



Teacher's Notes

Written by Sarina Dickson

Story Summary

Aunt Nasty is coming to stay. Claire and Toby don't know what to expect.

You see, Aunt Nasty isn't like other aunties. Aunt Nasty is a witch!

A spooky and magical full-colour edition of a classic story from the Carnegie-winning and Hans Christian Andersen Award nominated author Margaret Mahy, with new illustrations by Chris Mould.



About the Author

Margaret Mahy (1936–2012) is one of New Zealand's most celebrated children's writers. She is the author of more than 150 titles, which have been translated into many different languages and sold around the world. Appointed to the Order of New Zealand in 1993, Mahy also won many global prizes for children's writers, including the Carnegie Medal and the prestigious Hans Christian Andersen Award.

'It is in the nature of books, that they have the capacity to make you feel powerful about what you can alter and achieve in your life' - Margaret Mahy

About the Illustrator

Chris Mould went to art school at the age of sixteen. He has won the Nottingham Children's Book Award and been commended by the Sheffield Children's Book Award. He loves his work and likes to write and draw the kind of books that he would have liked to have had on his shelf as a boy.

Suggested Shared Reading Questions

- † What can we predict about the book from the cover? Does the cover illustration suggest this is going to be a funny book? Or a scary book? Or something else? Does everyone agree, or does the illustration mean something different to different people?
- † Who is the book dedicated to? Who would you dedicate a book that you had written or illustrated to? Who is the dedication from?
- † What is the name of the page that tells the reader how many chapters are in the book?

Pages 11-15

- † Who is in the family?
- † Why doesn't the family want Aunt Nasty to come and stay?
- † Why can't they just ask her not to come?
- † What might happen if they make her angry?

Pages 16-22

- † Make your eyes go round like Toby and Claire's did when they heard that Aunt Nasty is a witch.
- † What do their expressions tell us about how they are feeling?

† Aunt Nasty wrote her letter on a dead mouse skin. What might you write a letter on if you were a witch?

† Why does Toby think Aunt Nasty is showing off?

† What tasks did the family have to do to prepare for Aunt Nasty coming?

Pages 23-29

† Does Aunt Nasty expect the family to be happy to see her?

† Why do the children have to be quiet? What might happen to them if they're not?

† Why did Aunt Nasty come on a plane instead of her broomstick?

Pages 30-36

† Was Aunt Nasty pleased when she saw her room? How do you know?

† What are all the things we've learnt about Aunt Nasty so far?

† Do you think she seems as bad as the children were expecting her to be?

† Why were the children unhappy?

Pages 37-43

† What did the family do differently while their Aunt was there?

† What is a useful toadstool for a witch?

† What do you think Aunt Nasty wants the toadstools for?

† Why do you think Mum looked tired and sad?

Pages 44-54

† Oh-oh! Have you ever forgotten an important birthday?

- † How might the children make it up to their mum?
- † How does Aunt Nasty sneak her cat on the plane?
- † What are some of the things Aunt Nasty tells the children to draw? What is her plan?

Pages 55-63

- † What does Aunt Nasty do with the drawings?
- † What did the smoke smell like? Does everyone smell something different?
- † Why do you think that is?
- † How does Aunt Nasty change the room? Will Mum be happy?

Pages 64-70

- † What is Aunt Nasty's present for Mum?
- † Why doesn't Aunt Nasty want to wait until Mum gets home?
- † How does Aunt Nasty get home? Where do you think she might live?

Pages 71-76

- † How have the family's views of Aunt Nasty change from the beginning of the story?
- † Do you think they might have misunderstood Aunt Nasty from the beginning?
- † How do you think Aunt Nasty feels about the family?
- † Do you think her opinion of them might have changed from staying with them and getting to know them better?
- † How do you think Aunt Nasty felt about coming to stay with them?

Suggested Activities

Timeline of events

Put these events in order. Pay attention. One of them doesn't belong!

- † A letter arrives for the family.
- † Aunt Nasty uses magic to make a party for Mum.
- † The children don't want Aunt Nasty to come.
- † A soup bowl gets broken.
- † Mum is sad.
- † A frog tries to eat one of the children.
- † Aunt Nasty arrives on a plane.
- † Aunt Nasty has a cat around her neck like a scarf.

What Happened Next?

Write your own Chapter 6: Did Mum like the party? Did they ever see Aunt Nasty again? Did Aunt Nasty leave anything behind? Was there a birthday surprise no-one expected?

Speech Marks Comic

Using the following examples of what the characters said in the book write a nine frame comic strip to retell the story. Include a speech bubble with speech marks and punctuation in each frame of your comic.

“Oh dear! Aunt Nasty is coming to stay”

“Leave the cobwebs in the corner”

“How nice to see you again Aunt Nasty”

“I will have a catnap”

“It is your mum’s birthday today and we forgot!”

“Can you draw?”

“I smell flowers”

“Goodbye to you”

“Happy Birthday”

The Ultimate Party

Think about someone that you know really well. Illustrate your ultimate party for them. Think about all the things you know about them, especially their likes and dislikes. Include things that they would love to have at their perfect dream party.