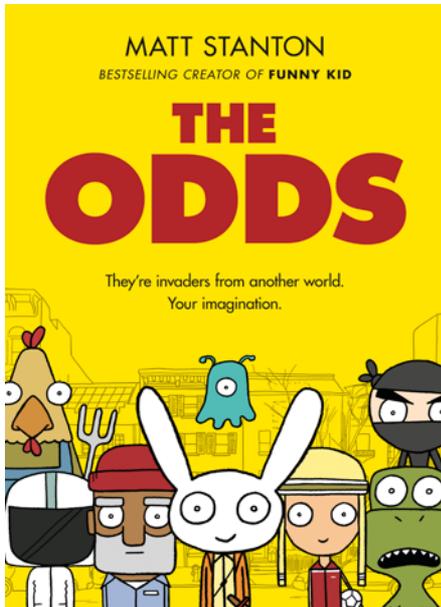


# Classroom Resources



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## The Odds

Matt Stanton

### BOOK SUMMARY

Kip is a quiet kid in a loud city. She's easy to miss and that's the way she likes it.

Then, one day, Kip's quiet life is suddenly interrupted. Ten of her favourite characters have stepped out of their worlds and into hers.

But what happens when a dragon-hunting rabbit leaves his comic strip? When an old man leaves his picture book? When a ninja leaves her TV show, a race-car driver leaves their video game, and a dinosaur turns up from Kip's nightmares?

From million-copy bestseller Matt Stanton comes the start of a hilarious and heart-filled graphic novel series about identity, imagination and discovering who you are.

Meet the Odds ... because fitting in is overrated.

### KEY LEARNING OUTCOMES

- ACELA1518
- ACELT1524
- ACELT1613
- ACELT1617
- ACELT1618
- ACELT1711

### THEMES

- Imagination
- Discovering who you are
- Belonging
- Identity
- Resilience
- Bullying
- Multimodal texts
- Humour

**Recommended Ages:** 7+

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# Classroom Resources

## Before Reading

### Resilience, the imagination, friends and the power of storytelling

A key theme of this graphic novel is the power of storytelling and friends. Matt Stanton shows how falling into the world of the imagination can sustain us, and how following the journey of characters in a story can also inspire and make us feel better.

Invite students to bring their favourite book to class.

- Ask them to tell the class why they like it and who is their favourite character.
- Share the books and ask other students to review or respond to the other books.
- Make a list of the class's favourite characters and work out if there are common characteristics and why.
- Ask the students if they like the protagonist or antagonist more and why.
- You could also invite students to look at the narrative shape of the text as well. Does the protagonist encounter a problem?

Stories are not just confined to books and novels. Narrative elements and memorable characters appear in: our dreams and nightmares, our imagination, our daydreams, audiobooks, apps, graphic novels, picture books, comics, slide presentations, web series, web pages, YouTube videos, TikToks, animations and video games.

Ask students to discuss:

- What is the character you have loved the most in a TV show, movie, book or game you have played?
  - Why do you love this character?
- Can you remember the scariest figure you have ever dreamt about?
  - Draw a picture of the character and explain why it was so scary.
  - Did the character feel real? Why?
- What is the best dream you have ever had?
  - Who appeared in the dream?
  - Draw the character and write a conversation between you and the character.

As a class, discuss the following quote by the children's writer CS Lewis: 'We read to know we are not alone.'

## During Reading

### Examine the relationship between words, sounds, imagery and language patterns in narratives

A graphic novel is a multimodal text. In multimodal texts, composers add more meaning to a text because they utilise more than one mode of communication. Multimodal texts are made up of two or more of the following modes, and each mode can add to telling the story. The modes are:

- Written and spoken language
- Visual language – images, page layouts and formats, filters, the use of colour, viewpoint, framing, angles
- Sound – volume, natural/unnatural sounds, noise, silence, rhythm of music, sound effects
- Facial expressions and body language – body movement, eye movement, gaze
- Spatial – position of layout

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Think about each character in *The Odds* – how does Stanton use the different modes of communication to create his characters? How does he combine words, sounds, images, facial expressions, clothes, eyes and language patterns to make each character unique?

Character	Facial expressions Eyebrows, eyes, shape and position of mouth	Appearance Face and body shape, hairstyle, clothing, facial covering, jewellery/ accessories, make-up, props	Eyes and gaze Gestures Movement of head, arms, hands, legs, feet Stance	What does this character add to the story?
Kip				
Dad				
Diana				
Lance				
Theo				
Booster				
Ninja-Nina				
Blub				
The G.O.A.T.				
Mr Pink				
Racer				
Unicorn				

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Create and draw two contrasting characters using sound, gestures and facial expressions to show how they are different. Make a six-frame cartoon with the two characters arguing about ice cream.

Write two PEEL paragraphs on the character of Kip and one of the Odds. Use these sentence stems to start you off.

## Paragraph One

Kip is characterised as a person who ...

Matt Stanton uses facial expressions/appearance/gestures/hairstyle to convey ...

Matt Stanton also uses facial expressions/appearance/gestures/hairstyle to show how ...

## Paragraph Two

To contrast Kip, the character of \_\_\_\_\_ is characterised as ...

Matt Stanton uses facial expressions/appearance/gestures/hairstyle to convey ...

He also uses facial expressions/appearance/gestures/hairstyle to show how the character is ...

## After Reading

As a class, analyse the multimodal elements of the text:

1. What are the modes being used? Written, visual, spatial, tactile, gestural, audio or oral?
2. What is the purpose of the text? Who is the audience?
3. What elements of each mode are emphasised and why?
4. The structure – is there a narrative element? Is a problem presented and a solution offered?
5. What visual elements are most significant? Is there repetition of shapes? Is there a sharp contrast between two elements? What is the proximity of objects or figures?
6. How is humour used? Why is it used?
7. How are gestures used? Why?

## Focus on visual literacy

Composers control what a viewer can see or not see to influence how the viewer feels. Perspective created by shots and angles makes audiences feel a particular way. A close up, for example, lets the viewer see the intimacy of a character's emotions. A single tear running down a cheek or terrified eyes fills a shot or frame, which communicates sadness to the audience. Think about how Stanton creates perspective through his choice of shots, angles and colour to communicate a range of emotions. These choices increase tension, a sense of anticipation and unpredictability. Audiences love to be surprised.

Each one of these shots and angles is used to great effect in *The Odds*:

- Long Shot:  
A shot from some distance. A long shot establishes the landscape and atmosphere of a story. A barely visible character in the background may be seen. A full body may be shown. It may show the loneliness or helplessness of the character. Or it may just set the scene. Find an example of this shot type.
  - Look at all the pictures at the beginning of each chapter – are they long shots?
  - What does Stanton convey with each picture?
  - What can you see in the long shot?
  - What emotions do you feel? Why?

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- **Medium Shot:**  
The most common shot. It shows a character or a figure from above the head to just below the waist. Find two examples of medium shots.
  - What can you see in the medium shot?
  - What emotions do you feel? Why?
- **Close Up:**  
A shot taken of a character's or figure's head from just above the head to the top of the upper ribcage. There is little or no background. The image takes up at least 80 per cent of the frame. Find an example of a close up.
  - What can you see in the close up?
  - What emotions do you feel? Why?
- **Extreme Close Up:**  
A very close shot focusing on a very specific object or part of a body such as an eye or a hand. Find an example of an extreme close up.
  - What can you see in the shot?
  - What is the effect of focusing on this specific thing?
  - Why has this thing been highlighted to the reader?
- **Eye Level:**  
A picture at the character's eye level. It makes the viewer feel as if they can see what the character can see. Can you find an example of this shot type?
- **High Angle:**  
This angle shows things from a higher point than eye level and may even cause the reader to look down on the subject of the shot. The subject looks smaller and can appear powerless or trapped. Find an example of a high angle shot.
  - What emotions do you feel? Why?
- **Low Angle:**  
When this angle is used, the picture is drawn from below eye level. It may cause the subject to appear strong, powerful, or threatening. Is there an example of a low angle shot in *The Odds*?
  - What is the effect of this on the reader?

Choose one character from *The Odds*, and look at the different shots and angles that have been used by Stanton when they are depicted. Finish the following analytical paragraph.

With the representation of \_\_\_\_\_, the composer uses \_\_\_\_\_ camera shots and angles, plus other multimodal elements such as colour, sound, facial expressions and gestures to make the character \_\_\_\_\_ . For example, Matt Stanton uses a (circle one) close up/long shot/low angle shot of \_\_\_\_\_ to convey \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ which makes the audience feel \_\_\_\_\_ .

Create three pictures to represent yourself.

- What angles and shots would you use to convey who you are?



# Classroom Resources

## Focus on the oral and sound elements

Composers also add to meaning by using sound devices, which elevate and accentuate the sounds of words. Onomatopoeia makes the reader feel the sound. For example, the word 'crash' sounds as it is written. There is a lot of onomatopoeia in *The Odds!*

- Find five examples of onomatopoeia in *The Odds*.
- Why has Stanton used onomatopoeia? How does it add to the meaning of the text?
- Go back to the three pictures you drew to represent yourself. Add one example of onomatopoeia.

## Think/Pair/Share activity

Invite students to pair with another student. Using their communication, writing and representation skills, students can interview their partner, write a 150-word article about them, and then create a 45-second multimodal presentation to introduce their partner to the class.

- Make careful choices to increase the power of your images and words.
- Use sound devices, angles, shots, colour, contrast, cropping, text, onomatopoeia, facial expressions and gestures in the presentation.

## About the Author

Matt Stanton is a bestselling children's author and illustrator who has sold more than one million books worldwide. His middle-grade series *Funny Kid* debuted as the #1 Australian kids' book and has legions of fans across the globe. He has published such bestselling picture books as *There Is a Monster Under My Bed Who Farts*, *This Is a Ball and Pea + Nut!*, and produces a daily YouTube show for kids. He lives and works in Sydney, Australia, with his wife, bestselling author Beck Stanton, and their children.

[mattstanton.net](http://mattstanton.net)

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