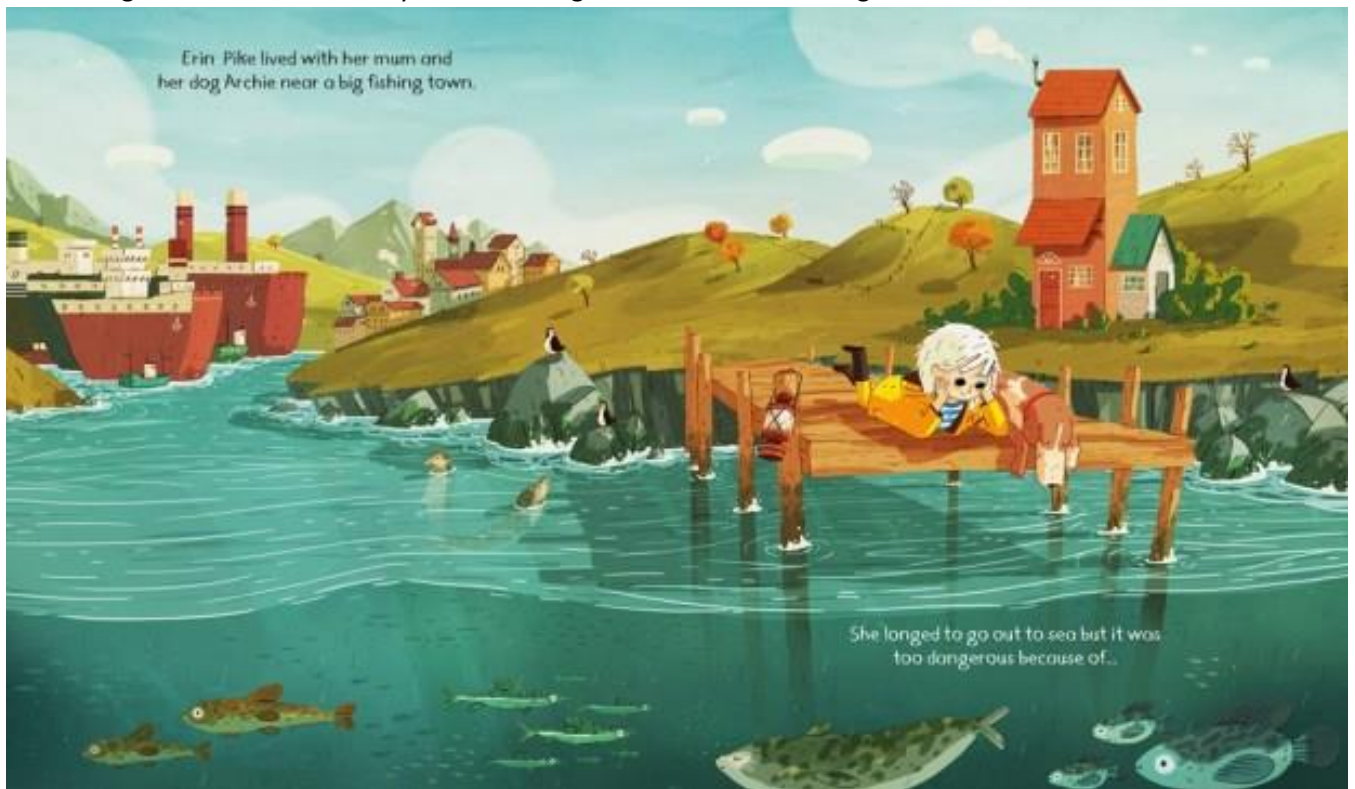


Take 5: Ideas for Independent/Home Learning

The Secret of Black Rock by Joe Todd-Stanton (Flying Eye)

1. Explore it

Look at the spread from the book below. What do you notice? Where is this? What makes you think that? How would you describe this place? Is it like anywhere you have seen before in real life or stories? Is there anything you find particularly interesting about this scene? Why? Who is this girl? What is she thinking?



Now read the first page of the spread. What do you learn about Erin's life from this? Read the second page. What more does this tell us about Erin? Is this what you expected from looking at the picture? How would you describe Erin's character; not just her appearance but by her behaviour, thoughts and feelings?

Why does she long **'to go out to sea'**? Why is it **'too dangerous'**? Who do you think has told her it is too dangerous? Why? What do they know? What would she see there? What could happen to her?

2. Illustrate it

Think about where Erin lives and her longing to go out to sea. What is special about the sea? Who lives there? Look closely at the fish that she is watching. Which do you like best? Why? Can you draw it? What is special about it compared with the others? What features will you include? Is it short and round or long

and skinny? Is it plain or patterned? Is it alone or in a group? Maybe you would prefer to draw a sea bird instead. Can you see any in this illustration? How could you draw them? Share your drawing and talk about why you think it is special.

3. Talk about it

Look at the front cover and read the title. What do you notice? What is happening here? What is Erin doing?

- Where is Erin going in her boat? What tells you this?
- Do you think Erin has asked to go out to sea? What makes you think that?
- Should we always follow our dreams? Why do you think that?

4. Imagine it

Look at the front cover again, looking closely at the picture. Think about where Erin is going:

- Can you find the Black Rock mentioned in the title? How would you describe it?
- Would you want to go there? Why? Why not? What can you see?
- Think about what the secret of Black Rock might be. What do you think she will find there?
- Do you know any stories with secret or magical places? What is special about them?

Create Black Rock above sea level as well as what you imagine it looks like below sea level using whatever materials you have to hand. What do you imagine its secret to be? Is it dangerous? Is it beautiful? Can you find a way to hide its secret and then reveal it to somebody else?

You could draw or write a story about Erin and the Secret of Black Rock. Why did she go there? What do you imagine happens when she arrives there? How does the story end?

5. Create it

Erin longed to go out to sea. What are your dreams? What do you long for? Why is it important to you? Talk together about where you would most like to go, what you would most like to do or who you would most like to see. Why do you long for these things? How would it make you feel?

Create a wish list of all your hopes and dreams. As well as big dreams, think about small things you could wish for today; something achievable that will make you feel nice. Draw and write your wishes on separate bits of paper and begin to fill something like a jar, book or box with them. You can keep adding to your wish list or take dreams out when they become reality and share this with other people. How will you decorate your wish jar? Do you want it to keep your wishes secret or will your decoration reveal clues about what is inside?

Learn more about author/illustrator Joe Todd-Stanton's picturebook making process on CLPE's Power of Pictures website: <https://clpe.org.uk/powerofpictures/books-and-teaching-sequences/mouse-called-julian>