

Instructor Resource Guide: Mysterious Stories

The following activities and resources were selected to support classroom instruction and family literacy engagement. In addition to these instructor resources, each book in the collection has three short engagement activities for adults and families.

Suggestions for Using the Collection and Activities

- ◆ Explore the books in the *Mysterious Stories* collection by clicking on the book title in the table below.
- ◆ Notice that the books in the collection provide text across a span of reading levels for adults and include books that are engaging for children and families to read together.
- ◆ Access the short, guided activities for each book that offer suggestions for both instructors and families. You may access the activities by clicking on the book title in the table below. The activities are attached to each book.
- ◆ Allow learners individual time to access the application and explore the collection and guided activities.
- ◆ If using the reading collection for the first time, model how the age and language filters work in the application, and how to locate the search function, so books can be easily found.
- ◆ Decide how you will interact with the topic and curated text collection. This resource guide has suggestions to support in-person instruction and offers online resources for instructors and family engagement. Consider using the materials as starting points for larger units or creative activities to engage with topics and texts.
- ◆ Use this collection and guide to help develop and foster a reading life for your learners and their families!

Engaging Books for Adults		
Book Title	Author	Lexile Reading Level
<i>Ghosts International: Troll and Other Stories</i>	Sarah Walker	510
<i>The Night Telephone</i>	Greta Gorsuch	530

News for You: Are Aliens Watching Us? Study Finds Many Stars With Clear View of Earth	New Readers Press (ProLiteracy)	760
News for You: ¿Están observándonos los extraterrestres? Un estudio halla numerosas estrellas que tienen una vista clara de la Tierra	New Readers Press (ProLiteracy)	660
Engaging Books for Adults and Children		
¿Qué le pasa a Farley? (Lee con Highlights)	Lisa Mackinder	460
The Milo & Jazz Mysteries: The Case of the Stinky Socks	Lewis B. Montgomery	470
What's Wrong with Farley? (Read with Highlights)	Lisa Mackinder	530
Ouch! Things that Sting	Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy	640
Vincent Ventura y el misterio de la bruja lechuza	Xavier Garza	660
Vincent Ventura and the Mystery of the Witch Owl	Xavier Garza	700

Activities to Support Instruction

To explore this topic, consider how you will build anticipation, background knowledge, and schema for your learners about topics regarding *mysterious stories*. To do this, consider addressing the following questions with your learners:

- What does mysterious mean to you?
- What mysterious events have you experienced?
- What types of events do you consider to be mysterious?
- Do you like mysteries? Why or why not?
- Are mysterious stories always scary?

To address those questions, you could have a class discussion. However, there are many more ways to get your learners thinking, collaborating, and actively engaging with each other. To do so, consider any of the following activities:

- **Chat Stations:** Use this strategy to encourage discussions among small groups of learners on a number of different topics to activate their background knowledge about mysterious stories. Set up conversation

starters, or small snippets from short stories around the learning environment to foster collaboration and conversation among all learners.

- [Affinity Mapping](#): This activity will help students make connections to each other's' thinking visually by responding to, categorizing, and linking thoughts and ideas on paper.
- [Anticipation Guides](#): Create anticipation guides for specific texts, concepts, or ideas learners will be exposed to. Then encourage learners to discuss why they put what they did for their responses. This can be done whole-group, small group, or through think-pair-shares.
- [K-W-L Charts](#): These charts can be used with learners in a variety of ways. Complete one whole group, or have learners do them individually and share their responses with each other and/or the whole group. These guides help foster active thinking and serve as a great formative assessment for educators.

While you read the texts, you will want to support your learners with literacy strategies to foster their learning growth. Consider comprehension skills that learners will need to access the texts within the collection. It will also be important for learners to continue building background knowledge. For example, if learners are reading the text, *Ghosts International: Trolls and Other Stories*, consider having them gather information about mysteries and legends from countries around the world. It will also be important for them to have informational context, so consider having them watch short clips of television shows or movies, or read short stories to better understand the reading for deeper comprehension. The following resources and templates will help learners build literacy skills and comprehension as they read:

- [Reciprocal Teaching](#): This strategy will help learners interact with texts by encouraging them to predict, clarify, summarize, and question to deepen their comprehension of text.
- [Think-Aloud](#): This strategy works best when modeled for learners because it shows them what readers do to interact with texts. It can be used with learners of any ability and with any genre of text.
- [Gist Strategy](#): This framework will help readers build their comprehension by giving them specific purposes for reading each time they look at a text. It helps learners summarize, but also to discern the main idea from a text and think about supporting evidence of that main idea.

[Online Resources to Support Instructors](#)

The following resources will help instructors gather more ideas and insights for teaching texts within the *Mysterious Stories* collection:

- [Crime and Puzzlements](#): Use these short mysteries to foster learners' critical thinking as they use text evidence to determine who committed the crime.
- [Build Stronger Critical Thinking Skills with Mysteries](#): This site will provide many links to different lesson plans that use mysteries or the idea of mysteries to promote critical thinking and interdisciplinary content. All can be adapted to learners of all abilities.

- [Everyone Loves a Mystery](#): This unit from ReadWriteThink will provide educators with resources and tools to teach learners all about mysteries.
- [CommonLit](#): This free resource has an entire section of mystery stories about both fiction and nonfiction events and topics for learners of all abilities.

Suggestions for Using the Collection and Activities with Families

These suggestions may be shared directly with adult learners and their families, so they can explore this theme and books together.

- ◆ Choose a book to explore from the *Mysterious Stories* collection.
- ◆ Read and discuss the book with your child. Use *before*, *during*, and *after reading* questions to help your child make connections to themselves and to other parts of their life. The following are some examples:
 - **Before Reading**

Look at the front cover with your child. Explore the pictures and text, and ask them:

 - Does this book remind you of anything?
 - What do we already know about _____?
 - What does the word, “mystery” mean to you?
 - What is an example of a time you experienced something mysterious? How did that go?
 - How do you think mysteries are solved?
 - **During Reading**
 - If you were in this story, what do you think you would be hearing? Seeing? Tasting? Smelling? Feeling?
 - What has happened to the character(s) so far?
 - Have you been in a situation that is similar, or like, the situation the character in the story is in? What was the same for both of you? What was different?
 - What is the mystery this character is trying to solve or experiencing? How do you think it will turn out?
 - What clues do we know so far from the book?
 - **After Reading**
 - Tell me the story in your own words.
 - What would you like to ask the author (or characters) of the book?
 - What did you like most about the story? Why?
 - Would you have done things in a different way than the character in the story did? If so, what would you have done differently?
 - How did this character’s mystery end? Do you think it was a good ending? What would you have changed?
- ◆ After reading the story, you will notice activities at the bottom of the screen. Explore these activities with your child!