

Educator Discussion Guide

Big Foot Is Missing!

By J. Patrick Lewis and Kenn Nesbit

Illustrations by MinaLima

Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Nominee 2018

Grade 3-5

Submitted by Stacy Wren

School of Library and Information Science, LSU, Baton Rouge

ABOUT THE BOOK

“Cryptozoology is the study of hidden animals, or those whose real existence has not yet been proven.” (J. Patrick Lewis & Kenn Nesbit) This book takes a look at several cryptids. Each page includes illustrations in different formats, such as milk cartons, newspaper want ads, and traffic citations, each examining one of these different creatures, including Bigfoot, Dingonek, Chupacabra, and the Loch Ness Monster.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

J. Patrick Lewis is a former U.S. Children’s Poet Laureate (2011-2013), and winner of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) 2011 Excellence in Children’s Poetry Award. Before writing full-time, he was a professor of economics. His children’s poetry often focuses on science-related and historical topics. Lewis lives in Ohio.

Biographical information taken from author’s website at

<http://www.jpatricklewis.com/>

Kenn Nesbit is a former Children’s Poet Laureate (2013-2015). He is the author of 18 books of poetry for children, published by Scholastic, Sourcebooks, Chronicle Books, and others. He attended National University and majored in Computer Science, and, prior to writing poetry full time, worked as a software engineer. Nesbit currently lives in Spokane, Washington.

Biographical information taken from author’s website at

<http://www.poetry4kids.com/>

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATORS

MinaLima is the design team of Miraphora Mina and Eduardo Lima. Mina is a graduate of Theatre Design from London’s Central Saint Martins School of Art, and Lima earned a degree in Visual Communications from Pontifical Universidad e Catolica, Rio de Janeiro. They met when they collaborated as graphic designers for the Harry Potter films. Together, they also designed all

of the graphic elements for The Wizarding World of Harry Potter - Diagon Alley at Universal Orlando Resort, and most recently designed props for the *film Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. Mina and Lima live and run their art studio in London.

Biographical information taken from illustrator's website at <http://store.minalima.com/>

PREREADING ACTIVITIES

Discussion

Look up the meaning of the words cryptozoology and cryptid. In small groups, discuss at least one cryptid story you've read or heard about. What evidence exists that this creature is real? What makes you think it's imaginary? Is this creature frightening, funny, or just plain strange? Why? (Taken from Teacher Study Guide at http://www.chroniclebooks.com/landing-pages/pdfs/poetrypicture_teachersguide_update.pdf)

Poem and Illustration

Have students draw a picture of a cryptid of their choosing, based only on descriptions they have heard. Have them write out a description of their creature in a poetic form.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Identify one cryptid from the collection with which you are the most familiar. Discuss in small groups what new "fantastic facts" you have learned about this creature. (Taken from Teacher Study Guide at http://www.chroniclebooks.com/landing-pages/pdfs/poetrypicture_teachersguide_update.pdf)
2. Which cryptid seems the most believable to you? Why? Use information from the poem to support your response. (Taken from Teacher Study Guide at http://www.chroniclebooks.com/landing-pages/pdfs/poetrypicture_teachersguide_update.pdf)
3. Discuss one poem from the collection as a class without looking at the illustration. Then, with a partner, draw your own illustration of the cryptid. Compare to MinaLima's illustration when you're done. What information do you notice or gain from the original illustrations? (Taken from Teacher Study Guide at http://www.chroniclebooks.com/landing-pages/pdfs/poetrypicture_teachersguide_update.pdf)
4. What do you think was scratching on the door in the poem about the Beast of Bodmin Moor? What specifically from the poem or illustration makes you think so?
5. Would you visit Waza National Park? Use an example from the book to tell why or why not.
6. Would you want to adopt Baby Luscas from the classified ads? Explain your answer using an example from the book.
7. Reread the poem about the Dingonek. Describe the cryptid using a bulleted list made up of one-word descriptions.
8. Who would be least likely to want a Chupacabra as a pet? What in the poem tells you that?
9. If you were to visit the Republic of the Congo, what might you encounter and where? What makes you think that?

10. Look at the cover of the book. Why do you think this cryptid was chosen for the cover? What cryptid would you put on the cover? Why?
11. Do think you a spray such as Moth-Away would really work on cryptids? Why or why not? Give proof from the book.
12. All the other cryptids had poems on their pages. Why do you think the Giant Anaconda didn't?
13. Why did Goatman receive a citation? What would you have done if you were the policeman? Why?
14. Why does the book suggest not sharing your cotton candy with Nandi Bear?
15. Many of the cryptids in the book are said to be found in remote places, such as swamps, lakes or jungles. Why do you think that is the case?

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

Art:

Imagine your very own cryptid. Where does this creature live? What does it eat? Is it small, or large? Does it have scales, fur, or feathers? Let your imagination run wild! Next, create a "Missing!" sign for a creature you invented. Make sure to include all identifying information for the creature, where it was last seen, if there is a reward, and who to contact if found.

Language Arts:

Instruct students to name their cryptid and write the name vertically down a loose-leaf sheet of paper. Direct the students to write acrostic poems using the name of their cryptid. (In acrostic poetry, most commonly, the first letter of each line, when read vertically, spells out the subject of the poem. You can also use the middle or end of the line. Follow this link for examples of acrostic poetry: <https://www.youngwriters.co.uk/types-acrostic>

Working in pairs or small groups, students will write a short news report on a sighting of their cryptids, and read it aloud to the class, pretending to be news anchors. Be sure to incorporate new vocabulary words from the book. Or, you have the option of making this a longer, at-home project and instructing the student groups create videos to be shown in class later.

P.E.:

A cryptid relay race! Teacher will make or purchase "Bigfoot's Feet". (Cut large feet out of cardboard, attach adjustable strap for students to strap to their feet). Students will divide into two teams and race wearing Bigfoot's feet. Students can then race crab-crawling like Dingonek, bear crawling like Black Shuck, and slithering like the Giant Anaconda!

Math:

Students will choose one cryptid to do further research on. They will record some of the reported measurements of the cryptid on paper. (Height, weight, foot size, etc.) They will then estimate and make a list of commonly known things that are the same size as the cryptid's measurements. For example: Big Foot is as tall as two 6-foot-tall men, the Giant Anaconda is as long as 2.5 school buses, etc.

Science:

Working in small groups, assign a cryptid to each group for the students to research. Students will read historical accounts concerning the cryptid. Following the scientific method, instruct students to form a hypothesis about the cryptid’s existence. Do these historical accounts stand up scientifically? Ask students to provide evidence, and, if possible, reach a conclusion concerning the cryptid.

VOCABULARY

Cryptozoology	Swamp	Newfangled	Romps
Ngoubou	Cryptid	Chupacabra	Savage
Safari	Tormented	Evidence	Destruction
Runt	Unwary	Paralyze	Mimic
Kraken	Aquatic	Amok	Preposterous

RELATED WEBSITES

Kenn Nesbit’s Site About the Book

<https://www.poetry4kids.com/news/new-book-bigfoot-is-missing/>

Chronicle Books Site About the Book with Link to Teacher’s Guide

<http://www.chroniclebooks.com/titles/bigfoot-is-missing.html>

Scientific American Blog, “If Bigfoot Were Real”

<https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/tetrapod-zoology/if-bigfoot-were-real/>

Website of Author J. Patrick Lewis

<http://www.jpatricklewis.com/>