

A Vampire Named Fred

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TEACHER GUIDE

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Chapter One - The Old Dark House

Discussion Questions: These open-ended questions can help students explore the characters, situations, and language usage in the story.

- 1) Why do you think the boys liked to go to the old dark house to play? Do you think it would have been exciting to play there?
- 2) What rules were the boys breaking when they went in the old house to play? What kind of trouble could they have gotten into?
- 3) Why do you think Al's mother never told him that he couldn't go to the house next door to play?

Recall Questions: These short-answer questions can also be used before the next chapter to help students remember the story line.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) What lived in the walls of the old house? | mice |
| 2) What did Al's mom worry about most? | that he would fall off the stairs and break his neck |
| 3) When did Al get the flash light for his birthday? | on his ninth birthday |
| 4) How long was the old house for sale? | 15 years |
| 5) Where did Hermie live? | across the street and three houses down |

Newspaper Activity:

Have the students look at the ads for houses that are for sale. Have them list the things they think are important about a house they would be buy. Then have them make another list of what they believe their parent(s) would think was important in buying a house. Compare the two lists. Then have them make a list that would suit both the student and parent. It is a great time to discuss compromising.

Vocabulary Words:

gloomily
creaking
filthy
dangerous
actually
monstrosity

Chapter Two - New Neighbors

Discussion Questions: These open-ended questions can help students explore the characters, situations, and language usage in the story.

- 1) Why did Carl tell the movers there was very old, important stuff in the boxes?
- 2) Why do you think that Al's mom wanted to make lemonade for the boys and their new friends?
- 3) Why do you think Carl wanted to cut the tape on the last box himself?

Recall Questions: These short-answer questions can also be used before the next chapter to help students remember the story line.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) What was the name of the moving company? | Midnight Movers |
| 2) Why didn't Carl want the boys to sweep up the dirt and bugs? | He didn't want to disturb the insects. |
| 3) Why did the boys have to go next door to Al's house? | to get some scissors |
| 4) What were some of the things that the boys helped unpack? | a lamp, a coffee table, a radio, tuxedos |
| 5) What was in the last box that Carl unpacked? | a man |

Newspaper Activity:

Sometimes when people move, they don't want to take everything they own. Sometimes they have garage sales. Look in the paper to see if you can find garage sales listed. What kind of things do people sell at garage sales? Imagine that you have to move and that you will have to pack up all the stuff in your room. Consider selling some of your things. Write an advertisement for the things you want to sell.

Vocabulary Words

antique	priceless
husky	manuscript
imagine	attractive
valuable	tassels
delicate	

Chapter Three - The Man in the Box

Discussion Questions: These open-ended questions can help students explore the characters, situations, and language usage in the story.

- 1) Why do you think Hermie didn't look happy about shaking Fred's hand?
- 2) Why did Hermie want to leave before he got paid?
- 3) What did Fred mean when he said "There's a great prejudice against us vampires?"

Recall Questions: These short-answer questions can also be used before the next chapter to help students remember the story line.

- 1) What was the man in the box wearing? a tuxedo
- 2) What did Fred prefer over television? radio
- 3) When Fred dropped the fake accent, who did he sound like? the weatherman on tv

Newspaper Activity:

Have the students look through the newspaper for headlines. Headlines tell what the story is about. Have the students think about how they might write headlines for a story about prejudice. EXAMPLE: "Prejudice Ruins Life of Local Vampire" Write several samples of headlines that would give the reader a good idea about the story. Next pair or group the students off and have them write a paragraph about one of the headlines they have written. Have them write about how lives are affected by prejudice. Then have the students share their stories with the class.

Vocabulary Words

accent	foreign
dramatic	prejudice
wisely	peasants
jackknifed	sneak

Chapter Four - A Little About Vampires

Discussion Questions: These open-ended questions can help students explore the characters, situations, and language usage in the story.

- 1) Why do you think Fred wanted the boys to keep a secret from their parents? Is that a good idea? How might keeping secrets from your parents be a bad idea?
- 2) Why do you think it was hard for Fred to have friends? Would you want to be his friend?
- 3) Do you think Carl was a good friend to Fred? Why?
- 4) Why do you think Carl keeps correcting Fred when Fred says things?

Recall Questions: These short-answer questions can also be used before the next chapter to help students remember the story line.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1) What kind of water did Carl bring everyone? | Perrier |
| 2) What kind of skin do vampires have? | pale, sensitive |
| 3) What must vampires wear when they go out in the daytime? | dark suit, gloves, sunglasses, a veil |
| 4) Why do Carl and Fred like the bugs and mice? | They keep them company. |

Newspaper Activity:

Have the students scan the paper for articles about unusual events. Talk about how difficult it is to completely understand a situation you have never been in personally. A reporter's job is to get the facts about a story and report them in a clear concise manner. Have the students pair off in groups of two. One is the reporter and have the other be the owner of a pet that is lost. The pet must be one that is very unusual--one that is misunderstood. Maybe a bat, a spider, or a snake. This exercise could really help the kids to see how difficult it is to communicate the real story.

Vocabulary Words

- | | | | | |
|------------|---------|------------|------------|------------|
| satisfied | engaged | recovered | determined | awkward |
| hereditary | trend | gratifying | persistent | mysterious |

Chapter Five - A Nighttime Visit

Discussion Questions: These open-ended questions can help students explore the characters, situations, and language usage in the story.

- 1) Why do you think Al and Hermie snuck out of the house at night? Why is that dangerous? What are some of the bad things that could happen to you if snuck out at night?
- 2) Why is it a bad idea to go over to someone's house when your parents don't know them?
- 3) How could the boys have told their parents where they were going and gotten permission to go to Fred's house?

Recall Questions: These short-answer questions can also be used before the next chapter to help students remember the story line.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1) What was Al reading that summer? | The Last Unicorn |
| 2) What kind of music did Al and Hermie hear at Fred's house? | big band music |
| 3) What was Fred doing when the boys got to his house? | hanging up-side-down on a bird perch |

Newspaper Activity:

Hermie seems to have a hard time coming up with words to describe his feelings. Have the students help him out by writing a description of what he saw when he looked to the right of the old radio. Remind them of what Hermie is feeling--fear and curious all at the same time.

Vocabulary Words

damp
deserted
unusual
admit
overcast
hollow

Chapter Six - Walking the Bat

Discussion Questions: These open-ended questions can help students explore the characters, situations, and language usage in the story.

- 1) Why was it hard for Fred to find a job? Try to think of a job that he might be able to do.
- 2) Why do you think Fred would appear “sulky?”
- 3) Does Carl seem to take good care of Fred?
- 4) Why do you think Fred was embarrassed about being a bat?

Recall Questions: These short-answer questions can also be used before the next chapter to help students remember the story line.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1) What does Fred like to eat and drink? | well-done hamburger and water |
| 2) What did Carl tell the man Fred was? | a toy |
| 3) What does Fred like to eat when he is a bat? | fried banana sundae |

Newspaper Activity:

Newspapers often use illustrations or photos to help the reader be able to “see” the story. Did the illustrator do a good job of drawing the scene for this chapter? Have the students draw a picture of one of the scenes in this chapter that would help the reader to “picture” the scene. Captions always accompany photos. They explain what is happening in the photo and who is in the photo. Make sure to use a caption with your illustration.

Vocabulary Words

interview	sulky	interpret
expression	circumstances	embarrassing
scuffle	censorship	navigate
crave	convenience	enthusiastic

Chapter Seven - At the Tastee Daree Freezee

Discussion Questions: These open-ended questions can help students explore the characters, situations, and language usage in the story.

- 1) The author says that “in the ‘fifties, soft serve ice cream was a big deal.” What did he mean? Is it a “big deal” today? Who serves soft serve ice cream in your town?
- 2) In this chapter, the author introduces new characters. One of them is Elvis. Do you think the author is basing Elvis on the real Elvis? Why or why not?
- 3) Did the author describe the events that happened in the chapter well? Did he do a good job of capturing the excitement?

Recall Questions: These short-answer questions can also be used before the next chapter to help students remember the story line.

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| 1) Who ran the Tastee Daree Freezee? | Elvis |
| 2) What kind of sundae did Fred want? | Fried Banana Sundae |
| 3) Where had the cat been hiding? | Under the dumpster |
| 4) Who finally got the cat out the door? | Elvis |
| 5) Who was laughing about the whole thing? | Hermie |

Newspaper Activity:

Advertisers use slogans to try to get people to buy their product. Have the students look in the newspapers for slogans. Have them choose four or five slogans to write down on a piece of paper. Group the students and have them discuss the slogans they wrote down. Next have them make up a slogan for a product—real or imagined. Then have them try to “sell” the other students their product. You can take votes to see who would buy the products based on the slogans presented.

Vocabulary Words

panic	fumes	complain	exterminator
original	sag	snappy	artistic
appreciate	react	guarantee	release
berserk	swat		

Chapter Eight - A Fried Banana Sundae

Discussion Questions: These open-ended questions can help students explore the characters, situations, and language usage in the story.

- 1) Do you think Mrs. Delaney liked Fred?
- 2) Do you think Fred would be a good employee for the Tastee Daree Freezee?
- 3) Why do you think that Fred calmed down after eating the Sundae?

Recall Questions: These short-answer questions can also be used before the next chapter to help students remember the story line.

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1) How did Elvis get the bananas ready for the sundae? | He fried them. |
| 2) Where did Elvis get his blue suede shoes? | Cap'n Bob's |
| 3) Who helped Elvis at the Tastee Daree Freezee? | Mrs. Delaney |

Newspaper Activity:

Mrs. Delaney didn't appear to like Fred. She stayed behind the freezer the entire time Fred was in the Tastee Daree Freezee. Maybe she didn't like Fred because of he was a vampire. Have the students write a letter to the editor of your paper about why you believe Fred should or should not be hired to work in a public place waiting on the public. Encourage the students to write the letter without being prejudiced.

Vocabulary Words

eventually	clenchplunge	dainty
discriminate	whimper	wages
diplomatic	condition	imagination

Chapter Nine - The Trouble With Cats

Discussion Questions: These open-ended questions can help students explore the characters, situations, and language usage in the story.

- 1) Al and Hermie tried to think of good qualities that Fred had that would help him find a job. Can you name any qualities that Fred had?
- 2) Do you think that the idea of the Rent-A-Bat was a good one? Why?
- 3) Do you think your parents would pay to have a bat eat the bugs around your house? Why?

Recall Questions: These short-answer questions can also be used before the next chapter to help students remember the story line.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) What kind of tree did Hermie and Al like to sit under? | hackberry |
| 2) How many cats were outside Fred and Carl's house? | 20 - 25 |
| 3) How did Carl believe that the cats had heard about Fred? | He thought the cats talked to each other. |

Newspaper Activity:

Have the students look at the editorial cartoons in your paper. An editorial cartoon gives a person's opinion on a subject. Many times the subject is political. The cartoonist uses humor to give his or her opinion on a particular subject. Have the students look at headlines and try to find a humorous way to draw their opinion of the story.

Vocabulary Words

skill	drawback	insult
repellent	impression	vigilante
depressed	complaint	

Chapter Ten -A Trip to Cap'n Bob's

Discussion Questions: These open-ended questions can help students explore the characters, situations, and language usage in the story.

- 1) What do you think shopping at Cap'n Bob's would be like?
- 2) The author used a lot of tactics to describe Cap'n Bob's. What did he do to make it easy to picture what the inside of Cap'n Bob's looked like?
- 3) Why do you think Cap'n Bob wore different outfits?

Recall Questions: These short-answer questions can also be used before the next chapter to help students remember the story line.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1) What were Al and Hermie looking for at Cap'n Bob's? | shoes and catnip |
| 2) What did Cap'n Bob's smell like that day? | coffee |
| 3) Where did Al find the catnip mice? | behind the 45 records |
| 4) Who paid for the boys' purchases? | Al |

Newspaper Activity:

Have the students look at the classified advertisements. Explain how the newspapers charge for each word used in a classified ad. Have the students work together in groups to form a 25-word advertisement for Cap'n Bob's. Have them share their ads with the rest of the class.

Vocabulary Words

unclaimed	accumulation	detergent
classier	bargain	catnip
burrowing	scuffed	located
exposed		

Chapter Eleven - Cats and Mice

Discussion Questions: These open-ended questions can help students explore the characters, situations, and language usage in the story.

- 1) Why did Elvis offer the boys a free fried banana sundae?
- 2) Why did Elvis tell Al, "Great shoes?"
- 3) Why did Carl think that people would accuse them of catnapping if they tried to go into business returning the cats?

Recall Questions: These short-answer questions can also be used before the next chapter to help students remember the story line.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1) Who was singing on the record that the boys gave to Elvis? | Elvis |
| 2) How many cats did the boys think were in Fred's yard? | about 50 |
| 3) How much money did the boys make by returning the cats? | Nearly \$50 |
| 4) Why did Hermie say the cats wouldn't be leaving home for a while? | Because they had the catnip mice. |

Newspaper Activity:

Have the students scan the newspaper for articles about some local problem that needs solving. Group the children and have them discuss the problems they found and possible solutions. Have them share their solutions with the rest of the class.

Vocabulary Words

shuffled	population	increased
agitated	curious	celebrate
gain		

Chapter Twelve - An Invitation

Discussion Questions: These open-ended questions can help students explore the characters, situations, and language usage in the story.

- 1) Why do you think Fred didn't want to do an act at the birthday party?
- 2) Why do you think that Al's mother wouldn't like to find out her son's friend was a vampire?
- 3) Why do you think that Fred disliked Halloween?

Recall Questions: These short-answer questions can also be used before the next chapter to help students remember the story line.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1) Who was having a birthday party? | Ginnie |
| 2) Who was supposed to perform at the birthday party? | Sandy the Clown |
| 3) Why did the boys think that Fred was not much fun? | He was depressed. |
| 4) Why was Ginnie's mother calling off the party? | Because Sandy the Clown had the flu. |

Newspaper Activity:

Have the students look at the different pages of the newspaper. See if they can define what each page contains. Example: Front page is the news. Have them make a list of the pages and what they contain.

Vocabulary Words

thrilled	slack	perform
notice	act	perpetuates
stereotype	admit	

Chapter Thirteen - The Birthday Party

Discussion Questions: These open-ended questions can help students explore the characters, situations, and language usage in the story.

- 1) Why did Al and Hermie decide that Carl needed to change his name to Igor for the party?
- 2) Why do you think Fred refused to change his name?
- 3) Why do you think the cat chase was the hit of the act?

Recall Questions: These short-answer questions can also be used before the next chapter to help students remember the story line.

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1) What did Hermie get Ginnie for her birthday? | some puzzles |
| 2) Why did Sammy think that Fred should have a disgusting name? | Because bats eat bugs |
| 3) Who was Igor's assistant? | Al |
| 4) What kind of ice cream did Igor feed Fred? | butter brickle |

Newspaper Activity:

Sometimes the whole story is not included in the newspaper. This normally happens when there is an ongoing event. This chapter of the story stops short of letting the students know how the party turns out. Have each student write a short article detailing what they know about the success or failure of Fred being the entertainment at party. Have them check the newspaper for any ongoing stories that might give them an idea on how to make the reader want to read the next day's story.

Vocabulary Words

clung	pursuit	presence
circular	encouragement	grasp
peasant	navigators	conform

Chapter Fourteen - Show Biz!

Discussion Questions: These open-ended questions can help students explore the characters, situations, and language usage in the story.

- 1) Did the kids at Ginnie's believe that Fred the bat had really turned into Fred?
- 2) Why did the kids like the "magic trick?"
- 3) Do you think that Fred and Carl will be successful in "show biz?"
- 4) What do you think Carl and Fred will do for Halloween parties?

Recall Questions: These short-answer questions can also be used before the next chapter to help students remember the story line.

- 1) Who was doing the juggling? Fred
- 2) Who was going to sing at the next party? Carl
- 3) Who was going to be the manager? Al and Hermie

Newspaper Activity:

Have the students look at the advertisements in the newspaper. Then have them do an advertisement for Fred and Carl's party act. They can illustrate it if they like. Share with them the five things that an advertisement must address: who, what, where, when and why.

Vocabulary Words

suspicious	hooked	manager
offers	gratifying	

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