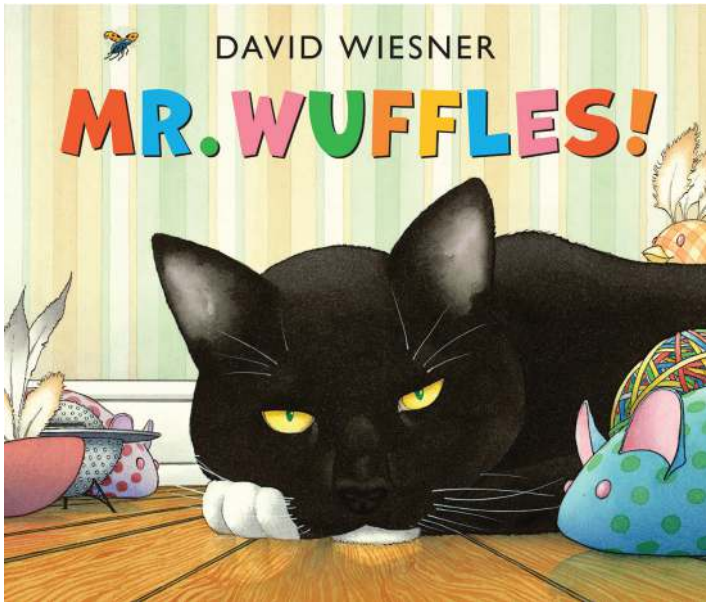


DAVID WIESNER

Ideas for Classroom Use

**About the author**

David Wiesner grew up in suburban New Jersey, known to his classmates as “the kid who could draw.” He went on to become a student at the Rhode Island School of Design and he soon discovered that picture books were the perfect vehicle for his work. Three of the picture books he both wrote and illustrated won the prestigious Caldecott Medal, making him only the second person in the award’s long history to have won three times. He has also received two Caldecott Honors.

Wiesner generally spends several years creating each new book. Many versions are sketched and revised until the story line flows smoothly and each image works the way he wants it to. He creates three-dimensional models of objects he can’t observe in real life, such as flying pigs and lizards standing upright, to add authenticity to his drawings. David Wiesner lives with his family outside Philadelphia.”

Mr. Wuffles!

David Wiesner has done it again with *Mr. Wuffles!* When the finicky cat, Mr. Wuffles, mistakes a small spaceship for a toy, the results are nearly disastrous for the tiny green travelers inside. Forging a quick alliance with unlikely friends (the household insects), the travelers manage to fix their ship and escape—to Mr. Wuffles’s great annoyance. This nearly wordless, action- and emotion-packed book will inspire kids of all ages. It lends itself well to an exploration of point of view (what’s happening from Mr. Wuffles’s perspective? What’s happening from the insects’ perspective?). You may also use this book to discuss dialogue, or how action moves the plot along. You might use it as an exploration of character—in this story, the characters are much more than they initially seem to be. Use it as an exploration of setting in fiction writing—Wiesner has created a fully realized world complete with rules, technology, history, and language. Your students may even be inspired to invent their own worlds.

Activities Based on *Mr. Wuffles!*:

- Ask students to translate the travelers’ and the ants’ coded speech bubbles into dialogue.
- Ask students to tell the story from the perspective of Mr. Wuffles and then to switch and tell the story from the perspective of one of the travelers, or one of the insects.
- The ants record their history in pictures. Ask students to study those pictures and write the stories they tell.
- As in many of David Wiesner’s books, things are not always what they seem. What looks like a cat toy is actually a spaceship!—a world inside a world. Ask students to choose an ordinary object to think and write about in this extraordinary way—who or what might inhabit the pencil sharpener? What if the basketball is a planet populated by creatures too tiny to see? What if the school bus is actually the toy of a giant?
- In this story, simple ants are wise historians, little green travelers can repair sophisticated machinery with a pencil eraser and a marble, and ladybugs are involved in complicated plans. People are not always who they seem. When students are developing characters for a story, ask them to think and write about what’s beneath the surface.
- Ask students to design, plan, and create their own comic or graphic novel. How do the pictures tell the story? If they choose to add dialogue, how does the dialogue move the story along?