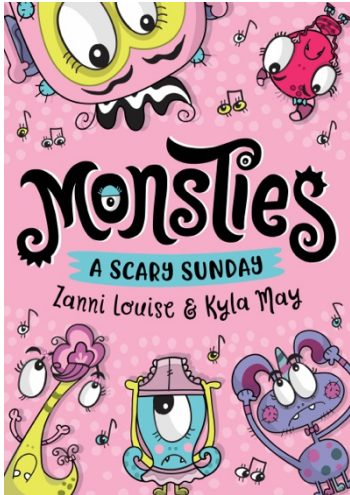


Teacher's Notes



The Monsties: A Scary Sunday

Written by Zanni Louise

Illustrated by Kyla May

Teacher's Notes by Bec Kavanagh

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

RECOMMENDED FOR

primary-aged readers (ages 6+, grades 2–3)

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- Learning areas: English
- General capabilities:
 - AC9E2LA09
 - AC9E3LA10
 - AC9E2LA02
 - AC9E3LA03

THEMES

- Bravery
- Creativity
- Friendship
- Courage
- Noise
- Stories
- Fear

SYNOPSIS

Sunday is usually the scariest day in Scaryland, but for the Monsties it's the day where they do all of their favourite activities! For Orla this means writing her weekly bedtime story, and she's promised that this one will be her best one yet – with no ghosts!

But writing a story is easier said than done, especially when all the other Monsties are making so much noise that Orla can't think of anything. The only thing left for her to do is venture up to the attic. But the attic is scary, and probably full of the one thing Orla has promised NOT to write about! Orla needs to find a way to be brave, so she asks the other Monsties to help. When she's finally ready to venture up to the attic, is she brave enough to face what she finds there?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR

Zanni Louise has been writing stories since she was little, growing up in country NSW. She now lives with her family of four in the Byron Bay hinterland. Author of over thirty kids' books, Zanni writes picture books, chapter books and books for 10–12 year-olds, which are sold in 20 foreign territories. She's been twice listed in the CBCA Notables, and her picture book *Archie and the Bear* was selected for the highly prestigious international children's catalogue: The White Ravens.

Kyla May is an Australian illustrator, writer and designer. She is the creator and illustrator of over 50 books. Some of the book series she's worked on include *Juliet*, *Nearly a Vet*, *Diary of a Pug* and *Paris Takes Over The World*. In addition to books, Kyla has created several animated TV series for children and also designed toys. Kyla lives by the beach in Victoria, Australia, with her three daughters, two dogs and two cats.

THEMES

Bravery

What does it mean to be brave? Orla is afraid to go into the attic because there might be ghosts there! Even though it turns out that the ghost is nothing to be afraid of, Orla needs to be brave to overcome her fear. Discuss the way that Orla's friends help her to overcome her fear and the objects they give her to help her feel brave.

Creativity

Creativity can be hard! Especially when there are so many distractions. Orla needs peace and quiet to be able to come up with an idea that is good *and* that all of her friends want to hear. What kind of space do you need to come up with good ideas? Discuss some of the things that can get in the way of being creative, and some of the ways you can spark creativity.

WRITING STYLE

This is a book about writing stories, and it's also a book about the things that get in the way of writing a story! All Orla wants is a bit of peace and quiet, but instead she keeps getting very noisy interruptions. Zanni Louise uses onomatopoeia – words that sound like the noise they're describing – to make the story feel noisy for the reader as well. These are words like *banging*, *thwacking* and *brrrring*. What other examples of onomatopoeia can you find in the book? What other stories use words like this?

The other technique that Zanni Louise uses is synonyms – different words that mean the same thing. In this case, she uses words that mean noise, like *racket*, to remind the reader what the main problem in the story is. What other words can you think of that mean 'noisy'?

COMPREHENSION

- What's the scariest day of the week in Scaryland? Why?



- What are some of the things the monsters do on a Sunday?
- How is this different to what the Monsties do on Sunday?
- What does Orla love to do every Sunday?
- What characters does Orla promise *not* to put in her story?
- What does Orla need to write a good story?
- What are some of the things that interrupt Orla while she's trying to write?
- What is Orla's last option for a peaceful place to write? Why doesn't she want to write there?
- How do Orla's friends help her to feel braver?
- What are Boo's 'noise-finding ingredients'? How do they help to find noise?
- What are some of the main problems in the story? How do the Monsties overcome them?
- What does the Amazing Noise-Eating Machine do?
- What is surprising about the ghost in this book?

WRITING EXERCISE

At the end of the book Orla smiles because finally 'she had peace and quiet. And a pretty good story ...'

Write the first paragraph of Orla's story. Try to write a powerful opening line that makes the reader want more.

ILLUSTRATION STYLE

The Monsties are bright and colourful, perfect for readers transitioning from picture books to chapter books as they offer some of the comfort and familiarity of picture books. Kyla May's illustrations are quite eclectic – these characters have all the elements of a monster, but don't really seem that scary. Why not?

Discuss the things that make these Monsties less alarming.

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Draw a picture of your favourite Monstie doing their favourite activity.
- Mig gives Orla a 'ghost-busting wand' to make her feel braver. Do you have a special item you use to make you feel braver? Design the perfect ghost-busting wand for Orla to use next time she has to face a ghost!
- The Monsties are made up of some pretty random parts – horns and bows, spikes and diamonds! Discuss the things that make a Monstie different from a Monster and create your own Monstie to join the team. What would their name be? What's their favourite thing to do on a Sunday?



- Sometimes, the hardest part of writing a story is coming up with a good idea. But writing a story doesn't have to feel like hard work. Letting yourself be silly, especially in the ideas stage, can help to overcome the blank page. Think of a character with a problem (it can be any kind of character, with any kind of problem! An ant with a sore tooth! A mermaid with no tail!) Now come up with twenty different solutions to the problem – they don't have to be realistic, that part comes later, just let yourself brainstorm twenty things that could happen. Somewhere in that list is your story.
- This is the second book in the Monsties series – in the first Mig can't go to sleep because she's lost her bunny. Which character do you think the next book will be about? What could happen to them? Make some predictions about book 3, and come up with a possible title for it.

RELATED READING

Monsties: The Lost Bunny

By Zanni Louise and Kyla May

Barkly Mansion and the Weirdest Guest

By Melissa Keil

Hodgepodge: How to Make a Pet Monster

By Lili Wilkinson

