



CfE levels Early and First (Ages 4-8)

## **Emily Gravett learning resource**

Creative activities based on  
*Dogs, Monkey and Me* and *Tidy*

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## About this resource

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This resource gives cross-curricular activity suggestions to help you find out more about Emily Gravett and explore her books *Tidy*, *Dogs* and *Monkey and Me* with your class or book group. Adapt and use these activities as you see fit! Whether you own a class set or just one copy, we hope there's something in here which inspires you to set up some fun, creative learning around the books.

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## About Emily Gravett

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Emily Gravett has become a household name in children's writing and illustration since the publication of her first book *Wolves* in 2005. With books like *Orange Pear Apple Bear*, *Little Mouse's Big Book of Fears* and *Again!* she has cemented a reputation as an innovative and dynamic author and illustrator, with each new book strikingly different from the last. Emily has won the Kate Greenaway medal for illustration twice in her relatively short career. She lives in Brighton with her family.

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## Activities based on Tidy

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### Conservation

SCN 1-02a, Lit 1-25a, Eng 1-31a

Pete really should find out a bit about all the trees before he decides to dig them all up. To encourage your pupils to find out about a tree, you can use the following resources:

- This BBC clip tells pupils all about the life of an oak tree:  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/clips/z6bvr82>
- This longer clip may also be useful to find out about trees and forest wildlife: <http://bbc.in/2iLz7kX>
- This presentation on the TES website will help you introduce different types of tree to pupils (you'll need to create a free login):  
<http://bit.ly/2iLvo6F>

After you've used these resources to introduce your pupils to a few different types of tree, head out to a natural space and try to identify different types of tree. This Tree ID sheet from Woodland Trust is very handy for this task: <http://bit.ly/2iLCzff>. For younger pupils, this ID sheet asks them to simply arrange leaves by colour, shape and size rather than tree type: <http://bit.ly/2iLEMr0>

After this, ask pupils to record their findings in some way, describing the physical characteristics of the trees they've found, as well any wildlife that lives in or feeds from the tree. You can choose different ways of doing this: annotated photo galleries, narrated digital stories, illustrations, reports or creative texts like poems are all good ways for pupils to record and share their findings with others. For older pupils, the next activity might present a good option!

### **Write poetry about the natural world**

Eng 1-31a

Writing a poem about a natural feature like a tree is a great way to conserve and share an experience with others.

Take your pupils out on a walk in a natural space – even the school playground will do the job as long as there are some natural features there. Ask the pupils to record what they can see, hear, touch and smell near (for example) a tree. How does the tree's surface feel? Do the leaves make a sound? What do the patterns on the leaves look like?

Afterwards, ask the pupils to write a poem describing what they've seen. This video from author Nicola Davies should help pupils transform their experiences into writing: <http://bit.ly/2jc7loR>

### **Discussion**

Lit 1-02a, Lit 1-09a, HWB 1-08a

Pete thinks he's doing a good thing by tidying the forest, but he doesn't really think about how it will impact others. However, he admits he made a mistake and sets about putting it right.

Discuss the following questions with your pupils:

- What does it mean to make a mistake? What different kind of mistakes can we make – just with schoolwork, or with the way we behave too?
- Do you think we should expect to never make mistakes?
- Why do you think people make mistakes?
- How do you think we should react if we make mistakes? What about if another person makes a mistake?
- Can making mistakes be a good thing?

Other titles which explore characters who get things wrong include *Stanley the Amazing Knitting Cat* by Emily MacKenzie, *I Don't Want to Be a Pea* by Ann Bonwill, *My Big Shouting Day* by Rebecca Paterson and *Red* by Jan de Kinder.

### **If you and your pupils loved *Tidy***

Check out this list of funny picture books:

<http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists/12-funny-books-to-enjoy-during-scotlands-big-laugh-3-7>

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## Activities based on *Dogs*

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### **Drama and retelling**

HWB 1-21a, Lit 1-03a

The book describes dogs behaving in all different kinds of ways. Ask your pupils to move around and imitate the dogs as you read through the story.

If you want to extend the activity to help pupils retell the story, use story stepping to help pupils remember what the dogs are doing at different stages of the book.

Story stepping involves pupils coming up with an action to represent what is happening on each page, and then reading the accompanying text straight after they've done the action. After they've done one action and read the text, they take a step and do another action representing what happens next in the book.

After some practice, ask pupils to do this without having the book to refer to.

If you don't want to give pupils too much to remember, split them into groups and allocate them small sections of the story. They can then perform these to each other!

### **The Minister's Dog**

Lit 1-02a, Lit 1-26a

Emily Gravett uses lots of adjectives to describe the dogs in the book. You can use an adaptation of the game The Minister's Cat to get pupils thinking of new adjectives!

To play The Minister's Dog, tell the pupils that, "The minister's dog is an amazing dog." Then, ask a pupil to say the same thing, except that the adjective has to begin with the letter 'b': for example, "The minister's dog is a bendy dog." Encourage pupils to think of descriptions they might not expect to be applied to a dog: curvy dogs and disappointed dogs should be welcomed!

This activity can be a good precursor to pupils writing and illustrating their own versions of the book with new descriptions and images.

## Illustration activity for older children

EXA 1-03a, Lit 1-31a

This activity will help older pupils to think about purpose and audience when designing a picture book for younger children. Make sure that pupils haven't seen the book before you do this activity!

Share some picture books which show pupils how important images and layout can be in helping us understand a story:

- Ross Collins' *There's a Bear on My Chair* has relatively simple text, but the images tell us more about the characters' emotions. Have a look at Ross reading the book here: <http://bit.ly/2jbfndX>
- Jon Klassen's *This Is Not My Hat* is a slightly more complex example, where without the pictures, we would have a completely different understanding of what is happening in the story. Jon reads the book out in our Authors Live video here: <http://bit.ly/2jb97Mb>

Reproduce the text from *Dogs* on a side of A4, and hand it out to pupils. Tell them that they need to decide what is going to be in the illustrations, and how the book will be laid out. They need to consider their young audience's requirements: the book needs to be fun and lively as well as easy to follow, and the ending needs to have some suspense and a surprise revelation.

Our 'Who Am I and Who Are You?' resource can help pupils get to grips with depicting illustrated characters: <http://bit.ly/2jbcgMj>

## If you and your pupils loved Dogs

Check out this list of other books about our canine friends:

<http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists/10-books-about-dogs>

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## Activities based on *Monkey and Me*

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### **Hold a puppet show**

EXA 1-02a, Lit 1-31a

*Monkey and Me* provides a great opportunity for pupils to make puppets and re-tell the story as a puppet show: there is a wide variety of animals to re-create from the book. Have a look at the images gallery in this case study for some different ways to create puppets: <http://bit.ly/2jblJD9>. A search for 'making monkey puppets' on Pinterest will also give some handy results!

If you want to extend the activity beyond simply re-telling the story, you could ask pupils to add to the story by writing short monologues where each animal introduces itself and tells the girl and her monkey a bit more about themselves.

After this, why not invite another class or parents in to watch a puppet performance of the story?

### **Local sightseeing**

EXA 1-03a

After going to the zoo, the girl and the monkey might be keen for another day out! Ask your pupils what the girl and the monkey might see if they came to visit your home town. What would the pupils recommend seeing, and what would they tell them about the town? Ask pupils to draw or paint pictures of themselves on a day out with the girl and the monkey, seeing a local sight or doing one of their favourite activities.

### **Create your own zoo**

LIT 1-09a, LIT 1-14a, LIT 1-28a, Exa 1-03a

The book can open up great opportunities for research, numeracy, role play and parental involvement. Why not get your pupils to open up their own zoo?

Explain to the pupils that their first task is to find out all about the animals in a zoo. What do they eat, where do they come from and what are their babies called? What other interesting facts can your pupils find out?

National Geographic's Kids website is a great place for you to find out some interesting facts to pass on to your pupils:

<http://ngkids.co.uk/animals>

Help your pupils come up with their own fun facts. For instance, a tiger can weigh up to 363 kg and measure up to 3.3m, so how does this compare to other animals? How many cats would need to stand on a scale to reach the tiger's weight? How many tigers could fit inside your classroom?

After this, ask the pupils to paint pictures of different animals, depicting one fun fact about the animal.

Once the paintings are done, it's time to create your zoo! Arrange the paintings around the classroom – this will give the pupils a chance to sort the animals into categories, just like in a zoo. Invite parents in and let the children tell them all about the animals. They can build or set up a makeshift reception desk, where they can ask for money and hand over tickets and guide leaflets with 'maps' of the zoo. Ask small groups of children to be 'zookeepers' for individual areas, so they can be designated experts about the animals in that area. Get them to entertain parents with the fun facts they have learned about the animals!

### **If you and your pupils loved *Monkey and Me***

Check out this list of other books about the zoo:

<http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists/10-books-set-at-the-zoo-3-7>