

**Small-Group Activity: Toby Litt's "The Monster"**

In groups of three or four, discuss the following questions as a group and collaboratively respond to them on a separate piece of paper. You are encouraged to refer to the text, especially when specific examples are requested.

1. According to the story, what gender is the monster? What gender did you imagine the monster to be as you read the story? Explain.
  
2. Of what things does the monster have an awareness? In other words, what does it know about itself and/or about the world?
  
3. (a) If you didn't look up the word *merd* while reading the story, explain what you think it means based on the context in which it is used. If you did look it up, provide a definition.  
  
(b) What do you think is important about the monster's interaction with the *merds*?
  
4. (a) What is the monster's attitude toward itself? How does the monster treat itself? How do you know? (Provide examples.)  
  
(b) Why do you think it treats itself this way?
  
5. (a) Why do you think the subject of the story is described as a "monster"? What makes it "monstrous"?  
  
(b) Do you get the sense that the monster is an unknown species or artificial creation like that constructed by Frankenstein? If not, what do you think it is? Explain.