

THE CROC ATE MY HOMEWORK



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TEACHER'S GUIDE

Curriculum Connections and Activity/Discussion Guide

The activities in this guide align with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for grades 3–5.



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AMP! Comics for Kids

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GRADE LEVEL: 3–7

Curriculum Connections

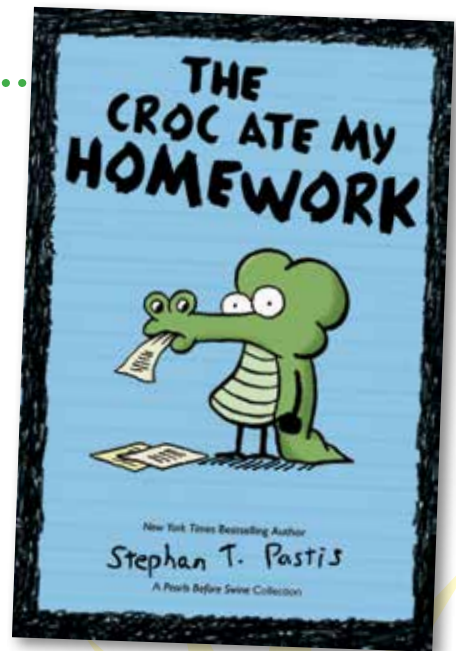
English Language Arts / Art

Thematic Connections

Friendship * Competition * Family * Neighbors * Community * Animals * Humor

Overview

The Crocs have more bite than brains and eat more takeout food than living prey, but it doesn't stop them from cooking up hilariously harebrained schemes to eat their helpless Zebra neighbor. Other characters from the *Pearls Before Swine* comic add to the story's fun, including know-it-all Rat, slow-witted but kind Pig, and intellectual Goat.



English Language Arts Lesson Plan

Objective

Students will read this comic book, participate in a class discussion, and complete individual writing exercises prompted by the book.

Pre-reading Discussion Questions

- * Ask students if they have read other comics featuring these characters. If so, can they predict what the story might be about? Can they suggest behaviors and reactions that particular characters might have? How funny do they expect the story to be?
- * Have students read other comics featuring animals? Why do they think it is funny to anthropomorphize, or give human characteristics, to animals? Would they rather read a comic with human characters?

Post-reading Discussion Questions

- * Do students feel that the author/artist had done a good job of anthropomorphizing the Crocs? Ask students to give examples of the Crocs' human characteristics and of their animal characteristics.
- * The language that the Crocs use is different from that of the other characters. Did students find it hard to understand? Can they suggest why the author/artist chose to give the Crocs their own distinctive speaking style? How does it influence the reader's understanding of their character? Do they like this language better than that of the other characters? Does this simple language make students think "less" of the Crocs?
- * Ask students what makes the Crocs' adventures funny. Is it the way they are drawn, the language they speak, the actions they take? Could it be the setting of the story? Would it be as humorous if it were taking place in the wild, instead of in a suburban neighborhood?
- * In the story, readers learn that Goat writes a blog. What do they think is the subject of Goat's blog? If the Crocs had a blog, what would it be about? What about Rat's blog or Pig's?
- * On page 31, Pig finds a magic lamp and makes a foolish wish. What would students wish for?

Writing Exercises

- * Have students choose an animal character from the book and:
 - Write a one-word description of that character.
 - Write a two-word description.
 - Write a three-word description.
 - Write a one-paragraph description.

Ask them to provide a specific story panel from the book that they feel best illustrates the attributes of their character.

- * On page 14, Rat and Pig end up stranded on a desert island. Have students write two or three paragraphs describing which of the characters they would like to have along if that happened to them, and why? Then have them write about which of their friends they would choose for this kind of adventure.
- * The Croc father has a tradition of putting his son to bed at night with a very unusual bedtime prayer, nursery rhyme, or story. Have students choose a familiar rhyme or tale and rewrite it "Croc-style."
- * Have students identify the unifying themes throughout the collection and suggest which specific panels illustrate those themes. (For example, the idea of "conscience" is illustrated in the opening panels with the angel/devil figures and picked up again on pages 130/131 when Zebra insists that father Croc won't eat him.)
- * Have students write two or three paragraphs comparing and contrasting the Crocs and the Zebra. How would the story have been different if they weren't enemies? If the Zebra were not smarter than the Crocs? Which "side" did students sympathize with?



Other Curriculum Connections

Art

- * On page 158, Rat creates a “Smart Card” that he can use to silence people who disagree with him. Have students design their own cards. What would the card do? On whom would they use it?
- * Invite students to draw their own Crocs/Zebra story panel. They can decide if the Crocs will finally succeed or if Zebra will turn the tables on them once again.

English Language Arts Standards (abbreviated version) this guide aligns with:

Grade 3

Reading: RL.3.1, RL.3.3, RL.3.6, RL.3.7

Writing: W.3.1, W.3.4, W.3.10

Speaking and Listening: SL.3.1, SL.3.1a, SL.3.1b, SL.3.1c, SL.3.1d, SL.3.2

Language: L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3

Grade 4

Reading: RL.4.1, RL.4.2, RL.4.3

Writing: W.4.1, W.4.4, W.4.9, W.4.10

Speaking and Listening: SL.4.1, SL.4.1a, SL.4.1b, SL.4.1c, SL.4.1d, SL.4.2

Language: L.4.1, L.4.2, L.4.3

Grade 5

Reading: RL.5.1, RL.5.2, RL.5.3, RL.5.7

Writing: W.5.1, W.5.4, W.5.9, W.5.10

Speaking and Listening: L.5.1, SL.5.1a, SL.5.1b, SL.5.1c, SL.5.1d, SL.5.2

Language: L.5.1, L.5.2, L.5.3

Visit the Common Core State Standards website to read about the individual standards: www.corestandards.org/the-standards.

