

TEACHER'S GUIDE



The Library Dragon

Written by Carmen Agra Deedy | Illustrated by Michael P. White

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Ages 6–10 | Fantasy

AR • RC • Lexile • F&P • GRL P; Gr 3

Also available: *The Return of the Library Dragon* | HC: 978-1-56145-621-5

ABOUT THE BOOK

Sunrise Elementary School needs a thick-skinned librarian to help care for the books in their school. When Miss Lotta Scales answers the advertisement for someone who is “on fire with enthusiasm” she is hired immediately. Who could protect the books better than a real dragon? She takes her job of guarding the books very seriously. Students aren’t allowed to check out books and both children and teachers are scared of her. Story time burns out and the children’s grades go up in smoke. But one day little Molly Brickmeyer wanders into the library and picks up a book. The moment she begins to read it out loud other students gather around. When Miss Lotta Scales overhears the read-aloud and sees the eager children’s faces, her scales fall away and she is transformed into Miss Lotty, the loveable librarian.

THEMES

The Importance of libraries | Following rules
Respecting others’ property | Caring for the library
Making choices | Trying something new

BEFORE YOU READ

- Ask the students to compare and contrast their school library to their community library.
- Show students the cover of the book and tell them the title. Ask them what they think the book may be about?

- Discuss the job of a librarian. What are some of the duties of a librarian?
- Discuss how to behave in a library and how to check out library books.

AS YOU READ

In advance, you may want to use post-its to mark several places that are good opportunities for stopping and predicting what will happen next. On chart paper, record the book title and divide the paper into three columns. Make one wide column for recording predictions and two narrow columns with the headings “Yes” and “No.” Ask students to predict what the book could be about. Read aloud up to the first post-it. Discuss if any of the predictions were fulfilled or unfulfilled and check the appropriate column. If any are still in question leave them blank. Add any new predictions, if necessary, based on what has been read or seen in the pictures.

AFTER YOU READ

- Compare the librarian in the book with one at your school.
- Discuss why it is important to keep books safe and protected from harm.
- Talk about why it is significant to return books when they are due.
- Discuss what a banned book means and why school libraries have to do this.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

LANGUAGE ARTS

- Make available the following list of vocabulary words from the book. Have students define at least ten words and use them each in a sentence.
- | | | |
|----------------|-------------|--------------|
| dragon | dread | mumbled |
| replaced | sputtered | wandered |
| smudged | fumed | stumbled |
| clutching | smoldered | huddled |
| smearing | furiously | blur |
| unfounded | medieval | suspiciously |
| inflammatory | glare | scorched |
| depict | delegation | spewed |
| intently | incinerated | chuckled |
| transformation | awe | |
- Using butcher paper, have students sequence the story. Illustrate the beginning, middle, and end. Write a sentence under each image.
 - While reading the book, have students look or listen for words that relate to dragons and create a list. (Examples: flame, fire)
 - Ask students to define an advertisement and discuss its parts. Have students create their own ad poster and share it with the class. Allow the class to guess what the ad is about before its creator explains it.
 - Discuss descriptive words and how to incorporate them into writing (Examples: “touching and clutching,” “pawing and clawing,” and “smearing and tearing.”)
 - Discuss nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Choose a page or several pages from the book and have students identify the words as a noun, verb, or adjective. Or have them find all the nouns in the book, then the verbs, and finally the adjectives.
 - Define a synonym. How did the author use synonyms to write the story?
 - Have the students tell the story from a different perspective of a different character in the book (Examples: Miss Lemon, Molly Brickmeyer, the Principal)

SCIENCE

Come up with five interesting facts about dragons and draw a picture or select an image from the Internet to go with the information. Have students create small posters to share and display on a bulletin board.

MATH

- Using *The Library Dragon*, have students create five word problems that relate to the story. Share with a partner and then the class.
- Have students select a page from the book and count the number of nouns, verbs, and adjectives on that page. Create a graph showing this information.

SOCIAL STUDIES

- Play Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down. Have students decide which parts of the book they considered appropriate or inappropriate behavior by putting their thumbs up or down. Have the class debate both sides of their views.
- Discuss the purpose of going to the library. Ask students to list ways they can make the most of their visits to the library.
- Create a chart titled “Library Rules.” Have students create a list of rules about how they need to act while in the library and how they need to treat the books they check out of the library. Decorate the chart and display it in the classroom.
- Discuss what it means to respect people and their things. Ask the students to talk about something that is important to them that may not be to someone else. Conclude the discussion by emphasizing that we should treat one another respectfully and treat others’ belongings with respect too.
- Discuss with students why they think the Library Dragon was so overly protective of the books. What may have caused her to become this way? What could she have done to make sure the books stayed safe?
- Talk with the students about book care and why it is necessary to follow rules created for the classroom library and the school library. Show them copies of books that have been ruined by misuse. Discuss the Library Dragon’s rules for her library that were useful and those that were not. This is a good time to discuss all of the wonderful things the school librarian does to make the library great. Afterwards, have the class write Thank You letters to the school librarian.
- Compare and contrast how you should treat people and others people’s belonging (whether it be the property of other students, teachers, or the school).
- Create a Venn Diagram between the Library Dragon and Miss Lottie. How were they the same/different?
- How did Molly Brickmeyer help change the Library Dragon’s view of how kids treat books?

GEOGRAPHY

Have the students draw a map to the school library for someone who is new or a guest in the school. The map should identify all surrounding areas and include a compass rose.

DRAMA

- Have the students reenact the book. Assign character roles and narrator sections so that each student has a part.
- Have students create a paper plate mask of the Library Dragon or Miss Lottie using various materials from the classroom. Create and perform a few short skits or a short script of five different scenes from the book.

AWARDS

- Georgia Top 25 Reading List —Georgia Center for the Book
- Read Alouds too Good to Miss —AIME
- Flicker Tale Children's Book Award —North Dakota Library Association
- Buckaroo Book Award (2nd Runner Up) —Wyoming Library Association, Wyoming State Reading Council
- Volunteer State Book Awards (master list, K–3) —Tennessee Association of School Librarians
- Young Hoosier Book Award (nominee, grades K–3) —Association for Indiana Media Educators
- Children's Book Award (nominee) —Florida Reading Association
- Colorado Children's Book Award (nominee) —Colorado Council of the International Reading Association

REVIEWS

“Deedy is an accomplished storyteller and kids will likely enjoy her frequent puns and wordplay and [Michael White’s] droll, stylized illustrations, filled with vibrant color and lots of comical details.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

“Youngsters will enjoy the funny touches and librarians may feel the good-humored tap of a reminder that books are for kids.”

—*School Library Journal*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carmen Agra Deedy is a *New York Times* bestselling author and has been writing and traveling around the world telling stories for more than twenty years. Her books, including *14 Cows for America*, *The Library Dragon*, *The Yellow Star*, and *Martina the Beautiful Cockroach* have received numerous awards and honors. Carmen has performed in many prestigious venues, but children are her favorite audience. Born in Havana, Cuba, she came to the United States as a refugee and like most immigrants sees the world from multiple perspectives.

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ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Michael P. White is an award-winning fine artist and the illustrator of several children's books. He lives in Georgia.

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Peachtree Teacher's Guide for
THE LIBRARY DRAGON

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