

# The Snowman

BY MICHAEL MORPURGO



*Inspired by the original tale by*  
**RAYMOND BRIGGS**

## **EYFS & KEY STAGE 1** **FREE CLASSROOM RESOURCES**

**MEETS CRITERIA FOR LITERACY,  
FOCUSING ON PSHE & CITIZENSHIP OBJECTIVES**

**Explore themes of:**  
*Empathy & Friendship,*  
*Reading comprehension,*  
*Inference skills,*  
*Scientific processes*  
includes suggestions for  
differentiation



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## DEAR TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS

This Resource Pack uses Michael Morpurgo's take on the timeless tale, '**The Snowman**' – not only to celebrate the **40th anniversary** of Raymond Briggs' bestselling classic, but also to **spark ideas for Literacy and PSHE** in the classroom.

Its objective is for the children in your class to interpret the original story in new and interesting ways, and to explore in more depth the value of the special friendship that is at its heart, covering themes of empathy and loneliness.

The lessons included here provide starting points for children to think about the significance of the friendship between James and the Snowman in the story, and also to reflect on the importance of friends in their own lives – helping to create a warmer, more inclusive classroom environment.

We can't wait to hear your heart-warming experiences using this wonderful new book in the classroom; after all, Christmas is coming, and it's getting a bit chilly around here . . .

The Puffin Schools Team



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## THE AIM

This Resource Pack can be used with all children at KS1, recommended ages 5–9 and also covers early Key Stage 2. Many of the activities in this Resource Pack can also be used at EYFS, although it is advisable that the original picture book is used as the source text with this age group. Suggestions for differentiation are included throughout this pack but ultimately left to the teacher's discretion.

The four lessons included here aim to improve reading comprehension and inference, but also to provide cross-curricular objectives in Literacy, PSHE and Science – from the symbolism of the snowman and the importance of friendship in the story, to the changing states of matter in hot or cold temperatures.

## ABOUT THE BOOK

*When James wakes to see snow falling one December morning,  
he is delighted and rushes outside to make a snowman.*

*With coal eyes, an old green hat and scarf and a tangerine nose,  
he is perfect and James can hardly bear to go inside and leave him.*

*In the middle of the night, he wakes and creeps  
out to see his Snowman again – and to his amazement,  
the Snowman comes to life...*

**This special tale of true Christmas magic will  
bring everyone's favourite childhood festive  
character to a brand new audience.**



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## CONTENT LIST - OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES

This Resource Pack provides material for four, hour-long lessons that can take place during classes, during circle time, P4C sessions, or as extra-curricular activities.

### LESSON ONE: FEELING LEFT OUT

#### OBJECTIVES:

- To discuss in a group the need to belong and to be included
- To explore ways to ensure classmates and friends always feel included

**OUTCOME:** *A table of ideas for how to make people feel included in various different school spaces*

### LESSON TWO: A SPECIAL FRIENDSHIP

#### OBJECTIVES:

- To explore the meaning of friendship and to identify the qualities of a good friend
- To analyse the friendship between James and the snowman in the story

**OUTCOME:** *A letter to a friend, entitled 'Why You Warm My Heart'*

### LESSON THREE: MY SNOWMAN

#### OBJECTIVES:

- To write to inform and explain by creating an instruction manual for how to build a snowman
- To use colour and texture when drawing/designing in order to create impact

**OUTCOME:** *An instruction manual for how to build a snowman; a picture of a snowman using materials to add texture and colour*

### LESSON FOUR: HOT AND COLD

#### OBJECTIVES:

- To define the different states of matter: solid, liquid and gas
- To present the process of melting using a diagram or flow chart

**OUTCOME:** *Two completed flow charts showing the process of melting chocolate and snow / the snowman*

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## LESSON ONE: FEELING LEFT OUT

### LEAD-IN QUESTIONS:

- Why is it hard when you feel left out at school?
- What sorts of things can make you feel left out?
- What does it mean 'to belong'?

### TASK 1:

Read the extract from **The Snowman** below and answer the comprehension questions:

*“James told the snowman all about himself – well, not all; just the interesting things, like his best toys and Paul Millard, who he wanted as his best friend, and the green mountain bike, and how he wished, wished, wished he could stop stuttering and stammering, because everyone at school laughed at him. And then he told him that his favourite food was raspberry jelly, and that he hated Brussels sprouts.”*

1. Why does everyone at school laugh at James?
2. What two things do you learn about which food James likes and dislikes?
3. Who does James want to be ‘his best friend’?
4. Why do you think James might feel left out?



# The Snowman

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## LESSON ONE: FEELING LEFT OUT

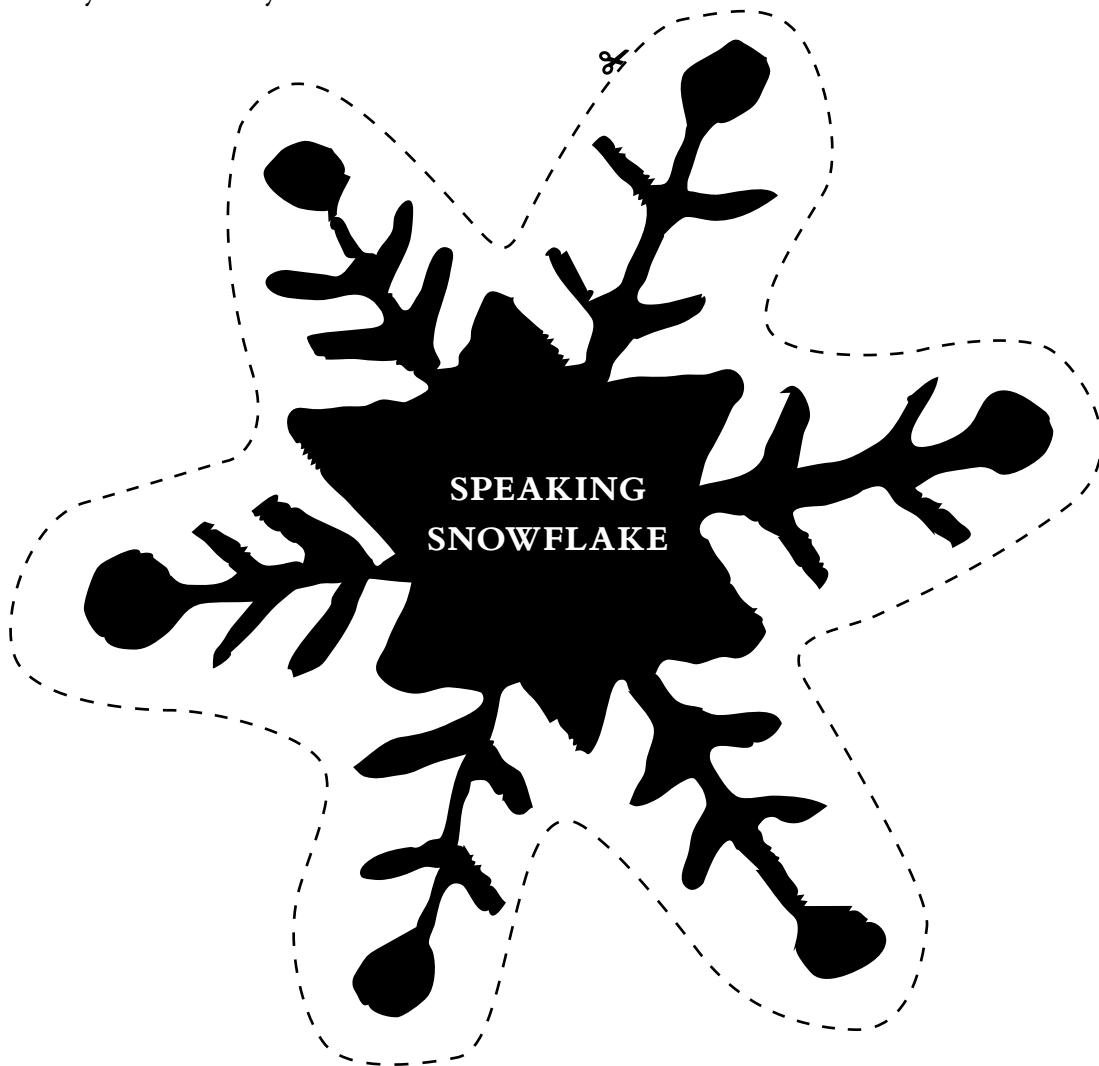
### TASK 2:

Look at the statement below:

*“A good friend is someone who includes everyone, making sure no one is ever left out.”*

Together, discuss this statement and what you think it means or why it is important.

Before you begin, cut out the Speaking Snowflake template below. Then, sit around the classroom with all of your classmates in a big circle. Pass the Speaking Snowflake around the circle; when you have it, it is your turn to speak. Remember to listen carefully to what everyone has to say.



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## LESSON ONE: FEELING LEFT OUT

### TASK 3:

Now that you've discussed what it means for everyone to be included, think of three examples for how you could make sure everyone feels a sense of belonging in the following places:

**IN THE PLAYGROUND**

**IN THE CLASSROOM**

**IN THE LUNCH HALL**

Fill in the template on the next page with your ideas.

### Differentiate for younger children:

Children can also draw a scenario in each location showing what makes them feel 'happy' or 'safe' in each of the different spaces/locations. What or who makes James feel happy or safe in the story?

### EXTENSION TASK:

Ask children to come into the centre of the circle and role-play some of their ideas for each of the locations.

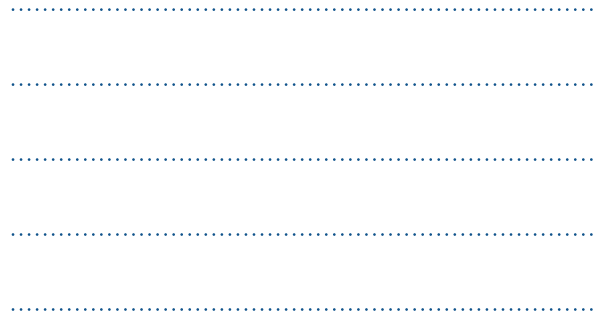
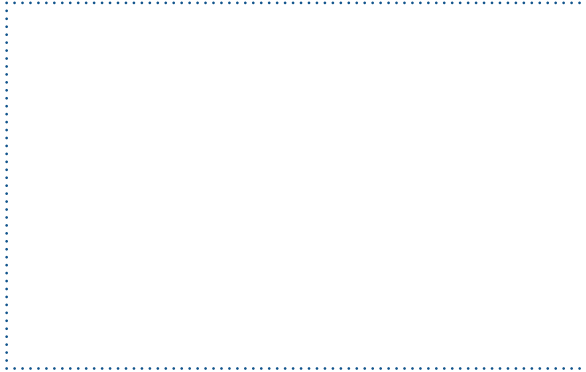
Can they apply some of their ideas to James's situation in the story?

# The Snowman

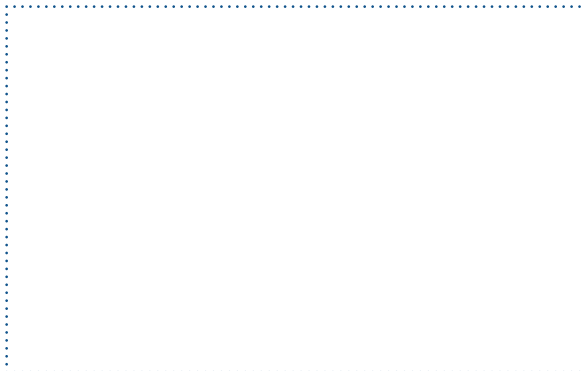
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**EVERYONE IS INCLUDED...**

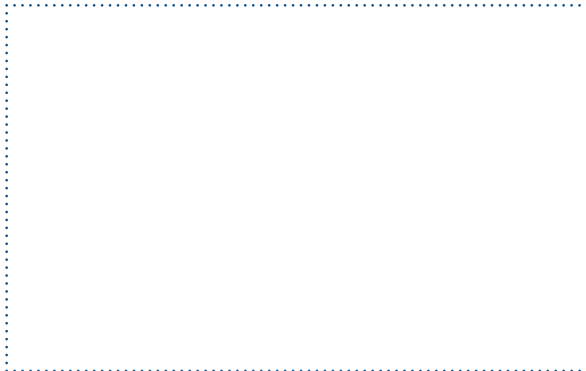
**IN THE PLAYGROUND**



**IN THE CLASSROOM**



**IN THE LUNCH HALL**





# The Snowman

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## LESSON TWO: A SPECIAL FRIENDSHIP

### LEAD-IN QUESTIONS:

- What makes someone a good friend?
- What makes someone a bad friend?

### TASK 1:

On the next page, fill in the empty snowflakes below with words that you think describe a good friend. Fill in the flames with words that you think describe a bad friend. Use the word-bank below to help you.

GENEROUS    THOUGHTFUL  
CRUEL    SELFISH    FUNNY    NASTY  
DEVIOUS    DECEITFUL    KIND  
INTERESTED    BOSSY    SELFLESS

### Differentiate for younger children:

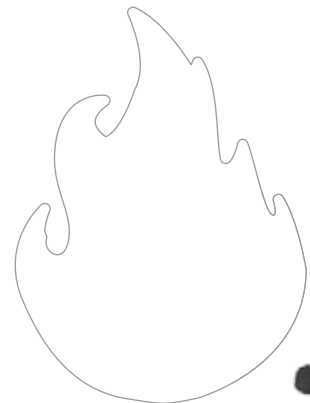
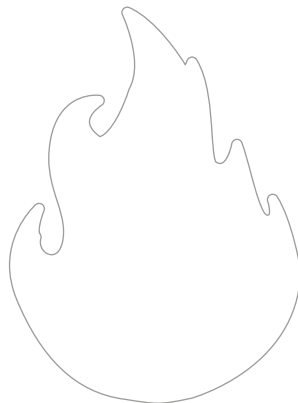
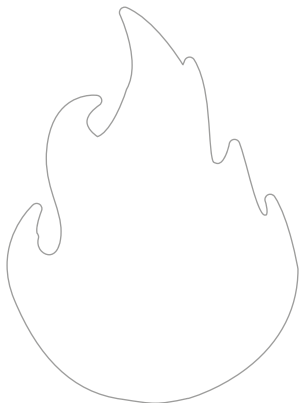
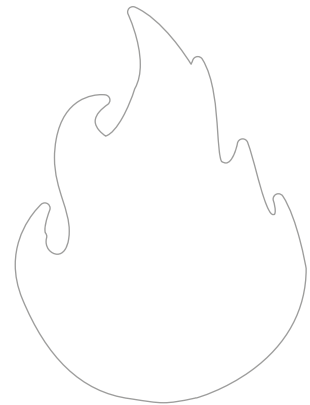
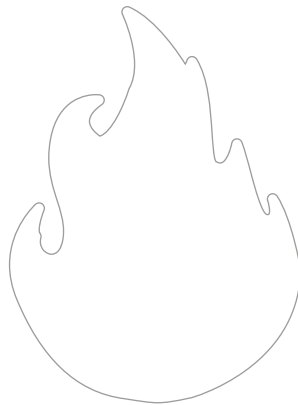
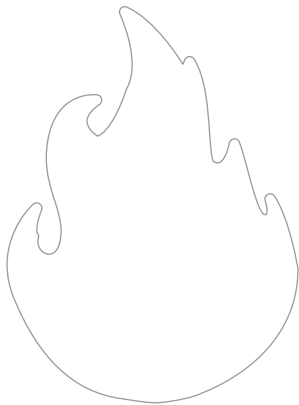
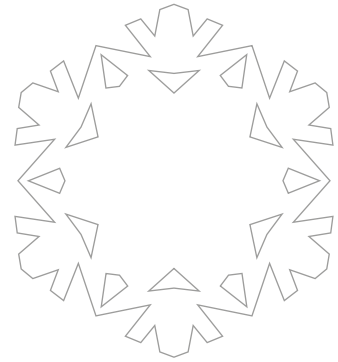
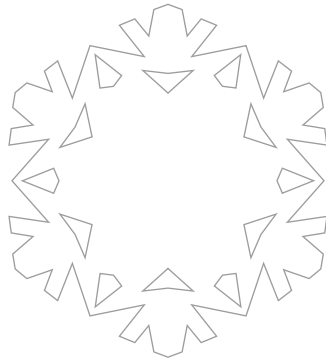
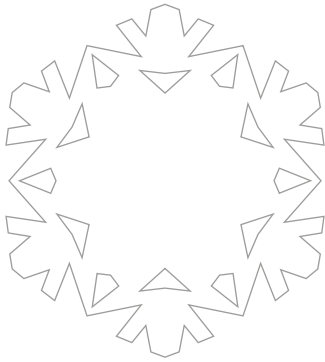
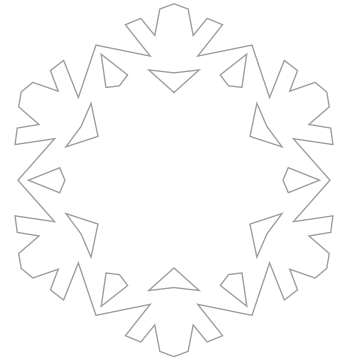
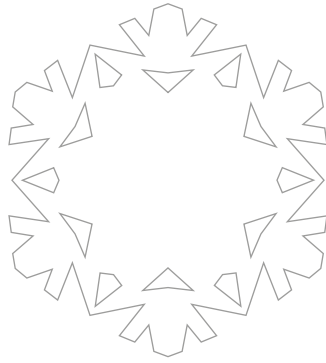
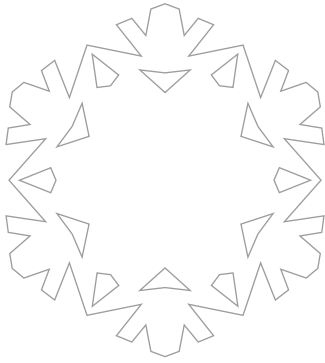
Use slightly simpler words for this exercise: e.g. 'kind', 'happy' 'good at listening'.

It might be helpful to use picture prompts here so that children can look at images of situational examples in which people are being good or bad friends.

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**GENEROUS   THOUGHTFUL   CRUEL   SELFISH   FUNNY   NASTY**  
**DEVIOUS   DECEITFUL   KIND   INTERESTED   BOSSY   SELFLESS**



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## LESSON TWO: A SPECIAL FRIENDSHIP

### TASK 2:

Look at the illustrations below, taken from the story. Under each of them, describe what the illustration tells you about the special relationship between James and the snowman. Use your words from Task 1 to help you.



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# The Snowman

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## LESSON TWO: A SPECIAL FRIENDSHIP

### TASK 3:

Read the extract below from Chapter 5, in which James describes how the snowman makes him feel:

*“James told the snowman all about himself – well, not all; just the interesting things, like his best toys and Paul Millard, who he wanted as his best friend, and the green mountain bike, and how he wished, wished, wished he could stop stuttering and stammering, because everyone at school laughed at him. And then he told him that his favourite food was raspberry jelly, and that he hated Brussels sprouts.*

*The snowman smiled and listened quite happily. So that cheered James up. Something else was cheering him up too, but he couldn’t think what it was.”*

1. List two ‘good friend’ qualities that the snowman shows here

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2. Why do you think the snowman ‘cheered James up’?

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3. What else might be cheering James up here?

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## LESSON TWO: A SPECIAL FRIENDSHIP

### TASK 4:

Look at the statement below:

*“His snowman seemed only too proud to introduce him to everyone as ‘my good friend James’. James loved that. They were words that warmed his heart. And that was just as well, because by now that was the only part of him that was warm at all.”*

Write a letter to one of your friends, explaining to them why they ‘warm your heart’. Tell them what their qualities are. Finish by telling them how you also try to be a good friend, and how you might be a better friend in the future.

### Differentiate for younger children:

Instead of writing, children can gather together all of the words and images that they have found to represent what makes a good friend. They can then create a classroom or nursery display out of these words and images.

### EXTENSION TASK:

Ask children to explore the end of the story.

- What happens to the snowman?
- How does this make James feel?
- Ask children to consider whether James has lost his friendship with the snowman, now that he is not there?

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## WHY YOU WARM MY HEART

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# The Snowman

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## LESSON THREE: MY OWN SNOWMAN

### LEAD-IN QUESTIONS:

- Why do people build snowmen?
- What features does a snowman usually have?

### TASK 1:

Look at the description of the snowman in the story's blurb and fill in the sentences below:

*“When James wakes to see snow falling one December morning, he is delighted and rushes outside to make a snowman.*

*With coal eyes, an old green hat and scarf and a tangerine nose, he is perfect and James can hardly bear to go inside and leave him.”*

The snowman's eyes are .....

The snowman's hat is .....

The snowman's scarf is .....

The snowman's nose is .....

### Differentiate for younger children:

Ask children to look at the image of the snowman in the story and to pick out the key things that they can see. Prompt questions might include: What is the snowman wearing round his neck? What would it feel like if you could touch it? Can you see anything on the snowman that is pointy?



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## LESSON THREE: MY OWN SNOWMAN

### TASK 2:

Write an instruction manual for how to build a snowman. Include the following phases:

- How to build its body
- How to make a hat
- How to decorate the snowman

### TASK 3:

Use the snowman template on the next page to create your own snowman.

- What colour eyes would it have?
- What kind of hat, scarf, and buttons?
- What would its arms be made of?

Decorate your snowman with different materials to show its different textures and colours.

### EXTENSION TASK:

Make sure to include a few words about why you have built your snowman, and what sort of friend he or she would be.





# The Snowman

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## MY OWN SNOWMAN



I have built my snowman this way because .....

My snowman will be a special friend because .....

# The Snowman

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## LESSON FOUR: HOT AND COLD

### LEAD-IN QUESTIONS:

- What happens when water is put in the freezer? Why?
- What happens when ice is put on the radiator? Why?

### TASK 1:

Define each term below and think of examples for each:

SOLID .....

LIQUID .....

GAS .....

Materials can change their state (solid, liquid, gas) when they are heated up or cooled down. Think about what would happen to a bar of chocolate on a sunny day at the beach. Complete the flow chart using words and drawings to show the changing state of chocolate on a sunny day:



Chocolate begins as a:

.....



Chocolate becomes a:

.....

### Differentiate for younger children:

Ask children to look at water in different states: e.g. water in a glass, an ice cube. Can they discuss the differences between them? For example, they might think about which is **harder**, which is **colder**, which is easier to run their fingers through etc. To advance the discussion, children might think about what happens to the ice cube if they hold it for too long. Can they connect this process to the process that we see in the story, when the snowman is scared that he will melt?

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## LESSON FOUR: HOT AND COLD

### TASK 2:

Read the extract from Chapter 7 of **The Snowman** and answer the comprehension questions below:

*“But suddenly the snowman was not looking happy at all. He jumped up and backed away from the fire. James saw at once what was upsetting him. It was the heat of the fire! It was too much for the snowman. It was warming him up, and he didn’t like it one bit. He liked being cold. He had to be cold.”*

1. What does James realise is ‘upsetting’ the snowman in the extract?
2. Why is the snowman ‘not looking happy at all’?
3. Why do you think the snowman ‘had to be cold’?

### TASK 3:

Fill in another flow chart like the one in Task 1, this time showing how the snowman will change when he is put into contact with the fire.



The Snowman begins as a:

.....



The Snowman becomes a:

.....

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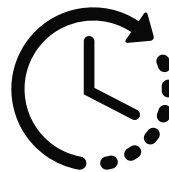
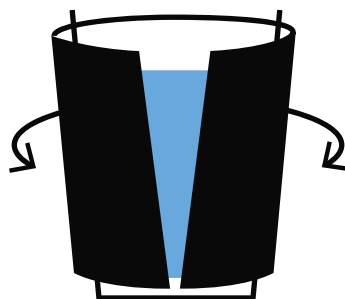
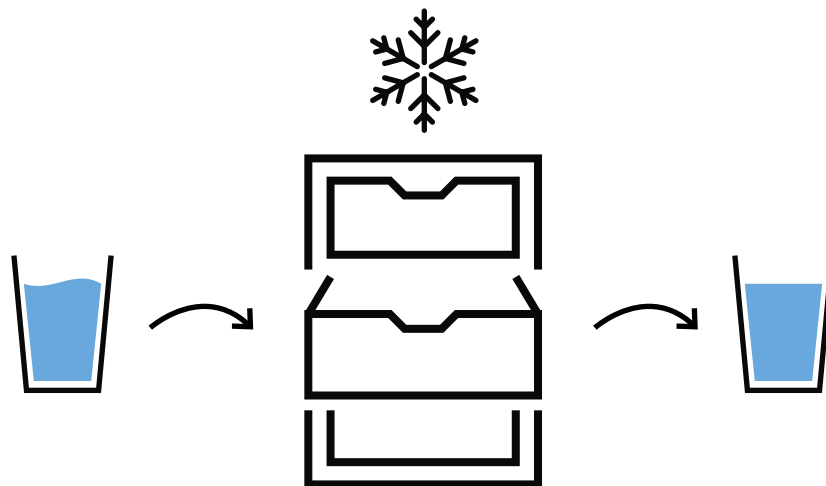
## LESSON FOUR: HOT AND COLD

### EXTENSION TASK:

Investigate whether putting a jacket on a snowman will make the snowman melt faster or slower.

To carry out the investigation, fill some plastic cups full of water and freeze them overnight. What has happened to the water?

Then, remove the plastic cups from the freezer and use different materials in the classroom or from your craft box to dress the fake snowman. Which material keeps the snowman alive, or in its current solid state, the longest?

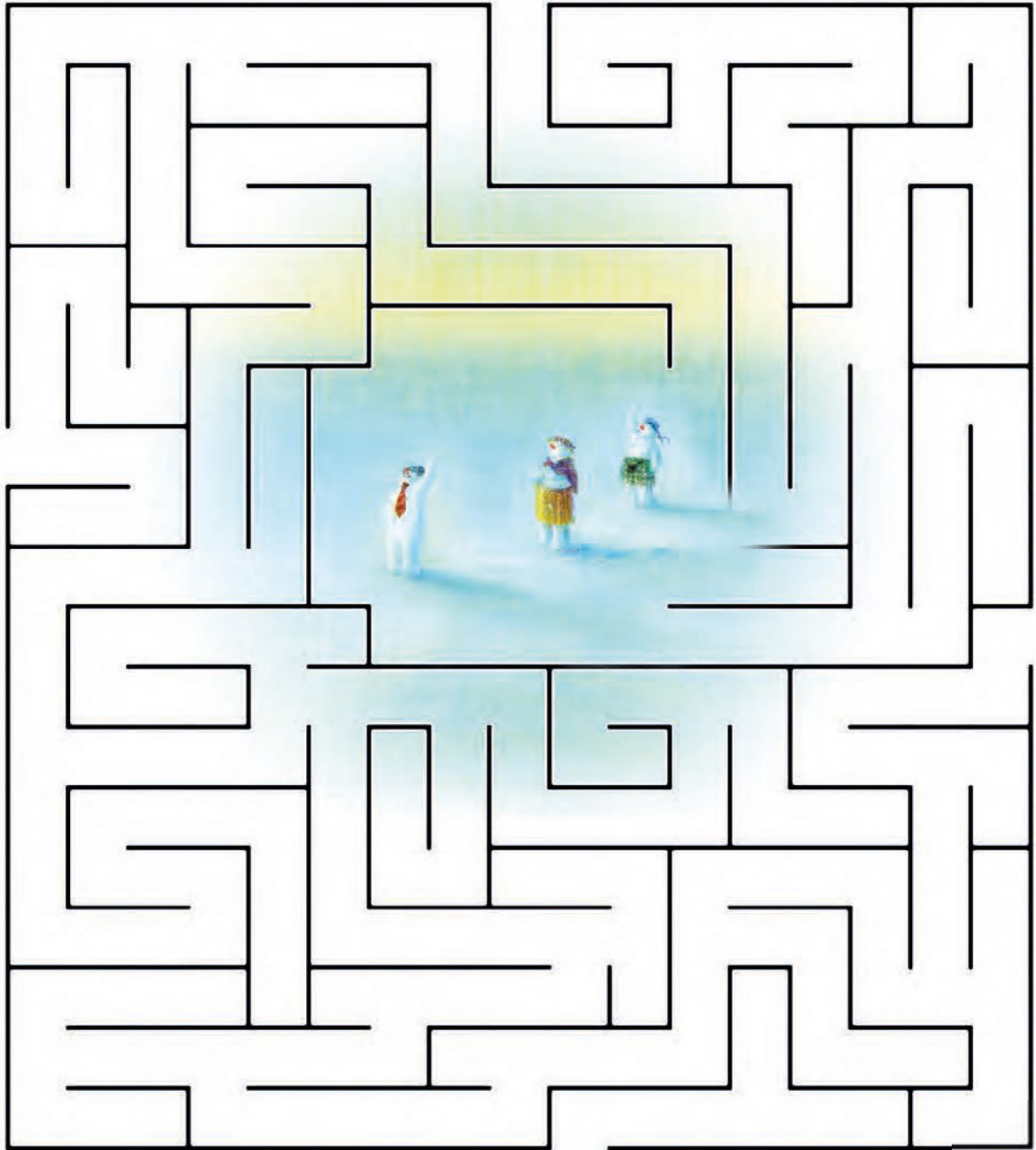




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Can you help the Snowman  
find his friends?



# The Snowman

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## A Christmas Word Search



Reindeer  
Star  
Snowman  
Christmas  
Elves

Stockings  
Gifts  
Santa Claus  
Presents  
Tree

# The Snowman

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Have fun colouring in this festive bauble!

