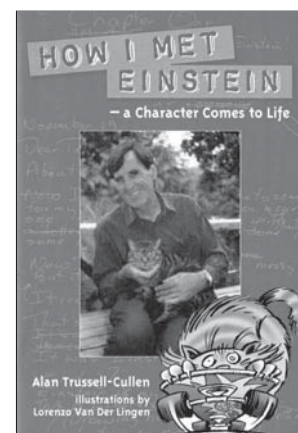


# How I Met Einstein

by Alan Trussell-Cullen

illustrated by Lorenzo Van Der Lingen



## Book Summary

Author Alan Trussell-Cullen explains the different steps in the publishing process for his book, *Ask Einstein!* The reader follows, step by step, as his original idea is transformed into the finished product.

## Features of the Book

- An explanation told from different points of view
- The chapter headings that show the steps in the publishing process
- The features of a nonfiction text – index, glossary, photographs, diagrams
- Fact boxes to provide extra information
- The summary in the form of a flow diagram
- The use of cartoon drawings and speech bubbles
- Different typefaces to show change of narrator
- Technical language – *typeface*, *manuscript*, *stylus*, *roughs*

## Purpose

*How I Met Einstein* can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- S** discussing texts written from different points of view;
- S** exploring the effectiveness of the layout of a book;
- S** understanding how a book is written and published;
- S** studying variations in vocabulary;
- S** reading and writing procedural text.

## The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Discussing texts written from different points of view
- S** Exploring the effectiveness of the layout of a book
- S** Understanding how a book is written and published

## Introducing the text

As an introduction to this book, you could share *Ask Einstein!* with the students or have them work in a literature circle with the book.

Look at the cover of *How I Met Einstein* and discuss the title.

- What do you think this book will be about?
- Who is the person on the cover? Who is the cat on his knee?
- What is the writing behind the cover pictures?

If the students have not already read a book about Einstein the cat, you could discuss the cartoon illustration on the cover.

- What words would you use to describe this character?

Record the students' ideas to refer to as they read the book and meet the character.

Read the blurb on the back cover together.

- Does this help you to predict what the book will be about?

## Reading and discussing the text

Look at the title page.

- *What do you think the words in the speech bubble mean?*
- *Which is the “real” cat?*
- *What do the words “a character comes to life” mean?*

Draw on the students’ prior knowledge of how a book is published. Make a list of the keywords. Discuss the words in the pawprints on page 3.

- *Why are these here? What do they show?*
- *Why is one pawprint a different color from the others?*

Read the first page of chapter 1 together. This explains the author’s intention and may clarify questions that may have arisen when introducing the book.

Now ask the students to read the rest of chapter 1 independently. As they read, they could consider the following questions:

- *What kind of character is Einstein?*
- *Does the author use all the ideas he records?*
- *Why did the author choose the name Einstein?*
- *Why do you think the typeface changes on page seven?*

The students could now read up to page 29 to follow the progress of the author’s story.

- *As you read, think about the skills that would be needed for these jobs.*
- *Is one of the jobs more important than the others? Why?*

When the students have finished reading, discuss the way the book is written from different points of view – the people involved in the publishing process and also the character of Einstein.

- *Why do you think the author has used pencil sketches of Einstein and speech bubbles throughout the text?*
- *What other things has the author done to keep the readers interested in the text?*

After this discussion, the students could review the whole publishing process by referring to the flow diagram on page 30.

## Revisiting the Text

The suggested activities below can be used immediately after the guided reading lesson if appropriate or could be taken as a mini-lesson at a later time.

### **S** Studying variations in vocabulary

In the text, the editor talks about making sure that the correct language is used for the country where the book is to be sold. The example she uses is *pavement* and *sidewalk*. She could also have said *footpath*. Although words from many cultures are now used worldwide, there are still some terms that we associate with one particular English-speaking country.

Ask the students to brainstorm words that change from country to country, for example, *trash/rubbish*; *tin/can*. They could display the information as a list so that they could add to it over time.


### **S** Understanding how a book is written and published

Ask the students to list the different people involved in producing a book and to find the skills that are needed to do that job. They could use the blackline master on page 76 to record their ideas. Discuss the strengths of the students and allocate a role to each person. You will need different people to think of an idea, write the story, edit the work, design the layout, illustrate the text, and print the final version. The students could work in pairs if necessary.

When they have “published” their book, the students could use the finished product to explain the publishing process to the rest of the class.

### **S** Reading and writing procedural text

This text is an explanation. It explains how to do something in a step-by-step way.

 Ask the students to write their own short procedural text explaining each step in a clear and interesting way. They could think about the following questions:

- *What kind of layout will you use?*
- *How will you do the illustrations?*
- *Will you use charts or diagrams?*

Each student could read their writing to a partner to determine if the explanation is clear.