

The Twits - Dirty Beards



Overview

Learning objective

- To explore sensory description and figurative language.

Learning outcome

- To create a wall display, showing a giant Mr Twit's Beard with illustrations demonstrating metaphors for decaying food.

Book reference

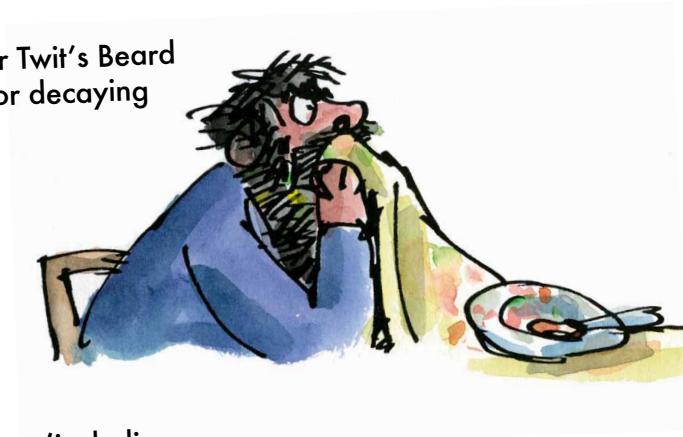
- Chapter 3: Dirty Beards

Cross-curricular link

- Literacy, Art and Design.

Resources

- Pictures of decaying food, one set per group (including milk, meat, cheese, apple, bread); thesauri; art and craft materials for creation of a wall display.



Starter

- In groups, the children look at pictures of decaying food. They discuss the following questions and use thesauri to generate words and phrases:
 - What does decay look like?
 - How do you feel as you look at this food?
 - What adjectives could describe the decaying food?
 - What similes could describe the decaying food?
- Groups feed back ideas to the rest of the class.

Main teaching activity

- Read this extract from *The Twits*.

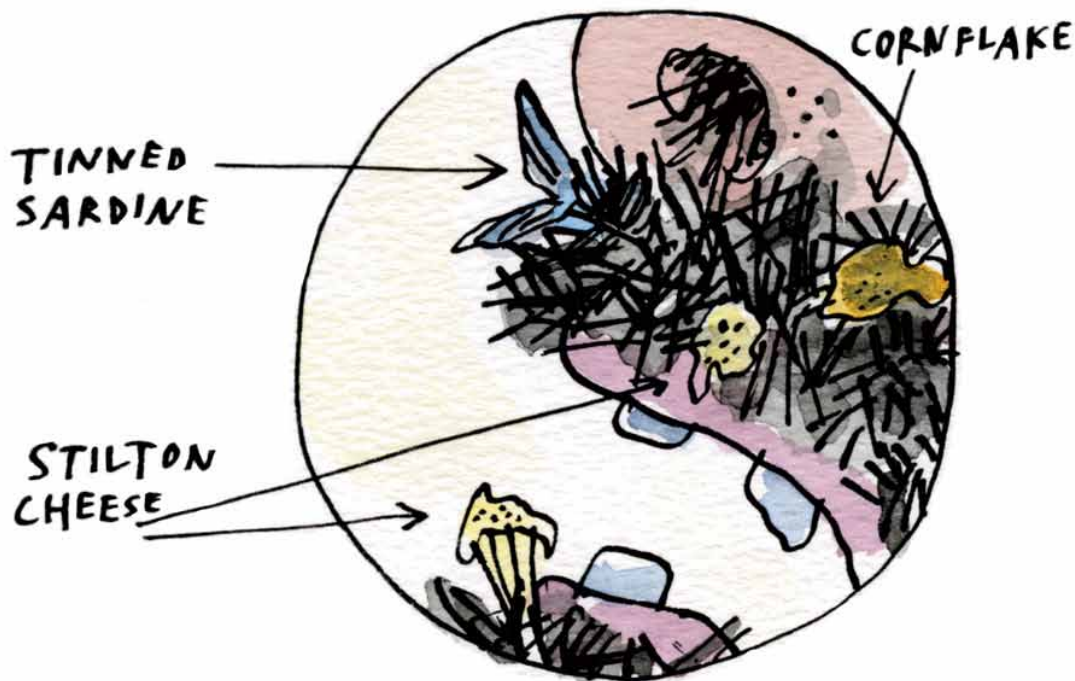
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Mr Twit didn't even bother to open his mouth wide when he ate. As a result (and because he never washed) there were always hundreds of bits of old breakfasts and lunches and suppers sticking to the hairs around his face. They weren't big bits, mind you, because he used to wipe those off with the back of his hand or on his sleeve while he was eating. But if you looked closely (not that you'd ever want to) you would see tiny little specks of dried-up scrambled eggs stuck to the hairs, and spinach and tomato ketchup and fish fingers and minced chicken livers and all the other disgusting things Mr Twit liked to eat. If you looked closer still (hold your noses, ladies and gentlemen), if you peered deep into the moustachy bristles sticking out over his upper lip, you would probably see much larger objects that had escaped the wipe of his hand, things that had been there for months and months, like a piece of maggoty green cheese or a mouldy old cornflake or even the slimy tail of a tinned sardine. Because of all this, Mr Twit never went really hungry. By sticking out his tongue and curling it sideways to explore the hairy jungle around his mouth, he was always able to find a tasty morsel here and there to nibble on.

- Mr Twit's beard is described using the metaphor a 'hairy jungle.' Discuss as a class:
 - What does the word 'jungle' make you think of?
 - How might a jungle be similar to Mr Twit's beard?
 - What might Roald Dahl be suggesting about Mr Twit's beard?
- In groups, the children return to the class mind-map. Independently, the children choose one type of food to go inside Mr Twit's beard. They must think of a simile and lots of adjectives to describe their particular piece of decaying food.

Group or independent activity

- Using appropriate media, the children make a drawing of their chosen piece of decaying food. They fill the picture with words, such as metaphors and adjectives to describe the piece of decaying food.
- Cut the pictures out, and collate all the pieces of art into a whole class wall display of Mr Twit's beard, full of pictures of all the pieces of decaying food stuck inside it.



Plenary

- Children share their metaphors and adjectives, and how these are reflected in their art work.
- Peers can comment upon the effectiveness of the words, and the colours, shapes and patterns of the artwork.



Other activities

- **Music:** Make a Beard Orchestra. Stand in a circle. Every individual should be ready to say their word or phrase describing their chosen piece of decaying food (e.g. 'mouldy old cornflake.'). One child stands in the middle as the 'Conductor.' The Conductor points at individuals one by one, at which they must say their word or phrase. The conductor can control the orchestra, so the children say the word loudly, softly, quickly, slowly, etc. This can be enhanced with the use of sound effects, using the body (clapping, stamping), instruments or recycled materials.
- Hold a class debate on Mr Twit. The motion is: Mr Twit should wash his beard! The group supporting the proposition (headed by Mrs Twit) prepare their arguments FOR the motion. The group supporting the opposition (headed by Mr Twit) prepare their arguments AGAINST the motion. The two sides can then debate their arguments. End with a class vote, and find out whether the motion should be carried or not carried.

