

DESMOND PUCKET

MAKES MONSTER MAGIC

MARK TATULLI



TEACHER'S GUIDE

English Language Arts Curriculum Connections

The activities in this guide align with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for grades 3–5.



Andrews McMeel
Publishing®

Desmond Pucket Makes Monster Magic

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AMP! Comics for Kids
Andrews McMeel Publishing
ISBN: 9781449435486

GRADE LEVEL: 3–5

Curriculum Connections

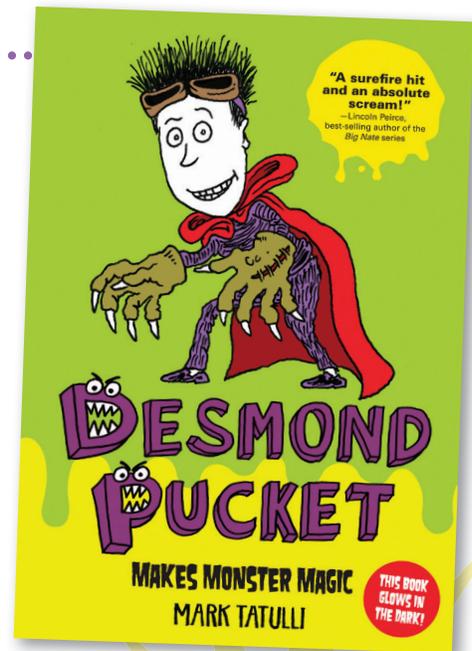
English Language Arts * Art

Thematic Connections

Imagination * Friendship * Family * Inventions *
Betrayal * Monsters * Humor * School * Creativity

Overview

Desmond's world is full of monster magic, including detailed drawings of custom-crafted wriggling worms, goblins that spring from toilets, and elaborate slumber party ghost scares. He's an aspiring special effects wizard with dreams of creating his own dark amusement park rides, just like the Mountain Full of Monsters at Crab Shell Pier he'll be visiting on this year's school field trip. But when Desmond takes his frightful pranks a little too far, he finds himself in trouble and his field trip privileges in danger. Can he clean up his act while staying true to who he is? Students will enjoy and relate to Desmond's imagination and exploits, and the book's humor and originality will inspire class discussion and individual writing exercises.



English Language Arts Lesson Plan

- * Reading comprehension and class discussion
- * Writing: creative writing, research and write reports, character study, opinion essays

Objective

Students will read this title independently, participate in a class discussion about the book, and complete individual writing exercises based on the book.

Reading Comprehension: Class Discussion Questions

- * In the opening pages of the book, Desmond plays a trick on his mother. How quickly do students realize that what is happening is not real? What's the first clue that the author gives to show the reader that it's a trick?

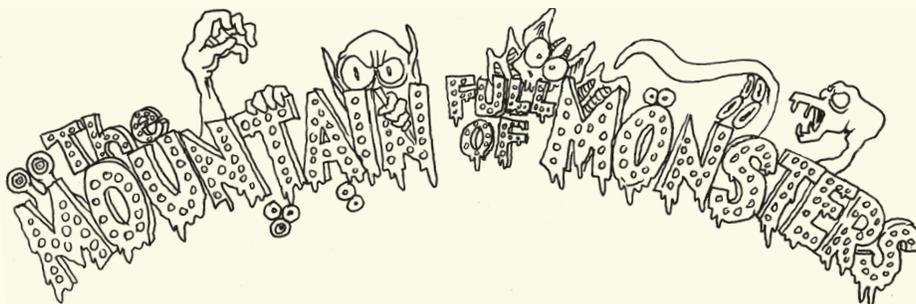
- * Desmond is really looking forward to his first ride on the Mountain Full of Monsters. Do students think he is going to be disappointed when he finally gets there? Why or why not? What could be wrong with the ride experience? Have students ever looked forward to something that did not meet their expectations?
- * Desmond is completely into his monster tricks. Do students understand or do they think he is weird? Do students have a special interest in something, or know someone who does? Have them discuss the pros and cons of being obsessed with something.
- * How many characters from the book can students remember and name? How does the author influence how readers are supposed to feel about some of the characters? Do students agree with what the author suggests? For example, do they hate Mr. Needles?
- * Ask students if they know the definition of “nemesis” and if not, explain. Does Desmond have more than one nemesis in the book? Do students have one or more?
- * How many of Desmond’s tricks can students remember and name? Do students think the tricks would work in the real world? Do they think the tricks would be funny?

Creative Writing

- * One of Desmond’s “last chances” involves joining the school newspaper. Have students write a mock interview with Desmond, as if for a school paper. Then have them write a follow-up interview with the “reformed” Desmond, with quotes from his family and friends.
- * On pages 14 and 15, Desmond imagines what the Mountain Full of Monsters ride is like. Ask students to invent their own “dark ride.” Have them name it, describe it in detail, and write some “promotional copy” inviting visitors to try the ride. Alternatively, ask students to describe in detail the best rides they’ve ever been on. Bonus: Have them read their descriptions to the class.
- * At Rachel’s slumber party, the girls tell a “Bloody Mary” story (page 43.) Have students write their own stories, following the outline provided by Desmond.
- * While Desmond and Ricky are eating lunch in the rain, they make up an origin story about Sloppy Joe sandwiches. Have students create their own origin story. Bonus: Read the story to the class.

Research and Write a Report

- * The boys’ story about the first Sloppy Joe was very entertaining, but just how did the Sloppy Joe sandwich really get its name? Have students research and write a report.
- * Desmond’s focus on monster tricks might prepare him for future success in a career. Have students research possible careers for Desmond and summarize what they find.
- * Desmond is confident that the Mountain Full of Monsters ride is going to be terrific. Have students research the best scary amusement park rides, write a report about them, and present to the class.



Character Studies

- ✱ Have students list every character in the story and write two sentences about each of them, identifying the character “type”: hero, villain, sidekick, etc., examining what elements of that character contribute to the humor of the story.
- ✱ Which of the characters do students believe is the most fully developed besides Desmond? Why? What makes that character important to the story? What character could have been left out of the story?

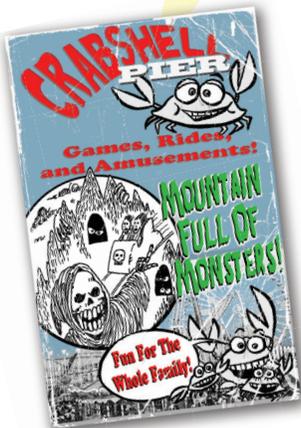
What’s Your Opinion?

- ✱ The adventures of Desmond are told in a “diary” format. Ask students who have read other books in this genre (*Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, *Timmy Failure*) to compare one of those to this book. Which one is funnier? Which main character do they like better? Which nemesis is meaner? Which one has more interesting art?
- ✱ Diary fiction is told from a first-person point of view. Do students prefer this to a third-person story? How would Desmond’s story be different if his sister Rachel was telling it? If one of his teachers were telling it?
- ✱ This book uses both art and text to tell the story. In students’ opinions, how does this enhance the story, or detract from it? Does the art make the story funnier or scarier? Is it easier to visualize the characters since the author/artist is showing us what they look like, or would students prefer to imagine the characters themselves?
- ✱ Do students like “new” Desmond or “old” Desmond better? Why? Which one would make a better friend? A better sibling? A better student?

Other Curriculum Connections

Art

- ✱ Have students write and draw a first chapter of their own diary title, introducing themselves.
- ✱ Desmond has his own logo (page 5): Desmond Pucket “Gourmet of Gore.” Have students design a logo and tagline for themselves or for a friend.
- ✱ In the creative writing section, students invented their own “dark ride.” Now have them draw their brochure or flyer to market the ride (as Desmond does on page 7).



English Language Arts Standards this guide aligns with:

Grade 3

Reading: RL.3.1, RL.3.3, RL.3.6, RL.3.7

Writing: W.3.1, W.3.1a, W.3.1b, W.3.1c, W.3.1d, W.3.10

Speaking and Listening: SL.3.1, SL.3.1a, SL.3.1b, SL.3.1c, SL.3.1d, SL.3.6

Language: L.3.2, L.3.2a, L.3.2e, L.3.2f, L.3.2g, L.3.3, L.3.3a, L.3.3b

Grade 4

Reading: RL.4.1, RL.4.3, RL.4.6

Writing: W.4.1, W.4.1a, W.4.1b, W.4.1c, W.4.1d, W.4.4, W.4.7, W.4.10

Speaking and Listening: SL.4.1, SL.4.1a, SL.4.1b, SL.4.1c, SL.4.1d, SL.4.4

Language: L.4.2, L.4.2a, L.4.2d, L.4.3, L.4.3a, L.4.3b, L.4.3c

Grade 5

Reading: RL.5.1, RL.5.3, RL.5.6, RL.5.7

Writing: W.5.1, W.5.1a, W.5.1b, W.5.1c, W.5.1d, W.5.4, W.5.7, W.5.10

Speaking and Listening: L.5.1, SL.5.1a, SL.5.1b, SL.5.1c, SL.5.1d

Language: L.5.1, L.5.2, L.5.2e, L.5.3, L.5.3a, L.5.3b

Visit the Common Core State Standards website to read about the individual standards:

www.corestandards.org/the-standards.

