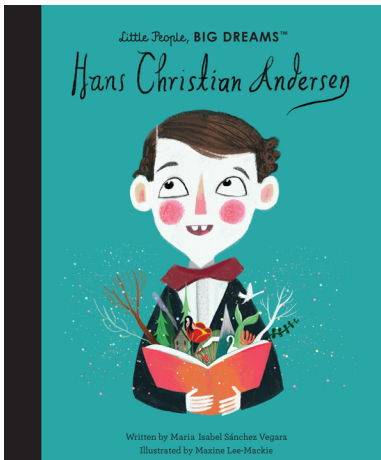


# Little People, BIG DREAMS™

## TEACHERS' GUIDE



Hans Christian Andersen  
Little People, BIG DREAMS™  
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### LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

Hans Christian Andersen was born in 1805 in Denmark and grew up in a family that loved books and storytelling. His life wasn't always easy, but Hans continued dreaming up imaginative fairy tales and poems that he hoped to share with the world. Because of his persistence, Hans's dream came true and many of his stories are still enjoyed by children and adults to this day.

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS IN THIS UNIT

1. What big dream did Hans spend his whole life working toward?
2. Who helped Hans as he worked on his storytelling?
3. What did Hans do to accomplish his goal?
4. How did Hans turn his heartbreak into something beautiful?
5. What holiday was created in honor of Hans's birthday?

### CLASSROOM DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. The text says that Hans's family had one book that they considered their "precious jewel" (p. 3). It was so important to them that they kept it safe in a special cabinet. Ask the students to think about something that their own family considers to be extra special. What is the item? Where do they keep it?
2. Ask the class to share favorite stories their families like to read together. What do they like about them? Has there ever been a story their families read that they did not like? Why didn't they like it?
3. On p. 9, Hans goes back to school even though he is older than all of the other students. This shows persistence, or sticking with something even when it is hard. Ask the class to share experiences they have had when they've had to show persistence like Hans.

4. Hans's story of the Ugly Duckling tells of a duckling who doesn't fit in and is not treated fairly by the other ducks because of how he looks. He grows up and learns that he is actually a beautiful swan and that he didn't fit in with the other ducks because he isn't a duck! On p. 15, the text says that "there is a swan inside all of us." Ask the students to think about the swan inside of themselves. Generate a list of beautiful personality traits and have students share what they feel makes them beautiful. If a student struggles to recognize a quality about themselves, ask for another student to share something they appreciate about that classmate.

### Student Activities

1. **Character Dress Up Day:** After sharing a variety of Hans's more familiar stories (examples could include "The Little Mermaid," "The Princess and the Pea," and "The Ugly Duckling"), invite children to dress up as one of the characters. Ensure there are a variety of materials at school that could be used to put together a quick costume if students are unable to gather materials from home.

2. **Imagination Self-Portraits:** On p. 4, we see a picture of what is happening in Hans's imagination while his father reads him stories. Students will draw themselves with a thought bubble and something fantastical they like to imagine. Remind them to make their self-portraits bright and colorful, just like the illustrations in the book!

3. On pg. 6, we learn that Hans loved watching the puppeteers and even performed his own puppet shows for his mom. Have the students design their own animal puppets using clean, old socks and a variety of art materials. They can choose to create and perform a solo puppet show or join together for a group performance.

4. **Write, Write, Write!:** When Hans didn't get the roles he wanted in the theater, he spent all of his free time writing stories (p. 8). Play some traditional Danish music (without lyrics) and provide writing materials to the students. Allow them to free write whatever stories come to their minds. On a subsequent day, have the students share their stories with each other like Hans shared his stories with the theater director.

5. **Build a Fairy Tale:** Have the students sit in a circle. Review the common characteristics of fairy tales. Then explain that you are going to build a fairy tale as a class by adding one line at a time. Choose a student who might struggle with the activity to be the first storyteller and contribute, "Once upon a time..." Go around the circle and allow the students to be as imaginative as they'd like, and remind them that the story doesn't have to make complete sense. If a student struggles when it is their turn, you can prompt them with a line from one of Hans's stories. This activity can be repeated as students become more comfortable with its process.

6. **Children's Book Day** is celebrated on Hans's birthday each year to honor his love of books. Ask the students what holiday they would want celebrated on their birthday. Remind them that it should be connected to something they love like Hans loved books. For example, it could be Bike Riding Day or Pizza Day. Students can design a poster to use as a decoration at the celebration.

