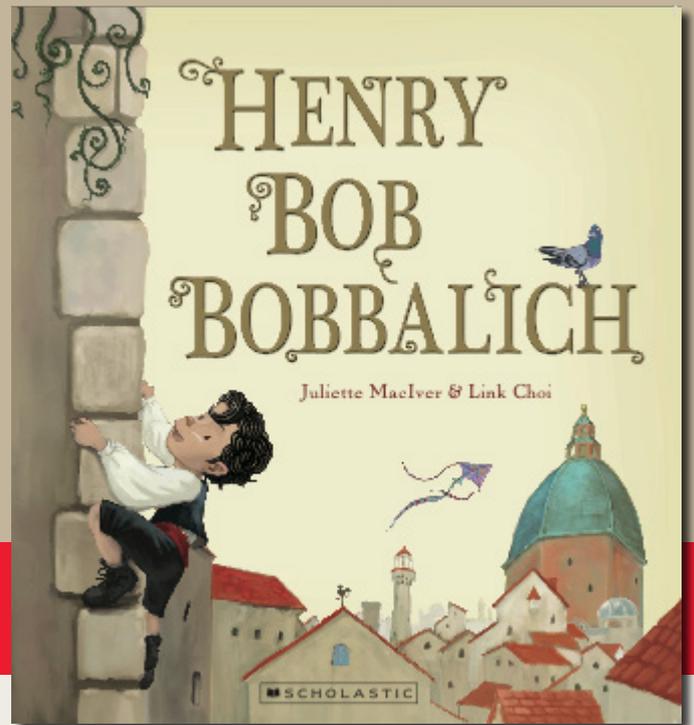


Henry Bob Bobbalich

By Juliette MacIver

Illustrated by Link Choi

- Reading • Writing • Rhyme
- Art



Synopsis

Henry Bob Bobbalich is about a boy with a great talent and an even greater passion – climbing. Henry Bob climbs buildings, walls, cliffs and the ornate pages of this delightful picture book. At the beginning of the story, Henry Bob amazes his school friends with his climbing prowess. However, one day, while climbing something particularly dangerous, his boot falls and hits his mean-spirited schoolteacher on the head. The teacher responds by forbidding Henry Bob from climbing any more, and gains the agreement of Henry Bob's parents. At first, Henry Bob is angry, but once his anger is spent, he becomes desperately unhappy and unwell. He no longer speaks or plays with his friends. Henry Bob takes to his bed, and none of the doctors, priests, or psychics his parents call on can cure him.

In a desperate attempt to save his son's life, Henry Bob's father takes him on a tour of the world's most amazing sights. None of these, however, excite Henry Bob. Then, one day, while travelling through a far-off land, Henry spies a small child about to fall from a high precipice. He rushes to the rescue, scaling the cliff just in time to save the girl. He is hailed as a hero, and goes on to climb the Himalayas with his father. But it is being free once more to follow his heart that fills him with the greatest joy.

About the Book's Creators

Juliette MacIver is a Wellington-based author and mother of four. She majored in linguistics at Victoria University and has a diploma in teaching English. Juliette is the author of popular Scholastic picture books the *Marmaduke Duck* series, *Grasshoppers Dance*, *The Moose and the Goose*, *Bye! Bye! Bye!* and *Tom and the Dragon*. Juliette's picture books have been awarded two Storylines Notable Book Awards and have been shortlisted for the NZ Children's Book Awards, the LIANZA Children's Book Awards and the Crystal Kite Award.

Link Choi was a finalist of the LIANZA Awards Russell Clark Medal for Illustration for his book, *The Dragon Hunters*. He has also tutored 3-D animation, created 2-D game art and was a props designer for *The Hobbit* films. Link is based in Auckland.

Writing Style

Henry Bob Bobbalich is a warm and charming old-fashioned rhyming picture book with a very modern message: follow your heart. The tale is set in an indeterminate European city in centuries past. The language chosen matches the lively illustrations, with the author using words and phrases such as 'held them in thrall' and 'which he scaled with haste'. The text is in the third person and past tense. While some of the sentences are long and include several phrases, they read easily and smoothly. Even young children are likely to follow the plot and be enchanted by the story. In the last sentence, Juliette MacIver makes her message clear when she says, '*But perhaps more importantly, let us recall: he was free to pay heed to that innermost call, and this made young Henry most joyful of all.*'



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Shared Learning and Discussion Points

ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

- Look at the cover. Where and when might this story take place? How can you tell? What sort of person is Henry Bob Bobbalich likely to be? Why do you think this?
- Look at the endpapers? What does Henry Bob look like he is doing? (Endpapers)
- What is Henry Bob good at? How do we know he is good at it? Does he enjoy it? What, then, is a 'vocational call'? (pp.6-7)
- How many rhyming words can you find on these pages? What letters do all these words end in? (pp.6-7)
- What sorts of things does Henry Bob climb? What happens to his boot? (pp.8-9)
- Look at the rhyming words on these pages? Are they all spelt the same? What different spellings can you find for the same sound? (pp.8-9)
- What happened to Henry Bob's boot? (pp.10-11)
- What did Henry Bob's teacher say? Why do you think his parents agreed with the teacher? How do you think Henry Bob will feel about this new rule? (pp.10-11)
- Were you right? How did Henry Bob react at first? Would you have felt the same way? What happened when his anger ran out? (pp.12-13)
- What has happened to Henry Bob? Why is he so ill? Why can't anyone help him? Can you think of anything that might help? (pp.14-15)
- Look at Henry Bob's hair. How has it changed? Why do you think the illustrator made this change? (pp.14-15)
- What is the difference between reading psalms and reading palms? Why do you think Henry Bob's parents wanted these things to happen? (p.15)
- What is 'sickness of heart'? Why is Henry Bob's heart sick? Where might Henry Bob's father be taking him? (pp.16-17)
- How does the illustrator show us what Henry Bob's father is talking about? What does Henry Bob's father think will help him? What does Henry Bob want? (pp.16-17)
- Do the amazing sights that Henry Bob sees help him feel better? (p.20)
- What does Henry Bob see on the cliff? What is the problem? (p.21)
- What do you think will happen? (pp.22-23)
- Were you right? Why do you think these words are in capital letters? (pp.24-25)
- Why do you think the mother cried? (p.26)
- Do you think Henry Bob was a hero? (p.27)
- Where is Nepal? What do you think the author means by 'the world's most difficult wall'? (pp.28-29)

- What was it that made Henry Bob most joyful of all? What is 'that innermost call'? (pp.28-29)
- Is there anything you have an innermost call to do? What is it? (pp.28-29)
- Do you think Henry Bob will be well now? What has cured him? (pp.28-29)
- What is Henry Bob doing on these endpapers? (Endpapers)

Activities

ACTIVITY 1: TIME FOR RHYME

Before reading *Henry Bob Bobbalich* to the students for the second time, prepare cards with rhyming words from the ends of sentences. Choose simpler or harder words depending on the ages and abilities of your students. Divide the students into groups, and provide them with all or some of the cards to sort into groups of rhyming words. Encourage the students to discuss the meanings of unknown words, such as 'plight' or 'ravine'. Read the book to the students a second time. Allow them to make corrections to their card groupings as they listen to the story.

After reading the book again, discuss the rhyming words with the students. Make sure they have got all the words in the correct groupings. Ensure also that your students are aware of different ways of writing the same sound. Discuss examples appropriate to their level.

You could then create class lists to display on the wall, or students could create their own Rhyming Word notebooks, which they could add to as they think of examples or come across them during the year. The words could also be used for spelling lists.

ACTIVITY 2: REACH FOR THE STARS – IN A STORY

Discuss with your students how Henry Bob was good at climbing and had a passion for doing it. Talk about how both talent and passion are needed for success. Encourage the students to talk about famous people they know who have clearly displayed both these attributes. Then help them each choose an area in which they would like to succeed, such as football, dance, music, writing or acting.

Now talk about how the plot of *Henry Bob Bobbalich* depends on his being denied the right to follow his dream. Help your students to plan a story in which the main character has a different talent but is also denied the chance to practise it. Help them plan an introduction, and then a story arc in which the problem gets steadily worse, until is resolved at the end.

As each child completes a satisfactory plan, allow him or her to begin writing the story itself. Work with those children who find the task difficult. At the end, allow the students to share their stories with the class. Then compile the stories into a book for students to read in spare moments.



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ACTIVITY 3: FRAME IT

After reading *Henry Bob Bobbalich* tell your students that this a new book, only recently published. Ask them about the things that make it seem new and the things that make it seem old. Create a class chart. For example:

| NEW | OLD |
|-------------------------------|--|
| a paperback | curly shapes and ornate frames |
| printed in modern way | old-fashioned clothes; horse and cart |
| page with publisher's details | old-fashioned words: <i>upon</i> , <i>pay heed</i> , <i>school fellows</i> |

Show the students examples from the Internet of ornate medieval and Renaissance books so that they can see where the inspiration for ornate shapes might have come from.

Display some sample ornate frames (such as those found at www.colourbox.com/vector/vintage-photo-frames-set-doodle-style-ornamental-and-cute-photo-colored-frames-for-decoration-and-design-vector-6413167). Then model for your students ways in which they can use the frames to illustrate the stories they wrote above. They could, for example, draw a picture within the frame and write a sentence or two below it, or they could write some sentences from their story within the frame. Point out how both these things have been done in *Henry Bob Bobbalich*. Also, show them how some illustrations extend out of the frame (e.g. on page 17). Allow the students to use the frames in creative and imaginative ways, working first in pencil and then in colour.

Written by Mary Atkinson