

MUDDY MAX

The Mystery of Marsh Creek



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.



Andrews McMeel
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Muddy Max: The Mystery of Marsh Creek

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AMP! Comics for Kids

Andrews McMeel Publishing

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GRADE LEVEL: 3–7

Curriculum Connections

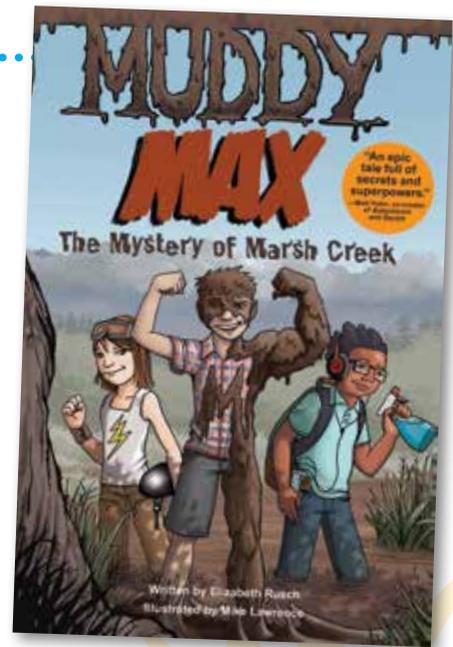
English Language Arts

Thematic Connections

Family * Friends * Bullies * Superheroes * Science * Invention * Problem Solving

Overview

Max may be the cleanest middle-school kid in the world—his mysterious, neat-freak parents make certain of that. But when he accidentally falls into a mud puddle, he makes a fantastic discovery: Mud gives him super powers! With help from his friends, Max uses his powers to uncover the secrets of mud-covered Marsh Creek—and his own family.



English Language Arts Lesson Plan: Collaborative Discussion and Creative Writing

Objective

Students will read this book independently, participate in class discussions, conduct short research projects, and complete individual writing exercises based on the book.

Post-reading Discussion Questions

- * Ask students if they have read other graphic novels in the mystery genre. Have they read mystery books and/or watched mystery movies? Can they suggest common themes that appear in the mystery genre (examples: mysterious characters, intriguing plots, clues)? Are most of these elements found in this book?
- * At what point in the story did students begin to suspect that Max's parents were keeping a secret? What were the clues in the art and in the text that led them to think this? Which scenes allows readers to guess the secret?

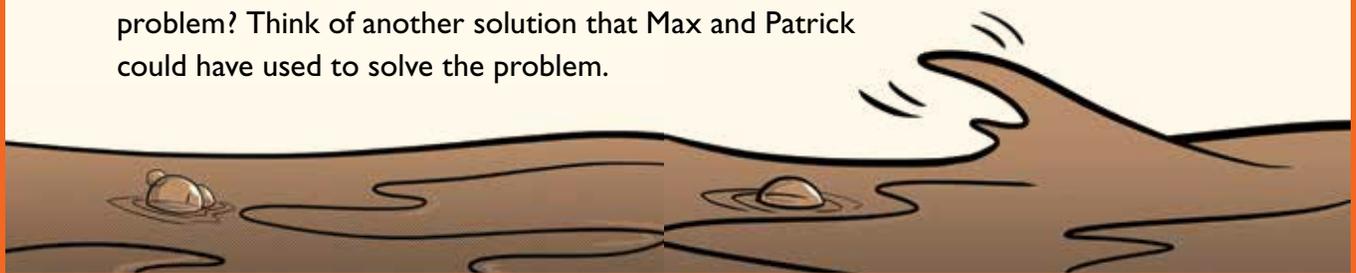
- * Having a superpower is pretty cool, but would students be willing to get covered in mud in order to be strong? What would they give up or endure in order to have a superpower? Have the class make a list of superpowers, like Max and Patrick do on pages 83 and 85. What superpowers have students read about in other graphic novels and comic books or seen on TV and in movies? Take a class vote—what is the number one superpower students would like to have? Number two? Number 3?
- * One good thing about having a superpower would be the ability to teach bullies a lesson. Ask the class how different characters interact with George, the Marsh Creek bully. What is the end result of the confrontation between Max and George? What does that say about Max’s character? Discuss different types of bullying and have students suggest actions to take if they are bullied or see it happening to others.

Research and Report

- * On page 210 in the “More to Explore” section at the back of the book, it says that Milo’s mud-fort house was inspired by the work of Spanish architect Antoni Gaudi. Have students find examples of Gaudi’s work online or in reference books and write a report about his life and work. Which characteristics of his work are shown in the pictures of the mud-fort house?
- * Have students research and write a report on the top ten muddiest places in the world based on average annual rainfall. Are the places all inhabited? How do the inhabitants use the rain and mud to their advantage? What problems do they have? What plants and animals can be found there?

Writing Exercises

- * Ask students to write an essay about the different ways anger and frustration are portrayed in the book, giving specific examples from both art and text. Do they think some of the characters have good reasons to be frustrated? For example, how does Milo feel about his life in Marsh Creek? How does Milo deal with his anger and frustration? How do the author and artist show this?
- * Have students draw a chart comparing and contrasting Max’s feelings and Milo’s feelings about the mud. Based on their diagram, students should decide if they agree with Max or Milo. Using evidence from the story to support their opinion, students should write from either Max or Milo’s perspective and try to convince their readers why using the mud is either beneficial or harmful.
- * Ask students to think of at least one example of problem solving in the story. Have them write a two- or three-paragraph response to the following questions: When did Max and Patrick have to work together to accomplish a goal? What did they do to finally solve the problem? Think of another solution that Max and Patrick could have used to solve the problem.



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

Grade 3

Reading: RL.3.1, RL.3.3, RL.3.5, RL.3.6, RL.3.7

Writing: W.3.1, W.3.2, W.3.4, W.3.7, W.3.8

Speaking and Listening: SL.3.1, SL.3.2, SL.3.3, SL.3.4, SL.3.6

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

Grade 4

Reading: RL.4.1, RL.4.3, RL.4.7

Writing: W.4.1, W.4.2, W.4.4, W.4.7, W.4.8, W.4.9

Speaking and Listening: SL.4.1, SL.4.2, SL.4.3, SL.4.4

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

Grade 5

Reading: RL.5.1, RL.5.3, RL.5.4, RL.5.6, RL.5.7

Writing: W.5.1, W.5.2, W.5.4, W.5.7, W.5.8, W.5.9

Speaking and Listening: SL.5.1, SL.5.2, SL.5.4

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.

