

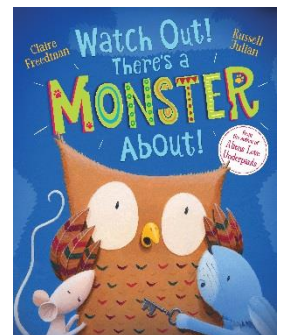


Watch Out! There's a Monster About!

**Written by Claire Freedman
and illustrated by Russell Julian**

1 – Introducing the book

- Start by looking at the cover – how do you think the characters on the front are feeling? Why? Now read the first three pages of the story up to *'I've heard he's very big and horribly hairy'*. Ask children to start picturing the Monster of the Woods in their own heads, and describe their monster to a friend. Share suggestions with the rest of the class, emphasising that we all imagine things differently, so each person's monster will be different from everyone else's.
- Together talk through all the various features of the imaginary Monster of the Woods in turn, starting to list a range of describing words for each one. What are his eyes like? His mouth and teeth? His skin? His arms, hands, ears and legs? Has he just got one head or several? How does he move? What does he sound like?
- Ask children to draw or paint a picture of their imaginary monster and write labels to describe the different parts of his body. Make a display of all the different monsters.



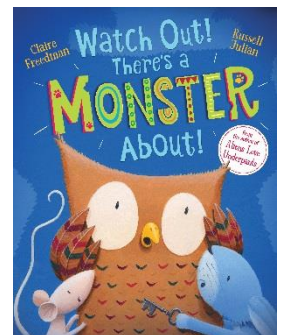


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2 – A storm in the classroom

- Now read the next part of the story up to where the storm comes and Owl pretends he's not at home. Talk to the children about their experiences of being in a storm. What is it like? What about if you lived in the woods like Owl? What kind of sounds would you hear? As a class create a 'sound picture' for this part of the story, using body percussion and appropriate instruments. One group of children could represent the rain coming down, starting off slowly and then getting heavier. Another group could be the wind starting to whip up. You could have a thunderclap and the creaking of trees or snapping of twigs as well as branches beating against the window pane. At the same time choose children to make the sounds of Rabbit or Mouse running to Owl's house and banging at the door. 'Conduct' the sound picture by pointing at groups of children to get them to start or stop, and use pre-agreed hand signals to make the noises louder and quieter. After practising, individual children could take a turn at conducting.





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3 – Nobody panic...I've got a plan

- Read the rest of the story. What kind of noises did the Monster make when he was knocking on Owl's door? Why did they decide to open the door in the end? Was the Monster of the Woods really scary as they had expected? Invite children to suggest some comforting, un-scary names – like Snuggles – for the monsters they painted earlier.
- Owl works together with his friends Rabbit and Mouse to come up with a plan to deal with their fear of the Monster of the Woods. Agree that having friends to help you deal with difficult situations is a good thing. However, Owl's plan is to lock the door, pull the curtains shut and pretend he is not at home. Does that actually help in the end? Did his fear go away? Agree that when they actually came face to face with the Monster of the Woods, the friends found that they didn't have to be scared after all. Work together to write a plan as a class for what to do if you are worried or upset about something. Display this in the classroom, so you can refer to it in future.

