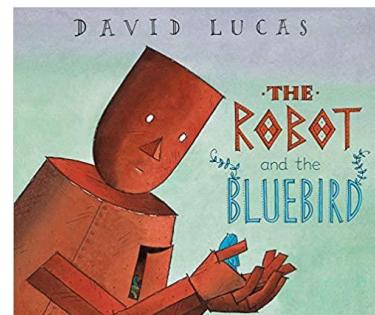
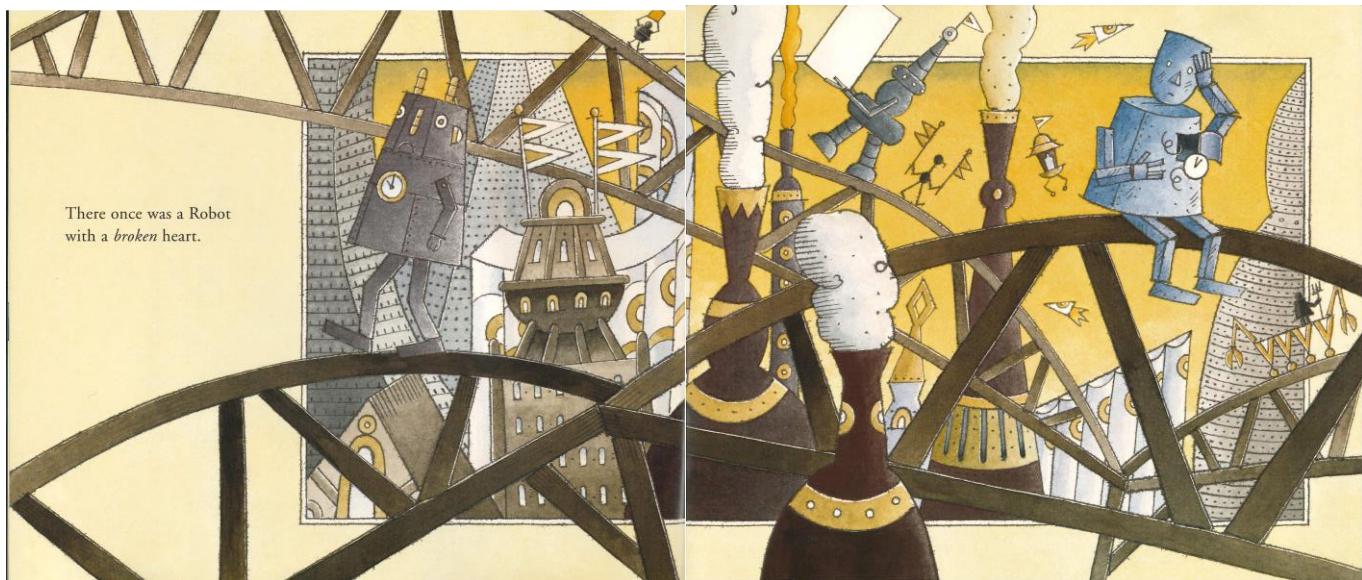


Take 5: Ideas for Independent/Home Learning

The Robot and the Bluebird by David Lucas (Andersen Press)



1. Explore it



Read aloud the words on the page above and spend time looking at the illustration. What do you think is happening here? Who do you think the story is about?

Focus in on the character of the robot. What does it look like? How do you think the robot feels about his broken heart? How do you know? Look at the other robots in the spread. What are they doing? Do you think they have noticed the robot with the broken heart? Why do you think they are walking in the opposite direction?

Now think about where this story might be taking place? Where do you think this is happening? What words or phrases would you use to describe this place? What do you think it would be like to be there: what might you see, hear, smell? How do you think it would feel to be there? What do you think the robots do here? How do you think the robot's heart got broken? What might have caused this?

What do you think might happen next in this story?

2. Illustrate it

Think again about the robot with the broken heart. Do you think he was always like this? Or, do you think this has happened recently? What do you think the robot might have looked like before his heart was broken? What might he have done in this robot world? Do you think he had a specific job?

Take some time to imagine what the robot would have looked like before his heart broke. What would his expression be like? Where would he be? What would he be doing? When you have a clear picture in your mind, take a pencil and a piece of paper and draw what you think the robot would have been like. If you don't have any to hand, you could use the back of an old envelope, letter or cereal packet.

Once you have drawn your picture, talk about what you have drawn with someone else if you can: what is similar about the drawings? What is different?

3. Talk about it

- How do you know that the robot has a problem? How do the words and picture show you this?
- What does it mean to have '*a broken heart*'? Why do you think the author/illustrator has put the word in italics? Have you heard this phrase before? What might have happened to someone who is broken-hearted?
- What do you think it will mean for the robot to be broken-hearted? Do you think a broken heart can be repaired? What do you think will happen to him?
- Do you know any other stories about robots? What do you already know about them, and how they behave? How are they the same as human beings, and how are they different? What can you do that a robot can't? Are there things a robot can do that you can't?
- Do you think robots can have feelings like people do?

4. Imagine it

Look again at the robot in the picture and think about how it might be feeling. Have you ever felt like this before? What made you feel better? What do you think could be done to help the robot? Is there anything the other robots in the illustration could do? If you could program these robots, what would you tell them to say or do?

You could write these out on strips of paper as instructions for the other robots. See if you can link your ideas together, such as: *Go up to the robot and say hello. Take out his heart then replace it with a new one.*

5. Create it

Think about all the different tasks and jobs that you might want robots to do, at home, at school, and in shops, factories and the wider world. Think of things that robots can do because they are robots that we can't do because we are human: maybe there are dangerous, difficult, or boring jobs?

Imagine that you could have a robot in your family. Think about what you would like the robot to do for you: how could you ask it to help you and your family and friends? What kind of jobs might it be able to do, in your bedroom, in the living room, in the garden, perhaps even at school?

Draw a picture of your robot and annotate it to show all the special features it has that make it so useful to have around. You could even make an advert for your robot, for the TV or for a magazine. How would you persuade people to buy it? What could it do for them to make their lives easier?

Share this with someone else at home. Do they think your robot would be helpful? Do they have any other jobs that they'd like a robot to help them with?

Watch David Lucas talking about the ideas behind *The Robot and the Bluebird* here, and retelling the story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mhzpf9bj-gM>.