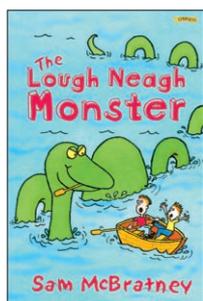


# THE LOUGH NEAGH MONSTER



by Sam McBratney, illustrated by Donald Teskey

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Everyone knows of the Lough Ness monster, but very few had ever heard of the one in Lough Neagh until Nessie decided to pay her quieter cousin a visit. Nessie, whose idea of fun is to headbutt boats and frighten old-age pensioners, had left her Scottish home when her antics caught the interest of journalists and scientists. But the pupils of Ballymascullion School are not as easily outwitted, and Noblett finds himself protecting his cousin from their Ancient Reptile Trap and the dangerous yellow monsters as Nessie makes the most of her Irish holiday.

## LANGUAGE – ENGLISH

- ◆ Vocabulary extension: Gratuitous, self-indulgent, impressive, synchronised, incredible, shambles.
- ◆ Descriptive language: ‘Couldn’t tell a full stop from a decimal point ...’ (pp.56, 57); ‘playing peek-a-boo with a boatload of tourists ...’ (p.38); ‘a mighty army of snorting yellow monsters on the march ...’ (p.74); ‘an ugly warty face and crooked flippers ...’ (p.53).
- ◆ Language of ancient reptiles: Plesiosaurus, plateosaurus, diplodocus reticulata, hinged hip-joints.
- ◆ Discussion: ‘Teachers are best at teaching what they are interested in ...’ (p.46), children analyse this statement, possibly in the form of a simple class debate.
- ◆ Discussion: Children discuss any exciting dreams that they may have had and compare them with Nessie’s ‘thrilling dreams’ on p.20.
- ◆ Creative: Headlines. Children discuss the newspaper headlines on p.40 and compose imaginative tabloid/broadsheet headlines of their own.

## SESE – SCIENCE

- ◆ Plants and animals: Variety and characteristics of living things. Children develop some awareness of the life cycle of the great reptiles, comparing and contrasting with common reptiles in the environment today. Identifying a range of underwater plants and living creatures such as eels and fish, suggesting those plants which Noblett might have grown in his underwater garden, investigating how plants respond to light. Recognising and describing characteristics of some

fish: Flippers, fins, tails, gills, scales.

- ◆ Fieldwork: Trip to local aquarium, e.g., National Aquarium, the Seafront, Bray, County Wicklow.
- ◆ Sound: Discussing the purpose of the sonar equipment and underwater probes used by the scientists, p.11.

## SESE – GEOGRAPHY

- ◆ Natural environments: Identifying and exploring name, location, flora and fauna of a major natural feature, Lough Neagh. (pp.14–15).
- ◆ Water: Investigating how water can move materials and objects of different sizes, learning about water and its uses.

## SPHE

- ◆ Myself: Self-identity. Recognising and appreciating the similarities and differences between people, within families (p.15).
- ◆ Myself: Making decisions. Realising that decision-making involves personal responsibility; were the choices made by Nessie in pursuit of ‘fun’ (pp.22, 23, 28–30) irresponsible and/or selfish?
- ◆ Myself and others: My friends and other people. Identifying and discussing qualities and skills associated with friendship, forgiving each other, being sensitive to the feelings of one’s friends. Children discuss Nessie’s relationship with Noblett; did Nessie treat her cousin with dignity and respect, did she practise care, consideration and courtesy when interacting with Noblett and others?

## VISUAL ARTS

- ◆ Windsurfer sails: See *Busy Fingers* series, No. 2, Summer, p.7.
- ◆ Tissue fish: See *Starting Art*, Book 1, pp.18–19.