



Text:

The Smartest Giant in Town

By Julia Donaldson



Plot: (to support the teaching sequence)	<p>George the Giant was a happy friendly giant but one day he felt unhappy about how he was dressed, his clothes felt old and raggedy. So when he sees a new shop selling giant-sized clothes, he decides it's time for a new look: smart trousers, smart shirt, stripy tie, and shiny shoes.</p> <p>He felt so smart in his new outfit. On the way home, however, he meets others who are in greater need of his clothes than he is, so he gradually gives away each new item of clothing. His tie becomes a scarf for a giraffe and his shoe makes an ideal home for a family of mice. So he ends up as a very cold giant indeed and finding the shop closed, resurrects his old gown and his old sandals. However, good deeds do not go unrewarded When he arrives home, the animals he has helped are all waiting for him with a thank you present.</p>		
Genre:	Narrative – picture book; animal story with warmth & humour	Tense:	
Structure:	Repetitive text with prose as well as poetry and rhyme. The book is told in prose but with some rhymed sections. The story uses the classic construction theme of a children's book, where the character goes through a series of similar experiences only in different guises (in this case George meets various needy animals).	Theme/s:	<p>Kindness and Empathy – the book highlights the moral that it's better to be kind than worry about material possessions in a world where worrying about what your clothes say about you is a major obsession. This act of sharing and helping others promotes a sense of empathy and understanding for those who may be different or less fortunate.</p> <p>Self-Perception – George feels self-conscious about being the “scruffiest giant” and desires to be the “smartest.” This initial perspective is focused on social status and how others perceive him. As he gives away each piece of his new outfit, he begins to prioritise the needs of others over his own. The story implies the relief and gratitude of the animals at George's generosity, showing the positive impact of kindness. The ending highlights a shift in George's self-esteem and contentedness. He is no longer the “smartest giant” but the “kindest giant.” This signifies a deeper understanding about what truly matters.</p> <p>Beyond Appearance – While George seeks to improve his own appearance, the story ultimately emphasises that true “smartness” lies in kindness and helping others. This suggests that judging others based on their appearance is superficial, and true value lies in their characters and actions.</p>
Familiarity of content:	Set in a quaint town inhabited by a mixture of giants and normally sized people.	Perspective :	Third person focused on the perspective of George as he navigates town and interacts with other characters, all the while being referred to as “he” and “him” by the narrator.

Other language choices:	The author uses the superlatives “smartest” and “scruffiest”, and adjectives throughout to highlight the qualities of the clothes and their new function (scruffy giant, old brown sandals, smart clothes, long warm scarf, stripy tie, strong new sail, new white shirt, magnificent sail, tiny ruined house, shiny shoes, warm dry sleeping bag, big squelchy bag, enormous present, beautiful gold paper crown).	Background Knowledge:	<p>Suddenly – the story uses this to indicate a quick and unexpected event.</p> <p>Restless – describes the giant’s state of mind before he decides to change his clothes.</p> <p>Wonder – The giant “wonders” what to do with his old clothes, showing a thoughtful process.</p> <p>Magnificent - used to describe the giant’s new clothes and his overall appearance.</p> <p>Improve – The giant’s decision to buy new clothes is driven by the desire to “improve” his appearance.</p> <p>Combine – He “combines” his clothes with the animals’ needs.</p> <p>Sandals – Type of footwear mentioned in the story.</p>
Tier 2 & 3 Vocabulary :	<p>Tier 2 Suddenly, restless, wonder, magnificent</p> <p>Tier 3 Scruffiest, patched-up, magnificent, enormous, cosiest</p>	Diversity:	Diversity in this book is represented through the different animals George the giant encounters and helps, showcasing a variety of needs and demonstrating kindness and generosity. While the story doesn’t explicitly focus on human diversity, it subtly introduces the idea that different creatures have different needs and appearances, all deserving of kindness and consideration. The story highlights the importance of recognising and addressing the specific needs of others, regardless of their size or species.
Media & other links:	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_f1QbJm1irY https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/articles/z79t8xs	Links to previous texts:	FS2 – The Enormous Turnip, The Rainbow Fish, Elmer Y1 - Amara & the Bats