



The Shocking Trouble on the Planet of Shobble

L M Moriarty

Teachers' Notes

Introduction

L.M. Moriarty's first book for children was *The Petrifying Problem with Princess Petronella* and *The Shocking Trouble on the Planet of Shobble* is the second book in the Space Brigade series.

The Space Brigade are relaxing after their spectacular triumph over Princess Petronella and her evil plans to destroy Earth, when they receive an intriguing letter. The planet of Shobble wants to employ their services.

When the Space Brigade land on Shobble they soon discover that the beautiful planet has a dark secret. Most of the population are slaves, forced to mine for marshmallow and drill for chocolate. Led by a teenage girl called Topaz, the workers are beginning to rebel. The commander-in-chief wants the Space Brigade to squash the rebellion.

At first Nicola refuses to be involved but then something shocking happens that leaves her with no choice. The Space Brigade set off on an incredible journey and along the way they learn new skills, make new friends – and change the planet Shobble's history forever.



Curriculum Links

English: Reading, Writing, Research
Creative and Performing Arts: Drama, Drawing
Science and Technology: Living Things, Design and Make,
The Earth and its Surroundings
PDHPE: Interpersonal relationships
Mathematics: Mapping

Learning Outcomes

Students will have the opportunity to:

- read a text independently and in groups
- respond to themes and issues in a text
- draw on a range of skills and strategies to read and comprehend a text
- analyse techniques used by authors to create certain effects and use language creatively
- devise, act and rehearse drama for performance to an audience
- discuss friendship issues and bullying
- discuss the effects of different feelings.

Before you read

Look at the title and front cover picture of the novel. Work in pairs and write a short paragraph suggesting what the story may be about. Read out your group's ideas to the rest of the class.

Read the book

Read *The Shocking Trouble on the Planet of Shobble* as directed by your teacher in one of the following ways:

- as a whole class
- in small reading groups
- individually.

Stop every now and then to re-evaluate where you think the story may be heading. Discuss your ideas with a friend as well as parts of the story you like and why.





After You Read

Use the following questions to promote discussion of the book. Discuss these questions as a class or write the answers down.

1. Who are the members of The Space Brigade?
2. What is Time-Squeeze Speed (p20)? How could you use it in your life?
3. Shimlara can read, and project her voice into other people's minds. What would you do if you had a special power like that?
4. What are the colours of the rainbow? How is a rainbow formed?
5. If you had to go on a mission to an unknown planet, what five things would you take and why?
6. Why was a Katie a celebrity to the people of Shobble?
7. How does the payment system on Shobble work? Do you think it's fair?
8. Why was Katie kidnapped?
9. What are 'hairities' in our society? Why are they treated differently to others?
10. In the Valley of High Hopes (pp101–102), what were some of the hopes the Space Brigade felt?
11. What was the package Enrico sent to Nicola? Why did he send it?
12. Why was Shobble a peanut-free planet?
13. How did the kids dye everything yellow with no yellow dye?
14. What were Silent Fred's first words when he got his voice back? What would yours have been?
15. At the end of the story what do you think has happened to Shimlara's family? Write a few ideas down for the next adventure.



Activities

Intergalactic Phone

Design your own intergalactic phone to communicate with other planets. Label the different parts and write a brief description of how it works.

Make a Planet

Read about different planets in our Solar System. Use balloons and papier-mâché or foam balls to design and build your own planet. Choose a shape and colours for your planet. Give it a name and name the people who live there. Describe these inhabitants and list their characteristics and personalities.

Bullying

Enrico has become a bully. Why do you think he is a bully? Work in small groups and discuss what makes someone a bully, why you think people become bullies and some solutions to the problem of bullying in schools.

Sayings

Throughout the story various sayings appear. For example, 'The early bird catches the worm'. Write down any other sayings you know of with a brief sentence to explain their meanings.

Slogans

The slogan for Shobblechoc is – 'Every bite is a summer holiday'. Pretend you work in advertising and make up your own slogan for Shobblechoc. Design a poster to go in a supermarket to sell Shobblechoc.

Divinascrumptolicious

The chocolate on Shobble is so delicious it is described as being 'Divinascrumptolicious'. Make as many smaller words as you can from the letters of the word Divinascrumptolicious. Have a class competition to see who can find the most words within this large word.



Greed

Enrico and his family have become greedy. Discuss as a class what greed is and what makes people greedy.

Mapping Fun

Reread p74. Create and draw a map of Shobble marking where the Space Brigade are and where Topaz is. Put in some of the landmarks or points of interest.

Phobias

Enrico has xanthophobia (the fear of the colour yellow), melophobia (the fear of music) and koumpounophobia (the fear of buttons). He is also afraid of peanut butter. Do some research to discover five more unusual phobias.

Precious Stones

Use books or the Internet to find out about topaz. Why do you think the author chose the name Topaz for her character?

Arguments

When the Space Brigade met Horatio he had lived alone for a long time because of a trivial family fight. What was the argument about? What are some silly things you argue about?

Silver Space Ship

Use the description on p19 to write an explanation of how the Space Brigade's silver suitcase turns into a spaceship. Draw some pictures to complement your description.

Weapons

Reread the section that describes the Biters (pp117–118) and the Shock-Sticks (pp120–121). Invent your own weapon to fight the Biters. Describe it, label it and draw it.

Hurricane Research Project

The Space Brigade became caught in a hot-air balloon in a hurricane. Use books and the Internet to answer the following questions.

- What is a hurricane?
- What is the difference between a hurricane, a cyclone and a tornado?
- What causes a hurricane?
- What are the names of some famous destructive hurricanes?

Scoop

Recount the Space Brigade's adventure in the hot-air balloon. Make it as entertaining as you can. Illustrate your report.

Drama Time

In small groups of 4–6, select a part of the story you like the best. Rehearse this section of the book with your group and perform it for the class. Bring in any costumes or props you may need.

Despair Gas

Nicola tells the others that despair is just a feeling and you don't have to give in to your feelings. Do you agree with this? Write three reasons why you agree and three reasons you disagree. Share your ideas with the class and have a mini class debate.

Alphabet Alliteration

Near the end of the story Enrico is confronted by all his fears. He responds with the phrases – yucky yellow, mucky music, beastly buttons (p221). These are types of alliteration. Make up your own alliteration alphabet book from A–Z using short phrases and illustrating each letter.

Rainbows

Write down everything you know about rainbows.





Book Review

Write a short book review for *The Shocking Trouble on the Planet of Shobble*. Include the following:

- Title
- Author
- Favourite characters
- Brief plot summary
- Favourite part of the novel
- Recommendation (who you would recommend the book to and why)
- An illustration.