

Grade 4 Unit 1 The Maze of Bones (39 Clues Series)

Synopsis:

When Old Grace Cahill kicks the bucket, her will reveals the first in a series of secrets that will take her heirs on an adventure around the world. Key among them are Amy and Dan Cahill, a brother and sister team determined to discover Grace's secrets. With the help of their glitter eye shadow-wearing, nose-ring-rocking au pair, Nellie, the three of them travel to Philadelphia and Paris on the trail of that guy on the front of the \$100 bill: [Benjamin Franklin](#).

Big Ideas and Key Understanding:

Family

Exploration

Loyalty

Good vs. Evil

Key Words and Vocabulary activities:

Intricate

Catacombs

Mozart

Au Pair

Mourners

Armonica

Orb

Draw a picture of the Cahills in a scene from the book using 4 of the vocabulary words listed above.

Pre-Reading Questions:

What's up with the Title? Where do you think the Cahills will be led in this book?

Read book:

Discussion Questions:

1. What are Amy and Dan's individual strengths and weaknesses? How do they complement each other as a team?
2. How do Amy and Dan change and grow over the course of the story?
3. Why does Rick Riordan show other teams' perspectives instead of just focusing on Amy and Dan? Do those perspectives add anything?
4. Why did Grace keep the competition a secret from Amy and Dan?

Extension Activities:

Go on the websites listed below and see how many questions you get right!

<http://www.shmoop.com/maze-of-bones/quotes-quiz.html>

<http://www.shmoop.com/maze-of-bones/symbols-quiz.html>

Write an alternative ending to this book!

Grade 4 Unit 1 Because of Mr. Terupt by Rob Buyea

Synopsis

It is the beginning of fifth grade, and Mr. Terupt is a brand new teacher. He has his hands full with seven distinctive voices in his class: Jessica is the smart, new girl who isn't quite fitting in. Luke is the brain. Anna has a home life she's embarrassed about and just wants to disappear. Peter is the class clown, who can't seem to sit down and focus. Lexie is a bully who feels that the best defense is a good offense. Jeffery just hates school, and nobody really knows why. Overweight Danielle can't ever seem to stand up for herself. Only Mr. Terupt seems able to reach his students, and things are beginning to look up for each of them until a fateful winter day where an accident occurs that will change everything and everyone.

Big Ideas and Key Understanding:

Bullying

Moving and Relocation

Value of Family

Self-Confidence

Infidelity

Forgiveness

Key Words and Vocabulary Activities:

Betrayed

Ostracized

Shunned

Genuine

Thrive

Intervene

Malicious

Make a wheel with a spinner that includes the following phrases:

Act it Out!

Spell it!

Draw it!

Use it in a Sentence!

Using each of the vocabulary words, spin the wheel and see where it lands!

Pre-Reading Questions:

How would you describe an exceptional teacher?

What kind of effect do they have on their students?

Have you ever been in a class where the teacher didn't seem to care about their students? If so, what was the effect on the class?

Read the book:

Discussion Questions:

- Alexia says "It's always easier for me to lie when I don't have to look at the person's eyes." **Why do you think Alexia feels like she needs to lie? Do you ever feel like lying would help you make friends?**

- Danielle deals a lot with Alexia bullying her about her weight. Danielle's mom tells her that "It's making you a better person and someday this experience will help you." **Do you agree with Danielle's mom?**
- Mr. Terupt says "I've watch Alexia be unpleasant to all of you. I hoped that one of you was going to stand up to her and tell her to stop. You didn't...If you let people get away with being mean, they're going to keep being mean... You should stand by each other. That's what being friends is all about." **Do you think that Mr. Terupt was right? How do you handle bullies?**

Extension Activities:

Imagine Mr. Terupt is your teacher. How would he handle the kids in your class?

Watch the following video preview of the sequel to Because of Mr Terupt; what are your predictions for Mr. Terupt Falls Again?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9G9w--5RZw>

Create a comic strip based on the book Because of Mr. Terupt !

Create a one-act play based on your favorite chapter of the book.