



Walker Books Classroom Ideas



The Amazing Meals of Martha Maloney

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illust. by Donna Rawlins
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*Notes may be downloaded and printed for
regular classroom use only.

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Outline:

On a school trip to the Museum of Famous People, Martha Maloney wanders off and enjoys the culinary delights of important figures through time, much to the dismay of her teacher. Readers can experience history through the dining tables of King Henry VIII, Princess Marie Antoinette, Queen Nefertiti and more, with heaped servings of information about each time period and their culinary customs. This unique picture book weaves together fiction and non-fiction to create a delicious read for inquisitive young minds.

Author/Illustrator Information:

Margaret Wild has written books across many genres and has been published around the world. Her numerous awards and distinctions include the Children's Book Council of Australia Picture Book of the Year Award for *Jenny Angel*, illustrated by Anne Spudvilas, *The Very Best of Friends*, illustrated by Julie Vivas, and *Fox*, illustrated by Ron Brooks. In 2008 she received the Nan Chauncy Award for an outstanding contribution to children's literature in Australia. Her book *Vampyre*, illustrated by Andrew Yeo, was short-listed at the 2011 Aurealis Awards. Margaret has three titles in the Walker Classics series: *Going Home* and *A Bit of Company*, both illustrated by Wayne Harris, and *Let the Celebrations Begin!*, illustrated by Julie Vivas. Margaret received the Australia Council Award for Lifetime Achievement in Literature in 2020.

Dan Wild has been curious for as long as he can remember, with his parents feeding that curiosity by supplying him with astronomy and dinosaur books for most of his birthday presents. Although initially interested in science, he followed the family profession of writing. He has since worked in a variety of communications roles with topics ranging from the environment, urban infrastructure, finance and education.

Donna Rawlins was born in Melbourne, Australia. She has worked in Publishing (in house and freelance) as a designer, editor, illustrator and writer since 1979 and has taught (part-time) illustration and graphic design in tertiary and TAFE since 1983. Donna tours and lectures regularly in Australia and internationally, running workshops for students, teachers, librarians and is actively involved in voluntary work dedicated to children's literature and early childhood intervention for children with special needs. Her classic picture book, *My Place* (1987), written by Nadia Wheatley, is a classic bestseller and her extraordinary book, *Waves* (2018), is a migration story for readers of all ages.

How to Use These Notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

These notes are for:

- Ages 4-7
- Years F-1

Key Learning Areas:

- English

Example of:

- Picture Book

Themes/Ideas:

- Food
- History
- Imagination



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Discussion Questions and Activities:

Before Reading

View the cover and title of the book. Identify the following:

- The title
- The author/illustrator
- The publisher
- The blurb

What do you think the story might be about from looking at the title only? Make up your own story using the title *The Amazing Meals of Martha Maloney*.

Do your ideas change after seeing the cover? What characters can you see on the cover? What type of story do you think *The Amazing Meals of Martha Maloney* might be? Based on the cover, what kinds of food do you think might appear in the book?

What sort of meal do you think Martha Maloney is getting ready to eat on the cover? If you were sitting in front of that empty plate, what kind of delicious food would you be hoping to eat?

Exploring the Book

Who do you think the audience for this book is? Why?

Martha Maloney eats a lot of different food in the story. Look at each spread and count how many different kinds of food you can see. Discuss the foods that you think would be most interesting to eat. Have you eaten some of these foods? Which foods are most different from the food you're used to?

Think about the story from Mrs Souza's perspective. Perhaps write or tell her version of the story. What would she be thinking, feeling and saying? What would the story look like from the perspective of one of the famous historical figures that Martha Maloney dines with, like Queen Nefertiti or Emperor Puyi?

Fill in a Book Report Card for *The Amazing Meals of Martha Maloney*. Include: Title / Author / Illustrator / your favourite part / favourite character / favourite illustration / favourite sentence / what you liked about the book / what the author could have done better / who you think would enjoy it the most.

On the whiteboard or on a large sheet of paper, place an image of the cover of *The Amazing Meals of Martha Maloney* and surround it with words that describe the book. Include words that describe what you liked and what you disliked about the book.

The Amazing Meals of Martha Maloney includes something called "endnotes" for each banquet scene. What are endnotes used for? You might want to do individual research, or discuss as a class.

Martha Maloney meets a lot of famous historical figures in the book. If you could have dinner with a famous person from history, who would you want it to be? Write a story about what your dinner with them might be like.

Martha Maloney learns a lot about history during her time at the museum, but Mrs Souza thinks she's day dreaming and breaking rules. How do you think Martha Maloney's imagination helps her learn so many facts? Do you learn better when you're using your imagination?

Exploring the Illustrations

How do the illustrations add to the story? How would the story be different if there were no illustrations?

On many spreads, several of the words are different sizes and shapes. Why do you think the book's designer has done this? How does it add to the story? How should you read the words in BOLD or capital letters etc.?

Choose one of the spreads and have a class discussion about the following:

- How do you think Martha Maloney and the other characters are feeling? What clues might there be in the pictures?
- Is there a main colour in this spread? How does it make you feel?
- Do the colours change from spread to spread? Why might that be?

There are a lot of people in the illustrations of the amazing meals that Martha Maloney enjoys. How has Donna Rawlins used perspective to convey a feeling of bustling activity? Which of these spreads do you think is the most interesting or exciting?

Draw your own banquet scene where you are the king or queen. Think about what kinds of food you would like to eat, and who you would like to invite.