

Bedtime for Monsters, written and illustrated by Ed Vere (Puffin)

Do you ever wonder if somewhere, not too far away, there might be MONSTERS? This charming and funny book takes children on a journey to find out what monsters are really like. This clever tale explores different layers of meaning, with one story being conveyed through the text and another through the illustrations, with a touching ending that should allay fears of the monster under the bed.

Overall aims of this teaching sequence

- To think and talk confidently about their response to the book, using prediction, asking questions, making connections with their own experience
- To encourage collaborative narrative play
- To develop sustained story making and storytelling
- To enjoy listening to and using spoken and written language in play and learning
- To use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences
- To think about the story meanings conveyed in the illustrations
- To explore the story through play, role-play and storytelling
- To write for meaning and purpose in a variety of narrative and non-narrative forms

This teaching sequence is designed for a Nursery or Reception class.

Overview of this teaching sequence.

This teaching sequence is approximately 2-3 weeks long if spread out over a series of sessions. The book demands to be read together with young children as much as read aloud to children as it is designed to encourage conversation, visual literacy and imaginative play; it shows how a story can be told in more than one way.

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2012:

Prime Area: Communication and Language

Listening and attention:

- Listen attentively in a range of situations;
- Listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions;
- Give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged

Specific Area: Literacy

Reading:

- Read and understand simple sentences;
- Use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately;
- Read some common irregular words;
- Demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.

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in another activity.

Understanding:

- Follow instructions involving several ideas or actions;
- Answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events;

Speaking:

- Express themselves effectively, showing awareness of
- listeners' needs;
- Use past, present and future forms accurately when
- talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future;
- Develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

Writing:

- Use phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds;
- Write some irregular common words.
- Write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others.
- Spell some words correctly and make phonetically plausible attempts at others.

Cross Curricular Links:

Understanding the World:

- Look at homes and habitats – why do different animals and creatures live where they do?
- Investigate more maps, tube, bus, local area. Look at signs and symbols that give instructions or directions for a journey. Make own signs and draw own maps on a small and large scale (chalk on the playground, large rolls of paper, smaller individual maps).
- Use roamers, bee-bots or remote controlled toys to follow routes and map journeys.

Expressive Arts and Design:

- Use a variety of media and techniques to represent and make own monsters.
- Make monster masks to re-enact the story
- Create a monster den / cave in the role play area.
- Make monster foot prints from potatoes / use vehicles / animals in paint to make tracks and compare them.

Physical Development:

- Use large and small equipment to explore journeys and travelling. Look at prepositions like, over, under, across, above, below, around and work out ways of travelling on equipment or around a space.

- Use bikes to go on a journey, like the monster, describing where you have been and what you saw.

Ideas for Continuous Provision:

Mark making/ writing:

Encourage children to make:

- A Factsheet about their monster – What he looks like, where he lives, what he does
- Letters- to invite the monster to visit school, home, monster party
- Maps of the story setting to help people to find the monster’s cave
- A menu of the monster’s favourite things to eat

Role Play:

- Create a monster den; what will you need in there?

Small world play:

- Encourage children to explore transport and journeys in small world play. Have access to train tracks, vehicles, boats in the water areas, with passengers to travel and places for monsters to visit.

Teaching Approaches

Reading aloud and rereading
 Responding to illustration
 Book talk
 Role Play and Drama
 Visualising

Writing Outcomes

Shared Journal
 Speech/Thought Bubbles
 Song writing
 Caption Writing
 Own and Class Books

Teaching Sessions

Before beginning this book

- Make some ‘Monster Footprints’ to leave out in the classroom on the morning that the book study will begin.
- Plan a trip to a wood, park or other setting that will allow children to explore some of the settings in the book first hand like the ‘dark and terrible forest’, the ‘gloopy, schloopy swamp’ and the ‘thorns and thistles’.
- Make a display of books in the classroom that include other monster stories such as Leonardo, the Terrible Monster by Mo Willems, Not Now Bernard by David McKee, Two Monsters by David McKee, A Monster Day at Work by Sarah Dyer, Creepy Monsters, Sleepy Monsters by Jane Yolen and Kelly Murphy.
- Prepare a class reading journal by sewing or stapling together sugar paper to collect children’s responses or examples of their work throughout the unit.

Introducing the book:

- Have the children walk in to find the footprints. Who do we think they belong to? Scribe children's ideas in speech bubbles as a record of the talk. Without sharing the front cover of the book, look at the footprints and text on the first pages of the book and read aloud. Allow children time to look and respond to the question asked in the text: Do you wonder if somewhere, not too far away, there *might* be MONSTERS? Scribe ideas in the shared journal around a copy of the picture of the monsters.
- Look at the illustration of the monsters. Are they all the same or are they different? Talk about the different monsters in the picture making notes of good examples of descriptive vocabulary.
- In continuous provision, provide opportunities for children to either make a monster puppet using illustration and lolly sticks or to make a salt dough monster using powder paint coloured salt dough and a variety of embellishments (googly eyes, coloured matchsticks, pipe cleaners, feathers, sequins.) Or egg carton monster puppets: <http://www.redtedart.com/2012/05/02/egg-carton-finger-puppets/> When they are finished ask them to introduce their monster to a friend. What is he like? What does he like to do or eat? Does he make a noise?
- Using digital cameras each child should take a photograph of their own monster and talk about the monster they have created, ideas can be written or scribed on caption strips.

Exploring Character:

- Look at the illustrations of the outside and inside monster's home. Look for clues that can answer questions about his character, e.g.: Where does he live? What does he do? What is he like?
- Make a home for your own monster using a shoebox. Allow time for the children to explore, play and storymake with their monster in his home. Speech bubble templates could be used to record children's talk or for children to create speech and write for their monster.

Reading aloud and book talk:

- Read up to the page where 'He's coming to find you RIGHT NOW!' Do the children think that the monster really wants to eat you up?
- Record the children's talk and ideas in a class reading journal or a SMART Notebook file by scribing around the picture.
- Encourage the children to explore and play with their monsters, finding out what they could do with them. They could respond in illustrations showing what they would like to do with their monster friend. Allow lots of opportunities for drawing and mark making on a large scale. Rolls of paper indoors or out give good scope for shared illustration on a large scale or children could respond by painting or smaller scale illustration using a variety of media or a graphics program on the computer or IWB. These could be put together with children's speech into a shared 'Our Monster Adventures' book.

Reading aloud and exploring setting

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- Read to 'You're not scared are you?' Discuss this question and talk about the different responses. Texts should be a secure world to explore and talk about fears in a non-threatening way.
- What could we do if we're scared of the monster? Investigate ways of keeping him out e.g. making a keep out sign, labelling bottles of monster spray, emergency plans or designing, constructing and labelling a monster trap.
- Encourage the children to think about the monsters they have created and that have come to be their friends. What different adventures have they been on?
- Re-enact the monster's journey through play. Sensory experiences can be provided in small world play to explore the settings of the wood, swamp, thorns and thistles and mountains. And if possible, take a trip to a local park or wood to discover first-hand the outdoor elements of the setting.
- Allow children to explore experiment and mark make with wellies in mud or with sticks in mud.

Empathising with a character:

- Finish reading the text. Was the end as they expected it to be or was it a surprise?
- Discuss with the children: how do we think the monster feels when he finds out that people thought he would eat them? What is the monster really like?
- Have some speech or thought bubbles around to scribe children's responses.
- Discuss if there have been times that people have thought something about them that isn't really true. How did it make them feel?

Re-Reading and Responding, Shared writing of a monster poem

- Focus on the illustrations of the monster throughout the story, without the text. Collect children's words to describe the monster, encouraging them to look closely at what they can see in the pictures. What does he look like? What does he do?
- Scribe their words and record on caption strips.
- Arrange the children's words to form and write a group poem about the monster e.g

Two horned,

Trumpet eared,

Cave liver,

Bike rider,

Swamp stomping,

Mountain climbing,

Stair creaking

Child kisser!

- Children can then go on to record or scribe a similarly structured poem about the monster they have created.

Re- Reading and book talk

- Talk with children about what they like or don't like about the story, about any questions that they have or anything that the story makes them think about.
- Ask them to say which part of the book stays in their minds most vividly.
- What will they tell their friends about this book?

Re-enactment through play: Story Mapping

- Create a shared story map to recall the monster's journey. Where did he have to go to get from his cave to the house? Focus on children recalling and using descriptive language from the text to describe the different settings in the journey and how he travelled.
- Children can then take their salt dough, crafted or puppet monsters on an adventure from their box home and around the setting, taking photographs or making their own story map of where their monster has been. This could also be done at a place of interest outside the setting to vary the places the monster travels to on his journey.

Shared Writing

- Put some of the photographs or illustrations of the monster journeys on the IWB. Choose one to focus on. Can the children see where the monster was or what he was doing? Discuss and explain that that you want to write some captions for the photographs so that you can put them up on display in the classroom. Explain that a caption describes what is happening in the picture so that people looking at it will understand what is going on. Write a caption together to describe the photograph. Show another photo and ask the children to work in pairs to write their own caption on a whiteboard. Share ideas together.
- Children can then in a guided/group writing activity write a caption to fit their own photograph. For less experienced writers you could scribe their ideas and use talking tins or include a talking photo album to record their voices.

Storytelling and ICT

- Make a book about the children's monsters, photos could be imported into MovieMaker and children could narrate their monster story, or photos or drawings could be made into a class book with children writing their own captions. More experienced writers can go on to draw and write

their own monster journey stories using small home-made books.

Other ideas and Activities:

Phonological Awareness:

1) Word collection

- Ask the children to listen carefully and talk about some of the words in the text:
Gloopy/schloopy

Scritch/scratch

Squished/squashed

Thorns/thistles

- Can they hear the rhyme / alliteration? Have a bag of objects and ask the children to pass the bag around and look inside. Can the children name the objects in the bag? (Include object pairs that rhyme or that have the same sound at the beginning (spoon/moon, goat/coat, stick/stone)
- Invite children to think of any other words that rhyme or begin with the same sound. Do any of the children's names have this sound in them? Make a word collection on a large piece of paper for the children to add to independently if they find or can think of any more rhyming or alliterative words.

2) Voice Sounds:

Investigate different words that describe the sounds that the monster and his bike make, e.g. ring-a-ding-ding, bump-bumpity-bump, gloop gloop schloop, scritch scratch ouch, creak creakity creak, kissy kissy kissy. Look at how these words are formed and how children can use them in their play and song making.

Family Learning

Weekend adventures:

- Send a toy monster home to spend the weekend with a child from the class. Make a special monster shaped book to accompany it and encourage children to record the adventures they have together in any way they like, using a combination of photographs, drawings, writing or annotation.
- Encourage parents to also join in, perhaps adding comment or scribing the story for their child. On the monster's return to school, children should share the weekend's events with the class, using the book to help them talk about what they did together.