

DODIE'S PHENOMENAL PHEESIC

By Christine De Luca



A CLOSE READING

Including 2 accompanying CDs to follow
along with!

A note to teachers:

These notes are a guide for schools wishing to do a Close Reading of 'Dodie's Phenomenal Pheesic', the Shetland Dialect version of Roald Dahl's 'George's Marvellous Medicine'.

It is intended for 2nd Level pupils.

Suggestions are made for where the teacher should read to the class, and where the children in the class should read by themselves, but they are only suggestions. Some teachers may wish to have the class read more than is suggested, some teachers may wish to read more themselves, the Activities should be adaptable.

**This pack comes with
CDs of the whole of
'Dodie's Phenomenal
Pheesic' read by the
author Christine De Luca**

Contents:

- Introduce the book
- Chapter by chapter reading questions and suggestions
- Extracts for shared reading
- The Characters
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- Setting
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The material in this booklet is based on the ideas and content found in Scholastic's *Read and Respond* book for *George's Marvellous Medicine*

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Introduce the book

Begin by asking the class if they know the name Roald Dahl.

They may already be familiar with some of his stories by either reading his books or seeing films of his books. For those who have heard of him get them to tell the rest of the class what they know.

Has anyone read or heard of 'George's Marvellous Medicine'?

Explain that 'Dodie's Phenomenal Pheesic' is a translation of 'George's Marvellous Medicine' into Shetland Dialect.

Chapter 1 - 'Granny'

The first chapter of the book establishes Granny's nastiness, and the reader's sympathies for Dodie's predicament are developed. Dodie begins to make plans for getting even with Granny and the reader believes she deserves it.

With the class, read to the top of the second page (p.8), to 'Luikin tae her aa his lane wisna really da maist excitin wye ta spend a Setterday moarnin.'

Ask the class what they think Dodie will do in the story. (Dodie will get up to mischief.)

Ask them if they think this is an effective way to begin a story. Does it make them want to find out what the mischief will be?

Ask the children to read to the top of Page 9 and then describe what Granny is like. Tell them to find the descriptive words and phrases in the text.

For example:

- 'grountin grötti-barrel o a Granny'
- 'hed kinda broon teeth'
- 'a peerie snyipped-up mooth laek a dug's backside'
- 'a nearbigyaain, nipsiccar aald nyaag'

Point out the use of alliteration in phrases like 'a nearbigyaain, nipsiccar aald nyaag'.

Discuss the things that Granny says to Dodie. Ask the children whether they think Granny's instructions to Dodie about what to eat are silly, sensible, or frightening?

Read to page 15, where it says, 'Come ower here ta Granny an shö'll hark secrets i dy lug.' Ask the class where and how the tone and atmosphere changes.

Read the last two pages of the chapter. Ask the class to describe how Dodie feels about his Granny, and what frightens him most, her words or her appearance? Can they find particular sentences or paragraphs?

Chapter 2 - 'Da Phenomenal Plan'

Read to half way down page 20, where it says, 'If hit didna dö dat, dan hit wis jöst ösless.' Ask the class what they think Dodie wants to do to his Granny? Ask the class if they think he will do any of these things he's just spoken about? Ask the class what they think he will do?

Read to the end of the chapter, ask everyone in the class to re-read the poem that ends the chapter and choose their favourite line.

Chapter 3 - 'Dodie Starts ta Mak da Pheesic'

Read to the class the opening of the chapter, to page 24, where it says, 'Dodie pat da pan apö da flör an gud ta wark.' Ask the class if anyone knows what Dodie promised his parents? (that he won't touch the medicines kept in the bathroom)

Explain that what happens next is Dodie goes around the house putting all sorts of things into a pan to make his pheesic. Get the class to read the rest of the chapter themselves. Ask them to write down all the ingredients Dodie puts in his pheesic, and once they get them all they are to add to the list, by thinking of various other ingredients that could go in - but they have to remember the rule that Dodie follows: not to touch medicines.

Chapter 4 – 'Animal Peels'

Read the first few paragraphs to the class, down to 'He wis oot colin da hay i da mödow.'

Ask the class if they think Dodie should use the animal medicines? Point out the sentence: 'He kent his faider widna be dere.' What does this tell the reader about the rights or wrongs of Dodie's decision?

Get the class to read the rest of the chapter themselves (5 pages). Get them to take notes on any similarities between this chapter and the previous chapter. (The ingredients are in capitals, they have descriptions on what they're meant to be for, Dodie explains why it could be good for Granny...)

What names does Dodie have for his Granny? i.e. da aald bird...

Chapter 5 – 'Da Cook-up'

Read this chapter to the class and get them to listen for words and expressions that say how the medicine is cooking.

Everyone read the poem out-loud together. Discuss with the class the use of alliteration ('f' sounds, 's' sounds, 'w' sounds). Discuss rhyme and onomatopoeia, and how Christine De Luca has used certain dialect words in the poem.

Chapter 6 – 'Broon Pent'

Ask the class to read this short chapter to themselves. Ask them to watch for exclamation marks, and to make notes on how the author has used them. (There are some used in speech, where people are shouting; there are some used in the text to increase the drama).

Once they've finished reading and you've discussed exclamation marks. Ask the class why they think Granny keeps telling off Dodie for growing too fast?

Chapter 7 - 'Granny gyets da Pheesic'

Read the first page and a half of this chapter to the class. Stop at "...an da broon pent." Dodie has listed some of the ingredients that went into his pheesic - can the class remember others?

Ask the class what they think is about to happen, when Granny drinks the pheesic, listen to some of their ideas. Then get them to read for themselves what happens (to the bottom of page 46).

Ask the class why the author has used ellipses between the descriptions of what is happening to Granny? (To add to the drama)

Read to the bottom of page 49. Dodie is wondering what will happen next. Ask the class what they think will happen. (Granny grows so tall she goes through the roof)

Have the class read to the end of the chapter to find out.

Chapter 8 - 'Da Broon Hen'

Get the class to read this chapter themselves.

Then get them to answer some questions; why does George give the hen a spoon of the medicine? (To prove to Granny that he made it); how does Granny react to the hen growing? (She boasts that she is still taller and she wants to be the centre of attention); how does the hen grow differently from Granny? (she grew taller and got thinner, but the hen grows taller whilst remaining plump).

Chapter 9 - 'Da Grice, da Stots, da Yowes, da Horse an da Nanny-goat'

Get the class to read this chapter themselves.

Based on the pictures through the chapter, get the class to draw pictures of their own of animals getting bigger after drinking the pheesic. They should feel free to be as imaginative as they like.

Chapters 10 & 11 - 'A Crane for Granny' and 'Mr Kranky's Graet Idee'

Read these chapters to the class, down to the bottom of page 78, where Dodie says "But wait a meenit, dad,' Dodie said."

Granny's selfish personality is emphasised as she loses centre stage, and Mr Kranky's personality is brought out as he gets carried away with plans to make money from the pheesic.

Ask the class what they think of Mr Kranky's plans (to sell the pheesic to other farms, to make a pheesic factory)?

Read to the bottom of page 80, where Dodie says "But Dad..."

Ask the class what they think Dodie is trying to tell his Dad? (That he can't remember all the ingredients)

Get the class to read to the end of the chapter themselves, and when they get to the end, tell them to make their own list of all the ingredients they can remember going in, and how Dodie cooked them together.

Chapters 12, 13 & 14 - 'Phenomenal Pheesic Number Two', 'Phenomenal Pheesic Number Tree', 'Phenomenal Pheesic Number Fower'

Read these short chapters to the class.

Mr Kranky and Dodie try time and again to recreate the pheesic, but none have the same effect.

In these chapters the character of Mrs Kranky is developed. Ask the class what they think of Mrs Kranky (she is calm and reasoning) and in what ways she is different to Mr Kranky?

Chapter 15 - 'Cheerio Granny'

Get the class to read the last chapter.

Tell them to stop when they get to the bottom of page 106. Granny has had a large dose of Pheesic No.4, which makes you shrink, and she has shrunk so small she is now standing in the palm of Mrs Kranky's hand.

What do the class think of this? What would it be like being that small?
What would you do if you had to look after someone that small?

Read the last few pages to the class. At the end, ask them what they thought of the whole story?

Shared reading

Extract 1 - (from the chapter 'Da Phenomenal Plan')

Dodie set him doon at da table i da but-end. He wis shakkin a coarn. Oh, foo he hated Granny! He raelly *hated* dat horrid aald witchy wumman. An, aal of a sudden, he hed a grit urge ta *dö somethin* about her. Somethin *braaly big*. Somethin *totally terrific*. A rael *shocker*. A kinda explosion. he wantit ta blaa awa da witchy guff dat hang about her trowe by. He micht only a bön eicht year aald but he hed smeddum. He wis ready ta tak dis aald wife on.

'A'm no gyaain ta be faert o *her*,' he said tae himsel peerie-wyes. But he *wis* faert. An dat's why he wantit aal of a sudden ta explod her awa. Weel...no fairly awa. But he did want ta shak da aald wife up a coarn.

OK, dan. So whit sud hit be, dis undömious, speecial, explodin gluff for Granny?

He wid a laekkit tae a pitten a firewirk banger anunder her shair but he didna hae een. He wid a laekkit tae a pitten a lang green snake doon da back o her froak but he didna hae a lang green snake. He wid a laekkit tae a pitten six muckle black rats i da room wi her an lockit da door but he didna hae six muckle black rats.

As Dodie sat dere tinkin about dis interestin problem, his ee fell apö da bottle o Granny's broon pheesic staandin apö da dresser.

Read the first paragraph of Extract 1 and encourage the class to read along with you. Emphasise the words in italics and add expressive voices.

Read from, 'A'm no gyaain ta be faert o *her*,' up to '...explodin gluff for Granny?' Do the children think Dodie wants to hurt Granny? Ask them to find words in the extract that support their answer. What does Dodie really want to do to Granny?

Look at the sentence: 'So whit sud hit be, dis undöminous, speecial, explodin gluff for Granny?' Discuss adjectives. What effect do the adjectives have? Discuss why the author might have chosen these words.

Read the 3 ideas Dodie has for what he'd like to do to his Granny. Discuss his ideas and how Granny might react to them. Were they good ideas?

Discuss what might be going through Dodie's mind when he sees her bottle of pheesic?

Extract 2 - (from the chapter 'Animal Peels')

Da first bottle he took doon hed orange-coloured pooder in hit. Da label said, FOR HENS WI FOUL PEST, HEN GRIPE, SORE NEBS, GAMMY LEGS, COCKERELITIS, EGG TROUBLE, BROODINESS OR LOSS O FEDDERS. MIX WAN SPÖNFOO ONLY WI IVERY BUCKET O MAET.

'Weel,' Dodie said alood tae himsel as he poored in da hale bottlefoo, 'da aald bird winna be lossin ony fedders eftir shö's hed a dose o dis.'

Da neist bottle he took doon hed about five hunder gigantic maave peels in hit. FOR HORSES WI HAERSE TRAPPLES, hit said apö da label. DA HAERSE-TRAPPED HORSE SUD SOOK WAN PEEL TWA TIMES A DAY.

'Granny maybe disna hae a haerse trot,' Dodie said, 'but shö certainly haes a sharp tongue. Maybe dey'll cure dat instead.' Inta da pan gud da five hunder gigantic maave peels.

Dan dey wir a bottle o tick yalooey liquid. FOR KYE, BULLS AN STOTS, da label said. Will cure KYE POX, KYE MANGE, CRUMPLED HORNS, BAD BRAETH IN BULLS, SAIR LUGS, TEETHACHE, HEADACHE, HOOFACHE, TAILACHE AN SAIR YOODDERS.

'Dat ill-naitered aald coo i da ben room haes ivery wan o yon rotten illnesses,' Dodie said. 'Shö'll need hit aa.' Wi a swinkle an a glug da yaloo liquid sloppit inta da noo nearly foo pan.

Dodie has obeyed the rule about not touching the medicine cabinet but, realising it does not apply to the animals' medicines, he adds these pills and potions to the mixture. Ask the class what they notice about the way the words have been written?

Go over each description discuss which of the animal illnesses are genuine (sair yoodders) and which are invented (bad braeth)?

Which of the descriptions does George link to his Granny? i.e. her sharp tongue.

Extract 3 - (from the chapter 'Cheerio Granny')

Jöst dan, da aald wife spied da cup in Dodie's haand. Shö bood her doon an skoitit inta hit. Shö saa dat hit wis foo o broon liquid. Hit luikit braaly laek tae. 'Ho-ho!' shö scriecht. 'Ha-ha! Sae dat's dy jookerie-packerie, is hit! Du fairly luiks eftir dysel, does'n du! Du fairly maks sure *du's* gotten a fine cup o tae! But du nivver tocht ta bring een tae dy pör aald Granny! I aye kent du wis a selfish grice!

'Na, Granny,' Dodie said. 'Dis isna...'

'Dunna lee ta me, boy!' da graet muckle aald hag baalled. 'Pass hit up here dis meenit!'

'Na!' cried Mrs Kranky. 'Na, midder, dunna! Yon's no for you!'

'Noo *du's* fornenst me an aa!' shoutit Granny. 'Mi ain dowter tryin ta stop me haein mi brackfast! Tryin ta laeve me fantin!'

Mr Kranky luikit up at da horrid aald wife an he smeegit. 'Of coorse hit's for you, Granny,' he said. 'You takk hit an quilk hit doon while hit's fine an haet.'

'Dunna tink I winna,' Granny said, bendin doon fae her graet heicht an rekkin oot a muckle hoarny haand for da cup. Haand it owre, Dodie.'

'Na, na, Granny!' Dodie cried oot, pooin awa da cup.

'You manna! You're no ta preeve hit!'

'Gie hit ta me, boy!' yalled Granny.

'Dunna!' cried Mrs Kranky. 'Yon's Dodie's Phenomenal...'

This passage has a great deal of direct speech. Point out how a change of speaker always begins on a new line. Highlight the punctuation used in writing dialogue.

Ask the class to think about why Mr Kranky's responses to Granny wanting to drink the pheeisic are different from Mrs Kranky and Dodie; why is this?

Arrange the class into groups of four. Let them take the role of one character each and read the dialogue aloud using expressive voices.

Point out the ellipsis that ends Mrs Kranky's words. Ask the class why Mrs Kranky wasn't able to finish what she was saying, and to think of what is missing?

Ask the class to predict what Granny, Dodie, and Mr and Mrs Kranky will do after this point?

The Characters

The objective here is for the class to empathise with characters.

Granny

Get the class to re-read the opening chapter 'Granny', and then, in pairs or small groups, find and make a note of all the words and phrases that describe Granny's appearance.

Go through the list and discuss why the author chose these words.

Discuss what the Shetland dialect words might have been in the English version.

Discuss how the words make them *feel*/about Granny.

For older/more confident learners: Ask the children to write a character description of Granny

For younger/less confident learners: Let the children draw Granny and label the drawing.

Dodie

Get the class to re-read the first paragraph on page 18.

Discuss Dodie's family and the people around him (he has a mother, father and granny, but no brothers or sisters).

Discuss how his Granny treats him and how he describes himself as feeling in the paragraph on page 18. (He wants to take on his Granny)

Dodie decides to make a phenomenal pheesic to give to his Granny. Ask the class what other things someone in Dodie's position could do to try and deal with someone like his Granny.

Whose side are we (as readers) on, is it Dodie's side, or Granny's side? (Dodie's) Ask the class to think about how the author has written the story so that we are on Dodie's side (the story is told from his point of

view, we see the Granny be bad to him so we feel empathy, we like Dodie because he is good and fun).

Mr Kranky

Read page 64 to the class.

Get them to go through the page on their own, first writing down any words or phrases they find that describe Mr Kranky (peerie, baandy legs, a muckle head, kindly, no aesy ta live wi...) then secondly, they are to write a sentence that they think describes Mr Kranky, i.e. Mr Kranky is a nervous man, who is easily excited...

Read pages 78-79 to the class.

Ask the class to write a sentence or two on what Mr Kranky's character is like now, i.e. He's not nervous, now he's ambitious. But he's still excitable...

Read from the bottom of 97, from 'Jöst dan, da aald wife spied da cup in Dodie's haand...' to page 103 to the class.

Get them to go through the pages on their own, writing down all the things Mr Kranky says, i.e. on page 99 'Of coorse hit's for you, Granny,'

Then when they are finished get them to write a paragraph on Mr Kranky's character come the end of the story and how he has changed.

Granny's point of view

Reread to the class Chapters 7 & 8, 'Granny Gyets da Pheesic' and 'Da Broon Hen'.

To ensure the children understand what has happened, ask them to describe to a partner the sequence of events in these two chapters.

Discuss the point of view of the story: it is told from Dodie's point of view. Ask the class to think of questions they would like to ask *Granny* about what happened from *her* point of view, using What, When, Where, and Why.

Choose children to sit in a "hot seat" and act in the role of *Granny*. Can they answer questions from other members of the class. Take turns.

After various people have asked *Granny* various questions, get everyone to write a new part to the story, told from the point of view of *Granny*.

Remind the children about how the book begins (perhaps reread the opening chapter) ask the class what it must be like for someone like *Granny* who has to sit on their own all day?

On your white board write the statement: "Granny is a kind old lady who just likes teasing Dodie".

Split larger classes into small groups or pairs to discuss the statement and think about whether they agree. Encourage them to find evidence to back up what they think. Get them to feed back to the class.

Another statement could be: "Granny is a nice old lady who is mistreated by Dodie".

Setting

Reread Chapter 9 'Da Grice, da Stots, da Yowes, da Horse an da Nanny-goat'.

Ask the class to describe where the story takes place (in the house and on a croft).

Get the class to draw a map of where the story takes place. Have them draw and label the rooms of the house. They should imagine where all the places mentioned for all the animals mentioned could be, then add them to their map, labelling each one.

They can add captions to highlight important places i.e. 'Dodie found the animal medicines in here', or 'This is where Granny's head went through the roof'...

Book Review

Get the class to write a review of the book.

The questions/details they must answer/include are:

- **Title:** (Dodie's Phenomenal Pheesic)
- **Author:** (Christine de Luca)
- **Information about the author:** (Christine de Luca is a Shetland woman who now lives in Edinburgh. She is a poet and a writer of fiction....)
- **About the translation:** (It is a translation of Roald Dahl's 'George's Marvellous Medicine' published by Hansel Co-operative Press)
- **Synopsis:** (Brief outline of the story)
- **The use of Shetland Dialect:** (encourage the class to give an opinion of what it was like reading a book in Shetland Dialect)
- **My favourite part...**
- **My least favourite part...**