

Lesson Resources

Overview

Whether he is brushing his teeth, playing with his toys or trying to sleep, this little boy's worry monster is ALWAYS with him. Will it ever go away?

My Monster and Me is a story that can be used with KS1 and KS2 children to illustrate how to talk about and deal with anxieties and worries.

The resources below focus on discussion and writing opportunities to engage readers and inspire writers. Using *My Monster and Me* ensures that these discussions are done at the same time as raising awareness of children's mental health.

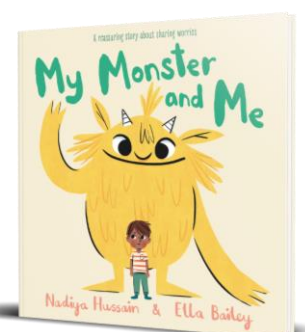
Spoken Language Objectives from the National Curriculum

Pupils should be taught to:

- listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
- ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
- articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
- participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play/improvisations and debates
- gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)
- consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
- select and use appropriate registers for effective communication



Resources based on *My Monster and Me* by Nadiya Hussain and Ella Bailey



Nadiya Hussain

My Monster and Me

Ella Bailey

Suggested activities to promote spoken language and high-quality writing opportunities.

Resources for Year 1

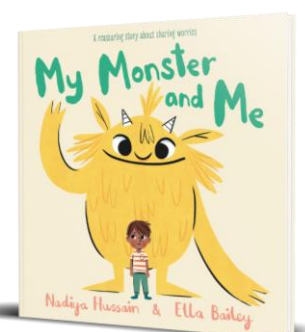
- Focus on the double spread at the beginning of the book with the text: 'This is my monster. And this is me.'
 - Pose the questions: 'What can you see? What do you notice? Why do you think the illustrator drew both characters like this?'
 - Probe children to talk about the differences in height and facial expression of the monster and boy
 - Continue the discussion: 'What do you think will happen? What do you think the relationship between these characters is like?'
- Share the next three double spreads and revisit the question above referring to the relationship between the characters

Writing activity:

Write a short character description of one of the characters – boy or monster. Allow Year 1 children to choose who to write about.



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Resources for Year 2

- Using the front cover (do not read the blurb), ask children to predict what might happen

Encourage them to justify their prediction using a structured response such as: 'I think _____ because I can see _____'
'_____ might happen because _____.'

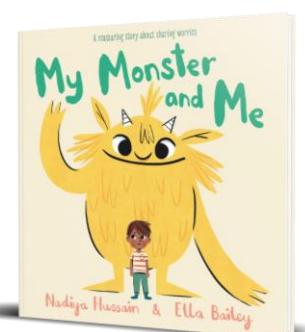
- Share the text with children and pause at the double spread where the boy goes to Gran's house and ends with 'Gran listened quietly ...'
- Allow the children time in pairs or small groups to brainstorm what the little boy is saying to Gran. Children can record their ideas on big pieces of paper and then share them together as a class
- Bring children back together again to look at the illustration where Gran is sitting on the floor with the little boy (back to back with the monster). How do we imagine the little boy will be talking? With confidence/with pauses/using questions/whispering? Will he look at Gran or look down? Will he cover his face or look her in the eye?
- Put children in pairs and ask them to re-enact the conversation orally using their sheets of paper to support them

Writing activity:

Choose a character in the image of the boy talking with Gran and write a reflection about their conversation. This could be a recount in the form of a diary, letter or a more reflective analytical response as a monologue, depending on the children's ability.



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Resources for Year 3

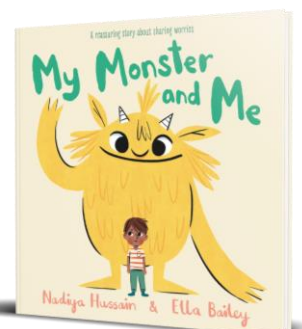
- As with Year 2, use the front cover (do not read the blurb) and ask children to predict what might happen
- Encourage them to justify their prediction using a structured response such as: 'I think _____ because I can see _____' '_____ might happen because _____.'
- Pause at the double spread near the end of the book with the text: 'The next day I saw my monster at school ... It wasn't as SCARY any more.'
- Pose the question: 'Why does he put the monster in his pocket? Are you surprised that the little boy strokes the monster's fur? Why isn't the monster as scary any more?' Allow children to work in pairs to respond
- Bring children back together as a class to discuss their findings. Probe children to discuss that the little boy is gaining confidence and is now gaining control of his fears and worries

Writing activity:

Plan a diary entry for the first half of the book and a diary entry for the end of the book. Encourage children to collaborate in small groups or pairs – perhaps plan around a table so that they can directly compare the entries/feelings.



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My Monster and Me

Ella Bailey

Resources for Year 4

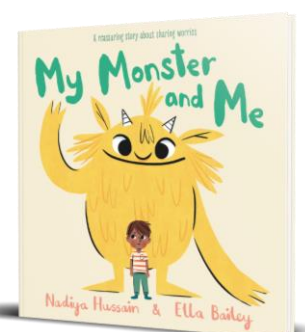
- Before sharing the book, write words such as ‘worry, anxiety, nerves, sharing, advice, strength, weakness, concern, vulnerable and mental health.’ Allow children to work in small groups to discuss these words and what they really mean
- Bring the class back together and share ideas. Are any words more or less difficult to define? Explain that these words may be more relevant to our discussion once we have read this book
- Share the story with children
- Once the story is finished, display the question: ‘What is the purpose of this story?’ Encourage children to think about the author’s intention(s). What impact did Nadiya want to have on her readers? Guide children to think about Nadiya providing a tool for children who worry or are anxious
- In small groups, ask children to create reasons why teachers should read this book to Year 4 children

Writing activity:

After the above discussions, explain to children that they are going to write a letter to Year 4 teachers to explain/persuade them to read this book to their class. The letter should explain the purpose of the book/ impact it will have on their pupils and persuade teachers to read the book.



Resources based on *My Monster and Me* by Nadiya Hussain and Ella Bailey



Resources for Year 5

- Before reading the book, share Nadiya's letter included in this resource pack. In pairs and groups, ask the children to discuss, 'What is the tone of Nadiya's letter? And why do you think she has written this book?'
- Bring children back together to share their findings. Encourage them to summarise Nadiya's reasons for writing the book using the term 'mental health'
- Children may share knowledge of mental health in their own lives. This should be dealt with sensitively so that children feel that they can talk in a safe and trusting environment
- Read the story to Year 5 and ask them if they are satisfied with the ending. Were they surprised? Has this given them a new understanding of anxiety?

Writing activity:

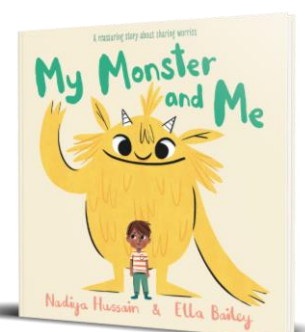
Focus on the page near the end of the book where the text reads: 'But if it ever feels like getting out, I tell it to behave. My monster is part of me. We've known each other from the beginning.'

Challenge children to use this part of the text to write a letter to a child suffering with anxiety. The purpose of this writing will be procedural rather than instructional (they do not need to list first/next/then).

Children should write with an advisory tone and can quote from this section of the text to support their message.



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Nadiya Hussain

My Monster and Me

Ella Bailey

Resources for Year 6

- Share a photograph of Nadiya Hussain and ask the children if they know who she is. Then share a clip from The Great British Bake Off – some of Nadiya’s creations and when Nadiya wins
- Ask the children what type of person they think Nadiya is. Working in pairs, encourage the children to list qualities of an aspirational winner
- Then share the front cover of the book and her letter. Are the children surprised to hear that Nadiya has suffered with a panic disorder? Encourage children to talk and when they come back together, guide them to discuss how sometimes we have no idea what is going on inside a person
- Discuss that physical symptoms like scars and bruises are obvious but inner symptoms like anxiety and panic disorders are less obvious and are sometimes disguised

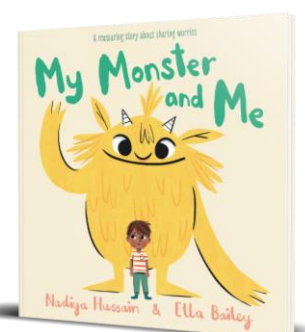
Writing activity:

Ask children to reflect on Nadiya Hussain as a person. Challenge them to write a description of a successful person who has been very honest about inner struggles. They may choose to write using an informal tone, ‘Did you know...’ or a more formal biographical tone.

Ensure that children understand the sensitivity and respect required when writing about a person’s struggle.



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My Monster and Me

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Nadiya's Letter

For as long as I can remember, I have suffered with panic disorder. Some days it consumes me and other days I can hardly tell it's there.



When I wrote this book, I took myself back to the time when I was a small child and couldn't explain 'that feeling'. It was my monster. Some days it was shouting and screaming in my face, and other days it sat quietly in my pocket.

I wrote this book in the hope that if we learn to explain worries, anxiety and panic early enough to children, they will have the support and tools to help them through life. No child should suffer in silence.

Love Nadiya x



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