

The Tuckshop Kid

Written by Pat Flynn
Illustrated by
Tom Jellett

Teachers' notes written by Pat Flynn

Introduction

Welcome! This unit of work has been written to help teachers provide students with practical, positive reading and learning experiences. It is divided into three sections: Chapters 1-4, 5-8 and 9-13. Each section has a listening comprehension quiz, a 10-word spelling list, fill-in-the-blanks vocabulary and a 'Have Your Say' discussion point. At the end of the unit are suggested activities and an answer section.

This unit of work is published on the Internet at www.patflynnwriter.com This website includes other materials that may assist teachers and students, such as reviews, an author biography and Frequently Asked Questions. If you wish to order class sets of *The Tuckshop Kid*, phone University of Queensland Press Sales at 07 3346 9434.

***The Tuckshop Kid* – by Pat Flynn**

Description

Matthew is seriously fat, a target of bullies but a wonder at working out the most food you can buy at the school tuckshop. His services are much in demand at lunchtime. However, when he faints during a Physical Education lesson the doctor is worried his obesity may have already caused him to develop Type 2 diabetes. Mum takes notice and cuts back on her work hours in order to spend time with Matthew, cooking healthy food and exercising with him. And it turns out quite a few of the kids at school are on his side as well in his battle to lose weight; especially Kayla, the girl of his dreams who has never worried about his size anyway.

The story is told from Matthew's point of view. Humour and realistic well-paced dialogue draw in readers and hold their interest throughout the book.

Themes

There are a number of strands within the story that lend themselves to whole class or group discussion:

1. Obesity and the longer-term problems it can cause.
2. Bullying. How often kids are bullied just because they are different.
3. Self-perception and how it can be linked to over-eating to compensate for feelings of inadequacy.
4. Friendship and its role in developing self-esteem.
5. Family relationships and how family support can help in developing self-esteem.

1. Obesity:

Matthew's doctor, Dr Morrison, clearly states possible results of over-eating; eating the wrong foods and not exercising (pp.22-25). He also offers a possible reason for over-eating (see p.80) which is supported by Matthew's binge eating after thinking he heard Kayla bad-mouth him (p.66).

2. Bullying:

Withers and 'the new kid' bully Matthew because of his size (pp.11-12). Flynn's opening paragraph (p.2), in which he points out how a school class is made up of individuals, can be used to discuss the concept of difference and tolerance.

3. Self-perception:

Matthew acknowledges that his size has something to do with his unpopularity (p.19 "No one likes the fat kid") and taunts also usually refer to his size (p.4. 'Fatzilla'). In addition to the binge mentioned above, while Matthew waits for retribution on p.29 he throws away his apple and drinks his chocolate milk.

4 & 5: Friendship and family support, together with personal endeavour, are the factors that are going to see Matthew through his weight loss. In particular, note the class response to Matthew's insistence on running the three laps of the oval (p.55). It is a turning point.

CHAPTERS 1-4

Taking Notice. Listening Comprehension – Quiz 1

1. Which Tuckshop lady does Matt say is ‘mad at the world lately’? (p.2)
 - a. Jan
 - b. Pam
 - c. Mrs Dwyer
 - d. Mrs Spencer

2. Who used to be Matt’s best friend? (p.8)
 - a. Craig Withers
 - b. Andy Reynolds
 - c. Kayla
 - d. Alex Jackson

3. In Chapter two, what is written at the bottom of the chocolate milk carton? (p.12)
 - a. Try Again
 - b. Winner!
 - c. Loser!
 - d. Nothing

4. What sort of car does Matt’s Mum drive? (p.17)
 - a. BMW
 - b. Mercedes
 - c. Audi
 - d. Ford

5. Doctor Morrison says that he thinks Matthew may have: (p.22)
 - a. The Flu
 - b. Huntington’s disease
 - c. Type 1 Diabetes
 - d. Type 2 Diabetes

Chapters 1-4

Spelling – List 1

Technically
Sausage
Pigeons
Amnesia
Diabetes
Incompetence
Receptionist
Amputation
Barbeque
Advice

Vocabulary

Place the correct words from List 1 into the following sentences.

1. Trouble with giving other kids _____ is that I don't have time to plan my own lunch, which is what I need to do right now. (Chapter 1)
2. 'You can get a _____ roll and fifty cents worth of lollies,' I suggest. (Chapter 1)
3. 'Doctor Morrison will see you now,' the _____ says in a hushed tone. (Chapter 4)
4. 'I think you may have Type 2 _____. I don't want to scare you, but it's a disease with serious complications – including possible blindness and limb _____. (Chapter 4)
5. 'Pizza,' I say. 'Meatlovers with _____ sauce.' (Chapter 4)

Have Your Say

- On page 11 Matthew is teased and called names by Withers and the new kid. Have you ever been teased and called names? How did it make you feel?

Chapters 5-8

Taking Notice. Listening Comprehension – Quiz 2

1. Matt throws a ball and hits Craig in the: (p.29)
 - a. Nose
 - b. Stomach
 - c. Eye
 - d. Knee

2. Matt's Mum makes him a cake for afternoon tea. What type of cake is it? (p.39)
 - a. Fruit
 - b. Chocolate
 - c. Orange
 - d. Birthday

3. Marcus Wright is really good at which sport? (p.41)
 - a. Cricket
 - b. Golf
 - c. Tennis
 - d. Snowboarding

4. Who's the toughest kid in Matt's grade? (p.43)
 - a. Marcus
 - b. The New Kid
 - c. Eric
 - d. Matt

5. What competition at school has Matt won in the past? (p.53)
 - a. Spelling
 - b. Weightlifting
 - c. Handball
 - d. Donut eating

Chapters 5-8

Spelling – List 2

Squawks
Unconscious
Tattooed
Accidentally
Disappointed
Scribbling
Enemies
Thunderous
Anonymous
Succumbed

Vocabulary

Place the correct words from List 2 into the following sentences.

1. The bottom of the carton calls me a WINNER! but I reckon the bottom of my soul has a giant L _____ on it. (Chapter 5)
2. Mr Brown's _____ voice can scare the pants of kids (or scare something wet into their pants). (Chapter 6)
3. The bird takes a peck, _____, and flies off like it's running late to migrate. (Chapter 6)
4. The last thing a chubby kid needs is more _____. (Chapter 7)
5. I'd _____ to a rare moment of weakness – for the first time in my life I cared about being the most unfit person on the face of the planet. (Chapter 8)

Have Your Say

On page 29 Matthew reacts to Withers' teasing by throwing a ball at his head. Do you think it's okay to act aggressively in certain situations? What would make you react in a violent way?

Chapters 9-13

Taking Notice. Listening Comprehension – Quiz 3

1. Kayla tells Matt that if he can win her a free chocolate milk, she'll let him: (p.57)
 - a. Have lunch with her
 - b. Cheat off her in a test
 - c. Ask her a question
 - d. Eat her lunch

2. What does Withers throw at Matt? (p.65)
 - a. A stone
 - b. Mud
 - c. A tennis ball
 - d. Nothing

3. In Chapter 11, what does Matt order himself for dinner? (p.68)
 - a. Thai
 - b. KFC
 - c. Pizza
 - d. Indian

4. In Chapter 12, what does Kayla do to Matt in the tuckshop line? (p.72)
 - a. Kisses him
 - b. Yells at him
 - c. Asks for money
 - d. Slaps him

5. At the movies, who punches Matt in the stomach? (p.81)
 - a. Kayla
 - b. The New Kid
 - c. Withers
 - d. Eric

Chapters 9-13

Spelling – List 3

Butterflies
Appointment
Stomach
Deodorant
Sandwich
Damn
Apologising
Liquorice
Twinkle
Impaired

Vocabulary

Place the correct words from List 3 into the following sentences.

1. Even though I've had some _____ fine lunches, it's always been all about the food. (Chapter 9)
2. Her lips are stained black from the _____ ; she looks like a devil worshipper. (Chapter 11)
1. I notice the pizza man's shirt is soaked under the armpits. If he asks for a tip, I'll tell him to wear _____ .
4. There's a _____ in her eye. (Chapter 12)
5. 'You have a doctor's _____,' she says. (Chapter 13)

Have Your Say

On page 72, Kayla kisses Matthew without his permission. Do you think what she did was wrong? Imagine if Matthew kissed Kayla without her permission. Would that be more or less wrong? Explain.

Activities

Role Play

In groups of three to six present a short role-play from *The Tuckshop Kid* based on Chapter 5, pp.28-32. Read the passage carefully and add material of your own if you think it's needed.

Design a Menu

You'll notice that every chapter is started with a tuckshop menu and the author has used wordplay to make jokes. Design your own menu and add in some of your own jokes.

Author Study

Look up Pat Flynn's website, www.patflynnwriter.com and answer the following questions:

1. Pat Flynn first wrote a series of books about a skateboarder. What was the skater's name?
2. Besides the skateboarding series, name three other books Pat Flynn has written.
3. What year was Pat Flynn born and what is his favourite sport?
4. Where does Pat Flynn get ideas for his books?
5. What advice does he give to young writers?

Decisions – Positive or Negative?

Write down the positives and negatives for some of Matthew's decisions in *The Tuckshop Kid*. Decide whether or not the decision was, overall, a positive or a negative one.

Throwing the Ball at Withers (p.29)

Positives	Negatives
Letting out anger	

Deciding to Run Around the Oval (p.51)

Positives	Negatives
	Starts to sweat a lot

Deciding to Order Pizza (p.68)

Positives	Negatives
Doesn't cost too much	

Answers

Chapters 1-4

Listening Comprehension

1. C
2. A
3. B
4. A
5. D

Vocabulary

1. advice
2. sausage
3. receptionist
4. diabetes, amputation
5. barbeque

Chapters 5-8

Listening Comprehension

1. C
2. A
3. C
4. C
5. D

Vocabulary

1. tattooed
2. thunderous
3. squawks
4. enemies
5. succumbed

Chapters 9-13

Listening Comprehension

1. C
2. A
3. C
4. A
5. D

Vocabulary

1. damn
2. liquorice
3. deodorant
4. twinkle
5. appointment