



Monkey Puzzle learning resource

Ideas and activities to support
using Julia Donaldson's book
in class

Age 3-8

CFE Levels Early to First

Resources created by
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**Scottish
Book Trust**
inspiring readers and writers

Contents

Activities: Introducing Julia Donaldson	2
<i>Monkey Puzzle</i> activities	2

How to use this resource

These resources are designed to support a project around Julia Donaldson's book *Monkey Puzzle*. There are quick activity ideas, and suggestions for longer project work.

Activities: Introducing Julia Donaldson

These activities can be used with any Julia Donaldson book, and are a good way to introduce the concept of an author.

Book hunt LIT 0-01b, LIT 0-11b

Go to your class, school or local library and go on a Julia Donaldson book hunt. Try to find as many books written by Julia Donaldson as you can. Look at the front covers and tell a partner or group which one you would most like to read and what you think it will be about.

A day in the life of... ENG 1-17a

Julia has a range of resources to explore on her website. Take a look at the poem she has written about '[A day in my life](#)'. Create 3 questions that you would like to ask Julia, based on what she has told you about her everyday life. Try to use a mixture of hot and cold questions for Julia!

Read a variety of books LIT 1-28a, LIT 1-29a

Read different picture books written by Julia Donaldson and write her a letter telling her about which books you liked, what you liked about them, how you feel about the illustrations and any other ideas that you have about setting, characters or plot. Tell her about the types of stories that you like to write and ask for any tips that you would like to help improve your writing.

Monkey Puzzle Activities

Perfect patterns MTH 0-19a, MTH 1-19a

Look at the pictures of butterfly with her wings outstretched. The pattern on both sides is the same. Create your own symmetrical butterfly and use paint with sponges, potato printing or your hands to create a large symmetrical butterfly mural for the wall.

Extension activity: The pattern on butterfly's wings is symmetrical. Look at the pictures in the story and find other symmetrical images (leaves, flowers, insects, bat for example). Go for a walk around the school playground or grounds and try to find other symmetrical shapes and objects in the environment. Take any that are lying on the ground back to class and make a symmetry collage of the objects you have found in nature.

Animal role play EXA 0-12a

Choose one of the animals or insects from the story and role-play the creature, using actions and noises in a space of your own. Call out one name and that person should continue moving, whilst all others should freeze on the spot. Others should try to guess which creature they are being. When the teacher claps, you should all

move again. Repeat the game until everyone has had a turn at showing their movements and others have guessed.

Explore nature SCN 0-01a

Look at the different animals and insects in the story. Go on a nature walk in the school grounds or in a local park and see how many of them you can spot in your own local area. Take photos of the creatures that you find which also appear in the story. When you get back to school, draw a picture of one creature that you saw which does not appear in the story. Talk about the animals in the story which you did not see on your nature walk.

Standing statues game LIT 0-01a, LIT 0-11a, LIT 0-20a

Listen to the story being read to you slowly, and stand up every time that you hear a word that has the same sound as another word from the story. Try to tell the class or group which two words sound the same. Examples could include 'she' and 'me' or 'mum' and 'come'. Try to think of another work of your own which sounds the same.

People who help us when we are worried HWB 0-03a

In the story, little monkey turns to butterfly to help him find his mother. They work together to find her and monkey changes from being worried and scared to being happy in the end. Think about a time that you have been worried or scared at home or school. Talk about who you would turn to help to you in each different situation, and how you felt once they had helped you. Paint or draw a picture of one of the different people in your life who helps you. Cut out all of the pictures and create a montage of 'people who help us when we are worried'.

When you are worried ENG 1-19a

Little monkey is lost and worried because he cannot find his mum. Think about a time that you were lost by yourself or with others. Think about how you felt when you were lost or when something or someone you care about got lost. Look at the monkey's face on the front cover and the first page of the story and talk about how he is feeling. Draw a picture of the time you got lost or you lost a person or thing and try to show how you were feeling by putting detail into the face. Share your picture with the class or a group, telling friends what happened and how you felt when you got lost.

Create a MISSING poster LIT 1-14a

Look through the story for the different descriptions that little monkey gives of his mother. Create a MISSING poster that could be nailed to a tree in the jungle, giving all of the different details of what she looks like (look at the descriptions of her size, tail, legs, fur etc.). Remember to include information about where she was last seen and choose a reward that you would give if somebody/an animal found her.

Caterpillars and Butterflies SCN 1-14a

Butterfly did not realise that little monkey looks like his mother as butterfly looks very different to her babies. You can watch how caterpillars turn into butterflies on this [BBC bite size video](#).

Animal illustration EXA 1-02a

Look at the illustrations of the different animals in the story. Choose 1 that you would like to create yourself. Draw a large outline of your chosen animal or insect on A3 sugar paper. Using the written descriptions of the animals and the illustrations, choose which media you would like to use to complete your picture. Think about the wide range of materials available- cloth, fur, sugar paper, waste materials, pastels, watercolours, pens, pencils, buttons, shells, foil, foam, wool ... Complete your picture and then describe it to the class, explaining why you chose the media that you did. Cover the wall in green and draw on lots of leaf shapes. Cut out and hang your pictures in front to create your own class jungle!