

## The Twits - The Furniture Goes Up

Lesson  
plan

### Overview

#### Learning objective

- To develop research skills.
- To understand and interpret key features of birds.
- To develop empathetic skills.

#### Learning outcome

- To produce a piece of creative writing, written in the first person from the point of view of a bird.

#### Book reference

- Chapters 23, 24 and 25: The Great Glue Painting Begins, The Carpet Goes on the Ceiling, and The Furniture Goes Up.

#### Cross-curricular link

- Literacy, Art, Science (living things and their habitats), PSICHE.

#### Resources

- Research materials – you might consider creating fact cards about particular birds.



### Starter

- Discuss in pairs: what makes a good team?
- Feedback ideas to the rest of the class.
- Read, or recap, Chapter 23, 24 and 25 from *The Twits*.
- Focus upon this extract from Chapter 23, The Great Glue Painting Begins:

“ And so the great glue painting of the ceiling began. All the other birds who had been sitting on the roof flew in to help, carrying paint-brushes in their claws and beaks. There were buzzards, magpies, rooks, ravens and many more. Everyone was splashing away like mad and, with so many helpers, the job was soon finished.

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- How are the birds working well as a team?
- Draw out that a team can work well on a task when everyone contributes a skill they are good at.

### Main teaching activity

- Pairs choose a bird to research. The bird may be from the text (“buzzard, magpie, rook, raven”) but also any others with interesting features or unusual habitats (such as, from the UK: barn owl, cockerel, cuckoo, robin, black-headed gull, swan, vulture, green woodpecker; and from outside the UK: albatross, hummingbird, ostrich, parrot, peacock, pelican, penguin, puffin, vulture.)
- Pairs research key facts about the bird, using these guidelines:
  - The bird’s habitat – where it lives;
  - The bird’s plumage – the colours and patterns of its feathers;
  - What the bird likes to eat;
  - Any distinguishing features (for example: a long neck, a strong beak, a nice song);
  - The bird’s behaviour (for example, owls are wise; puffins are very sociable and hang around in enormous groups; albatrosses spend much of their life flying.)



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### Group or independent activity

- Explain that the children will now create a new character, which will be the bird they have chosen.
- Pairs invent a name for their chosen bird-character. It could use assonance, alliteration or rhyme, just like Roald Dahl's inventive use of names (The Roly Poly Bird, Muggle-Wump.)
- Working in pairs or individually, the children write the story of the Great Glue Painting from the point of view of the bird-character. The story should include:
  - A description of the bird's natural habitat – where had the bird been during the day, before painting the Twits' ceiling with glue and moving all the furniture?
  - The features of the bird – for example, a strong beak – and how that might help (or hinder) the bird to complete the task;
  - How it felt to take part in the Great Glue Painting, moving the carpet to the ceiling, and then lifting the furniture up and sticking it upside down;
  - How the bird feels towards Mr and Mrs Twit.
- Examples:

#### Mafflewop the Magpie:

Ha! Ha! I was so excited when Muggle-Wump told us all to paint the ceiling with glue. I had spent all day stealing sparkly pennies when I thought, 'Hang on! Why do I always steal from people? Why don't I help the other birds for a change?' While we painted the Twits' ceiling with glue, I kept chattering and chattering about it, and the other birds told me to be quiet. I think I was annoying them.

#### Beauzle the Buzzard:

For hours, I was circling and circling the hills, looking for worms to eat. I was delighted when I saw hundreds of worms wriggling around in a horrible overgrown garden below. I knew this must be the Twits' house because I know Mrs Twit sometimes disguises worms as spaghetti. I smoothly floated down to find a tasty one to eat for my tea, when I heard a big commotion coming from inside the house. I went inside, and found Muggle-Wump there, telling us all to paint the Twits' ceiling with glue. Soon I was holding a paintbrush in my big, strong beak. I have to say I was much better at holding onto it than those tiny sparrows with their tiny beaks.



## The Twits - The Furniture Goes Up cont.



### Plenary

- Individuals can read out the beginnings of their stories to the rest of the class.
- Peers can comment on the effectiveness of particular words and phrases on the reader.

### Other activities

- Draw the bird for a class wall display that shows the Great Glue Painting in progress.
- Make a bird mask and prepare a dramatic presentation of the bird's monologue dressed in character.
- Natural environment: Go outside and see which birds can be spotted in the school grounds. Listen to their calls and observe their flight patterns and behaviour. Make a record of the findings and present it in a poster or oral presentation.

