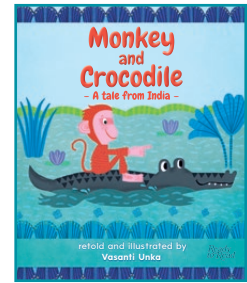


# Monkey and Crocodile

A tale from India

retold and illustrated  
by Vasanti Unka

This text is levelled at Turquoise 1.



The Learning Progression Frameworks describe significant signposts in reading and writing as students develop and apply their literacy knowledge and skills with increasing expertise from school entry to the end of year 10. This teacher support material describes the opportunities within this text for students to develop this expertise.

## Overview

Monkey lives a happy life in a tree high above a river. Crocodile swims in the river and eats fish all day, but what he really wants to do is eat Monkey. When Monkey needs help to cross the river, Crocodile thinks his chance has come ...

This story requires students to “flexibly use the sources of information in text, in combination with their prior knowledge, to make meaning and consider new ideas” and “draw on a wider range of comprehension strategies to think more deeply about what they read” (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 13).

There is an audio version of the text as an MP3 file at [www.readytoread.tki.org.nz](http://www.readytoread.tki.org.nz)

## Curriculum links

English (level 1): Selects and reads texts for enjoyment and personal fulfilment.

## Related texts

Tales with tricky animal characters: *I'm the King of the Mountain* (shared); *Purr-fect!* (Yellow 3); *Crow Tales* and *Tricky Rat* (Blue 1), *I Want to Fly* (Blue 2), *Rat and Octopus* (Orange), *No More Cakes* (Turquoise 1); “Why the Crocodile Has No Tongue” (JJ 24); *Two Tiger Tales* (Purple 1)

Texts associated with India: *Diwali* (shared); *No More Cakes* (Turquoise 1)

An animal tale with a similar setting: *Too Many Mangoes* (a play, JJ 38)

## Text characteristics

*Monkey and Crocodile* has the following text characteristics that help develop the reading behaviours expected at Turquoise.

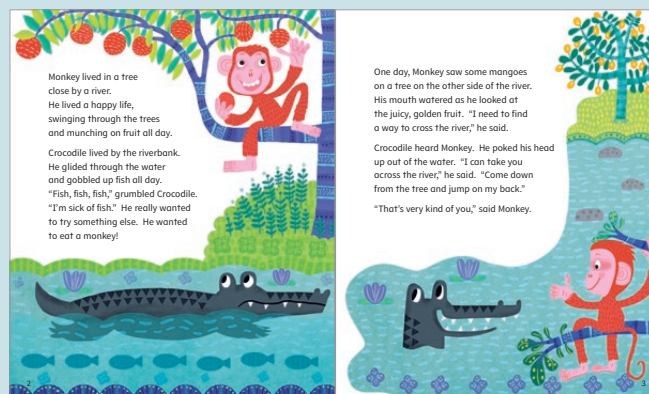
A mix of explicit and implicit content (in text and illustrations) that provides opportunities for students to make predictions and inferences

Narrative features (setting, characters, dialogue, plot, and a clear beginning, middle, and end) to support students to draw on and build their knowledge of story structure

The familiar context of a traditional tale to enable students to make connections to their prior knowledge

Language features that provide opportunities for students to apply and extend their knowledge of vocabulary and word structure, for example:

- a variety of verb forms including irregular past-tense verbs (“heard”, “began”, “thought”, “took”, “threw”)
- the compound words “afternoon”, “riverbank”, “something”
- the homophones “through” and “threw”



A variety of sentence structures requiring students to attend to punctuation and linking words (for example, “as”, “if”, “with”, “then”, “but”, “when”, “suddenly”) to clarify connections between ideas

The humorous style of the illustrations, including movement lines and the word “BOING!” in the illustration on the last page

Some descriptive language that may be new (for example, “swinging”, “munching”, “riverbank”, “glided”, “grumbled”, “really”, “mangoes”, “watered”, “juicy, golden fruit”, “poked”, “kind”, “suddenly”, “heart”, “angry”, “pretend”, “strange”, “jaws”, “snapped”, “leap”, “Crunch”, “Squash”, “BOING”) that are supported by the context, the sentence structure, and/or the illustrations and that provide opportunities for students to apply their processing system

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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?)*

To find out what happens when Crocodile takes Monkey across the river

To find out if Crocodile and Monkey are friends

## 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 goals listed below link to the descriptions of reading behaviours in *The Literacy Learning Progressions* and *The Learning Progression Frameworks*.

**Select from and adapt** them according to your students' strengths, needs, and experiences – their culture, language, and identity (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 7).

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

- **make connections** between their prior knowledge and information in the story to **make predictions and inferences**
- identify and track the main events in the story (**summarise**)
- identify and discuss (**analyse**) what makes this story exciting and satisfying to read
- form an opinion about the characters (**evaluate**)
- **make meaning** by searching for and using multiple sources of information together
- **monitor** their reading and self-correct where necessary, for example, by rereading text or checking further sources of information.

## Introducing the story

- 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 short video on the importance of introducing the text is available at <https://vimeo.com/142446572>. **Select from and adapt** the following suggestions.

For English language learners, you could talk through the illustrations on the cover, title page, and first few pages before the whole-group session to build confidence with vocabulary and to provide support with text features that may be unfamiliar. You can find further information about features of texts that may need support at ELLP.

- A few days before introducing this book, make available other familiar tales with tricky characters

for the students to reread and enjoy (see Related texts).

- Have the students read the title and sub-title. Encourage them to share their knowledge of other animal tales, particularly Indian tales.
- Briefly discuss what they know about monkeys and crocodiles. Clarify (if necessary) that crocodiles eat monkeys! Encourage the students to speculate why Monkey might be riding on the back of a crocodile. *What could happen?*
- Use the title page illustration to introduce the name of the fruit and to draw out the idea that mangoes would be something that Monkey would like to eat. If possible, have a picture of a mango handy (or have a real mango for the students to look at and taste).
- Use the illustrations on page 2 to confirm the students' understandings about monkeys and crocodiles. Prompt them to infer from the illustrations how each character seems to be feeling at this point.
- Draw attention to the mangoes in the page 3 illustration and encourage the students to speculate how Monkey might be able to get some. Prompt them to make a connection to the cover illustration.
- Share the reading purpose and give the students sticky notes to mark words or ideas they might want to come back to. Remind them of strategies they can use to solve words and clarify meaning (for example, looking for the biggest known word "chunk", using what they know about letters and sounds, rereading and/or reading on, thinking about what makes sense, and checking the illustrations).

## Monitoring the reading

- Observe the students as they read the story by themselves. Increasingly, the processing students do at this level is "inside their heads" and may not be obvious until you are discussing and rereading the story. Only intervene on the first reading if it's clear that a student needs help. There will be opportunities to provide further support with word solving and comprehension on subsequent readings.
- If a student makes an error without noticing, wait until the end of the sentence or the page before intervening, unless they stop reading. Waiting gives them the opportunity to notice and fix it themselves. Use appropriate prompts to draw their attention to the error.
- Remember to base these prompts on what you know about the student's 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 syntax and vocabulary. In this case, an explanation and further examples would be more effective, or simply tell them the word.

- These are examples of possible student errors and teacher responses:

Text in book	Student reads	Teacher prompt
swinging through the trees	swimming through the trees	<i>Does that make sense? Have another look.</i>
He <b>glided</b> through the water.	He <b>glided</b> through the water. (The student reads the line correctly but looks puzzled.)	Reassure the student about the word. <i>That's right, the word is "glided". What do you think it means? Note it as a discussion point for after the reading.</i>
His mouth <b>watered</b>	Monkey's mouth <b>wa ...</b> (The student stops.)	Ask the student to cover "ed" and look again at "water". Then have the student read the whole sentence. If necessary, prompt for meaning. <i>What does your mouth do when you see something nice you want to eat?</i>
BOING!	<b>B ...</b> (The student is unsure how to solve the word.)	Write "oi" words the student already knows (for example, coin, join, noise) and read them together. Support the student to draw on this knowledge and blend the sounds together to read "BOING".

- Other prompts that you could use include: *Are you sure?; Can you find your mistake and fix it?; What can you see in that word that will help you?; Can you break that into chunks?; What sound could that make?; What else could you check?*
- 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 revisit this story several times, focusing on different aspects and building vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. **Select from and adapt** the suggestions below. Many of the discussion points listed here also lead naturally into after-reading activities.

- Enjoy the students' responses to the ending. *Is that what you thought would happen? Have them review their earlier predictions. Did your ideas about Monkey or Crocodile change as you read the story?*
- Remind the students of their purpose for reading. *What did you find out? Have them summarise what happened and why. Use questions to support their thinking and prompt them to refer to the text for clarification. What did Monkey want? What did Crocodile want? Did they both get what they wanted?*
- Encourage the students to think critically. For example:
  - Do you think Monkey knew Crocodile was listening to him on page 3?
  - Was Crocodile really being kind when he offered to take Monkey across the river?

- Why did Monkey tell Crocodile that his heart was in the mango tree? (And why did Crocodile believe him?)
- Was Monkey brave or foolish?
- Have the students reread the story, stopping to discuss points of interest, including aspects they have marked with sticky notes. For example, you could explore:

- how the characters are feeling at different times. Prompt the students to make inferences using evidence in the text and illustrations. You could record the students' ideas on a chart, as in the partially completed example below.

Page	Our ideas about how the characters are feeling	Our evidence
2	Monkey – happy, satisfied	He's smiling. He lives "a happy life". He's got fruit to eat.
	Crocodile – grumpy, bored, dissatisfied	He's sick of eating fish and he's grumbling. He wants to eat Monkey, but Monkey is up in the tree. He looks grumpy.
3	Monkey – hungry, a bit greedy, foolish	His mouth is watering. He wants to get the mangoes. He decides to go with Crocodile.
	Crocodile – happy, tricky	He's smiling and being friendly. He thinks he can trick Monkey and eat him.

- the descriptive language, for example:
  - the verbs that describe what the characters did. The students could act them out to build their understanding. *What does it look like to glide? How does it feel if your mouth waters? Show me how you can pretend to be a rock.*
  - adjectives (such as "juicy", "golden", "kind", "Silly", "angry", "strange", "wide") to add information. Have the students reread the sentences where these words occur to clarify meaning.
  - the sound effects on the last page ("Crunch! Squash!", "BOING").
- the use of speech marks and attributions to indicate dialogue and the alternatives to "said" ("grumbled", "laughed", "yelled") to show how the character is speaking. You could also draw attention to the use of contractions to make the dialogue sound more natural.
- what makes the story exciting and satisfying to read, for example:
  - the characters trying to trick each other (and the silliness of Crocodile)

- the danger to Monkey (wondering if he is going to be OK)
- the humorous illustrations, including the movement lines and the word “BOING” in the illustration on page 8
- the descriptive language (see above)
- how the students worked out (or tried to work out) unfamiliar words or phrases. Explore aspects such as:
  - the irregular past-tense verbs “heard”, “began”, “thought”, “took”, “threw”. Reread the sentences where the words occur and discuss their meanings. Remind the students that not all verbs in English can have “ed” added. Make connections to some familiar examples (come/came, make/made, catch/catched, wake/woke).
  - the components of the compound words – “afternoon”, “riverbank”, “something”
  - the homophones “through” and “threw.”

## After reading: practice and reinforcement

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

For English language learners, [SELLIPS](#) also has ideas for purposeful and relevant tasks.

**Select from and adapt** these suggestions.

- Provide many opportunities for students to reread this story and to read other related texts. You could also read picture books written and illustrated by Vasanti Unka to the whole class.
- The students can build up their comprehension and fluency by rereading the book while listening to the audio version. Audio versions are particularly supportive for English language learners because, as well as clarifying pronunciation, they provide good models of the prosodic features of English, such as intonation and phrasing.
- The students could record themselves reading the story, perhaps with different students taking the roles of Monkey, Crocodile, and the narrator (similar to Readers’ Theatre). Prompt the students to attend to punctuation, including the dash on page 5 and the parentheses on page 6, to support phrasing and intonation.

- Have the students draw and write about their favourite part of the story and why they liked it or about how the characters were feeling at two different times in the story, using evidence from the book to support their ideas. They could also refer to the chart created when discussing the story.
- Ask the students to write about whether Monkey and Crocodile were clever or foolish, supporting their opinions using evidence from the story.
- The students could compare Monkey and Crocodile with one or two tricky characters from other stories (see Related texts). Have them write what each character did and why they did it. A possible framework is shown below.

Character	What the character did that was tricky	Why the character did it
Monkey		
Crocodile		
Tricky Rat		
The cat in <i>Purr-fect!</i>		
Flea in <i>I’m the King of the Mountain</i>		

- Have the students complete a cloze activity such as in the example below. You could provide the missing words, or the students could locate them in the story.

Monkey lived in a \_\_\_\_\_ close by a river.

He lived a \_\_\_\_\_ life, \_\_\_\_\_ through the trees and \_\_\_\_\_ on fruit all day.

Crocodile \_\_\_\_\_ by the riverbank. He \_\_\_\_\_ through the water and \_\_\_\_\_ up fish all day.

“Fish, fish, fish,” \_\_\_\_\_ Crocodile. “I’m sick of fish.” He \_\_\_\_\_ wanted to try something else. He wanted to eat a \_\_\_\_\_!

**Words** (in random order): monkey, really, gobbled, swinging, tree, glided, munching, happy, grumbled, lived

- Give the students cards with the component parts of the compound words from the story and have them work in pairs to reconstruct them (after/noon, river/bank, some/thing). Provide them with cards with other common components and challenge them to make and record as many compound words as they can.