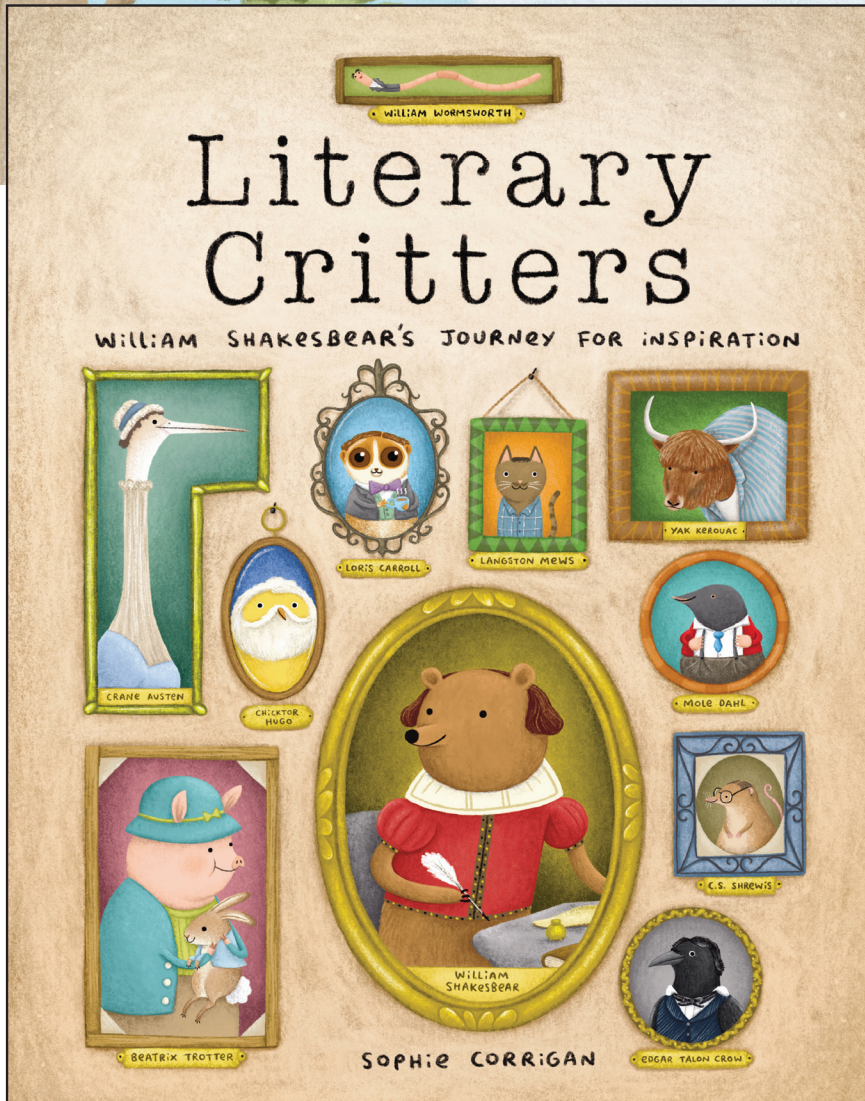


CURRICULUM GUIDE

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Literary Critters

WILLIAM SHAKESBEAR'S SEARCH FOR INSPIRATION

BY Sophie Corrigan

IN THIS IS PLAYFUL introduction to iconic authors, William Shakesbear needs inspiration. What should his next play be about? Desperate for help, William sets off on a journey to visit some of his Literary Critter Guild friends to see if they can spark ideas and inspiration. Fortunately, friends like Mole Dahl, Crane Austen, Beatrix Trotter, Edgar Talon Crow, Yak Kerouac, C.S. Shrewis, Langston Mews, and more offer lots of sage advice.

Sophie Corrigan's whimsical art and characters will charm young readers. Just by reading the book, they, too, become members of the Literary Critters Guild and are invited to continue growing in their love for all things reading, writing, and books.

zonderkidz.com



The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) addressed by the discussion questions and activities in this guide are noted throughout. For more information on the Common Core, visit corestandards.org.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

-  Take a picture walk through the book. Do you think this story is fiction or nonfiction? Give reasons and examples to support your answer.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7
-  Describe the main character and the problem the character faces in this story. Where in the book do you find out details about the problem in the story?
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3
-  Where does the main character live in the story? What is he putting off doing until he solves his problem? **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3**
-  What do you think the word “inspiration” means? How do you know the meaning of this word? **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.4**
-  On William Shakesbear’s journey he meets many literary friends. In what ways are William and Mole Dahl the same? How are they different from one another?
-  What solution does Beatrix Trotter offer William to help him solve his problem? Why doesn’t he follow Beatrix’s suggestion?
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3
-  Look at the page where William meets with Edgar Talon Crow in Edgar’s treehouse. How is this page different from the other illustrations in the book? What do the colors used to create this illustration make you feel as a reader?
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7
-  Who are some of the Literary Critter Guild friends who attend Loris Carroll’s mad tea party? **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1**
-  Langston Mews suggests that William should write a poem. What does he say the flowing river water sounds like?
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1
-  After his long journey, William finally settles in his cave for a long winter’s nap. What images come to William in his dreams? Do you think these images could inspire William? Why or why not? **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3**
-  What does William find outside the entrance to his cave once he wakes from his long hibernation? **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1**
-  What lesson do you think William learns in this story? What message might the author have wanted the reader to learn from the story? **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.2**

ACTIVITIES

Dear William

The story begins with a letter to the reader from William Shakesbear describing his lack of inspiration and his need to search for writing ideas. Write a friendly letter back to William. Describe what you do when you feel uninspired. What strategies do you use to come up with new ideas for stories, plays, and poems? Share with William what you will be reading and/or writing next.

Best Advice

William travels to visit many different authors in the hope that one will give him useful strategies for finding his inspiration for writing again. In your opinion, which author gave William the best advice? Write an opinion piece that states which author gave the best advice and include reasons for your selection. Include contrasting ideas from some of the other authors William visited. Clearly state and support why your selected author shared the strongest writing advice with William.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.1

Dreaming About Books

All of that traveling from author to author makes William very tired. He finally heads home to settle in for a nice, long nap. Once asleep, he dreams about things discussed with his author friends—everything from tiny wardrobes to cups of tea to funny bunnies. If you were to dream of some of your favorite books, what parts of these stories would appear in your dream? Draw a picture of this book-inspired dream. List the titles of the books that are represented in your dream on the back of your illustration.

Inspiring Authors

The author of *Literary Critters* has cleverly disguised the names of real authors with animal-inspired names. Choose one of the children's authors from the story to research: Beatrix Potter, Roald Dahl, C.S. Lewis, or Lewis Carroll. Find out how your selected author became a writer, what stories were written by your author, and any other interesting facts. Compile all of your information into a report. Share your author report with your classmates.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.2



The discussion questions and activities in this guide were created by Leigh Courtney, Ph.D. She teaches in the Global Education program at a public elementary school in San Diego, California. She holds both masters' and doctoral degrees in education, with an emphasis on curriculum and instruction.

Name: _____

Who Said What

William Shakesbear went on quite a journey to find writing ideas from other authors. Study the two columns below. Connect each author with the advice he or she shared with William Shakesbear to help him feel inspired about writing again.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1



• EDGAR TALON CROW •



• C.S. SHREWIS •



• MOLE DAHL •



• YAK KEROUAC •



• WAGATHA CHRISTIE •



• BEATRIX TROTTER •

Authors Visited

Edgar Talon Crow

C.S. Shrewis

Mole Dahl

Yak Kerouac

Wagatha Christie

Beatrix Trotter

Advice Shared

“Get yourself a pet!”

“Why not write about being a supersleuth, sniffing out clues to solve a mystery!”

“The best teacher is experience.”

“Look around, my friend. I often find inspiration in the shadows.”

“Just follow a path and go with it. You might find creatures, kings, and queens, maybe even a tasty box of Turkish delight—inspiration is everywhere!”

“Just make it **OUTRAGEOUSLY** fantastical. A little magic can take you a long way!”

Name: _____

Wonderful Words

There are so many wonderful words in *Literary Critters*! Hunt through the book to find ten of the most interesting words in the story. Add each “wonderful word” to the chart below. Make a good guess about the meaning of each word, then look them up and write the dictionary definition of each one.



CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.4

Wonderful word	I think the word means ...	The dictionary definition is ...

Name: _____

Character Profile

William Shakesbear is the main character in *Literary Critters*. Create a character profile to show what you know about him.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3

Character's Traits

Physical Description



Character's Actions

Character's Thoughts