



Activity Guide

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The Very Worst Monster

ABOUT THE STORY

Sibling rivalry makes a mark in this humorous tale about young Hazel, a monster girl determined not to let her baby brother Billy take the spotlight away from her. Unfortunately, nobody in her monster family pays any attention to her efforts to out-monster Billy, and when he actually wins a competition and the coveted title of "Worst Monster in the World", all seems glum for Hazel. Hazel's determination, however, enables her to restore her rightful place in the family structure.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR

Pat Hutchins was born in England and loved drawing from the time she was very young. At age sixteen she received a scholarship to an art school and did art work for London's commercial field. After getting married she moved to New York where her popular book "Rosie's Walk" was published. Since then she has written and illustrated numerous books and has enjoyed success on both sides of the Atlantic. Hutchins currently lives in London with her husband, Laurence, also an artist, and their two sons, Morgan and Sam.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask the children to raise their hands in they have a baby brother or sister at home. Discuss times they have felt jealous of them, or felt like they were competing for their parents' attention. Explain that in this story, Hazel is a young monster girl who struggles with the attention her baby brother gets.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- a. What did Billy Monster's Pa say about him when he was born? (grow up to be Worst Monster in the World)
- b. Why didn't Grandma and Grandpa pay attention to Hazel when they came to visit? (only watching baby Billy)
- c. What did Billy do to win the Worst Monster Baby competition? (try to eat the judge)

- d. What did Hazel do with Billy after he won the competition? (gave him away)
- e. What did Hazel's parents think about her having given away her baby brother? (told her she must be the Worst Monster in the World)
- f. How did Billy get back home? (he was given back)

Vocabulary

Write these words on the chalkboard and review their meanings. Then ask volunteers to use the words in sentences.

fangs	competition	judge	frightening
worst	listening	admiring	noticed

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Visual Arts: Seeing Monsters

Have students examine the illustrations, paying special attention to the different types of monsters. Working in pairs or small groups, have children identify the five distinct groups (bird-like, bull-like, alligator-like, elephant-like, and human-like). Ask the groups to identify one similarity among all of the types (all have four fingers on each hand).

Language Arts/Creative Writing: Love That Baby

Have students write a paragraph about a time they felt jealous of a sibling, and how they overcame their feelings of resentment. For those with no siblings, have them either imagine a situation, or write about a time they felt jealous over someone else, such as a friend.

Creative Arts/Language Skills: Be a Winner

Have a class competition for Worst Liar, or something equally silly.

INTERNET ACTIVITY

Before you send children to do research using any of the keywords listed below, you may wish to try them yourself to be sure the sites are suitable.

Pat Hutchins

Have students research this prolific author to find out more about her. What are some other books she has written? Where does she live? Does she have children?

Monsters

Have children look for information on famous monsters, such as Frankenstein. Create a class book of monsters based on the information they find.