**The Books of Elsewhere, Volume 1: The Shadows**

By Jacqueline West

Illustrated by Poly Bernatene

Louisiana Young Reader’s Choice Nominee 2013

Grades 3 - 5

Submitted by Angela Germany

West, Jacqueline. *The Books of Elsewhere, Volume one:* *The Shadows.* Penguin Group. 2010. 241 pages.

**SUMMARY**  
  
***The Books of Elsewhere, Volume one:*** ***The Shadows*** by Jacqueline West Illus. Poly Bernatene. 241 pgs. When Olive’s family moves into an old house filled with paintings she discovers that the paintings are really doors into the strange world of Elsewhere. Olive discovers an unusual pair of glasses that allow her to enter this universe. She meets Morton, a nine year old boy who lives inside one of the paintings. Led by three talking cats, she explores this dark mysterious world and confronts the power that wants to get rid of Olive by any means. She defeats one evil power but the house has many more secrets to reveal. The sequel, Spellbound is available. IL: **MG** - BL: **5.1** - AR Pts: **7.0** (Fantasy, suspense, adventure, creepy)

**AWARDS, Honors and Recognition**   
  
 New York Times Best seller

2010 Cybils Award Winner

2010 Minnesota Book Award finalist

Publisher's Weekly "Flying Start"

Summer 2010 Kids' Indie Next List

Junior Library Guild Selection

Starred review, Publisher's Weekly

Starred review, Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

Amazon.com "Best Books of the Month", June 2010

Master List for the 2013 [Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Awards](http://www.state.lib.la.us/literacy-and-reading/louisiana-young-readers-choice) (Grades 3 - 5)

Master List for the 2011-2012 [Texas Bluebonnet Award](http://www.txla.org/TBA-nominees)

Master List for the 2013 [Illinois Bluestem Award](http://www.islma.org/Bluestem.htm)

Master List for the [Sunshine State Young Readers Award](http://myssyra.org/)

**AUTHOR’S BIOGRAPHY**  
  
Jacqueline West lives in Red Wing, Massachusetts with her husband and her dog, a Brittany Spaniel. In addition to writing youth fiction, Jacqueline is also a poet. Some of her favorite authors and books growing up included: Winnie-the-Pooh*,* Bunnicula, Anne of Green Gables, Ronald Dahl, *Kate DiCamillo, etc.*

For more information about the author visit: <http://www.jacquelinewest.com/about.php>, <http://us.penguingroup.com/nf/Author/AuthorPage/0,,1000063838,00.html>, <http://cynthialeitichsmith.blogspot.com/2010/10/new-voice-jacqueline-west-on-books-of.html>

**ILLUSTRATOR’S BIOGRAPHY**

Poly Bernatene is Hispanic and many of the websites about him are written in Spanish. He is from Buenos Aires, Arentina. He has illustrated over 60 children’s books in: Argentina, Mexico, Spain, UK, Australia, Denmark, Germany, France, China, Taiwan and USA.

Information from: <http://poly-bernatene-bio.blogspot.com/>

**CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS**  
  
**Writing:**

Have your students pick one of the three cats in the story. Ask them to make up and write a short back-story telling how their cat ended up in the employment of the McMartin family.

**Art:**

Much of the story had to do with paintings: portraits, nature scenes, etc. Show your class some famous paintings or techniques and have them create their own using paint, markets or pastels. You can tie in a writing component by having students think of a back-story to go with their painting. The story could explain how the art they created could be another painting in the house and how their painting fits into the house Olive lives in.

Some Examples that could be modified and used:

* Lesson plan on Monet <http://www.kinderart.com/arthistory/monetandimp.shtml>.
* Lesson plan on Henri Rousseau using water colors and pastels
* <http://www.kinderart.com/arthistory/rousseau.shtml>
* Lesson plan on Marc Chigall <http://www.kinderart.com/arthistory/daydreamchagall.shtml> using colored pencils and markers
* This blog has a variety of art ideas <http://fairydustteaching.blogspot.com/search/label/Art> and also a Self Portrait activity here <http://fairydustteaching.blogspot.com/2011/05/kindergarten-art-show.html>
* This blog entry is for making flowers with watercolors <http://madebynicole.blogspot.com/2011/09/abstract-watercolor-flowers-kid-craft.html>

**History**

On page 149 Olive discovers the gravestone writing *Here Lies Alfred McMartin, Memento Mori 1623.*  Have students (individually or in groups) research what was going on in the 1600’s: what life was like, what styles of clothes were worn, what famous people were alive, what was going on in the world and America then, etc. They could also create a short timeline.

**English**

Students can look up these vocabulary words to assist in understanding the story.

**Vocabulary:**

Inheritance (p 2)

Aberration (p 3)

Victorian (9)

Sepia (p 9)

Hypothesis (p 37)

Indignant (p 50)

Incredulous (p 51)

Methodically (p 79)

Dormer Window (p 107)

Magnanimously (p 172)

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**  
  
What are some of the things that are creepy about the house? Why are they creepy?  
  
What are some of the odd things about the painting on the walls?  
  
Why do you think the paintings will not come off the walls?

Describe Olive’s parents.

Who and what is Horatio? What is peculiar about him?

What happens when Olive puts on the pair of glasses she finds?

Who is Morton? Describe him.

Who is Leopold and what does he do?

Who was Aldous McMartin?

What did Olive notice when she looked at the house from the backyard? (p 107)

Describe Olive’s necklace she found. What is strange about it?

In the book, Harvey the cat liked to impersonate a variety of characters from books. Name some of the characters. (Sir Lancelot, The 3 Musketeers, a Pirate, cousin of the Count of Monte Cristo, etc.)

Who was your favorite character in the book and why?

**WEB SITES**

The Books of Elsewhere Official Website

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

Author’s Website

<http://www.jacquelinewest.com/about.php>