

TOTO

THE NINJA CAT



WRITTEN BY DERMOT O'LEARY
ILLUSTRATED BY NICK EAST

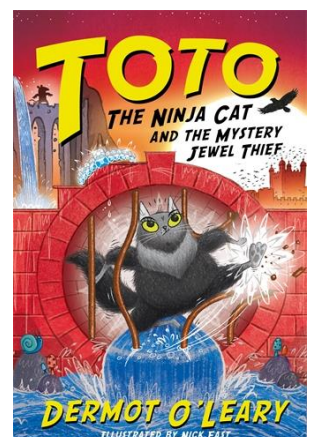
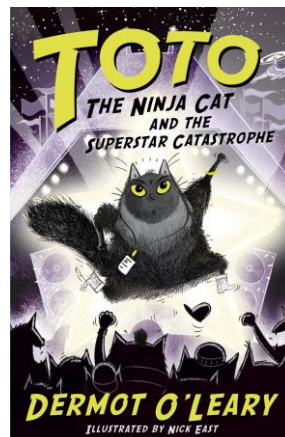
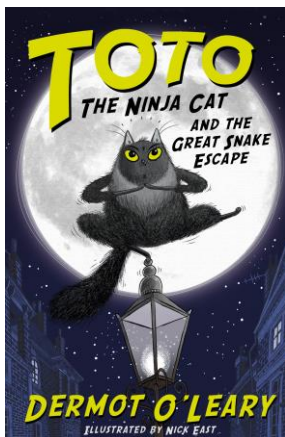
RESOURCE PACK FOR KS1/2 TEACHERS

INTRODUCTION

Suitable for: Ages 6-8

Includes: Extracts from the four books in the series + corresponding activities

Themes: Cat characters; superheroes; comic strip stories; mysterious objects



Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East

ABOUT THE BOOKS

Toto is no ordinary cat, and she can't wait for you to join her on her ninja adventures! From one of the UK's best-loved broadcasters, purrfect for fans of *The Aristocats*, *The Secret Life of Pets* and *Atticus Claw Breaks the Law*.

Toto the Ninja Cat and the Great Snake Escape

Toto the Ninja Cat and her brother Silver live footloose and fancy-free in a townhouse in London. Toto is almost totally blind, and learnt to trust her senses from a ninja cat-master who taught her back in Italy where they were born. By day, Toto and Silver seem to be ordinary cats, but by night, they love to have adventures!

One evening, news reaches Toto that a king cobra has escaped from London Zoo! Together with the help from a very posh new friend and two hungry tigers, Toto and Silver must investigate. Can they find the giant snake, before it's too late?

Toto the Ninja Cat and the Incredible Cheese Heist

Toto, the amazing Ninja Cat, is back and cooler than ever! Toto is almost blind, but that doesn't stop her having brilliant adventures.

Something CAT-ASTROPHIC has happened: ALL the cheese in the world has been stolen. Join Toto, her brother Silver and their best friend Catface on a secret mission to save the day. Toto is going to need all her ninja skills to defeat the fur-midable cheese thief ...

Toto the Ninja Cat and the Superstar Catastrophe

After months of keeping London safe from notorious animal bad guys, Toto the Ninja Cat is going on a well-earned holiday to the world's most famous music festival – Catstonbury!

But a villain has a dastardly plan to hypnotise the crowd when a world-famous band is on stage, turning them into evil minions. How can Toto possibly prevent the catastrophe when everyone thinks the band is the cat's pyjamas?

It will take all of Toto's ninja skills – and some help from a friendly otter – to save the day ...

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



NEW *Toto the Ninja Cat and the Mystery Jewel Thief*

Toto and her friends are due to be looking after the French ambassador on a day of sightseeing, finishing at the Tower of London to see the animal world's crown jewels: a sacred diamond cat collar.

But when they arrive, the collar has disappeared – and what's worse, it looks like Toto's boss Larry is responsible, with Toto as his accomplice! Toto is almost arrested, but she escapes to try and get to the bottom of the mystery and clear her name.

She and her friends will have to follow some strange clues that will take them to a secret bookshop, Buckingham Palace and the rats' underground city in the sewers ... Can they defeat an unexpected villain and bring the thief to justice?

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



RESOURCE PACK CONTENTS

This resource pack provides material (including free extracts from the books) for four, hour-long lessons that can take place during classes, during circle time, P4C sessions, or as extra-curricular activities.

- **EXTRACT 1:** The Great Snake Escape

Objectives: Plot a journey from Italy to London using a world map; carry out research into a specific historical period; use comprehension and inference skills to create a 'cat mask' for one of the main characters.

Subjects: Literacy: Reading Comprehension and Inference, Geography, History, Art, Design and Technology

- **EXTRACT 2:** The Incredible Cheese Heist

Objectives: Create a new name for a superhero animal character using literary devices; explore how personal weaknesses can also become strengths; create a detailed superhero animal profile for a new character.

Subjects: Literacy: Reading Comprehension and Inference, Creative Writing, PSHE, Art, Design and Technology

- **EXTRACT 3:** The Superstar Catastrophe

Objectives: Analyse how literary devices such as onomatopoeia are used for comic effect in writing; use musical instruments to experiment with sound; create a comic strip version of a scene in the story.

Subjects: Literacy: Reading Comprehension and Inference, Creative Writing, Art, Design and Technology, Music

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



- **NEW EXTRACT 4:** The Mystery Jewel Thief

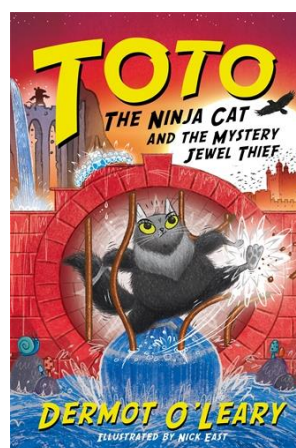
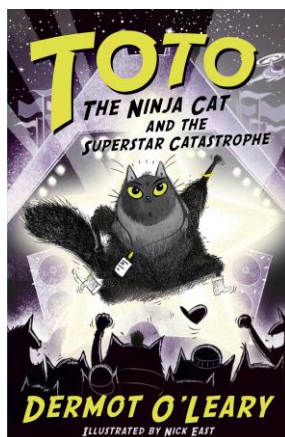
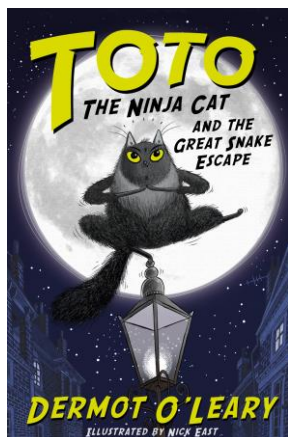
Objectives: Describe a beautiful or treasured object; understand how objects can be used to create mystery and to advance plot; use objects to create a unique story.

Subjects: Literacy: Reading Comprehension and Inference, Creative Writing, Art, Design and Technology

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



INTRODUCING THE BOOKS!



In pairs, look at the titles of the four books in the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series:

Toto the Ninja Cat and the Great Snake Escape
Toto the Ninja Cat and the Incredible Cheese Heist
Toto the Ninja Cat and the Superstar Catastrophe
Toto the Ninja Cat and the Mystery Jewel Thief

- Which of these titles is your favourite? Why?
- Which title draws the reader in the most? How?
- What effective words and phrases are used?
- What sort of themes and features do you think these stories might have?
- How are the titles similar? Why do you think this might be?

Activity suggestion 1:

In groups, create a film trailer for one of the books in the series, taking into consideration the possible heroes, villains and themes.

Activity suggestion 2:

Create a new title and cover for Book 5 in the series. Make it as catchy (and eye-catching) as possible!

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



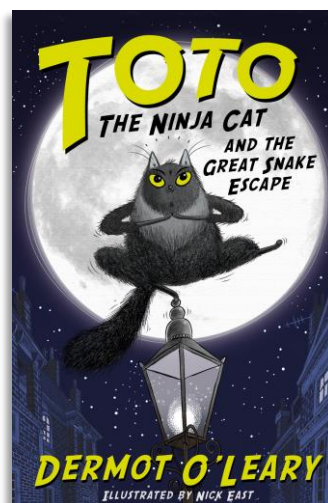
USING BOOK 1 THE GREAT SNAKE ESCAPE: CAT MASKS

Lead in question:

- What is your favourite animal and why?

In Extract 1, we are introduced to two of the main cat characters in the story. Read the description again and answer the questions:

1. How is Silver related to Toto?
2. What period of history does the author suggest Toto could be from? List two clues.
3. Which country is Toto from?
4. Why do you think Toto is 'whispering' to Silver?
5. How does the author create tension at the end of the extract?



Activity suggestion 1:

In the extract, we learn that Toto has come all the way to London from Puglia. In pairs, use a world map to plot her journey. Give two different options for travel and include the different modes of transportation required.

Activity suggestion 2:

In the extract, Toto compares herself to a cat from 'Elizabethan England'. Carry out some research in groups into this time period – especially into the types of clothes people wore and the way they looked!

Activity suggestion 3:

Using the descriptions in the extract, create a cat mask, using Activity Sheet 1, to show what you think Silver or Toto looks like – you can choose your favourite character! When you've finished, create your own cat mask for a brand new cat. Ask your teacher to share your completed masks with us on Twitter at @HachetteSchools

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



USING BOOK 2 THE INCREDIBLE CHEESE HEIST: SUPERHERO CATS

Lead in question:

- Who are your favourite animal characters in books, films or on television? Why?

Using Extract 2, answer the following questions.

1. What sort of relationship does Toto have with Silver?
How do you know?
2. What are Toto's strengths and weaknesses?
3. Can Toto's weakness also be considered a strength?
4. What was the name of Toto's teacher?
5. How do you get the impression that Toto might be about to receive her first 'mission'?



Activity suggestion 1:

Toto is good at escaping from difficult situations – that is why her name is 'Toto the Ninja Cat'! Can you think of your own animal character and animal name? Remember, it doesn't have to be a cat!

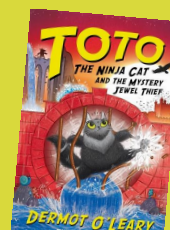
Activity suggestion 2:

Complete a superhero animal profile for your animal character, using Activity Sheet 2. Consider how your character's weaknesses might also become their strengths.

Activity suggestion 3:

Use Activity Sheet 3 to draw your character and label him or her. Then show your character to the other members of your group. Don't forget to share them with us on Twitter at @HachetteSchools

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



USING BOOK 3 THE SUPERSTAR CATASTROPHE: CAT COMICS

Lead in task:

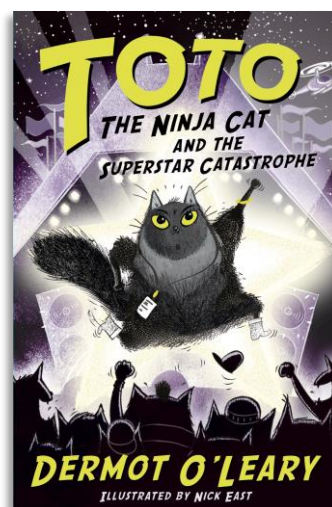
Imagine you are fire. If fire had a written language, it might look something like this:

Fzip rroazz shwiff prrip crooar!

When words *sound* like what they mean, this is called onomatopoeia. Some books – especially comic books – use onomatopoeia, sometimes for comic effect, sometimes to shock the reader.

Using Extract 3, answer the following questions.

1. Where are Toto and Silver in this extract?
2. Why does Toto leap out of bed? What does she prevent from happening, 'just in time'?
3. What causes Toto to 'accidentally' land on her brother's head?
4. Who is the villain in the extract?
5. How does the author make the scene funny?



Activity suggestion 1:

Choose one of the following things and invent a new language for it using onomatopoeia:

- A bumpy train
- A swinging rolling pin
- A snoring cat
- A blow to the head

Activity suggestion 2:

Using Activity Sheet 4, look at the following examples of onomatopoeia. Can you match these words to some of the events in the extract? If musical instruments are available, use them to experiment with the sounds.

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



Activity suggestion 3:

Using Activity Sheet 5, re-write the scene from Extract 3 of *Toto the Ninja Cat and the Superstar Catastrophe* – this time as a comic strip. Use as much onomatopoeia as possible to show the different things that happen in the extract and what they sound like!

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O’Leary and Nick East



NEW USING BOOK 4 THE MYSTERY JEWEL THIEF: OBJECTS IN STORIES

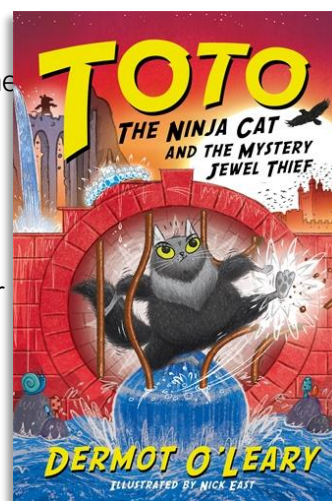
Lead in task:

Think of your most prized or most beautiful possession – or imagine the most beautiful thing you have ever seen.

What does it look like?

Use the following categories to describe the possession that you have in mind. You can either describe it by speaking, by writing, or by drawing!

- SHAPE
- COLOUR
- SIZE
- TEXTURE



Using Extract 4, answer the following questions.

1. What do the two friends 'find staggering' in the opening of the extract?
2. Why is Tom both happy and sad when he throws the silver box into 'deep inky pond'?
3. What does the phrase 'it was a small price to pay' mean?
4. What can you tell about the relationship between the two friends here? Underline key words or phrases.
5. How does the author make you want to read on at the end of the Prologue?

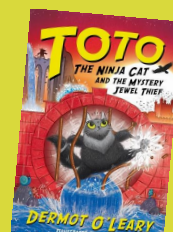
Suggested Activity 1:

It's time to get creative! Find activity sheet 6 and let's think about magical and mysterious objects in stories.

Suggested Activity 2:

Create your own mysterious or mythical object. What is special, magical or mysterious about your object? How can you show its special powers in your design? What would make someone want to steal it?

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



NEW USING BOOK 4 THE MYSTERY JEWEL THIEF: OBJECTS IN STORIES continued

Suggested Activity 3:

Story time! You're going to create a story as a group including, you guessed it, some very mysterious objects!

Note down the object that you created in the previous activity on a piece of scrap paper.

Put the different pieces of paper (or bring in real objects, if you prefer) into a story bag. Then, in groups, randomly select three objects out of the story bag and discuss how your objects might fit into a story. Share your ideas with the group.

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



EXTRACT 1

Book 1: Sneak Peek!

She looked over at her brother Silver, who, as his name suggests, had silver and white fur, with a big bushy tail and white paws.

Toto, on the other hand, was a big ball of black, grey and brown fur, especially with her winter coat on. She had a ruff around her neck, which made her look like a cat that wouldn't be out of place in Elizabethan England, as opposed to where she was really from – a place called Puglia, in the heel of Italy. She and Silver were stray cats and they had arrived in London only three weeks ago, after they were rescued by two kind humans, who they now called Mum and Dad. (Or, as Toto would say, Mamma and Papa.) The ones who currently lay snoring on their bed.

'Silver,' whispered Toto. 'SILVER! Did you hear that? I think it came from outside, from the bins . . . OUR BINS!'

EXTRACT 2

Book 2: Sneak Peek!

As much as she enjoyed her status, Toto knew that she wouldn't have been able to do any of it without Silver. Toto was almost completely blind, and could only see light and dark shapes. Silver acted as her eyes and, as far as she was concerned, they came as a team.

Since the adventure, their lives had been very quiet, without much need for the ninja skills. Even though she was highly trained, Toto hadn't been given her first mission yet. In fact, the group of ninjas she belonged to, the ANCIENT ORDER OF INTERNATIONAL NINJA CATS, was so secret that apart from her old Italian sensei Ventura, she didn't even know who any of the other members were! So, Toto had been trying to teach Silver her best moves to make sure she didn't get out of practice . . .

Toto jumped gently from the counter top to the fridge and began rooting around.

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



EXTRACT 3

Book 3: Sneak Peek!

A jolt from the giant locomotive awoke her. She sat bolt upright, the sun now long gone, replaced by a cloudless moonlit sky which illuminated the cabin and made it easier for her to get her bearings. Rubbing the sleep from her eyes, she glanced over at the other bed in the berth where she could make out the shape of her brother, curled around his own bushy tail, fast asleep and snoring gently. No waking you – belly full of milk, I'd imagine, she thought. She lay back on her bed and tried to drift off again ... looking out the window, up at the ceiling, and around the cabin. She could make out the shadowy shapes of the beautiful iron luggage rack above her, the white porcelain washbasin and, in the corner of the room, the tall hat stand that—

Wait a minute! she thought. There was no hat stand there when I came to bed.

The ninja leaped out of her bed just in time as the hat stand came to life and brought a lethal wooden rolling pin crashing down, missing Toto by a hair's breadth and smashing the bedside lamp.

The hat stand – which, it was now obvious to Toto, was actually a gigantic Siberian cat – looked down and sneered, 'I'm the ticket inspector! And it looks like you don't have a valid one to be on this train.'

He cackled and took another swing at Toto's head. Once more she evaded the blow and dived across to her brother's bed, accidentally landing with one foot on his head.

Although Toto knew she had to think of something fast, she was momentarily distracted: HOW IN THE WORLD WAS SILVER STILL ASLEEP? She'd just landed on his head, was standing now with one paw right in his ear and he was still snoring away like he was back in his basket at home!

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



EXTRACT 4

Book 4: Sneak Peek!

The cat nodded and pawed at the collar. It unclasped and came apart into two perfect circles – one of flawless diamonds and one of deep blue sapphires – shining in the moonlight. No matter how many times they saw it, both human and cat found its beauty staggering.

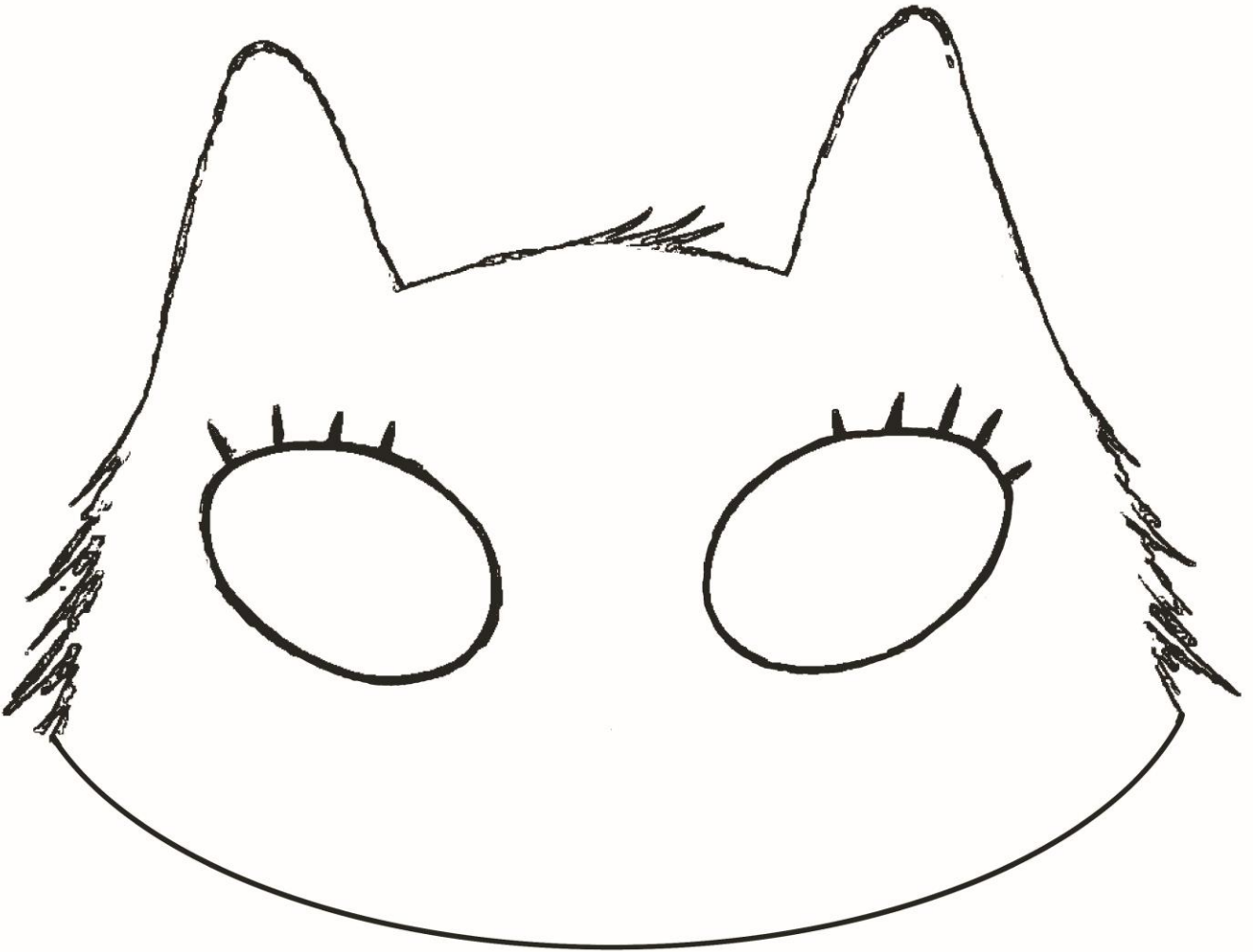
Taking one last look, Tom placed the diamond band into a velvet pouch and carefully popped it back into the silver box. Snapping it shut, he threw it into the deep inky pond, and they watched it slowly sink to the bottom, eventually disappearing from sight. The two friends smiled at each other. Although Tom felt sad that he'd never get to speak in the human tongue again, it was a small price to pay. Jumping up into the warmth of his master's coat, they mounted the horse and started the ride back into London and their cosy beds. Tom was certain that with his enemies beaten, all the animals of old London town, and indeed the world, would be safe ... and so they were for the next 600 years ... until ...

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



Activity Sheet 1

Using the descriptions in the extract, create a cat mask, to show what you think Silver or Toto looks like – you can choose your favourite character! When you've finished, create your own cat mask for a brand new cat.



Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



Activity Sheet 2

Complete a superhero animal profile for your animal character. Consider how your character's weaknesses might also become their strengths.

SUPERHERO ANIMAL PROFILE

PICTURE OF SUPERHERO ANIMAL

NAME:

REASON FOR NAME:

SUPERPOWER:

STRENGTHS:

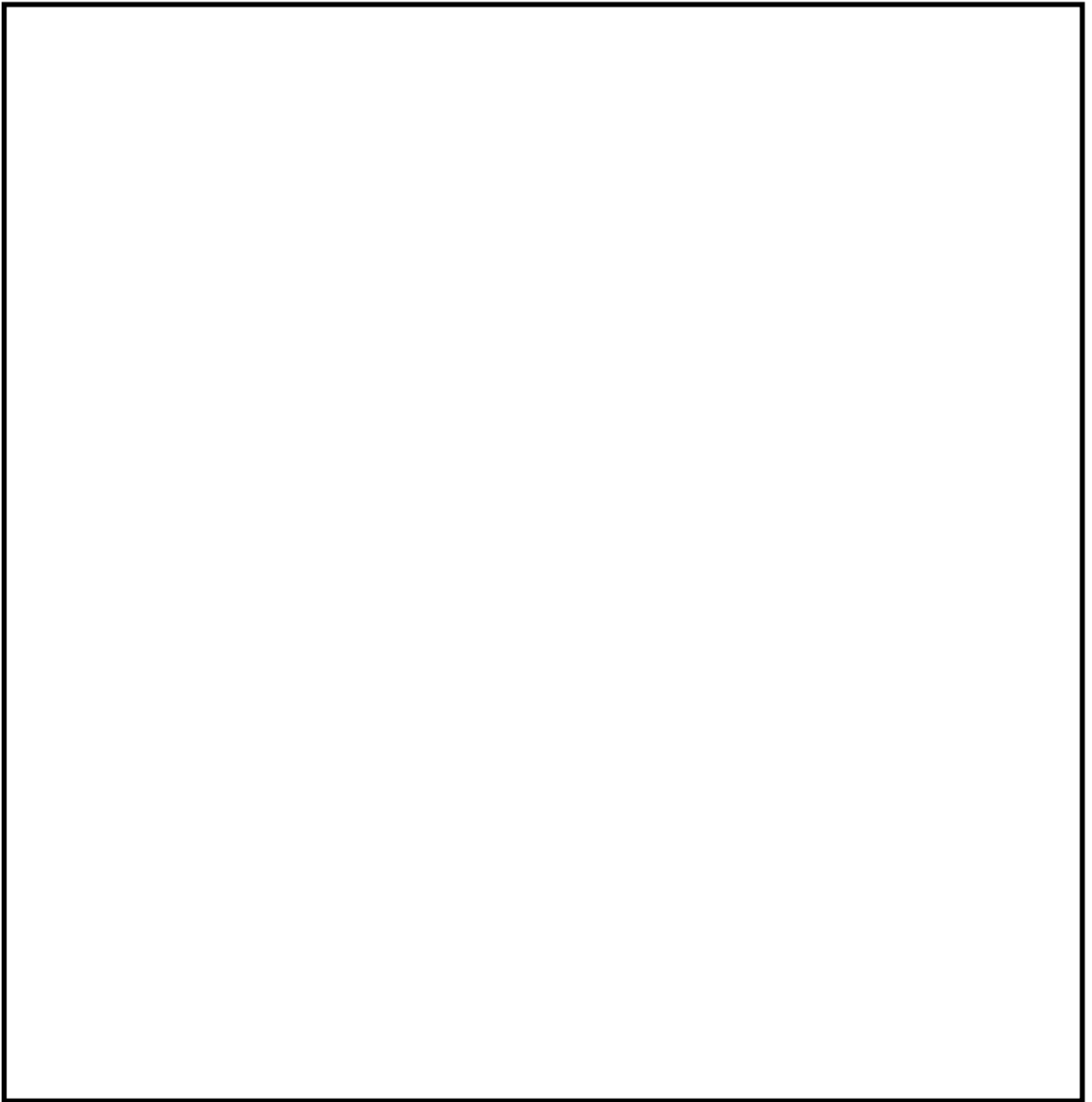
WEAKNESSES:

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



Activity Sheet 3

Draw your character and label him or her. Then show your character to the other members of your group.



Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



Activity Sheet 4

Look at the following examples of onomatopoeia. Can you match these words to some of the events in the extract? If musical instruments are available, use them to experiment with the sounds.



THWACK!



TWANG!



SPLAT!



ZOOM!



BLAM!



POW!



BASH!

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



Activity Sheet 5

Re-write the scene from Extract 3 of *Toto the Ninja Cat and the Superstar Catastrophe* – this time as a comic strip. Use as much onomatopoeia as possible to show the different things that happen in the extract and what they sound like!

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East



Activity Sheet 6

It's time to get creative! Let's think about magical and mysterious objects in stories.

What do the objects below make you think of? Why could they be interpreted as 'magical' or 'mysterious'? Why might someone want to steal them?! Remember, use your imaginations; there are no right or wrong answers.

OBJECT	WHY MIGHT IT BE MAGICAL OR MYSTERIOUS?	WHY MIGHT SOMEONE WANT TO STEAL IT?
A SACRED DIAMOND CAT COLLAR		
A GLIMMERING GOLD RING		
A GLINTING FRAMED PICTURE		
AN ANCIENT SWORD		
A DUSTY OLD BOOK		

Resources based on the *Toto the Ninja Cat* series by Dermot O'Leary and Nick East

