

The Smeds and the Smoos

Overview

● Authors

Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler

● Story themes

Aliens
Diversity
Family
Friendship
Inclusion
Space
Tolerance

● Curriculum links

Art and design
Drama
Geography
PSHE
Science

● By the same author

Tiddler (Alison Green Books)
The Smartest Giant in Town
(Macmillan Children's Books)
A Squash and a Squeeze
(Macmillan Children's Books)

● Alternative books

Something Else by Kathryn Cave
and Chris Riddell (Puffin)
Say Something! by Peter H
Reynolds (Scholastic)
The Squirrels Who Squabbled
by Rachel Bright and Jim Field
(Orchard Books)

Plot

The Smeds don't like the Smoos, and the Smoos don't like the Smeds. Why? Simply put, they don't like anything or anyone different to themselves. However, two of the young aliens – Janet and Bill – begin a friendship that horrifies their grandparents. One day they decide to run away together. Distraught, the Smeds and the Smoos have to work together to look for the beloved pair. As they search, they meet different aliens on different planets and start showing signs of friendship towards each other. When they can look no more, they return home and discover Bill and Janet and their 'dear little baby', who 'was purple, from head to toe!' The story ends with the Smeds and the Smoos united, full of joy and happiness.

About the children's book

The Smeds and The Smoos is a story poem that tackles the issue of prejudice and the importance of friendship in an inspiring and joyful way. The last page in the book has the dedication 'To All the Children of Europe' by Axel Scheffler, encouraging readers to think about the message underlying the story: that we are all more alike than different, and that we should treat each other with kindness.

About the teacher's guide

As well as detailed Guided and Shared reading, *Read & Respond: The Smeds and The Smoos* provides the following activities to cover the English curriculum.

Word reading and spelling

- using the spelling rule for adding '-s' or '-es' as the plural marker for nouns
- reading words with contractions and understanding the apostrophe
- using vocabulary from the story to answer questions

Comprehension

- looking for signs of friendship in the book and linking it to their own experience
- sequencing events to retell the story
- using adjectives to describe what food and drink from the book might taste like

Composition

- writing answers to questions about where Janet and Bill went on the rocket
- writing a recipe for pink milk putting the steps in the correct order
- planning a holiday poster about the planet where the Smeds and the Smoos live

Speaking and listening

- discussing how the Smeds and the Smoos felt about Janet and Bill disappearing
- finding descriptive verbs and performing the relevant action
- answering questions in the role of Janet or Bill