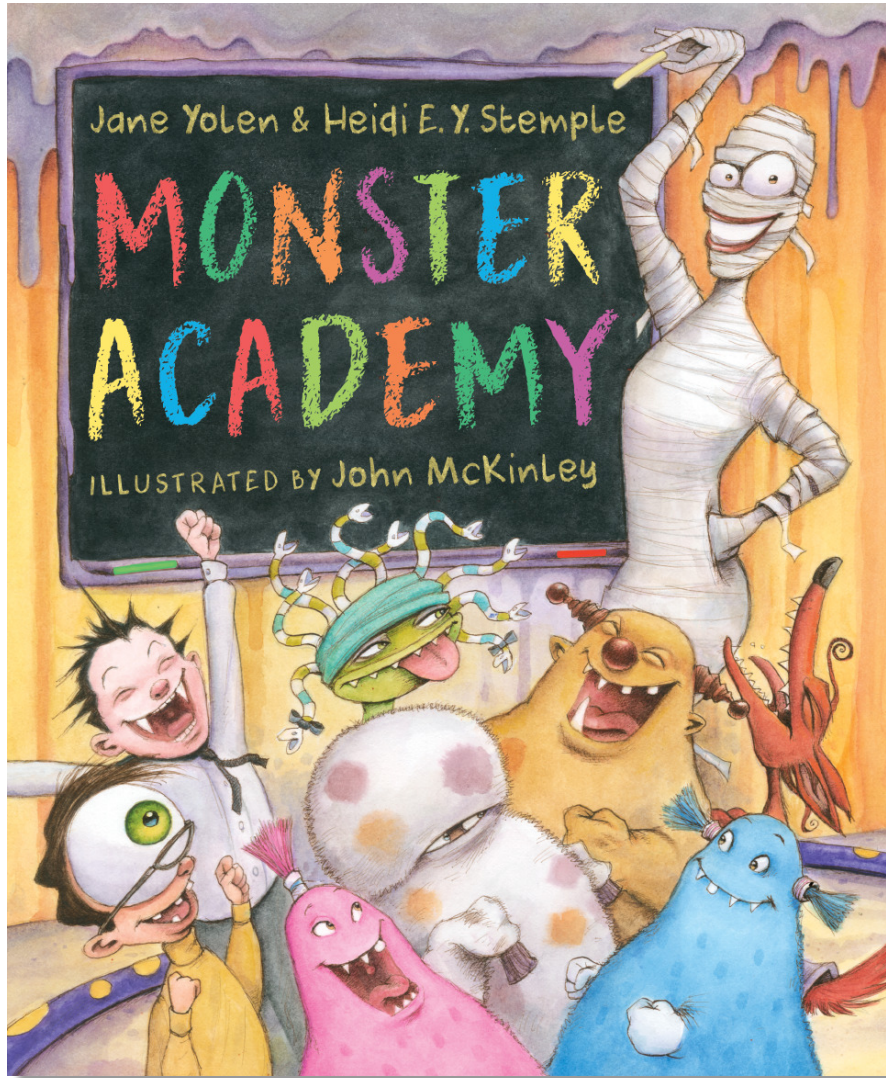


Monster Academy

A teacher's guide created by Marcie Colleen
based on the picture book
written by Jane Yolen & Heidi E. Y. Stemple
illustrated by John McKinley



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Meet the Authors – Jane Yolen & Heidi E. Y. Stemple

Bestselling writer Jane Yolen (she has almost 400 books!) is no stranger to monsters! She's been writing about tyrannosaurs and other huge beasts in her award-winning Blue Sky Press series that began with *How Do Dinosaurs Say Good Night?* She and her daughter, Heidi E. Y. Stemple, love writing books together, and Heidi has written more than twenty. Jane and Heidi live in western Massachusetts. To learn about all their books, visit them at www.janeyolen.com and www.heidieystemple.com.

Meet the Illustrator –John McKinley

John McKinley is the illustrator of nearly fifty chapter books in the popular *Ready, Freddy!* series launched by Blue Sky in 2004. *Monster Academy* is John's picture-book debut. John lives in Monterey Bay of California's Central Coast. To learn more about his work, visit him at www.mckinleyink.com.

Meet the Curriculum Writer – Marcie Colleen

This guide was created by Marcie Colleen, a former teacher with a BA in English Education from Oswego State and a MA in Educational Theater from NYU. In addition to creating curriculum guides for children's books, Marcie can often be found writing books of her own at home in San Diego, California. Visit Marcie at www.thisismarciecolleen.com.

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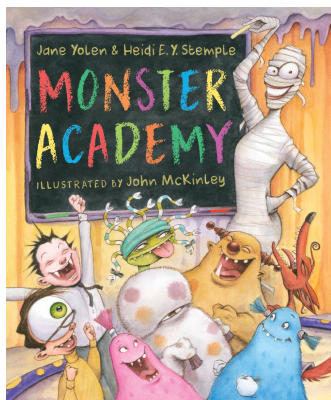
How to Use This Guide

This classroom guide for *Monster Academy* is designed for students in kindergarten through third grade. It is assumed that teachers will adapt each activity to fit the needs and abilities of their own students.

It offers activities to help teachers integrate *Monster Academy* into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies curricula. Art and drama are used as a teaching tool throughout the guide.

All activities were created in conjunction with relevant content standards in ELA, math, science, social studies, art, and drama.

Would you like to tell the authors what you did after reading *Monster Academy*? Or share photos? Email HeidiEYS@gmail.com. Make sure to note if the photo can be shared on social media or not.



MONSTER ACADEMY

Reading level: Ages 4-8

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Come along with Principal Frank N. Stein into a bright, energetic classroom where the class pet is a big purple boa constrictor, recess is in a swamp, and class bats help build a Creepy Castle in the Monster Maker's Lab. When Tornado Jo, a new student, roars into class, a storm is brewing. Who could ever guess that Jo's new best friend will be a vampire, and Jo will help him find his missing fang?

Award-winning writer Jane Yolen teams up with her daughter, Heidi, to present colorful monster children who have familiar human issues such as making friends and learning to help others. In a final twist, Tornado Jo -- the worst behaved student -- is revealed to be an out-of-control *human*, not a monster after all. Oh, no! Monsters are more afraid of humans than we are of them! Everybody *runs*!

Laugh-aloud humor is enhanced by John McKinley's highly imaginative illustrations loaded with fun and hidden jokes tucked into the art. An irresistible romp from start to finish!

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English Language Arts

Reading Comprehension

Before reading *Monster Academy*, help students identify the basic parts of a picture book: jacket, front cover, back cover, title page, spine, end papers, and jacket flap.

The Front Cover ~

- Describe what you see. Who do you think the characters are? What are the characters doing?
- Stand up and pretend to be one of the characters in the illustration. Pay close attention to the facial expression and body shape of the character. How do you think this character feels? How does this pose make you feel?

The Title Page~

- Describe what you see. Pay close attention to details.
- What can you say about the setting of *Monster Academy* based on the title page illustration?

Now read or listen to the book. Help students summarize in their own words what the book was about.

- Who is the principal of Monster Academy?
- Why does Miss Mummy speak in rhyme?
- Describe in your own words how Tornado Jo disrupts in the class.
- During math class Vic almost cries. Why?
- Why does Fifi call Jo "the worst monster ever"?
- The monsters all run when they see a human child. Why do you think they do that?
- How is Jo both a monster and a human?

Let's talk about the people who made *Monster Academy*:

- Who are the authors? Who is the illustrator?
- What kind of work did each person do to make the book?

Now, let's look closely at the illustrations.

- Check out some of the following details that John McKinley includes. Can you find:
 - A globe with a bite out of it.
 - A hamburger.

- A bowling pin.
- A blue ear of corn.
- A creepy centipede.
- Ernie’s tail (hint: Ernie’s tail can be seen in all the scenes inside the school).

Miss Mummy is always kind. How do we know?

Miss Mummy’s bandages unravel through the day. Does this mean something? Maybe she is getting tired or frustrated. Here’s an interesting insight: The authors asked the illustrator to show this without a comment in the book. Can you guess why? Real reason—like all school teachers who work so hard, Miss Mummy is slowly unraveling during the day. But she will go home, have a nice dinner, do HER homework, and come back the next day completely ready to do it all again!

Writing Activities

What Happened? ~ *Monster Academy’s* Plot

Help students define the plot arc within *Monster Academy*.

Beginning	Middle	End
Enter problem:	First Then Next After that Finally	They lived happily ever after.

BONUS: Using the basic plot structure above, create an original story about Miss Mummy’s class at *Monster Academy*. Students can work individually or as a class.

Art center ~ Provide a variety of art materials including crayons, pencils, markers, paint, scissors, colored paper, old magazines, and glue for students to illustrate the scenes in their stories.

Drama center ~ Provide puppets, costumes, and props so students can recreate their new stories.

School: Fiction vs. Nonfiction

Compare school, as depicted in *Monster Academy* (fiction) to school in real life (nonfiction).

As a class, create a T-chart of comparisons.

Nonfiction	Fiction
Ex. Principals and teachers are human.	The principal and teacher are monsters.

Tornado Jo's Point of View

Either as a class or individually, explore *Monster Academy* from the point of view of Tornado Jo. How does Jo feel? Why do you think Jo isn't very nice? What might Jo really want?

Advanced classes will be able to re-create *Monster Academy* from Tornado Jo's point of view. However, the non-advanced class can simply create captions and thought-bubbles for Jo.

Additional Challenge: Try writing thought-bubbles for all the characters in *Monster Academy*.

My Classmate Jo

Tornado Jo certainly keeps things interesting in the classroom.

Have the students write a story placing themselves in the class with the other monsters and Jo. Or maybe Jo comes to their birthday party. Or goes to sleep-away camp.

Each story should include a beginning, a middle with Tornado Jo in 3 different situations and an ending.

Optional: Create the story together as a class.

Once Upon Your Tooth Tale

- If they have already lost teeth, students can share their own tooth stories with the class. If any student has yet to lose a tooth, they should interview a student who has and report back to the class.
 - When did they lose their first tooth?
 - What did it feel like? How did it finally come out?
 - What did they do with the tooth?
 - What was it like to not have all their teeth? What could they eat? What couldn't they eat?
- Then, in a circle of sharing, each student will have a turn to say the following phrase: "Next time I lose a tooth, I..." and fill in the blank with something from the generated list or from their shared stories.
- The activity can be completed as a writing assignment and/or by drawing a picture.

***"Jo will learn some manners here."* ~ Letters of Apology**

Tornado Jo is not nice to the other monsters in the beginning of *Monster Academy*, but seems to create chaos on purpose, which is very different from causing chaos accidentally.

Using a moment from *Monster Academy* as inspiration, write a letter of apology to the other monsters. The letter should include

- a brief re-cap of the situation,
- an apology for what happened,
- a reason why Jo acted that way,
- a solution to make sure it doesn't happen again.

Emphasis can be placed on the proper form of letter writing and the parts of a letter.

Further Activity: Have students write letters of apology to someone they didn't treat nicely.

Speaking and Listening Activities

Picture books are written to be read aloud. Here are some other ways to bring *Monster Academy* to life in your classroom and have fun with speaking and listening skills!

Choral Reading

- Using the text of *Monster Academy*, read the book aloud together. Emphasize memorization, as well as good vocal expression.
- Turn *Monster Academy* into a script. Read the script out loud together. Emphasize memorization of the students' parts as well as good vocal expression.

Mime

- While the teacher reads the book aloud, students can act out the events in the book. Students can choose which character they wish to play. Emphasize body motion and facial expressions, as well as listening skills. Switch roles and read the book again.

Drama

Without making noise, students act out their favorite scene from *Monster Academy*. Ask the rest of the class to guess which scene they are acting out.

- Create a TV commercial to encourage people to read *Monster Academy*.

Language Activities

Rhyme Time

Miss Mummy in *Monster Academy* is cursed and only speaks in rhyme. How do you think she got that way?

Here are some activities to help introduce rhyming to your class.

Engine and Caboose

Introduce the concept of producing rhyming words with train engines and caboose pictures or objects. Explain that when you make rhyming words, the caboose will always stay the same but the engines will be different. Pick a sound for the caboose (e.g., "at") and place many different engines in front to make rhyming words (e.g., h-, m-, c-).

"I Spy"

Start the activity by sitting with the children in a large circle. Provide the children with a sentence containing two rhyming words, e.g. "I spy a chair and a bear." The first object name is something in the room and the second object name doesn't have to be in the room. Have the child on your right create her own "I Spy" sentence. For example, "I spy a box and an ox." This continues around the circle until all students can create their own "I Spy" rhyme. *Tip: You may want to place objects around the room that are easy to rhyme so you can point them out to the children if they need suggestions.*

Fill in the Blank

Re-read *Monster Academy* aloud. When you get to Miss Mummy's speeches, pause at the end of the 3rd and 4th sentences of each stanza and have the children raise their hands and give the correct rhyming word to complete the sentence.

For example:

"I count: Yeti, Yoti, Fifi, Spec,

Serpentina, Vic, Bog...and wait!

That's seven when we should have _____.

Is our newest monster _____?"

Offer opportunities for the children to make up silly sentences using other words that rhyme but don't make sense. Continue with the rest of the book until all the children have had opportunities to rhyme.

This can be done with other rhyming books, as well.

Math

Word Problems *For younger students, the use of pictures or props might be needed to figure out word problems. Note to teachers: Use the word problems below as inspiration to write your own, based on *Monster Academy* or any other book of study.*

- 1) Fifi has five teeth but loses one tooth. How many teeth does Fifi have left?
($5 - 1 = ?$)
- 2) Four class bats chip in to help with building a creepy castle. Three more class bats join in. How many class bats are helping to build the creepy castle?
($4 + 3 = ?$)

- 3) Miss Mummy knows that there are eight monsters in her class. When she counts, she finds seven monsters in her class. How many monsters are missing?
($8 - 7 = ?$)
- 4) Tornado Jo spins wildly into the room and knocks over two chairs. Jo then spins some more and knocks over one more chair. How many chairs does Tornado Jo knock over? ($2 + 1 = ?$)
- 5) Everyone, but Jo, helps Vic look for his missing fang. They have 9 minutes to search, before recess is over. They search for 7 minutes. How many minutes do they have left to search. ($9 - 7 = ?$)

Where is Vic's Tooth?

This hopscotch activity will help students improve motor skills, balance, and self-regulation behaviors. Additionally, this game will encourage them to learn about math concepts such as number recognition and counting, as well as elements of art including shape and line.

This game can be created for indoor spaces through simply taping out the boxes on the floor and/or traditionally by drawing them on the pavement outdoors.

Materials:

- Masking tape (for indoor version)
- Sidewalk chalk, markers, or dark crayons
- Beanbag or object to represent the tooth
- Two dice

Set Up:

Create the hopscotch boxes.

Students can help draw numbers in the squares. If they are not ready to write numbers alone, try lightly drawing the numbers first and then encourage them to trace over them.

How to Play:

1. Place "tooth" in one of the squares.
2. The first student rolls the two dice and adds the two numbers together to know how many boxes they must hop. (ie. $2 + 4 = 6$, hop six spaces).
3. The students hop their way through, counting as they go.

4. If they land on the box with the "tooth," they have their treasure! If they overshoot or fall short they must start all over again.
5. Play continues until the "tooth" is reached by everyone.

For an extra challenge, change the location of the "tooth" each turn.

The Tooth Troll's Hunt

This scavenger hunt will help students sharpen observational and counting skills.

- Create several copies of the paper cut-outs of different shaped teeth (human teeth, molars, fangs, tusks, etc). Number each different shape set from 1-5.
- Hide these cut-outs around the room.
- Assign students a certain shape of the teeth.
- Ask students to find tooth #1, tooth #2, etc. until they have a set of 5. If a student sees a number they already have collected or a shape that is not what they are collecting, he/she must leave it for another student to find.
- The first student to find their shaped teeth in 1-5 sequence, wins.
- Additional activity: This same game can be played with a set pattern of colors or pictures to teach sequencing.

Create a Missing Teeth Graph

Conduct your own survey of missing teeth in the classroom or across a grade level or the entire school.

Create a graph of the results.

- How many total missing teeth are there?
- Who has the most missing teeth?
- Who has the fewest?
- Are there students who don't have any missing teeth?
- Who has more missing teeth, the boys or the girls?
- Add up the class's total missing teeth.

Display the graph and its gathered data in a bulletin board display.

For additional graphing fun, create a graph of birthdays by month, favorite desserts, number of siblings, etc.

Under Where? Spatial Sense

Spatial concepts (a category of basic concepts) define the relationship between us and objects, as well as the relationships of objects to each other.

Look at the Monster Recess spread in *Monster Academy*. Use spatial concept words, such as ***in front of, behind, next to, over, under, between, in, on***, etc. to describe where things appear in the illustration.

Describe where Vic is.

[examples: in the swamp, between the bees, next to Jo]

Describe where Serpentina is.

[example: on the grass, behind Bog, between the swamp and the hill.]

Describe where Bog is.

[examples: next to Fifi, in front of Serpentina]

Have students pick another spread in *Monster Academy* and discuss where things are spatially within that illustration.

Now look around your classroom.

- Describe where your desk sits.
- Describe where your teacher is sitting or standing.
- Describe where the chalkboard/whiteboard is.
- Describe where the clock is.
- Describe where the door is.
- Can you describe where anything else is?

Science

Monster Maker's Recycle-Lab

Each student should bring from home one item found in the recycling bin (plastic bottles, tin cans, milk cartons, newspaper, etc).

Using all the items and some additional art supplies, create a creepy castle which can be displayed in the classroom.

Build a Castle Bridge Challenge

All castles need a moat bridge!

This challenge allows students to test out the Scientific Method for themselves as they problem solve a way to build a moat bridge that really works! Of course, a little imagination is going to go a long way here, too!

Step 1: Ask a Question

Step 2: Do Research

Step 3: Guess an Answer (also called a Hypothesis)

Step 4: Test Your Guess/Hypothesis

Step 5: Did it Work? Could it Be Better? Try Again

Step 6: Draw a Conclusion

Step 7: Write a Written Report of Your Results

Step 8: Retest

Of course, a little imagination is going to go a long way here, too!

- Set up two tables or desks in the classroom that have a large gap in between them (approximately 3-4 feet is ideal.)
- Explain to students that they will be working in groups of 2-3 to build a bridge to connect the two pieces of furniture.
- Provide the students with several craft items (rulers, paper, cardboard tubing, empty boxes, tape, glue, etc.) Check the recycling for other ideas of materials.
- Each group's bridge must:
 - Connect the two pieces of furniture.
 - Be a construction, not merely a long piece of cardboard laid across the gap.
 - Be strong enough to hold four Matchbox-sized cars (or some other item of your choosing).
- The groups must create an eight-page Scientific Notebook for their bridge and carefully document their use of the Scientific Method throughout the process of building their bridge.

Once all bridges have been built side by side connecting the two pieces of furniture, test them out one by one as a class. Did they work? Retest? If they didn't work, head back to the drawing board like a real inventor.

Offer up awards to increase the competition.

- Strongest Bridge
- Creepiest Bridge
- Most Materials Bridge
- Least Materials Bridge

Social Studies

The Tooth Troll's Friends Around the World

Many different cultures have their own traditions regarding the Tooth Fairy. In *Monster Academy* the Tooth Fairy is referred to as the Tooth Troll.

With a world globe or map nearby, explore the following customs as a class.

- In many European countries, Elves or Brownies collect teeth under pillows.
- In Costa Rica or Chile, kids give their baby teeth to their mothers to make jewelry.
- In the Philippines, a Tooth Rat collects teeth from windowsills.
- In Columbia and South Africa, lost baby teeth are placed in a warm slipper for a mouse to retrieve.
- In Argentina and Sweden, kids leave their baby teeth in a bedside glass of water for a magical mouse to pick up.

Explore more by following these links: <http://mentalfloss.com/article/58503/7-tooth-fairy-traditions-around-world> and <http://www.rdhmag.com/articles/print/volume-26/issue-6/feature/legends-of-the-tooth-fairy.html>

Draw a picture of what you think the Tooth Troll must look like.

Our Day Timeline

Monster Academy is a timeline of a typical school day, starting with arriving at school and ending with dismissal time.

A timeline is a great way to teach sequencing, or how to put events into the order in which they happened.

As a class, create a timeline of a typical day in the classroom. Brainstorm the daily routine. What happens in the morning? What happens in the afternoon? What happens next?

If the teacher can take pictures throughout a typical day, have students sort them in chronological order.

Materials:

- Easel paper roll (or multiple pieces of paper taped together to form a 10-foot length)
- Markers
- Scissors
- Tape
- Ruler
- Photos

1. Cut a long sheet of paper from a paper roll, or tape several pieces of paper together to form a long sheet (final paper should be about 10 feet long).

2. Lay it out on a table horizontally and, using a ruler, draw a line through the middle, dividing it horizontally.

3. Above the line, write the key moments in the classroom's daily routine, left to right, leaving a few inches of space between each. *This is also a great way to introduce the concept of clock time. Consider marking the key moments with a clock face showing the appropriate time.*

4. Below the line, let the class illustrate each event—either with photos, or with drawings.

Alternate Activity: Students can create timelines of their individual days, including their time before and after school.