

Title		I Want My Hat Back			
Author (Text & Illustration)		Jon Klassen			
Publication Year		2011	Publisher	Walker Books	
Translated Versions		Japanese translation available			
Words	254	Pages	40	YL Level	N/A
Synopsis					
<p>This story’s main character, a bear, is looking for his favorite red pointy hat, which is lost. He walks around asking a fox, frog, rabbit, turtle, and snake, "Have you seen my hat?" but all of them don’t know where it is either. The bear is troubled, he mutters, "I wonder if I will ever see my favorite hat again..." After a while, the bear remembers seeing a red hat somewhere a few minutes ago. He rushes to get it back... You will have to read it yourself to find out what happens next.</p>					
Introduction					
<p>This is a work that cleverly disrupts the planned harmony that readers have come to expect from picture books. Readers might think, "Is this ending appropriate for children?" Of course, there are no horrific scenes or inappropriate language in this book, but you should be a little careful when reading it to children under elementary school age. I can't get into details because I wouldn’t want to spoil the ending, but the author writes a clever plot twist. He uses common picture book themes (e.g., cute animal illustrations, plain vocabulary, and repetition of the same expressions) while making subtle changes to the endings of common picture books to make the reader think about the "justification of unfairness" or "justification of violence" that also exist in the real world. You wouldn't stop to think about why these cute animals aren't smiling or why their eyes aren't looking at the other person. This is guaranteed to be a good point of discussion.</p> <p>In the first place, is the bear telling the truth? As soon as we ask this question, this cute little bear picture book falls under the issue of the unreliable narrator in modernist literature.</p> <p>Anyway, the best thing about this picture book is that it has a serious theme, but you can read it with a smile on your face.</p>					
Related work/Reference URL					
<p>[Other recommended picture books by Klassen]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>This Is Not My Hat</i> (Walker Books, 2012) (Japanese translation available) <p>This is the first sequel to <i>I Want My Hat Back</i> and it is therefore advisable to read <i>I Want My Hat Back</i> before reading this. Unlike <i>I Want My Hat Back</i>, this book begins with the narrator, a little fish, stealing a big fish's hat. What will the fate of the little fish be?</p>					

- *We Found A Hat* (Walker Books, 2016) (Japanese translation available)
This is the second sequel to *I Want My Hat Back*. Two turtles find a hat at the same time. Now, which one of them will take the hat... you can probably sense an imminent dispute, but things turn out to be rather surprising and heartwarming. Maybe I'm reading a little too much into it or maybe the power of imagination to evade conflict is just that great.
The translation was done in the Kansai dialect by Yoshifumi Hasegawa, a popular children's book author, and the titles are unique.
- [Recommended Picture Books Illustrated by Klassen]
- *The Dark* by Lemony Snicket (Little, Brown and Company, 2013)(Japanese translation available)

Notes

A portion of this text is a substantially revised version of the draft frontispiece, "Seeking Inspirational Picture Books" [Ehon o Sagashini] [6] from *English Teachers' Magazine*, September 2019 (Vol. 68, No.6), Taishukan Publishing Co., Ltd.

(Text: Motoko Fukaya)