



Capaldi, Clare Anne (2020) *Angry outside: a study into Mairi Hedderwick's Katie Morag stories and their potential to develop emotional literacy*. [MEd]

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ANGRY OUTSIDE: A STUDY INTO MAIRI HEDDERWICK'S *KATIE MORAG* STORIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO DEVELOP EMOTIONAL LITERACY

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Dissertation submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education in Children's Literature and Literacies

University of Glasgow

28th August 2020

Acknowledgements

I would firstly like to thank my dissertation supervisor, Maureen Farrell, for her support, reassurance and for sharing a mutual passion for my chosen texts. Maureen's comments and suggestions were invaluable and instilled me with both confidence and self-belief.

I am a grateful for my parents who introduced me to reading, literature, art, and the beauty of the Scottish landscape from a young age. Thanks also to them, alongside my in-laws and siblings, for helping with childcare during the early days of my Masters studies.

Massive hugs to my amazing children Anna, Leo and Luca who offered their own opinions on the *Katie Morag* stories and kept me grounded and smiling as I wrote this dissertation whilst home-schooling during a global pandemic. We did it!

Thanks to my husband, Chris, forever my greatest champion, who indulges my book hoarding obsession and keeps me laughing. Without his encouragement and unwavering belief in me, none of this would have been possible.

During the final weeks of writing this thesis, my grandfather passed away. He was a wonderful man with a huge heart and a lifetime of funny anecdotes. He doted on his family and was excessively proud of his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I feel incredibly privileged to have had adult relationships with three of my grandparents over and above my fond childhood memories. I dedicate this dissertation to my late Grandad, Jim Robertson.

Summary

This dissertation considers using Mairi Hedderwick's iconic *Katie Morag* picturebooks to develop emotional literacy in the Scottish primary classroom. The paper acknowledges the ways that the texts are commonly used in schools within Scottish cultural contexts or for geography-based topics comparing island life with city life and proposes that the stories also have much potential for developing children's emotional literacy.

Literature around cognitive literary criticism, emotional literacy, picturebook semiotics and visual literacy is reviewed alongside relevant papers on both Hedderwick's texts and the BBC television series. A general overview of the *Katie Morag* stories is presented before the research focuses on three key texts: *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted* (Hedderwick, 1986), *Katie Morag and the Big Boy Cousins* (1987) and *Katie Morag and the New Pier* (1993). Using a cognitive literary lens, a framework is designed and then applied to the chosen texts based on features outlined in Nikolajeva (2013).

The methodology involved a close textual analysis of each double-page within the picturebooks, drawing attention to representations of basic emotions and higher cognitive emotions in both the verbal and visual texts. The written text was examined to glean examples of literal, metaphorical and implied statements of emotion. In the images, facial expressions and body language were explored as was composition, scale, colour and point of view and how this informs the reader's understanding of the emotions presented within the stories. The results are presented thematically looking at Katie Morag's emotions, how she responds to other people's feelings, how the weather mirrors emotions through pathetic fallacy, as well as a discussion about Theory of Mind and empathy.

The study finds that there is much potential for using these texts to discuss emotional literacy in the primary classroom and in doing so boosting children's visual literacy skills. The stories boast examples of embedded Theory of Mind for children to practise their mind-reading skills and opportunities to identify empathy between characters. A general discussion surrounding the importance of emotional literacy alongside visual literacy is then presented with reference to the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes. Finally, some suggestions are offered for exploring these texts through holistic, cross-curricular classroom experiences.

Nikolajeva, M (2013) 'Picturebooks and Emotional Literacy', *The Reading Teacher*, 67 (4)

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scottish Children's Literature in the Curriculum for Excellence

Throughout my Masters studies I have been reading picturebooks, children's fiction and young adult novels for both personal enjoyment and professional development. I have taken a particular interest in discovering both classic and contemporary Scottish children's literature which has led me to reflect on the different ways that I have used Scottish texts in the classroom throughout my teaching career in a Scottish primary school. I have been questioning whether the use of Scottish literature is fully embedded into my practice or whether I have chiefly chosen Scottish texts to supplement Scottish themed topic work or to celebrate specific cultural events like Burns' Birthday, St Andrew's Day or *Book Week Scotland*.

Scottish texts are expected to be integral to Literacy and English experiences within the classroom at all stages, according to the Curriculum for Excellence (Education Scotland, 2020d:1). The definition of Scottish literature is wide and inclusive. Scottish literature includes texts that are set in Scotland and those that adopt a typically Scottish literary form. Scottish texts may deal with specifically Scottish issues or themes which cause the reader to reflect on 'the wide range of cultural communities and individual experiences which constitute a distinctive national culture' (Farrell, 2009:46). Texts do not need to have a specific Scottish theme or setting; texts created by authors or illustrators who were born, educated, or live in Scotland are classed as Scottish literature, as are those penned in the Scots language, or translated into Scots from another language (Alison, 1997:34-35). Moreover, in Scottish children's literature, the concept of the child or childhood motivates the writer and influences the reader's interpretation, judgement, analysis of the text and how they are used, in keeping with definitions of children's literature more generally (Hunt, 2009:13).

Using Scottish children's literature in the classroom offers 'a rich resource' for pupils 'to learn about Scotland's culture, identity and language', thus developing an appreciation of Scotland's 'vibrant literary and linguistic heritage and its indigenous languages and dialects' (Education Scotland, 2020e:4). Furthermore, it is important for children to hear the distinctive Scottish voice portrayed through literature (Farrell, 2009:46). Children need to see themselves reflected in the books that they read and Scottish children's literature encompasses a plethora of diverse identities and themes. Within this dissertation, I explore how Mairi Hedderwick's *Katie Morag* picturebooks, while explicit in their rendering of Scottish culture and identity, can be used with a different purpose in the classroom; developing emotional literacy.

1.2 The texts: the *Katie Morag* stories by Mairi Hedderwick

Winner of the Scottish Book Trust's first annual *Outstanding Contribution to Children's Books Award* in 2017, Mairi Hedderwick is a well-known Scottish author and illustrator who has been enchanting readers since the 1980s. Hedderwick's most famous character, Katie Morag, made her first appearance in *Katie Morag Delivers the Mail* in 1984 and her television debut on CBeebies in 2013. There are now fifteen books in the series and many have been translated into different languages including Norwegian, Swedish, Chinese and Gaelic (Scottish Book Trust, 2020). The *Katie Morag* stories hold a special place in my heart as I remember delighting in the illustrations of the early books as a child myself, I have happy memories reading aloud to (and watching the television series with) my own children, as well as sharing the stories in the classroom with pupils over the years.

Children's literature is often described as having the potential to act as a window, a mirror, or a door for readers (Arizpe, Farrell and McAdam, 2013) and I believe the *Katie Morag* stories can do all three. Set on the fictional island of Struay, inspired by the isle of Coll in the Inner Hebrides, the stories offer a window into life on a remote island. The books promote a sense of Scottish cultural identity which children in Scotland may identify with. Indeed, Farrell argues that stories set on islands are a distinctive trope in Scottish children's literature, evident in much Scottish children's fiction since the Victorian era (Farrell, 2009). Most people in Scotland, however, do not live on an island so the picturebooks offer a glimpse of what life would be like growing up in an island community.

Times Educational Supplement (TES) Resources is a website where teachers can share resources. When "Katie Morag" is entered into the file search, 120 results are returned. 80 of these are tagged as relevant to "English" subject area, while 44 are labelled as relating to "Geography" (TES Resources, 2020). Many of the suggested resources involve interpreting maps, comparing island life with urban life or identifying human and physical features of a landscape. This would suggest that the *Katie Morag* stories are often explored in relation to their capacity as a window into another world.

Only five results are returned relating to "Personal, Social and Health Education" which correlates with *Health and Wellbeing* in the Curriculum for Excellence. This highlights a missed opportunity for exploring emotional literacy within these texts. Reading children's literature in the classroom ought to be more than simply decoding texts. Books can be 'a vehicle for developing understanding and wisdom about the human condition' (Arizpe, Farrell and

McAdam, 2013:245). The stories can act as a *mirror* reflecting back and helping children to understand their own experiences (Kornfeld and Prothro, 2005). Children may see themselves reflected in the character of Katie Morag as a sibling, a daughter or a friend. Katie has adventures, gets up to mischief and makes amends. She's kind, caring and headstrong. Moreover, readers may recognise emotions that they experience mirrored in the character of Katie Morag.

Children's literature can act as a door when a shift in the reader's position occurs (Sumara, 1998) due to their 'interaction' with a given text (Botelho and Rudman, 2009:xiii). When critical reading pedagogies are adopted in the classroom children can be guided towards and through the door (Arizpe, Farrell and McAdam, 2013:246). I think there is potential for the *Katie Morag* books to act as doors through classroom exploration of empathy and the development of children's Theory of Mind. Empathy is the ability to understand other people's thoughts and feelings, which Nikolajeva argues is possibly 'the most important capacity that distinguishes human beings from other living organisms' (2013a:95). In order to show empathy, children need to develop their Theory of Mind (Coats, 2018:69). Theory of Mind is recognising that other people have emotions, knowledge and beliefs; and fundamentally the understanding that these desires, intentions and perspectives can be different from our own.

There are numerous occasions throughout the *Katie Morag* series where Katie has to consider the feelings of others. This is explored both through the written text and the illustrations that are integral to our understanding of what happens within each story. I will explore the different ways that the *Katie Morag* stories could be used to develop emotional literacy and Theory of Mind in the primary classroom; not in a didactic sense suggesting a model as to how children should behave, but rather through identifying emotions in the texts followed by thoughtful discussion and reflection.

1.3 The research

In this research I will explore the potential of using Hedderwick's *Katie Morag* stories in the classroom to promote and develop emotional literacy. I will firstly review literature about picturebooks, visual literacy, emotional literacy, Theory of Mind, empathy and papers about the *Katie Morag* texts. After presenting a general overview of the series, I will create a framework to analyse the images and written text in three chosen texts through the lens of cognitive literary criticism. Using a thematic approach, I will

collate and reflect upon the findings from the textual analysis in relation to the presentation of emotions, Theory of Mind and empathy. In doing so, I will demonstrate the potential of the *Katie Morag* stories for developing emotional literacy and what this might look like in the Scottish primary classroom.

CHAPTER 2 – PICTUREBOOKS, VISUAL LITERACY AND EMOTIONAL LITERACY: A REVIEW OF THE FIELD

This chapter presents some of the relevant literature I used in my research. I firstly considered picturebook theory focusing on visual literacy and children's responses to picturebooks. I looked into recent research on emotional literacy and cognitive literary theory with reference to Theory of Mind and empathy. I then completed a search for relevant papers on the *Katie Morag* stories. Throughout my reading, I considered how it related to the Curriculum for Excellence.

2.1 What is a picturebook?

A picturebook is a 'cultural object' (Kiefer, 2011:87) which introduces children from a young age to literacy, literature, and art (Kiefer, 1995:5) and is 'a significant means by which we integrate young children into the ideology of our culture' (Nodelman, 1996:116). A picturebook relies on the interplay between written language and illustrations to tell the story where 'words and pictures define and amplify each other' (Nodelman, 1988:viii) and at times 'distort' or 'reverse' one another (1988:20). Sipe describes this as the synergy between the words and pictures (1998:98) explaining that the overall cohesion of a text depends not simply on the verbal and visual working together, but also the 'perceived transaction' between them (1998:99). The compound word *picturebook* is frequently used to distinguish narrative picturebooks from other books with illustrations and non-narrative picture books (Arizpe, 2013:165).

Nodelman (1988) explores the semiotics of picturebooks, particularly how the details in the illustrations make meaning. Semiotics is the name given to the study of signs. Signs include words, images, objects, gestures and sounds (Pantaleo, 2016:229). Nikolajeva and Scott (2006) develop these ideas and describe how the interaction between visual and verbal information is necessary for decoding picturebooks. From a semiotic point of view, images are 'complex iconic signs' which *represent*, while the written words, are 'complex conventional signs' which *narrate* what is happening. However, we can only decipher these conventional signs if we have the correct code (2006:1). Namely, if we can read the words. The process of reading a picturebook is described as an 'hermeneutic circle' where no individual element can be understood without reference to the other. The reader, therefore, moves back and forth from the verbal to the visual to interpret the meaning thus revealing a deeper understanding of the whole text (2006:2). Nikolajeva and Scott suggest that reader response theory, with the central

idea of ‘textual gaps’, is a useful approach to reading picturebooks (2006:2). The written words fill the textual gaps remaining from the pictures, and vice versa. Readers then read between the lines to fill any further gaps. The more gaps a text has to fill, the more possibilities there are for different interpretations (2006:10).

2.2 Picturebooks and Visual literacy

Serafini critiques the fact that the main focus of teaching reading in primary school is on mastering the skills and strategies to decode written language (2010:85-6). Using picturebooks in the classroom can be an important means of not only developing children’s reading skills but also other literacies, including visual literacy. Visual literacy is the capacity to construct meaning from visual images. Our visual literacy skills are increasingly important in twenty-first century Scotland as influences from globalisation and multimedia challenge our understanding of what it means to be literate. Traditional conceptions of literacy which focus decoding written language have been replaced by the notion of ‘multiliteracies’ which acknowledges both linguistic diversity and multimodal representation (New London Group, 1996). This shift is reflected in the Curriculum for Excellence (Capaldi, 2020:2) where literacy is defined as ‘the set of skills which allows an individual to engage fully in society’ through a wide range of texts and ‘different forms of language’ (Education Scotland, 2020e:4). A ‘text’ is understood to be ‘the medium through which ideas, experiences, opinions and information can be communicated’ (2020d:5). While the Curriculum for Excellence acknowledges multiliteracies, there is no specific mention of visual literacy in the documentation (Capaldi, 2020:4). In comparison, the *Australian Curriculum*, groups the skills of *reading* and *viewing* together, describing *Visual Knowledge*, the ability to ‘understand how visual elements create meaning’, as an integral element of being able to read (Australian Curriculum, online).

Textual meaning can be constructed through a range of modes including visual, linguistic, spatial, gestural, audio and multimodal (New London Group, 1996:65). Picturebooks can be described as multimodal texts as they rely on both linguistic and visual elements to create meaning. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) demonstrate how we read visual images by analysing their visual grammar. A grammar reveals how various elements converge to create meaning. While words and clauses build meaning in linguistic structures, it is composition, line, colour and perspective which create visual meaning. Our appreciation of picturebooks is shaped by our understanding of such visual elements; and our ability to discern and recognise representations in an image is a fundamental in emerging visual literacy (Kiefer, 1995:9).

Kiefer (1993, 1995) explored the potential of picturebooks to elicit responses from primary school aged children. When looking at picturebooks, readers must ‘discriminate and interpret what they see’ in picturebooks which involves their ‘attention, their recognition, and finally their understanding’ (Kiefer, 1995:8). Analysing the children’s informative, heuristic, imaginative and personal responses, Kiefer surmised that using complex picturebooks in the classroom develops children’s visual literacy and critical thinking in regard to both cognitive and aesthetic factors (1993:278) because they encouraged children to think and question, which stimulated quality classroom discussion (1993:280). However, Salisbury argues that the pedagogical focus in the classroom must not simply be on the “reading pictures” aspect of visual literacy, but also on the “writing with pictures”. He states that when teachers recognise the ‘importance of drawing in terms of intellectual development we may see a visual literacy emerge which goes a little deeper than acquired decoding skills’ (2008:36). When studying visual art including picturebook illustrations and concentrating on the visual elements, the teacher helps to ‘develop children’s capacities to internalise this visual language’ which can then be transferred into their own drawings (Rabey, 2003:138).

Influenced by reader response theory, Arizpe and Styles (2003) conducted empirical research to explore children’s responses to picturebooks. They used individual interviews, open ended group discussions and interpreted children’s creative responses (drawing, painting, performance and play) to reveal children’s responses, including their reactions to the emotional dimensions of picturebooks. Children scrutinised a variety of texts and even younger children ‘could reach remarkably sophisticated interpretations’ within an environment of ‘mutual exploration’ between teachers and pupils (2003:48). Children shared their own emotional reactions to stories and responded to artistic elements when questioned (2003:50) and through the process, learned about the relationship between words and illustrations in picturebooks (2003:64). Children were fascinated by the details they could spot in Anthony Browne’s picturebooks (2003:100) and were able to read the emotion with ‘subtlety’ and by showing ‘empathy’ for various characters (2003:84). Furthermore, the children were able to ‘put themselves in the artist’s head to imagine how [Browne] wanted the reader to react by creating images that inspired, humour, fear and other emotions’ (2003:202).

When exploring primary pupils’ appreciation of artwork in picturebooks, Pantaleo (2016) directed the children’s attention towards the visual elements – line, colour, typography, point of view, perspective and framing. The children drew a variety of faces to explore how changing the lines of the mouth and eyebrows could change the emotion depicted on a face (for example,

happiness, sadness or surprise) thus illustrating the potential of illustrations to convey emotions (2016:239) and how readers can understand a ‘sign-maker’s choice and deployment of the semiotic resources’ to make meaning in a text (2016:248-9). While all children would benefit from such interventions, it may be particularly relevant when working with children on the autistic spectrum who may have difficulty interpreting and understanding facial expressions.

2.3 Emotional Literacy and Cognitive Literary Criticism

Picturebooks are widely acknowledged for their role in children’s emerging reading skills, for cultivating visual literacy and now their importance in children’s emotional literacy development is gaining greater recognition (Nikolajeva, 2013b:249). We are born with innate emotions, but emotional intelligence has to be learned (Krefft, 2019:1). Krefft asserts that emotional intelligence can be systematically taught in schools and it should be collaborative and interdisciplinary (2019:1). This mirrors the Curriculum for Excellence’s approach to Health and Wellbeing which ought to be holistic and the responsibility of the whole school community (Education Scotland, 2020c). Emotional literacy is the ability to correctly name and express our emotions and ‘using our words to express our emotions is the modality through which emotional intelligence shines’ (Krefft, 2019:5). Krefft argues that emotions are not discussed enough with children asserting that ‘developing emotional intelligence must partner with the development of our reasoning faculties’ (2019:12). This is reminiscent of the work of Bloom (1956) who identified three learning domains: the *Cognitive* domain, primarily mental abilities and knowledge; the *Affective* domain, pertaining to feelings and emotions; and the *Psychomotor* domain which focuses on physical skills. Krefft suggests that using literature in the classroom is a good means to develop the affective domain by facilitating discussions about emotions, not simply a character’s emotions, but the reasons behind their emotions, why they might be experiencing these emotions (2019:19).

This aligns with recent research into cognitive literary criticism where some academics believe that reading fiction can boost children’s emotional intelligence. While reader response considers *how* readers interact or transact with texts, cognitive literary criticism is a ‘way of thinking about literature’ (Stockwell, 2002:6) that considers *why* this interaction is possible, namely the narrative devices or mechanisms used to engage the reader cognitively and affectively (Nikolajeva, 2013a:96). Reader response only provides an ‘approximation of comprehension’ (Dey, 2018:98) and does not give sufficient insight into the cognitive

processes of reading (Kümmerling-Meibauer and Meibauer, 2013:146). Cognitive criticism, buttressed by neuroscience, explains that certain neurons in the brain react to the plot, characters and settings in fictional worlds as if they were real (Nikolajeva, 2013a:96). While ‘direct affective responses’ in real life are innate and ‘evolutionally conditioned’ (2013b:250), Nikolajeva explains that ‘the complex mechanism of mirror neurons that enables our brain to simulate responses to representations as if they were real stimuli’ fire when presented with a frightening monster or a smiling face in a picturebook (2013b:250). Visual images play a greater role in understanding other people’s emotions because facial expressions and body language send more powerful messages to our brain than hearing literal statements like ‘the boy is sad’ (Nikolajeva, 2012:274). Critics of cognitive literary criticism question the ‘reliability of its methodological basis’ and the ‘usefulness of its results’ (Müller-Wood, 2017:223). Müller-Wood also notes a ‘general indifference to readers’ cognitive and affective contribution to the construction of textual meaning’ which she sees as paradoxical given the focus on reader reception and emotion within the field (2017:224).

From another perspective, Kümmerling-Meibauer and Meibauer are interested in how a child’s cognitive development is linked to their understanding of how a picturebook works (2013:143), explaining that cognitive development focuses on language, thinking, emotion and vision (2013:144). Firstly, children learn to understand the images, then they understand the verbal text and finally children begin to integrate the verbal and visual representations (2013:145). They surmise that there is a correlation between children’s language acquisition and their literature acquisition (2013:147). This is closely related to a child’s Theory of Mind.

2.4 Theory of Mind

Theory of Mind is our ability to recognise that other people have knowledge, intentions, desires and beliefs that may be different from our own (Coats, 2018:67). It is called a ‘theory’ because it is not externally visible. Certain cognitive abilities have to develop before Theory of Mind can evolve (2018:67). Such abilities include children’s knowledge that a ‘word can mean more than one thing’ and their understanding that ‘the way they speak isn’t necessarily the way the world is’. Theory of Mind develops gradually from around age three and develops further when children reach adolescence. The ages from four to seven years old are particularly important ages for Theory of Mind

development (Zunshine, 2019:7). First order beliefs, a child's ability to separate their own beliefs from those of other people, develops around the ages of three and four while second order beliefs, being able to imagine what another person is thinking, develop around the age of seven or eight (Silva-Diaz, 2015). Theory of Mind is also linked to children's understanding of jokes and humour (Coats, 2017:68) and their ability to lie (Pelletier and Wilde Astington, 2010:6). The lie does not actually need to be a lie rather, as Meibauer explains, 'with regard to the speaker's intention to deceive [...] it only matters what the speaker believes to be the case' (2005:1377). There are numerous examples of lying in children's literature, a recognisable example is *The Boy Who Cried Wolf* from Aesop's fables.

Theory of Mind starts from a child's very first thought and can develop to an understanding of embedded thinking such as "he knows that she knows that they know" (Pelletier and Wilde Astington, 2010:6). Zunshine argues that fiction often embeds more mental states than we are generally required to interpret in real life, which can be attributed to characters, narrators, implied authors and implied readers (2019:3). Considering Theory of Mind, in particular embedded thoughts, Zunshine examines a range of children's literature illustrating different examples of embedded thoughts. She exemplifies trickster tales like *The Gruffalo* (Donaldson, 1999) or *Rosie's Walk* (Hutchins, 1967) that follow in the tradition of many cultural tales which present a trickster narrative intended for preschool age group (2019:17-18). Such books demonstrate embedded mental states on multiple levels. The Gruffalo is amazed that the fox, owl and snake are scared of the mouse, while the reader knows that the Gruffalo has been tricked and that the animals are indeed scared of the Gruffalo and *not* the mouse. In *Rosie's Walk*, mental states are embedded to the third level due to illustrations (2019:19). While the character of Rosie has no knowledge that she is being followed and that her pursuer is being humorously thwarted by multiple obstacles, the reader is aware of all of this. Children must have an evolving Theory of Mind to appreciate both irony and humour.

Pelletier and Wilde Astington (2010) were interested to discover whether an evolving Theory of Mind and a child's ability to use metacognitive language play a significant role in a developing understanding of stories. Metacognitive language to describe to characters' mental states included words like, 'think', 'know', 'believe', 'understand', 'intend', 'guess', 'plan', and 'dream' (2010:7,16). They suggest that a child's 'ability to make inferences about the plot and make evaluations about events and outcomes, may depend on the degree to which they are able to think and talk about the character's, the author's and the reader's perspectives' (2010:7).

Furthermore, they explored the correlation between a child's Theory of Mind and their ability to coordinate the language of action (the explicit plot of a story) and the language of consciousness (the implicit plot). Their results revealed that a child's ability to synchronise the two landscapes was strongly dependent on their age (2010:16) and children with a more mature Theory of Mind tended to understand and use metacognitive language when retelling stories (2010:16).

Theory of Mind is often described as mind-reading. Nikolajeva suggests that reading fiction can offer an emotional experience that helps to develop skills of mind-reading (2014:121). Mind-reading normally starts by recognising basic emotions (joy, sadness, anger, fear and disgust) in other people (Nikolajeva, 2012:275). Fiction portrays the feelings of characters and their interpretation of other characters' emotions; thus, fiction offers children opportunities to experience different emotions in a 'safe mode' (Nikolajeva, 2014:121). She argues that because our brains interpret fictional emotions like real emotions, reading fiction prepares children for experiencing and enacting both empathy and mind-reading in real life (2014:121). Mind-reading relies predominantly on our visual perceptions (2014:123). Images can be processed by the brain quicker than verbal language, so identifying a person's facial expression or body language in pictures 'can provide us with powerful tools for increasing children's emotional intelligence' (2014:123). Nikolajeva suggests that the interplay between visual and verbal information within picturebooks is essential for mind-reading. The textual gaps regarding emotions in picturebooks can be filled by the visuals. In her own research, Nikolajeva demonstrates how emotions can be represented through words and pictures. She uses the term, *emotional ekphrasis* which is the 'the verbal, visual or multimedial discourse used to describe an emotion' which goes beyond explaining emotions to evoking them (2012:277). This is the manifestation of emotions through words, facial expressions and body language, both in real life and in literary texts. Neuroscience explains that mirror neurons react when someone acts and when they observe the same action performed by another (Dey, 2018:105). When we are presented with an image of happiness or sadness, for example, our brain 'evokes a memory' of that emotion from personal experience or from a prior literary experience (Nikolajeva, 2012:277). Of course, we can only evoke that memory if we have experienced that emotion before. Images in picturebooks can be ambiguous and readers cannot always decide on the nuance which is simultaneously advantageous and disadvantageous and thus a very powerful 'pedagogical device that helps young children verbalise emotion[s]' (Nikolajeva, 2014:127).

2.5 Empathy

While Theory of Mind is knowing that other people have thoughts and intentions that are different from our own, empathy is understanding other people's feelings or *feeling with* them (Coats, 2017:68). Reading fiction, picturebooks in particular, can be a potential means of fostering empathy in children (Nikolajeva, 2013b:249). The Empathy Lab promotes diverse children's literature providing resources to foster empathy. They describe empathy as 'the ability to connect to other people's feelings and perspectives in a meaningful way' (2018:3) and suggest that empathy has three main components: affective, cognitive and empathic concern. The *affective* is about resonating with other people's emotions; *cognitive* is when we use reason and imagination to work out what people are feeling; and finally, *empathic concern* is having understood what other people are feeling, we are inspired to help others (2018:3). They assert that we live in a time of an empathy deficit and thus 'equipping young people with strong empathy skills can be a major engine for social change, because understanding others helps us become better citizens, partners and work mates' (2018:4).

The concept of empathy has also come under criticism. From the perspective of cognitive psychology, Bloom suggests that while empathy can 'motivate kindness, it can also spur cruel and irrational actions' (2017:24), cause 'exhaustion and burnout' (2017:29) and that there are ways for us to show compassion for people without actually *feeling with* them. He suggests that people often show compassion or concern without empathising. An adult may comfort and reassure a child who is scared of a barking dog without actually feeling their fear with them (Bloom, 2017:28). From a literary perspective, Coats suggests that while reading fiction can develop a child's Theory of Mind as it teaches us to understand different motivations, it does not necessarily lead to empathy (2017:69). Understanding what another person thinks and feels does not mean that you must identify or empathise with them (2017:69). Furthermore, even if an individual does empathise with another person (fictional or real) it does not mean that they will act with more compassion or morality in real life (2017:69).

Nonetheless, others believe that 'empathy encourages involvement' in texts (Arizpe and Styles, 2003:58). In her empirical research involving emergent bilingual children reading metafictional picturebooks, Dey explored whether the children could empathise with fictional characters' interiorities by understanding their emotional states (2018:103). She asserts that 'there is an urgent need for people to understand and empathize with one another and to overcome the many cultural differences that act as barriers to community and communication'

(2018:96). Her research shows younger readers both affectively and cognitively responding to characters' emotions by showing empathy to their situations. If a mouse is frightened, the child feels concern and then the child shows empathy by feeling relieved when the mouse manages to outwit his adversaries (2018:106). Furthermore, the study demonstrates the potential of picturebooks for developing children's emotional literacy and the benefits of using picturebooks as a 'multifaceted pedagogic resource' (2018:112) which paves the way for other such research with children.

2.6 Literature about the *Katie Morag* stories

While the *Katie Morag* stories could be considered classic Scottish children's literature, there is relatively little written about them. When defining the distinctive nature of Scottish children's literature, Farrell uses the *Katie Morag* stories to exemplify certain tropes and motifs common in Scottish children's books. Hedderwick's texts are recognisably Scottish, evident through Katie's kilt and Shetland jumper and the identifiably Scottish island landscape, wildlife and weather (Farrell, 2011:179). This commitment to overt Scottishness has resulted in disagreements with publishers who thought this would 'limit her global appeal' (2011:179). The stories, however, depict scenarios that many children can identify with 'while still remaining true to recognizable experiences rooted in Scottish culture' (2011:180). Farrell asserts that the island setting is a distinctive trope in Scottish children's literature which she describes as an 'effective motif' which offers 'an evocative image' of the Scottish nation as an island (2009:69). The island is a place where 'time can seem to stand still' and thus can be intimately linked to Scottish history, culture and identity (2009:69). Hedderwick's texts present relevant issues, notably the exploration of how building a new pier could affect the island community (2009:68) in *Katie Morag and the New Pier* (1993). Farrell discusses how the book not only considers the differences between island-life and mainland life but also the tension between traditional island values and modernisation, citing the decision of Katie's parents to open a bistro, which she describes as 'sophisticated and cosmopolitan' and perhaps at odds with traditional island industry (2009:74).

The National Centre for Research in Children's Literature (NCRCL) (2003) includes *Katie Morag and the New Pier* in their *European Picture Book Collection*. Citing reasons for its inclusion in the collection, it states that the themes and feelings in *Katie Morag and the New Pier* are both universal and firmly local. Furthermore, the theme of change offers teachers scope to explore this fundamental aspect of life in the classroom. The NCRCL suggests

possible learning experiences that learners could engage in, including studying the details in the book, creating a three-dimensional model of the island and partaking in oral research by interviewing elderly relatives or neighbours about things that have changed in their own locality (NCRCL, 2003).

Farrell (2004) also asserts that strong, empowered children, who often carry the burden of ‘adult’ responsibilities, is a recurring motif in Scottish children’s books citing Katie Morag alongside other protagonists from Scottish children’s texts. Katie often helps her parents or cares for her grandmothers. Examining the portrayal of older people in children’s television, Holdsworth and Lury (2016) describe the special relationship between Katie Morag and Grannie Island in the CBeebies television series of *Katie Morag* (2013-) where care and caring are at the heart of their relationship. Similarly, Inthorn (2018) examines the portrayal of intergenerational relationships especially representations of children as carers in grandchildren-grandparent relationships in BBC children’s programmes including the *Katie Morag* series. She asserts that within the programmes ‘informal intergenerational care [is recognised] as something that is valued’ (2018:85). While these studies focus on the television programme, the stories and character portrayals in the CBeebies series remain close to Hedderwick’s texts which depict reciprocal relationships of care, particularly between Katie and her grandmothers. Inthorn notes several times when children notice and respond to their grandparents’ care needs including times when Katie helps Grannie Island, cheers her up or she enlists the help of Granma Mainland. Likewise, Grannie helps Katie get out of tricky situations and helps to remind her about the importance of sharing and thinking about others.

The *Katie Morag* stories have not been without controversy. After the publication of the most recent book in the series, *Katie Morag and the Dancing Class* (2007), Hedderwick was challenged by censors because Mrs McColl is pictured breastfeeding (The Herald, 2007). Indeed, Mrs McColl can be seen nursing her baby in multiple books since *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted* (1987). The images of exposed nipples resulted in the picturebooks being banned by several libraries whilst simultaneously celebrated by breastfeeding charities and organisations (Hedderwick, 2017). Highland Health Board used Hedderwick’s illustrations on posters as part of a campaign to promote breastfeeding (The Herald, 2007). Hedderwick said she ‘was a delighted to milk the opportunity to have the mother breastfeeding’ (2017) within her stories!

2.7 Emotional Literacy in the *Katie Morag* picturebooks

The *Katie Morag* stories rely on the interplay between the verbal and visual texts to tell the story. When used in the primary classroom children can practise using their visual literacy skills to understand the texts whilst experiencing a Scottish text. While there has been much written about picturebooks, emotional literacy and Theory of Mind, the attention of research into the *Katie Morag* stories has focused on the ways that the *Katie Morag* books typify Scottish children's fiction (Farrell, 2004; 2009; 2011) and research into the stories' television form has focused on intergenerational care and especially the relationship of Katie with her grandmother (Holdsworth and Lury, 2016; Inthorn, 2018). Since many of the stories consider Katie's emotions or require Katie to think about the feelings of other characters, there is gap in the literature that I would like to investigate. There is much potential for the *Katie Morag* texts to be used to promote emotional literacy in the primary classroom.

CHAPTER 3 – AN OVERVIEW OF MAIRI HEDDERWICK’S *KATIE MORAG* TEXTS

3.1 The Island of Struay

Mairi Hedderwick’s classic *Katie Morag* texts are set on the fictional island of Struay, inspired by the isle of Coll. She describes her first book, *Katie Morag Delivers the Mail* (1984) as a ‘nostalgic self-indulgence’ as it is loosely based on her experiences raising her family on Coll in the 1960s (Hedderwick, online). The early stories feel like they are set in a bygone era: the family use a traditional stove to cook dinner, boil water and warm their iron, the babies wear towelling nappies, and Granma Mainland uses a manual sewing machine. Despite this, the themes of growing up on an island, family-life, friendship issues, getting up to mischief and then making amends have a timeless, universal feel. Modern development is explored in *Katie Morag and the New Pier* (1993) as the islanders come to terms with how the new pier will change their community, and readers may spot a computer – albeit “out of order” – in the island’s school classroom in *Katie Morag and the Riddles* (2001) suggesting that electricity has at last arrived on the island of Struay.

Geographically, the island of Struay (as depicted in the map in *The Big Katie Morag Storybook*, 1996) bears little resemblance to Coll other than the shape of bay and a line of cottages (Hedderwick, online). Hedderwick explains that many of the characters were inspired by real islanders while others are purely fictitious. Granma Mainland, who first makes her appearance in *Katie Morag and the Two Grandmothers* (1985) wearing high heels and clutching her handbag, is based on Hedderwick’s own mother when she visited Coll in the 1960s (Hedderwick, online).

3.2 The characters

The first book, *Katie Morag Delivers the Mail*, introduces the character of Katie Morag and her family who run the island Post Office and shop. Her parents are flustered trying to work while her brother, Liam, screams with teething pain. Katie is charged with delivering the mail for the day. En route, she paddles in the river and manages to slip into the water soaking all the letters and smudging the ink. As a result, she delivers the parcels to the wrong people. Katie visits her Grannie who dries her clothes and helps her to put things right. This first book paves the way for later stories where Katie gets into situations and makes amends. As Grannie says,

‘She’s very good at sorting things out.’ This is also true in *Katie Morag and the Riddles* where she falls out with her friends and has to regain their trust.

The first book introduces the main characters and presents the special relationship between Katie Morag and Grannie Island. Inthorn (2018) talks about the two directional intergenerational care between Katie and her grandmothers in the CBeebies production and this is also true of the original texts. Katie helps Grannie clean her sheep and get her ready for the show in *Katie Morag and the Two Grandmothers* and Grannie helps her turn her wellies into tap shoes in *Katie Morag and the Dancing Class* (2007). Meanwhile Katie enlists the help of Granma Mainland to help lift Grannie’s spirits in *Katie Morag and the Wedding* (1995) and helps out running the farm when Grannie is poorly and bedbound in ‘Grannie Island is ill’ in *The Big Katie Morag Storybook* (1998).

Characters develop as the series go on. Granma Mainland makes her first appearance as does her admirer, Neilly Beag, in *Katie Morag and the Two Grandmothers*. They later celebrate their marriage in *Katie Morag and the Wedding*. Katie’s cousins, Hector, Archie, Dougal, Jamie and Murdo Iain create a commotion in *Katie Morag and the Big Boy Cousins* (1987). They visit the island from the mainland camping and generally making nuisance. Katie finds them thrilling and enjoys joining in their naughtiness.

3.3. Images, Intertextuality and Intratextuality

The evocative watercolour illustrations boast many details for children to discover and delight in; for example, Grannie Island’s kittens always seem to be up to mischief, knocking over vases or climbing into cupboards. The endpapers frame each book depicting a morning scene at the beginning and a calm evening scene at the end after the events of the story. The happy endings settle the reader’s mind and provide closure and resolution, an important feature of books aimed at younger audiences. In *Katie Morag and the New Pier* (1993), we see a transformation in the scenery of the village with the final endpapers boasting not only the new pier but also the finished bistro. Throughout the story we see Mr and Mrs McColl planning their bistro but it is never explicitly mentioned in the verbal text. Indeed, many important aspects of the plot develop through the images alone which reflects the important interplay between the verbal and visual for complete semiotic understanding. In *Katie Morag and the Wedding*, Grannie Island is in a bad mood because everyone is fussing over Granma Mainland’s imminent nuptials. While Katie tries to comfort her grandmother, we see Liam raking through a box of old photographs and finding one of Grandad Island. Later when Katie writes to Granma

Mainland to help make Grannie feel better, we notice Liam handing this photo to Katie. Granma Mainland arrives in style for her wedding, not by ferry, but by a helicopter which is being flown by Grandad Island. This same photo makes an appearance in the short story ‘Grannie Island is ill’ in *The Big Katie Morag Storybook*. Similarly, in *Katie Morag and the Two Grandmothers*, the illustrations show Mrs McColl to be pregnant, however there is no reference to this in the verbal text. In *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted* (1986), the baby has just been born.

There are many intertextual and intra-textual links made to other stories within the series. Nodelman describes intertextuality as ‘the interconnectedness of all acts of communication and their consequent dependence upon each other for their strategies of meaning making’ (1988:104) saying that ‘the more knowledge we have, the richer and more complex even very simple picture books come to be’ (1988:106). Whenever Katie Morag is pictured in her bedroom, there are always copies of previous books strewn on the bed or the floor. In *Katie Morag and the Wedding*, there is a stack of the five previous *Katie Morag* titles sitting on her bedside table. We see Grannie Island reading a copy of *Katie Morag Delivers the Mail* aloud to Liam in *Katie Morag and the Riddles* and also when she is in her sickbed. Katie’s favourite teddy is to be seen many times in subsequent books wearing the Babygro that she gives him *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted*. Attentive readers may spot a framed picture of Grannie’s prize-winning sheep, Alecina who made her debut in *Katie Morag and the Two Grandmothers*, hanging in Grannie’s house. Meanwhile, Mrs McColl is reading a newspaper which boasts a headline of “New Pier Leaking” in *Katie Morag and the Wedding*. There is much intratextuality within the individual texts themselves, for example in *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted*, canny viewers may spot the items that Katie finds in the flotsam being tossed by the waves before they arrive on the shoreline where she discovers them (see Figure 4, later).



Figure 1. *Katie Morag and the New Pier* (twelfth double-page spread)

Hedderwick often uses windows and doors to draw our attention to objects, people and weather. In the final page of *Katie Morag and the New Pier*, we see the new pier, the ferry, the old ferry boat framed in one window which are all important in the plot. Grannie Island's house with the big boy cousins' tent pitched outside can be seen through another, while Katie's parents' newly built bistro can be seen through the door. Meanwhile both the strong blue rope that Katie finds on the shore and the recipe book she made can be seen proudly displayed on the wall. All of this provides intratextual references that encourage us to pause and reflect on these aspects of the plot and are also very fun to spot.

3.4 Scottish Culture and Language

In addition to the distinctive Scottishness of the texts (the clothes, landscape, weather), the stories are peppered throughout with Scots words. In *Katie Morag Delivers the Mail* Grannie Island says that Katie got herself into a 'boorach'; a muddle. Katie gets involved in a game of 'Chickenelly' in *Katie Morag and the Big Boy Cousins* which is the Scots name for the well-known game which involves knocking on doors then running away. Mrs McColl describes Katie's bedroom as a *midden* (a rubbish heap) in *The Second Katie Morag Storybook* (1998). Grannie helps Katie prepare for an island concert introducing her to *Ho Ro My Nut Brown Maiden*, a traditional Scottish folk song and *You Cannae Shove Your Granny Off a Bus*, a well-loved Scottish children's song in *Katie Morag and the Grand Concert* (1997).

3.5 Gender and Diversity

Farrell describes the *Katie Morag* as non-sexist children's literature citing Grannie Island clad in her dungarees and who drives and mends her tractor (2009:68). Grannie is very practical minded, hammering tacks into Katie's wellies to transform them into tap shoes and frequently helping out the McColls. She is seen as the antithesis of Granma Mainland who perhaps adheres to a more conventionally feminine representation (Farrell, 2011:180). However, the books do not conform to stereotypical portrayals of gender responsibilities. Within the family home, Mr McColl is often seen comforting the children (*Katie Morag Delivers the Mail*), bathing the baby (*Katie Morag and the Riddles*), helping to decorate the wedding cake (*Katie Morag and the Wedding*), serving tea, washing the dishes and changing the baby's nappy (*Katie Morag and Tiresome Ted*) and cooking (*Katie Morag and the Dancing Class*). Mrs McColl is a working Mum who runs the Post Office whilst raising three children. However, the gendered

description of Mrs McColl as the ‘Post Mistress’ seems outdated, as does the term ‘Lady Artist’ given to the village artist.

There is little ethnic and racial diversity within the *Katie Morag* books. Only in the more recent, *Katie Morag and the Riddles* (2001), *Katie Morag and the Birthdays* (2005) and *Katie Morag and the Dancing Class* (2007) does the only character of colour make an appearance, Katie’s friend Sasha. Data from The Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLIFE) (2018) exposes the infrequent representation of black and minority ethnic (BAME) characters in children’s books. Only 4% of the children’s books published in the UK in 2017 featured BAME characters while only 1% of the children’s books published that year had a BAME main character despite the fact that 32.1% of school age pupils were of minority ethnic origins (CLIFE, 2018:5). Similarly, there is no representation of disability in any of the texts. Children need to see themselves reflected in the books that they read and as educators we need to ensure that the texts we use in the classroom reflect and promote different cultural realities. Having said this, the illustrations probably do reflect the population of a small rural island in Scotland at the time the books were written and represent the island community in the time they are set.

While the racial and ethnic diversity in the *Katie Morag* stories is poor, there is a range of diverse characters in other senses; there is strong female representation and there are other interesting characters. Grandad Island likes to travel the world only returning to Struay very infrequently. Mr McColl’s reclusive brother makes appearances in *The Second Katie Morag Storybook* and *Katie Morag and the Birthdays*. Matthew lives self-sufficiently at the other side of Struay, growing vegetables and living off the land. Katie arrives at his hut expecting everything to be a mess however, is pleasantly surprised by his quiet life and looks forward to visiting again. The islanders welcome the construction workers from the mainland into their houses in *Katie Morag and the New Pier*, showing an attitude of tolerance and acceptance which is universally important but is arguably particularly pertinent in this Brexit era when there are intolerant beliefs toward immigration held by some people in society.

3.6 Feelings and Emotions

Throughout the series there are multiple instances when Katie experiences strong emotions and times when she must consider the feelings of others. Katie is worried at the end of *Katie Morag Delivers the Mail* that there may be angry words said when she arrives home very late after muddling up all the parcels, so she invites Grannie home for dinner to avoid confrontation. Katie is embarrassed when she and her friend are wearing identical dresses in *Katie Morag and*

the Grand Concert. Feeling miserable and guilty for bursting her mother's necklace, she gets cross and falls out with her friends in *Katie Morag and the Riddles*. She makes it up to them all by solving the riddles that their teacher has set them as a challenge. In *Katie Morag and the Dancing Class*, Granma Mainland is excited that Katie is starting ballet classes. She buys her ballet-shoes and sews her a frilly frou-frou skirt and Katie does not wish to hurt Granma's feelings by telling her that she does not like ballet. There are many occasions within the texts when emotions are explored but for the purposes of this dissertation I will focus on *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted* which concentrates on Katie's emotions, *Katie Morag and the Big Boy Cousins* where Katie changes her behaviour to think about other people's feelings, and *Katie Morag and the New Pier* when Katie considers how people can have different feelings and perspectives.

In *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted*, Katie Morag is in a bad mood because all the attention is focused on her new baby sister. Feeling very cross, Katie kicks her favourite teddy into the sea and very soon regrets it. Her Mum, who is also feeling overwhelmed, sends Katie Morag to stay with Grannie Island for a few days to calm down. Soon her mood improves and she begins to feel better. While gathering driftwood from the shore after the storm, she finds special presents to for her family. She also discovers her old teddy much to her delight, whom she mends, and all ends happily.

In *Katie Morag and the Big Boy Cousins*, her cousins have come to stay with Grannie Island. Grannie expects help with chores but the boys have other ideas and involve Katie Morag in their mischief. They steal Grannie's boat and create a commotion in the village by banging loudly on every door, knocking over ladders, bins and flower pots. Grannie Island is furious and Katie tries to make Grannie feel better and encourages her cousins to help with the chores. They then enjoy a barbecue together.

In *Katie Morag and the New Pier*, construction workers are building a new pier. Ferries will now arrive on the island bringing tourism and economic benefit to Struay. Many of the islanders are excited about this prospect; while others, including Grannie Island, are feeling pessimistic. One night, a storm rages and the workers' huts are washed out to sea. Grannie Island and the ferryboat man manage to save one of the huts using a strong rope that Katie had found on the shore. This salvaged hut becomes a tearoom that both tourists and locals can visit. Meanwhile the workers stay with the islanders and tell tales of mainland life for the duration of the construction.

CHAPTER 4 – A TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE TEXTS THROUGH A COGNITIVE LITERARY CRITICISM LENS

4.1 A framework for analysis

This study focused on the representation of emotions in the words and images within the chosen texts: *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted* (Hedderwick, 1986), *Katie Morag and the Big Boy Cousins* (1987) and *Katie Morag and the New Pier* (1993). My methodology involved creating and using a framework which considered picturebook semiotics, how the words and pictures function together; and acknowledged how visual conventions of colour, composition, scale and point of view focus our attention on feelings and emotions within the texts. This framework guided my examination of the emotions displayed by the character of Katie Morag and how she thinks about the feelings of other characters. As well as emotions, this study considered Theory of Mind and empathy, so I used a cognitive literary lens to carry out my textual analysis. According to *A Companion to Literary Theory*:

Cognitive literary criticism engages the contemporary psychology and neuroscience of reading, consciousness, imagery, social behavio[u]r, decision making, empathy, and perception in order to gain new insight on literature and creativity.

(Starr, 2018:402)

Much has been written about the cognitive processes of adult readers (Stockwell, 2002), the implications reading has on our Theory of Mind (Zunshine, 2006) and how reading literature can lead to empathy (Keen, 2007). Nikolajeva (2012) directs the focus of cognitive literary criticism towards children's literature and particularly picturebooks.

Cognitive literary criticism considers the narrative devices used to engage the reader both cognitively and affectively. In the paper, 'Picturebooks and Emotional Literacy', Nikolajeva explains that 'picturebooks offer vicarious emotional experience' (2013b:250) for children as 'picturebooks evoke our emotional engagement through images as well as words and, moreover, through amplification of words and images' (2013b:249). She lists a range of ways that emotions can be communicated through picturebook texts through 'recognizable external token[s] of emotions, because this is how we use Theory of Mind in real life' and moreover it is difficult to read an emotion if there is no 'clear external expression' (2013b:251). These external demonstrations of emotion include facial expressions, like the shapes of the mouth and the eyes and body language (2013b:251). Our eyes are also

drawn to artistic conventions that convey emotions like the use of colour, for example red for aggression or black for distress. The positioning of figures also suggests emotion for example characters at the corner or the side of an image may be read as lonely or scared (2013b:252). Furthermore, the size and scale of figures in relation to other characters can also be indicative of emotion. The verbal text describes emotions through literal or metaphorical statements, although words sometimes contradict images. As Nikolajeva asserts, when ‘words are symmetrical with images, mind-reading is restricted’ (2013b:252). Emotion can also be conveyed by words that describe characters’ behaviours, for example both ‘skip’ and ‘plod’ describe how a character is moving whilst simultaneously implying their mental state. The skipping character is in a much happier mood than the one who plods.

We are born with basic emotions: happiness, fear, disgust, sadness and anger. However, each of these emotions has its own spectrum, or ‘nuances of emotions’ (Nikolajeva, 2012:277); for example, contentment and exhilaration are degrees of happiness, while anger could describe a continuum from mild crossness to fury. Higher cognitive emotions, or social emotions, include love, guilt, shame, pride, envy and jealousy which are less innate and ‘may be culturally dependent’ (Nikolajeva, 2013b:252). The illustrations ‘frequently carry the heaviest load’ for social emotions through body language and positioning of characters in relation to each other (2013b:253). Finally, in this paper, Nikolajeva discusses the potential of picturebooks to encourage younger readers to engage in more complex embedded mind-reading, for example “A thinks that B thinks that A thinks...” (2013b:253). She suggests that young readers do not go beyond two levels of embedded mind-reading (2013b:253-4) and often opt for ‘immersive identification’ (2013b:254) empathising with the child character. Although other researchers believe that young children can understand embedded thinking to three or more levels (Zunshine, 2019) as exemplified by *The Gruffalo* (Donaldson, 1999) and *Rosie’s Walk* (Hutchins, 1967) in chapter 2.

Pathetic fallacy is the poetic practice of the attribution of human emotions to nature. It was first coined by Ruskin (1856) as a criticism of overly sentimental poetry. The meaning has shifted and is no longer a critique rather a description of attributing feelings to nonhuman things. I found this a useful concept to direct my attention to the representation of emotions within the images because while we are naturally drawn to humans in images (Nodelman, 1988:129), many of the illustrations in the *Katie Morag* texts focus on landscape and weather.

My methodology involved a qualitative close reading and textual analysis of both verbal text and visual images and their interaction, using the elements outlined by Nikolajeva (2013b). I considered:

- The facial expressions and body language of characters evident in the images;
- Visual conventions including composition, colour, scale, point of view, positioning of characters on the page and pathetic fallacy;
- Examples of what I perceived to be basic emotions, higher cognitive emotions and nuances of emotion and how these are represented through words and visuals;
- Whether statements of emotions were literal, metaphorical or implied through other descriptions in the verbal text;
- Theory of Mind and embedded thinking as it applies to both characters and readers;
- Examples of characters showing empathy.

4.2 Applying the framework

Each of the three chosen texts boast endpapers, a title page and twelve double-page spreads. I approached the research by analysing each double-page spread individually considering the indicators within the verbal and visual text. In

[Appendix I](#) there are three exemplars of my framework application, one example per book, representing different manifestations of emotion. The first depicts Katie in the throes of a bad mood in *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted*. The second example highlights the turning point in *Katie Morag and the Big Boy Cousins* when Katie changes her behaviour to think about her Grannie's feelings. The final double spread demonstrates Katie showing empathic concern for the feelings and emotions of other people in *Katie Morag and the New Pier*. Using a thematic approach, I collated and reflected upon the results.

Research suggests that the most common positive emotions are amusement, awe, gratitude, hope, inspiration, interest, joy, love, pride and serenity (Fredrickson, 2009). Some common negative emotions people experience are anger, contempt, disgust, embarrassment, fear, frustration, guilt, sadness, shame and stress (Fife Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), online). These lists helped me to identify and label the emotions portrayed through facial expressions, body language or stated or implied by the verbal language. In addition to Nikolajeva (2012, 2013b), I found Nodelman's *Words About Pictures* (1988) helpful for understanding the relationship between words and images. Furthermore, Bang's *Picture This! How Picturebooks Work* (2016) was invaluable when considering the significance of shape, colour and composition styles within the illustrations and how this can affect our perceptions of objects and characters on the page.

CHAPTER 5 – EMOTIONS, EMPATHY AND THEORY OF MIND IN THREE *KATIE MORAG* TEXTS

Feelings and emotions are at the heart of the *Katie Morag* stories which offers children the opportunity to develop their affective domain whilst enjoying the stories of island life and everyday relationships within a Scottish cultural context. At times emotions are stated literally within the written text perhaps to make clear to younger readers why characters might be feeling as they do; or to reinforce strong emotions, for example ‘Mrs McColl was furious’ in *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted*. These emotions are amplified by the stern expression on her face and her rigid body language portrayed through the images. Often Hedderwick employs literal statements of emotions to set the scene. At the start of *Katie Morag and the New Pier*, Katie is described as ‘excited’ and Mrs McColl is ‘delighted’ about the prospect of new pier being built, while Grannie Island is feeling ‘pessimistic’.

There is little evidence of metaphorical statements of emotion within the texts but emotions are frequently implied by words which describe behaviours without explicitly stating feelings. When Katie ‘stomps’ this describes her anger and bad mood; Grannie ‘frowns’ which suggests sadness or displeasure; the big boy cousins ‘groaned’, showing their frustration; and everyone ‘cheers’ when the hut is safely brought to shore, which implies their joy or happiness. Hedderwick also uses expressions like ‘Katie’s tummy tickled with excitement’ (1987) and ‘she couldn’t believe her eyes’ (1986), an idiom which children should be familiar with and understand.

Nodelman says that the ‘emotional quality of what is asserted [within a picturebook] must be conveyed by the pictures’ which informs the reader/viewer about ‘the tone of voice in which to read the words – the attitude to take toward them’ (1988:42). My research suggests that although the verbal text does state emotions either literally or through implication, much of the *emotional ekphrasis*, the discourse employed to describe emotions (Nikolajeva, 2012:277), is conveyed through the illustrations. I discovered that emotions are portrayed (or intensified) in these texts through characters’ facial expressions, body language and also as a result of the artistic conventions. This requires careful viewing. For the most part, because she is the protagonist, it is Katie’s feelings which are explored.

5.1 Katie Morag's emotions

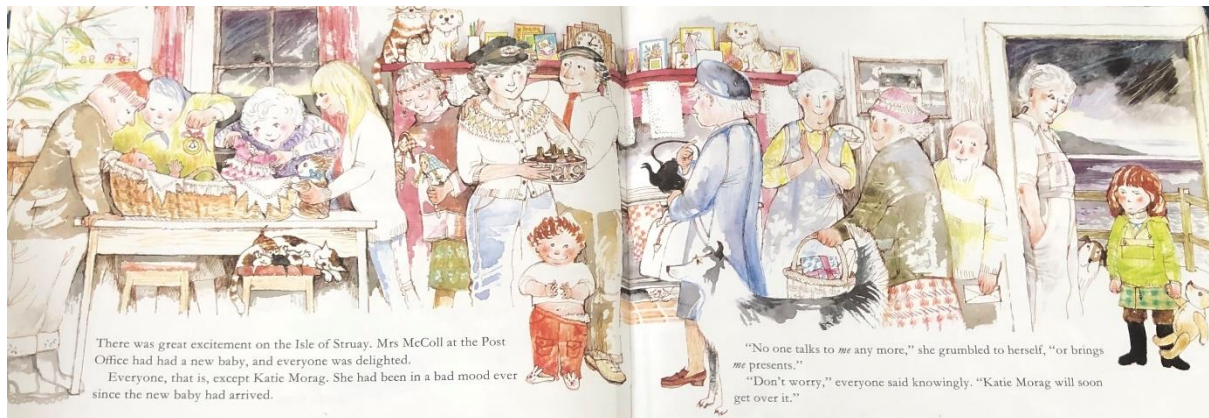


Figure 2. *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted* (first double-page spread)

In Figure 2, Katie is described as being in a 'bad mood' as she 'grumble[s] to herself'. This is confirmed by her scowl and her clenched fist which children should be able to identify as anger. The other assembled people are described as 'delighted' that the new baby has arrived and their smiling faces and relaxed body language endorse this. Katie's emotions contrast the rest of the group and this is emphasised by the visual elements, particularly composition and colour. Nodelman asserts that composition implies emotion as the 'the location of objects in relation to other objects can affect the way we understand them' (1988:130). Like many of Hedderwick's illustrations, this is a busy scene with many details to discover. Katie Morag is positioned at the right of the image. If our eyes read from left-to-right, we first see visitors gathered around the baby. Mr and Mrs McColl and Liam stand in the centre of the scene and eventually we see Grannie Island and Katie. Positioning an object towards the edge of a picture suggests tension (Bang, 2016:80) which is further amplified here by the use of colour. Katie stands at the door juxtaposed against the dark sky, meanwhile the rest of the characters are clustered in the bright, warm, welcoming kitchen. Only Grannie Island, with whom Katie Morag has a close relationship, stands alongside Katie in companionship, perhaps in empathy.

The story of *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted* is an exploration of Katie's emotions. Her bad mood is induced by her jealousy of the attention her new baby sister is receiving, and perhaps because she feels displaced now that there is another girl in the family. Katie's actions are a result of her emotions. There are rich opportunities to discuss emotions with children and particularly in relation to how our thoughts, feelings and behaviours are connected. Our behaviour is affected by our thoughts and emotions. Then our actions, and the outcomes of our

behaviour, in turn, affect how we think and feel. As they grow up, children develop their understanding of their own emotions and the way they respond to them. Knowing how to manage their negative emotions appropriately helps children achieve emotional balance (Fife CAMHS, online). Alongside other emotions, this text explores the nuances of anger: from crossness, through rage and fury to indignation. Sometimes our emotions can be displaced on an object or artefact and here we see Katie Morag's wrath unleashed on her teddy bear. When Katie Morag nips her little brother, stomps about and kicks her teddy into the sea, it is because she is hurting inside. As Nikolajeva says, when 'words are symmetrical with images, mind-reading is restricted' (2013b:252). While there are some literal statements of emotions in the *Katie Morag* books, generally readers must interpret the exact nuance from the images which leaves opportunities for mind-reading.



Figure 3. *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted* (fourth double-page spread)

Here Katie Morag is unable to sleep. The prose states that 'she began to wish she hadn't thrown [her teddy] away'. We know what she is thinking, but there is space left for the reader to decide on what she is feeling by using the pictorial clues. With Katie's mouth pursed and her hands on her head, I would expect children to suggest worry or sadness, however perhaps slightly older children with a more developed Theory of Mind may suggest that Katie is experiencing guilt or regret for kicking her teddy into the sea. The two side-by-side images give the impression of the passing of time which also heightens the tension. In the second image, Katie looks directly at the reader appealing to us for empathy or comfort. Nikolajeva states that children often opt for 'immersive identification' (2013b:254) empathising with the child character. However, in my experience as a mother and teacher, I am not persuaded this is necessarily the case. I find children can often be very critical of characters especially if they have been unkind. Nevertheless, even if the reader has not empathised with Katie

until this point when she stomped about angrily and hurt her brother, we do begin to feel compassion for her now. Many children will have experienced sleepless nights or times when they were worried or regretful, so images like this have much potential for discussion about emotions and experiences.

Katie Morag's fraught emotions can be contrasted with Liam who sleeps with a smile on his face. The smiley-face sticker and peace sign on Liam's bed further amplify his happiness and contentment. Our eyes are drawn to the blackness of the storm outside the window. The storm appears at its worst with a fork of lightening cutting across night-time sky. As Bang says 'darkness seems scarier to us than light because we see well in the light and poorly in the dark' but also darkness in images can 'suggest adversity or obstacles' (2016:46). Likewise, the window is open and the wind blows the curtains around which mirrors Katie Morag's inner turmoil.

5.2 The Weather and Emotions

Scotland is renowned for changeable weather and it is not unusual, as the saying goes, to experience four seasons in one day. The islands, in particular, are well-known for their wet and windy climate. Not surprisingly, the weather plays an important role within the *Katie Morag* texts and the representation of weather in these texts is a visual pathetic fallacy. The weather is used as a device to metaphorically mirror Katie's emotions throughout *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted*. The storm is building when Katie is angry and reaches its peak when Katie cannot sleep during the night and it continues raging as she trudges up to Grannie Island's to stay. Blue skies finally reappear when Katie Morag's bad mood subsides and Katie starts to think about her family again.

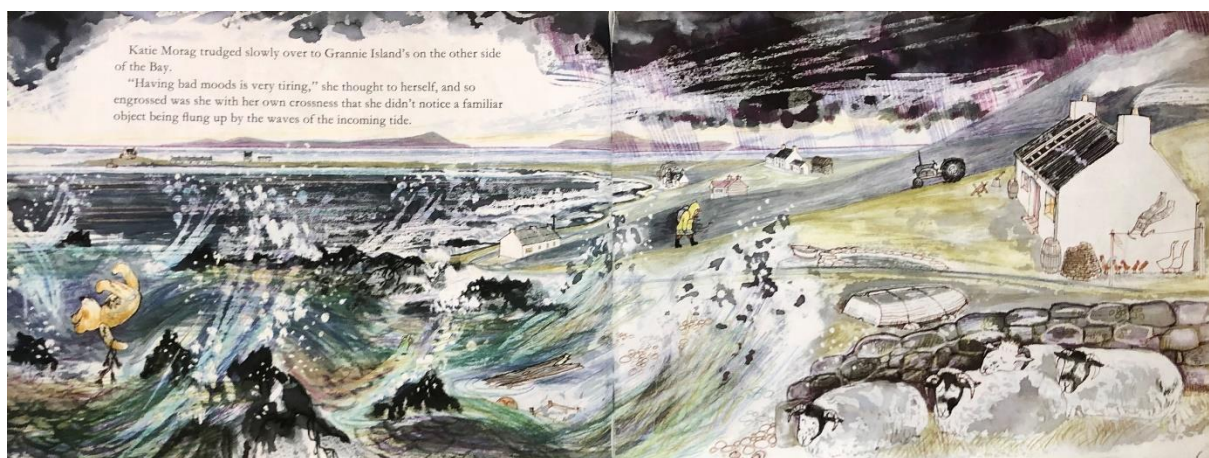


Figure 4. *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted* (sixth double-page spread)

The most visually dramatic scene in the book is when Katie hikes towards her Grannie's house amid the storm (Figure 4). Nodelman says that 'the size of objects in relationship to their background may imply relationships between characters and environment' (1988:129) and this is certainly true here. The weather and the scale of Katie on the page suggest that she is swamped by her emotions. The colours evoke the drama of the scene alongside the angular rain and the immense swirling waves that look to consume Katie.

Shapes that lean forward towards the protagonist feel as though they are blocking or stopping forward progress, whereas shapes leaning away give the impression of opening up space or leading the protagonist forward.

(Bang, 2016:24)

Here the turbulent ocean seems to prevent Katie from feeling better. The contrast between Katie's yellow raincoat against the blacks and purples of the background are dramatic. Moreover, Katie's tiny scale, her body hunched over as she trudges to Grannie's, in the middle of the double-page spread suggest that her emotions are out of her control. The verbal text directs our attention away from Katie towards her teddy who is bobbing on the surf, whom she has not noticed because, we are told, she is too 'engrossed in her crossness'. The narrator tells us that Katie thinks 'having bad moods is tiring'. There is, however, a little light on the horizon both literally and figuratively. The storm has already passed for islands and the hills in the background. Often 'smaller horizontal or horizontally oriented shapes within a picture can be felt as islands of calm' (Bang, 2016:52) which suggests that there is hope and Katie will feel better soon.

Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted with its dramatic storm reflecting Katie's bad mood reminds us of the expression "to ride out the storm" which means to get through a difficult situation without coming to much harm. This idea of embracing our emotions is in line with current thinking about emotional literacy and children's wellbeing and resilience. Children must be encouraged to recognise their own emotions and develop the appropriate language to be able to communicate their feelings (Young, 2019:6). When children learn to name their feelings, this helps them to express how they are feeling without having to act on it, for example expressing their disappointment without sulking or throwing a tantrum (Fife CAMHS, online). Stronger emotional literacy also leads to stronger emotional resilience (Scottish Recovery Network, 2019).

In *Katie Morag and the Big Boy Cousins*, black threatening clouds mirror the mischief and emotions in the story. Figures 5 to 10 illustrate the movement of a weather system across the sky which reflects the chaos of the events. A solitary grey cloud lingers overhead as Katie Morag and her cousins row their boat towards the village which creates a sense of foreboding (Figure 5). As the children set out their plans to wreak havoc, a storm cloud with dramatic rain rages behind the oldest cousin as he directs the others (Figure 6). Blackness almost consumes the whole sky in the height of the commotion reflecting the villagers' anger (Figure 8) and sits directly above the heads of the irate villagers as Grannie tells the children off. Only once apologies have been made and the mess cleared away, does the sky brighten up again. Although a little black cloud remains above the village in Figure 10 reminding the reader of the turmoil and troubled emotions that occurred there.



Figure 5. (fifth double-page spread)



Figure 6. (sixth double-page spread)



Figure 7. (seventh double-page spread)



Figure 8. (eighth double-page spread)

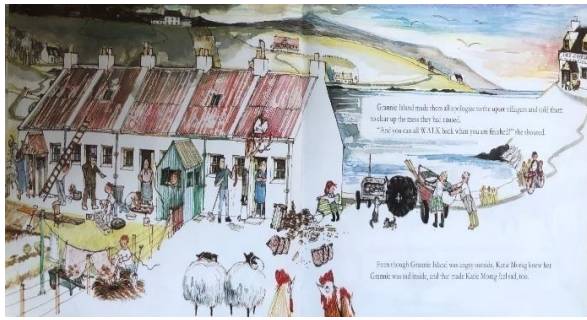


Figure 9. (ninth double-page spread)

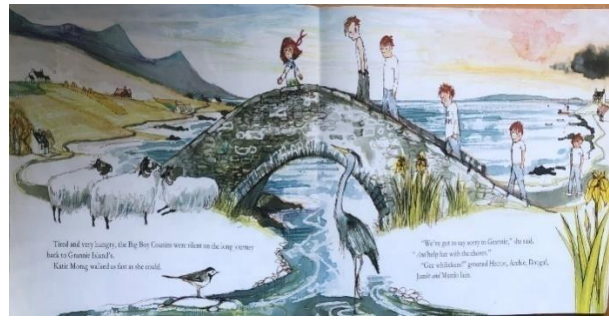


Figure 10. (tenth double-page spread)

In *Katie Morag and the New Pier* the storm plays a pivotal role in the plot when the construction workers’ huts are swept out to sea and Grannie Island and the Ferryboat man heroically rescue the one remaining hut using the strong rope that Katie Morag had found on the shoreline. Although in this instance, the storm does not overtly reflect the characters’ emotions, thunderstorms are dramatic events that can make us feel excited or afraid in real life and we remember these feelings when we experience a wild storm portrayed through words and pictures. Reading fiction simulates cognitive and affective responses in our brains (Nikolajeva, 2013a:96) and pictures affect our emotions because of what we associate them with and our experiences in “real” world (Bang, 2016:92). Our affective responses therefore can deepen our engagement with the text.

5.3 Katie Morag responding to Grannie Island’s emotions

Of all the characters in the *Katie Morag* series, Katie Morag is arguably closest to Grannie Island. Grannie has a calming influence on Katie and allows her space to overcome her big emotions in her own time. Grannie also provides wool and a needle and thread for Katie to repair her tattered old teddy and by doing so atone for her mistakes without judgement. She allows Katie space to embrace and live through her emotions. However, as explored by Holdsworth and Lury (2016) and Inthorn (2018) the intergenerational care is reciprocal between Katie and her grandmother.



Figure 11. *Katie Morag and the Big Boy Cousins* (Third double-page spread)

In *Katie Morag and the Big Boy Cousins*, Katie Morag gets caught up in the thrill of naughtiness and ignores her Grannie's requests for help with the chores. The positioning of the characters on the page helps to reinforce the emotions and actions of the characters. Clustering Katie Morag and her cousins together gives them a sense of unity as they conspiratorially hide from their Grannie, none of them considering Grannie's feelings. They also share similar body language with their hands over their ears, exaggerating the fact they are not listening to Grannie Island. Grannie, on the other hand, is separated from the rest of the group which perhaps means that the reader identifies less with her (Bang, 2016:22). Space around a figure can isolate them from other figures in an image which sometimes makes them look 'free' and at other times 'vulnerable' (Bang, 2016:104). Here it is the latter. The emotions present in this scene are higher cognitive emotions rather than basic emotions. Katie is in awe of her cousins while they are frustrated at Grannie pestering them to do their chores. Theory of Mind is important in understanding lies (Meibauer, 2005; Silva-Diaz, 2015; Zunshine, 2019) and while Katie is not lying per se, she is dismissive of Grannie by refusing to listen to her. The reader knows that Katie knows that she really should be helping her Grannie. Neither Katie nor her cousins are thinking about their Grannie's feelings; or those of the villagers when they play their game of 'chickenelly' knocking on doors and wreaking havoc in the village. There is much potential for interesting classroom discussion about the choices we make and the implications of such choices.

The figure of Grannie in the distance in Figure 11 can be contrasted with her imposing stature in [Figure 8](#). The words 'Grannie Island was colossal with fury' are intensified by her gigantic scale compositionally. In this image she is presented in at the centre foreground of the double-page and therefore cannot be ignored. Nodelman says that 'a solitary object usually

has more weight than a number of small ones’ and that ‘the size of objects in relationship to their background may imply relationships between characters and environment’ (1988:129). If Grannie’s smaller scale in the previous image made her look weak or vulnerable, the largeness of her figure certainly endows strength now (Bang, 2016:90). Grannie’s tractor is a symbol which represents her and is evident throughout the series of *Katie Morag* books. Here the tractor, alongside Grannie herself, dominates the image which draws our attention to Grannie Island and certainly guides the reader to consider things from her point of view. We cannot see Grannie’s facial expression, but we can imagine it is angry and fierce. All eyes are turned in her direction – the children, the villagers and even her dog – suggesting that Grannie is shouting. Katie’s face is red and she replies ‘timidly’ when asked what they were doing, which implies that she is a little scared. Readers can infer that she is probably feeling regret and possibly embarrassment too. This marks a turning point in the story when Katie is no longer ‘tickled with excitement’ by her cousins’ naughtiness and she now focuses her attention on Grannie’s feelings and trying to make her feel better. She makes it her mission to help tidy up and ensure that everyone pulls their weight to help Grannie.

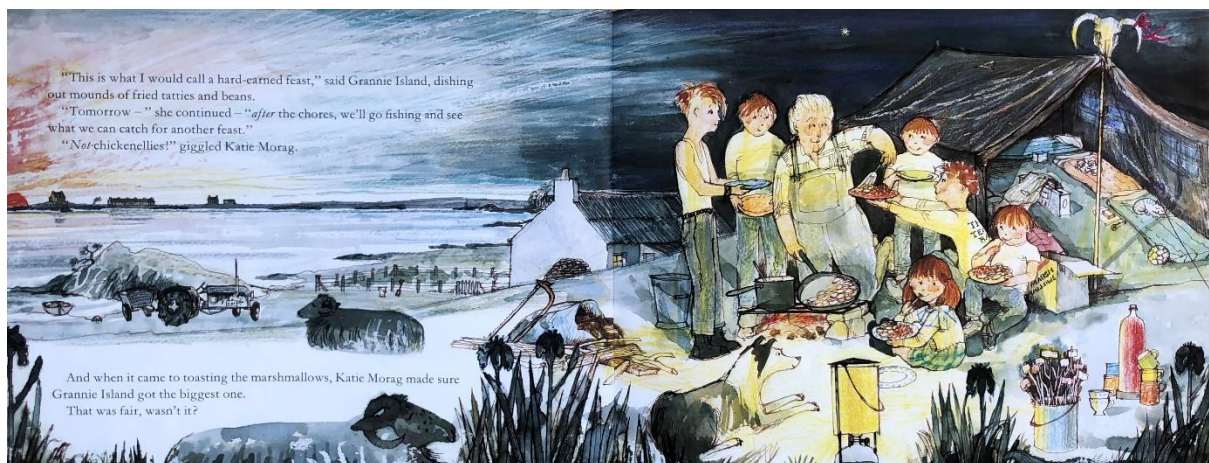


Figure 12. *Katie Morag and the Big Boy Cousins* (twelfth double-page spread)

By the conclusion of the story, the cousins, Katie Morag and Grannie Island are all clustered together enjoying their ‘hard-earned feast’. There is a warm yellow glow in Figure 12 signifying warmth and contentment which is further confirmed by their happy relaxed expressions. Bang says ‘when two or more objects in a picture have the same colour, we associate them with each other’ (2016:44) and the characters all seem united together after all the drama of the day. Katie’s eyes, unlike her cousins, are not on their Grannie. Rather she has spotted the marshmallows because Granny has been hurt, Katie is trying to make her feel better:

And when it came to toasting the marshmallows, Katie Morag made sure Grannie Island got the biggest one. That was fair, wasn't it?

(Hedderwick, 1987)

The narrator addresses reader in the closing sentence of the story which invites a discussion about fairness and compassion. This appeals directly to children's Theory of Mind as they are encouraged to think about others and reflect on how we can make amends if we make mistakes.

5.4 Theory of Mind and Embedded Thinking

Theory of Mind is the ability to understand that someone else might believe something about the world that they themselves know isn't true (Coats, 2018:68). Reading fiction involves much embedded thinking such as "A knows that B knows that A knows..." (Pelletier and Wilde Astington, 2010, Zunshine 2019). Another aspect of Theory of Mind relates to how the visual, audio and/or gestural modes gives clues to emotion within multimodal texts (Coats, 2018:68). Often there is a direct reference within the written text although most of the time this requires inference (2018:68). Nikolajeva suggests that picturebooks 'frequently make use of ambiguity created in the interaction between media when conveying a character's emotional state' (2014:95) and these double-coded narrations in picturebooks help to develop a reader's Theory of Mind (Nikolajeva, 2012).



Figure 13. *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted* (fifth double-page spread)

One particular example of this is particularly pertinent in *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted* when Katie Morag borrows Liam's hot water bottle to cuddle when she cannot sleep without her teddy. The following morning, she wakes with a wet bed (Figure 13). The verbal text focuses on Mrs McColl being 'furious' and this is reinforced by her pursed lips and angular

body as she sharply points to the wet bed. The reader knows that Katie Morag knows that Mrs McColl thinks Katie has had an accident, however we know that actually the lid of the hot water bottle has come loose during the night. The reader must use their inference skills to deduce this. In the image we see the hot water bottle and a puddle of water on the floor out of Mrs McColl's sight. Such deduction requires quite sophisticated mind-reading and is likely to need teased out of children through discussion. Mr McColl's eyes are on his wife and he tries to appease the situation suggesting that Katie ought to go and stay with Grannie for a while. Katie, by now probably exhausted, seems resigned to accept her mother's evaluation of the situation. We cannot help but feel for Katie Morag here as it seems she is being punished for something she has not done. Nikolajeva says that picturebooks often 'depict conflicts between characters based on misunderstanding, misinterpretation, and misdirection of emotions' and this is definitely the case here but 'they also depict characters developing empathy towards other characters' (2013b:253). Katie shows a lot of empathy for others throughout the books.

5.5 Empathy for other characters

In *Katie Morag and the Big Boy Cousins*, after Grannie has told the children off for upsetting the villagers, the text states:

Even though Grannie Island was angry outside, Katie Morag knew her Grannie was sad inside, and that made Katie feel sad, too.

(Hedderwick, 1987)

This sentence is incredibly poignant as it conveys Katie's empathy for her grandmother. When Grannie Island feels sad, Katie Morag feels sad. We can infer that Katie probably feels regret, too, in having caused Grannie's sadness. It is Katie's empathic concern that spurs her into action to make her Grannie feel better. This idea that people can present one emotion but can actually be feeling a different underlying emotion is quite complex and would take a more developed Theory of Mind to navigate. There is much opportunity for quality discussion with children in a classroom setting including introducing words like *empathy*. Empathy starts to develop when children can recognise the basic emotions of joy distress, fear and anger. Babies can sense these emotions in people's facial expressions before they even understand or can say the words 'happy', 'sad' or 'scared' (Nikolajeva 2013b:251), so by the early years of primary school most children should have an emerging concept of empathy and empathic behaviours.

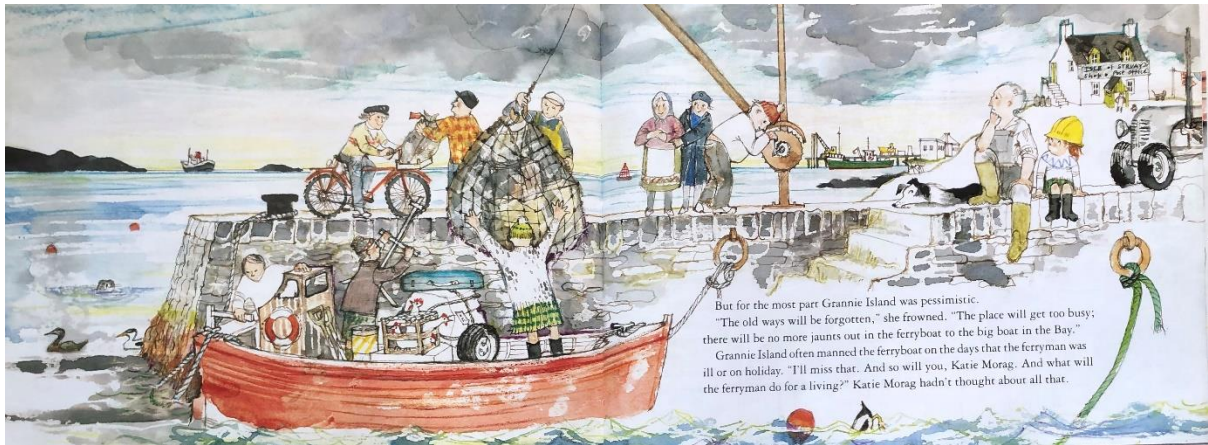


Figure 14. *Katie Morag and the New Pier* (third double-page spread)

In *Katie Morag and the New Pier*, we see Katie's attention focused on the feelings of other people as she tries to see things from multiple perspectives and points of view. While most of the islanders are excited about the prospect of the new pier bringing industry, tourism and opportunity to the Island of Struay, Grannie laments that the 'old ways will be forgotten'. In Figure 14, we see Grannie looking forlornly at the commotion. Katie's eyes are directed at her Grannie as she shows compassion and empathy for Grannie's feelings. The verbal text describes Grannie as being 'pessimistic', a word that would likely require a definition and certainly initiate discussion with young children. Katie tries to understand what the building of the new pier will mean for different islanders. Her parents are excitedly planning their bistro, the Lady Artist is creating trinkets to be sold in the new craft shop and the farmer is delighted at the prospect of selling his produce more frequently, but Katie is concerned about the Ferryboat man and how he will become 'redundant' (another word that would spark classroom dialogue). In Figure 15 whilst Katie chats to the Ferryboat man she mirrors his body language, a common non-verbal means of showing empathy or connection with somebody. Grannie is once again positioned off to the side an unconvinced onlooker with only her loyal dog as companion. She is isolated both compositionally and in terms of her feelings.

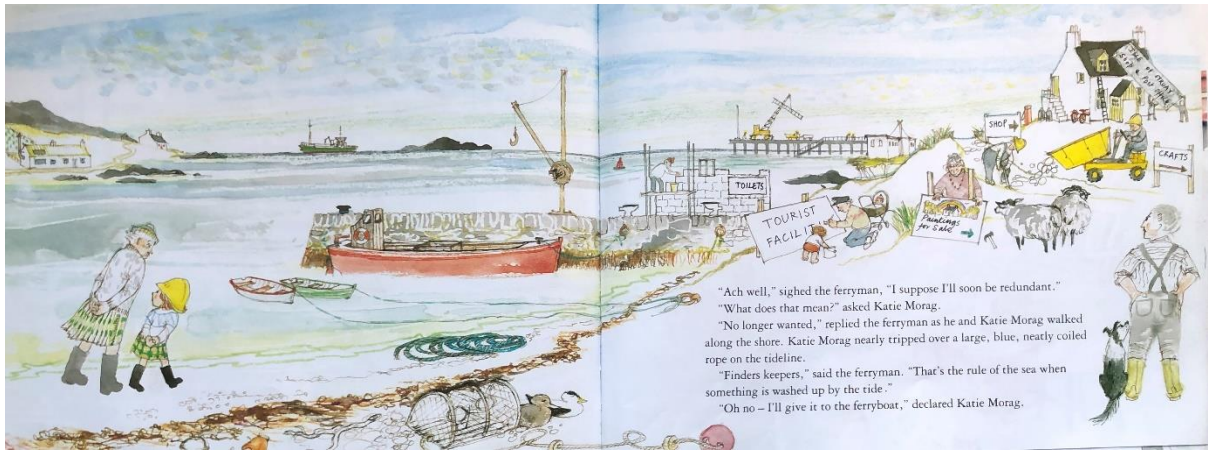


Figure 15. *Katie Morag and the New Pier* (fifth double-page spread)

Katie's thoughts are so consumed with the plight of the Ferryboat man, that she cannot eat her dinner (Figure 16). Her worry and concern for another person is affecting her physically. Her parents are focused on their extension plans and while Grannie Island is not mentioned on the page, her cottage around the bay is framed by the window reminding the reader that Grannie too is feeling sad.



Figure 16. *Katie Morag and the New Pier* (sixth double-page spread)

In many children's books children characters are often depicted showing empathy towards other children or animals, for example when Alfie puts his blanket to the side to play with Min at the party in *Alfie Gives a Hand* (Hughes, 1983) or when Noi looks after the lost whale in *The Storm Whale* (Davies 2013). In the *Katie Morag* texts, Katie's compassion and empathy is often focused on adult characters. In real life, children do spend a lot of time reading the emotions of their parents and grandparents. The artistic conventions, particularly the composition and scale of characters invite the reader to empathise with the characters, too. In Figure 17 there is much celebration and commotion in the background, as the first ferry arrives

at the new pier, however it is Grannie's face that is the focal point of the image. She looks sorrowful although resigned to the fact that the old days are gone. Empathy is a human emotion, but once again, Grannie's loyal dog seems to be sensing his owner's sadness.



Katie Morag and the New Pier (eleventh double-page spread)

Nikolajeva says that to be an empathic reader, you need to be able to separate yourself from the mind you're reading (2014:122). The *Katie Morag* texts are picturebooks which are most likely (although not exclusively) to be shared between an adult and child together as a bedtime story or within a classroom setting. There is rich opportunity to explore feelings, emotions, point of view and different perspectives framed within quality dialogue and classroom activities which would enable readers to engage without, I believe, succumbing to immersive identification. Furthermore, the exploration of different viewpoints (as Katie Morag does in *Katie Morag and The New Pier*) and being able to appreciate multiple perspectives is an important part of children's evolving understanding of democracy and the development of critical literacy skills.

CHAPTER 6 – IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM

6.1 The need for Emotional Literacy

As I write this dissertation in summer 2020, children here in Scotland have spent several months in ‘lockdown’ and engaging in home learning as a result of the global coronavirus pandemic. Children’s pre-lockdown lives of school, extra-curricular clubs, socialisation with friends and extended family was upturned and suspended. In addition, some children may have experienced covid-19 related bereavements or changes in their family circumstances. Returning to school will pose challenges for the whole school community as we all readjust back into the classroom routine and the so-called ‘new normal’. Health and Wellbeing oriented approaches are being adopted across the country to support children’s transitions back into school. I teach in East Lothian Council where there is an authority-wide commitment to *Nurture, Recovery and Reconnection* this term focusing on positive relationships and emotional growth (East Lothian Council Educational Psychology Service, 2020a). The proposed principles for recovery and reconnection include ensuring that ‘schools offer a secure emotional base’ for learners prioritising social and emotional development, building resilience and allowing space for children to put their emotions into words and reflect on shared experiences (East Lothian Council Educational Psychology Service, 2020b). It seems that the need for exploring emotional literacy is greater than ever. Nikolajeva asserts that ‘like all other literacies, emotional literacy can be enhanced and trained, and here the teacher’s role becomes decisive’ (2013b:249).

The term *emotional literacy* is not used within the Curriculum for Excellence. However, children’s health, wellbeing and emotional needs are at the centre of the curriculum. Experiences and outcomes that relate specifically to social and emotional wellbeing are not only expected to be addressed across the curriculum, but are a responsibility for all stakeholders (Education Scotland, 2020b). The *Katie Morag* picturebooks are probably most commonly read with younger classes (P1 to P4) but I believe it would also be worthwhile to explore the texts with Second Level classes too, as older children with a more developed Theory of Mind may have inciteful ideas on higher cognitive emotions and be better able to articulate their opinions. I have collated the relevant Health and Wellbeing experiences and outcomes for discussing emotional literacy with the *Katie Morag* stories in [Appendix II](#) for Early, First and Second levels.

6.2 A drawback of using texts to explore Emotional Literacy

Koltz and Kersten-Parrish suggest using picturebooks as stimulus for restorative justice classroom discussions, for conflict resolution and supporting social and emotional learning (2019:637-8). They posit that conversations through picturebooks support pupil's relationships, personal growth, wellbeing and behaviour (2019:637) and I think there is potential for this with the *Katie Morag* stories. A drawback of proposing the use of Hedderwick's texts to explore emotional literacy is that the books are seen as a vehicle to facilitate an external goal and this may eclipse the function of the picturebooks to entertain and delight as well as promoting multiliteracies. Some children's books are unambiguous in their focus on emotions, for example *The Colour Monster* (Llenas, 2016) is marketed as a picturebook that will act as a stimulus for talking about feelings with young children. The *Katie Morag* books, on the other hand, are not presented as explicit explorations of emotions, and any opportunities for discussion are woven into relatable experiences of being a child and stories of island life. The engaging illustrations invite children to look, and then look again. Nodelman says that images in picturebooks 'operate as punctuation' (1988:248), they encourage us to pause before we move on. Arizpe and Styles assert that by 're-reading and re-discussing' texts children move from a literal comprehension towards critical reading (2003:70). Furthermore, analysing multimodal texts particularly the relationship between words and images, engages children's 'higher order reading skills' including inference, viewpoint and style which requires the reader to think deeply (2003:238). I believe that the study of the *Katie Morag* stories offers an holistic learning experience that would engage children affectively and aesthetically as well as presenting ample opportunities for discussion and developing emotional literacy.

All reading events fall on a continuum from the 'efferent' to the 'aesthetic'. The efferent focuses on what is to be retained afterwards while the aesthetic emphasises our affective responses (Rosenblatt, 1986:124). Rosenblatt is concerned that children are frequently expected to provide an efferent reading of texts in the classroom without engaging aesthetically (1986:126). She stresses the potential of literature to widen our horizons and to help us understand ourselves and this emerges as a result of the 'emotional and intellectual participation in evoking the work of art, through reflection on our own aesthetic experience' (1993:21). I propose that before any discussion about feelings, emotions, facial expressions or body language is introduced in regard to the *Katie Morag* texts, children would have the opportunity to listen, to read, to look and to explore. Pupils would be able to offer and discuss

their own informative, heuristic, imaginative and personal responses (Kiefer, 1993) before rereading with a more efferent intention to explore emotions. After all, as Arizpe and Styles note many textual details are missed by children after their first reading of picturebooks (2003:9). The same can be the case for adults.

6.3 Developing Visual Literacy

As demonstrated in chapter 5, much of the characters' emotions in the *Katie Morag* stories were communicated through the illustrations and the interplay of the words and images on the page. There is ample opportunity to discuss both basic and social emotions evoked through facial expressions and body language. However, the way that Hedderwick communicates emotions through artistic conventions of colour, scale, composition and point of view will require teasing out and require a metalanguage in order to understand and describe the grammar of visual design (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006). Callow proposes a 'Show Me' assessment framework to support teachers in teaching and assessing visual literacy in the classroom. The framework focuses on analysing, interpreting and critiquing visual images within multimodal texts by directing attention to children's affective responses; an understanding of compositional aspects of images and its associated metalanguage; and a critical awareness and understanding of how images position viewers to think, feel and respond (2008:618). This will be important to help children understand how Hedderwick conveys and amplifies characters' emotions through artistic conventions.

Unlike the Australian Curriculum with its inclusion of *viewing* within reading skills, the Curriculum for Excellence does not specifically mention visual literacy. I have identified the relevant Literacy and English experiences and outcomes for Listening and Talking and *Understanding, analysing and evaluating texts* alongside some Art and Design experiences and outcomes appropriate for engaging with Hedderwick's texts in the classroom [See [Appendix II](#)]. The language of visual elements and ability to respond to the work of artists by discussing thoughts and feelings can be applied to multimodal texts as well as visual images. As well as developing visual literacy skills, there are great benefits of using picturebooks in the classroom for children who have difficulty decoding written English:

When opportunities are provided to privilege visual and verbal skills, instead of concentrating on reading and writing, many children can fly intellectually, especially those who are inexperienced with written text or learning in an unfamiliar language.

Arizpe and Styles, 2003:241

6.4 Classroom activities

The *Katie Morag* texts lend themselves to cross-curricular experiences and engaging holistic, interdisciplinary learning. Pupils can experience the stories through Expressive Arts, Literacy, English and Health and Wellbeing in addition to the map work and land use comparisons in Geography and themes of Scottish culture and identity. Once the children have shared their initial responses and had time to engage with the texts perhaps through character study or landscape and weather painting, there will be opportunities for dialogue where children can explore and identify emotions in the text. Follow-up tasks may include speech bubble annotations on illustrations, drawing emojis to describe characters feelings, writing diary entries from Katie's point of view, building up a scary storm using musical instruments or engaging in role play scenarios. Hot seating or mock debates may prove effective for exploring different points of view in *Katie Morag and the New Pier*.

Children would then have opportunities to reflect upon and share their own emotional experiences, if they wish. Questions may include: *Share a time that you felt angry. What helped you to calm down?* A key message in emotional literacy is that all emotions are acceptable, however some behaviours are not acceptable (Kreffft, 2019:28). Kreffft also suggests that in conflict situations, we should 'Talk emotions first. Then problem solve' (2019:30). Most of the emotions explored in the *Katie Morag* stories are everyday feelings (like joy, anger, sadness, regret, guilt, excitement) while themes involving grief, bereavement or other challenging emotional topics are not addressed. Nonetheless, unearthing emotions may be challenging for some children and pupils may not wish to share their own experiences. Teachers would need to consider the needs of the particular children within their class and decide whether such discussions would be appropriate. Nikolajeva suggests that the emotional response to 'emotionally charged images' could come from memories of experiencing that emotion before either in real life or in literature (2013b:251). It would be worthwhile to leave a comments box available so children can write down any questions or comments and set aside time when children could speak to the teacher in confidence.

My first interdisciplinary learning topic with my P1/2 class this term is *Katie Morag*. We are immersing ourselves in the world of Struay within a play-based classroom context with a Post Office role-play corner, postcard writing, shell loose-parts play opportunities, artwork talking about grandparents, our favourite teddies or toys, alongside lots of story reading and discussion. I look forward to putting my theory into practice and exploring emotional literacy through these

texts in line with East Lothian’s framework for nurture and reconnection (East Lothian Council Educational Psychology Service, 2020a).

CHAPTER 7 – CONCLUSION

7.1 The potential of the *Katie Morag* texts

To return to the metaphor which describes children's literature as a mirror, window or door (Arizpe, Farrell and McAdam, 2013), I have demonstrated that Mairi Hedderwick's *Katie Morag* stories have the potential to act as all three. The texts offer children a mirror to reflect their own lives as Katie Morag portrays a child who has a special relationship with her grandparents, who falls out with her friends, who feels jealousy towards her siblings, who gets up to mischief then makes amends, who cares about other people, considers their feelings and empathises with them. The texts offer a window into life on a remote island away from the Scottish mainland, in a time before electricity and the internet, where sheep roam freely and people travel by bike, boat and tractor. Moreover, the *Katie Morag* picturebooks act as a door for readers to step through and explore, as they consider the feelings of the characters and how these relate to their own emotions and, in doing so, perhaps develop their Theory of Mind and empathy.

My research reveals the potential of Hedderwick's texts to develop emotional literacy with children as the words and images interact to present feelings and emotions that children can recognise and identify through facial expressions, body language, artistic conventions alongside the verbal text. Studying characters' emotions taps into children's affective domain as it triggers cognitive and neural responses and helps children name emotions and relate them to their own experiences. Teachers can develop empathy and Theory of Mind through reading fiction in the classroom because the act of reading creates scenarios where emotions are evoked which helps children practice for mindreading in real life (Nikolajeva, 2013a:96). Even though we may understand what other people are feeling, it does not necessarily follow that we will empathise with them. Furthermore, empathising with someone does not mean that we will act with more compassion or morality (Coats, 2017:69). Whether or not reading Hedderwick's *Katie Morag* stories will lead to more empathic behaviour in the classroom or in other aspects of children's lives I cannot say, but the texts offer rich opportunities to discuss the feelings of various characters and then relate this to pupils' own experiences. Moreover, analysing the interplay between the visuals and verbal text to create meaning helps children understand how picturebooks work thus developing their visual and critical literacy skills. Using the *Katie Morag* stories in the classroom offers opportunities for exciting multifaceted pedagogy within interdisciplinary contexts whilst

introducing children to quality children's literature which promotes Scotland's culture, identity and language.

7.2 A reflection on the research

When I embarked upon this study, I anticipated that there would be much potential to engage children in conversations about feelings, emotions and empathy in the classroom. However, I did not appreciate the complexity of these texts and the extent to which they could sustain close textual analysis and careful scrutiny, especially regarding the synergy (Sipe, 1998) between words and images. Every time I returned to my three chosen texts, *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted* (1986), *Katie Morag and the Big Boy Cousins* (1987) and *Katie Morag and the New Pier* (1993), I discovered another detail in the illustrations that I had not previously noticed which contributed to my overall understanding and appreciation. I look forward to also revisiting the other stories with fresh eyes. Hedderwick's skill in amplifying emotions visually through composition, scale, colour or through evocative weather systems is exceptional. Furthermore, she uses language that is both evocative and thought provoking: the idea that Grannie Island could be 'colossal with fury' and 'angry outside' yet 'sad inside' (Hedderwick, 1987) opens up much possibility for stimulating classroom discussion and reflection.

I found the framework I created to examine the texts through a cognitive literary lens effective in guiding my analysis. It helped me to determine aspects of both the visual and verbal text that I might not have initially identified, especially in regard to Theory of Mind and instances where emotions were implied (either by words or pictures) rather than overtly stated in the texts. Initially, I thought that of all the books, *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted* was aimed at the youngest audience, but I soon discovered that to fully understand and appreciate the nuances of the higher cognitive emotions of jealousy, envy and regret it would actually require a more developed Theory of Mind and as such it could be read on multiple levels.

7.3 Possibilities for the future

I am looking forward to putting my theory into practice in my P1/2 classroom this term, however it would be interesting to revisit the same texts with an older class (perhaps P6 or P7) and compare the responses that children with a more developed Theory of Mind would offer. Are older children more likely to label the higher cognitive emotions rather than younger children? Can the younger children identify any social emotions or simply the basic emotions? Are older children more able to identify and articulate the artistic conventions and describe how this enhances their understanding of the texts? To what extent are younger children able

to identify the artistic conventions? How do children of different ages identify and interpret the nuances of emotion? Do children identify or empathise with Grannie, Katie, or perhaps someone else? Although all children develop at different rates, I would expect such an exploration would shed light on the relationship between cognitive development and emotional literacy within this particular context. There is much potential for further study within a cognitive literary framework for these texts.

I am eager to present my research on emotional and visual literacy with my colleagues this academic session, as it seems especially relevant this year. Moreover, I look forward to sharing my appreciation of these picturebooks with both pupils and teachers. I started this study loving the *Katie Morag* stories with their iconic protagonist and stunning illustrations and as I delved into the world of Struay and studied the characters' emotions I discovered much more about them. I finish this process believing that every child in Scotland would benefit from the opportunity to read/view, explore, and be proud of Mairi Hedderwick's exceptional contribution to Scottish children's literature.

Word count: 16262

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Appendix I - Examples of the Framework Application

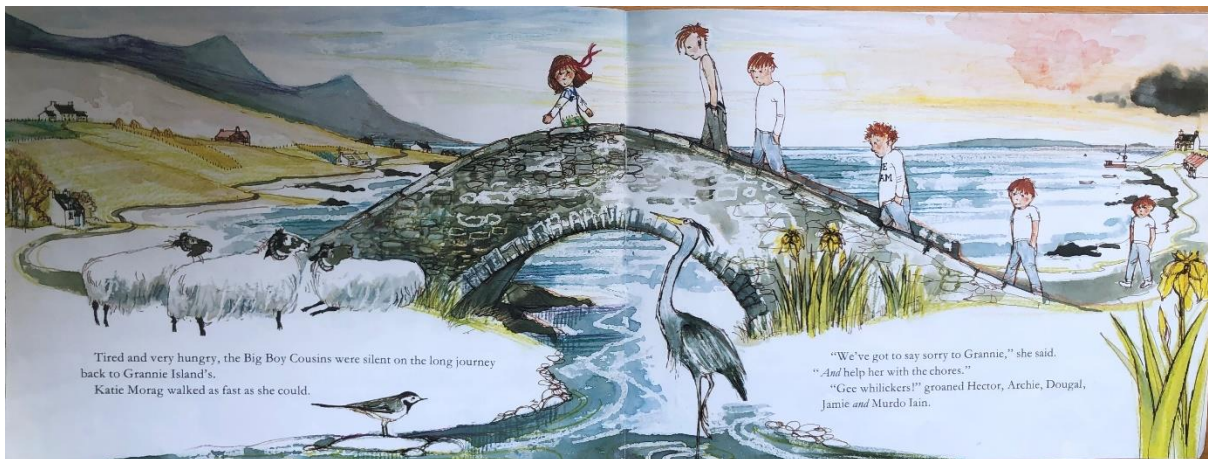
Example 1. *Katie Morag and the Tiresome Ted* (second double-page spread)



<p>Visual Images: Facial expressions showing emotions</p>	<p>Katie Morag looks angry although she is not scowling like the previous page. Her lips are downturned. The villagers look shocked or surprised at Katie’s behaviour. Liam is very upset. His facial expression shows that he is screaming (extreme sadness and anger). Mrs McColl, although in the distance, also has a red face which suggests anger.</p>
<p>Visual Images: Body language</p>	<p>Katie Morag is kicking her teddy bear into the sea in fury. Her body is angular and tense. The villagers are all looking in Katie’s direction suggesting that the commotion has caught their attention. One villager ducks below the jetty to avoid being kicked.</p>
<p>Visual Images: artistic conventions – scale, colour, positioning of character, point of view</p>	<p>The teddy stands out against the sky giving it prominence. Blacks and purples of the storm mirror how Katie is feeling. Our eyes are then drawn to Katie Morag - she is positioned on the left of the frame. As we read the image from left to right we see the villagers watching her. Eventually we look up the hill to see Liam who is crying. All around him is white space perhaps suggesting that he was innocently wronged and he is feeling both physically and emotionally isolated and abandoned. He is also tiny scale which perhaps suggests that his feelings were not Katie’s top concern.</p>
<p>Visual Images: Pathetic Fallacy</p>	<p>The darkest, blackest part of the storm continues to rage above Katie’s head. The sea is choppy and the clouds look ominously grey and purple. The scene looks very windy and tumultuous – the laundry is</p>

	blowing violently on the washing-line, the chickens are scattering, the grass is blowing, the seagulls are circling overhead presumably very noisily. All of this mirrors Katie’s bad mood.
Verbal text: Literal statements of emotion	Only literal statement: “she was so cross”.
Verbal text: metaphorical statements or implied emotions	The verbal text describes Katie’s behaviour which suggests emotion without explicitly stating it – “stamping her feet”, “nipping her little brother”, “she kicked...” “she shouted”. Words like “stomped” is a variation of the word walked but imbued with emotion and mood without a literal statement of emotion. There are no metaphorical statements of emotions here.
Basic emotions (happiness, fear, anger) and nuances of emotion	Katie is showing anger, as are Liam and Mrs McColl. In terms of nuance, Katie is furious (extreme anger). Likewise, Liam is enraged by the fact he’s been hurt. He has angry tears, rather than tears of sadness. Mrs McColl’s anger is borne out of frustration at Katie’s behaviour.
Higher cognitive emotions (love, guilt, envy, jealousy)	Readers may infer that the reason for Katie’s anger is her jealousy and envy of her baby sister and the attention she is getting; and her feelings of displacement.
Theory of Mind and embedded mind-reading	The villagers know that Katie is angry because she is jealous, they also know that she will regret what she has done.
Characters showing empathy	The villagers’ attention is on Katie Morag, but are they feeling empathy for her? Liam needs love and attention – perhaps the readers will empathise with Liam? Or maybe children reading will empathise with Katie Morag if they know how it feels to have strong emotions?

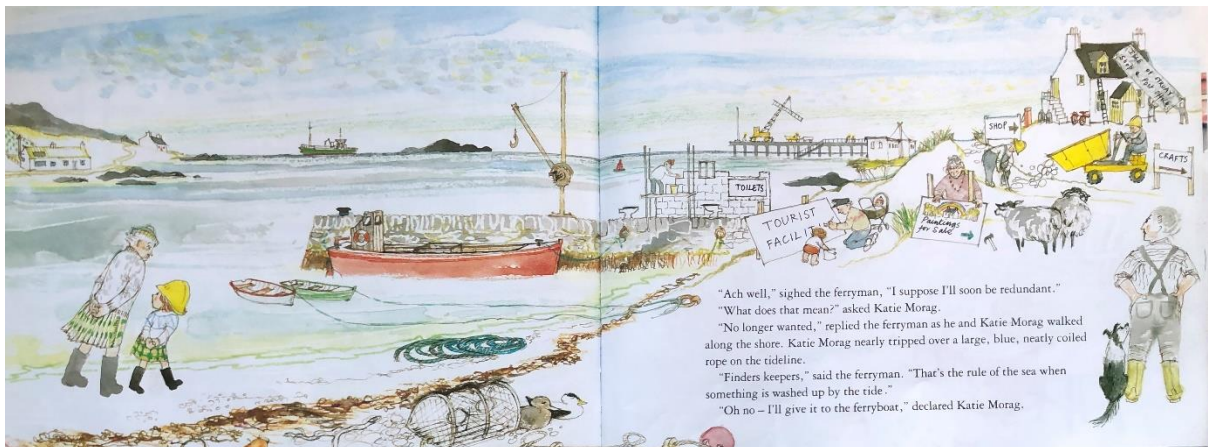
Example 2: *Katie Morag and the Big Boy Cousins* (twelfth double-page spread)



<p>Visual Images: Facial expressions showing emotions</p>	<p>Big boy cousins – glum facial expressions. Katie is resolute and determined and looks directly at the reader, appealing to us to feel the same. The cousins look like they are embarrassed and ashamed at what has happened. The final cousin in line, Murdo Iain still looks cross (probably because he has to walk back).</p>
<p>Visual Images: Body language</p>	<p>Big boy cousins have hunched bodies, hanging heads, hands in pockets suggesting misery or shame and embarrassment. Katie on the other hand leads the group. She looked very determined as if she's on a mission as she strides ahead. Rather than the follower, she is now in charge.</p>
<p>Visual Images: artistic conventions – scale, positioning of characters, colour, point of view</p>	<p>A path – we can see where they have come from and where they are going. The bridge is framed in the middle, drawing our attention - it is a natural focal point. This is a turning point in the plot; they are leaving behind the village. Also, it is interesting to note that while we read from left to right, the characters are walking from right to left. Almost as if, Katie is prepared to undo what has been done. All the animals and birds are watching Katie Morag and Katie is looking directly at the reader, pulling us in, appealing to our emotions, perhaps.</p>
<p>Visual Images: Pathetic Fallacy</p>	<p>The heron's resolute expression perhaps mirrors Katie's. The grey cloud still lingers above the village as a reminder of what naughtiness and angry emotions there. Perhaps the red sky also evokes the anger, while</p>

	the blue above Grannie’s house suggests serenity and a peaceful conclusion.
Verbal text: Literal statements of emotion	None. All emotions are implied through the images and the nuances of emotion in verbal statements.
Verbal text: metaphorical statements or implied emotions	Words and phrases including “tired and very hungry”, “groaned” “silent” all describe behaviour and feelings which suggest their sad/angry/fed up emotions. Meanwhile Katie “walked as fast as she could” describing her determination.
Basic emotions (happiness, fear, anger) and nuances of emotion	The boys could be described as sad about what has happened, Murdoch Ian looks a little angry (although a mild anger, more annoyance at having to walk home). However, the emotions are probably best described by social emotions.
Higher cognitive emotions (love, guilt, envy, jealousy)	Katie’s guilt and shame has been replaced with a determination. The cousins look a bit “sheepish” like they are embarrassed and feeling shameful about what they have done.
Theory of Mind and embedded mind-reading	The reader knows that Katie is now thinking about her Grannie’s feelings.
Characters showing empathy	“We’ve got to say sorry” “And help her with the chores” – Katie suggesting that they need to show some empathy for Grannie through their words and actions.

Example 3. *Katie Morag and the New Pier* (fifth double-page spread)



<p>Visual Images: Facial expressions showing emotions</p>	<p>Grannie is looking angry/unsure. Although we cannot see all of Katie's face, she looked concerned as does the Ferryboat man who has a look of resignation as he accepts that he will soon be redundant. We can just about make out the expressions on the faces of the Lady Artist and Mrs McColl who are both smiling indicating happiness.</p>
<p>Visual Images: Body language</p>	<p>Grannie hands on her hips and there is a sharpness in her posture suggesting that she is not at ease. Katie and the ferryboatman are deep in conversation. She mirrors his body language in empathic concern. Everyone else contentedly busy and engaged in tasks to prepare for the increased tourism as a result of the pier.</p>
<p>Visual Images: artistic conventions – scale, colour, positioning of character, point of view</p>	<p>Katie and the Ferryboat man are at the left and catch our eye first of all. Grannie is positioned the corner of the image separating herself from the rest of what's going on, looking on. The ferryboat is red and sits almost in the centre of the scene drawing our attention towards it. The blue rope is also a much darker shade and is in an almost central position. The boat and the rope will be pivotal in the plot later on (intratextuality).</p>
<p>Visual Images: Pathetic Fallacy</p>	<p>The peacefulness of the sea and the stationary boat seem significant. The boat too is redundant.</p>
<p>Verbal text: Literal statements of emotion</p>	<p>No literal statements. It's all implied through images and nuances in the verbal text.</p>

Verbal text: metaphorical statements or implied emotions	The ferryboatman “sighs” which generally denotes a negative mood – here probably defeat, disappointment and possibly frustration. The word “redundant”, no longer needed or unnecessary carries negative connotations which are hard to disassociate from emotions.
Basic emotions (happiness, fear, anger) and nuances of emotion	Grannie – fear of what may happen. Sadness about the old ways being left behind. Happiness in Mrs McColl and the villagers anticipating what may happen – this is expressed through the visual images.
Higher cognitive emotions (love, guilt, envy, jealousy)	Other villagers – interest and excitement in what lies ahead. Perhaps some disappointment and frustration on the part of the Ferryboat man, expressed through his “sigh”.
Theory of Mind and embedded mind- reading	Katie is trying to understand different points of view.
Characters showing empathy	Katie mirrors the ferryboat man’s stance as he walks. Showing her empathic concern. They are even wearing almost identical outfits which they always do, however it seems more poignant here pulling them together. Also, by giving the blue rope to the ferryboat she’s thinking about the others and not herself.

Return to [chapter4](#)

Appendix II – Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing Experiences and Outcomes:

I am aware of and able to express my feelings and am developing the ability to talk about them.

HWB 0-01a / HWB 1-01a / HWB 2-01a

I know that we all experience a variety of thoughts and emotions that affect how we feel and behave and I am learning ways of managing them. HWB 0-02a / HWB 1-02a / HWB 2-02a

I understand that my feelings and reactions can change depending upon what is happening within and around me. This helps me to understand my own behaviour and the way others behave. HWB 0-04a / HWB 1-04a / HWB 2-04a

I am learning skills and strategies which will support me in challenging times, particularly in relation to change and loss. HWB 0-07a / HWB 1-07a / HWB 2-07a

I understand that people can feel alone and can be misunderstood and left out by others. I am learning how to give appropriate support. HWB 0-08a / HWB 1-08a / HWB 2-08a

(Education Scotland, 2020b:3)

Listening and Talking Experiences and Outcomes:

I enjoy exploring and choosing stories and other texts to watch, read or listen to, and can share my likes and dislikes. LIT 0-01b / LIT 0-11b

I enjoy exploring events and characters in stories and other texts, sharing my thoughts in different ways. LIT 0-01c

I regularly select and listen to or watch texts which I enjoy and find interesting, and I can explain why I prefer certain sources. I regularly select subject, purpose, format and resources to create texts of my choice. LIT 1-01a / LIT 2-01a

As I listen and talk in different situations, I am learning to take turns and am developing my awareness of when to talk and when to listen. LIT 0-02a / ENG 0-03a

When I engage with others, I know when and how to listen, when to talk, how much to say, when to ask questions and how to respond with respect. LIT 1-02a

When I engage with others, I can respond in ways appropriate to my role, show that I value others' contributions and use these to build on thinking. LIT 2-02a

To help me understand stories and other texts, I ask questions and link what I am learning with what I already know. LIT 0-07a / LIT 0-16a / ENG 0-17a

I can show my understanding of what I listen to or watch by responding to and asking different kinds of questions. LIT 1-07a

I can show my understanding of what I listen to or watch by responding to literal, inferential, evaluative and other types of questions, and by asking different kinds of questions of my own. LIT 2-07a

Education Scotland (2020d:2-5)

Reading: Understanding, Analysing and Evaluating Texts Experiences and Outcomes:

I enjoy exploring events and characters in stories and other texts, sharing my thoughts in different ways. LIT 0-19a

To show my understanding across different areas of learning, I can identify and consider the purpose and main ideas of a text. LIT 1-16a

To show my understanding, I can respond to different kinds of questions and other close reading tasks and I am learning to create some questions of my own. ENG 1-17a

To help me develop an informed view, I can recognise the difference between fact and opinion. LIT 1-18a

I can share my thoughts about structure, characters and/or setting, recognise the writer's message and relate it to my own experiences, and comment on the effective choice of words and other features. ENG 1-19a

To show my understanding across different areas of learning, I can identify and consider the purpose and main ideas of a text and use supporting detail. LIT 2-16a

To show my understanding, I can respond to literal, inferential and evaluative questions and other close reading tasks and can create different kinds of questions of my own. ENG 2-17a

I can: discuss structure, characterisation and/or setting; recognise the relevance of the writer's theme and how this relates to my own and others' experiences; discuss the writer's style and other features appropriate to genre. ENG 2-19a

Education Scotland (2020d:11-12)

Art and Design Experiences and Outcomes:

I can create and present work using the visual elements of line, shape, form, colour, tone, pattern and texture. EXA 1-03a

I can create and present work that shows developing skill in using the visual elements and concepts. EXA 2-03a

I can respond to the work of artists and designers by discussing my thoughts and feelings. I can give and accept constructive comment on my own and others' work. EXA 0-07a / EXA 1-07a / EXA 2-07a

(Education Scotland, 2020a:4-5)

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