

Teaching Guide



About the book:

Eli has a dream. He's going to be the next Stephen King, and he's just created his best monster yet!

Neha has a secret. Her notebook is filled with drawings of a fantasy world called Forest Creeks, and it's become inhabited by wonderful imaginary creatures. But her new friends are in danger . . .

Court has a gift, both for finding trouble and for stopping it. And when she accidentally ends up with one of Neha's drawings, she quickly realizes that the monsters raiding Forest Creeks are coming from Eli's stories.

When these three creative kids come together, they accidentally create a doorway from Forest Creeks into the real world, and now every monster that Eli ever imagined has been unleashed upon their town!

About the Author:



Sarah Cannon, author of *Oddity*, has lived all over the U.S., but right now she calls Indiana home. She has a husband, three kids and a misguided dog. Sarah holds a B.S. in Education, and has taught a wide variety of grade levels and subjects, including English as a Second Language and SAT Prep! She's a nerdy knitting gardener who drinks a lot of coffee, and eats a lot of raspberries.

She is probably human.



Discussion Questions:

Eli loves to write scary stories and movie scripts, and as he points out, the first character in a scary movie never gets to live! What are the stages the main characters move through as they respond to the monster invasion, first in the notebook, then on their home turf? How are they similar to or different from familiar tropes in scary books and movies? CCSS 6-12 RL.3, CCSS 6-12 RL.7, CCSS 6-12 SL.1

What things do you know about Court, Eli, and Neha because they are actually stated in the story? What did you learn about them that wasn't directly stated? Give an example from the story to support your answer. CCSS 6-12 SL.1, CCSS 6-12 RL.1/3

Would Scott survive in one of Eli's scary movies? Why or why not? Why do you think he survives in this story? CCSS 6-12 SL.1, CCSS 6-12 RL.1

Which character in Twist are you most like? Use events and information from the book to justify your answer. CCSS 6-12 W.1a/1b, CCSS 6-12 SL.1



Eli is a writer, Neha is an artist, and Court is an adventurer. Which skill set do you think was most powerful in this story? Why? CCSS 6-12 W.1a/1b, CCSS 6-12 SL.1

Because Twist is set in Oklahoma (and in a different time period!) you might notice some words/ways of saying things that are unfamiliar to you. Make a list of these terms and discuss their meaning in class. CCSS 6-12 L.1, L.3

Why would an author choose to use these terms even if readers might not know them? Why is fiction different from non-fiction in this way? Is there ever a time when a fiction author should NOT use slang or culturally-specific language? Why or why not? CCSS 6-12 L.1, L.3, L.5

Projects!

Design a monster counter-measure or trap using favorite toys from your childhood or common items you have lying around at your house. Describe this invention in detail, explaining how each part would work and the invention's intended effect. Make a list of all required materials and draw a diagram of your invention. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of your invention when it comes to various monsters from Twist. How do their particular qualities and abilities affect whether your creation works on them? CCSS 6-12 W.2, CCSS 6-12 WHST.2

Create a monster-preparedness plan for either your home, or your school. Create a map of the school and grounds. Write a report that includes the following: an analysis of where monsters would be most likely to get in and why, an argument that identifies the strongest base of operations for defending students and teachers and justifies your choice by making a clear argument and providing specific examples, a description of countermeasures would you use to defend the site using only items that are normally available, and where you would place them. CCSS 6-12 W.2

Write a story in which you are battling monsters like Neha, Eli, and Court! Make sure we know how you got into this situation in the first place, and that we can picture the monsters you encounter and the setting as your battle unfolds. Include sensory details and dialogue...if your monster doesn't talk, you're going to have to get creative! If you send the story to the author (that's me!) it might even be published on her website! CCSS 6-12 W.3

Twist is set in 1983, before you were born! Gather information from multiple print and digital sources to answer the following questions: What movie would you have been most excited to see in a theater that year? Track down two reviews for that movie. Did the reviewers agree or disagree with your choice? Does the movie's popularity (or lack thereof) match the review? What are three major news events that happened that year? Who was president? What were three popular songs that came out that year that you've heard before? What would you have chosen to wear on your feet, and why? CCSS 6-12 W.7, CCSS 6-12 WHST.7/8



Want to schedule a school visit?

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