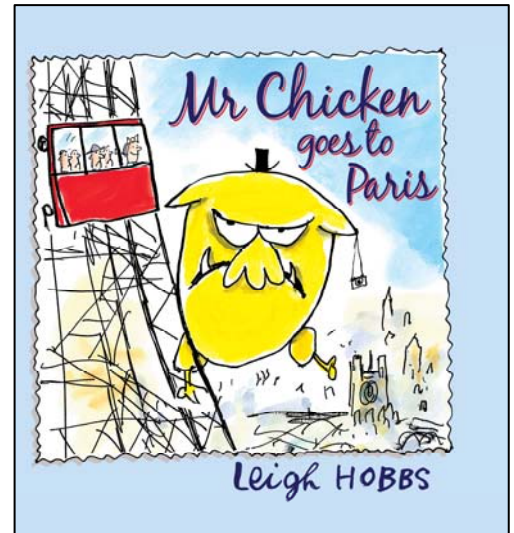


Mr Chicken Goes to Paris

Leigh Hobbs

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Summary

When we first met Mr Chicken he was terrorising the school in *Hooray for Horrible Harriet*. Now, he is venturing overseas, having taken up his friend Yvette's invitation to visit Paris. As they journey together through the City of Love, Mr Chicken is overcome by the magic of all the city has to offer – and the inhabitants of this most stylish city don't quite know what to make of him.

Mr Chicken is yet another unforgettable and riotous character from Leigh Hobbs who will delight children of all ages. Full of travelling paraphernalia and with a sprinkling of French, the offbeat, humorous story explores a warm and surprising friendship.

Author style and motivation

Leigh says 'perhaps what kids love about my characters is that they are funny, but more likely I think they respond to the fact that there are two voices. There is the voice of the text and the voice of the pictures. The text is the adult's voice and the pictures are the child's voice.' — *Dromkeen Society Bulletin, December 2008*.

"I got the idea for this book during a trip to Paris in 2006. I'd created my Mr Chicken character in the second *Horrible Harriet* book, and suddenly I had a flash of inspiration imagining him visiting all the landmarks and tourist spots I was familiar with. Mr Chicken's French friend came later. Architecture and history are passions of mine, so setting a book in Paris gave me the opportunity to draw some of the buildings I admire." — *Leigh Hobbs*

Sample discussion questions and activities overleaf.

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In the classroom...

Mr Chicken Goes to Paris

by Leigh Hobbs

Discussion & Activity Questions

Themes include: friendship, travel, misfits

1. Before reading the book, discuss what the class knows about Paris and the French people and what landmarks, customs, etc they might expect to find in the story. Locate Paris on a world map.
2. The blurb on the back of the book is a quote by another author. Write a new blurb for *Mr Chicken Goes to Paris* that will encourage others to read it.
3. Make a postcard from Mr Chicken to a friend back home (Horrible Harriet, perhaps?) telling them what he has been doing and seeing in Paris. Create an appropriate image for the other side such as a location or activity.
4. Source photographic images of the famous landmarks used in the book eg: the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame Cathedral, the Mona Lisa, the Palace of Versailles, the Arc de Triomphe and compare them to the illustrations in the book.
5. Yvette accepts Mr Chicken's unusual appearance, but the people of Paris appear shocked, amazed and horrified (note especially Mr Chicken's visit to the Mona Lisa in which the crowd is looking at Mr Chicken instead of the painting). Why do you think their reaction is different to Yvette's? Can you think of other examples from real life when we judge people by their looks rather than their actions and for who they are?
6. Choose another country or city for Mr Chicken to visit and write a new story following the style of *Mr Chicken Goes to Paris*. Think about what famous landmarks Mr Chicken might see. What foods will he eat? If he's in a non-English-speaking country, what common words or phrases will he need to know?
7. Revisit the class's pre-reading predictions (Activity 1) and discuss how accurate they were. What have they learned about Paris from reading this book?

Curriculum recommendation and discussion questions prepared by Kate Justelius-Wright, Allen & Unwin.