



CFE Level 2 (Ages 8-11)

My Gym Teacher is an Alien Overlord **Learning Resources**

Fun, creative activities inspired
by award-winning author
David Solomons

Resources created by Scottish Book Trust

About these resources

These resources are full of cross-curricular activity suggestions to help you explore *My Gym Teacher is an Alien Overlord* with your students. Adapt and use as you see fit!

Introducing *My Gym Teacher is an Alien Overlord*

My Gym Teacher is an Alien Overlord is the sequel to the hugely popular and award winning *My Brother is a Superhero*. Luke's older brother is a superhero, who everyone knows saved the world from an asteroid attack last term. Luke, on the other hand, is a comic mad super-fan with no super powers at all. While his brother gets all the glory, Luke is desperate to prove that he too can fight supervillains and save the world from destruction.

Activities

Video Game Design

Luke is obsessed with video games. So when *Puny Earthlings* comes out, featuring his very own hometown, Luke is determined to beat his friends and neighbours and be the first to complete the game.

Video game design allows students to develop skills including collaboration, critical thinking, problem solving, and digital literacy. In this task your pupils will design their own video game using *Gamestar Mechanic*, a simple and easy to use programme which teaches children the principles of game design. You don't have to have any game design or coding experience or even experience of playing video games in order to do this project, the website has easy to follow learning resources and walks you through the process step by step.

Learning the building blocks of video game design

TCH 2-03a, TCH 2-04a

Pupils learn by completing 'Quests' in order to gain the tools that they need to become a game designer. Each level that students complete introduces a new element of game design and gives pupils the opportunity to play games that exemplify that element and also requires them to fix broken games that deal with that particular element of design. If they have

internet access you could set pupils the task of completing a level at home and to keep a journal of their learning.

Once pupils have learnt the principles of game design they can begin to build their own games from scratch. Depending on the confidence of your pupils in using the programme you could set the pupils different objectives to guide their game designs. For example, less confident pupils could be given the task of designing a game for younger children to play and more confident pupils could focus on creating multi-level games for more advanced players.

Pupils can play each other's games with the intention of offering purposeful feedback and offering suggestions for improvement.

Find out all about Gamestar Mechanic and how to get started here:
https://gamestarmechanic.com/teachers/what_is_gamestar

For a teacher's description of using Gamestar Mechanic to teach video game design take a look at: [www.nwp.org/cs/public/download/nwp_file/15447/kehrig_greg_tech_tools_for_teaching_WEJ_\(2\).pdf?x-r=pcfile_d](http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/download/nwp_file/15447/kehrig_greg_tech_tools_for_teaching_WEJ_(2).pdf?x-r=pcfile_d)

Writing Reviews

LIT 2-28a, ENG 2-27a

Once pupils have created their own games they can take on the role of video games journalists to play and write reviews of each other's games.

Begin by showing your pupils examples of video games journalism to introduce game reviews as a genre of writing. Some websites to look for articles are:

- <http://www.gamestm.co.uk/category/reviews/>
- <http://www.gameinformer.com/reviews.aspx>
- <http://www.gamesradar.com/all-platforms/reviews/>

When playing each other's games ask pupils to think about the following questions:

- What is the aim of the game?
- How easy/ difficult is the game to play
- What elements of the game do you find exciting?
- Do you want to play the game again?

For a guide on teaching descriptive review writing take a look at these resources on TES. These resources are based on writing film reviews but could easily be adapted to writing about video games:

www.tes.com/teaching-resource/filmclub-writing-a-review-6321228

Design Your Own Superhero Costume

In *My Gym Teacher is an Alien Overlord* superheroes Star Lad and Flutter (aka Luke's brother Zack and friend Lara) both made their own superhero costumes to go along with their super powers. In this task your pupils will create their own superhero persona and a costume to match.

To help your pupils get started with ideas for their superpower and costume you can come up with ideas all together as a class. Read chapter 2 of *My Gym Teacher is an Alien Overlord* which describes Star Lad and Flutter's costumes and then ask pupils to think of all of the different words they could use to describe a superhero and how they look.

Next ask pupils to come up with their own superhero name and special superpowers. To help they could use a superhero fact-file to describe their superhero alter ego,

Superhero Fact-file: _____

Pupil name: _____

Superhero alias: _____

Special superpowers: _____

Weaknesses: _____

Mode of transport: _____

Costume: _____

Once pupils have completed their superhero fact-file they can create an ideas board with photo inspiration, drawings and fabric/material samples of their costume.

Encourage pupils to think about what materials they would use and how the costume would be practical to wear - would it protect them in a fight, can it be easily hidden under a school uniform, what are the costume's special features and how does the costume reflect their superhero personality?

Make a Flip-book Animation

EXA 2-03a, ENG 2-19a

Ask your pupils to have a look at the illustrations at the bottom of each page in *My Gym Teacher is an Alien Overlord*. Do they notice anything about them? If you flick through the book the illustrations make a flip-book animation!

Making a flip-book animation is very simple. All you need is a pack of post-it notes and some pens. This YouTube video has an easy to follow explanation of how to make a simple flip-book with a moving dot or stick figures: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Njl-uqnmBGA>

Once your pupils have got the hang of making flip-books they could have a go at animating a character or scene from *My Gym Teacher is an Alien Overlord*. In groups ask pupils to come up with six key scenes or characters from the book that they could turn into an animation. These can be central events or something quite small, sometimes the simplest

scenes are the most effective to animate. Pupils can then pick one of these to turn into a flip-book animation.

Here is an example of a simple stick figure action flip-book which works really well: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zO8MISjo0T0>

Create a Book Trailer

Tch 2-04a, Eng 2-19a, Eng 2-24a, Eng 2-31a

Book trailers are a fantastic way of encouraging pupils to engage with a book and combine a number of different skills from the curriculum.

A book trailer is just like a film trailer, giving a taster of a book for its potential audience.

Scottish Book Trust has created a brilliant resource pack on creating book trailers which can be found at: <http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/learning/learning-resources/resource/how-to-create-book-trailers-video-series>

Once your pupils have made their trailers you can hold a film screening - watching all of the trailers together. Encourage your pupils to discuss the trailers after they have seen them:

- How well has each trailer captured character, setting, atmosphere?
- Does the trailer make you want to read the book?

Reading Recommendations

Lit 2-11a

If you and your class loved *My Gym Teacher is an Alien Overlord*, you might like to take a look at these book lists for some ideas for further reading:

- 12 Amazing Sidekicks (8 – 11)

www.scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists/12-amazing-sidekicks-8-11



- Eight Hilarious Reads (8 – 11)

www.scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists/8-hilarious-reads-8-11

- Six Comic Book Characters with Superpowers

www.scottishbooktrust.com/reading/book-lists/6-comic-book-characters-with-superpowers-8-11