

STORYworks®

Teacher's Edition • A Complete Teaching Kit
September 2008

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Welcome Back!

SEPTEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

- **"Lost in a Blizzard"** will captivate your students as they learn about a 19th-century blizzard and a boy who survived against all odds.
- **Newbery-winning *The Tale of Despereaux*** is a new movie, and this month's play gives your students a sneak peak!

- Compare and Contrast the Monkees and the Naked Brothers Band.
- The **Create a Character Contest** is back! Award-winning author Roland Smith needs a character for his next story. Our biggest contest of the year, with nearly 100 prizes for you and your students.
- **PLUS:** Poetry by **Maya Angelou**, paragraph writing, Grammar Cop, Wordworks, and more!

CHECK OUT OUR BEAUTIFUL NEW WEB SITE!

LOG ON TO WWW.SCHOLASTIC.COM/STORYWORKS to find:

- 22 **FREE** standards-based **reproducible skills activities and quizzes** created for the articles in this issue.



- **NEW!** *Storyworks* Activity Library: great activities to use with all *Storyworks* features.

• **Writers' Workshop is back!**

A great reproducible to help your students hone their writing techniques.

- Nationally acclaimed writing expert **Mary Rose** offers special tips!

This Teacher's Edition is available online!

URGENT NEWS ABOUT OUR ONLINE ANSWER KEYS!

You will find the answer keys for online reproducibles on a separate Web site: www.scholastic.com/storyworksanswerkey. This comes in response to complaints from many teachers that their crafty students were finding answers online. In addition, you will find the magazine's answer key on that Web site, though those answers are also printed on page T7 of this Teacher's Edition.

September at a Glance

Major Features	Language Arts Standards and Skills Development	Web Reproducibles
<p>Poetry, p. 3 “Three Skies” By CLAUDIA LEWIS</p>	<p>Primary Standards and Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading comprehension • Analyzing poetic language • Predicting • Critical thinking <p>Other standards and skills: making inferences, visual literacy, writing to prompts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension Quiz • Critical Thinking Questions • Poetry Writing
<p>Nonfiction, p. 10 “Lost in a Blizzard” By LAUREN TARSHIS</p> <p>Writing Activity: Sentence Chef: Paragraph writing activity</p>	<p>Primary Standards and Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding setting • Understanding character’s motivations • Comparing and contrasting • Identifying themes • Drawing conclusions <p>Other standards and skills: understanding details, foreshadowing clues, identifying supporting details, writing to prompts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension Quiz • Writers’ Workshop: Descriptions • Critical Thinking Questions • Vocabulary • Fact/Opinion
<p>Fiction, p. 18 “The Day the Worms Moved In” By MARLANE KENNEDY</p> <p>Writing Activity: Reader Response: Paragraph writing activity</p>	<p>Primary Standards and Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding character • Making inferences • Identifying main idea • Crosscurricular content • Identifying important details <p>Other standards and skills: critical thinking, comparing and contrasting, cause and effect, writing to prompts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension Quiz • Critical Thinking Questions • Vocabulary • Understanding Character
<p>Play, p. 24 “The Tale of Despereaux” ADAPTED FROM SCREENPLAY BASED ON THE BOOK BY KATE DICAMILLO</p>	<p>Primary Standards and Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparing and contrasting • Understanding character • Understanding setting • Predicting • Understanding literary devices (symbolism) <p>Other standards and skills: identifying genre, cause and effect, understanding plot, writing to prompts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension Quiz • Critical Thinking Questions • Vocabulary • Cause/Effect
<p>Poetry, p. 32 “Life Doesn’t Frighten Me” By MAYA ANGELOU</p>	<p>Primary Standards and Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding poetic structure • Identifying main idea • Making inferences • Author study <p>Other standards and skills: writing to prompts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension Quiz • Critical Thinking Questions • Meet the Poet: Maya Angelou (synonyms)

Departments and Skills Pages

Crossword Puzzle
Vocabulary
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Grammar Cop
Homophones
page 5

Writing Rescue!
Punctuation
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Sentence Chef
Paragraph Writing
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Yesterday & Today
Compare/Contrast
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Reader Response
Paragraph Writing
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Wordworks
Parts of Speech
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Bubble Test
Test Taking
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Three Skies p. 3



SUMMARY

This simple poem ends with a big question: what lies beyond the skies we see?

Students will enjoy pondering the poem's philosophical aspects.

LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

- Reading comprehension
- Analyzing poetic language
- Predicting
- Critical thinking

MAIN TEACHING OBJECTIVES

After reading this poem, students should be able to:

- explain what the three different skies described in the poem are
- describe the language the poem uses
- discuss the question posed at the end

BEFORE READING

Predicting: Have students read the title of the poem and look at the illustration accompanying it. What do they think “Three Skies” means? What different skies do they predict will be discussed in the poem? What other skies can they think of?

DURING READING

Examining language: Read the poem aloud. As students listen, what do they notice about the language? Is it complicated? Does the poet use whole sentences? Rhymes? What words are repeated? Is the vocabulary sophisticated or ordinary? What effect does it create?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS/ WRITING PROMPTS

- What three colors of sky does the poem describe? What does each one represent? (reading comprehension)

Grey sky is what we see overhead; blue sky is above the clouds; black sky is in space.

- You can figure out that the narrator of the poem is imagining moving in what direction through the sky? (making inferences) *upward or vertically*
- What is the significance of the zipper in the illustration? (visual literacy) *It shows how the narrator is mentally unzipping or moving upward through the layers of sky, thinking about what lies above.*
- What does the poem ask in its last line? What are your own ideas for answering this question? (paraphrasing/critical thinking) *The poem asks what lies beyond space; answers will vary.*

AFTER READING

Writing a poem from a different point of view: Ask students to imagine that rather than looking up at the sky, they are on an airplane looking down. Have

Life Doesn't Frighten Me p. 32



SUMMARY

This empowering poem by Maya Angelou was first published in her collection *And Still I Rise* in 1978. It radiates the universal idea

of embracing life rather than running away from it.

LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

- Understanding poetic structure
- Identifying main idea
- Making inferences
- Author study

MAIN TEACHING OBJECTIVES

After reading this poem, students should be able to:

- discuss the structure of the poem and how it affects the meaning
- discuss who the narrator might be
- make text-to-self connections

- be familiar with Maya Angelou

BEFORE READING

Author study: Explain to students that Maya Angelou has written poetry and songs; produced, directed, and acted in plays and films; and worked as a civil rights activist. In 1993, she delivered her poem, “On the Pulse of Morning,” for Bill Clinton’s presidential inauguration. She has written six memoirs, including *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. She is a history professor at Wake Forest University in North Carolina.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS/ WRITING PROMPTS

- What line or variation of it is repeated throughout the poem? What effect does this repetition have? (understanding poetic structure) *“Life doesn't frighten me at all,” is repeated. The repetition*

works to make the point to the reader, but it also seems that the narrator is convincing himself or herself of it too; it becomes true through the process of repeating it.

- What are some of the experiences that don't frighten the narrator? Who might be frightened by these things? Who could the narrator be? (making inferences) *Some experiences include seeing scary shadows and hearing noises, imagining dragons and scaring them away. These are things that might scare a child, so the narrator is probably a young child.*
- Even though the poem is written in the voice of a young child, how do you think it appeals to people of all ages? What is its universal message? (identifying main idea) *Even though people's fears change, we still have them and we can still be bold in the face of them.*



Reproducibles

Skills and Test-Prep Online

Go to www.scholastic.com/storyworks to print out the following activities that can be used with these poems:

THREE SKIES

- Comprehension Quiz
- Critical Thinking Questions
- Poetry Writing

LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME

- Comprehension Quiz
- Critical Thinking Questions
- Meet the Poet: Maya Angelou (Synonyms)

**SUMMARY**

The whipping winds and massive snowfall of a blizzard demonstrate one of nature's furious phenomena. The blizzard that swept across the Northern Prairie in January 1888 showed its wrath to schoolchildren in particular. Students will be spellbound by this gripping nonfiction.

LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

- Understanding setting
- Understanding character's motivations
- Comparing and contrasting
- Identifying themes
- Drawing conclusions

MAIN TEACHING OBJECTIVES

After reading this story, students should be able to:

- recognize the power of the Blizzard of 1888 and people's helplessness against nature
- describe conditions in the Northern Prairie, both in ordinary times and during the blizzard
- explain why children were especially affected by this storm
- retell what happened to Walter Allen; discuss his actions and motivations
- compare weather forecasting in 1888 and today

BEFORE READING

Examining text features: Have students peruse the drawings, photos, and captions that accompany this article. Invite them to describe what they see. Which image do they find most interesting? Why? What can they predict will happen in the article? Based on the images and captions, how would they describe the Blizzard of 1888?

DURING READING

Following Walter: This article describes the effects of a major blizzard in the Great Plains, partly through the experiences of one boy. Help students separate and follow the story of Walter Allen by asking them to make notes and summarize his main actions throughout the article. Have them number a paper from 1 to 5 and fill in each line with important details for

retelling his story. For example, you might want to suggest the first one for students as, "Walter gets up and goes to school on an unusually warm morning."

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS/
WRITING PROMPTS**

- Why were children happy to get up and go to school on January 12, 1888? (understanding details) *They had been stuck at home in very cold temperatures for two weeks; it was finally warm.*
- According to the story, what did the sky look like? What did it mean? Have you ever seen conditions around you that gave you clues that bad weather was coming? Describe them. (foreshadowing clues) *The sky was golden and covered with light clouds, which signaled the coming blizzard; answers will vary.*
- What was the weather prediction for the day? How do you think the prediction would be different if it were made today? Why? (comparing and contrasting) *The prediction was for fair weather. Today it's more likely they would have predicted the storm because meteorologists use radar and other advanced instruments.*
- What details in the story illustrate how sudden and terrible the blizzard was? (identifying supporting details) *The sky suddenly turned dark, the schoolhouse shook, it became impossible to see anything in the snow, and so forth.*
- Why was Walter's perfume bottle so important to him? If he realized how great the risk of trying to save it was, do you think he still would have done it? Explain your answer. (understanding character's motivation) *The bottle was important because it was different from everyone else's, and it looked like a pirate's treasure. Answers will vary.*
- What states are mentioned in this article? What was winter ordinarily like in this region? (understanding setting) *The article mentions South Dakota (or the Dakota territory), Minnesota, and Nebraska. The map also shows Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri. Winters were long, cold, dark, snowy, and windy.*
- The Blizzard of 1888 is often called the Schoolchildren's Blizzard. Based on what you read in this article, explain why this is an appropriate name for the storm. (drawing conclusions) *It affected*

schoolchildren because they went to school on a warm day and were trapped in the storm when it hit during school hours.

- What lesson(s) do you think Walter Allen learned when he regained consciousness? (identifying theme) *He learned that no physical object is more important than your life, the value of family, and the power of nature over humans.*

WRITING A SCENE

Ask students to imagine that a major studio is making a movie about the Blizzard of 1888. Arrange them in pairs, and have them choose one part of the article to rewrite as a movie scene. Their scene may include dialogue and narration describing the events.

EXPLORING BLIZZARDS

Invite students to do research to find out about blizzards. Have them discover what forms a blizzard and learn about other significant blizzards of the past.

WRITING PROMPTS

Expository: Choose one person from this article and explain in what ways he or she is a hero. Use details from the story to support your choice.

Narrative: Think about the most harrowing weather situation you have experienced and write a personal narrative telling what it was like. Make the story come to life by including examples of what happened or what you did.

**Reproducibles**

Skills and Test-Prep Online

Go to www.scholastic.com/storyworks to print out the following activities that can be used with this article:

- Comprehension Quiz
- Writers' Workshop: Descriptions
- Critical Thinking Questions
- Vocabulary
- Fact/Opinion

**SUMMARY**

Maddie has been terrified of worms since she was in kindergarten, so when her mother creates a composting bin in the garage, it brings out the worst in her. But an unexpected event makes her realize she can overcome her fear.

LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

- Understanding character
- Making inferences
- Identifying main idea
- Crosscurricular content
- Identifying important details

MAIN TEACHING OBJECTIVES

After reading this story, students should be able to:

- describe Maddie's character, including how she feels about worms, why, and what makes her change
- identify important elements of plot
- understand the main idea of overcoming a fear
- understand concepts of composting

BEFORE READING

Discussing phobias: Have students look at the title of this story, and ask them what they think it means. Explain that a phobia is a strong, irrational fear of an object or a situation that normally poses little threat. Some common phobias include claustrophobia (fear of confined spaces), acrophobia (fear of heights), and ophidiophobia (fear of snakes). Ask volunteers to share their fears. Reassure the class that a phobia is problematic only when it interferes with daily-life.

DURING READING

Understanding composting: Students might be unfamiliar with composting or the role of worms in it. Explain that composting is a process by which organic material (like food scraps or plant cuttings) changes to nutrient-rich soil. In nature, worms play a key role in preparing soil for things to grow. Inside a composting bin, worms eat food scraps, digest them, and excrete them as fertile soil that is great for gardens. **Have students learn more about worms and composting at <http://yucky.discovery.com/flash/worm/index.html>.**

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS/
WRITING PROMPTS**

- Why is Maddie so afraid of worms? Do you think worms are actually harmful? Why or why not? Why do you think many people react negatively to worms? (critical thinking) *Maddie is afraid because in kindergarten a classmate put a night crawler in her hands. Worms are generally not harmful, but they appear to many as slimy or disgusting.*
- Why does Maddie keep her worm phobia secret? (making inferences) *She is afraid her brothers or kids at school will tease her or possibly taunt her with worms.*
- How are Mom's feelings about the worms different from Maddie's? What accounts for this difference? (comparing and contrasting) *Mom enjoys the worms and cares for them as pets, perhaps because she understands that they will help provide good soil for her garden.*
- What are some details that illustrate Maddie's adverse reaction to worms? Do you feel similarly toward anything? (identifying details) *Worms make her feel like she is in the path of an oncoming train; she feels sick looking at her spaghetti; she hates having them in the living room; and she thinks she'll faint if she sees one in the dirt. Answers will vary.*
- What do you learn about Maddie when she decides to take her toast tidbits to the composting bin instead of throwing it away? (understanding character) *Even though she fears the worms, she doesn't want to disrupt her mother's project; her mother has taught her why composting is important.*
- What choices does Maddie consider when she sees that worms are escaping from the compost bin? What does the choice she makes show? (making inferences) *Maddie considers walking away to let the worms die or trying to get help for them. She gets help, which shows she cares about her mother and about the worms.*
- Why did the worms crawl out of the drainage holes? (cause and effect) *They got cold, and they instinctively burrowed down to try to keep warm.*
- How do you think Maddie felt as she gathered up the worms? (understanding character) *Answers will vary, but students might suggest that she felt both "grossed*

out" and proud of herself.

- What main message do you think the author would like you to take away from this story? (identifying main idea) *It is possible to overcome your fears.*

INTERVIEWING A CLASSMATE

In this story, Maddie must be brave to face the worm cleanup. Invite students to think of a time they did something they consider brave. In pairs, have students interview each other about what they did. Make sure they find out what happened, who was involved, and where and when it occurred. Finally, have them prepare a brief presentation to share what they learned with the class.

**GRAPHIC ORGANIZER
(CAUSE AND EFFECT)**

Composting can involve an ongoing cycle in which food waste becomes soil to grow more food, and so on. **Help students understand this cycle with our graphic organizer at www.scholastic.com/storyworks.**

WRITING PROMPTS

Expository: Ask students to write about a fear or phobia they have, and something they have done to overcome it. If they feel they haven't overcome a fear, have them write about what they would like to overcome and how they think they might do it.

Narrative: Invite students to create a character that has a phobia and write a story based around the character's fear. **They can find out more about phobias at <http://www.kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/phobias.html>.**

**Reproducibles**

Skills and Test-Prep Online

Go to www.scholastic.com/storyworks to print out the following activities that can be used with this story:

- Comprehension Quiz
- Critical Thinking Questions
- Vocabulary
- Understanding Character

**SUMMARY**

The Tale of Despereaux, the Newbery Medal-winning novel by Kate DiCamillo, is coming to the big screen soon! Give your students a sneak peek with our *Storyworks* adaptation of the movie!

LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

- Comparing and contrasting
- Understanding character
- Understanding setting
- Predicting
- Understanding literary devices (symbolism)

MAIN TEACHING OBJECTIVES

After reading this play, students should be able to:

- describe the characters of Despereaux and Roscuro, and discuss what they have in common
- compare the rats to the mice
- understand the role of light, open places versus dark, hidden places
- identify important events in the story and remember their order
- predict what will happen as the story continues

BEFORE READING

Author study: Ask students what they have read previously by Kate DiCamillo. They might be familiar with *Because of Winn Dixie*, *The Tiger Rising*, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, or others. Ask if anyone has read *The Tale of Despereaux*. Give students an opportunity to recommend a DiCamillo book they have read to classmates, and tell one thing they liked about it. **They can learn more about the author at <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/read.jsp>, then click on All About Authors and search for Kate DiCamillo.**

DURING READING

Comparing settings/Understanding symbolism: As students read, ask them to notice where each scene takes place and where different characters prefer to be. Guide them with these questions: Where do the rats live? Where do the mice live?

What do these places have in common? Where does Despereaux like to go? How does Roscuro feel about the dungeon? Where does Roscuro want Despereaux to take him? What do you think dark, hidden places represent? What do you think light, open places represent?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS/ WRITING PROMPTS

- In the first scene, the Kingdom of Dor is preparing for a holiday. What genre, or kind of story, does the scene suggest the play will be? Why? (identifying genre) *The scene suggests the story will be like a fairy tale because there is a castle, a kingdom, a King, a Queen, a Princess, and an important royal event.*
- Roscuro is different from other rats. What details from the story show how he is different? (understanding character) *Roscuro is a cultured rat who likes fine things like good soup. He is a world traveler, whereas other rats live in darkness and filth.*
- What are most of the rats like? What are most of the mice like? How are they the same and different? (comparing and contrasting) *Most of the rats are mean and dirty. The mice are meek and scared. They both live in hidden places, but the rats are more aggressive.*
- What details show how Despereaux is different from other mice? (understanding character) *He is brave, curious, and a dreamer, while the other mice live in fear.*
- Why does Despereaux talk to Princess Pea? What happens because of it? (cause and effect) *He talks to her because she is like the princess in the story he read, and the story enchants him. As a result, he is sent to the dungeon.*
- What does Roscuro want from Despereaux? Why? (understanding plot) *He wants Despereaux to take him to the Princess so he can apologize to her for falling in the Queen's soup.*
- What do you predict will happen next in the story? How do you think it will end? (predicting) *Answers will vary.*

AFTER READING

Making a Storyboard: Help students re-

member important events and their order by having them make a storyboard of the play. First, work together as a class to pick out the important events. Which ones are crucial to the story? After listing them on the board or chart paper, have students illustrate each one in order, in a storyboard or comic-book box style.

CHANGING THE KINGDOM OF DOR

Arrange students in small groups, and ask them to discuss what they would change about the Kingdom of Dor if they had the opportunity. Make sure they can explain why they think their change is important. Then have groups share their ideas with the class.

WRITING PROMPTS

Persuasive: Ask students to imagine they are citizens of Dor. Have them write a speech persuading the King why soup should no longer be banned and National Soup Day should be brought back as a holiday.

Expository: Roscuro and Despereaux are both unlike their peers in some ways. Invite students to write about a way they are unlike their peers, and what is special about it.

Letter: Have students pretend they are Roscuro writing a letter of apology to Princess Pea. What would the letter say?

**Reproducibles**

Skills and Test-Prep Online

Go to www.scholastic.com/storyworks to print out the following activities that can be used with this play:

- Comprehension Quiz
- Critical Thinking Questions
- Vocabulary
- Cause/Effect

Create a Character Contest

My name: _____ Age: _____

Teacher's name: _____ Grade: _____

School: _____

School address: _____

School phone number: _____ Home phone number: _____

(Remember to include your area code and ZIP!) See page 8 of the September *Storyworks* for rules to this contest.

My Character

1. My character's name: _____ Age: _____

2. Where my character lives: _____

3. My character's hobbies, skills, and dreams: _____

4. The biggest problem my character has ever faced, and how he or she solved it:

5. How my character might grow in the story: _____

6. What my character looks like: _____

7. Other information you should know about my character: _____

Please continue on another piece of paper if you need more room.