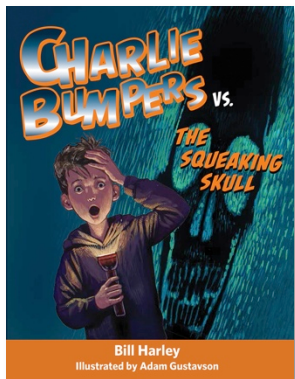


# TEACHER'S GUIDE



## Charlie Bumpers vs. the Squeaking Skull

Written by Bill Harley | Illustrated by Adam Gustavson

HC: 978-1-56145-808-0 | PB: 978-1-56145-888-2 | CD: 978-1-56145-809-7

Ages 7–10 | Realistic Fiction | Series: Charlie Bumpers  
AR • RC • Lexile • GRL P; Grade 3

### ABOUT THE BOOK

This Halloween Charlie and Tommy have big plans. They hope they can get out of taking their little sisters around and go trick-or-treating in Alex's upscale neighborhood instead. There they'll get tons more candy, they'll be on their own, and afterwards they'll get to attend the sleepover at Alex's house. But when Charlie finds out that the entertainment at the party is to consist of the "Scariest Horror Movies Ever," he is struck by panic. Charlie loves candy and he loves sleepovers with his friends, but he absolutely hates horror movies. There is yet another wrinkle in Charlie's Halloween plans. He is determined to win the big prize (ten movie tickets) that will be awarded for the best costume, but when he finally comes up with a genius prize-winning idea, he runs into an unexpected obstacle... How will Charlie be able to enjoy Halloween this year?

### THEMES

Friendship | Family | Fear | Halloween | Humor  
School | Learning lessons

### BEFORE YOU READ

- Draw three columns on a piece of chart paper. (Leave the last column open until the book has been read.) The following activities will reinforce these skills: read, record, and discover. You can do the activities together as a class or ask each student to do them individually.
- Ask the students to look at the cover of the book and predict what they think will happen. Have them record their responses in the first column of the chart paper. **CCSS.ELA.RL.1 & 2**
- Take your students on a picture walk through the book. Have them predict what might happen in the story, and record these predictions in the second column on the chart paper. Try to draw out inferences based on images rather than words. Are these predictions different from the cover predictions? **CCSS.ELA.RL.1 & 2**

### AS YOU READ

- Read the book chapter by chapter, stopping after each chapter for reflection and questions. The students will answer two questions per chapter. (See

## MEETING THE STANDARDS

The activities in this guide directly address a variety of standards across the curriculum. Following each activity, you'll find an abbreviation for the standard(s) it supports. For a complete list of the Common Core Math and English Language Arts Standards addressed, please see page 3.

list of questions on page 2 of this guide.) **CCSS.ELA.RL.1, 2, 3 & 6, CCSS.ELA.SL.1, 2 & 3**

- Give each student some post-it notes to document changes in predictions. The children should cite pages to place in the third column on the chart. **CCSS.ELA.RL.2**
- Collect new vocabulary words and make a list of them on chart paper. Continue to add to it as you read. **CCSS.ELA.RL.4**

### AFTER YOU READ

- Discuss what your students discovered after reading the book. How did their opinions change from the beginning of the story to the end? Take a look at the post-it notes on the chart paper and talk about the differences. **CCSS.ELA.RL.5 & 6**
- Discuss the questions at the end of each chapter. (See list on page 2 of this guide.) Ask if anyone would like to share his/her thoughts. **CCSS.ELA.SL.1, 2 & 3**

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

### LANGUAGE ARTS

- An adjective is a word that describes a person, place, or thing. Use one word to describe each of the following characters: Charlie, Tommy, Mabel, Alex and Kyle. **CCSS.ELA.L.1**
- Making connections. Ask students if there is anything within the story that they can connect with. Have them write about a time when they felt the same way as one of the characters in the book. **CCSS.ELA.Writing.1, CCSS.ELA.L.1 & 2**
- Write tall tales with your class like the story that Charlie told at Halloween. **CCSS.ELA.W.4, 5, & 6**
- Charlie and Tommy often combine two words to make something extraordinary, an example of this is combining stupendous and terrific to make stupific. Please come up with five new words by combining words. Include definitions of your new words. **CCSS.ELA.RL.4 & 5**

### MATH

- Mabel collected 125 pieces of candy while trick-or-treating, Charlie collected 30 pieces. Mabel gave Charlie half of her candy. How many pieces does Charlie now have? **CCSS.MATH.OAA.3, CCSS.MATH.NF.2**
- At the end of the first day of school, Charlie could not think of one good thing that had happened to him

that day. Can you think of one good thing that happened to Charlie?

### SOCIAL STUDIES

In Chapter 4 we asked you to list five other countries that celebrate Halloween. Please provide a brief description of how these countries celebrate. Choose one celebration to showcase with a drawing.

**CCSS.ELA.W.7 & 8**

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS BY CHAPTER

#### Chapter 1:

1. What does the winner of the costume contest get?
2. How do you think Tommy felt about spending the night at Alex's house?

#### Chapter 2:

1. Like Charlie, have you ever watched something you wish you hadn't? Explain.
2. What did Matt call Charlie when Charlie was relieved that his mother turned the movie off?

#### Chapter 3:

1. What does Matt want to do on Halloween?
2. How does Mabel feel about Charlie not taking her trick-or-treating?

#### Chapter 4:

1. What is a chupacabra?
2. Halloween is not celebrated in Chile, but can you name five countries, besides the USA, that celebrate Halloween?

#### Chapter 5:

1. Who suggested that Alex invite Hector over for Halloween? Why?
2. How did Charlie feel about having Kyle Curtis invited to the party? Why?

#### Chapter 6:

1. Why was Charlie afraid that Alex might find out he doesn't really like scary movies?
2. Why does Charlie say that he isn't scared of scary movies, even though he is?

#### Chapter 7:

1. How do you think Charlie felt when Matt called *The Shrieking Skull* "the creepiest movie ever"?
2. What is Matt's plan to save Charlie? Do you think it will work?

**Chapter 8:**

1. How did Charlie get the idea for his costume?
2. How did Charlie's mom feel about making the costume? Why?

**Chapter 9:**

1. Why did Charlie ask his brother to wait until morning to de-scare him?
2. Why did Charlie's father come into Charlie's room?

**Chapter 10:**

1. Why does Charlie's mother want to pick a costume up at the store for Charlie?
2. Do you think Matt was really trying to de-scare Charlie or was he enjoying himself?

**Chapter 11:**

1. Who did Charlie get to help him with his costume?
2. What does it mean for a bat to be rabid?

**Chapter 12:**

1. The guys at the lunch table promised to keep a secret. What was the secret?
2. What is the name of the Long-Fingered Man?

**Chapter 13:**

1. Why did Charlie miss recess? Was it worth it?
2. How do you think Charlie felt when he completed his costume all by himself?

**Chapter 14:**

1. What did Charlie's family think of his costume?
2. How did Charlie scare Matt?

**Chapter 15:**

1. How do you think Charlie really felt about not watching *The Shrieking Skull* at Alex's house?
2. "Darren had a way of making people feel uncomfortable." What do you think this means? Has someone ever made you feel uncomfortable?

**Chapter 16:**

1. What did Charlie want to use to make himself look rabid?
2. Why did Charlie's dad say "I must be insane"?

**Chapter 17:**

1. What was the Squid for Halloween?
2. What was Tommy's plan to get hair on his face? Do you think it was a good one?

**Chapter 18:**

1. How do you think Charlie felt about seeing Brady Bernhart wearing the same costume as him? How would you have felt?
2. What did Ms. Bromley say to Charlie after the costume contest?

**Chapter 19:**

1. Who told Brady about Charlie's idea?
2. Why did Charlie wish he "was going with Dad and the Squid, or helping Maldore, Deliverer of Justice"?

**Chapter 20:**

1. How did Tommy put the hair on his face?
2. In the book it says that Alex's dad looked "pretty horrified by what he saw." Why do you think this is?

**Chapter 21:**

1. Charlie thought that big houses would give out big candy bars. Did that happen? What did Charlie think of his treats?
2. How did Hector like his first Halloween?

**Chapter 22:**

1. When Alex announced that his mother had gotten the movie *Space Gremlins*, what did Kyle do? What did you think of this?
2. Who suggested that Charlie tell the story of The Long Fingered Man?

**Chapter 23:**

1. How did Alex feel about watching *The Shrieking Skull*?
2. What was Kyle doing after Charlie finished telling the story. Why?

**Chapter 24:**

1. Did Charlie have fun on Halloween?
2. What did Mabel do for Charlie? Why did she do it? How did it make Charlie feel?

**Bill Harley's  
Charlie Bumpers series:**

*Charlie Bumpers vs. the Teacher of the Year*  
*Charlie Bumpers vs. the Really Nice Gnome*  
*Charlie Bumpers vs. the Squeaking Skull*  
*Charlie Bumpers vs. the Perfect Little Turkey*  
*Charlie Bumpers vs. the Puny Pirates*  
*Charlie Bumpers vs. His Big Blabby Mouth*

### THE ACTIVITIES IN THIS GUIDE DIRECTLY ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING STANDARDS:

#### COMMON CORE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

- Reading Literature #1, 2 & 3: Identifying Key Ideas and Details
- Reading Literature #4, 5 & 6: Craft and Structure
- Speaking and Listening #1, 2 & 3: Comprehension & Collaboration
- Writing #4, 5 & 6: Production and Distribution of Writing
- Writing #7 & 8: Research to build and present knowledge
- Language #1 & 2: Conventions of Standard English

#### COMMON CORE FOR MATH STANDARDS

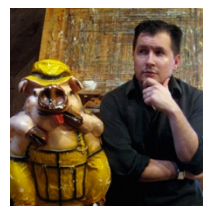
- Operations & Algebraic Thinking A.3
- Number and Operations – Fractions #2



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bill Harley is a two-time Grammy Award-winning storyteller, musician, and writer who has been writing and performing for kids and families for more than thirty years. He is the recipient of Parents' Choice and ALA awards. Bill has won two Grammy Awards, one for his children's storytelling album *Blah Blah Blah* and one for his children's spoken-word album *Yes to Running!* *Bill Harley Live*. He lives in Massachusetts.

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#### ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Adam Gustavson has illustrated many books for children, including *Lost and Found*; *Mind Your Manners*; *Alice Roosevelt!*; and *Snow Day!*. He lives in New Jersey.

[www.adamgustavson.com](http://www.adamgustavson.com)

#### REVIEWS

"Harley serves up hilarious high jinks squirming with Halloween trouble.... [A] learning experience for more than just the main character." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"Harley develops all of Charlie's concerns with a nice sense of balance and levity, and Gustavson's uncommonly good spot illustrations are frequent, adding notes of creepiness or humor at all the right places." —*Booklist*

"Fans of the [audiobook] series will enjoy this third installment, and those new to Charlie will have no trouble following along." —*School Library Journal*

"Author and narrator Harley delivers another great story for young boys..." —*Booklist Online*

"Occasional ink and watercolor illustrations highlight the installment's funniest moments." —*Horn Book Guide*

#### AWARDS

- Kansas State Reading Circle Recommended Reading List (intermediate) —Kansas National Education Association
- Junior Library Guild Selection

Peachtree Teacher's Guide for  
**CHARLIE BUMPERS VS.  
THE SQUEAKING SKULL**  
prepared by Meagan Lenihan

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