THE STORY

A bug flies through an open door into a house, through a bathroom, across a kitchen and bedroom and into a living room ... where its entire life changes with the switch of a button. Sucked into the void of a vacuum bag, this one little bug moves through denial, bargaining, anger, despair and eventually acceptance—the five stages of grief—as it comes to terms with its fate. Will there be a light at the end of the tunnel? Will there be dust bunnies in the void? A funny, suspenseful and poignant look at the travails of a bug trapped in a vacuum.

AUTHOR PROFILE

Mélanie Watt writes her books both in French and English. She is the bestselling creative genius behind many beloved picture books for children, including the Scaredy Squirrel series and the Chester series.

At Wordfest, she presents Bug in a Vacuum, about a fly whose entire life changes with the switch of a button.

WEB RESOURCES

EXTENSION

• Author website: http://melaniewatt.blogspot.ca/
• Publisher website: http://www.tundrabooks.com
• Book trailer website: http://www.tundrabooks.com/catalog/display.jsp?isbn=9781770496453

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

• Dealing with Grief + Children's Grief Education Association + http://childgrief.org/childgrief.htm
• Grief Management + The Centre for Grieving Children + http://grievingchildren.org/grief-resources/
• Children and Grief + Scholastic + http://www.scholastic.com/childrenandgrief/
• Grief and Loss + BC Children's Hospital + http://www.bcchildrens.ca/YourVisit/FamilyServices/GriefAndLoss/default.htm
DISCUSS

At the beginning of the story, Melanie Watt includes a definition of the word ‘vacuum’. The word can be used to mean any of the following things:

• A cleaning machine
• An empty space
• A void left by a loss

Look up this word in the dictionary. Why do you think Melanie Watt chose to include these definitions at the beginning of the story? Does reading this list change the way you feel about the story itself?

• How can you help a friend in bereavement? As a class, brainstorm a list of strategies to support a grieving friend.

ACTIVITY SHEETS

October is Diversity Awareness Month. Teach students to respect differences among people in their community and around the world by using the resources below for elementary, intermediate, or high school students. You’ll find printables that promote tolerance and understanding, and lessons about immigrant families. Art, reading, and writing activities will help familiarize students with the history and traditions of different religions and ethnic groups.

Activity sheet #1: Use these questions to help your students interview someone from another culture about a holiday that they have celebrated. Holidays you could focus on include Jewish, Muslim, and Christian holidays. (View this activity sheet)

Activity sheet #2: Teach students how to say “thank you” in many different languages. This printable materials provide an excellent activity for the Thanksgiving season, during which you can teach your students to appreciate and give thanks for their blessings. However it is appropriate any day of year! (View this activity sheet)

Activity sheet #3: New Year’s Day, Cinco de Mayo, Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and birthdays are covered in this booklet. (View this activity sheet)

SUGGESTED READINGS

FROM THE SAME AUTHOR

• Have I Got a Book For You! + Kids Can Press + 2009.
• Leon the Chameleon + Kids Can Press + 2003.

BY OTHER ARTISTS FROM WORDFEST 2015

• When Santa Was a Baby + Tundra Books + 2015.
• The Queen’s Shadow + Cybele Young + Kids Can Press + 2015.
• Some Things I’ve Lost + Cybele Young + Groundwood + 2015.

OTHER BOOKS AND MOVIES ON RELATED SUBJECT

• The Velveteen Rabbit + Margery Williams + Puffin Books + 1995.