

NIBBLES

GRADES 1-3; AGES 6-9

Party Time!

- Take large pieces of construction paper, posterboard or plain chart paper and make fairy wings. Use paints or crayons, glitter, feathers, whatever catches their fancy. Display the wings in the classroom or attach string (through holes punched in the center) and let the students wear the wings.
- Describe the ideal fairy. What would he/she look like? What powers would he/she have? Describe the fairy and then draw him/her.
- Make a fairy tale like the one read in the book. Have students contribute ideas and write it as a class. "Once upon a time..." is always a good beginning. Discuss the characters first and be sure the story includes fairies and animals.

Bad Buster

- Discuss! Buster works and plays with the dogs at the kennel. He treats the dogs well and they do what he says. What do the students think about this? How does Buster get the dogs to do what he says? In what other situations would Buster be successful? In what other situations would Buster's way of working with the dogs be helpful?
- Draw a picture of Buster and one of the dogs.
- Buster captures the burglars and saves the day. Write another story (individually or as a class) where Buster does something good.
- Have a party where all the students act like one of the dogs from the book. What would they do? Which dog would they choose to be? Why? What would they do?

General

- Draw a cartoon representing the story. Use one box per chapter, and draw the main idea from each chapter. What is the main thing that happens? Alternatively, you could have students draw their favorite event of each chapter.
- Kids love to play act. Have the students choose parts (or draw names from a hat) and have them act out the story. Use actual lines from the book or have them improvise.
- Sometimes siblings can be hard to deal with. Becky in *The Magic Wand* makes her brother disappear, and in *The Littlest Pirate* Nicholas shows his big siblings he can save them. What would you like to do to your sibling(s)? What is your fantasy? Write about it and illustrate.
- Buster in *Bad Buster* and Jack in *Quack! Quack!* help save some animals. What do you think of that? Would you like to save an animal? What is a way you could help animals? Plan an event or make a poster to save an animal, either a pet or a species (examples: save the whales, help feed local dogs).
- Many of these books have animal themes. What if you could be an animal, what animal would you be? How would that animal act? Do you think you could do the spelling lesson as that animal (in a controlled manner!)?

- *The Littlest Pirate*, *Quack! Quack!*, and *My Amazing Poo Plant* are books about adventure. What kind of adventure would you like to take? To sail on the high seas? Flying through the air in the circus? Create a cartoon (6-8 frames) where you have an adventure. Use pictures and words.
- In *Quack! Quack!*, *The Littlest Pirate*, and *Bad Buster* the characters stand up to bullies. Have you ever had someone bully you? What happened? Write down some of your memories of the experience. Then with a partner, playact the scene with the bully either the way you remember it or with an ending you would have liked.
- In *The Magic Wand*, Becky has a pretend magic wand—or is it *real*? What if you had a real magic wand? What would you do with it? Write a short story describing what you would do with a magic wand. Be sure to include a picture!
- Emma grows the perfect pet in *My Amazing Poo Plant*. What would your perfect pet be? Is it your dog? Could it be a cross between a fish and a gerbil? Draw a picture of your perfect pet and write a description of this pet and why it is perfect.

BITES

GRADES 2-4, AGES 7-10

Let It Rip!

- David and his friend Nick deviously sell Fart in a Jar to other kids. What kinds of tricks would the students like to play on other kids or adults? Make a list of the ideas and vote on the best one.
- David's grandmother has a recipe for soup that keeps everyone from passing stinky wind. It's the secret ingredient that does it! What do you think the secret ingredient could be? Create your own recipe for special soup (or any dish) that has a secret ingredient. What does this secret ingredient do?
- What other things that can't be seen could be put in a jar and sold (kiss in a jar, sweat in a jar)? Have kids come up with ideas and make labels to put on jars. Have them bring in an empty jar from home. Display the jars in the classroom.

Luke and Lulu

- The story ends with "maybe she wasn't as good as everyone thought she was." What does this mean? What will Lulu do? What possibilities do the students come up with? Write a sequel in which Lulu has more adventures.
- Lulu is quite a dog! Create a chart and list the good things about Lulu and the bad things about Lulu.
- Luke really wants a dog. What kind of dog would your students want? Have them draw their fantasy dog.
- Play Luke and Lulu. In a gym or outdoors pair students and have one play Luke and one play Lulu. What would the dog and boy do? Where might they run?

General

- In these books, kids often take charge. Let a student take charge of the class as if he/she were one of the characters in the book. Give them something to teach, like the spelling lesson. How would they do it like a character? What would they have the class do?
- Play charades. Have a student choose a character or choose one for them. Have them act like that character and even say some lines from the book. The class has to guess which character they are portraying.
- Trying new things can be hard. Both Merry in *The Too Tight Tutu* and Rick in *Crazy for Cake* try new things and find success. What new thing would you like to try? With a partner talk about something you have always wanted to try. See if you can come up with a plan to actually try your new thing.
- Dealing with your family can sometimes be a challenge. Rick in *Crazy for Cake* has trouble with his mom, Merry in *The Too-Tight Tutu* has a brother who teases her, and Sandra in *Big Bad Bunnies* teases her brother and gets teased by her brother. What issues do you have with your family? Does your brother always tease you? Does your sister always want to be near you? Does your mom always need to know what you're doing? Write a journal entry talking about what bugs you about your family. Then try to come up with a solution or compromise you can try at home (talking about it, getting your sister a new game, etc.).

- Fear is a powerful emotion. Rick in *Crazy for Cake* is afraid of being average, Sandra in *Big Bad Bunnies* is afraid of bunnies, and Snag in *The Gutless Gladiator* is afraid of being killed. What is something you are afraid of? It can be an animal, a brother, something serious, or something silly. Draw a poster of you conquering your fear.
- Some schools in this series have unusual or funny aspects. *The Gutless Gladiator* has a school for gladiators and the students in *Miss Wolf and the Porkers* are troublemakers. The boys in *Let it Rip!* sell farts in a jar at school. Make a list of the things that would make your school perfect. What would it have? What wouldn't it have? What kind of rules would there be?
- Snag in *The Gutless Gladiator* hates fighting and prefers to play his fife and dance. He ends up able to change all the gladiators to be less violent. Perhaps it is partly the influence of the music he plays. Can music be that powerful? Make up a song to try and change people's minds about something, be in war, eating vegetables, or saving electricity or anything else you choose.
- *Miss Wolf and the Porkers* is a take-off of the fairytale *The Three Little Pigs*. It is called a "fractured" fairytale. What is your favorite fairytale? Choose one and write your own mixed-up, funny, "fractured" fairytale.

CHOMPS

GRADES 3-6; AGES 8-12

Stella by the Sea

- Mary Sparkel interprets the dreams of other characters in the book. Have the students play dream interpreters. Pair them up and have them tell each other a dream and have their partner analyze it. They can write up the interpretation and share it with the class.
- What do your students desire? Have them write a story describing their heart's desire and what would happen if they got it!
- Stella's dream comes true when she rents a playhouse. Have students draw their own dream playhouse. They can design rooms, make a floor plan, and/or draw and color the front. Where would their playhouse be?

The Boy Who Would Live Forever

- Daniel stays 12 for over 200 years! Have the students imagine and write about life at 12 (or any age of their choosing) for 200 years. What would it be like? What things would change in 200 years? Would it be good to stay 12? What would be good and what would be bad?
- Many things changed in the 200 years Daniel lived. Choose something that has evolved over the last 200 years and draw its stages (vehicles over 200 years, kitchens over 200 years, etc). What might it look like in another 200 years? Draw its future incarnations.
- Daniel is able to change people's minds and put ideas in their heads to suit his purposes. Is this good or bad? Have a debate about this idea. Divide the class into groups and have the students brainstorm the good and bad points of Daniel's ability. Have those groups choose whether they support Daniel's abilities or not and then convince the others that they are right.
- Daniel comes from another world in outer space. What does that world look like? What powers do the creatures that live there have? What can they do? Draw this other world and write captions describing the creatures.
- What magical powers would your students want? Have a discussion about having magical powers and what your students would do with those powers.

General

- Have students keep a journal for a week as if they were the main character. What would they write, and how would they feel about things that happened to them? They can write about real events and respond as the character, respond to events in the book or create made up events.
- Have a book party and have students come as a character from the book. Serve food from the time period/country of the book, dress as the character, listen to music the characters would have listened to and talk as the characters about events in the book.
- Three of these books are scary! What are some things that scare you? Discuss with a partner or write a journal entry talking about what scares you. Is it roller coasters? Thunder and lightning? Your sister's hair dryer? Talk and write about what scares you and why it scares you.
- There are mysteries in many of these books. Rose in *Catland* has to figure out what is happening with all the cats and how to solve some problems. Robby in *The Twilight Ghost* needs to solve the ghost mystery and Grommet in *Scream World* has to find out who is causing trouble in

Scream World. Mysteries are fun to read and fun to write. Brainstorm with a partner about possible mysteries and then write your own mystery story. It can be realistic, something that happened to you, or totally made up.

- Many of these characters don't quite fit in. Rose in *Catland* doesn't fit with her new family, Walter in *Walter Wants to be a Werewolf* isn't turning into a werewolf as he should, and Grommet in *Scream World* no longer fits in with his old friends. It's hard not to fit in. Have you ever felt that way? Write about what it's like to be different and something that is different about you. You can do it in journal or cartoon (10-12 panels) format. Be sure to illustrate!
- Everyone has issues with their families sometimes. Rose in *Catland* has trouble with her new stepsisters and stepmother. Robby in *The Twilight Ghost* fights with his parents and Walter in *Walter Wants to be a Werewolf* gets teased and then ignored by his brother and sister. Write a story/journal entry about family problems.
- Many of these stories have characters trying to save something. Grommet in *Scream World* is saving an amusement park, Rose in *Catland* is saving cats, Walter in *Walter Wants to be a Werewolf* is saving his family and his family's stuff. The kid saves the day. What is something that you think needs saving? Is it animals? Your town? Your garden? Your brother from the werewolves? Make a poster or a diorama depicting you saving something.
- There are bullies in several of these stories. Grommet in *Scream World* starts out as a bully and his friends are bullies (to strangers). Ma and Mardy Mingus are thieving bullies in *Walter Wants to be a Werewolf*. Slugger Sloan is a bully in *The Twilight Ghost*. Bullies can be really difficult to deal with. As a class, or in small groups, brainstorm ways to positively deal with bullies, instead of fighting. Think of what the characters in the books did, as well as your own ideas. Then write up a poster listing your ideas. Hang it up in the classroom or hallway.