

# Monsters Poetry

## The Teaching Sequence for Writing

### English KS1 Year 1



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It is very important that this unit is tailored to the needs of your class. The poem in this resource is a suggestion. You may choose to use the recommended approaches with a poem of your choice. The main focus of approaching poetry in this way is enjoyment, performance and vocabulary development.

#### Learning aims

The Teaching Sequence for Writing is still the recommended approach to the teaching of reading and writing.

Young readers encounter words that they have not seen before much more frequently than experienced readers do, and they may not know the meaning of some of these. Practice at reading such words by sounding and blending can provide opportunities not only for pupils to develop confidence in their decoding skills, but also for teachers to explain the meaning and thus develop pupils' vocabulary.

#### Curriculum objective

Non-statutory guidance.

This unit focuses on the comprehension element of reading and the performance and enjoyment aspects of poetry. It is assumed that this will be taught alongside daily phonics sessions which focus on the decoding element of reading. However, teachers should make sure that pupils can sound and blend unfamiliar printed words quickly and accurately using the phonic knowledge and skills to revise and consolidate those grapheme-phoneme correspondences learnt earlier.

Some slides contain additional teacher guidance in the 'Notes' area of the accompanying PowerPoint presentation, which will not be visible to the children. These are listed throughout the PowerPoint index on the following pages.



## PowerPoint presentation

The accompanying PowerPoint presentation has 49 slides. Slides 1 to 10 are specifically for teachers; subsequent slides are intended to be used in the classroom with the children. The slides are indexed as follows:

- Slide 1: Title slide
- Slide 2: The teaching sequence for writing
  - Phase 1a: Reading with a reader's eye.
  - Phase 1b: Reading a writer's eye.
  - Phase 2: Capturing ideas, learning the skills, practising, planning, having a go.
  - Phase 3: Teacher modelling: planning, drafting, editing, writing.
- Slide 3: Explains Phase 1a and Phase 1b: The reading phase will be revisited several times over the duration of a sequence as further texts or extracts are introduced. NB Poetry reading will focus on reading aloud, performance and enjoyment.
- Slide 4: Teacher modelling of comprehending a text:  
Phase 1a: Reading with a reader's eye: Do I like it? How does it affect me?
- Slide 5: Teacher modelling of analysing a text:  
Phase 1b: Reading with a writer's eye: Do I like it? How does it affect me?
- Slide 6: Phase 2: Capturing ideas, learning the skills, practising, having a go.
- Slide 7: Phase 3: Teacher modelling: planning, drafting, editing, writing.
- Slide 8: Sets out how the children will learn, and explains that this resource is not meant to be a prescriptive unit of work, but rather a repository of teaching opportunities.  
Guidance from the Notes:  
**The poem selected is a suggestion only. Teachers may choose to use the recommended approaches with poems of their own choice. The main focus of approaching poetry in this way is enjoyment, performance and vocabulary development.**
- Slide 9: Poetry. Explains that this unit will provide children with opportunities to listen to, read, enjoy and recite poetry.





Guidance from the Notes:

**'Marshmallows'** is available on The Literacy Shed website: [The John Lewis Christmas advertisement](#) from 2017 is also relevant and appropriate for discussion:

Provide plenty of opportunities to immerse children in poetry. Through poetry, children can feel the rhythms and flows of complicated language without the need for deep understanding. There are plenty of additional poems available for teachers to select from, but recommended are:

[Pie Corbett's Monster Poems, Teach Primary](#)

[In Every Corner by Ruth Merttens, Hamilton Trust](#)

[We're Going to Find the Monster by Malorie Blackman](#)

- Slide 10: Explains what you will be doing throughout this unit.

Guidance from the Notes:

**Children should be taught to enhance their performance through intonation, tone and volume.**

Slides 11 to 49 are aimed at the classroom, as outlined below:

- Slide 11: Title slide
- Slide 12: Sets out the reading and writing objectives.

Guidance from the Notes:

**'Through listening, children also start to learn how language sounds and to increase their vocabulary and awareness of grammatical structures. In due course, they will be able to draw on such grammar in their own writing.'** NC 2014 Non-statutory guidance.

- Slide 13: Get ready for reading, "He crawled from the lagoon...".
- Slide 14: Get ready for reading, new words.

Guidance from the Notes:

**These are words from the poem as suggestions to explore further. Teachers should select from this list, or use different words to explore prior to reading the poem. Encourage the children to participate and work out what the words mean. Notice that each word is repeated in the explanation. Repetition of the word can help children to remember. Further word work will be included at later stages in addition to at this point. The last example here is a simile. This terminology is not introduced in Year 1 but the concept of a simile being a comparison can be.**



- Slide 15: Get ready for reading – monsters, monsters, monsters! A selection of monster images.

Guidance from the Notes:

**The images on the slide are suggestions. There are hundreds of monster images available online and in books. Teachers should select appropriate images for the children they teach. Alternatively, children can create their own monsters to describe.**

**Ask the children to work in pairs to choose a monster and describe it orally. Encourage them to look carefully at the image they choose and consider what kind of monster it might be so they can describe the appearance and the character of their chosen monster. Ask children to share their descriptions with the rest of the class and record any relevant vocabulary on the working wall for future use.**

- Slide 16: Get ready for reading – which endings work?

Guidance from the Notes:

**This activity is designed to meet the objective ‘Read words containing taught GPCs and –s, -ing, -ed, and –er endings’ and uses words from the upcoming poem. However, it will also provide an opportunity to explore further and recognise that these suffixes will fit with other roots, e.g. sneak could take the suffix –ed, -er, -ing and -s. Provide pairs or small groups roots and sufficient suffixes to identify which suffixes fit which roots. This activity may be simplified if required by providing fewer roots, fewer suffixes, or simpler suffixes. It may be extended by encouraging children who are currently more competent readers to identify roots where the suffix brings about a change, e.g. try could not take the suffix –s alone. It would need to follow the guideline ‘y to i before adding the suffix’. NB Use of the terms ‘root(s) and suffix(es) is not required in Year 1. A further extension is the identification of words that can also take a different meaning such as tower, charm, alarm which can function as nouns in a different context.**

- Slide 17: Phase 1a: Reading with a reader’s eye: Do I like it? How does it affect me?

Guidance from the Notes:

**Reading aloud with expression (prosody) is central to a poetry unit and needs to be modelled by the teacher. Encourage children to share their ideas rather than trying to guess yours. This is crucial in developing a child’s sense of themselves as a reader with valid views and opinions.**

- Slide 18: Phase 1a. Reading with a reader’s eye: Do I like it? How does it affect me? Asks the children to listen to their teacher reading the poem.

Guidance from the Notes:

**The importance of talk and analysis being rooted in personal response.**



Give individuals or pairs their own copy of the text. A [‘Tell-me grid’](#) recommended by Aidan Chambers (provided on the accompanying PDF file) is one mechanism for structuring thinking.

Blend pair, small group and whole-class talk

Train pupils over time to talk in small groups; strategies for structuring talk (turn-taking in a given order, asking each other questions, etc)

The teacher spends time joining tables; over a series of lessons, can interact with and assess individuals as you might in small group reading sessions.

- Slide 19: Reading as a reader – Verse 1.

Guidance from the Notes:

**Look at the first verse of the poem with the image concealed and discuss with the children who this character might be and what stories he might be able to tell.**

**Encourage the children to ask and answer questions based on their first impressions of this character.**

**Use the question tree to model for the children how to ask and answer questions.**

- Slide 20: Reading as a reader – Verse 1. Displays the first verse.
- Slide 21: Reading as a reader – Think Aloud.

Guidance from the Notes:

**Prompts on the next slide may be printed and distributed to pairs to focus responses. All activities may be repeated with subsequent verses if teachers choose to do this.**

- Slide 22: Displays a selection of prompts to help the children discuss the poem. These are also supplied on the following pages of this PDF.

Guidance from the Notes:

**Encourage children to make a sensible prediction based on what they already know. This is a crucial skill which underpins the foundations of inference as children become more competent readers. If they can make a sensible prediction, then they have started to develop an understanding of what they read.**

- Slide 23: Displays a further selection of prompts to help children discuss the poem. Ask the children to discuss the first verse with a partner for two minutes.



Guidance from the Notes:

**Children who are able to write independently could make notes as they discuss. Alternatively, recording devices could be used then fed back to the group later.**

- Slide 24: Reading as a reader – read it like you mean it! Displays each line from the first verse twice, once for the teacher to read and once for the children to repeat.

Guidance from the Notes:

**Encourage the children to join in as you read the first verse aloud several times, one line at a time. Ensure that you read with exaggerated expression to make it clear that the children should try and emulate the way you read. A common method that is popular is to use a toy microphone to show whose turn it is to speak. If children are unfamiliar with this approach, it will probably be necessary to practise the lines several times.**

**This approach may be repeated as often as the teacher thinks is appropriate and will support the children's fluency and memory.**

- Slide 25: Reading as a reader – syllables. The words displayed are also supplied on the accompanying Word document, to make it easier to print and also to edit, according to the needs of your class.

Guidance from the Notes:

**This activity is designed to introduce and discuss key vocabulary. It also provides an opportunity to link the meanings of new words to those already known. Distribute to individuals or pairs of children 2- and 3-syllable words and ask them to practise sounding and blending the words, providing support where necessary. As you read the next verses, ask the children to stand up and repeat the word. Other children can clap the syllables as they are read.**

- Slide 26: Reading as a reader – verses 2 and 3.
- Slide 27: Reading as a reader – linking words.

Guidance from the Notes:

**Ask the children to talk in pairs to think of what each word means to them. Can they come up with alternatives? Can they come up with what the word doesn't mean? Saying what a word doesn't mean can help to clarify what it does mean. These words are suggestions only. Teachers should select words from the poem that they consider will be worth exploring with the children they teach.**



- Slide 28: Reading as a reader – Verses 4 and 5.

Guidance from the Notes:

**The joining words ‘or’ and ‘and’ are used here and in subsequent verses. This provides an opportunity for teachers to draw the children’s attention to separate sentences that make sense on their own and how the joining words link those sentences. Although poetry does not follow the same rigid structure as other text types, it is nevertheless of benefit to reinforce the concept of a single clause sentence.**

- Slide 29: A series of questions to help the children discuss the poem so far.

Guidance from the Notes:

**Why do you think the monster has changed and is now scary?**

**Elicit responses that show an understanding of the fact that the supply of marshmallows has run out so the monster is no longer friendly and playful. Ensure that children grasp that the information that ‘the bag is completely empty’ shows the reader the event that has made the monster change.**

**The monster is not so charming – what do you think that means?**

**Help children to understand the meaning of charming by relating this to other occasions where they may have encountered the word, e.g. Prince Charming and other characters in animated films.**

**1. The monster transforms into something quite alarming. How does the boy feel now? 2. How can you tell?**

**Use the illustration (or the film if being used) to elicit from the children that the monster has changed from being frisky and good-natured when he was getting marshmallows to something scary and threatening when the sweets run out.**

**I run and find a pillow, and suddenly I see.**

**What does he see? Use the next verse to explain that he is desperately trying to think of a way to protect himself when he comes up with an idea. Help children make the connection between the marshmallow sweets and the pillow: shape, consistency, etc. He has thought of something – what could it be? Allow the children a few minutes to discuss with a partner what might happen next.**

- Slide 30: Reading as a reader – Verse 6
- Slide 31: Reading as a reader – Verse 7





- Slide 32: Reading as a reader – think aloud.

Guidance from the Notes:

**This activity can be used with any verses that have been read. All activities may be repeated with subsequent verses if teachers choose to do this.**

- Slide 33: A selection of prompts to help discuss the verses read. They are also supplied on the following pages of this PDF.

Guidance from the Notes:

**Encourage children to make a sensible prediction based on what they already know. This is a crucial skill which underpins the foundations of inference as children become more competent readers. If they can make a sensible prediction, then they have started to develop an understanding of what they read.**

- Slide 34: A further selection of prompts and questions to help children discuss the verses read with a partner.

Guidance from the Notes:

**Children who are able to write independently could make notes as they discuss. Alternatively, recording devices could be used then fed back to the group later.**

- Slide 35: Phase 1a. Reading with a poet's eye: How has the poet done it? What techniques can I learn and apply?

Guidance from the Notes:

**Choose one or two objectives to be the main focus of studying the text with a poet's eye. Use the word 'poet' when speaking to the children. They need to see themselves as potential poets.**

**The wording of these response prompts is slightly different when reading as a poet.**

- Slide 36: Reading as a writer – Spot the marks.

Guidance from the Notes:

**Objective: Identify and begin to punctuate sentences using a capital letter and full stop, question mark or exclamation mark.**

**This activity provides an opportunity for children to notice where punctuation has been used to demarcate sentences, but also to explore how the choice of that punctuation can aid fluency and expression in reading. Children who are currently more competent readers could carry out this activity in small groups independently of the teacher.**



**Model the reading of relevant lines with expression and emphasise how the punctuation affects the delivery of the lines. Invite children to join in varying their expression in response to the use of question marks and exclamation marks. Discuss with the children why a question mark or an exclamation mark has been used. This can be extended by including sentences with full stops and the matching part of the punctuation fan.**

- Slide 37: Reading as a writer – Can you identify which punctuation?

Guidance from the Notes:

**Provide each child or pair of children with a punctuation fan containing a question mark and an exclamation mark. Distribute some of the lines on card for pairs to read together, responding to the punctuation appropriately. Invite pairs to perform their line, and ask the rest of the children to hold up their punctuation fans with the correct mark displayed. The fan is on the following pages of this PDF file. And the lines are supplied on the accompanying Word document.**

- Slide 38: Reading as a writer – contractions match-up.

Guidance from the Notes:

**Objective: Read words with contractions (I'll, I've, he's, he'll) and understand that the apostrophe represents the omitted letter(s).**

**There are more examples of contractions presented here than occur in the poem. Teachers should identify further opportunities in shared and guided reading to point out contractions to children and reinforce that the apostrophe represents the missing letter(s). Focus on the fact that in most cases, the other letters do not change. Exceptions include won't. Note that words are presented in lower case apart from the personal pronoun I and the missing letter(s) have been underlined.**

**Note that there are three contracted words in the poem which are not pronouns: *there's, bag's, monster's*. Teachers should decide whether to include these or not depending on the understanding of the children as these may be confused with apostrophes of possession that children may have encountered in their reading. Ensure that children begin to understand that the apostrophe replaces the letter or letters that is missing. NB This is the first introduction to informal techniques which will be built upon later in KS2.**

- Slide 39: Reading as a writer – apostrophes.

Guidance from the Notes:

**These are lines from the poem but written as separate and complete sentences to reinforce sentence structure.**



**Provide individuals or pairs of children with an apostrophe fan. Teachers should read each line aloud slowly but without displaying the sentence. Children should raise their apostrophe fan when they hear the word they think contains the contraction. Click to reveal and check.**

- Slide 40: Reading as a writer – Cross the river. Looks at how to make words rhyme.

Guidance from the Notes:

**Objectives: Identify rhyming words and invent alternatives.**

**Provide plenty of opportunities for children to identify rhyming words in songs and nursery rhymes prior to this activity.**

**Create a river in the middle of the room out of paper or fabric and divide the class in two with one group on either side. Give individual children or pairs one card each with a word on it from the list above, ensuring that you have a rhyme to match. (You may need several cards with the same word, e.g. 4 'me' etc depending on the number of children.)**

**In turn, each child or pair, reads their word. If a child or pair has a rhyming match, they may cross the river to join them. (There will probably be a few crossings but plenty of repetition!)**

- Slide 41: Reading as a writer – joining words.

Guidance from the Notes:

**Objective: Join words and clauses using 'and'.**

**Model selecting sentences, joining them with 'and' and reading them aloud. Elicit from the children what changes need to be made, e.g. the capital letter needs changing to lower case, the full stop in the first sentence is replaced by 'and'. Model reading the new sentence aloud. Provide pairs of children with separate sentences either from the poem or an alternative. Ask them to join the separate sentences together, read them aloud and discuss what works and what doesn't. Using the poem will provide a known text, but some sentences may go together in a different way than the original and this is acceptable provided they are cohesive, e.g. *He's huge and he's got enormous feelers*. This works, but others may not. The sentences on the slide are also supplied on the accompanying Word document.**



## Phase 2

- Slide 42: Get ready for writing – contractions.

Guidance from the Notes:

**This is Phase 2 of the teaching sequence.**

**Present an image to the children which may be one they have seen in this unit or an alternative. Visit <https://www.onceuponapicture.co.uk/> (free sign-up).**

**Model writing sentences about what you can see using contractions where appropriate, rehearsing aloud the process, e.g. capital letter, makes sense, final punctuation. Include statements, exclamations and questions where appropriate, then ask the children for ideas. In pairs, children should orally rehearse then write their own sentences about the image. The contractions presented here are suggestions only and teachers should use whatever is appropriate to the image they choose.**

- Slide 43: Get ready for writing – rhyming words.

Guidance from the Notes:

**Objective: Identify rhyming words and invent alternatives.**

**Present children with words from this poem or elsewhere. Ask pairs of children to think of more words with the same rhyming patterns and use segmenting skills to write them down. If appropriate, children could use their new words in sentences. This should be modelled first. The sentences should be grammatically correct but do not necessarily need to relate to the poem.**

**The examples are suggestions only. Children need plenty of practice with identifying and using rhyming words.**

- Slide 44: Writing a description - monsters, monsters, monsters!

Guidance from the Notes:

**The images on the slide are suggestions. There are hundreds of monster images available online and in books. Teachers should select appropriate images for the children they teach. Alternatively, children can create their own monsters to describe.**

**Ask the children to work in pairs to choose a monster and write a description. Use the words previously recorded on the working wall which may include contractions and rhyming words if children are confident.**



- Slide 45: A series of lines and questions about the poem.

Guidance from the Notes:

**This is a suggested approach which brings together some of the elements taught such as contractions and final punctuation (. ? !). However, teachers should adapt the activity to meet the needs of the children they teach and focus on just one objective if appropriate. Children who are currently more competent could join their words and sentences using the joining word 'and', e.g. The monster has purple eyes and red spots on its chin.**

- Slide 46: Displays the poem in full, which you can also find on the next page of this PDF.
- Slide 47: Displays the punctuation fan, which you can also find on the following pages of this PDF.
- Slides 48 and 49. Closing slides.

All websites referred to were functional at the time of publication. Teachers should check that these are still operational before including them in the lesson. Original illustrations by [Stella Perrett, Radical Cartoons](#)





# MARSH MALLOW

There's a monster in the woods.  
He crawled from the lagoon.  
He's got enormous feelers  
And eyes like green full moons.

He sneaked up right behind me  
Towering like a tree.  
He's huge and he is hairy -  
Wait! He's trying to take my sweet!

He wants to steal marshmallows...  
No - he only wants to play.  
He's moving even quicker now!  
Will I be okay?

The bag's completely empty!  
Now this monster's not so charming.  
Transforming very quickly  
Into something most alarming!

I've got to think of something  
Or he'll soon be eating me!  
I run and find a pillow  
And suddenly I see...

If only I can trick him  
But he's going quite berserk.  
He spies the big 'marshmallow'  
And my plan appears to work!

The monster settles down  
And puts the pillow on a spear.  
He starts to toast the tasty treat  
Which promptly disappears!



My favourite line is  
...because...

The verse reminds  
me of...

I like the  
word xx  
because...

The verse reminds  
me of...

The verse made me  
feel... because...

I am not sure what  
xx means

The picture  
made me  
feel...

I think that xxx  
will happen next.



# Punctuation fan

!

Exclamation  
mark



?

Question  
mark



# Punctuation fan



Full stop



CAP

Capital  
Letter



Apostrophe



# Tell Me Grid

|                              |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <div>What I like</div>       | <div>What I didn't like</div>   |
| <div>I want to know...</div> | <div>It reminded me of...</div> |

