

MONSTROUS notions

Allowing children to indulge their natural relish for the gloriously grim can lead to enhanced creativity across the curriculum, says Pie Corbett...

When Count Gracula fell in love with a Troll

When Count Gracula fell in love
nobody knew what to say.
So, he visited her each night
but he kept away in the day.

She was ugly and smelt of eggs -
but the Count was blind to her faults.
Nightly, he called to dance and smooch; they
capered and cantered the waltz.

By the light of the waning moon,
to the tune of a werewolf's song.
Gruesome, the twosome danced and pranced.
The Count was keen; before too long,

Gracula tried to plant a kiss
upon her scarred and scowling face.
But her beard got right in the way
(she had warts all over the place).

He lunged with his fangs - and he missed,
took a chunk right out of her ear.
The Count felt the kiss of her fist
and the tip of her boot up his rear!

The Monster From Outer Space

The Monster from outer space
has a monstrous appetite.
He dines whenever it pleases him -
morning, noon and night.

Cupasoup and coffee,
tortillas and toffee,
potatoes and chips,
with various dips,
chocolate and custard,
mountains of mustard,
dough balls and bacon,
milk shakes - not shaken.

Sliced up turkey, a side of ham,
barbecue meat, truncheons of spam,
grilled cheese burgers, with curry and
mash, scampi, lemon and seafood hash,
walnut wedges and onion rings,
slow cooked salmon with chicken wings,
garlic bread and salads galore,
he always seems to want much more.

Yes, the Monster from outer space
has a monstrous appetite -
he's an intergalactic dustbin,
morning, noon and night.



Show the class

Share these poems with your children as a PowerPoint on the whiteboard. Register for the free resources section of the Teach Primary website (teachprimary.com) and search for 'Monstrous notions'.

Working with the poems

'Monsters' makes a great theme for art work, dance, music, stories and of course poetry. It lends itself to looking at stories about mythological creatures as well as creating new, fantastical beasts.

Reading

All three poems featured here would lend themselves to dramatic performance,

especially as they rhyme. This might be enhanced by adding scary music as a background or by using rhythmic sound effects, such as body percussion and chime bars.

Writing

The alphabet poem could be turned into a gruesome alphabet book, complete with illustrations. Use resource books and the internet to compile a list of

monsters, then present them using a simple rhyming pattern such as the rhyming couplets that I have adopted. Perhaps this would be easiest if children work in pairs, splitting the alphabet in half. Encourage pupils to chant their couplets aloud and to listen for the rhythm.

The same tactic might be adopted to create a list of tasty snacks for a particular monster. This could be achieved by using

real foods as I have done, or by inventing all sorts of weird things. For instance, an Iron Man might eat:

*Bicycle pedals and handles
of steel,*

*Silvery mudguards and a
broken wheel,*

*Shiny bonnets and a metal door,
The roof of a lorry and an iron
floor....*

The Monsters' Alphabet

A is for alligator, loose in the sewer,
B is for boggart, clutching
a skewer,

C is for cat burglar, chasing a cat,
D is for Dragon, now how
about that,

E is for elf, stealing the hour,
F is for fairies, hidden in flowers,

G is for ghost, almost unseen,
H is for Hag, queen of the scene,

I is for ice bear, roaring aloud,
J is for jealousy, spoiling
the crowd,

K is for King Kong, climbing
a tower,
L is for long-lost souls, draining
your power,

M is for minotaur, prowling
the maze,
N is for nuisance, lost in a haze,

O is for Ogre, up with the lark,
P is for prince, lost to the dark,

Q is for queen, holding a comb,
R is for robber, inside your home,

S is for sprite, alone in the night,
T is for troll, afraid of the light,

U is for unicorn, prowling the city,
V is for vampire, without
any pity,

W is for werewolf, all hair
and teeth,
X is for X-ray, unveiling the grief,

Y is for yeti, deep in the snow,
Z is for zealous, the deadliest foe.

Further Ideas

- Draw and label an invented monster; then write a non-chronological report about it for the 'Guide to Rare Monsters of the British Isles'.
- Write a set of instructions on 'how to tame a monster'.
- Create a persuasive leaflet about 'caring for your pet monster' that could be given out in the local 'Monster Pet Shop' to those buying a new monstrous pet.
- Find out all the facts about a legendary creature such as the Loch Ness Monster. Hold a class debate: 'does 'Nessy' exist?'



(Poems © Pie Corbett 2011).

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