Overview & Purpose

Author Study

Download the author study kit at Reading Rockets:
http://www.readingrockets.org/content/pdfs/authortoolkit_rr.pdf

Objectives

Content Purpose: Learn about the author and where she got the inspiration for her Dragon Slayer Academy Series.

Language Purpose: Use "Castle Terms" to describe the DSA Castle; (you can click several times to enlarge the picture.

http://www.castles.org/Kids_Section/Castle_Story/parts.htm

Social Goal: Honor each other's participation.

Objectives:

Materials Needed

Other books in DSA Series
Books on Castles and Knights
Lucky Charms,(one cup per pair of students in a plastic bag)

Other Resources

Tumblebooks
Sir Cumference Series;
The Great Round Table
The Great Knight of Angleland
The Sword and the Cone

Background information on the author

Time Allowance (15-30min)

5-10 minutes to read/discuss the story, 5-10 minutes for activity, 5-10 minutes for checkout

Notes:

NGSSS:
LA.4.1.7.2, LA.5.1.7.2
MA.3.A.4.1

Author Birthday (1/16)

Kate McMullan

Prepared By: Dr. Sharon Richert

Lesson Procedure

Teacher Modeling: (Give a short summary of the story from below) then ask the question; Have you ever held a grudge? Well in this story, the dragon Snagglefahng does, and he is coming after Brother Dave. It was his peanut brittle that broke the dragon’s fangs and now his false fangs cause him to lisp. Read the scene where he arrives to seek his revenge. Pages74-to the top of page 79..show the students the picture on the opposite page..predict? (they should say that Wiglaf, or Wiggie for short, come to Brother Daves aide since he wants to be a hero)

Guided Instruction: Tell the students about Wiglaf and that he wants to be a hero knight and live in the DSA Castle. What do you think he has to know to be a knight and a dragon slayer? Do you remember the name of the Academy in Harry Potter?

http://www.universalorlando.com/harrypotter/ When the interactive map shows up, click on Hogwarts and it will take you on a virtual tour. How might it be similar to the DSA Castle?

In pairs, take an interactive tour of a castle built in the 1300's.Lets see if you can find the moat, drawbridge, keep, rampart, battlement, dungeon and barbican. Definition for these terms and more;

http://medievalcastles.stormthecastle.com/parts-of-a-medieval-castle.htm

As you call out the term and describe it, have them find it on the computer.

Activity

Collaborative: The students at DSA wear every good luck charm they know to keep the dragon Snagglefahng from seeking revenge and destroying their academy. Have the students do the following activity in pairs and not by themselves as stated. Have them predict which "Charm" is the luckiest. Have students report out and put their information on a big version of their chart for all to see. Who predicted correctly?

http://www.lessonplanspage.com/mathstpatricksdaygraphingluckycharms35-htm

Independent: Have students look at their chart and answer the questions 1-7 at the end of the site…this is their EXIT ticket, when they give it to you at the door, give them some Lucky Charms to keep the Dragons away!

Background information on the main character in the series and synopsis of Book #13 from Kidsreads.com;

When a traveling minstrel foretells that he is to become a hero, Wiglaf sets out to fulfill his destiny: he signs up at the Dragon Slayers’ Academy. But how can he ever hope to be a dragon slayer when he can’t even stand the sight of blood? Follow his adventure in this series when he learns more about his past and what the future holds for him.

#13 Things couldn’t be better for the greedy headmaster of DSA. Lasses are lining up to enroll in his school, and more students mean more gold! But when The Medieval Times headline announces that the Bad Luck Dragon is on its way to DSA, Mordred orders his students to hunt for every good luck charm ever invented. But can a bunch of phony 4-leaf clovers help Wiglaf and his friends defeat the dragon Snagglefahng? Or will their luck run out?

Biography of the author

http://us.penguinrandomhouse.com/nf/Author/AuthorPage/0,1000010695,00.html

The last paragraph tells you why she wrote the DSA series

"McMullan says, "When I visit schools, I hold writing workshops and encourage kids to write about their own lives, about what they know. Sometimes a bright kid will ask, 'But you write the Dragon Slayers’ Academy books. What do you know about life in a medieval boys' school?’ Great question. When I write about Wiglaf, I think back to my grade school days; the cafeteria meatloaf, the torture of rope climbing in gym class, and the teachers who used to go off on tangents that were often much more interesting than what we were supposed to be studying. Almost every character in Dragon Slayers’ Academy is loosely based on someone I've met, from my secondary grade best friend to my daughter's orthodontist."