Curriculum Guide

*Dusty Dabbert: The Secret Animal Kingdom* by Thom Roep, illustrated by Piet Wijn

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Graphic Novel

Ages: 6-11

Grade level equivalent:3

Interest level by grade: 1-5

Guided reading level: O

Educational Description

Graphic novel picture books, animal fantasy, adventure tale. Story elements: setting animal worlds, plot and character development, vivid and detailed illustrations enhance meaning and tone, humorous, figurative language: simile, metaphor, comprehension strategies: identify different perspectives and point of view, changes from beginning to end of the story, and cause and effect relationships, compare and contrast, make text to text and text to world connections. Themes: good vs. evil, curiosity, exploration, peace vs. unrest, the power of kindness, hospitality to strangers

CCSS/Instructional Strand: W.3.3,3a,3b,3c,3d,4,8,10; SL.3.1,1c,1d,2,3,4,5,6; RF.3.3,3b,3c,3d,4,4a,4c; L.3.3,4,4,4a,5,5a,5b,5c,6; RI.3.1,2,3,4,5,6,7,10

Focusing on plot/meaning:

What kind of community does Dusty discover when he finds the secret animal kingdom? How do the animals get along? Are there rules that the animals follow? Is there a culture that makes it easy for all the animals to live together in peace?

Could people live the way the animals do? What makes the animal kingdom special?

How does Dusty react to the way the animals live? Compare/contrast that to how Carl Craven reacts to the animals.

What is the problem that the animals must solve? How do they escape from Carl Craven? How does Dusty help them?

Character development:

How is the character of Dusty established? When you first see him, what is he doing, how does he act?

How is the character of Carl Craven established? What does he do or say to give you a sense of his personality? How does he treat his servant?

How is the character of Bam established? Is he a good king or a bad king? Does he take care of the animals or use them as servants?

Themes:

Fairness, compassion, equality, good vs. evil

Describe how the animals live together in peace and how they treat each other. Compare/contrast that to how Carl Craven wants them to live.

How does Dusty react when he first sees Carl Craven? Is he worried for himself or for the animals? Does he think the animals might consider him a bad human the way Carl Craven is? Point to places in the story where you can see what Dusty thinks/feels.

Visual narrative:

The illustrator creates a rich fairy tale world first where Dusty lives and then where the animals live. What details does the art show in the first pages that give you a sense of where Dusty is traveling? What details do you see in the animal kingdom that give you a sense of that world?

Pick a few of the animal characters to describe. For example, what sense do you get of the frog? The bear? The wolves? The rabbits?

Cause and effect:

How does Carl Craven trap the animals?

How does Dusty trap Carl?

Are there other tricks you can find in the story?

Beginnings, middle, endings:

How does the story start? Is there a problem being set out? A character being described? What is the mood at the beginning?

The middle is complicated with a lot of things happening. Draw a story line and plot what happens. There are two parallel threads – what Dusty is doing and what Carl is doing. How do the threads meet? What is the mood in the middle? Is there tension? Is there a sense of drama, a sense of humor?

Is the ending satisfying? Why or why not? Did you guess that Dusty would play the trick that he does? Did you think the knapsack would be an important part of the resolution? Go back to the beginning and look at when the knapsack appears and what it does in the story.

What is the mood at the end of the story?

Activities:

Invent your own animal kingdom. What would the rules be? Would there be a king or queen? Would some animals have more power, more wealth than others?

How would you organize your kingdom if you wanted it to be a peaceful one? What elements are important for there to be peace?

What would happen if something or someone disrupted your kingdom? What if there was a big earthquake? What if an enemy found the kingdom? How would your kingdom react?