

The Monster

Yrs 1/2

Theme: Stories – exploration of plot / settings / characters.
Plants / medicines.

Context: The story of a monster in need.

Overview of learning:

- Understanding how stories can help us learn about human behaviour.
- Learning about common themes, characters and settings in traditional stories.
- Developing an understanding of prejudice and acceptance.
- Developing compassion for others.
- Understanding that plants / medicines can help people.
- Learning about bravery / courage.
- To explore how plants grow; the parts of a plant; how some plants have medicinal purposes.
- Recognise simple geographical features.

Interesting aspects:

- That characters traditionally perceived as bad can have good qualities.
- That plants can help to save people's lives.
- That people can be brave and risk their lives to help others.

Inquiry questions:

- How can stories help us to understand why and how people behave?
- Why are people suspicious / intolerant of others?
- Why is it important to help people in need?
- How can medicine help to save lives?
- What makes people capable of acts of bravery?

Narrative:

In a village near a mountain and a lake live a group of people. At the bottom of the lake grows a rare plant that the villagers harvest each month. The plant can cure a range of illnesses. The villagers have heard that a monster has recently moved into a cave at the top of the mountain. They have heard rumours that he has done terrible things in neighbouring valleys. They go to the cave and find the monster nursing a sick baby. He tells them he needs the plant from the lake to cure the baby. The villagers send their team of divers down to the lake to harvest the plant to help the monster baby.

Expert Team: the team of divers / the team of medicine makers.

Client: the monster.

Commission: to dive down to the bottom of the lake and harvest the plant; to make the plant into medicine and give the medicine to the sick baby.

Tasks:

1. Discuss geographical features from a picture / map.
2. Talk to the monster to find out what is wrong.
3. Draw the plant and discuss how it is used to make people better.
4. Draw the equipment used to harvest the plant from the lake.
5. Enact the dive to harvest the plant.
6. Give the medicine to the monster's baby.
7. Observe the recovery of the baby.
8. Discuss the achievements of the diving team.

Links to curriculum:

English: folk stories – plot / setting / characters.

Science: identify that most living things live in habitats to which they are suited and describe how different habitats provide for the basic needs of plants; describe and name the parts of a plant.

Geography: use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to key physical features, including: mountain, lake, valley and key human features, including: village, house, office; use pictures and maps to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features.

PSHE: to think about themselves, to learn from their experiences, to recognise and celebrate their strengths; that household products, including medicines, can be harmful if not used properly; rules for and ways of keeping physically safe including safety in the environment (water safety); to recognise that they share a responsibility for keeping themselves and others safe.

Steps:

1. Teacher begins to draw a picture, narrating as she draws. It shows a mountain, at the bottom of which there is a lake and a village. 'Near the top of the mountain is a deep cave. Recently a monster has moved into the cave. The people of the village are terrified of the monster – they have heard stories of it doing terrible things in villages on the other side of the mountain.
2. The people in the village use a special water plant that grows deep down at the bottom of the lake. From the plant they extract a medicine that can cure almost anything. Every month a team of divers dives down into the lake to harvest the plant – it is a very dangerous job.

Draw the plant. Place all the pictures in the middle of the circle.

Talk about the details of the plant, bringing together ideas from all the assembled pictures. (So the co-created plant is established through language).

Children to choose one of the following to briefly draw / write about:

Which part of the plant is used for the medicine?

How is the plant made into the medicine:

Where and how is the medicine kept?

Who takes charge of the medicine in the village?

Come back together to share ideas.

CIR as villagers take it in turns to tell anecdotes of how the plant has helped them / their families. 'My daughter had a fever and two drops of the plant medicine made her sleep peacefully and recover.'

3. The monster has been seen coming down the mountain towards the lake and the village. We have heard stories from villages on the other side of the mountain about some of the things the monster does. Share some of the rumours: 'they say that he'.

Every time the monster approaches the village we do our best to frighten him away. Create a group of villagers. TIR as monster. Group of CIR as villagers – create their stance as they see the monster. AIR as monster looks scared / sad, turns and walks slowly back up the mountain.

The villagers have decided to send a group of people up to his cave – TIR as village leader, ask for some volunteers. They cautiously enter

the cave. Without being seen they observe TIR as monster at the far end of the cave – he slowly goes to pick up baby – rocks baby in arms, looking concerned. Freeze figure. What do we think is happening? Shall we ask the monster? We must not startle him? Reassure him that we have not come to hurt him or his baby. Monster tells villagers his baby is very sick. He has heard about an amazing plant that lies at the bottom of the lake. He has tried to come down to ask the villagers for help but they scare him away every time. He cannot swim to get it himself. He is desperate.

4. Back at the village the village elders call a meeting to decide what to do. Organise the villagers in for and against groups to debate whether to help the monster or not. There is very little medicine left in the village and that might be needed for emergencies. We would need to send the divers down to get some more of the plant to help the monster.

Villagers are now asked to cast their votes – hands up / stand up if you want to help the monster – would be more effective if each village stands or stays seated in turn to build up dramatic tension. One of the elders (TIR) counts the votes. If the votes are for **not** helping him the drama will need to be paused while the teacher decides where to go next! If they (hopefully) agree to help, briefly discuss how the plant can quickly be harvested from the lake. If they have voted not to help him the children could be asked to draw 3 consequences which could be discussed and then asked if they would like to turn back the clock and see what would happen if they had voted otherwise?

5. The special team of divers is summoned. They will have to get ready their specialist equipment for the dive. It will be a dangerous one – the rains have made the lake very full and there is a storm forecast.

Begin to make a list (teacher scribing) children to then draw the equipment that the divers will be taking.

Set up the scene at the edge of the lake. Teacher narrates: the waters are rough – the divers will need to move slowly and carefully amongst the jagged rocks at the bottom where the plant grows.

Small group of CIR as divers (inc camera holder) – co-construct position at bottom of lake. Villagers await on the shore – members of their family might be down there – thoughts behind. TIR begins to send down radio messages – she has video footage sent up from underwater camera. (CIR can be passed the camera to add to instructions.) Pause action as the divers reach the surface with the plant.

6. A group of villagers is chosen go up the mountain to give the monster the medicine – who would be included in the group – we must not overwhelm him. Which person do we choose to present the medicine to the monster. After the handing over of the medicine the villagers stand back and watch as the monster gives his baby the medicine. What are we noticing about the baby?

Children behind the monster thank the diver / villagersThe village elders have decided to award the diving team with a special medal and certificate for their bravery. Make the medals and certificates. This might include a posthumus award.

7. TIR as village elder questions the divers (using 5 levels of social meaning – see below). Co-construct the positions of the elder and the divers .Children to take it in turns to stand behind a diver to give his answers

ACTION –can you share with everyone the brave act for which you were awarded these medals?

MOTIVATION: why did you dive down to get the plant ?

INVESTMENT: what have you had to learn to become such a brave diver?

MODELS: You have done this dangerous dive many times. Who taught you to be brave enough to do this month after month?

VALUES: why is it important to you to be this brave?

Alternatively, get all CIR as diving team to talk about what they were proud of during this mission.

Ideas for future activities:

Draw a story map.

Write instructions / safety rules for the divers.

Records of village illnesses / recoveries.

Design packaging / labels for the medicines.

Write a newspaper headline / report of the dive.

Draw 'photographs' of moments from the dive / the giving of the medicine.

Draw the monster. Write a description of his cave.

How did the monster repay the villagers? Still images / pictures of things he did to help the village.

Which part of the plant is used for the medicine?

How is the plant made into the medicine?

Where and how is the medicine kept?

Who takes charge of the medicine in the village?