

Educator Discussion Guide

THE ADVENTURER'S GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL ESCAPES

by Wade Albert White

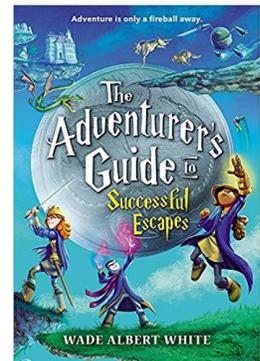
illustrations by Mariano Epelbaum

Louisiana Young Reader's Choice Award Nominee 2018-2019
Grades 6-8

*Submitted by Jackie Harsch, Librarian, East Baton Rouge Parish Public Schools
and Ellen John, Adult Programming Assistant, St. Tammany Parish Library*

ABOUT THE BOOK

Anne's days are dismal, dirty, and full of hard labor. As an orphan at St. Lupin's orphanage, her only hope for her future is to leave on her thirteenth birthday and find her true home. She and her best friend, Penelope, spend their hours daydreaming about adventures, magical quests, and becoming heroes. When the cold-hearted Matron of the orphanage unfairly denies her a ticket to freedom, she quickly learns that the Matron is hiding something. Anne's luck changes as she encounters a very rare gauntlet, activates a quest, and meets Jocelyn, a professor at The Death Mountain Quest Academy. She and her friend are whisked away by a dragon's fireball to train for completing the quest.



This quest is not exactly easy, though. Anne, Penelope, and Hiro, an addition to their team, discover there is no time for training and they must complete their quest in just a few short days. They are tasked with finding a tower with no door, solving obscure riddles, and fighting many horrible adversaries, or else they will suffer terrible consequences. This fresh fantasy features strong female lead characters full of adventure, friendship, and humor.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Wade Albert White is from Nova Scotia, Canada, who teaches part-time and enjoys trying his hand at animation. He and his family own one pretend cat and one real one, and "they get along fabulously."

Biographical information taken from author's website at

<http://wadealbertwhite.ca>

Accessed 2 October 2017.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Since 1996, Mariano Epelbaum has worked in various disciplines of animation and illustration as a character designer, illustrator, and traditional 2D animator. His character designs tend to be very expressive.

Biographical information taken from illustrator's website at
www.behance.net/marianoepelbaum
Accessed 2 October 2017.

BOOK AWARDS

Book Expo America (BEA) 2016 Middle Grade Buzz Book

2016 ABC Best Books for Young Readers

A Chicago Public Library Best Book of the Year 2016

An Indies Introduce Summer/Fall 2016

The Children's Book Review Best New Kids Books for Preteens and Tweens, September 2016

Canadian Children's Book Centre's starred listing Best Books for Kids and Teens Spring 2017

2016 Cybils Award Nominee

OTHER TITLES IN THE SERIES

The Adventurer's Guide to Dragons (and Why They Keep Biting Me) (2017)

PREREADING ACTIVITIES

Defining a Hero

To introduce the book, ask students to write a quick journal entry answering these questions: What makes a person a hero? What qualities do heroes possess? What kinds of things do heroes do? What are some examples of heroes? List these questions around the room and give each student four sticky notes. Have the students write each answer on a sticky note and then put them next to the corresponding questions. Either in small groups or as a whole, discuss the students' responses and craft a class definition of a hero.

Scavenger Hunt Quest

Have students solve problems to complete a quest of their own. Start by dividing the class into teams of three. Each team should be given three tasks to complete. The team that completes all three tasks first wins the quest. This activity develops problem-solving skills and encourages teamwork. Some suggested activities include:

1. Write a Haiku poem about dragons. Turn it into the teacher or librarian for the next clue.
2. Locate an object in the classroom by deciphering a code. That object will house the next clue. (Multiple items can be used in order to keep the teams from merely following each other to the object.)
3. Solve a riddle that points the team to a final destination in the classroom. For this example, the final destination is the globe. Example riddle:

“It spins at 1,000 miles per hour. Although it is not a fairground ride. At its center there is a molten core. And it has a crust on its outside.” There is a small representation of the answer in the classroom. Solve the riddle to discover where to go in the classroom to complete the quest.

Riddle found at

<http://riddles-for-kids.org/earth-riddles/>

Accessed 19 October 2017.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Explain how the tone of the prologue sets the reader’s expectations of the book.
2. Before each chapter the author includes excerpts from guides, quotes from people of authority, adventuring textbooks, student evaluations, and more. How do these build a better understanding of the magical world in which Anne, Penelope and Hiro live? What are some ways these excerpts add to the story?
3. Puns are found throughout the book. Provide a list of three examples and outline how each one is a pun.
4. Compare and contrast Anne to her friend Penelope.
5. Describe the matron, how she runs St. Lupins, and how she treats the orphans.
6. Outline the events that lead to Anne’s quest being activated. What type of quest is it?
7. What are three uncommon circumstances regarding Anne’s quest? How confident are the characters that Anne can complete the quest?
8. What important knowledge does Sassafras impart on Anne, Penelope, and Hiro? Based on this advice, what might the reader predict will happen?
9. List the rules and regulations surrounding travel by a dragon’s fireball. How do these stipulations affect the quest?
10. Explain the role of Jeffery. Provide at least three examples of how he helps the quest.
11. Trace at least three occurrences of foreshadowing concerning Mr. Shard and his motivation for helping Anne and her quest mates.
12. Anne, Penelope, and Hiro mention several Old World terms and devices. List two and explain the irony readers will find behind them.
13. What are Dead Tiers and why are they so dangerous? What are some potential consequences of being on one?
14. What does Jocelyn ask of Anne concerning the matron? What is her reasoning for this request?
15. How was Hiro able to release himself, Anne, and Penelope from captivity? How does this revelation affect the plot?
16. Based on her treatment of Rokk, what character traits does Anne embody? How do these traits relate to those of a hero?
17. Summarize how Anne, Penelope, and Hiro solve the riddle to complete the Rightful Heir quest.

18. What kinds of help does Anne receive while on her quest? Predict what might have happened without the help of one of these characters.
19. What events at the end of the book lead the reader to believe that Anne's adventure has not ended?
20. Given the opportunity, would you go on a quest with Anne and her quest mates? Explain your reasoning.

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

Reading Comprehension/Physical Education:

Throughout the book, the trio must solve riddles or answer questions and then perform tasks as they work toward completing their quest. As the reading teacher or school librarian, work with the P.E. teacher to develop a relay race-style game where the students move across the field answering comprehension questions about the story (as a team) and taking part in relay games. Divide the class into teams (size of teams shall vary based on equipment available and amount of space available outside or inside a gym). Set up a series of relay games. The competing teams should be asked a comprehension question. The team that answers correctly first moves forward in the game by completing the next relay. The team that answers the questions correctly and completes all the relay games first wins.

Language Arts/Art:

Anne, Penelope and Hiro encounter several robots, all of which serve various tasks, often aimed at capturing the trio or, at times, even helping them. Write about and design a robot that would be of some service to you. What purpose would the robot serve? Provide 2-3 tasks the robot would be designed to do. Explain why having a robot perform each task would be useful. Draw a design of the robot. While drawing your design, think about the tasks the robot must complete and try to make the design of the robot fit the tasks it is designed to complete. For example, if the robot will trim trees, it must be tall in order to reach the treetops.

Geography/Technology:

At the start of their quest, the trio goes to the library to research how and where to begin their journey. As they progress through their quest, solving riddles shows them where they must go next on their journey. For this activity, using a map and library and Internet resources, students will use their own research skills as they locate famous landmarks around the world, much like the research and location-finding the trio performs. Utilizing a worksheet provided by Education World, students will read clues for ten landmarks or locations around the world and properly locate them. Use the following link to review the lesson plan and worksheets, categorized by grade level, provided by Education World: http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/03/lp325-01.shtml

Math:

Hiro uses math to calculate how long it would take the trio to climb the tower as well as time elapsed for fireball travel. On an index card, ask students to craft a word problem that is like the one that the characters would encounter in the book. Write your name and the solution on the back of the card. Have the students swap cards with a partner (or you may mix up the cards and pass them out). Students should try solving the problem, check their answers on the back, and discuss with their partners why they got the problem right. If they didn't get the problem right, then they should discuss what should have been done differently. Repeat if time permits.

Social Studies/Math:

In the book, the team travels by dragon fireball, which takes eight hours regardless of destination. A dragon fireball must be paid for in gold, per use. In our world, there are several modes of transportation. For this activity, we will focus on traveling by car. Choose a destination that is more than 200 miles from your hometown. Determine how long it would take you to get to your chosen destination and how much it would cost.

- Use MapQuest, Google Maps or Yahoo Maps to determine a driving route, mileage, and driving time required. Using the current cost of gasoline, calculate how much the trip will cost round-trip.

Science/Computer Science:

Codes and ciphers are forms of communication that are meant to keep a message short or secret. A code replaces words, phrases or even sentences with letters or numbers. A cipher rearranges letters or uses substitutes to disguise a message. The science that studies codes, or the art of writing and solving them, as well as understanding and using ciphers is called cryptology. Anne, Penelope and Hiro have to decipher riddles and break codes in order to complete their quest. Start by breaking the students up into groups of three. Ask them each to come up with a message they want to keep hidden. Have them make a cryptograph and use it to break each other's secret messages.

- Tools needed: cardboard, a protractor and a split pin (one set per group).
- Use the following link for instructions to create the wheel, and for an example code to solve: <https://sites.google.com/site/codesforscouts/sliding-scale-or-cryptograph>

Vocabulary:

Impulsively	Lucrative	Eccentric
Clandestine	Relented	Nefarious
Rendered	Tome	Gallivanting
Suppress	Rapier	Oblivion
Undeterred	Reverberated	Apprehended
Erratically	Obliterated	Confiscated

RELATED WEBSITES

Interview with Wade Albert White

<http://whatswriteaboutthis.com/the-adventurers-guide-to-successful-escapes-an-interview-with-wade-albert-white/>

A transcript of organization What's Write About This (WWAT) interviewing Wade Albert White about this book.

Guest Post from Wade Albert White

<http://booksandladders.blogspot.ca/2016/09/we-canada-read-guest-post-from-wade.html>

A short post from the author about the book, his inspiration, and his Canadian heritage.

Interview with Wade Albert White

<http://middlegrademinded.blogspot.ca/2016/09/author-interview-wade-albert-white.html>

A transcript of Middle Grade Minded's interview with the author with book summary and short author biography.