



MAX'S WORDS

AUTHOR: KATE BANKS

ILLUSTRATOR: BORIS KULIKOV

See a video of the book read aloud here: [Max's Words](#)

**** REMEMBER: HAVE FUN AND THE KIDS WILL TOO! ****

OVERVIEW

ABOUT THE BOOK

Benjamin collects stamps and Karl collects coins, and neither one will share with their little brother Max. So Max decides to start a collection of his own. He's going to collect words. He starts with small words that he cuts out of newspapers and magazines, but soon his collection has spilled out into the hall. Benjamin brags that he has one thousand stamps. Karl is just a few coins short of five hundred. But a thousand stamps is really just a bunch of stamps, and a lot of coins is only a heap of money. A pile of words, however, can make a story. Bright, bold pictures incorporating clever wordplay accompany this highly original tale about a younger brother's ingenuity. (amazon.com)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kate Banks has written many books for children, among them *Max's Words*, *And If the Moon Could Talk*, winner of the Boston Globe–Horn Book Award, and *The Night Worker*, winner of the Charlotte Zolotow Award. She grew up in Maine, where she and her two sisters and brother spent a lot of time outdoors, and where Banks developed an early love of reading. “I especially liked picture books,” she says, “and the way in which words and illustrations could create a whole new world in which sometimes real and other times magical and unexpected things could happen.” Banks attended Wellesley College and received her master's in history at Columbia University. She lived in Rome for eight years but now lives in the South of France with her husband and two sons, Peter Anton and Maximilian. (us.macmillan.com)

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Born and educated in the former Soviet Union, illustrator Boris Kulikov graduated from Russia's Institute of Theatre, Music, and Cinema before immigrating to the United States in 1997. He worked at a variety of odd jobs before establishing his artistic career as an illustrator for the *New York Times Book Review*. Kulikov eventually found a way to make a much-hoped-for transition into children's-book illustration. His first illustration project, Lore Segal's *Morris the Artist*, drew critical praise and many other illustration opportunities. The illustrator's “witty illustrations” are sure to intrigue children and adults alike,” noted a *Publishers Weekly* contributor.”

THE READ ALOUD

BEFORE READING

MAX'S WORDS

TOPICS & THEMES:

- Collecting
- Siblings
- Sharing

Tips for every book!

POWER PHRASES:

I WONDER...

I NOTICE...

TELL ME MORE...

DIGGING DEEPER:

“Tell me more, why do you think that?”

“How do you know that?”

“Why do you think they feel like that?”

“Interesting, did you notice anything else?”

Use these before reading the story to help students activate background knowledge and make predictions:

- I wonder what the boy on the cover is doing with scissors.
- Where do you think this story takes place?
- How does the cover show us if this story is fiction or non-fiction?
- Listen to the story and find out if our predictions are correct.

DURING THE STORY

Use these while reading the story to help students interpret the action and content.

- (p. 4) How is Max feeling about his brother's collections?
- (p. 10) How did Max make his collection special?
- (p. 12) I wonder if Max's brothers will share their collections?
- (p.18) How do you think Max's brothers feel about his collection now?
- (p.20) Do you think this story could happen in real life?

AFTER READING

Use these after reading the story to help students understand what they just read.

- What do you think the brothers will do with their new words?
- How did the brothers change their feelings about Max's collection during the story?
- Is there anything the three brothers learned about collecting items?
- How do you think Kate Banks got the idea to write this story?
- Why do you think the author named this story, "Max's Words"?

BRINGING THE BOOK TO LIFE!

- (p. 6) What is Max holding in his hands? Show me how you would cut out a word from a magazine with a scissors.
- (p. 16) If you think Max has enough words for a story, give me a thumbs up. Thumbs down if you think he doesn't. Thumbs to the side if you're not sure.

COOPERATIVE LEARNING

- (p. 5) Turn to your neighbor and talk about what you think Max should collect. Share with the class.

SMALL-GROUP IDEAS

1. DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

- How do you think Kate Banks got the idea to write this story?
- Why did the illustrator, Boris Kulikov, change the setting in the middle of the story?
- Sequence the story by having each child add an event for the beginning, middle and end.
- What can we learn from collecting and organizing items?
- Do you think it is important to keep collections from the past? Why? Why not?
- How did the brothers change their feelings about Max's collection during the story?
- Is there anything the three brothers learned about collecting items?

Suggested Optional Activity:

- Imagine you were the creator of coins or stamps. What would your newest coin or stamp look like?

2. WRITING ACTIVITY

- Choose some of the words from Max's collection and write your own story.

3. EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- What other things might you collect? Write two sentences about this collection and draw a picture to illustrate.

COMMON CORE LINKS