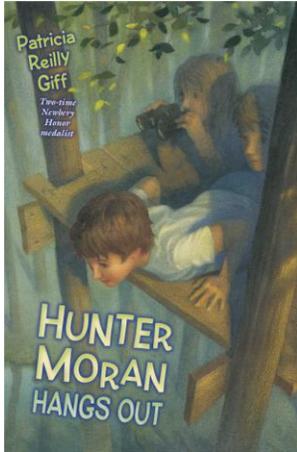
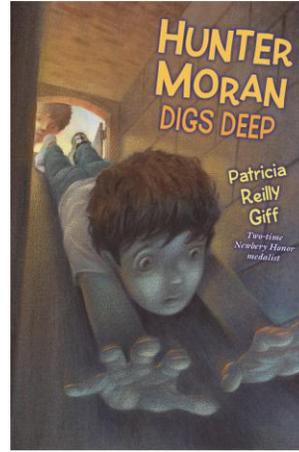


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HUNTER MORAN SAVES THE UNIVERSE
HUNTER MORAN HANGS OUT
HUNTER MORAN DIGS DEEP
Patricia Reilly Giff
Two-time Newbery Honor Medalist

GRADES 3–7

ABOUT THE BOOKS

Patricia Reilly Giff combines mischief, chaotic family drama, and plenty of adventure in these humorous and heartwarming stories!

“With Giff as skilled accomplice, the Morans provide delightful entertainment.”
—Publishers Weekly

In *Hunter Moran Saves the Universe*, twins Hunter and Zack have a few small problems to solve: they must save their town from a diabolical dentist, hold a funeral for an incriminating report card, and keep their father from finding out what they did to his laptop. None of this is going to be easy with a slew of siblings on their tail. Before the book is over, a vintage airplane, a hot-air balloon, and a borrowed fire engine will all play parts in the unfolding mystery.

The mayhem continues in *Hunter Moran Hangs Out* when Hunter and Zack hear from their pesky neighbor, Sarah Yulefski, that there is going to be a kidnapping in Newfield. But the more shocking news is that Steadman, their younger brother, is the kidnapper's target! The twins are on high alert and ready to stop all the suspicious activities going on around town.

In the third installment, *Hunter Moran Digs Deep*, the Moran clan is tearing up the town in search of the buried treasure of town founder Lester Tinwitty. But the twins leave a trail of havoc behind them, and when the cache is finally uncovered, the treasure hunters are in for a startling surprise!

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Prediction—Before reading the three books, have students look carefully at each cover and title. Based on the cover illustration, what do you think the story is about? After reading the story, compare what actually happened with your original thoughts. How correct were you? Do you think you can always predict what will happen in a story just by looking at the cover illustration? Is just looking at the cover always the best way to choose whether to read a book or not? Explain why or why not.

QUESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

Students may discuss the following questions related to any or all of the three books as a whole class, in partners or small groups, or they may be used as writing prompts.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Key Ideas & Details RL. 5.2–3; Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5.1, 3 and Production & Distribution of Writing W. 5.4; Speaking & Listening: Comprehension & Collaboration SL. 5.1 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas SL. 5.4; Language: Knowledge of Language L. 3–5.3.

Characterization—There are many interesting and somewhat quirky characters in the three stories: Linny, William, Steadman, Sarah Yulefski, Bradley the Bully, and Becca are a few. Discuss with students how an author goes about creating characters. What kinds of things do they need to include? Have each student choose one character from the list above (or another from the books) and write a profile. Students should include their age and appearance, what they wear, how they talk, where they live, what's important to them, what they like to eat, their specific talents, and any other relevant details. For an art activity, students can use pencils, charcoal, crayons, or any other chosen media to create a portrait of the character they chose to accompany their profile. *Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Key Ideas & Details RL. 4–5.3.*

Common sense—Sister Appolonia often says, “Use your common sense, boys.” Common sense is often defined as the ability to think and behave in a reasonable way and to make good decisions. Describe incidents in any of the three stories where Hunter and Zack and their friends used common sense . . . or, perhaps, where they didn't. What does the phrase “common sense” mean to you? Describe times in your own life when you feel that you used it to solve a problem. *Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Craft & Structure RL. 3–5.4; Language: Vocabulary Acquisition & Use L. 3–5.4, 5b.*

“Practice Makes Perfect”—Sister Ramona often uses this phrase. Explain what it means to you and whether or not you agree that it is true. Cite examples in your own life where it appeared to be true (or not). *Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Craft & Structure RL. 3–5.4; Language: Vocabulary Acquisition & Use L. 3–5.4, 5b.*

Families—Hunter is part of a large and somewhat unusual family. Even though it seems at times that he is completely exasperated with each of his siblings (except, perhaps for his twin brother Zack,) he ultimately believes in always caring for or defending each family member when necessary. How does his family compare with yours? How are they the same or different? Describe a situation when you had to come to the aid of a family member, even if they usually annoyed you. Each of Hunter's siblings has a specific talent or strength. What are the specific talents or strengths of your siblings?

Friends—Although Zack is Hunter's twin brother, he is also his best friend. And even though Hunter wants us to believe that he is completely annoyed by Sarah Yulefski, she is actually a good friend also. Have students describe what friendship means to them. What qualities are important in a true friend? Do you always have to like everything a friend does? How do true friends defend each other when they are confronted by problems from others? Describe your best friend. What qualities does he/she have that makes this friendship work?

Honesty vs. Dishonesty—There are several instances in each story where Hunter and Zack say things to various other characters that aren't exactly true. Do you think it is okay for kids (and adults) to do this?

Describe situations when you have had to say something that wasn't true in order to accomplish something else that you felt was more important at that moment. Do you think the stories would have been just as good without the telling of lies? Explain why or why not.

Television—Television programs play a huge part in Hunter's life. So much, in fact, that he can quote the exact time and day that each of his many favorite programs are aired. How important is TV in your life? What things do you learn from watching your favorite programs? Choose three of your favorites and write a short paragraph telling why you like the program and what you have learned from watching it.

Towns and Cities—Hunter's small town of Newfield is very unique, and everyone seems to know each other. The townspeople also organize several annual events such as contests and parades. Think of the place where you live. Is it a small town or a big city, or maybe a specific neighborhood that is part of a big city? Compare where you live with the town of Newfield. Describe any regular celebrations or rituals in your town/neighborhood that you enjoy. Which things are the same and which are different? Where would you prefer to live if you had the choice? Why?

Final Thought—At the end of the third book, which deals with hunting for a treasure in Newfield and what everyone can do with the money, Hunter learns that he can continue his drum lessons for free and that Sister Ramona feels he has definite talent. He says, "And somewhere in my chest, I do feel it, the pounding of the drums, the crash of the cymbals. And maybe I'd rather have that than any treasure I could find" (p. 115). What do you think Hunter means by this statement? Do you agree with him? What are some things in your own life that you feel are more valuable than anything money could buy? *Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Language: Vocabulary Acquisition & Use L. 3-5.4, 5b.*

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

LITERATURE/LANGUAGE ARTS

The three books exemplify a few specific literary techniques: *mystery, suspense, humor, and farce*. *Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Key Ideas & Details RL. 4-5.2 and Craft & Structure RL. 5.5.*

MYSTERY—Ask students to define what they think a mystery is. Ask them to name some favorite mystery programs they enjoy on TV. What do these shows have in common? Bring them to the understanding that a mystery is an unanswered question, and that clues are needed in order for the detective to find the answers and solve the mystery. Have students describe what the mystery was in each book and what the clues were that led to solving it.

SUSPENSE—Patricia Reilly Giff uses suspense frequently in the three books to keep readers excited about what might happen next. Note that this is a technique often used at the end of a chapter to keep the reader "hanging." Ask students to recount examples in each story where suspense was used. Ask students to discuss whether they like stories that use suspense or not and give their reasons.

HUMOR—There are many humorous incidents in each of the three books. Have students describe the situations they thought were funny. Why were they funny? What makes something funny? Have students delineate the difference between laughing *with* someone and laughing *at* someone. Discuss with students the idea of surprise or unexpectedness in humor as they talk about humorous incidents in the stories.

FARCE—Alert students to this type of comedy that uses absurd and highly improbable events in the plot. The situations in a farce are humorous because they often seem completely ridiculous. The choice of setting is a key factor in farce, as the protagonist is sometimes at odds with the environment. Often the central character in a farce does not (or should not) belong in the place of the action. Have students review the scenes in each of the books that they think would fit the definition of a farce. Ask them to present details from the story supporting their ideas.

VOCABULARY/USE OF LANGUAGE

Throughout the three books, there are several words that Hunter uses, even if he is not sure of their meanings. Discuss these words with students to assure that they understand their use. Ask students to jot down other words that might be unfamiliar and, using clues from the context, try to define them. *Hunter Moran Saves the Universe*: *alpha dog* (p. 3), *urban* (p. 6), *dubious* (p. 10), *garish* (p. 37), *atoll* (p. 47), *daft* (p. 54), *decapitate* (p. 78). *Hunter Moran Digs Deep*: *civic duty* (p. 4), *procure* (p. 60). Students can also look up these words in a dictionary and then tell or write their definitions in their own words, as well as their own sentences using the words.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Craft & Structure RL. 3-5.4 and Language: Vocabulary Acquisition & Use L. 3-5.4c.

Classroom Activities prepared by Sandy Schuckett, school library consultant.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Patricia Reilly Giff is a two-time Newbery Honor-winning author who has written many highly acclaimed books for children. Her books have appeared on *The New York Times* and *Publishers Weekly* bestsellers lists, among others. In addition to the Hunter Moran series, Pat's works include the timeless *Lily's Crossing*, a Newbery Honor Book and a *Boston Globe-Horn Book* Honor Book; *Pictures of Hollis Woods*, a Newbery Honor Book; and *Nory Ryan's Song*, an ALA Notable Children's Book, an ALA Best Book for Young Adults, a *School Library Journal* Best Book of the Year, and a Golden Kite Honor Book. Pat is also the author of *Don't Tell the Girls: A Family Memoir*. Her works for younger readers include the bestselling Kids of the Polk Street School series and the Ronald Morgan books. She lives in Connecticut with her husband, Jim.

GUIDE TO THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS CITED IN THIS GUIDE

LANGUAGE

Knowledge of Language

L. 3–5.3 – Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

Vocabulary Acquisition & Use

L. 3–5.4 – Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 3–5 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

L. 3–5.4c – Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.

L. 3–5.5b – Identify real-life connections between words and their use. Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.

READING: LITERATURE

Key Ideas & Details

RL. 4–5.2 – Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.

RL. 4–5.3 – Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions). Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).

Craft & Structure

RL. 3–5.4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

RL. 5.5 – Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.

SPEAKING & LISTENING

Comprehension & Collaboration

SL. 5.1 – Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led), building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas

SL. 5.4 – Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

WRITING

Text Types & Purposes

W. 5.1 – Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

W. 5.3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

Production & Distribution of Writing

W. 5.4 – Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.