

## Think of an Eel - January 2008

Author: Karen Wallace © 1993  
Illustrator: Mike Bostock © 1993  
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Available at all good bookshops, your school and library supplier, and at [www.walkerbooks.co.uk](http://www.walkerbooks.co.uk)

A wonderfully poetic account of an eel, packed with interesting details about this amazing creature. Children are helped to imagine the mysterious life of an eel through the subtle telling and beautiful illustrations. Together they provide a fascinating account of the remarkable journey of an animal few have encountered.

### Activities

- **Collect "golden lines"**

There are wonderfully vivid descriptions of the eel in the book. Children can comb through the text to find memorable phrases and words that help them to build a good picture of the creature, e.g. *"looks like a shoelace made out of glass"*. They can share their lists in small groups or as a whole class, and use them to create a "shape poem" in the form of an eel, perhaps using silvery ink pens on dark blue/green/black background for dramatic effect.

- **Reader's theatre**

The language of this book is so rich; it is perfect for presenting aloud as a dramatic reading. Divide the book into natural sections (p6-9, p10-13, p14-17, p18-19, p21-23, p24-26, p29) and the class into the same number of groups (if there are six groups, a group can work on p6-9 and p29 to begin and end the story). Make one photocopy of each section and give each group a section of the text to work on.

After reading it through, they can mark up the copy by underlining in different colours the lines or phrases to be read by each group member. They can choose to read some lines in pairs or as a whole group to emphasize particular meanings. They can add percussion or sound effects too. When each group has rehearsed their section, they can take it in turns to perform them seamlessly in sequence.

- **Create a PowerPoint presentation or big book**

In groups, children can decide on the main stages or events in an eel's life and create a slide/page for each one, with illustrations and written descriptions. Working on a storyboard as a draft can be a useful way to start. These can be shared with the whole class.

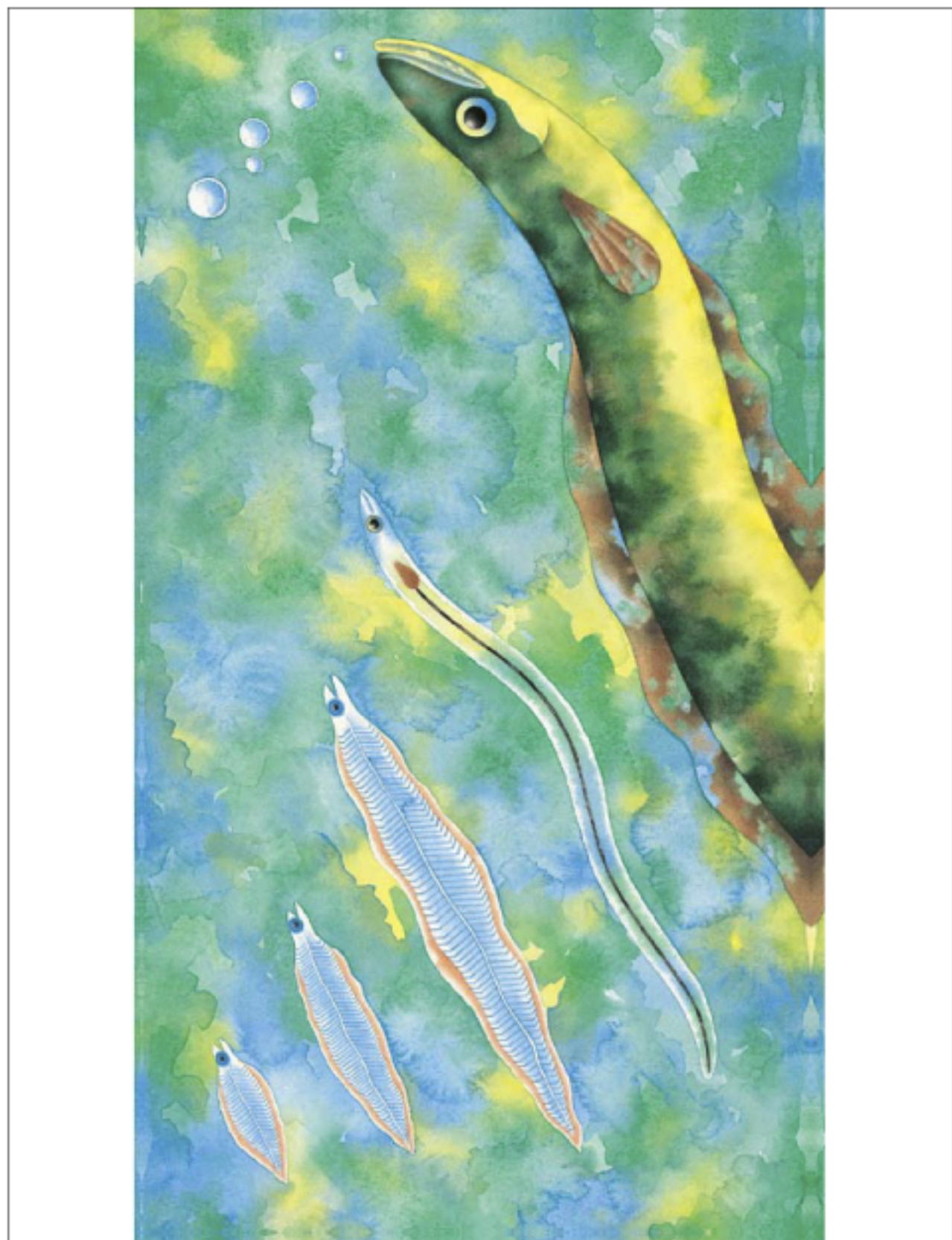


Image 3. Think of an Eel • © 1993 Mike Bostock