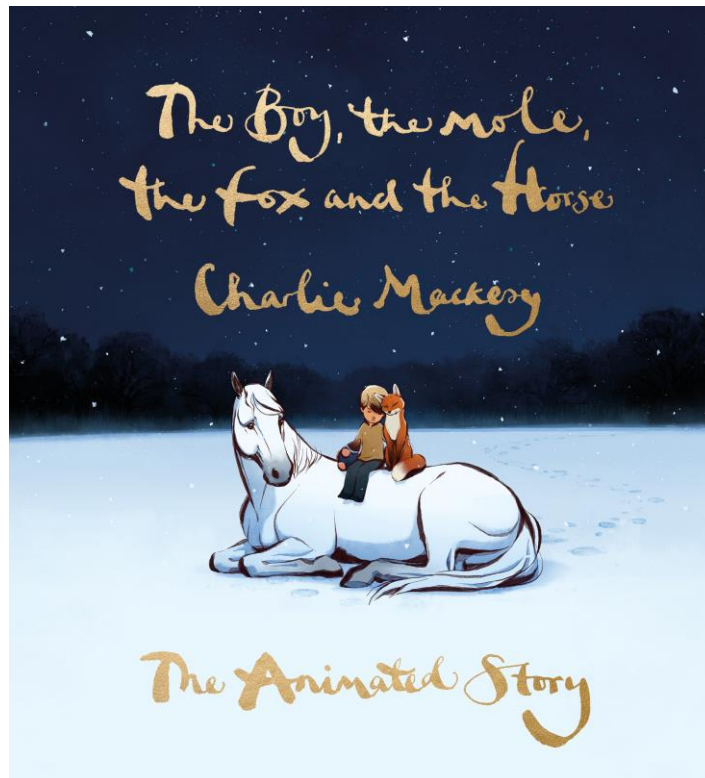


The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse by Charlie Mackesy

A Sensory Story for those with complex additional support needs (including PMLD.)



We've worked with Sensory Storyteller and Founder of [My Kind of Book](#), Ailie Finlay, to create this resource to accompany Charlie Mackesy's *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*.

Here are some suggestions to help you create a very simple sensory re-telling of this lovely tale which captures the gentle atmosphere and the serene quality of the story.

The main thread of the book is the conversation between the four friends as they journey through the landscape. You may want to let your pupils take on the role of the four characters as you tell the tale, using props to indicate each character. The pupils could choose which character they want to be, or you could 'award' different characters to different pupils, e.g., *'You can be the boy because you are very curious. You can be the mole*

because you are very helpful. You can be the fox because you are very brave. You can be the horse because you are very clever...'

(You could have several copies of the props and have several boys, moles, foxes and horses in each telling of the story.)

Sensory symbol suggestions for the characters:

Boy: a small woolly jumper, or neckerchief

Mole: some velvet fabric

Fox: some furry fabric or a lamb's wool duster (for the fox's brush)

Horse: a long white curtain tie-back tassel or something similar (for the mane or tail)

Once you have your characters you can set off on your story journey...chant rhythmically, all together as you sit in a circle:

The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse

The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse

The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse

As you repeat it will give you the sense of time passing on the journey. (Encourage the adults in the room to join in so that your pupils are surrounded by the sound.)

Then you could say:

When the dark clouds come keep going!

The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse kept going until they came to a...

Then choose a sensory incident from the story to share. (See below for suggestions.) The narrative itself is not particularly linear; you could try playing with the order of events as you tell the story, perhaps letting your pupils decide which order things should happen. Once you have taken your time sharing the props and everyone has enjoyed this first sensory experience go back to chanting:

The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse

The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse

The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse

Repeat again:

When the dark clouds come keep going!

The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse kept going until they came to a...

Choose a second sensory incident to share with your pupils. Then return to the chant. Continue in this way returning to the chanting between each sensory experience so that you

convey the sense of the journey continuing. Choose as many incidents as you feel is right for your pupils; four or five will probably be about the right length.

Some sensory incidents from the book and prop suggestions to depict them:

- **Climbing a tree:** use interestingly shaped pieces of wood, leaves and twigs.



- **Cake:** 'mix' a cake with a wooden spoon in a bowl. Infuse some cotton wool with some vanilla essence.
- **Rain:** make it rain with rain sticks and shakers, or by making 'raindrops' on the back of someone's hand with your fingertips.
- **Snow:** use white confetti or 'play snow'.



- **Fox caught in a snare:** tie a short piece of string round your wrist – pull it with the other hand to show how you are 'caught' – or ask your pupils to give it a gentle pull.
- **Falling in a river:** using a tambourine give it a prolonged shake for the 'wobble' and then a whack for the 'fall'. Repeat if everyone enjoys this. Record a running river on to a switch.
- **Watching the night sky:** use a large translucent piece of dark cloth. With a colleague hold this over the heads of your pupils to make it go a little bit dark. Play some atmospheric music or use a music box.



- **Sheep in a field:** use a sheep noisemaker toy or record sheep noises on to switches. Use some sheep's fleece if you can.
- **Galloping horse:** use coconut shells to make the galloping of the horse; make it get faster and faster. The lids from two large bottles of laundry detergent banged together can also make a good galloping noise.
- **Storm:** use any noise makers that you have to hand such as shakers, thunder makers etc. Blowing gently into a whistle will make a whistling wind noise and you could also use a fan to make 'wind'.



- **Sitting on the horse's back:** Use a big white cushion, encourage your pupils to feel how soft it is.



As you share the props you can repeat a simple sentence to tell your pupils what is happening, e.g., *'The mole fell in the river'*, *'It started to snow'*, *'The horse began to run'*.

Finish with a sensory experience which feels like it brings things nicely to a close. For example, snow confetti falling gently on everyone, or some pretend baking actions and then 'three cheers for cake!'

You may want to choose just one or two favourite quotes from the conversation between the four characters to include in your sensory re-telling. The concepts the friends talk about are often quite abstract and including too many of these may make the story less engaging for your pupils. However choosing one or two favourite quotes to include can work well. (Remember that your classroom team may appreciate these quotes as well.) You could project these quotes and illustrations on a white board as you tell the story.

At the very end you could say 'thank you' to your characters as you put the props away.

Remember – not all of these props recommendations are toys! The props should never be used unsupervised.