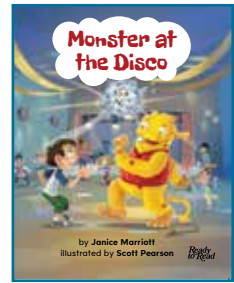


Monster at the Disco

by Janice Marriott
illustrated by Scott Pearson

This text is levelled at Blue 3.



Overview

Monster and Jack are enjoying the school disco when, suddenly, the lights go out and the music stops – it's a power cut! The problem of the lights is soon solved, but what about the music? You can't have a disco without music ... All is not lost, however. Monster comes up with a great idea to keep the dancing going.

This story supports the development of a self-extending reading process, requiring students to “monitor their reading, searching for and using multiple sources of information in order to confirm or self-correct” and use a variety of comprehension strategies to “engage more deeply with texts” (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 10).

There is an audio version of the text as an MP3 file at www.readytoread.tki.org.nz

Related texts

Other stories about Monster: *Monster's Lunch* (shared); *Monster's Vest* (Red 1); *Monster in the Pool* (Yellow 1); *Sports Day for Monster* (Yellow 3)

Humorous stories about solving problems and/or coping with unexpected events: *A Good Idea, Dragons! Dragons! Dragons!*, *Greedy Cat*, *Haere Atu! I'm the King of the Mountain* (shared); *Monster in the Pool*, *Painting the Fence* (Yellow 1); *Lunch for Greedy Cat* (Yellow 3); *The Gardener and the Scarecrow* (Blue 2)

Text characteristics

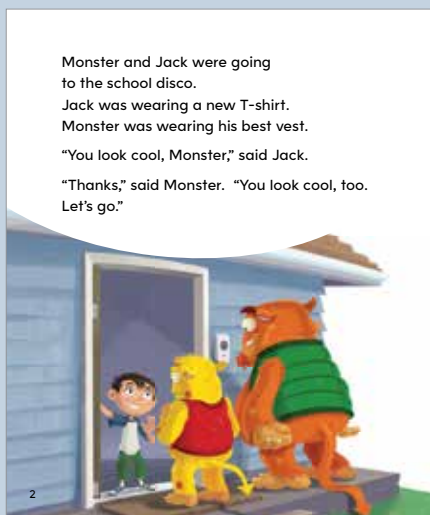
Monster at the Disco has the following text characteristics that help develop the reading behaviours expected of students reading at Blue.

Most content explicitly stated but also some implicit content that provides opportunities for students to make predictions and inferences

Mostly familiar vocabulary, including many high-frequency words, but also some interest vocabulary that may be new (for example, “cheered”, “clapped”, “disco ball”, “good news”, “hall”, “himself”, “lights”, “loved”, “music”, “power cut”, “smiled”, “special”, “spinning”, “storeroom”, “Suddenly”, “Thanks”, “vest”, “walls”, “wearing”, “without”, “Wow”) and that is strongly supported by the context, the sentence structure, and/or the illustrations

The familiar setting and context of a school disco

Illustrations that support and extend the meaning but may not exactly match the words



At the disco, music was playing and children were dancing.
A big disco ball made lights spin across the walls.

“Wow,” said Monster. “Come on, Jack. Let's dance.”

Sentences that run over more than one line but do not split phrases and several lines of text on every page

Dialogue between easily identified speakers

Several verbs that appear in different forms (“go”, “going”, “went”; “play”, “playing”; “spin”, “spinning”; “dance”, “danced”, “dancing”)

Words that begin with the same digraph or consonant blend (“cheered”, “children”; “special”, “spin”, “spinning”; “stopped”, “storeroom”); compound words (“himself”, “maybe”, “Sometimes”, “storeroom”, “without”); and words with the same rime (“hall”, “ball”, “best”, “vest”) that provide opportunities for students to build and apply their knowledge of letters, sounds, and words

Reading standard: After one year at school

The Literacy Learning Progressions

The above spread:

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Suggested reading purpose

(What can the students expect to find out or think about as a result of reading this text?)

We are reading this story to find out what happens when Monster and Jack go to the school disco.

Possible learning goals

(What opportunities does this text provide for students to learn more about how to “read, respond to, and think critically” about texts?)

The behaviours listed below link to *The Literacy Learning Progressions*. **Select from and adapt** them according to your students’ strengths, needs and experiences – their culture, language, and identity (*Reading and Writing Standards for years 1–8*, Knowledge of the learner, page 6).

This text provides opportunities for students, over several readings, to:

- **make connections** between their own experiences and information in the story to **make predictions and inferences**
- identify the main events in the story (**summarise**)
- **make connections** between this story and other stories about Monster to build up a picture of what Monster is like (**make inferences and visualise**)
- **make meaning** by searching for and using multiple sources of information
- **monitor** their reading and self-correct where necessary, for example, by rereading text or checking further sources of information.

Introducing the story

- A short video on the importance of introducing the text is available at <https://vimeo.com/142446572>
- Use your knowledge of your students to ensure that the introduction to the story activates their prior knowledge and supports them for a successful first reading. A few days before reading this book, add the previous stories about Monster to the students’ browsing boxes for them to reread and enjoy.

For English language learners, you could talk through the cover illustration and the first few pages before the whole-group session to build confidence with vocabulary. You can find useful guidance about supporting English language learners at <http://esolonline.tki.org.nz/ESOL-Online/Teacher-needs/Pedagogy/ESOL-teaching-strategies/Reading>

- Have the students use the title and the cover illustration to make inferences about the story (who, where, what, when). Encourage them to share their own experiences of school discos: what happens at a disco, what they might see and hear, and wear.
- Prompt the students to infer from the title page how Monster feels about dancing.
- Share the purpose for reading. Note that this purpose may become more precise as the students discover more about the story.
- Browse through pages 2–5, discussing what is happening in the illustrations. Draw out (or feed in) vocabulary, language structures, and ideas (such as the concept of the disco ball making lights spin across the walls) that you think may need support.
- On page 5, support the students to infer from the darker tones in the illustration that there has been a power cut. Encourage the students to make connections to any experiences they have of power cuts and to think about the implications for the disco. *Will they be able to carry on?* Ask the students to share their predictions with a partner.
- The students could begin to read the story for themselves at this point or, if you feel they need more support, you could discuss how the characters are responding to the problem on pages 6 and 7.

Monitoring the reading

- Observe closely as the students read the story quietly to themselves. Note their confidence and perseverance, their attempts to solve unknown words, as well as any instances of self-monitoring, cross-checking, and self-correction. Provide support to individual students as necessary.
- If a student makes an error without noticing, wait until the end of the sentence or page before intervening unless they stop reading. Waiting gives them the opportunity to notice the error and fix it. Use appropriate prompts to draw their attention to the error. For example:

Text in book	Student reads	Teacher prompt
and children were dancing.	and children was dancing.	<i>Does that sound right and look right to you?</i> (For an ELL student, this may sound right, so you could say: <i>In English, we say “and children were dancing”.</i>)

Text in book	Student reads	Teacher prompt
A big disco ball made lights spin across the walls.	A big disco ball made ... (student stops)	Ask the student to read the rest of the sentence (if they can) to clarify meaning. Otherwise, tell them to look at the picture. <i>What happens when the disco ball spins round?</i> If necessary, remind them of the introductory discussion. <i>Now try the sentence again.</i>
Suddenly, the lights went out	Some day the lights went out	<i>Some day? Are you sure? Does that word look like "some"?</i>
Look in the storeroom.	Look in the safety room.	Prompt the student to integrate meaning with visual information. <i>You're almost right. It's a room but not a safety room. What can you see in the word that will help you?</i>

- Other prompts that you could use include: *Think about what would make sense; You said ... Can we say it that way?; Look at the beginning of the word; Were you right?; Try that again; Look for something you know in that word; What else could you check?; What can you see that will help you?*
- Remember to base these prompts on what you know about the students' prior knowledge. For example, asking an English language learner if a word or sentence sounds right may not be useful if they are not familiar enough with English phonemes and vocabulary or syntax. In this case, an explanation (or explicit feedback as in the first example in the table) and further examples would be more effective.
- Reinforce the students' attempts to problem-solve whether they are successful or not.
- For further suggestions about ways to support students to self-monitor (to cross-check, confirm, and self-correct), see *Effective Literacy Practice in Years 1–4*, page 130.

Discussing and rereading the story

- You can reread this story several times, focusing on different aspects and providing opportunities for the students to build comprehension and fluency. Many of the discussion points listed here also lead naturally into "After-reading" activities.
- Enjoy the students' responses to Monster's idea. *What helped him come up with the idea of a band? Did you think this was a good idea? Why (or why not)?*
- Remind the students of the reading purpose. Ask them to summarise the events in the story (what happened and why). You could draw the students' attention to the Emergency Kits sign on the storeroom door on page 4 and 5. *How were the emergency kits helpful during the power cut?*

- Explain that most stories involve a problem and a solution. *What was the problem in this story? How was it solved?* (Note that there are several aspects the students could identify – the power cut itself or the fact that there was no music.)
- Encourage the students to think critically:
 - *What new things have you learnt about Monster after reading this story?*
 - *What tells you (in this book and others) that Jack and Monster are good friends?*
- Have the students reread the story, stopping to discuss points of interest. You can revisit this story over several sessions, exploring such features as:
 - the characters' thoughts and feelings as suggested in the text and illustrations.
 - the use of speech marks to indicate dialogue, and the attributions to clarify who the speaker is. Encourage the students to read the dialogue in a way that shows how the characters are feeling. You could also draw attention to the use of contractions ("Let's", "can't", "don't", "it's") to make the dialogue sound more natural.
 - the sentences running over several lines on most pages. Remind the students to read on to the full stop, even if the sentence sounds like it has finished, because often it will help with the meaning, (as in the second sentence on page 3). Model appropriate phrasing and intonation. You could discuss the use of words such as "and" and "but" to join ideas.
 - the words associated with discos. Ask the students to identify words and phrases that help them build a picture of what the disco was like (for example, "new T-shirt", "best vest", "cool", "music", "dancing", "disco ball", "lights spin across the walls").
 - the lively verbs in the story (for example, "spin", "spinning", "danced", "dancing", "clapped and cheered"). Have the students read the sentences that include these words and act out the verbs. (This would be especially supportive for English language learners.)
 - how the students worked out (or tried to work out) new words or phrases, for example, looking for the biggest known part of a word to solve the compound words or reading on to work out noun phrases (for example, "new T-shirt", "best vest", "big disco ball").
 - words with particular features, such as words with the same initial digraph or consonant blend or the rhyming words ("hall", "ball"; "best", "vest"). You could also draw attention to the unusual spelling of "special" where "ci" sounds like "sh".

After reading: practice and reinforcement

After-reading tasks should arise from your monitoring of the students' needs during the lesson and provide purposeful practice and reinforcement. Where possible, make links to other reading texts, including texts generated from language experience and shared writing, and to the wider literacy programme (oral language, writing, handwriting, alphabet and word games and activities) and other curriculum areas.

Select from and adapt these suggestions, according to the needs of your students.

- Ask the students to reread the story to a partner. Listen in, noting their ability to self-monitor and to use punctuation to support phrasing and expression. You could also use this time to do a quick running record with a student to provide more information on something you have noticed.
- The students can build their comprehension and fluency by rereading the story while listening to the audio version. Audio versions also provide English language learners with good models of pronunciation, intonation, and expression.
- Provide opportunities to reread this book and other stories with similar themes (see Related texts).
- To support summarising, have the students retell the story to a buddy. Provide support for English language learners by giving them copies of illustrations from the story for them to put in order and use to retell the story.
- The students could choose three key events from the story to draw and write about. Alternatively, they could choose one bad thing and one good thing that happened. They could add speech bubbles or thought bubbles to their pictures.
- The students could draw themselves dressed for a disco and add labels to describe their outfits.
- Have the students work in pairs or as a group to create a mural of themselves at a disco and add captions that describe what they are wearing and what is happening. Encourage them to refer to the book for ideas.
- Have the students work in pairs with all the Monster books to identify four or five things they have learnt about him (from both text and illustrations). Share and discuss the students' findings together and ask them to explain how they know these things. Some ideas are shown in the following example.

Our ideas about Monster	Why we think this
He is friends with Jack	Jack and Monster spend lots of time together (pool, sports day, disco).
He's yellow and furry with red spots.	There are lots of pictures of him.
He goes to school.	All of the stories have school in them.
He likes to eat snails and worms.	<i>Monster's Lunch</i>
He likes to wear vests.	There are lots of pictures of him wearing a vest. He got a new vest for school. He wears his best vest to the disco.
He's good at solving problems.	He shakes himself dry when he gets wet in the pool. He keeps trying at sports day until he finds out what he's good at. He thinks of a way to have music when there is a power cut.

- Build students' knowledge of word structure by exploring the inflected endings in some of the "disco" verbs, for example, "wearing", "dancing", "spinning" and "playing" (from pages 2 and 3). Support the students to identify the root words. Together, generate some word families for these verbs ("wear", "wearing", "wore", "wears"; "dance", "dancing", "danced", "dances"). Discuss interesting aspects such as "wore" (not "weared") and "spun" (not "spinned") or the need to remove the "e" from "dance" when adding "ing".

You could ask the students to work in pairs to complete a chart based on words from the story and to choose one word from each column to use in sentences.

Root word	-ing	-ed (or special word)	-s
play	playing	played	plays
dance			
	wearing	wore	
	spinning	spun	
		loved	
		clapped	
		cheered	
		smiled	