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[Experience](#), [Human Nature](#)



Where The Wild Things Are As humans we instinctively feel the need and desire to belong. When we truly belong to something we achieve a sense of acceptance, love and togetherness. 'Where The Wild Things Are' by Maurice Sendak is a children's book that explores the concepts of belonging and in contrast, not belonging. It is a very simple story accompanied by large, rich pictures. The text and pictures complement each other, each enriching the sense of alienation for the responder. Max is a mischievous young boy who displays aspects of childhood irritation and loneliness. He lives in a world with limited freedom as he is a child.

It becomes clear to the responder through the positioning of the character on the page, the vector of the boy's angry gaze as well as the neutral, bland colours used that Max feels like he doesn't belong in the world he calls home. The pictures at the beginning of the story are quite unengaging compared to the bright, richly textured pages that follow. This sense of not belonging leads to Max fantasising and creating a whole new world within his imagination. In this world Max is king, there is no one to tell him what to do and how he must act. In this place Max is completely accepted and the most important part of the wild things world.

Max wears a wolf suit during the story, it shows the responder that Max is disguising who he really is and that the suit enables him to escape from reality. Whilst Max is wearing this suit he becomes a wild thing and he thinks that his behaviour is acceptable. Max is pushing his family away, but he is also wishing to obtain a sense of belonging, love and acceptance. He finds this sense of belonging with his new wild friends. Throughout the text, the

composer portrays a range of emotions felt by Max. He finally gets what he wants, a place of unlimited freedom and acceptance, but still is not happy.

He needs to be “ where someone loves him best of all”. So he returns to the comfort and familiarity of his bedroom, where his mum had left his supper, still warm. Framing is an important visual element of ‘ Where The Wild Things Are’ as Max’s imagination grows, the illustrations get larger until they fill the whole page. Early in the book, before Max’s imagination takes him to the land of the wild things, we see a hand drawn picture of a wild thing hanging on his wall. He has thought about the wild things before and has been forming a plan in his mind.

Max has often felt like he doesn’t belong and has imagined belonging somewhere else, in an imaginary world where he makes all the rules and is king. The text regularly refers to Max as ‘ king’, but he doesn’t appear to be enjoying his job much. He looks sad, bored and lonely and begins to long for his home, which is a place where he does belong. ‘ Where The Wild Things Are’ links quite closely to the set text ‘ Romulus, My Father’. Both texts contain an informative tone and both contain the central theme of belonging. Both texts use imagery to represent the sense of not belonging, which then leads to belonging.

In ‘ Where The Wild Things Are’ the lack of belonging is shown through Max’s escape from reality, but then the sense of belonging is shown through Max’s desire to return home, to which he realises is where he belongs. This links to the set text ‘ Romulus, My Father’ where the lack of belonging is shown through Romulus’s inability to reduce the cultural barrier between him and the rest of the community, but then the sense of belonging is shown when

the community look at how hard Romulus works and therefore appreciate him, in which he belongs. By Pat Dwyer