

## The Twits - The House, The Tree and the Monkey Cage

Lesson  
plan

### Overview

#### Learning objective

- To explore how character may be reflected in surroundings.

#### Learning outcome

- To create a design for the Twits' garden.

#### Book reference

- Chapter 14: The House, the Tree and the Monkey Cage.

#### Cross-curricular link

- Literacy, Critical Thinking, Science (living things), Design and Technology.

#### Resources

- If possible, the lesson to include a visit or subsequent trip to a nearby overgrown area, hopefully one that has lots of weeds, stinging nettles and so on.



### Starter

- Discuss in pairs: what sort of house and garden do you think Mr and Mrs Twit would have? Why?
- Feedback ideas to the rest of the class.
- Visit an overgrown area. Study the plant and insect life there.
- Discuss:
  - What do plants need to grow?
  - Which plants are growing abundantly?
  - Which plants are not growing here? Why?
- Generate multisensory words and figurative language to describe the experience.
- Choose a particular plant and consider:
  - What does it look like?
  - What does it feel like?
  - What does smell like?
  - What does its shape/texture/smell remind you of?
- Return to the classroom and create a class mind-map recording the students' ideas.

### Main teaching activity

- Read the fourteenth chapter of *The Twits*, The House, The Tree and the Monkey Cage.
- Close-read this extract:

“ Here is a picture of Mr and Mrs Twit’s house and garden. Some house! It looks like a prison. And not a window anywhere.

“Who wants windows?” Mr Twit had said when they were building it. “Who wants every Tom, Dick and Harry peeping in to see what you’re doing?” It didn’t occur to Mr Twit that windows were meant mainly for looking out of, not for looking into.

And what do you think of that ghastly garden? Mrs Twit was the gardener. She was very good at growing thistles and stinging-nettles. “I always grow plenty of spiky thistles and plenty of stinging-nettles,” she used to say. “They keep out nasty nose little children.”

Near the house you can see Mr Twit’s workshed.

To one side there is The Big Dead Tree. It never has any leaves on it because it’s dead.

- In pairs, identify the reasons Mr and Mrs Twit give for their decisions to keep the house and garden the way that they are.
- Underline use of adjectives, alliteration and simile to describe the house and garden.



## The Twits - The House, The Tree and The Monkey Cage cont.

### Group or independent activity

- Independently, draw a design for the the Twits' garden. The design should have annotations which describe:
  - The feature of the garden.
  - An adjective or simile for the feature.
  - The reason it is there.



### Plenary

- Individuals present their gardens to the rest of the group.
- Peers can comment upon the effectiveness of the ideas, adjectives, similes and reasons for decisions in the gardens.

### Other activities

- Create a class display of the designs;
- Make the garden using craft materials within a silver roasting tray or a cardboard box;
- Script or roleplay the conversation the different plants might have in the garden. What it is like to be growing in such a miserable place?