Cool Drool

Author: Maureen Haselhurst
Illustrator: Dan Bramall
Teaching Notes author: Clare Robertson

Synopsis

Baz discovers a skull in eccentric Aunt Enna’s garden and finds that it’s home to Sumo, a slug with attitude and a talent for graffiti. Baz adopts Sumo as a pet but a dodgy museum curator called Professor Fogeldurge takes the skull, intending to fool the public with a fake and sell the original for a fortune. Baz and Sumo have one night to foil the Professor’s plan.

Group or guided reading

Introducing the book

- **(Questioning, Predicting)** Look together at the front cover and read the title. Ask the children what they think this book might be about.
- **(Questioning, Predicting)** Flick through the book and look together at the chapter titles. Do they give any clues about the story? Which titles sound the most interesting, or the funniest?
- **(Questioning, Clarifying)** Point out the footnote on page 11 and invite the children to have a quick look through the book to find more. Explain that the footnotes will help to clarify some unusual words and phrases, including Geordie (Northumbrian) dialect.

Strategy check

- Look together at the word ‘petrifying’ on page 4. The children may know its modern meaning, ‘terrifying’. Encourage them to look the word up in the dictionary to find the literal meaning of ‘petrify’ (‘turn to stone’).
- Remind the children to use the context to work out the meaning of words such as ‘gibbet’ (page 7) and ‘skirl’ (page 20).
- Help to clarify pronunciation where this may be unclear, for example ‘manoeuvre’ (page 58) and ‘pharaohs’ (page 71).

During reading

- **(Questioning)** As they read the story, ask the children to think about the descriptive words and phrases they enjoy the most, and why they enjoy them.
- As the children read independently, listen to them in turn and prompt as necessary, helping with pronunciation. Encourage them to use different strategies to decode unfamiliar words.

Independent reading

**Objective:** Discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language.

- **(Questioning, Clarifying)** As they read the rest of the story, ask the children to note examples of language that they find effective. This may be because of the ‘gross-out’ factor, or because it is funny, or both.
Ask the children to look out for similes and metaphors in particular. Page 13 may be useful to compare the two as it contains a metaphor (‘he ballooned’) and several similes (‘like a cavernous keyhole’, ‘stiletto-style teeth’) in one paragraph.

After reading, invite the children to share their notes and reactions with the class. Remind them to give reasons for their choices.

Assessment:
- Can the children identify examples of effective language, including figurative language?
- Can they describe their own responses and give reasons for them?

Returning and responding to the text

Objective: Infer characters’ feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions.

(Questioning, Clarifying, Imagining)

- Discuss how authors often give clues about how characters feel from their actions (‘showing’) rather than direct description (‘telling’).
- Read page 10 together. Invite the children to find an example of an action revealing Baz’s feelings or thoughts, for example his voice squeaking or the phrase ‘Baz swallowed very, very hard’.
- Ask the children to read the first half of page 28. What thought prompts Baz to jump up as he does, and decide to rescue Sumo?
- Ask the children what they think Baz’s actions here tell us about how his feelings towards Sumo have changed since their first meeting.

Assessment:
- Can the children identify an example of an action revealing how a character feels?
- Can they infer and describe how the character feels from the action?

Speaking and listening

Objective: Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions.

- Arrange the children into pairs and ask them: Would Sumo be fun or annoying to have as a pet?
- Ask each pair to decide who is on which side of the debate, and invite them to look through the book to find evidence to support their point of view.
- Ask the children to discuss the question in their pairs, challenging views politely and backing up their opinions with evidence.
- Invite pairs to debate the question in front of the class.

Assessment:
- Do the children argue their viewpoint clearly, using evidence to support their views?

Writing activities

Objective: Select appropriate grammar and vocabulary, understanding how such choices can change and enhance meaning.

- Ask the children, working in pairs, to read pages 20–21.
- Point out how the author enhances the dialogue with her choices of grammar and vocabulary, in particular the variety of interesting verbs on page 20 and adverbs on page 21.
Ask the children to write a short dialogue between Baz and Sumo on any subject, choosing some imaginative verbs and adverbs to bring their conversation to life.

Invite pairs to read or perform their work for the class.

Assessment:
- Can the children select verbs and adverbs that add interest to their dialogue?

Cross-curricular links
Science
- Use the Internet to find out some interesting facts about slugs.
Cool Drool (Oxford Level 18) curriculum coverage chart

**Links to Oxford Reading Criterion Scale:**
- Can refer back to the text to support predictions, thoughts and opinions, being able to elaborate in order to provide reasoned justifications. (R/D) [ORCS Standard 7, 4]
- Can explain a character’s motives throughout a text and use evidence from the text to back up opinions. (D) [ORCS Standard 7, 11]
- Can confidently infer and deduce meaning based on evidence drawn from different points in the text and wider experiences. (D) [ORCS Standard 7, 12]
- Can comment on the success of a text providing evidence that refers to language, theme and style. (E) [ORCS Standard 7, 15]
- Can explain how the author has used different language features (e.g. figurative language, vocabulary choice, use of specific grammatical convention) and the effect of these on the reader. (E) [ORCS Standard 7, 21]

**Comprehension strategies**
- Comprehension strategies are taught throughout the Teaching Notes to enable pupils to understand what they read, in books they can read independently. In these Teaching Notes the following strategies are taught: Predicting, Questioning, Clarifying, Imagining

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**ENGLAND** The National Curriculum in England: Years 5–6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spoken language</th>
<th>Pupils should be taught to articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions (SpokLang.4)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading: Comprehension</td>
<td>Pupils should be taught to understand what they read by drawing inferences such as inferring characters’ feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence (Y5/6 ReadComp.2iii) Pupils should be taught to discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader (Y5/6 ReadComp.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing: Composition</td>
<td>Pupils should be taught to draft and write by selecting appropriate grammar and vocabulary, understanding how such choices can change and enhance meaning (Y5/6 WritComp.2i)</td>
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**SCOTLAND** Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy and English experiences and outcomes – Second level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening and talking</th>
<th>When I engage with others, I can respond in ways appropriate to my role, show that I value others’ contributions and use these to build on thinking (LIT 2-02a)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>To show my understanding, I can respond to literal, inferential and evaluative questions and other close reading tasks and can create different kinds of questions of my own (ENG 2-17a) I can discuss the writer’s style and other features appropriate to genre (ENG 2-19a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>By considering the type of text I am creating, I can select ideas and relevant information, organise these in an appropriate way for my purpose and use suitable vocabulary for my audience (LIT 2-26a)</td>
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**WALES** Programme of Study for English: Year 6

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Oracy</th>
<th>Learners are able to explore challenging or contentious issues through sustained role play (Y6_OracSpea.5)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Learners are able to infer ideas which are not explicitly stated, e.g. writers’ viewpoints or attitudes (Y6_ReadComp.3) Learners are able to identify ideas and information that interest them to develop further understanding (Y6_ReadComp.3) Learners are able to consider whether a text is effective in conveying information and ideas (Y6_ReadResp.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Learners are able to use varied and appropriate vocabulary, including subject-specific words and phrases (Y6_WritLang.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Talking and listening
- Pupils can make relevant contributions in different roles (L5_com_talk.1ii)
- Pupils can discuss their own and others’ ideas (L5_com_talk.2i)
- Pupils can justify ideas and opinions (L5_com_talk.3i)

### Reading
- Pupils can understand some implicit meanings and attitudes (L5_com_read.3ii)
- Pupils can make reference to text to support opinions and draw conclusions (L5_com_read.4)
- Pupils can describe language, structure and presentation (L5_com_read.3i)

### Writing
- Pupils can use precise vocabulary to convey thoughts, ideas, relevant information (L5_com_writ.2i)
- Pupils can match writing to purpose and audience (L5_com_writ.3i)
- Pupils can create sentence structures which help to convey meaning (L5_com_writ.4i)