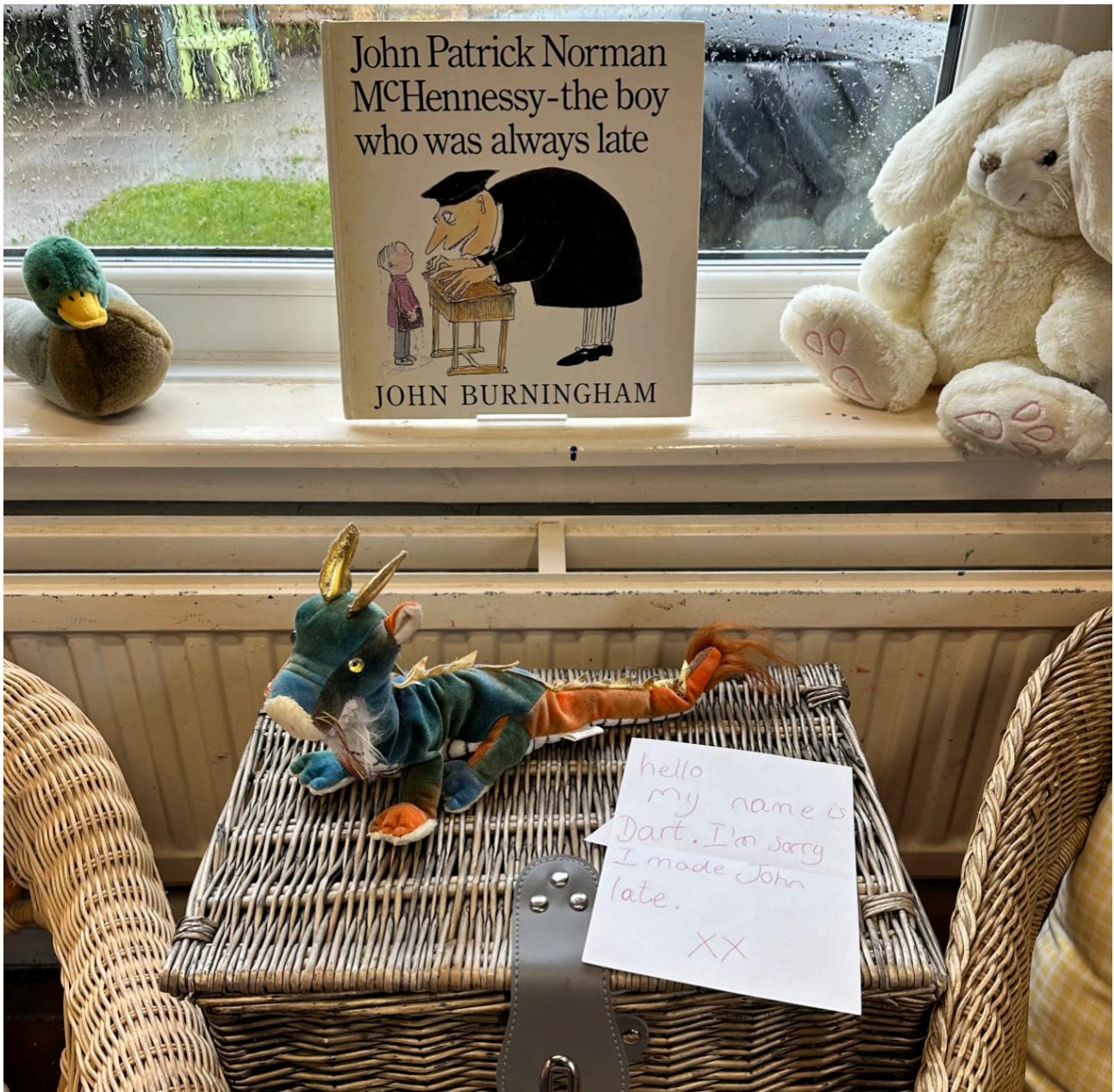
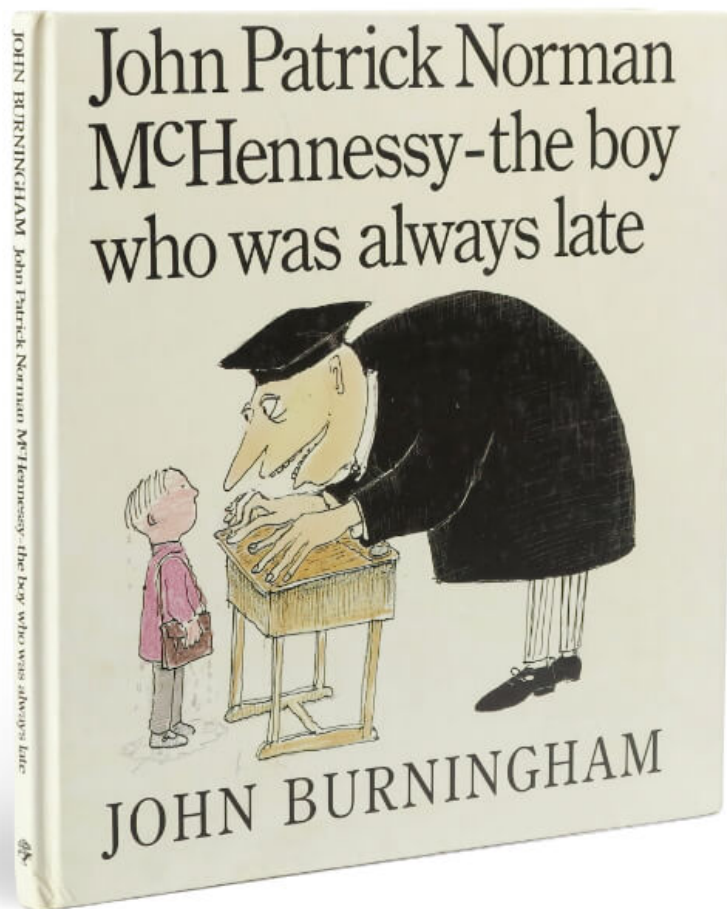


# Teaching Ideas and Resources



Teaching Notes for 'John Patrick Norman McHennessy  
- The Boy Who Was Always Late by John Burningham

Created by: Penny Kemp Instagram: @mrskempcreativeteaching



*This is a fantastic story which children are hooked by immediately, they are captured by the awfulness of John's experiences (not being believed, having a mean teacher, the threats of punishment) and then the immediate joy as the mean teacher gets 'payback' as one of my children described it at the end of the story.*

# Early Years Foundation Stage Activities

A wide variety of activities for the three prime areas of the EYFS Framework (Communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development) can be created and differentiated to include both Year 1 and 2 using the story as a starting point. The best activities are inspired and led by the children themselves, their interests, imaginations and experiences however here are some starting points.

**Literacy and phonics** - After reading the story with the children give them a selection of loose parts that they can use to recreate the story in a tuff tray. They will need a toy crocodile, lion, gorilla, items to be fields, path and a road etc. You could photocopy images from the story and lay them around the edge of the tray for the children to sequence the events of the story to aid the retell but also to inspire the scenes they create. Have recording devices (talking point recordable buttons or iPads) small clipboards with paper and pencils available for the children to record their stories orally and written.



**Physical Development** - in the outdoor area recreate John's journey to school, create new areas and obstacles he has to climb over, walk around, go through etc. Give the children a selection of tyres, planks of wood, crates, big pieces of material and other loose parts for the children to build the obstacles and design a route and path through them. Create, act out and tell new events in the story as they play.

**Communication and language** - Take the roles of the characters, in small groups ask the children choose which character to play. Choose a scene from the story, use props and microphones and act it out. Video them on an iPad for the children to watch back.

Prop the book open in the tray at different points of the story each day to provide starting point for speaking and listening. Place puppets and microphones with them.

Relate to children's own experiences, have they ever been late for anything? Were they worried? How did they feel, discuss different emotions although children in EYFS have less understanding of

time and may have little understanding of the concept of being late it would be useful to explain and talk about the impact of being late for an event.

Develop children's understanding of the world by identifying different creatures that would live in the same habitat and environments as crocodiles and the same as lions. Learn about the natural habitat of these animals. Wonder - Would you find a crocodile in a drain? How did it get there? Where does a lion live? What was it doing in the field?

**Expressive arts and design** – Create representations of animals draw, paint and collage. Create 3D junk models of the route to school.

You can create a variety of maths activities from different points of the story. Explore time, sequence events in a day, etc. Taking the theme of walking the children could do simple non-standard measuring using footprints. Use toy animals linked to the theme of the story and use them for subitising, counting, ordering numbers, addition, subtraction, more than, less than, recognising equal and unequal groups, number formation, shape and so much more.



*John Patrick Norman  
Hennessy hurried off  
along the road to learn*



# Key Stage One Activities

## ENGLISH

Author study read other John Burningham books, notice similarities between them, in particular notice the stories that feature children or animals overcoming big adversities as it is a common theme in his stories (eg Avacado Baby, The Shopping Basket, Courtney, Borka).

**Describe the main character**, John, ask the children to draw the different characters in the story, talk about, hot seat, role play them then write a description of one or more of them.

**Describe a setting in the story**, let the children choose a setting they like to draw and then describe. Model how to by choosing the classroom as a setting, draw it and label the features inside with their help, add things the children would like to be in there then describe. Compare what is similar and what is different to their classroom.

**Create a comic strip scene** to tell part of the story using the six illustrations showing John fighting over his satchel with the crocodile as a hook. Or to tell part of their new story that they create, twist the story, give John superpowers, and draw him winning the scuffle with the crocodile in a fun way. Use onomatopoeic words in explosion bubbles to show the sound effects eg boom, splat, kapow.

**Innovate the story** by creating new obstacles for John to overcome on his way to school. What other animals could stop him on his way? What other types of weather could stop him? As a hook for writing place a toy dragon (or any other creature) with a note saying "Hello, My name is Dart, I am sorry I made John late for school" for the children to come into class and find. Wonder how Dart got there, wonder what he did to make John late. As a short writing opportunity the children write notes back to Dart asking what he did to John giving them the chance to practice writing questions.

**Write a letter** from Dart to John apologising for making him late and explaining what he was on John's route to school by mistake.

**Recount their journey to school**, recount landmarks that they pass on their way.

**Write in role** as John, write a diary entry recounting one of the days he was late for school as depicted in the story.





*But on the way as he was crossing the bridge over the river, a big tidal wave swept him off his feet.*

Linking to science activities learning about animals featured in the story and their habitats **write a non-fiction report or fact file** about one of the animals. Watch clips from wildlife documentaries about the animal they are creating the report about as part of their research and if possible go on a class visit to a wildlife park or zoo that has the animals there to photograph and gather information.

**Write a list of instructions** telling someone “How to get to school on time”. Remember to use imperative (bossy) verbs and give commands keeping your instructions short and to the point. Write sequenced, chronological steps in the present tense. Include diagrams or illustrations if you wish. Eg:

Get up and get dressed.

Stay away from Drains

Have a wash

Watch out for Lions hiding in the bushes

Have your breakfast

Check out the tide times before you take the route past the river

Don't forget your school bag and set off for school

Walk fast

**Drama retell the story** putting the children into groups and giving them each a section of the story to act out. Use lots of different techniques, freeze frame, hot seating main characters, etc to develop the children’s vocabulary and retelling skills.

## KS2 Writing opportunities

**Write in role** as the teacher writing a letter explaining why he did not believe John. Write a persuasive piece of writing asking the children to create a likeable character, can their writing in role as the teacher evoke empathy from the reader to make him likeable?

**Create a newspaper article**

*'teacher snatched by gorilla!'*

### MATHS

**Use the theme of time to explore being late.** EYFS and Y1 children sequence events in a day, Y2 children use the story to learn about time intervals. Create problems to solve such as 'John set off for school at 8.30 am he was chased by a lion for 20 minutes and it took him 15 minutes to walk to school without interruptions. What time would he arrive at school?'

**Create opportunities to measure** length and height use a selection of toy animals (including a crocodile, lion and gorilla as well as new animals they may have added in their own innovations of the story) and allow the children to measure. They can measure with non-standard and standard measurement and explore the vocabulary longer, shorter, taller, tallest etc.

**Develop the children's understanding** of positional language by using the toy animals and describing their positions eg the lion is next to the bush, John is in front of the crocodile etc.

### PSHE

**Fairness and being believed** - Create a character feelings map as children explore how John feels at different points of the story. Explore adjectives that describe emotions, discuss why and how John's feelings change.

Explore the way John is treated by his teacher. The threat of being hit by a cane, being made to stand in a corner and face the wall and being made to write out the lines, these are now out of date forms of punishment in school, discuss why. How should adults behave? Discuss children's rights and feeling safe.

**Responsibility and routines** - talk about what helps us get to school on time. What can the children do to help their parents in a morning? Create a morning routine chart eg make their bed, get themselves dressed, have their shoes and bag ready by the door, etc.

# KS1 Cross Curricular Activities

## SCIENCE

**Animals and Habitats** – look at the animals in the story, where would their natural habitat be? Learn about animals' diets, omnivores, carnivores and herbivores. Create a tuff tray with animals, loose parts, herbs as plants for sensory opportunities and questions giving an opportunity to learn through play and discussion.



## GEOGRAPHY

**Weather** – discuss how the weather could affect you being late on a journey. What experiences do the children have of travelling in different kinds of weather? Discuss wearing appropriate clothing in different types of weather. Link to seasonal weather in the UK or country that they live in. Keep a weather chart over a few weeks and then allow the children to observe and note the changes. Link to the animals in the story and study weather in different climates.

**Seasons** – notice how the story moves through the seasons (link to other John Burningham books where he does this), photocopy a set of illustrations ask the children to sort them into which season they belong to and explain why. What clues do they see?



**Maps** – Develop geographical skills by creating maps of John's route to school from his house. Use simple compass directions, locational and directional language to describe different features and routes on their maps. Identify the physical and human features of their maps.

## COMPUTING

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**Sequence John's journey** using coding tools such as Bee Bots and program a route past obstacles (place toy animals along the way).

## ART

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**Look closely** at John Burningham's illustrations. Look at his use of colour, question why on the double page spread is one illustration black and white and the other colour? How did he create his pictures? Explore.

**Create a 3D map** of John's route to school using junk art objects.

**Draw or paint pictures** of animals featured in the story and others they would find living in similar habitats.

## MUSIC

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**Compose a song** creating lyrics based on the story or parts of the story. Use a variety of musical instruments to soundtrack the different emotions John feels throughout the story. Create a journey soundscape, use different instruments for each obstacle eg drums for elephants, rains ticks for storms, etc. Create rhythm patterns to represent John, pulling against the crocodile, running from the lion, stopping when he reaches school, etc.



“John Patrick Norman McHennessy, I am being held up in the roof by a great big hairy Gorilla. You are to get me down at once!”

*There are no such things as big hairy gorillas in the roofs around here*

