

BOOK STATS

Grade Level Equivalent: 3–5

Ages: 8+

Lexile Measure: 800L

Pages: 176

Genre: Fantasy, Humor

Subject/Theme: Fitting In, Bullies, Ghosts

| Common Core Standards | Reading | Writing | Listening & Speaking | Language |
|-----------------------|------------------------|---------|----------------------|--------------|
| Grade 3 | RL.3.1, RL.3.3, RL.3.4 | W.3.3 | SL.3.1 | L.3.3, L.3.4 |
| Grade 4 | RL.4.1, RL.4.3, RL.4.4 | W.4.3 | SL.4.1 | L.4.3, L.4.4 |
| Grade 5 | RL.5.2, RL.5.3, RL.5.4 | W.5.3 | SL.5.1 | L.5.4 |

Teaching the Book

Billy Broccoli has just moved into a new house; however, there's a problem . . . he has to share his bedroom with a ghost! At first, the funny phantom from another century gets on Billy's nerves—until he turns into Billy's ghost buddy. This humorous novel provides an opportunity to teach the genre of fantasy, the skill of problem and solution, and the use of vivid verbs. Activities will engage students in suspense writing, historical research, and dramatics.

Genre Focus: Fantasy

Comprehension Focus: Problem and Solution

Language Focus: Vivid Verbs

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Henry Winkler may be best known for his acting role as the Fonz in the hit series *Happy Days* and for his roles in films such as *Holes* and *The Waterboy*. However, Winkler is also an award-winning producer and director of children's programming, as well as an entertainment industry leader committed to children's welfare. With his coauthor, Lin Oliver, Winkler created the *Hank Zipzer* series about a fourth-grader who struggles with learning differences. The character is inspired by Winkler's own experiences growing up with undiagnosed dyslexia. Lin Oliver is the coauthor along with Henry Winkler of the *New York Times* bestselling middle-grade series, *Hank Zipzer*, as well as *Ghost Buddy*. Lin resides in Los Angeles, California, where she is also involved in television production.

OVERVIEW

Book Summary

Just before he begins sixth grade, Billy Broccoli has to deal with a new house, a new stepfamily, a new middle school, and a new neighborhood bully. He has no friends until Hoover Porterhouse appears—out of thin air! Hoover haunts Billy's new bedroom, but for a ghost, he's pretty cool. Hoover is always ready to give Billy advice about fashion, girls, baseball, and—especially—bullies.

On the first day of school, bully Rod Brownstone begins his mission to humiliate Billy. When Rod steals Billy's preserved tonsil and gives it to the girl Billy has a crush on, Hoover decides to seek revenge for his friend. He floats into Rod's bedroom, spirits away the remains of Rod's baby blanket, and hatches a plot to humiliate the bully.

Just when they are ready to exact revenge, Billy thinks again about the right thing to do. He negotiates a truce with Rod, teaches the Hoove a much-needed lesson, and enters the school full of new-found confidence—until he walks smack into the door. The offbeat humor of Billy and his ghost buddy continues in the next installment of this new series.

Get Ready to Read

Pre-Reading Activities

Fantasy vs. Realistic Fiction Engage students' interest and build background knowledge about the genre of fantasy by drawing on their prior knowledge about fantasy vs. realistic fiction. On chart paper or the white board, write two headings: Fantasy and Realistic Fiction. Ask volunteers to discuss the terms, helping them clarify the definitions. Explain that fantasy has imaginative characters and situations that could not exist in the real world. Realistic fiction has characters and situations that do exist in the real world.

Ask students to list books and movies or TV shows that are examples of both fantasy (*Harry Potter*, *Shrek*, *Star Trek*) and realistic fiction (*Ramona*, *Cam Jansen*).

Preview and Predict Display the cover of *Ghost Buddy: Zero to Hero* and ask students how they can tell this book is going to be a fantasy. Have them use the title and illustration to predict what might happen in the book.



BIG QUESTION

Critical Thinking Ask students to think about this question as they read and be ready to answer it when they've finished the book. Write the question on chart paper or have students write it in their reading journals.

Do you think Billy's ghost buddy is just in his imagination?

Vocabulary

Vivid Verbs Explain that vivid verbs describe actions in a way that adds interest and excitement to a story. They help readers picture what is happening in their minds. Encourage students to look for clues in the text to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words and have them check the dictionary definitions.

Use **Resource #1: Vocabulary Cards** on page 7 and distribute copies to students.

| | | |
|----------|----------|-------------|
| reeks | shrieked | boomeranged |
| quivered | whooshed | zipped |
| pounced | gnawing | |

As You Read

Reading the Book

Modeled Reading Read aloud several pages from the first chapter of the book, asking the class to follow along. Then ask students what they've learned about Billy. What is he like? Who are the other characters in the book so far? Do they think the book is going to be scary? Or funny?

Independent Reading Assign students to read the book independently. Encourage them to share questions and reactions with a partner.

Comprehension Focus

Identify Problem and Solution The plot of *Ghost Buddy* develops as Billy Broccoli and the talented ghost Hoover encounter and solve one problem after another problem. Help students identify the problems and the solutions in the novel that create conflict and interest. Also guide them to analyze what Billy's solutions tell about his character.

Use the graphic organizer on **Resource #2: Identify Problem and Solution** to model for students how to think about the problems and solutions in a work of fiction.

Model: Not long after Billy moves into his new bedroom, he discovers that his roommate is a ghost. At first, Billy is pretty freaked out and shrieks and hides under the covers. Then his curiosity gets the better of him and he gets to know and even like Hoover. What does this tell us about Billy? Even though he's scared at first, he is brave enough to get to know a ghost—and he's smart enough to let Hoover help him.

Have students fill in the rest of the solutions for the remaining three problems. Explain that they should fill in how Billy attempts to solve each problem and then how he solves it in the end. Discuss students' answers and what they tell about Billy's character.

After You Read

Questions to Discuss

Lead students in a discussion of these focus story elements.

1. Fantasy What character in the book makes it a fantasy? (*Hoover Porterhouse*) What makes Hoover almost seem like he is real? (*His jokes, his interest in baseball, etc.*) What makes him seem like he is a fantasy character? (*He walks through walls, disappears, etc.*)

2. Problem and Solution Billy and Hoover have very different approaches to solving problems. What do they learn from each other? (*Answers will vary.*)

3. Vivid Verbs What are two vivid verbs for the word “yelled?” (*shrieked, howled*) What are two vivid verbs for the word “run?” (*sprint, scurry*)

Questions to Share

Encourage students to share their responses with a partner or small group.

1. Text to Self Do you think that Billy made the right choice concerning Rod's baby blanket? Why or why not?

2. Text to World How is Billy's school alike and different from your school?

3. Text to Text Compare *Ghost Buddy* to another book you have read about a ghost. Or compare it with another humor book you have read. Which do you like best? Why?

WORDS TO KNOW

Vivid Verbs

Read aloud the following context sentences for the vocabulary words. Ask volunteers to give their definitions of each word. Discuss why the word is a better choice to describe the action than a more ordinary one.

1. Why would I even want to touch your infested baseball gear? It **reeks**. (p. 13)
2. Billy finally found his voice and **shrieked** like a five-year-old. (p. 20)
3. Unfortunately, Billy had forgotten to unplug the clock before he flung it, and it **boomeranged** back at him, heading right for his face. (p. 21)
4. His voice **quivered** even though he was trying to sound composed. (p. 23)
5. Hoover **whooshed** down the paper-goods aisle . . . (p. 41)
6. But a closed door was no barrier for Hoover Porterhouse, who **zipped** into Billy's room right after him. (p. 80)
7. Breeze **pounced** on Billy like a tiger. (p. 96)
8. Yet there was something **gnawing** at him. (p. 138)

Extension Activities

Reading/Writing Connection

Ghost Story Remind students that most ghost stories are scary, not funny. Ghost stories usually have suspenseful moods and creepy settings. Ask students to write a scary version of a story about a kid moving into an old house that is haunted. How could they make the house and the kid's bedroom creepy? What vivid verbs might they use to create a mood of suspense? Have students share their stories with each other and discuss what makes each scary.

Don't forget the



BIG QUESTION

Critical Thinking Give each student an opportunity to answer the big question. Encourage students to support their answers with details and evidence from the text. Tell them there is no one right answer.

Do you think Billy's ghost buddy is just in his imagination?

Content Area Connections

Math Baseball Statistics Encourage students who are baseball fans like Billy and Hoover to research and compare some statistics about their favorite teams. Ask them to research five or six sets of statistics—such as wins, losses, RBIs, etc.—for the past decade. Then have them rank each set of statistics by year. Encourage students to compare their results.

Social Studies 99 Years Ago Hoover Porterhouse lived in Billy's house 99 years ago when it was part of a large ranch. Challenge students to find out if their homes were standing a century ago. If not, what was on the land? Provide students with historical information about their community and, if possible, old photographs. Some students may be interested in researching more about the 1910s. For photos of working children at the time, visit <http://www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/childlabor/>.

Arts TV Comedy The dialogue and action in *Ghost Buddy* are written by two producers of television shows. Students will have fun acting out chapters or scenes of the book as a TV comedy. Chapters 6 and 7 have several charac-

ters, lots of action, and good dialogue. Assign students to the parts and help them turn the dialogue and action into a TV episode of *Ghost Buddy*.

Language Arts Top Ten Fantasy Creatures Have partners work together to create a list of their top ten favorite fantasy creatures from books, movies, TV, or computer games. Use the lists as a discussion starter about fantasy creatures and why they are so popular.

BIG ACTIVITY

My Ghost Buddy Assign students to create their own idea of a ghost buddy. Explain that they can choose a ghost from any time in history, and even the recent past. Have them imagine what they would want their ghost to be like, since it will be living with them in their bedrooms. Make copies of the printable, **Big Activity: My Ghost Buddy** on page 5 and distribute to students. Read the directions and answer any questions to clarify the activity.

Name: _____ Date: _____

BIG ACTIVITY: Ghost Buddy

A ghost is moving into your bedroom—but you get to choose who it will be. Fill out the application form below to get the ghost you want. Select all answers that apply.

Ghost Wanted

1. Time I want my ghost to be from:

- ☐ the 21st century ☐ 50 years ago
☐ 99 years ago
☐ other _____

2. Sex / Age I want my ghost to be:

- ☐ a boy ☐ a girl
☐ older than me
☐ other age _____

3. Personality I want my ghost to have these personality traits:

- ☐ funny ☐ smart
☐ kind ☐ wicked
☐ other _____

4. Interests My ghost should be interested in:

- ☐ sports ☐ television
☐ clothes ☐ computers
☐ other _____

5. Habits My ghost should be:

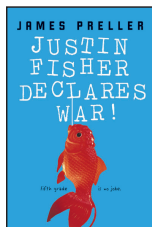
- ☐ neat ☐ messy
☐ like junk food ☐ like healthy food
☐ other _____

6. Other Qualifications In two or three sentences, describe your ideal ghost buddy and any other things you want or do not want in a ghost.

READ MORE AND LEARN MORE

Use these books and other resources to expand your students' study of the book or theme.

Theme Connections



Justin Fisher Declares War

James Preller

Ages: 8–11

Grades: 3–5

Lexile Level: 630L

Pages: 144

Justin has always been the funniest kid in school, playing pranks and goofing off. But this year, his new teacher isn't amused. And when Justin gets in trouble with Mr. Tripp, the kids turn on him, too. Bestselling author James Preller takes on the class clown in this school story that's full of humor, high jinks, and heart. **Available as a Storia e-book**



The Loser List

H.N. Kowitt

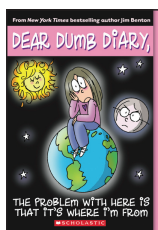
Ages: 9–12

Grades: 4–7

Lexile Level: 480L

Pages: 224

Danny Shine loves reading comics, drawing comics, and hanging out at Comix Nation. When Danny finds out his name has been added to the Loser List in the girls' bathroom, he freaks out. Danny's got to get his name off that list, and fast. This very funny story is about one kid's quest to prove to himself that being a geek is something to be proud of. **Available as a Storia e-book**



Dear Dumb Diary #6: The Problem With Here Is That It's Where I'm From

Jim Benton

Ages: 9–12

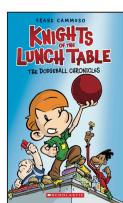
Grades: 4–7

Lexile Level: 990L

Pages: 128

There's a new girl at Mackerel Middle School. Her name is Colette, and she's totally friendly, smart, talented, and pretty. It's enough to make Jamie throw up. Readers will laugh out loud at Jamie's sharp take on middle-school mishaps in this dramatic, doodle-filled chapter of her journal.

Available as a Storia e-book



Knights of the Lunch Table #1: The Dodgeball Chronicles

Frank Cammuso

Ages: 8–11

Grades: 3–5

Lexile Level: GN250L

Pages: 144

Meet Artie King. He may be an ordinary student at Camelot Middle School, but he is the only one who can open that funky old locker. When Artie crosses swords with the bullies who rule the school, big Mo challenges him and his pals to a do-or-die dodgeball game. Even readers unfamiliar with the Arthurian legend will love the fast pace and wild graphics of this middle-school adventure.

Available as a Storia e-book



Slam Dunk!

Sharon Robinson

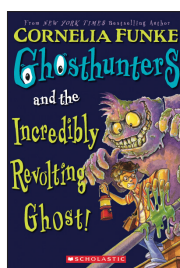
Ages: 9–12

Grades: 4–6

Lexile Level: 600L

Pages: 160

Elijah "Jumper" Breeze is finally settling into his new home in Harlem, and he's ready to start the sixth grade. His plans include hitting the books and hitting the court for some serious basketball. But his new school gives Jumper much more than he bargained for. One thing's for sure in this smart and relatable tale: middle school is going to be a tough game! **Available as a Storia e-book**



Ghosthunters #1: Ghosthunters and the Incredibly Revolting Ghost

Cornelia Funke

Ages: 8–11

Grades: 3–5

Lexile Level: 760L

Pages: 144

There's a slimy, troublemaking ghost in Tom's cellar, and he's the only one who can see it. Creeped out and annoyed, Tom seeks the help of a professional ghosthunter. But at the last minute, Tom realizes that he can't turn the specter out of its home—not when an even more powerful ghost across town has already expelled the poor thing. How did Tom get into this mess? And more importantly, will he get out . . . alive?

Available as a Storia e-book



The Haunting of Derek Stone #1: City of the Dead

Tony Abbott

Ages: 9–13

Grades: 4–7

Lexile Level: 540L

Pages: 160

Derek Stone is an average, slightly chubby New Orleans teen dealing with average, everyday problems. But everything changes for Derek after his family experiences a horrific train accident. The creator of the *Secrets of Droon* saga kicks off another wildly imaginative series, filled with humor, supernatural scares, and fascinating bits of history.

Available as a Storia e-book

Go to www.Scholastic.com/storia-corner to find PDF versions of the Storia teacher guides and links to purchase the related books.

reeks

shrieked

boomeranged

quivered

whooshed

zipped

pounced

gnawing

Name: _____ Date: _____

Ghost Buddy: Zero to Hero

Read each problem; then write how Billy solved it.

| Problem | Solution |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Billy finds out that he is sharing a bedroom with a ghost. | At first _____ _____ _____ Then _____ _____ _____ |
| 2. Billy keeps tripping in front of Ruby Baker. | At first _____ _____ _____ Then _____ _____ _____ |
| 3. Billy is made assistant score-keeper for the baseball team. | At first _____ _____ _____ Then _____ _____ _____ |
| 4. Billy is humiliated when Rod steals his tonsil and takes it to school. | At first _____ _____ _____ Then _____ _____ _____ |