



THE DUNDODDLE MYSTERIES

DAVID
O'CONNELL

THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY GHOST

ILLUSTRATED
BY
CLAIRE
POWELL

NOTES FOR TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS

The Chocolate Factory Ghost by David O'Connell and illustrated by Claire Powell is the perfect KS2 class reader for comedic adventure writing, magic and fantasy, aimed at children aged 7–9.

These notes include reading comprehension questions to support and elevate understanding of the text and to improve reading inference, retrieval and predictive skills, as well as suggestions for classroom activities to enjoy the book across different areas of the curriculum – from designing treasure maps to creating coats of arms and writing weird and wonderful descriptions of new magical worlds.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Archie McBudge knows his lucky underpants must really work, because when he and his mum are summoned to Honeystone Hall in the remote Scottish village of Dundoodle, they find Archie has inherited not only the enormous hall, but the whole of the world-famous McBudge Confectionery Company from Great-Uncle Archibald. That's a new home, a fortune and a lifetime's supply of treats rolled into one!

But all is not well in Dundoodle, and when Archie reads the mysterious letter his great-uncle left him, he finds himself on a quest to save his family's company from ruin. With the help of his new friends, Fliss and Billy, Archie has to try to figure out the puzzles of Honeystone before his sweet future melts away like an ice lolly in the sun!

Fans of *How to Train Your Dragon* and *Tilly and the Time Machine* will be hungry for this delicious mystery full of weird clues, strange creatures, malevolent relatives and lots and lots of SWEETS!

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READING GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What do you learn before the book even begins, by looking at the map of Dundoodle and the illustration on the next page? What do you predict the setting will be like? What characters might be involved?
2. Why does Archie think Honeystone Hall is 'seriously WEIRD' in the opening paragraphs of Chapter 1?
3. How do Archie and his mum feel about the news that he has inherited everything from his great-uncle, Archibald McBudge? Give evidence for your answers.
4. What does Archie's great-uncle say to him in the 'magical letter' in Chapter 2? Summarise the contents of the letter in five bullet points.
5. What can you tell about Felicity Fairbairn's character from the description of her at the beginning of Chapter 3?
6. How is Mrs Puddingham-Pye presented in Chapter 7? What do you predict that she is planning to do?
7. In Chapter 9, how does the author David O'Connell create comedy with the introduction of Billy Macabre?
8. How does the author portray a growing sense of unease as the story progresses? How does he use the technique of foreshadowing?
9. How does Archie feel about each of his parents? What does he learn about his dad as the story develops?

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10. What are the main motivations for each of the characters in the story? For example, why is Archie desperate to complete his Quest? Why does Billy want to help him? Why does Mrs Puddingham-Pye want to stop him? Do these motivations develop and change as the story progresses?
11. Why is there a dragon on the McBudge coat of arms? What is the significance or symbolism of dragons in the story?
12. What is the impact of Claire Powell's illustrations throughout the book? What do they add to the story? How do they enhance the reading experience?
13. How important is the theme of friendship in the book? What is the importance of the bond between Archie, Fliss, Billy and Sherbet?
14. What else does Archie learn that he will inherit from his ancestors in Chapter 36? How does he feel about this?
15. Who is the villain or enemy in the story? How does this alter as the story draws to a close? Can you record the different villains or enemies at each stage of the plot?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

LITERACY

- Make up your own magical town full of strange creatures and magical objects, just like Dundoodle. Describe the setting and the creatures that live there. What is life like in your imaginary town?
- There are several strange, odd and eccentric characters in Dundoodle. Create your own odd character. Describe the character's appearance, clothes, speech and behaviour.

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- Start a story of your own using the last lines of one of the chapters. For example, from the end of Chapter 5: 'Archie glanced up at the tree as he followed his mum out of the greenhouse. The magical letter had vanished' ...
- Imagine that you have been put in charge of casting for a film version of *The Chocolate Factory Ghost*. Which actors would you choose to play each character? Give reasons for your choices.

DRAMA AND SPEAKING & LISTENING

- Create a film trailer for *The Chocolate Factory Ghost* using persuasive language and exciting action or dialogue from the plot. Use a recent film trailer as inspiration – and remember to consider your target audience!
- Create a freeze-frame for one of the key scenes in the story between Archie, Fliss, Billy and Sherbet. How can you use body language, levels and facial expressions to show the relationships and the dynamics between the four friends?

HISTORY

- The story is set in the fictional 'Honestone Hall'. Carry out some research into a real historic building that would make a good magical (or haunted) setting. Present your findings and your reasons for choosing your building to the class.
- What is the history of magic? Create a timeline showing how people used or viewed magic through history. Highlight the key moments on your timeline.

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SCIENCE: BIOLOGY

- Use inspiration from the book to create your own mythical beast or animal. Explain its habitat or environment and how it has evolved to adapt to that environment.

GEOGRAPHY

- Create a real-life clue-trail in your school grounds, much like the one Archie follows on his Quest. Draw a map showing the layout of your school, including any important landmarks and physical features. Remember to use a clear key and the points on a compass (north, south, east and west). Mark an 'X' where there may be any hidden clues, or even treasure ...

Extension task: write directional instructions for someone else in the class to complete the clue-trail.

ART & DESIGN

- Using inspiration from Claire Powell's illustrations in the story, create a book cover for the sequel to *The Chocolate Factory Ghost*. What will Archie's next adventure be? Remember to include bold images, quotes and colours.
- Imagine *The Chocolate Factory Ghost* is being made into a film. Create a persuasive film poster giving audiences reasons to go to see it at the cinema.

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