

Judy Moody®

Short story competition resource



Dear teacher

Welcome to the fabulous world of Judy Moody! She's fun, she's feisty and she's the inspiration for our short story activity. Based on the very first book of the hugely popular series, this resource is designed to help you get to know Judy a little more whilst providing flexible and easy-to-use ideas to prepare your pupils to produce their own writing.

Give your pupils the opportunity to show off their skills and write for a real purpose and audience. Take a whole day, create a series of lessons or extend to a whole unit of work – the choice is yours!

Resource overview

We write best about what we know about, or so they say. This is certainly the case in terms of Judy Moody. Series author Megan McDonald says that most of Judy's stories grew out of tales about growing up with her sisters. 'Judy Moody is me...exaggerated!' she says. We take our own experiences and then blend them with our imagination and, from those seeds, our stories grow. Our competition encourages developing writers to follow Megan McDonald's lead and:

- Explore the world and character of Judy Moody
- Use that exploration to create their own character based on themselves
- Write their own 500 word, short story

In the first book we get to know Judy through a homework task set in her new class – a 'Me' collage. As part of the collage she has to think about things that have happened to her: the worst thing ever / the funniest thing ever etc. It actually turns out that the worst thing is one of the best, but that's another story!

We're challenging your pupils to write in the same way and tell us either: the best thing ever, the worst thing ever and the funniest thing ever that has happened to their character.

Getting in the mood...

Using *Judy Moody* as our guide, let's explore our spirited main character. The book is a perfect length for this project and could easily be read with pupils over the course of a day or over a few lessons. Pick 'n' mix the following activities to help build a character study of Judy.



You might want to use the **Capture a character** resource for pupils to record their ideas as they go along or create a whole class character study on large flipchart paper.

Character detectives

Using a visualizer, display the opening spread image of Judy's bedroom (pg. 10-11) and encourage partners to discuss and record what they can infer about Judy from the objects and decorations in her room. What kind of a mood do they think she might be in today? Discuss and compare their ideas as a whole class.

Family tree

Listening comprehension is a brilliant way to help develop memory and concentration skills. Read the short opening chapter aloud to pupils (pgs. 9-18). Read once more, but this time, encourage pupils to listen carefully to all the characters who are introduced. Can they jot down their names and think about how they are related to Judy to create a mini family tree? (Not forgetting Grandma Lou and Mouse, the cat, of course!)

Close your eyes

Judy's first day back at school is something she is not looking forward to, hence her mood. Ask pupils to close their eyes and take them on a guided visualization to explore their own feelings about first days back.

> *You wake up in the morning after a long summer holiday. Your first thought is that it is a school day – how do you feel?*

> *Next you think about getting dressed and putting on uniform for the first time in weeks – is it easy as you don't have to think about what to wear? Or do you hate not wearing your own clothes?*

> *Your mum or dad calls up to you – you have to hurry up. Are you excited or still tired?*

> *You think about getting to school. Will it be great to see all your friends again? Or perhaps you feel a bit nervous about your new class?*

> *Do you know who your new teacher is? Do you always look forward to having someone new or do you usually wish it could be the same as last year, with the same routines?*

> *You're in the playground and the bell rings to line up, how do you feel at that very moment?*

Ask pupils to open their eyes and discuss with their partners how they felt.

You might want to read the next chapter 'Roar!' and find out about Judy's first day back. Again as you read aloud, encourage pupils to note down anything they notice that tells them more about Judy's character from what she says and does and what she feels about her new class and teacher, Mr Todd. Discuss together.

Grouchy pencils

Judy has new stationery for her first day back – a set of Grouchy pencils.

"Pencils for impossible moods, said the package. Ever seen a pencil that looks like it got up on the wrong side of the bed?" (pgs. 26-27).

Challenge pupils to think about what kind of stationery reflects their personality or what sort they would like to see invented. An everlasting rubber? A perfect pitch pen which sings

in perfect tune every time you put pen to paper? A reckless ruler that flicks paper when you're not looking? Could they write the blurb for the packaging of their new invention?

Judy's 'Me' collage

Mr Todd sets the class a homework project to create a collage all about themselves (pg. 25). He gives them a useful list to help:

Who I am

Where I live

My friends

My best friends

My favourite pet

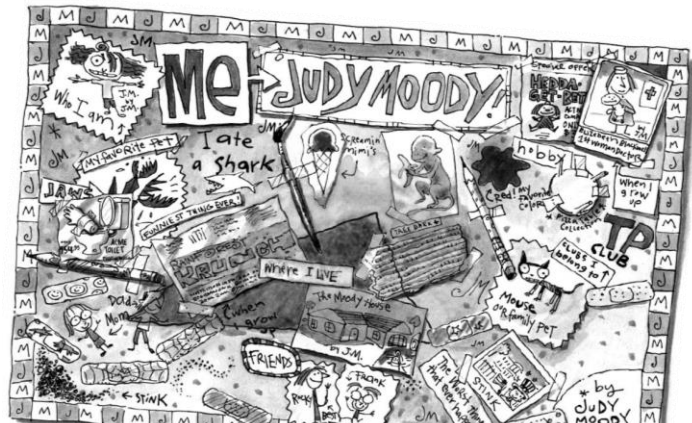
When I grow up

Hobbies

The worst thing that ever happened to me

The funniest thing that ever happened to me

Clubs



*from Judy Moody's Double-Rare Way-Not-Boring Book of Fun Stuff to Do. All rights reserved.

As you read the next few chapters, give pupils time to fill in their character study as they go by using this list to help them find out more about Judy. 'The TP Club' chapter (pgs. 80-93) has many of the answers to Mr Todd's list, as well as information. You also get to find out about the very special secret club that Judy is part of. There is also a certificate available online if pupils wanted to join the same club.

<http://staging.candlewick.com/judymoody/wp-content/uploads/JM-KIT-TP-CLUB.pdf>

Getting started

Having seen Megan McDonald's fantastic handiwork in bringing Judy Moody alive and off the page, it is now your pupils' turn to put their author hats on and create their own character.

Same-same!

Both Megan McDonald and the amazing illustrator Peter H. Reynolds have talked about using their own experiences to help them create Judy. Explain to pupils that they themselves are a great source of inspiration and ideas. In pairs get them to interview each other using the very same questions Mr Todd suggested for Judy's 'Me' collage.

Getting to know you

Get pupils to think of three facts about themselves that their classmates might not know. Two of them must be true but one must be made up. Ask the pupils to take it in turns to share their three facts with their partner, who has to try and guess which is false. All good practice in playing with imagination and exaggerating the truth!

Create Your Own Character

Now pupils can start to create their new character who will be the main character for their short story. Their character might be closely or loosely based on themselves or even entirely imagined, although remind pupils that we can always draw on our own experiences to help craft our ideas and imagine how characters will act and feel. As a support you might want them to complete the **Create your character** resource or make notes to craft a character backstory using a mind map. Once the basic details are in place encourage pupils to think about bringing their character to life.

What makes your character interesting?

Discuss with pupils what makes Judy Moody such a distinctive character:

- How would they describe her character?
- What does she look like?
- How does she speak? What are some of her favourite expressions?
(*same – same... rare!... she cracks herself up...etc.*)

Now encourage pupils to think about their new characters. Can they answer these questions about their creations?

How well do you know your creation?

By now pupils should be getting to know their new characters quite well. Ask pupils to come up with five questions they would like to ask a friend about their character. Try and make them different than the information they have already explored. For example:

- Where would they most like to go on holiday?
- What would their character do if they found a £20 pound note on the floor of a shop?
- Would their character rather ... live in an igloo ... a tree house ... or on a boat?

Try and get them to be playful and imaginative and then find a classmate to question them to see if they really do know their character well.

Decisions, decisions, decisions

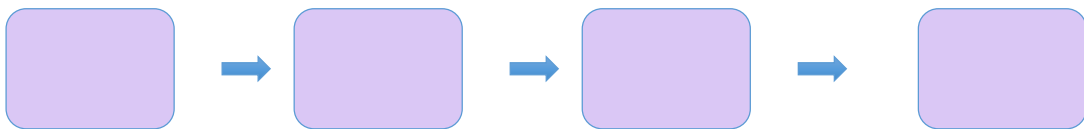
As pupils move towards their short stories, now is the time for decisions to be made. To help them make up their mind, remind them of Judy's *Worst Thing Ever* and *Funniest Thing Ever* (pgs. 119 – 135). You could even reread those chapters of the book (pgs. 94 – 188) to refresh their memories.

Pupils might want to use the **Superlatives ideas** resource to prompt some more ideas of what to write about.

Top tips for short stories

Short stories are notoriously tricky, and with only 500 words to play with, the following tips could be helpful:

- **Don't have too many characters.** More than three may be too many – one main character and one or two additional characters at the most.
- **Limit the timeframe.** Set your short story in a particular time frame which isn't too long – a lesson / an hour / 1 day / 1 week / a bus ride / a party / a trip.
- **Think in scenes.** You won't have enough space and time for long explanations, so try and imagine your story in scenes, like a film, to move the action along. A mini story board might help. Use the core five elements; *who, what, when, where, how* to get you started.



- **Show not tell.** You won't have time to tell your reader about your character with lots of description, you'll need to show them what your character is like by how they talk, what they say, how others react to them etc. Just by her answering, 'Roar!' we can tell a lot about Judy Moody!
- **Talk it through.** Prior to writing, rehearse your action. A great way to do this is to imagine you are a TV reporter in the field for a headline story. If the headline is *The Worst Thing Ever ...* what key questions do you think the studio anchor person will ask you to get the story clear to the TV audience in a short space of time? Practise with your chosen storyline before you begin to write. Providing microphones and videoing each reporter makes this much more fun!

As a teacher, it is always motivating and encouraging for pupils to see you write alongside them and share your own writing process – they love to be your critical friend and it helps create a community of writers in the classroom.

Celebrate your pupils' short stories, share and compare those worst / best / funniest moments.

These resources were created in partnership with Walker Books for a competition we ran in 2018. Use them to inspire your pupils to think about character, vocabulary and how to write engagingly. You could even run your own competition within the class or school!

Getting carried away

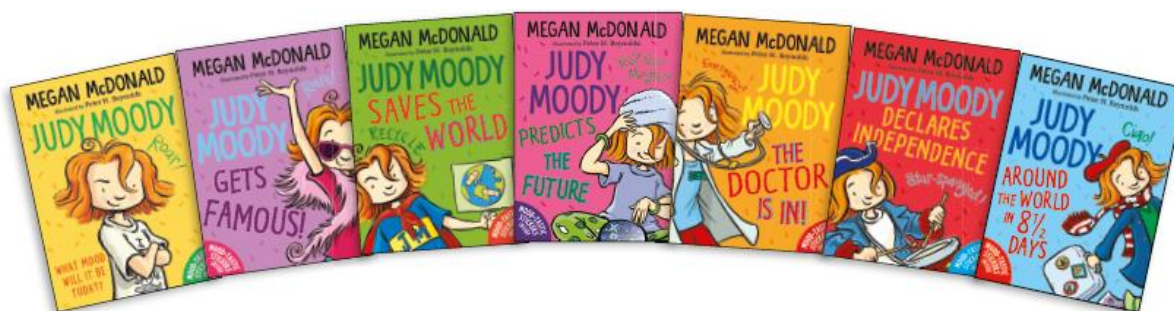
The Judy Moody books and the complimentary series all about Stink, her younger brother, provide a wealth of material to encourage reading and writing opportunities across the curriculum. Visit the Judy Moody website for activities, series lists, author and illustrator information and facts about Judy's world.

<http://www.judymoody.com>



Finally why not take a leaf out of Mr Todd's homework book and, having laid all the groundwork, encourage pupils to create with parents an actual 'Me' collage to represent themselves. A class assembly to share their short stories and then present their collages to friends and family would be a perfect celebration to finish to the competition.

Collect the laugh-a-minute adventures of Judy Moody!



www.judymoody.com



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