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LEMONY SNICKET

"Who Could That Be at This Hour?"

Common Core Connections—Third Grade Focus

Little Brown/ Genre: Fiction

Who Could That Be at This Hour? by Lemony Snicket pictures by Seth

Many books can meet most if not all CC Standards. However, we have found that some books speak strongly to a few standards. These one-page applications connect a focused text and the Common Core Standards as written for third graders—leaning on this text’s literary strengths.

3.RL.1

As the title suggests, this text is full of questions and demands readers to ask their own questions while reading on to answer them. Snicket sets readers up to ask questions! Must know more! Even the main character, Lemony Snicket, gets called out on his questioning by his chaperone, S, about his “penchant for asking too many questions...” (p. 31) Can a detective ask too many questions? Or a reader?

Encourage readers to stop at multiple points while reading and record the questions that hit their brains, perhaps in a reader’s notebook. Students can then consider sorting the queries—or starring the ones that they think will help them better understand the next part of the text. As a way to connect to standard **3.RL.5**, readers can keep track of the where they think they are going (make predictions) and consider ‘did I guess right?’ by looking at how parts of the story build and referring to chapters or episodes.

The 5Ws (who, what, when, where, and why) run through readers’ heads as they turn the pages in this mystery. A few concepts in the text that might evoke questions are: Snicket’s parents’ actions, S/the mentor, the masks for breathing, the statue, and Hangfire, to suggest a few. Or another angle is to focus on the questions of the characters, specifically Snicket and Moxie, who as detective and journalist, model the role of question asker. Encourage readers to reflect on how questions support their comprehension of the story.

3.RL.2

This reading standard asks students to recount stories and the central message (or lesson[s]); students record their thinking about the central message/lessons and connect key details and events in the text to their thinking. Some places where the author writes descriptively, allowing readers to create a mental (and drawn) image of the scene and thus some settings that would provide a rich look at details are:

the train station (p. 2)

the mansion (p. 30)—the drive to it...what did they see?

the city (p. 62, 66, & 72)

the cottage (pp. 132-3)

Each setting lays out a key piece of the story. A timeline would be a good way for readers to keep track of the places and events entering this sleuth’s case and connect to **3.RL.5**.



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3.RL.3

In this standard, readers are asked to describe characters (traits, motivations, and feelings). Encourage students to gather clues as readers and as detectives. A character web would be a good start to record findings as readers move through the text. Then **3.RL.3** asks students to demonstrate how characters' actions contribute to the sequence of events. This book has characters making choices (truth telling or not, where to go next...) that impact the action; have students diagram the action in a creative manner to reflect on the characters as well in their readers' notebooks.

3.L.4

Snicket celebrates language throughout the book, specifically vocabulary words. Using this standard, invite readers to embark on a vocabulary treasure hunt!

redundant (p. 12), **incoherent** (p. 14), **disembarked** (p. 20), **penchant** (p. 31), **gimcrack** (p.53), **hawster** (p. 54), **dawgling** (p. 67), **bombinating** (p. 76), **interlopers** (p. 93), **hydrophobia**, **agoraphobia**, and **acrophobia** (pp. 126-7), **obsequious** (p. 210) and **kowtowing** (p. 228). Support students as needed—some children might need this list to get started; other readers will find the fun words on their own.

3.RL.9

This standard seeks to compare and contrast themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author. This book is the first of four in this series by Snicket, so students can be encouraged to read one of the other books and be set up to compare and contrast. Another approach could be looking at *The Dark*, a picture book by the same author (illustrations by Jon Klassen). Ask the students about the similarities and differences between the texts.

Snicket's fun, approachable style ignites imagination. Standard **3.W.1** invites students to formulate an opinion on the whole story, a character, or even the comprehension strategy of asking questions... support with details from the story and encourage referencing page numbers. Consider asking students to revise and edit their written pieces with a friend or partner to develop and strengthen the ideas represented (**3.W.5**).