

# GUIDED READING PROGRAM

Fiction Focus

*2nd Edition*



These are the cards that go with Level U of the Guided Reading Program: Fiction Focus, 2nd Edition. There is one card for each book in the level, as follows:

- **The Adventures of Marco Polo**
- **All of the Above**
- **Charlie Bone and the Invisible Boy**
- **Creepy Creatures (Goosebumps Graphix)**
- **Ginger Pye**
- **The Graduation of Jake Moon**
- **Heaven**
- **Nothing But the Truth: A Documentary Novel**
- **The Tale of Despereaux**
- **Tangerine**

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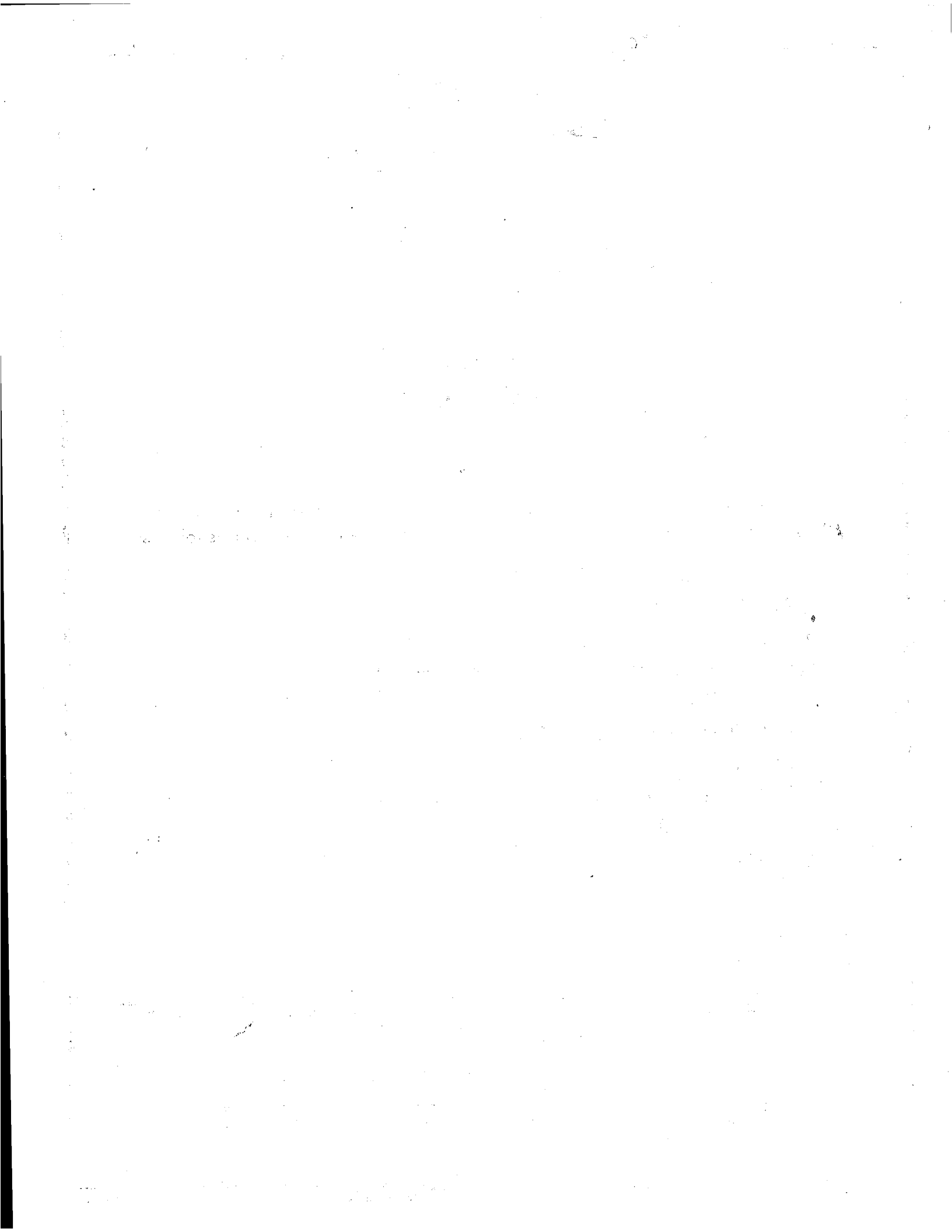
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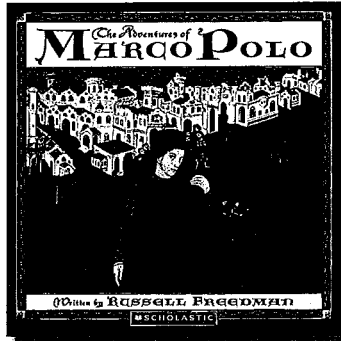
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# The Adventures of Marco Polo



## Summary & Standard

This nonfiction book discusses the experiences of the Venetian trader Marco Polo and addresses the controversy surrounding the truth of his account of his travels. Students will read literature from and about a wide range of historical periods and perspectives.

**Author:** Russell Freedman

**Word Count:** 250+

**Genre:** Biography

**Theme/Idea:** spreading information

## Making Connections: Text to World

Students may have prior knowledge of Marco Polo. Encourage them to share stories they may have heard. Explain that Polo was an Italian merchant who traveled through China, Central Asia, and the Middle East.

Extend the real-world connection by talking about ways information and technology spread around the world. Point out the benefits of travel and trade. Ask: *What might be carried from place to place by merchants and other travelers?*

For additional teaching ideas and resources, see [www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/activities/10/marcopolo.html](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/activities/10/marcopolo.html).

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** barbarian, caravan, empire, envoy, merchant

**Related Words for Discussion:** circulate, curiosity, expedition, influence, observation

## Genre

**Biography** Remind students that a biography features details and events from a real person's life and is usually told in the order in which the events happened.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** The middle chapters are organized in chronological order. Maps chart the path of Marco's journeys. Period artwork and illustrations in period style provide the reader with images from the different cultures visited. An author's note, an art note, and an index provide further support.

**Vocabulary** Words that students may not be familiar with such as *paiza* (page 12), *yams* (page 28), and *yurts* (page 33) appear in italics and are defined clearly in the text.

Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 100 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** Direct quotations from Marco's writing are embedded throughout, which may be confusing. Point out phrases such as *Marco reported* and *Marco wrote* that signal this. Many pages are text-heavy and sentences are long.

**Content** Students may be confused that scholars disagree about the truth of Marco's account. Discuss the points Freedman raises and explain that it is sometimes impossible to determine exactly what happened in history.

## ELL Bridge

To help students prepare for *The Adventures of Marco Polo*, review some of the content-area words such as *merchant*, *travel*, *trade*, *exchange*, *route*, and *goods*. Ask where students have heard these words before and talk about the meaning of each word. Then have partners write, practice, and perform ten-line skits about experiences a merchant has while traveling and trading goods along a route. To help students prepare their skits, use prompts such as *Where will you go to trade?* or *What goods will you buy and sell?*

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Have students identify the places to which Marco traveled and explain the reasons he visited each place. Then have them sum up the author's position on the importance of Marco's book.

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Have students evaluate Marco Polo's accomplishments. Ask: *How has the world today been affected by Marco's travels and stories? Who are some other historical figures that have had similar effects on the world?*

#### Thinking About the Text

Ask students to identify places where the author includes direct quotations from *The Description of the World* and to evaluate why he might have done this.

### Understanding Compare and Contrast

Remind students that when we compare and contrast things, we see how they are alike and how they are different. Point out that Marco spent a good deal of time during his travels examining how life in other parts of the world was different from life back in Europe.

- Ask students to identify some aspects of life that Marco compared, such as technology, systems of education, and religion.
- Use shared writing to make a group chart recording some of the comparisons that can be made between life in Europe and life in China.

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Latin Roots

Remind students that a root is the base part of a word. Knowing the meaning of a root can help readers figure out the meaning of words containing that root. Point out that some roots come from Latin, such as *scrib/scrip*, which means "write." English words that have this root are related to writing. Have students read and define the following words that contain the Latin root *scrib/scrip*: *transcribed* (p. 6), *description* (p. 7), *inscribed* (p. 12), *describe* (p. 15), *scribes* (p. 53), *manuscripts* (p. 54), *scribbling* (p. 55).

#### Developing Fluency

Model how to pronounce difficult place names and challenging words with ease. Then, have students work with a partner to reread the passages aloud, using proper pace, phrasing, and intonation.

#### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Adventurers** Lead a discussion about Marco's motivations for traveling to and recording what he saw in other lands. Discuss qualities an adventurer might possess. Talk about how Marco and Europeans in general benefited from his travels.

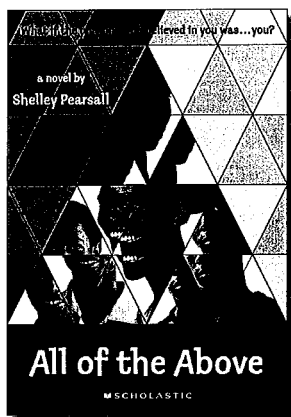
#### Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have students review the chapter "Did Marco Polo Go to China?" and the Author's Note. Ask them to write a paragraph evaluating the arguments for or against Marco's truthfulness. (**Persuasive**)
- Select two or three important Chinese technologies discussed in Marco Polo's book and have students write about their historical importance. (**Expository**)

#### Other Books

*Great Explorations* by David Neufeld  
*Visiting a Village* by Bobbie Kalman

# All of the Above



## Summary & Standard

A math teacher challenges his class of inner-city students to build the world's largest tetrahedron, and the students persevere despite personal problems and vandalism. Students will read to refine their understanding of how texts work across a variety of genres.

**Author:** Shelley Pearsall

**Word Count:** 250+

**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

**Theme/Idea:** overcoming adversity

## Making Connections: Text to Self

Have students share what they know about world records. Ask: *What do you think it takes for people to break a world record?*

Extend the connection by explaining that a tetrahedron is like a pyramid with a triangular base and that small tetrahedrons can be put together to make large tetrahedrons. To make the world's largest tetrahedron, the students in the story make and assemble 16,383 tetrahedrons. Discuss how long a project like that might take and whether students would have the perseverance to complete it.

For additional teaching ideas and resources, see <http://www.nea.org/neatodayextra/mathfun.html>.

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** attitude, foster, genius, responsibility, tetrahedron, vandals

**Related Words for Discussion:** adversity, courage, determination, persevere

## Genre

**Realistic Fiction** Remind students that realistic fiction has characters, settings, and conflicts that may be found in real life.

## ELL Bridge

Help students articulate character traits of people they know. Encourage students to use words such as *personality* and *qualities*. Provide an example by drawing a T-chart and writing your name in the left column and a few of your personality traits in the right. Have students draw their own T-charts, writing the name of the person in the left column and traits in the right. While students are reading the book, have them make a T-chart of traits for their favorite character. Have students discuss their charts.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** The text is broken into short chapters that are interspersed with recipes and math facts. The text is well spaced and easy to read.

**Vocabulary** Students will easily comprehend the story because the text reads the way seventh graders would speak, such as "... I gotta talk to you" (page 171). The vocabulary, for the most part, is easy to understand.

Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 100 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** There are very few illustrations to help the reader visualize the characters, places, and events in the story. The few illustrations there are appear in the chapters of the artistic student and are like doodles.

**Content** The story is told by four students, their teacher, and some of the students' parents. Each chapter is written from the point of view of a different character. The reader needs to consider the different points of view and piece together the story line of each of the four students.

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Have students list the personal challenges each of the student characters faces during the story. Then discuss how problems at home affect James and Sharice at school.

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Discuss how working together for a common goal can bring together people who would not otherwise have been friends. Discuss the characters' attitudes toward each other at the beginning of the story and how these attitudes change. Encourage students to share personal examples of how their attitude toward someone changed as they got to know the person.

#### Thinking About the Text

Have students read the author's note at the end of the book and discuss the fact that the author based her story on real events but invented the student characters. Encourage students to evaluate how realistic the characters are that the author created.

### Understanding Point of View

Explain that fictional stories can be told by a narrator using third-person point of view or by a character in the story using first-person point of view. Use an example from a familiar book to show third-person point of view, and then read page 15 of this book.

- Have students identify the words Rhondell uses to refer to herself on these pages. (*I* and *my*)
- Have students identify how each chapter is told by a different character using first-person point of view. Have them discuss how these multiple points of view affect the story.

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Synonyms

Remind students that words that have similar meanings, such as *mad* and *angry*, are called synonyms.

- On page 8, point out the words *shatters*, *crack up*, *serious*, and *slouch*. Ask students to give synonyms for each word as it is used in context. Ask why they think the author chose these words.
- Have students find synonyms for other words as they read.

### Developing Fluency

Model voicing the different tone of each of the four student characters as you read a paragraph from different chapters. Have partners choose two of these characters and practice reading sections from their chapters.

### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Overcoming Adversity** Lead a discussion about how the students must have felt when vandals destroyed their first tetrahedron, and how they found the determination to persevere. Ask: *What are some obstacles you have faced? How did you find the courage to keep going?*

### Extending Meaning Through Writing

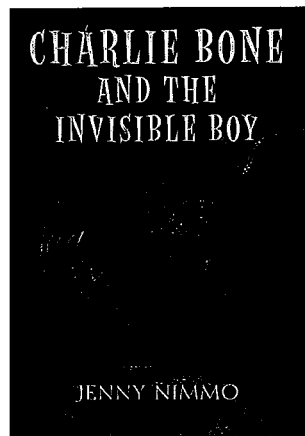
- Have students imagine that they are a character in the story. Ask them to write a scene from the book from their point of view. (**Narrative**)
- Have students write an article about the characters' achievements, and what they went through to succeed. (**Expository**)

### Other Books

*Once Upon a Time in Junior High* by Lisa Norment

*P.S. Longer Letter Later* by Paula Danziger and Ann M. Martin

# Charlie Bone and the Invisible Boy



## Summary & Standard

The third book in the Children of the Red King series follows the adventures of Charlie Bone. He and other children who are “endowed” with supernatural powers solve a mystery at magical Bloor’s Academy. Students will read to refine their understanding of how texts work across a variety of genres.

**Author:** Jenny Nimmo  
**Genre:** Fantasy

**Word Count:** 250+  
**Theme/Idea:** using special powers

## Making Connections: Text to Text

Students will most likely have prior knowledge of other fantasies. They may have read the Harry Potter series, in which students with “powers” also attend a special school. Ask them about fantasy stories they may have read.

Extend the connection to other texts by having students describe other fantasy tales. Ask: *What is similar about fantasy stories? How do they differ?* Have students think of “powers” individual children could possess and how those powers might be used. Ask: *If you had an unusual power what would it be?*

For additional information on this series, see <http://www.scholastic.com/charliebone/index.htm>.

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** conspicuous, endowed, extraordinary, impression, inherited

**Related Words for Discussion:** conspiracy, suspicion, unexpected

## Genre

**Fantasy** Remind students that a fantasy is a made-up story that has characters and settings that could not exist in real life.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** The print is very easy to read, and the chapter headings provide clear clues as to the progress of the plot.

**Content** Although the characters have unusual powers, Charlie Bone and his friends are ordinary in every other way. Students will be able to relate to their behavior and thinking as they try to solve the story’s mysteries.

Praise students for specific use of “Behaviors to Notice and Support” on page 100 of the *Guided Reading Teacher’s Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** Introductory matter about the “endowed children” and the inherited characteristics of the Children of the Red King, including the genealogy on pages x–xi, may confuse some students. Suggest that they refer back to pages xii–xiii as they proceed through the book.

**Vocabulary** This book includes many high-level descriptive words, such as *despondent*, *furtively*, *ominous*, and many others. Suggest that students keep a list of unfamiliar words to define through context clues or using a dictionary.

## ELL Bridge

Have teams of students act out scenes of dialogue from the novel, using gestures and vocal expression to convey meaning. For example, have them read passages such as the section that begins at the bottom of page 138 and ends in the middle of page 139. Have one student read aloud the descriptive paragraphs as a narrator. Have other students read the dialogue of Gabriel, Charlie, and Billy as if in a play, using expression and pace to convey meaning.

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Have students discuss the different characters in the book and their unique powers. Have students explain the use of *endowed* as it applies to various characters. Ask: *What does endowed mean for Charlie Bone? For Emma Tolly?*

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Have students infer unstated information about the characters' special powers. Ask: *Which of the endowed powers appeals most to you? Which characters use their powers most wisely?* Discuss with students how "good" and "bad" characters are signaled by their use of their powers. Ask: *How does Belle's changing eye color in the very first chapter warn us about her?*

#### Thinking About the Text

Have students find examples of the way the special powers of the characters are used in the conflict between good and evil in the story. Ask: *How does the tension build on pages 330–332? How do the powers of characters such as Emma and Charlie help Paton resolve the conflict with the sisters?*

### Understanding Text Structure

Point out that this book has distinct chapters, each with its own main idea. Model for students how the chapter structure of the book can aid their understanding of the story.

- Have students turn to page 24. Ask: *What is the title of this chapter? What does it suggest about the chapter content?*
- Have students describe how the chapter helps set up a major conflict in the story. Ask: *How will the invisible boy play a part in the rest of the book?*

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Context Clues

Remind students that they can often guess the meaning of an unfamiliar word by using clues found in the phrases and sentences near the unknown word.

- Read the sentence beginning, *As the three women tiptoed furtively down the steps*, on page 1. Say: *The women tiptoe, which suggests they are trying to hide their movements. Furtively suggests they are trying to be secretive.*
- Have students use context clues to help define *despondent* (page 139), *intensity* (page 175), and *ominous* (page 143).

### Developing Fluency

Model reading dialogue, such as the conversation between Paton and Charlie on pages 166–167. Use proper phrasing, rate, and expression. Then have pairs of students take turns reading the two parts aloud.

### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Character Interactions** Discuss the tension that builds between the characters in the book. Ask: *How does suspicion affect characters' relationships? How do they resolve some of their problems?*

### Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have students describe one character's "endowment," using examples from the book. **(Descriptive)**
- Have students write a short story from Ollie's point of view. **(Narrative)**

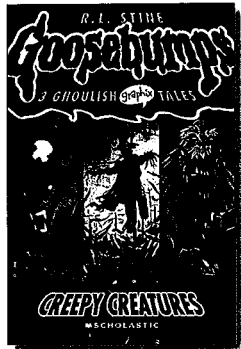
### Other Books

*REM World* by Rodman Philbrick

*The Girl With the Silver Eyes* by Willo Davis Roberts



# Creepy Creatures (Goosebumps Graphix)



## Summary & Standard

This trio of graphic-story fantasies includes eerie tales of a swamp werewolf, scarecrows that come to life, and an abominable snowman. Students will read to refine their understanding of how texts work across a variety of genres.

**Author:** R. L. Stine  
**Genre:** Graphic Novel

**Word Count:** 250+  
**Theme/Idea:** building suspense

## Making Connections: Text to Text

Students may have prior knowledge of graphic novels or comic books. Discuss the differences among graphic novels, text stories, and movies.

Extend the connection to other texts by inviting students to describe fantasy tales that involve creepy or disturbing subjects. Ask: *What do these kinds of stories have in common? What makes them frightening? In what ways is a graphic presentation of this kind of subject more effective than more traditional, straightforward text?*

For additional teaching ideas and resources, see <http://www.ncte.org/pubs/chron/highlights/122031.htm>.

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** abominable, binoculars, boredom, hermit, superstition, tradition, utter

**Related Words for Discussion:** eerie, incredible, supernatural, weird

## Genre

**Graphic Novel** Remind students that a graphic novel is similar to a comic book but has the more complex narrative of a novel, with a beginning, middle, and end.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** Students will likely be familiar with graphic formats. The graphic treatments of the stories will make it easy for students to visualize the characters and the action.

**Content** Students may be familiar with at least two of the subjects—werewolves and abominable snowmen. Most students will be familiar with eerie, supernatural stories, which will encourage them to read these treatments.

Praise students for specific use of “Behaviors to Notice and Support” on page 100 of the *Guided Reading Teacher’s Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** The graphic styles shift among the three stories. Suggest that students first identify the subject and main characters of each story and then, as they read, consider how the illustrations reflect the subject.

**Vocabulary** Some of the onomatopoeic renderings of sound effects and screams may be unfamiliar to some students, such as *GRRROOORR* (page 43). Suggest that students quietly sound out the words that are confusing or unfamiliar.

## ELL Bridge

Use passages from the three graphic novels to help students practice using gestures and pantomime to convey meaning. For example, have them read aloud and act out a series of panels, such as those on page 73. After students perform the panels with a partner, encourage them to describe the scene they have depicted.

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Have students compare and contrast the three graphic novels. Encourage them to summarize the three stories to highlight both their similarities and their differences.

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Have students infer unstated information about characters in the stories. Ask: *What do we know about the Swamp Hermit on page 29? What about Stanley, on page 52?* Discuss with students the way the characters' oddities add to the suspense of the story.

#### Thinking About the Text

Point out the sequence of panels at the bottom of page 42 and ask students to describe how the tension builds. Have students point out the moments of greatest tension in each story. Ask: *What made a particular scene especially scary? What elements in the graphic novel contributed to the tension or suspense?* Ask students to compare the rising tension of a graphic novel to the tension in a book or a scary movie.

### Understanding Text Structure

Help students understand the development of the plot in each graphic story by calling attention to narrator transitions in the graphic panels.

- Have students look at the center panel on page 26. Ask: *What is happening in this panel?* Discuss how the static illustration of the cabin combined with the narrator's "voice" in the text act like a voice-over in a movie, which moves the story forward even though no action occurs in the illustration.
- Have students point out similar examples in the next two stories.

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Compound Words

Remind students that a compound word is made up of two or more smaller words. The meanings of the smaller words often give clues to the meaning of the compound word.

- Write *moonlight*, *backyard*, *quicksand*, and *lifetime* on the board. Have volunteers identify and define the smaller words in the compounds.
- Help students figure out the meanings of the compound words. For example, *moonlight* is "the light from the moon."

### Developing Fluency

Have students select a series of panels in one of the three stories and read the scene aloud to a partner. Encourage students to read with expression.

### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Creepy Creatures** Lead a discussion about the creatures that are found in horror stories. Remind students that these stories are often based on traditional superstitions. Ask: *What creatures in these stories show up again and again?*

### Extending Meaning Through Writing

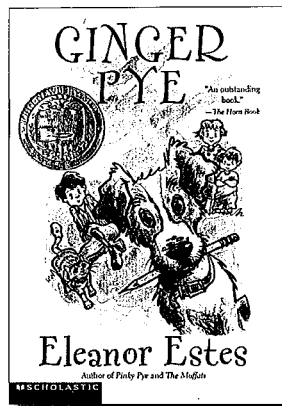
- Have students pick a story from the graphic novel and describe how the illustration style reflects the theme. **(Expository)**
- Have students write their own suspenseful tale in a series of graphic panels. Encourage students to look back through the stories for ideas. **(Narrative)**

### Other Books

*The Werewolf Chronicles* by Rodman Philbrick and Lynn Harnett

*Book of Spine Tinglers: Tales to Make You Shiver* by Bruce Coville

# Ginger Pye



## Summary & Standard

Rachel and Jerry Pye are devoted to their new puppy, Ginger. After he disappears mysteriously, they spend months searching for his kidnappers, never giving up hope. Students will read to refine their understanding of how texts work across a variety of genres.

**Author:** Eleanor Estes

**Word Count:** 250+

**Genre:** Realistic Fiction/Mystery

**Theme/Idea:** persevering

### Making Connections: Text to Self

Students may have personal experience with supporting a pet, friend, or family member during a difficult time.

Talk about doing all you can to help someone, especially when you don't immediately see any results from your efforts. It can take a lot of perseverance, or patience and hard work, in the face of difficulties. Invite students to share an example of a time when they persevered and helped someone they cared about, such as a friend who was sad.

For additional information about the 1950s, the period in which the story takes place, see <http://kclibrary.lonestar.edu/decade50.html>.

### Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** clue, furtive, reviewed, suspicious, villain

**Related Words for Discussion:** cooperation, courage, determination, loyalty, perseverance, persistence

### Genre

**Realistic Fiction/Mystery** Remind students that a mystery tells about an unexplained event and the clues that help explain it.

### Supportive Book Features

**Text.** The story is split into chapters with titles that give information about the content of the chapters. Simple line drawings illustrate events and documents (newspaper article, comic strip) from the narrative.

**Vocabulary** Most of the story is told using uncomplicated language that will be easy for students to follow.

Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 100 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Challenging Book Features

**Text** The narrative shifts among the points of view of different characters, including the dog Ginger. Uncle Bennie's speech is written as a three-year-old would talk and might be difficult to decode at times.

**Content** Because this book is set more than half a century ago, it mentions customs that may not be familiar to students today. Briefly talk about ways in which life was different in the 1950s. (See the Web site cited on this page for information about this time in the United States.)

## ELL Bridge

Before students read, discuss personality traits with them. Define the word *trait* in kid-friendly terms (something about a person that helps make the person different from others). Have students make a list of traits they think a good friend should possess. Then discuss with them why they think these traits are important in a friend. Provide sentence frames such as *A good friend should be \_\_\_\_\_* and *A good friend is \_\_\_\_\_*. After students read the book, ask them to identify traits they feel Jerry and Rachel possess. Ask: *Would you like to be friends with them?*

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Have students summarize what happens to Ginger, what Rachel and Jerry do to get him back, and the series of events that finally lead to his safe return to the Pye household.

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Ask students to find instances of characters showing perseverance other than Rachel and Jerry's search for Ginger. For example, Rachel struggles and then succeeds in climbing the Rock. Talk about the role perseverance plays throughout the story.

#### Thinking About the Text

To hold interest, the author of a mystery must present the reader with clues along the way. Ask students to identify and evaluate how Estes provides the reader with hints and clues about what happened to Ginger (e.g., the confusion about whether Wally was wearing the yellow hat, pages 189–194, noting the illustration on page 191).

### Understanding Characters

Explain to students that readers can learn things about a character's personality by examining the way he or she looks at the world. For example, Jerry and Rachel often make allusions or references to situations from real life or books that relate in some way to the current situation. Point out on pages 98–99 that Rachel alludes to a fairy tale maiden and to *The Tinder Box*, and ask students what it tells them about Rachel. (It shows that she is well-read.)

Ask students to find other allusions (e.g., on pages 2–3, 85, 91, 153, 193–194, 235, and 260) and identify what each allusion might tell them about the characters.

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Suffixes -er and -est

Remind students that a suffix is a part added to the end of a word to change its meaning. Point out that the suffixes -er and -est are used to compare two or more things, respectively.

- Turn to page 5 and point out the words *prettiest* and *funniest*. Lead students to observe that the suffix -est has been added to the base words *pretty* and *funny*. Work with them to identify how this suffix changes the meaning of each base word.
- On page 6, repeat the procedure with the words *prettier*, *older*, *rounder*, and *bigger*, using the suffix -er.

### Developing Fluency

Model fluent reading of a passage from the book, stressing appropriate pauses that would occur at the ends of sentences, before commas, and so on. Then have the group read a passage from the book together.

### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Perseverance** Lead a discussion about the importance of persevering even in the face of difficult odds. Talk about the qualities Rachel and Jerry each had that helped them make it through tough times. Ask students what other qualities might help a person persevere.

### Extending Meaning Through Writing

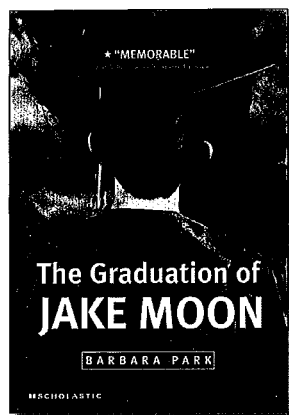
- Have students write a news story for the *Cranbury Chronicle* that reports on Ginger's return to the Pye family. (**Expository**)
- Ask students to write a description of their own pet or one they would like to own. (**Descriptive**)

### Other Books

*Souder* by William H. Armstrong

*Trout Summer* by Jane Leslie Conly

# The Graduation of Jake Moon



## Summary & Standard

Jake is challenged by the constant demands of providing care for his grandfather, who has Alzheimer's disease. When his grandfather disappears, Jake reconfirms his commitment. Students will read a variety of genres to better understand various aspects of the human experience.

**Author:** Barbara Park

**Word Count:** 250+

**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

**Theme/Idea:** making sacrifices for one's family

## Making Connections: Text to World

Ask students what they think it means to sacrifice something for someone else. Ask students whether they have ever done so, and whether they thought it was worthwhile.

Extend the real-life connection by building background about Alzheimer's disease. Have them read the second paragraph on page 10.

*Ask: What might be the challenges of taking care of someone who has Alzheimer's disease?*

For additional information and resources about coping with Alzheimer's, see [http://www.alz.org/living\\_with\\_alzheimers\\_just\\_for\\_kids\\_and\\_teens.asp](http://www.alz.org/living_with_alzheimers_just_for_kids_and_teens.asp).

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** annoyed, desperate, embarrassment, insulted, theory

**Related Words for Discussion:** attitude, commitment, considerate, coping, patience, relationship, respectful

## Genre

**Realistic Fiction** Remind students that realistic fiction has characters, settings, and conflicts that may be found in real life.

## ELL Bridge

Help students build comprehension about the story by asking them simple questions about the plot as they read. Remind students to keep the five Ws—who, what, where, when, and why—in mind as they read each new chapter. These questions will keep students focused on the content and the structure of the story. For instance, after the second chapter, ask: *Who is Skelly? How did he treat people before he became sick? What kind of illness does he have?* Invite students to indicate text that supports their responses.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** Chapters are of a manageable length, and each ends with an insightful comment, funny quip, or page-turning sentence.

**Vocabulary** The author has Jake use informal language that will be familiar to students and will help them identify with his problem.

Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 100 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** There are no illustrations in the text. However, the text contains plenty of action. Have students focus on visualizing the action as though they were making their own movie based on the book.

**Content** Alzheimer's disease is a difficult subject to discuss, and some students' families may be affected by it or other forms of dementia. Have students look for parts in the novel that show how Jake's character strengthens through caring for his grandfather. Discuss how the characters grow stronger, even as they worry and often lose patience with each other.

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Have students briefly summarize each chapter after they read it to keep track of plot and character development.

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

After they have read the book, have students share what they have learned about Alzheimer's disease and the challenges Jake faced. Have them discuss whether they think Jake would act the same way if the Dumpster episode were to happen again.

#### Thinking About the Text

Ask students to share their impressions of Jake's aunt and cousin. Have students compare and contrast them with Jake and his mother. Ask: *Why do you think the author included these characters in the story? How do they anger Jake? What does he learn from his cousin after Skelly disappears?* Emphasize that the relatives' reactions to Skelly's disease increase tension in the household, but that eventually Jake learns to be more patient.

### Understanding Point of View

Tell students that an author often chooses to tell a story through the thoughts and words of the main character. This is called the character's point of view. Ask: *From whose point of view is the story told? How does this point of view influence the story?*

- Read aloud pages 50–55, ending with *I kept going*. As you read, stop and have students discuss what Jake reveals about his own actions and character. Ask them what other characters would say about Jake if they were to narrate this scene.
- As students read, continue discussing what Jake's words reveal about his character. Are students able to identify with him?

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Multisyllabic Words

Remind students that a syllable is a word part that has one vowel sound. Explain that breaking down a long or difficult word into syllables can help readers figure out its meaning.

- Read aloud this text from page 61, stressing each syllable of the multisyllabic words: *In my opinion, an oral report doesn't benefit society in any way.*
- Ask students to identify the words that have three or more syllables and tell how many syllables are in each word.

### Developing Fluency

Point out to students that italicized words, capitalization, and question marks give clues about reading with stress, pitch, and volume. Model reading aloud page 68. Have small groups read aloud softly to each other. Circulate and listen in, giving assistance as needed.

### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Coping** Remind students of their discussion about Alzheimer's disease. Talk about how Jake copes with the changes in his life and eventually alters his relationships with his family members. Talk about why the changes in Jake's personal life are sacrifices.

### Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have students research and write about ways caregivers can tend to a relative with Alzheimer's disease. (**Expository**)
- Have students write a paragraph from James's point of view, describing what it's like to have a relative with Alzheimer's disease. (**Narrative**)

### Other Books

*Pictures of Hollis Woods* by Patricia Reilly Giff  
*You Shouldn't Have to Say Good-Bye* by Patricia Hermes

# Heaven



## Summary & Standard

Marley lives a happy life in the odd little town of Heaven, until she discovers something that turns her world upside down. Students will comprehend basic plots of a variety of fiction genres.

**Author:** Angela Johnson

**Word Count:** 250+

**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

**Theme/Idea:** finding your identity

### Making Connections: Text to Self

Have students think about what makes them who they are. Ask: *How would you feel if you learned something new about where you came from? Would it change how you feel about yourself?* Use a discussion to make a list of things that make up a person's identity.

Extend the connection by talking about how some life changes can make a person stronger. Invite students to offer some examples of events in their lives that affected their identities or personalities in a positive way.

For additional teaching ideas and resources, see [www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3751211](http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3751211)

### Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** spiritual, perfection, shadowy, wraith

**Related Words for Discussion:** lies, secret, family, dreams, parents

### Genre

**Realistic Fiction** Remind students that realistic fiction is a made-up story about things that could happen in real life.

### Supportive Book Features

**Text** The print is easy to read, and the chapter headings provide clues to the content of each chapter. The text is divided into short, manageable sections for easy pacing.

**Vocabulary** Many challenging words are presented with clear definitions in context, such as the presentation of the word *notorious* on page 15.

Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 100 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Challenging Book Features

**Text** Some students may have difficulty with some of the transitions between chapters. This may be particularly challenging when a chapter ends with ellipses, such as on page 65 and page 127. Help students understand the time shifts and use of ellipses in these transitions.

**Content** Some readers may struggle with some inferences that are used throughout the book. For example, though the author does not state it explicitly, the reader should infer on page 52 that Marley is Monna Floyd. Work with students to model how to infer meaning from the text.

### ELL Bridge

Some colloquial phrases and popular culture references may not be familiar to English Language Learners. Pause to explain words and phrases like *Slurpee*, *Impala*, *Amish*, and *keepin' it real*. Explain any additional phrases that may be confusing to students.

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Help students summarize the main conflict in the story. Ask: *What does Marley find out about her parents and Uncle Jack? After reading the letter from Deacon Major, why does Marley feel that she doesn't know who she is anymore? Why is Marley so upset with her parents?*

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Discuss with students different ideas of the word *family*. Explain that there are many types of families made up of a variety of members. Use the Maples, the Carrolls, and Bobby and Feather as examples of different family types. Invite students to talk about their own families and compare them to the families in the book.

#### Thinking About the Text

Explain that characters in realistic fiction stories behave the way real people do. The reader can often relate to the characters or to their experiences. Discuss with students some of the traits found in Marley, Bobby, and Shoogy that make them seem real. Ask: *Which of these traits seem most realistic? Which can you identify with?*

### Understanding Text Features

Point out that the author uses italics to distinguish Jack's letters from the rest of Marley's narration. This style is also used for letters written by other characters.

- Explain that the change in font style can help the reader recognize a brief shift in who is telling the story.
- Have students describe any other text features that helped them better understand the story.

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Synonyms

Remind students that words that have similar meanings, such as *happy* and *joyful*, are synonyms.

- On page 26, point out the words *flaw*, *squirms*, *dashes*, and *running*. Ask students to give synonyms for each word as it is used in context. Ask why they think the author chose these words.
- Have students find synonyms for other words as they read.

### Developing Fluency

Read aloud a page, modeling how expert readers pay attention to punctuation and adjust their pace to convey emotion. Use a passage containing both prose and dialogue to show how to transition between the styles. Then have students read with you.

### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Lies** Lead a discussion about secrets and lies. Ask: *Why do people keep secrets or tell lies? Is telling a lie ever a good thing? How would you feel if you found out that something important to you wasn't true?*

### Extending Meaning Through Writing

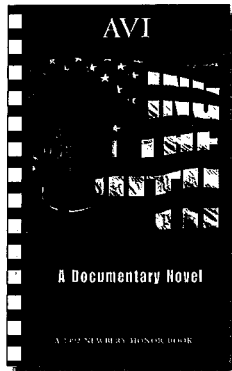
- Have students write a paragraph explaining whether or not they would like to live in Heaven, Ohio. (**Expository**)
- Have students write a letter from Marley to Jack explaining how she feels about his being her father. (**Narrative**)

### Other Books

*Waiting for Normal* by Leslie Connor  
*Fallen Angels* by Walter Dean Myers



# Nothing But the Truth: A Documentary Novel



## Summary & Standard

This realistic novel uses conversations, diary entries, memos, and letters to show the development of a controversy between a ninth grader and an English teacher. It soon spins out of control, leading to unhappy outcomes for all parties. Students will comprehend basic plots of a variety of fiction genres.

**Author:** Avi  
**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

**Word Count:** 250+  
**Theme/Idea:** encountering harmful misunderstandings

### Making Connections: Text to Self

Students may previously have encountered harmful misunderstandings from miscommunication. Encourage them to share their stories and any unhappy or unjust outcomes that resulted.

Extend the connection to their own experience by playing the “telephone game” with students. Have one student whisper to another a fact about the school day. The recipient of the “tip” whispers it to the next student, and so on. Then compare the last version to the original.

For additional teaching ideas and resources, see [www.jiskha.com/social\\_studies/psychology/rumors.html](http://www.jiskha.com/social_studies/psychology/rumors.html).

### Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** administration, attitude, conflicts, incident, personal, political, suspension

**Related Words for Discussion:** anthem, infraction, journalism, misrepresent

### Genre

**Realistic Fiction** Remind students that realistic fiction has characters, settings, and conflicts that may be found in real life.

### Supportive Book Features

**Text** The date and time headings make it easy for students to follow the progression of events in the developing conflict between Philip Malloy and Miss Narwin.

**Vocabulary** Context clues help guide students to the meanings of difficult words and their connotations throughout the text.

Praise students for specific use of “Behaviors to Notice and Support” on page 100 of the *Guided Reading Teacher’s Guide*.

### Challenging Book Features

**Text** The episodic structure of the text shifts from internal memos to script-like presentations of dialogue, to passages from letters and a diary, to other devices that reveal vignettes in the developing conflict. Suggest that students take notes to follow the progression of the story until they become accustomed to the book’s unique structure.

**Content** Each character has his or her own interpretation of the incident in Miss Narwin’s class. Make sure students realize that the “truth” of the situation is subjective and varies depending upon the character’s point of view.

## ELL Bridge

To help students practice visualizing events in the book, have them select a scene from the book and create a storyboard, as if they are planning to shoot the scene for a movie or TV show. Have them describe the positions of the characters, their gestures, and their facial expressions, as if students are directing actors in this scene. Encourage students to speak in complete sentences.

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Help students summarize the feelings and motives of each of the characters. Ask: *How does Miss Narwin feel about Philip at first? How does Philip feel about Miss Narwin?*

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Have students compare the main conflict in the book to real situations they know from the news. Ask: *How could a situation like the one that arises between Philip and Miss Narwin happen in real life? How might the outcome be the same or different in real life?*

#### Thinking About the Text

Have students discuss the unique structure of the book. Ask: *How is this book different from other novels you have read? Why does the writer present the various events and points of view in so many different ways?*

Have students explain how the presentation of facts and opinions gives the reader a complete story without providing a detailed description of all the events.

### Recognizing Events

Point out that this book tells what people are thinking but rarely tells the reader what is actually happening.

- Have students turn to pages 56–57. Ask: *What problem did Mr. Malloy have at work? How does this event affect the advice he gives Philip one hour later?*
- Have students describe how inferences about characters and their motivations help readers understand the realism and the events of the story. Ask: *Have you ever felt the way Philip does in this story? What did you do when you felt you were being treated unfairly?*

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Colloquialisms

Remind students that colloquial expressions often have meanings that are different from the literal meanings of the words in the expressions.

- Have students turn to page 18 and find the expression *awesome wicked*. Ask: *Does wicked mean "bad" here? What is its colloquial meaning?*
- Have students find additional examples of colloquialisms and explain them.

### Developing Fluency

Read aloud a page of scripted dialogue, such as the passage at the bottom of page 21, modeling how expert readers use character tags and punctuation to follow the scene and infer tone and gestures. Have students describe a scene as if they are watching actors play it.

### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Misunderstandings** Lead a discussion about how a misunderstanding between two people can begin simply and then quickly spiral out of control. Invite students to share examples of their own disagreements or other misunderstandings.

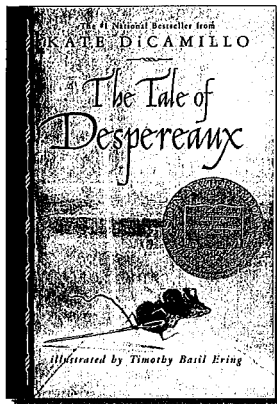
### Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have students describe a situation in which two people have entirely different views of the same facts. (**Descriptive**)
- Have students write an e-mail to Philip, giving their views of his situation. (**Narrative**)

### Other Books

*Report to the Principal's Office* by Jerry Spinelli  
*I Hate English!* by Ellen Levine

# The Tale of Despereaux



## Summary & Standard

Despereaux is a very small mouse that falls in love with Princess Pea, a human. After he gets sent to the dungeon for talking to humans, he meets the rat Chiaroscuro and the servant Mig who are plotting against the princess. Students will distinguish fantasy from reality.

**Author:** Kate DiCamillo

**Genre:** Fantasy

**Word Count:** 250+

**Theme/Idea:** overcoming darkness with the light of love

## Making Connections: Text to Text

Students will most likely have prior knowledge about fairy tales and other fantasy stories in which a brave knight or prince saves a princess or a young woman from a dragon or another type of villain. Invite students to compare and contrast several of these tales.

Extend the connection by drawing a concept web on a chart or on the board. Write the words *fairy tale* in the center, and invite students to suggest details they know about the characters and plots of most fairy tales.

For additional teaching ideas and resources, see [http://edsitement.neh.gov/view\\_lesson\\_plan.asp?id=387](http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=387).

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** conform, destined, dismal, illumination, prophecy, quest, torture

**Related Words for Discussion:** associated, compare, contrast, despair, symbol

## Genre

**Fantasy** Remind students that a fantasy is a story with characters, settings, or events that could not exist in real life.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** The text is divided into four books that are each divided into short chapters. The first three books tell the stories of the main characters Despereaux the mouse, Chiaroscuro the rat, and Mig the servant, respectively. The fourth book brings them all together.

**Content** The narrator of this tale often talks to the reader directly, pointing out difficult words, explaining flashbacks and key points, and commenting on the characters and plot. This approach makes the narrator seem like a friend.

Praise students for specific use of “Behaviors to Notice and Support” on page 100 of the *Guided Reading Teacher’s Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** The story is told with several flashbacks that may make the different plotlines hard to follow. Explain that the narrator helps the reader by pointing out time changes and by drawing connections among the plotlines.

**Vocabulary** Some words are challenging for young readers, such as *egregious* (page 52), *renounce* (page 55), *dire* (page 117), and *aspirations* (page 169). Encourage students to use context clues for understanding.

## ELL Bridge

Make a Venn diagram on the board or on chart paper to compare the characters Despereaux and Chiaroscuro. Ask students to suggest words that describe the mouse, the rat, or both characters and write them in the appropriate part of the diagram. Check students’ comprehension of the meanings of the words in the diagram by asking for synonyms or definitions of difficult words. Then have students tell how the characters were alike and how they were different.

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

The book's subtitle is *Being the Story of a Mouse, a Princess, Some Soup, and a Spool of Thread*. Have students tell why the four components of the subtitle are important to the plot of the story.

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Encourage students to compare and contrast this story with fairy tales and other fantasy stories they have read. Ask them to make comparisons of the setting, the main characters, and the problem/solution. Ask if their concept of the fantasy/fairy tale genre changed while reading this book. (See "Making Connections.") Students should understand that the setting (a castle) and the problem (to rescue a princess) are similar to many fairy tales, but that the characters and the solution are unique.

#### Thinking About the Text

Have students discuss the idea of a very small mouse as the hero of a story and why they think the author chose to make Despereaux *ridiculously small* and *obscenely large-eared*.

### Drawing Conclusions

Remind students that they can understand and appreciate a story much more if they draw conclusions from what they read. To draw conclusions, readers combine related ideas from the story to decide what they mean. Readers also use prior knowledge. Ask:

- *Based on pages 38–39, what do you think mice and rats have to do with the queen?*
- *On page 77, why does Gregory the jailer ask "You do not want to be let go?"*
- *On page 93, why does the narrator say it is important that Chiaroscuro did not look away from the light?*

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Synonyms

Remind students that synonyms are words with similar meanings. Have students read page 20 and discuss the meanings of *scurrying* and *scrabbling*. Encourage students to use context clues to understand the two words and tell how they are synonyms. Then have them use the synonyms in other sentences.

- Repeat the process for *deny* and *refuse* (page 89) and *right* and *accurate* (page 102).

#### Developing Fluency

Model fluent reading of passages with phrasing and expression, such as pages 52–54 (in front of the mouse council) and pages 99–101 (between the prisoner and the rat). Then have students do a choral reading of each passage.

#### Oral Language/Conversation

##### Talk About Metaphors of Light and Darkness

Point out that in this story light is often associated with love and goodness, and darkness with fear and despair. Ask students to give examples of other stories they have read in which these metaphors are used. Then ask why they think light and darkness have these associations.

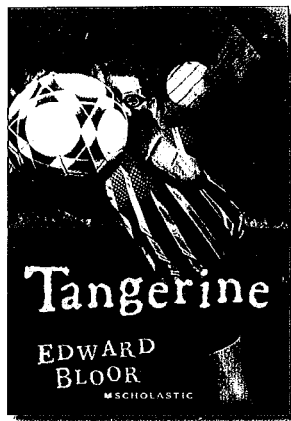
#### Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have students write several paragraphs comparing and contrasting the mouse Despereaux and the rat Chiaroscuro. **(Descriptive)**
- Invite students to write a poem using some of the author's descriptions of light and dark and their own imagery. **(Poetry)**

#### Other Books

*The Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling  
*The Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum

# Tangerine



## Summary & Standard

Paul Fisher sees more than his thick glasses would allow and tells his diary all that happens when his family moves from Houston to small-town Florida. Students will read to better understand the various cultures of the United States.

**Author:** Edward Bloor  
**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

**Word Count:** 250+  
**Theme/Idea:** facing challenges

## Making Connections: Text to Self

Students may have prior knowledge about moving to a new home or new town or attending a new school. Discuss what students experienced when making these changes.

Extend the real-world connection by talking about how students would want to be treated at a new school. Ask for suggestions as to how best to welcome a new student. Discuss practical difficulties a student might encounter at a new school during his or her first week.

For additional teaching ideas and resources, see <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/collateral.jsp?id=972>.

## Vocabulary

**Essential Words:** development, eclipse, handicap, majority, minority, portable, regulation, threatening

**Related Words for Discussion:** admiration, fame, perceive, reputation

## Genre

**Realistic Fiction** Remind students that realistic fiction has characters, settings, and conflicts that may be found in real life.

## Supportive Book Features

**Text** The text is organized as a diary with dated entries. Its strict chronology and first-person narrative create structural simplicity.

**Content** Students will be familiar with the difficulties and challenges that can arise when trying to fit in with new friends, a new school, or even new siblings or other family members.

Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 100 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

## Challenging Book Features

**Text** The book has nearly 300 pages and a great deal of text on each page. Remind students that the dates at the beginning of the diary entry can help them follow the sequence of events in the story.

**Vocabulary** Students may not be familiar with idioms, colloquialisms, and figurative language used in the book. Read aloud sections where these expressions are used and explain that they make the text more lively and often give it added meaning. Also, these devices give dialogue the quality of natural speech.

## ELL Bridge

To help students understand the organization of the book, talk about keeping a journal. Explain that journal entries are dated and arranged chronologically. A journal can be used to record daily personal experiences in the order in which they happen. Have students keep a log of how they spend one day, complete with the time each event or activity happened. Then have them compare their logs to the diary entries in the book, discussing how the dates/times help the reader understand the sequence of events.

## Teaching Options

### Developing Comprehension

#### Thinking Within the Text

Have students discuss what they learned about Paul. How was he able to cope with the change in schools? Summarize the events that Paul experienced and how he handled each situation.

#### Thinking Beyond the Text

Ask students to describe Lake Windsor Middle School and Tangerine Middle School. Have students make connections by asking which school is more similar to theirs and why. Have students predict how Paul might have felt if he had transferred to their school. Would he have been just as excited? What if Erik had transferred to their school?

#### Thinking About the Text

Remind students that figurative language refers to language that means something beyond the dictionary definition of the words. Point to the line *If you think we're slugs . . .* on page 45. Ask: *Is Paul saying that the students are actually slugs? Why does he make this comparison?* Have students notice and point to other examples of how the writer uses figurative language to describe actions, characters, and how people feel.

### Compare and Contrast

Remind students that authors often compare and contrast things and people to show how they are alike and different. Point out how the book contrasts Paul's two schools. Have students identify ways in which the schools and the students at each are different.

- Ask: *How does Paul feel about these differences throughout the book? Are there any similarities between the schools?*
- Have students support their answers with sentences or passages from the story.

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

### Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

#### Varying Words With Prefixes and Suffixes

Explain that prefixes, suffixes, or both can be added to base words to form new words.

- Ask students to identify the base word that can be found in both *undeveloped* and *development* (*develop*). Then have them identify the affixes that have been added (*un-*, *-ment*). Challenge students to use these words in a sentence. Then have students list other prefixes and suffixes.
- Ask them to add prefixes and suffixes to *pack* to form variations of the word.

### Developing Fluency

Model expressive reading of a passage from the book, stressing appropriate pauses. Have students read the passage aloud, paying attention to phrasing and using appropriate expression.

### Oral Language/Conversation

**Talk About Reputation** Lead a discussion about reputation. Have a volunteer look up *reputation* in the dictionary and read the definition aloud. Talk about how a person's reputation may or may not describe his or her character. Discuss Erik's reputation and how people perceived him.

### Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Challenge students to write a diary entry from the point of view of another character in the book, such as Theresa, who shows Paul around the school. **(Narrative)**
- Have students write a page explaining why the sinkhole, termites, and muck fires are metaphors for Paul's life. **(Expository)**

### Other Books

*Report to the Principal's Office* by Jerry Spinelli  
*The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett