

# Shifty McGifty

AND

# SLIPPERY SAM



Two robber dogs are cooking up trouble!

**nosy  
crow**

## ***Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam*** **learning activities**

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Age 4-8

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CFE Levels Early - First

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Resource created by  
Scottish Book Trust

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## About this resource

This resource is full of creative, cross-curricular activities inspired by the books *Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam*, *Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam: The Missing Masterpiece* and *Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam: The Aliens are Coming* by Tracey Corderoy and Steven Lenton. The activities can be used as part of a cross-curricular book project in class, or as individual activities.

## Authors Live

You can watch Tracey and Steven in action in their BBC Authors Live event, available on our [On Demand Library](#). In this event, you can enjoy an interactive reading of *Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam* and *Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam: The Diamond Chase* by Tracey, and learn to draw Slippery Sam with Steven. Also be prepared to participate in their “Oh no where did it go?” spot the difference game! Be sure to have pen and paper at the ready.

# ***Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam* activities**

## **Pre-reading: Discuss the book**

ENG 0-17a, ENG 1-17a

Before read the book, introduce the characters through the cover illustration and ask pupils questions:

- What do you think these characters are up to?
- Would you like to meet them? What would you ask them?
- Do you think they are naughty or nice? What makes you think that?
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## **Challenging stereotypes**

RME 0-09a, RME 1-09b

Why do robbers wear stripy tops and masks? Talk about stereotypes/uniforms/costumes. Show examples of these from illustrations in other books, eg ballet dancers, truck drivers, doctors and nurses, boxers.

How they can work against us making people think a certain way just by how we dress or look, and how can they work for us by showing we are part of a school /team/group who like a particular style?

## **Hot seating**

LIT 0-09a, LIT 1-09a

When the children are familiar with the Shifty McGifty story you can ask them to play 'hot seating'. In hot seating, each child takes a turn at being one of the characters in the story: Shifty, Sam, a neighbour, someone they tried to steal from, a visitor to the cake shop etc. They are questioned by the other children and must try to answer as the character.

For example: Shifty, what made you think that robbery was a good job for you? Neighbour, what did you think about attending a tea party, would you normally go to a strange dog's house for tea? Some children will be happy to answer a single question as the character; some will never want to leave the seat!

## **Drama**

EXA 0-13a, EXA 1-13a

Look at the places Shifty and Sam tried to rob...the bank and the butchers, the paper shop, the bookshop, the bike shop ...even the zoo.

Dramatise one of the attempted robberies with characters imagined from each venue. How did the robbery start? What did they try to steal? How were they foiled?

Small groups of children create their own dramatisation of an attempted Shifty and Sam robbery for others to watch, interpret and enjoy. Our “Quick activities for performing picture books” and “How to turn picture books into plays” resource can support you introducing drama in your classroom. Find both of these resources in the learning section of our website, or find via the browse and search function.

## **WOW cupcake words**

LIT 0-13a, LIT 0-21a, LIT 1-26a, EXA 0-02a

The buns at the party are described as dreamy and creamy, great adjectives. Can children think of other WOW words to describe delicious baking? Slurpy, squidgy, yumbilicious – wow, great adjectives, these can be captured and stored on the wall to be used in other pieces of writing.

To make your world wall, make a template of a cupcake, where the paper cup is plain white but the cake part is coloured to make it attractive. On the plain cup section write an adjective children have discovered through the book or other writing and could use to improve their descriptions in other stories they write. At first, the words will be solely to describe wonderfully tasty cakes but this resource can be extended to act as a space to store all new and interesting adjectives across the curriculum and throughout the year. The cake selection on the wall can be added to as the term progresses. Adjectives fill up a wall space as a great resource to tap into for writing as well as being an attractive display which children will wish to add to.

Cake shaped stencils can be made and used as a basis for the place to store and collect new WOW words for further work in the classroom long after Shifty and Sam have left the building!

## **Organise a bake sale or coffee morning**

MNU 1-09a, MNU 2-09a, SOC 1-18a, SOC 1-21a, SOC 1-22a

Children will have been to cake sales and coffee mornings. Have they ever organised one? This could be a small scale enterprise where children choose a simple cup cake recipe and decide to make cakes to sell to another class/staff/parents at a given date and time.

*What are we going to bake? Where will we get the ingredients?*

If possible, children should be involved in shopping for the ingredients and make lists beforehand.

First Level children will be able to budget and keep within an agreed amount to be spent. This is always more difficult where decorations are involved so they may need to be lead towards grating a bar of chocolate rather than buying the more expensive chocolate decorations.

They will also need to work out how much to sell the cakes for in order to cover their costs or make money if this is their intent.

What will any profits be used for? Do the children have a cause they support? Does the school or library have a collection fund running which this event to support or do children want to use it to buy more Shifty McGifty books for themselves?

Make posters and invitations, giving concise and clear information about the cake sale in an attractive way.

Schools which operate a healthier eating policy and don't encourage children to bring sweet snacks or bake cakes can use this as an ideal opportunity to support school policy by using a recipe involving healthier options. Have a sports bar sale, a veg and dip sale or encourage global enterprise by making it a Fair Trade sale.

Cost, advertise, bake, sell...enjoy.

Children may be encouraged to reflect on how well this enterprise worked or how they would do it differently next time but the main aim here is to enjoy taking part in an enterprise project.

## ***Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam* recipe book**

SOC 1-21a, SOC 1-22a, HWB 1-29a, HWB 1-30a

This enterprise can be completed wholly in the classroom with children identifying, gathering and recording recipes from books and cookery sites or can go beyond the classroom and involve parents and carers in supplying their favourite and well tested recipes.

The principle for the recipe book enterprise is similar to the baking exercise but there are a few added challenges and benefits.

Co-ordinating and recording recipes can be time consuming and needs more commitment than baking cakes but make use of the adults involved.

Can all recipes coming from home be typed in the same font and size?

This allows your recipe book to be put together in a clear and concise format, neatly printed, copied and bound/stapled. Or doesn't it matter in your recipe book?

Could the recipe book contain "stolen" recipes and therefore it can look a bit higgledy piggledy?

For example, the book could be called 'Shifty McGifty and Primary 2 Have Stolen Some Recipes Just for You'.

This recipe book would contain a mixture of hand written recipes, pages torn from magazines and neatly typed up ones. Pages are photocopied but recipes may be at funny angles or have hand written side notes ..." stolen from the school kitchen" ...."pinched from Mrs Lafferty's Classroom".

A simple recipe book created in school using scissors, glue and a photocopier, with the cover designed by children would make a quirky and fun enterprise.

If you have a local company or firm who might provide some sponsorship think about having the recipe booklet professionally printed.

It will look and feel great and now the children are true authors as their book has been "published" - just like Tracey Corderoy and Steven Lenton.

# ***Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam: The Missing Masterpiece activities***

## **Learn French!**

MLAN 1-01a, MLAN 1-03, MLAN 1-05a, MLAN 1-11a

In this story, we find Shifty and Sam in Paris in order to bake for an exhibition opening. Use this as an opportunity to learn some French. Perhaps you are already learning French in school as part of the 1+2 Approach to modern languages.

In the book, there are newspapers and signs in French. Cunningham Sly also speaks French- what does he say? Point out different French words in the book to your pupils and teach them to your pupils. You could create a Shifty McGifty French word bank and add the words. As you learn more words from and out with the book, pupils can add these to their word bank too.

## **Explore Paris**

SOC 1-13b, SOC 1-14a

Shifty and Sam are new to Paris and are amazed by what is around them. Together research all things French. Discuss:

- Where is France?
- What is Paris famous for?
- What do French people eat?
- What does Paris look like? There are lots of famous monuments in the book to discuss and explore.

## **What to do in an emergency?**

SOC 1-20a, LIT 1-09a

Shifty and Sam call the police to help them after they catch Cunningham Sly. This is a good opportunity to discuss what children should do in an emergency.

Here are some great books you can read with your class to introduce them to different emergency services:

## **Police**

*Wanted: Ralfy Rabbit, Book Burglar* by Emily MacKenzie

*What the Ladybird Heard* by Julia Donaldson and Lydia Monks

## **Ambulance**

*Tabby McTat* by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler

*Ambulance, Ambulance!* By Sally Sutton and Brian Lovelock

*Dylan the Doctor* by Guy Parker Rees

## **Fire Service**

*This Book Just Ate My Dog* by Richard Byrne

*George's Dragon at the Fire Station* by Claire Freedman and Russell Julian

*Maisy's Fire Engine* by Lucy Cousins

Do your pupils know what to do in the event of an emergency? Pupils can write scripts and act out 999 calls. For younger pupils there are some great activities and videos you can show them in this resource: [theschoolrun.com/homework-help/people-who-help-us](https://theschoolrun.com/homework-help/people-who-help-us)

## **Famous paintings**

EXA 1-07a, ENG 1-03a, LIT 1-20a, ENG 1-31a

The illustrator Steven Lenton has sneaky hidden and referenced four famous paintings:

- *The Girl with the Pearl Earring* by Johannes Vermeer (aka The Pug with a Pearl Earring)
- *The Son of Man* by Rene Magritte (aka Son of Man's Best Friend)
- *Self-Portrait* by Frida Kahlo (aka Frida Collie)
- *Mona Lisa* by Leonardo Da Vinci (aka Bone-a-lisa)

Look at the real paintings and compare them to the ones in the book. Which do your pupils prefer? Can they explain why?

Paintings are a great starting point for creative writing, as they offer many opportunities to ask questions of characters. Choose a painting with your class to focus on, and then began to ask questions of it. For example:

- Why does she only have one earring? Who is she? Where might she be going?
- Why does he have an apple in front of his face? Why is it a green apple? Does he prefer green to red? If so, why?
- Where is Mona Lisa sitting? What can you see behind her? How do they think she is feeling? Why?



- What does Frida have in her hair? Why might that be? What is in the background? What is she thinking? Does she look happy or sad?

The answers to these questions can be used as a starting point for a story. Ask pupils to write a short story based on the chosen character or painting exploring what your pupils think the person is thinking, feeling or doing. Ask your pupils to share their story with the rest of the class. This will show that from the same starting point, you have an incredible variety of creative responses.

### **Bake a monument**

SOC 1-13a, EXA 1-05a, EXA 1-06a, MNU 0-11a, MTH 0-16a

Shifty and Sam bake their own gingerbread Eiffel Tower, complete with French flag and sweet decoration. Could you use this as inspiration to create your own baked monument based on a building or place in your local area? The [Festival of Architecture](#) produced baked buildings from all across Scotland.

First, explore historic monuments and buildings in your local area. If you are able, walk and visit them. Ask pupils to vote for the one they would most like to make into a cake.

Next, ask pupils to draw and design their cake. Ask them to think about the shapes they could use to make their cake. For example, will it need to be circular, square, or triangular? Which would best fit the shape of the building?

You could stop here, using this activity as a planning and design exercise, asking pupils to draw their cake or create it out of cardboard or other recycled materials. Or you could ask pupils to work as a team to create a few of the designs as cake!

## ***Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam: The Aliens are Coming activities***

*Shifty McGifty and Slippery Sam: The Aliens are Coming* contains three short stories:

- The Aliens are Coming!
- Ice-Cream Time
- Miss Peachy-Pie's Pamper Café

There is one activity for each of the short stories.

## Build an alien reading den

EXA 1-05a, EXA 1-06a

Sam builds a reflective alien reading den in his garden. Use this as inspiration to create your own alien reading den! Ask pupils to design the reading den, thinking about which materials they would use. What would they like it to look like? What would they like inside? Where in the school (in outdoor space too) would be good to have the den?

Once your class has decided, you can start to construct your reading den. You could have a small celebration to ceremony to celebrate the opening or unveiling of the reading den. *The Aliens are Coming* could be the first book you read in it!

## Coast and waters

LIT 1-04a, LIT 1-09a, SOC 1-08a, SOC 2-08a

In *Ice-Cream Time* McGifty and Sam spent time at the beach as part of the sandcastle competition. Use this as an opportunity to talk about the [clean beaches campaign](#) and ocean pollution. There have been a number of articles in the news recently about plastic pollution, and [Plastic Oceans](#) has videos and articles you can explore with your students.

The photo of a [seahorse holding a cotton bud](#) has become world famous following the [Wildlife Photographer of the Year](#) competition. Look at this image with your class. What does it make them think and feel? How do they react to this image? The photographer asks some interesting questions in the blurb beside his photo, including what sort of future are we creating? And how can your actions shape the planet? You can pose these questions to your class too.

## Make a pampering smoothie

HWB 1-30a, HWB 1-30b, LIT 1-20a, LIT 1-26a

In the short story, Miss Peachy-Pie opens a new café across the road from McGifty and Sam that offers a pampering session with a delicious smoothie. Ask pupils to think about what they would like to include in their favourite smoothie. Talk about what they would really like to include, but also encourage healthy choices. Ask pupils to write out a recipe for their smoothie and instructions for how to make it. If you have a kitchen space, allow pupils to make their smoothies and try each other's.