**NOVEL**UNITS
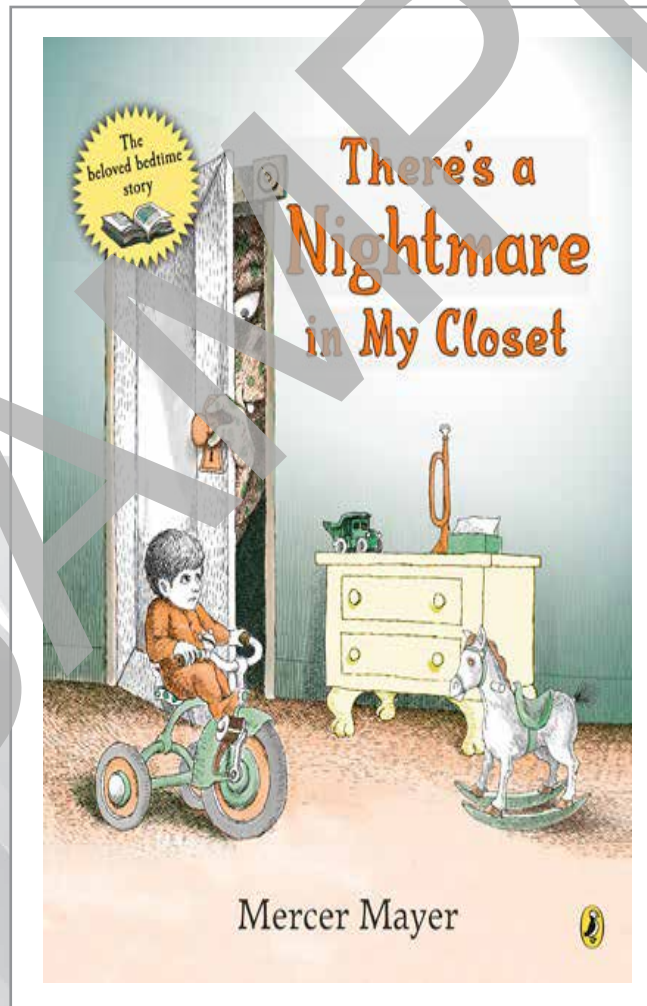
COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

# There's a Nightmare in My Closet

Mercer Mayer

**READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT**

# There's a Nightmare in My Closet

Mercer Mayer

## TEACHER GUIDE

**NOTE:**

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

# Table of Contents

SAMPLE

# Skills and Strategies

**Thinking**
    Brainstorming, classifying
    and categorizing, comparing
    and contrasting, evaluating,
    analyzing details

**Writing**
    Completion of charts

**Listening/Speaking**
    Participation in discussion,
    pantomime, drama

**Vocabulary**
    Antonyms/synonyms

**Comprehension**
    Predicting, sequencing,
    inference, real vs. make-
    believe

**Literary Elements**
    Character, setting, plot,
    mood

# Summary of the Story

A small boy tells a story of the awful nightmare in his closet and how he handled the problem.

# Introductory Information and Activities

*Instructions Prior to Reading:*
1. **Previewing the Book:** Have the students examine the cover. Ask: What does the expression on the boy's face tell you about him? What sort of boy is he? Who do you think is in the closet? Look at the hand on the door knob. Look at the eyes, nose and tooth. What words could you use to describe the creature? Are those *green* spots on it?

2. Have you read other books by Mercer Mayer? If so, how were they alike?

3. Given the following clues from the cover, what do you think will happen in the story?

    •a boy on a tricycle
    •a gun
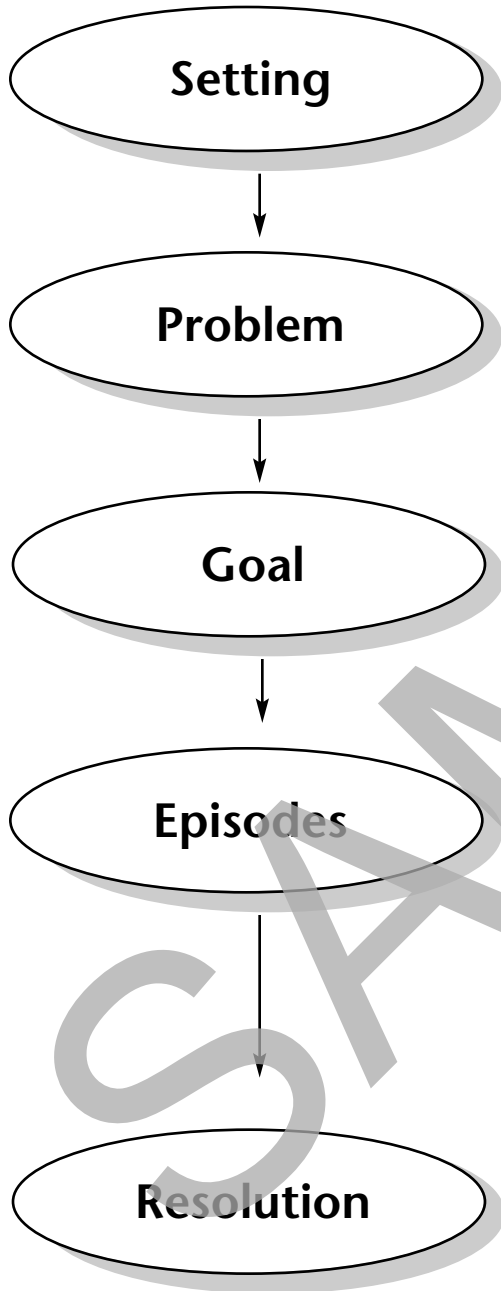    •a closet
    •wild creature

*Pre-reading Activities:*
1. Make an attribute web with the students which organizes their ideas about nightmares in graphic form. Begin by writing **NIGHTMARE** in the center of a large piece of paper. Ask students to quickly tell what **NIGHTMARE** makes them think of. On "wheelspoke lines" from the central word—**NIGHTMARE**—list student ideas. Encourage students to elaborate on particular ideas and show them how to depict these subcategories on the web. (See sample web on the next page and also pages 5-7 of this guide.)

2. **Bulletin Board:** Post the large web with the word **NIGHTMARE** and a story map. (See page 8 of this guide.) The children will draw pictures of nightmare creatures. Words to describe the creatures will be placed on the board.

*Story Map:*
Many stories have the same parts—a setting, a problem, a goal, and a series of events that lead to an ending or conclusion. These story elements may be placed on a story map. Just as a road map helps a driver get from one place to another, so too a story map helps the reader to understand the direction of the story. There are many different types of story maps. Students may use the one included on page 8 or make up their own.

# Story Map

Characters_____

_____

### Setting

Time and Place_____

_____

### Problem

Problem_____

_____

_____

### Goal

Goal_____

_____

_____

Beginning ⟶ Development ⟶ Outcome

### Episodes

_____

_____

_____

_____

### Resolution

Resolution_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

# Cause and Effect Chart

The story begins as it ends with the boy in bed. Think about all the steps that came between when the boy first looked at the closet and the last picture with the boy asleep with the nightmare.

Often one event results in another. The first step is called the CAUSE and the result is called the EFFECT. Sometimes one CAUSE has more than one EFFECT. Sometimes several CAUSES contribute to the same EFFECT.

Summarize each of the main events in the story in each of the "pie pieces" below. Label causes "c" and effects "e."

(A circle cut into about 12 pie slices, the first labeled "Boy on tricycle sees something in the closet.")
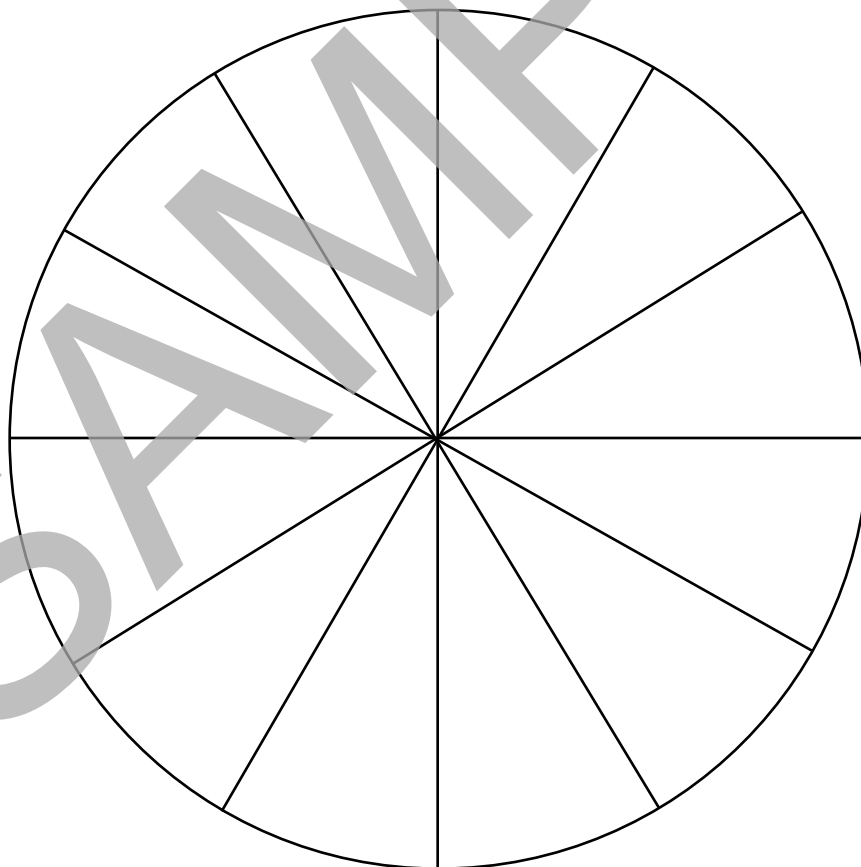
# Feelings Chart

Think about the boy. What was he like? Was he happy or sad? brave or cowardly? lucky or unlucky? Put an X on the circle which best describes the boy. If he changes, use 2 X's. Write a sentence explaining how you made your choice.

**Happy**                                                                                          **Sad**

○          ○          ○          ○          ○
_____

_____

**Brave**                                                                                     **Cowardly**

○          ○          ○          ○          ○
_____

_____

**Lucky**                                                                                     **Unlucky**

○          ○          ○          ○          ○
_____

_____

**Rich**                                                                                          **Poor**

○          ○          ○          ○          ○
_____

_____

**Loved**                                                                                     **Unloved**

○          ○          ○          ○          ○
_____

_____