Something’s Drastic
Michael Rosen (Collins)

Write a poem based on ‘The Hidebehind’ (page 7)

The scariest stories leave a lot to the imagination. In his poem ‘The Hidebehind’, Michael says we will never see this monster because it’s always hiding. But if it is hiding how do we know it’s there?

Read the poem out loud with your class...

The Hidebehind

Have you seen the Hidebehind?
I don’t think you will, mind you,
because as you’re running through the dark
the Hidebehind’s behind you.

“The Hidebehind” by Michael Rosen from Mind Your Own Business (© Michael Rosen 1974), and now available in Something’s Drastic (Collins Big Cat 2007), is reproduced by permission of PFD (www.pfd.co.uk) on behalf of Michael Rosen.

Class discussion

• In what ways might we sense something is there without clearly seeing it?

• How many (preposition) words can your class come up with to create their monster? By pointing in any direction students will discover quite a few: under, over, below, ahead, beneath.

Getting started

In small groups or individually, ask children to invent their own imaginary creature and write a poem about it.

• Ask pupils to choose where their monster lurks.

• Their choices will give them a name for it, such as the ‘Hideabove’, the ‘Hidebeside’, or the ‘Hideinside’.

• Knowing where it hides will help them decide if it can fly, creep or float. If it is below, perhaps it can burrow; if it hides inside things, it might be very small.

• Pupils’ poems can be longer than Michael’s and don’t not have to rhyme. To help pupils get started, they can use the same first line: Have you seen the…
• To make the poem really scary ask pupils to remember only to hint at what it is.

• Ask pupils to think about describing things in detail, so ‘noises’ might become claws on the kitchen floor, or the sound of papery wings being folded.

• Remember the twist in the tale: monstrous things are sometimes frightening because we don’t understand them! If not to deliberately scare people, why else might the children’s Hidebehind feel the need to hide?

**Follow-up activities**

• Ask students to **decorate** their poem with the tracks/footprints their particular monster leaves behind.

• **‘Jabberwocky’ by Lewis Caroll** is a classic ‘invented monster’ poem. Read it aloud to see how, just as with the words Hidebehind and Hideabove, it plays with language.

• **‘It’s Behind You!’** is a phrase deeply rooted in traditions of pantomime and audience participation. For **performance fun**, pupils can try adding a few ‘Where is it?’ type questions to the poems to invite audience response: It’s above you! It’s below you! It’s beside you!

• Create a group poem by combining everyone’s entry for their monster in a **Monster Guide Book**. Use a reference book to see what sections to use such as: NAME… LATIN NAME… DESCRIPTION… FOOD… HABITAT… etc.

![Something's Drastic](image)

To buy copies of *Something’s Drastic*, visit [www.collinsbigcat.com](http://www.collinsbigcat.com)

Activities written by Mandy Coe

Mandy Coe’s poetry has been broadcast on BBC radio and television; her work with schools has been featured in the TES ([www.mandycoe.com](http://www.mandycoe.com)).