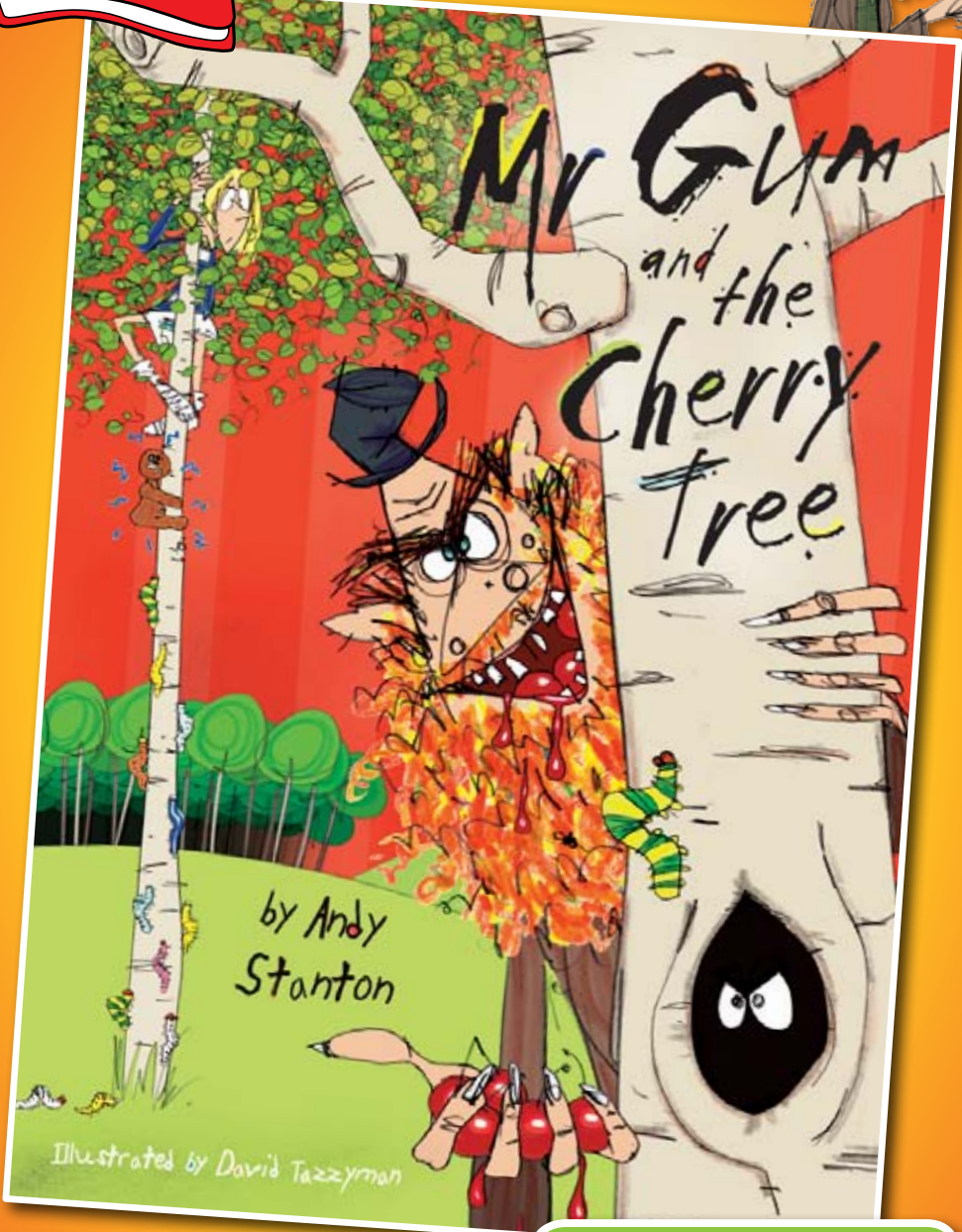




SCHOLASTIC

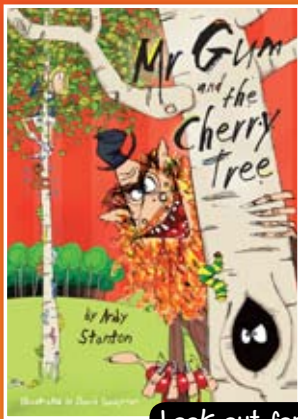
Book Talk



AGES 6+

Engage and inspire your pupils with a Book Talk!

Illustrations © 2010 David Tazzyman from *Mr Gum and the Cherry Tree* by Andy Stanton, published by Egmont



Look out for me at
your Book Fair!

AGES 6+

Price	£5.99
Case	Read Alone
Author	Andy Stanton
Illustrator	David Tazzyman
Publisher	Egmont

Using this book in your classroom

Themes

This hilarious book gives a great opportunity to look at how the author creates **humour** using **language**. It may also make readers think about **freedom**, the **abuse of power** and the value of **teamwork**!

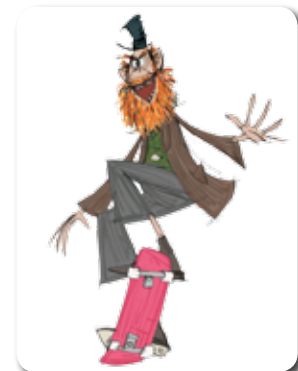
Summary

It's a glorious, give-me-moribus, start-of-the-storious spring morning in the peaceful (but bonkers) town of Lamonical Bibber. All the residents are set to enjoy their day in various unsavoury ways. But then Old Granny comes along with the surprising news that the Old Ways are back... She leads the townsfolk to the forest, where it seems that Runtus, King of the Woodland Spirits, has come back from the olden times and taken up residence in a cherry tree.

Naturally, everyone is very excited, and when Runtus suggests that they all hand over their most treasured possessions to him, they are keen to obey. But fortunately, our heroine Polly and the tiny gingerbread headmaster, Alan Taylor, smell a rat. Through persistence and teamwork (not to mention a certain amount of help from trillions of tiny pets and a massive whopper of a dog called Jake) they unmask the villain who is trying to trick the townsfolk. It is none other than Mr Gum! When the townsfolk realise this, they chase Mr Gum right out of the forest. With Mr Gum out of the way, they can go back to being their merry and bright-eyed selves.

Did you know?

- This is the seventh book about Mr Gum. Andy Stanton and David Tazzyman have won lots of awards for their Mr Gum books, including the Blue Peter Book Award, the Roald Dahl Funny Prize and the Red House Children's Book Award.
- The Mr Gum website (www.mrgum.co.uk) includes a brilliant spoof newspaper devoted to the world of Mr Gum – *The Lamonical Chronicle*.



The Story Session

1. Introducing the book

- Ask the children if they have read any of the other Mr Gum books. If they have, share thoughts and predictions about what this book might be like. If they haven't read any other Mr Gum books, look together at the back cover blurb and encourage them to make predictions about the book based on that.
- Read Chapter 1 out loud, and enjoy the funny words and phrases such as 'the whole squeak-mantling mess' and 'I'm looking forward to it like a rascal'. Revisit the children's predictions – were they right about the kind of book this would be?

2. Reading the story

- Read to the end of Chapter 5. Ask: "Why do you think Polly and Alan Taylor decide to escape? Are they worried about what is happening to the other townspeople? Do you think they are right to want to get away? What do you think they will do next?"
- Continue to read the book as a class, or encourage the children to read it independently. Pause to talk about the story, and encourage the children to share the parts they think are particularly funny. Children may enjoy taking turns to read the story aloud, or act out parts of the story.
- At the end of the book, talk about why Polly and Alan Taylor were suspicious about Runtus. Ask: "Why did Mr Gum want the townspeople to give him their most treasured possessions? Was it because he thought the possessions would be valuable? Or did he think that if he had their treasured possessions, he would be able to control them?"

3. Follow-up

- One of the most unusual and enjoyable things about the Mr Gum books is the author's inventive use of language. Encourage the children to have a go at a piece of writing in a similar style. This could be anything from a brief story opening or piece of dialogue to a whole new Mr Gum story!
- At the end of the story, Mr Gum runs away. Ask: "Do you think Mr Gum will be back? What mischief might he get up to next time?" Share ideas and make a plan for a class story about Mr Gum.
- Encourage the children to explore the Mr Gum website (www.mrgum.co.uk) to find out more about the author and illustrator and the world of Lamonic Bibber.

YOU TELL US

- Did you use these notes to have a Book Talk in class?
- Were they helpful?
- Are there any changes you'd like to see to make them more useful?

We're always happy to hear your comments, so please email us!
Please email: bookfairs@scholastic.co.uk