

Ideas for using MAPE's Big Books

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Look in KidsMAPE for the Big Books.
Read one of the Big Books, *Bluebell Time* or *Muddy Time*.
Answer the questions about the story you have read.
Only Katie-Lee has ever seen the monsters
so we do not really know what they look like.
Draw what you think the monster looks like.
Put the flowers from the story in your picture.



What is the name of Katie-Lee's dog?	
What colour is he?	
What flowers are in the story?	
What is the name of the monster?	
What colour is the monster?	
Did Mum believe that Katie-Lee saw the monster?	
What did Katie-Lee show Mum to try to make her believe?	
Do you believe Katie-Lee? Why?	

Notes for teachers

Monster Tree Stories

The Monster Tree stories all have a common format, which makes them ideal for studying story structure and comparing texts by looking at similarities and differences. [*National Literacy Strategy Text level work.*]

All are set in the same woods and involve the same ‘real’ characters – Katie-Lee, her dog, Lido and her mum. [*Discuss story settings – discuss and compare story themes – identify and describe characters.*]

All begin by looking at aspects of the natural history of a certain time of the year (when they are all available, there will be one story for each month). There is focus on the weather and a key feature of the natural environment and these are portrayed by photographic illustration. [*Compare and contrast stories with a variety of settings.*]

In the middle section, each of the stories has a fantasy element, set within the trees where one of the two monsters is encountered. The monsters have distinct characters – very different from each other – and are illustrated as cartoons. [*Identify and discuss main and recurring characters.*]

Each story ends with a discussion between Katie-Lee and her mum about what happened under the

monster trees. Katie-Lee always has some evidence to show but mum always disbelieves her account. [*Predict story endings/incidents – discuss character’s feeling and behaviour.*]

All the stories involve description, questions and dialogue and could thus also be studied at sentence level.

Other Big Books

Where do hedgehogs go? and *The Red Engine* are suitable for younger children.

Where do hedgehogs go? by Celia Burley has minimal text and beautiful watercolour illustrations. Hard copies of the book are available from MAPE.

The Red Engine has a cartoon format and an environmental theme. All the pages have appropriate music and narrated text.

Future development

MAPE plans to add more Big Books and would be interested in feedback from teachers who have used the existing resources in class. If you have any comments on any of the books please contact me, Heather Govier, Chair of MAPE at hgovier@CHALKFACE.NET or by snail mail at 219 Oswald, Courtwood Lane, Croydon, CR0 9HG.