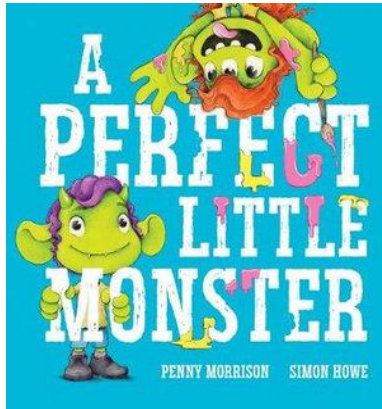


Preschool Activities



A Perfect Little Monster

Author: Penny Morrison

Illustrator: Simon Howe

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Outline:

Iris and Fang are twin monsters, but they couldn't be more different. Fang has lovely manners, but Iris behaves like a perfect monster. What will happen on their first day of school?

Author/Illustrator Information:

Author

Penny Morrison is a picture book author from the Northern Beaches of Sydney. She is an experienced early childhood teacher who loves every opportunity to promote the joy of reading. Her other books include the [CBCA Notable Captain Sneer the Buccaneer](#), the [Hey! Is that how God made ...](#) series and [The Mighty Mighty King Christmas Book](#).

Penny teaches part-time, runs a music playgroup and helps lead kids church on Sundays. She loves reading, leading writing workshops, speaking at conferences and visiting schools and preschools to share her books with children. She also squeezes in time for writing her own picture books, preferably sitting on the beach.

For more information see www.pennymorrison.net

Illustrator

Simon Howe is a picture book illustrator and development artist with a broad appetite for children's literature, animation, storytelling and design.

Some of his books include *On My Way* and *Bold Tales For Brave-Hearted Boys*. Simon is currently working with Hardie Grant Egmont to illustrate an exciting new chapter book series.

Since 2015, Simon has been working with kids folk band, *Teeny Tiny Stevies*, designing, directing and animating their music videos. He is a co-owner of *Pirate Size Productions*, a small company developing and producing high quality entertainment for children, young people and families.

For more information see www.simonhowe.com

Themes:

Social skills, friendship, assertiveness, sharing, co-operating, manners, tidiness, first day of school, twins, monsters, behaviour

Simon Howe on *A Perfect Little Monster*:



The illustrations were made digitally in Adobe Photoshop and a Wacom Cintiq drawing tablet. The line work is done with brushes that imitate graphite and coloured pencils, and the colouring was done with watercolour brushes built up in layers. Basically, it's the same process as traditional pencil and watercolour, but without the mess!

Penny Morrison on *A Perfect Little Monster*:



My story wasn't inspired by any particular wild child. It began with overhearing someone say, 'She's behaving like a perfect monster,' and then thinking about a monster who didn't behave like a 'proper' monster. I knew Fang would get into trouble for not acting the way a monster should--maybe he was even expelled from monster school because of his behaviour problem!



As a preschool teacher, I had often taught children to say, 'Please don't do that, I don't like it,' when someone was bothering them. Some children don't know how to stand up for themselves and being taught a phrase like this can help. Other children might push or hit someone who is hurting them and benefit from practising how to use words to solve a problem. I had often searched for a book which demonstrated a child using a similar phrase, but didn't find one. I was thrilled that Fang spoke like this and could model this phrase without it becoming a didactic book.

I had great fun imagining what Iris would consider to be perfect monster behaviour.

Get into a monster mood:

Drama

Make some monster growls, show your monster claws, make a monster face, stomp your monster feet.

Music

'We are monsters' by Mr. Eric and Mr. Michael (Learning Groove)

'We will stomp' by Mr. Eric and Mr. Michael (Learning Groove)

Choose two contrasting pieces of music, one calm and the other energetic, such as 'One Big Mob' by Red Hot Chili Peppers. Switch from one to the other, allowing the children to move and respond to the music.

Here are these songs on Spotify:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5pNGHVgAaJaxD3v8WFQDVg?si=olygK6waRTKX9MC6gc071g>

Discussion:

Before looking at the book

How do monsters behave? What would it be like if we had a monster in our classroom?

What do monsters think a 'perfect' monster is like?

Before reading the book

Look at the front cover. What do you think this story might be about?

Read the blurb on the back of the book. Which one is Iris and which one is Fang?

Which one do you think might be a perfect little monster?

During reading

Pp 4-5 (Packing bag picture) Which monster is telling the story? How do you know?

How do you think the monsters got their names?

Pp 6-7 (Brushing hair picture) Do you think anyone will know they're monsters?

Pp 8-9 (Arriving at school picture) How do the human children in the picture feel? Iris thinks smiling and saying hi is a bad habit. Why does she think that? What might happen if we smile and say hi?

Pp 14-15 (Sharing picture) What is Fang doing on this page? What is Iris doing? How do monsters share?

Pp 22-23 (Pack away picture) How does Fang feel in this picture? Why? How does Iris feel? Why?

P 24 (Final page) What is Iris doing in this picture? How does she feel?

After reading the story

What do you think Iris will do differently on her second day of school?

Do you remember what Fang said when someone played an instrument in his ear?

Responding creatively:

Art

Children create their own monsters using art material (draw, paint, collage, stick-on eyes) wearing a school uniform. Think of names for their monsters.

Drama

Give a purple wig and orange wig to two children, who pretend they are Iris and Fang. What might they say to each other?

Role play a situation where another child annoys/hurts you. How might you respond?

Role play with one child as Iris, hoarding all the toys for herself. How might you respond?

Set up a pretend school with paper and pencils, white board and school uniforms to dress up in.

Music/movement/maths

5 cheeky monsters jumping on the bed ...

Language

Opposite words. Ask if children can think of a word which is opposite to:

Tidy

Frowning

Unfriendly

In

On
Noisy
Polite
Greedy

Careful
Sad
Together
Calm