

## Teachers' Guide

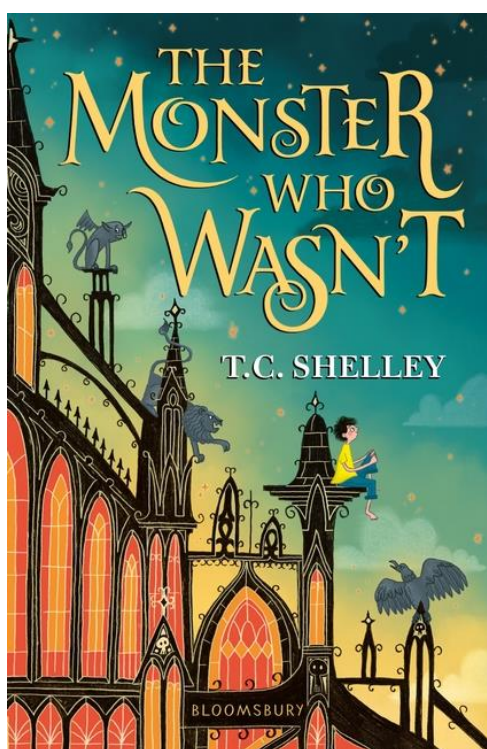
### *The Monster Who Wasn't*

Written by T. C. Shelley

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#### SYNOPSIS (PLOT)

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A brilliantly rich and strange fantasy adventure that will make us all believe in monsters be they good, bad or somewhere in between.

*It is a well-known fact that fairies are born from a baby's first laugh. What is not as well documented is how monsters come into being –*

This is the story of a creature who is both strange and unique. When he hatches down in the vast underground lair where monsters dwell, he looks just like a human boy much to the disgust of everyone watching. Even the grumpy gargoyles who adopt him and nickname him 'Imp' only want him to steal chocolate for them from the nearby shops. He's a child with feet in both worlds, and he doesn't know where he fits. But little does Imp realise that Thunderguts, king of the ogres, has a great and

dangerous destiny in mind for him, and he'll stop at nothing to see it come to pass.

#### AUTHOR BACKGROUND

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**T.C. Shelley** studied Creative Writing and Literature at university. She has been teaching English for over twenty years and her first school was classified as the most remote in Australia. She loves an audience and long before she took up teaching was writing and performing her poetry and short stories. She began writing novels to entertain her daughter, who wisely suggested that she try to get them published. Shelley lives with her husband, her daughter and two dogs in Perth, Western Australia. *The Monster Who Wasn't* is her first novel.

## PRE-READING ACTIVITY

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### Research gargoyles:

1. When were gargoyles first created?
2. Where does the word gargoyle come from? What does it mean?
3. Gargoyles have a practical use. What is it?
4. What type of animal is the oldest gargoyle?
5. What is a chimera?

### Research monsters:

In *The Monster Who Wasn't* the monsters are very traditional – they are based on old Celtic mythology.

1. What is an ogre? Describe what an ogre looks like.
2. What is a pixie? What are the common personality traits of pixies?
3. Describe a traditional boggart.
4. What is a banshee? What happens if you pick up an item that belongs to a banshee?

## SETTING

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The settings in *The Monster Who Wasn't* use a lot of opposites, even Bladder refers to The Hole as 'Downstairs' and the world of humans as 'Upstairs'. Can you separate these words into the two lists that describe the main settings?

*Upstairs, dark, rough, colourful, dull, Downstairs, open, stale, belonging, safe, light, downhearted, alone, closed in, fresh, promising, scary.*

The Hole	The Human World

Extension: look up the word *juxtaposition*.

## **RECIPE: CATHEDRAL BISCUITS**

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The gargoyles and the Imp Child live on a cathedral. Have you ever seen cathedral windows? They are beautiful. They are generally made of multi-coloured glass and tell a story.

Now, you probably won't see stories in these cathedral windows, but it is possible to make biscuits that look like stained glass windows.

This is a basic chocolate biscuit recipe, but you can use any biscuit recipe that doesn't puff up when baked.

### **INGREDIENTS**

- 200 grams of melted butter
- $\frac{3}{4}$  of a cup of caster sugar
- Cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract
- 1 egg
- 2 cups of plain flour
- 1 bag of boiled lollies
- icing for piping

### **METHOD**

- Preheat your oven to 180° Celsius (or 160°C Celsius if your oven is fan-forced).
- Mix the butter, sugar and vanilla. When you have a smooth batter, add the egg.
- Sift the flour and add that too, stirring with a wooden spoon.
- Roll dough out until it is nice and even.
- Now, here's the interesting bit, cut your dough out into an arched window. It will need to be no bigger than your hand to make sure it can support the 'glass'. The bigger your window, the thicker the frame should be.
- Take different coloured boiled lollies and crush them, sprinkling them inside your window. Arrange biscuits on a tray (don't forget the baking paper). Bake them until golden, which is about 10 minutes.

## MAP MAKING

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The Imp Child must go on a long trip through The Hole to get to his destination. When you have finished the book, can you draw a map to show his journey. What kind of legend might you use?

## ART

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This story includes mythical creatures. Draw a picture of your own mythical creature. Don't be afraid to merge animals you already know.

Choose one scene from the book and draw a comic strip to tell the story.

Imp has a foot in both worlds- the human and the mythical. Draw a scene of the world you feel you belong in most.

## DRAMA

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Divide the class into groups and allocate each group a chapter from the book to role play.

## FURTHER READING

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*Harry Potter* series

By J.K. Rowling

*Princess Academy* series

By Shannon Hale

*Unicorn Quest* series

By Kamila Benko

*Wide-Awake Princess* series

By E.D. Baker

*Maudlin Towers* series

By Chris Priestley