

# Introduction

Where the Wild Things Are is a timeless classic by Maurice Sendak that offers a golden opportunity for ESL students to engage with rich vocabulary, emotions, and imagination. This ESL lesson plan brings to life the story of Max, who sets off on a wild adventure to where the wild things are. Through this theme, students can explore vocabulary related to emotions, actions, and descriptive words. The captivating story also provides ample opportunities for language practice through speaking, reading, and writing activities.

## Vocabulary Building

### Vocab

Vocab	Definition
<b>Rumpus</b>	A noisy and/or rough activity or party.
<b>Mischief</b>	Playful misbehavior or troublemaking, especially in children.
<b>Max</b>	The name of the main character in Where the Wild Things Are, who goes on a magical adventure.
<b>Wilder</b>	Having a free, uninhibited spirit; not constrained by societal norms.
<b>Fantasy</b>	The creative imagination that transcends ordinary reality.

### Contextual Usage

- The wild things caused a **rumpus** in the forest with their loud stomping and roaring.

- **Max's mischief** on the boat helped him to reach the island where he met the wild things.
- In *Where the Wild Things Are*, **Max** is known for his adventurous spirit.
- The **wilder** side of imagination allows for limitless adventures and magical experiences.
- Maurice Sendak's book takes readers on a journey through **fantasy** and creativity.

## ESL Warm-up Activity

To kick off the lesson on *Where the Wild Things Are*, start with an engaging activity called "Create Your Wild Thing." Begin by discussing the characteristics of wild things and encourage students to describe what attributes a wild thing might have—sharp teeth, curly tails, or big round eyes. Then, ask each student to draw their version of a wild thing and write a short descriptive paragraph about it. This activity not only sets the tone for creativity but also gets students thinking about the story's theme even before reading or hearing it. It's a fun way to get everyone involved and excited about diving into the world of Max and his wild adventure.

## Main ESL Lesson Activities

### Vocabulary Activity: Wild Things Charades

Begin by writing vocabulary words related to wild things on separate cards. Words can include "roar," "mischief," "fantasy," "rumpus," and any other relevant terms. Ask the students to pick a card and act out the word without speaking while their classmates guess what it is. This fun and interactive activity encourages students to understand and embody the vocabulary in a lively manner.

### Roleplay Exercise: Interview with a Wild Thing

Divide the class into pairs, where one student takes on the persona of a wild thing from the story, and the other acts as an interviewer. They take turns asking each other questions; for example, about their behavior, feelings, or adventures. This activity promotes speaking skills and encourages creativity within an imaginative context.

## **Listening Comprehension: Wild Things Soundscapes**

Play different sounds (e.g., roaring, stomping) associated with wild things while displaying images related to each sound. Have students discuss in groups which sound matches which image based on their understanding of the story's description of wild things' actions. Encourage them to give reasons for their choices, fostering critical thinking skills alongside listening comprehension.

## **Reading and Writing Exercise: Letter to Max**

After reading *Where the Wild Things Are* together as a class, task students with writing a letter from one of the wild things to Max or vice versa. Instruct them to use descriptive language from the book and express emotions or experiences they would share with each other. This activity integrates reading comprehension with expressive writing skills while encouraging empathy through creative storytelling.

## **ESL Homework Assignment**

### **Homework Assignment: Wild Things Collage**

For homework, ask students to create a wild things collage using images from magazines or printed illustrations. Encourage them to include descriptive words or phrases related to the story and its theme. They can also write a short paragraph

explaining their choices and how they relate to the concept of wild things. This assignment allows students to practice their creativity, visual interpretation, and written expression skills.

## **Bonus Activity: Wild Things Story Extension**

As an optional bonus activity, students can choose to extend the story of *Where the Wild Things Are* by writing an additional chapter or creating their own picture book with original characters and settings inspired by the book's theme. This provides an opportunity for independent thinking, storytelling, and further language exploration. Note: The inclusion of a bonus activity is intended as an extra option for motivated students who may want to explore further. It is not mandatory but serves as an additional extension for those who are interested in going beyond the regular homework assignment.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the *Where the Wild Things Are* ESL Lesson Plan offers a captivating journey into the world of wild imagination and adventure. Throughout the lesson, students explored key vocabulary words such as "rumpus," "mischief," "Max," "wilder," and "fantasy." They engaged in various activities like charades, roleplay interviews, listening comprehension with soundscapes, and writing letters to deepen their understanding of the story.

Reflecting on this lesson, students have not only developed their language skills but also enhanced their creativity and critical thinking abilities. They have learned how to express themselves using descriptive language while exploring emotions and character traits. These skills can be applied to their overall language development by expanding their vocabulary, improving speaking fluency, honing reading comprehension skills, and fostering imaginative storytelling.

By immersing themselves in Max's wild adventure through *Where the Wild Things Are*, students have gained valuable insights into literature while strengthening their English proficiency. This lesson serves as a stepping stone for further exploration of storytelling techniques and encourages students to embrace their own creativity in both written and spoken communication.

# Why this topic is great for ESL learning

## Engaging and Relevant

The Where the Wild Things Are ESL Lesson Plan is a great topic for ESL learning because it captivates students' attention and sparks their imagination. The story of Max's wild adventure taps into their sense of wonder and curiosity, making the learning experience exciting and engaging.

## Vocabulary Expansion

This ESL lesson plan provides ample opportunities for vocabulary expansion. Students encounter new words like "rumpus," "mischief," and "fantasy" while exploring the world of wild things. By actively using these terms in various activities, students develop a deeper understanding of their meaning and context.

## Creative Expression

Where the Wild Things Are encourages creative expression through roleplay, writing assignments, and visual projects like collages or picture books. This allows students to unleash their creativity while improving their language skills, enabling them to express themselves more confidently in English.

## Critical Thinking Skills

The lesson plan promotes critical thinking skills as students analyze characters' actions, emotions, and motivations. Through discussions, roleplays, and interpreting soundscapes related to wild things' behavior, they hone their analytical thinking

skills while sharpening language proficiency.

Overall, the *Where the Wild Things Are* ESL Lesson Plan offers a dynamic approach to language acquisition by combining storytelling with vocabulary expansion, creativity with critical thinking skills development. It fosters an enjoyable environment where students are motivated to learn English while immersing themselves in a world full of imagination and exploration.