

The Snatchabook

By Helen Docherty & Thomas Docherty

A Common Core State Standards-aligned Activity Guide for Kindergarten and Grade 1

About the Book

It's bedtime in the woods of Burrow Down, and all the animals are ready for their bedtime stories. But books are mysteriously disappearing. Is there a book thief? Who could it be? One brave little bunny sets out to solve the mystery. It turns out to be a little creature called the Snatchabook, who has no one to read him a bedtime story. All turns out well when the books are returned and the animals take turns reading bedtime stories to the Snatchabook.



About the Author

Helen Docherty spent most of her time as a child either reading or writing; from an early age she started making books with her own stories and pictures in them. She took it very seriously and was quite determined to be a writer when she grew up. While teaching at the University of West England, she met Thomas Docherty, who had recently started illustrating his own books. With Tom's encouragement, she started writing stories again, and together they wrote the book *Ruby Nettle* and *the Ice Lolly Adventure*.



About the Illustrator

Thomas Docherty never imagined he would end up writing stories. In school, his spelling was terrible and he found reading really difficult. Luckily his parents read to him and took him to the library where he spent hours looking at picture books. He loved to draw, and began keeping a sketchbook diary, especially when he traveled anywhere new. He has written and illustrated a number of children's books and has been short-listed for a variety of awards, including the Kate Greenaway Medal, England's highest award for illustrations in a book for children, for his picture book *Little Boat*. Whenever possible, Thomas Docherty likes going to schools and libraries to talk to children about his work and help them write and draw their own stories.

Tom and Helen got married in 2008 and now live in Swansea, Wales, with their two young daughters.



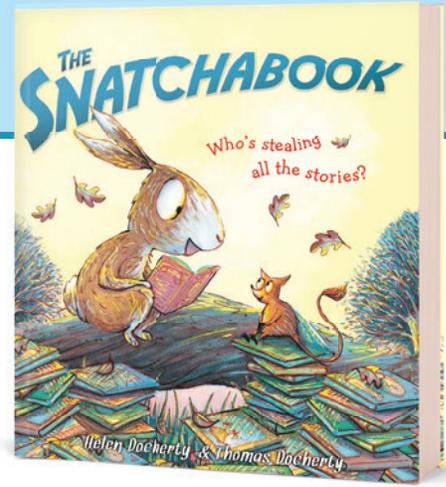
“The Snatchabook is so wonderful, it demands to be read out loud.”

—Caldecott Medalist Brian Selznick

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Pre-Reading Questions & Activities

- As a class, look at the front cover of *The Snatchabook*. What do students think is going to happen in this book? What kind of story do they think it will be?
- The action in this book revolves around animals reading books at bedtime. Ask students if they like to read or have stories read to them before they go to bed.
- Before starting to read this book to the class, do a picture walk. Have students closely examine the illustrations on each page. Discuss what is happening. Have them identify illustration details and explain what the details tell them about the story's characters, setting, and events.
- Review the name of the author and illustrator and help students define each of their roles in telling the story. What does the author do? What does the illustrator do?

Discussion Questions & Activities

Vocabulary Words

There are some words in this book that students may not know. Using context and the accompanying illustrations in the story, define the words as a class. Discuss other words that could be used which mean the same thing. Have each student draw a picture illustrating one of these words.

RL K.4, 1.4; L K.4, 1.4

Burrow

Contentedly

Solemnly

Mumble

Mournful

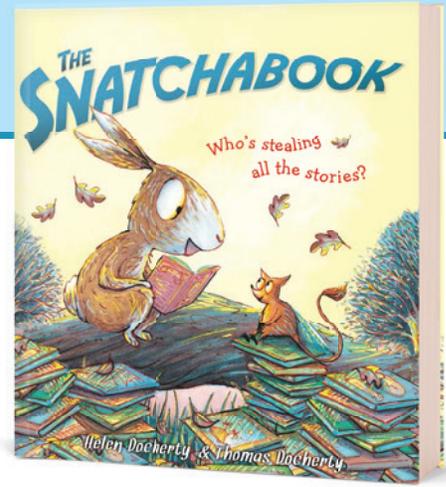
Amends



What is the Snatchabook?

From the text and illustrations in this book, what are the characteristics of a Snatchabook? What does he look like? What sorts of things can he do? What does he want or like? Why was he stealing the books? What is Eliza's plan to help him, and did it work?

RL K.1, K.2, K.3, K.7, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.7



Discussion Questions & Activities continued...

Draw Me a Story

Working as a class, list the major events of the story. Break into small groups and assign each group a different event to illustrate in their own way. When all the illustrations are finished, come back into the large group and have students put the illustrations in sequential order. Display the results in the classroom.

RL K.1, K.2, K.3, K.7, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.7

Details, Details, Details

The illustrations in *The Snatchabook* are rich with details that add to the atmosphere of the story and bring the book to life. These details also tell the reader a little more about what is happening in the story. For example, if you look closely at the very first picture, you can see the Snatchabook flying across the sky in front of the moon. Break students into pairs or small groups and assign each a page or pages in the book. Have them identify the details in their assigned illustration(s). What characters are featured on this page? How does the illustrator show what is happening in the story? What are their favorite things about this illustration? What part of the story does it tell? When this activity is completed, have the groups share favorite elements of their assigned pages with the rest of the class.

RL K.1, K.3, K.7, 1.1, 1.3, 1.7; SL K.1, 1.1

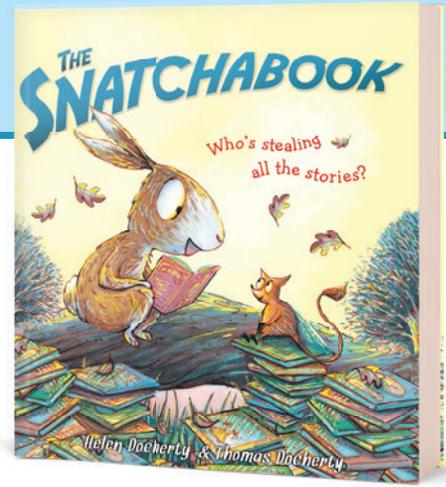
The Great Snatchabook Quiz-Off

The Snatchabook provides a great opportunity for students to practice composing interrogative sentences. Discuss what “question words” are, and how they are used. These include “the five W’s and one H”: who, what, where, when, why, and how. Have students practice making up questions beginning with these words. Break the class into small groups and have each group create six questions about the story—one for each question word. Write each question on a flash card. Assemble the questions into groups, removing duplicates. Ask the questions as if conducting a game show—The Great Snatchabook Quiz-Off! Select the “contestants” based on whatever criteria you wish, and let the questioning begin! When finished, review the questions with the class. What makes a good question? Which questions were the most confusing? What questions were duplicated and why? You may want to incorporate the following questions into your activity to ensure that the main points of the story are reviewed.

RL K.1, 1.1; SL K.1, K.2, 1.1, 1.2; L K.1, 1.1

- Who are the main characters in this book?
- Who do the animals imagine were stealing the books?
- What are the major events of the book?
- What does Eliza use as “bait” for the Snatchabook?
- Where does this story take place?
- How is Eliza brave?
- When does most of the action take place?
- How does the Snatchabook “turn a wrong into a right”?
- Why is the Snatchabook stealing the books?
- How does Eliza catch the Snatchabook?





Discussion Questions & Activities continued...

I've Got a Preposition for You

An introduction to prepositions is part of the ELA Core Standards for Language. The following prepositions appear in the story: in, into, of, on, at, against, before, across, from, under, with, upon. Familiarize students with them and their usage. It is easy for these important but small words to pass by unnoticed. Help students focus on these words by assigning each student one of the prepositions. As you reread the book aloud, have students raise their hands when their preposition is read and keep count of how many times their preposition is used. Tally the results. How many times did prepositions appear in book? Which one was used most often?

SL K.1, 1.1; L K.1, 1.1

Snatch-a-What?

Tell students to imagine that a new creature related to the Snatchabook has come to town. It could be a Snatch-a-toy or a Snatch-a-snack, or even a Snatch-a-shoe. Have them imagine what he is stealing and why he is stealing it. Have students design a crazy trap to catch this new "Snatch-a" creature and draw a picture of their trap. Working with an adult, have students dictate or write a short summary of how the trap will work. What will the trap do and how will the creature respond? When the designs are finished, scan them into the computer and create a slide show of the entire class's ideas.

W K.2, K.6, 1.2, 1.6

Fill in the Blank

Give each student a sheet of paper with, or have them write the words, "My favorite part of *The Snatchabook* is..." Have students illustrate their favorite moment with an original drawing. When they are done, work with students to write or have them dictate a few sentences explaining what they like about this scene and why.

W K.1, 1.1



Teacher's Guide prepared by We Love Children's Books, August 2013.