



Mascot Madness

Andy Griffiths

Teachers' Notes

Introduction

Andy Griffiths is an Australian children's book author and comedy writer. His books have sold over 4 million copies worldwide, have featured on the New York Times bestseller lists and have won over 40 Australian children's choice awards.

His latest book, *Mascot Madness!*, follows Northwest Southeast Central School's 5B class and the adventures of their crazy teacher, Mr Brainfright. Mr Brainfright becomes the school mascot – a large, bright yellow dancing banana – in an attempt to lift the school's sporting achievements.



Curriculum Links

English: Reading, Writing, Presenting, Researching

Creative and Performing Arts: Drawing/sketching, Drama

PDHPE: Active Lifestyle

Science and Technology: Using Technology, Design and Make

Learning Outcomes

Students will have the opportunity to:

- read a text independently and in groups
- respond to themes and issues in a text
- draw on a range of skills and strategies to read and comprehend a text
- analyse techniques used by authors to create certain effects and use language creatively
- examine different functions within the English language such as adjectives and similes
- design and make a board game and banner
- devise, act and rehearse drama for performance to an audience.

Before you read

Look at the author's name. Talk about other books by Andy Griffiths you may have read previously. Make the list as long as you can and share a bit about your favourite book. Discuss what makes Andy Griffith's novels so enjoyable.

Look at the front cover picture and the title of *Mascot Madness!*. Write a short paragraph outlining what you think the story may be about. Read out your ideas to the class.



Read the book

Read *Mascot Madness!* as directed by your teacher in one of the following ways:

- as a whole class
- in small reading groups
- individually.

Stop every now and then to re-evaluate where you think the story may be heading. Discuss your ideas with a friend as well as parts of the story you like and why.

After You Read

Use the following questions to promote discussion of the book. Discuss these questions as a class or write the answers down.

1. What is Mr Brainfright's favourite fruit and why?
2. What does Mr Brainfright bring to class? Where did he find it?
3. Jenny describes Mr Grunt as a bully. Why is he a bully?
What is your definition of a bully?
4. What were some of the things thrown out of the bus by the Northwest West Academy kids?
5. Why do teams sometimes have mascots? What are some other mascots you know of from sporting teams and schools?
6. How did Mr Brainfright train the kids for the athletics competition?
What are visualisations?
7. Why did Mr Brainfright call his class murderers?
8. What is 'mascot madness' according to Fiona's medical textbook?
9. What happened when the Northwest West Academy kids threw tomatoes at Jenny and Henry?
10. In *Mascot Madness!* what is the moral of the story?



Activities

The Bouncing Banana

Sketch a picture of Mr Brainright dressed in his banana costume. Draw a speech bubble coming out of his mouth and write a comment inside.

Mr Grunt vs Mr Brainright

Work with a partner. Rule up 2 columns and put the headings Mr Grunt and Mr Brainright. Discuss some adjectives that describe each teacher and write the adjectives in the appropriate column.

Bullies Are Bad Board Game

Northwest West Academy has a pro-bullying program instead of an anti-bullying program! Work in small groups and design and make a simple board game that teaches anti-bullying. Use recyclable materials to create your game and give it a catchy name. Rotate as a class, playing each group's game.

Crazy Caricatures

Sketch Chomp the bull terrier and Mr Constrictor in cartoon or caricature form.

Circle Meeting

Sit in a circle and discuss the topic 'A confused opponent is a weakened opponent'. Go around the circle saying whether you agree or disagree with the topic. Go around the circle again giving reasons for your answers and adding new ideas. Keep going around the circle adding interesting ideas and comments about the topic. You may say Pass at any time.

Encouragement Award

Work with a friend and list at least 5 ways you could encourage someone in your class.

Banana Bread/Cake Procedure

Use cookbooks or the internet to find a recipe for banana bread or banana cake. Write your recipe as a procedure including ingredients and how to make it. Try to follow the recipe at home with the help of an adult.



Flip's 'Flipisms'

Ten of the best 'Flipisms' by sports announcer Flip Johnson are listed in Chapter 39. Make up 10 of your own 'Flipisms' following the list below and share them with the class.

Faster than ...
Stronger than ...
Higher than ...
Slower than ...
More excited than ...
Hungrier than ...
Thirstier than ...
Scariest than ...
Louder than ...
More determined than ...

Lights, Camera, Action

Select a small section of *Mascot Madness!* Work in groups, giving each student a character to play. Rehearse it with your group, learn a few lines and perform it for the class. You may wish to bring in props and costumes.

Banners

Work with a classmate to design and create a banner for your school to take to an interschool swimming carnival or athletics competition. Use your school colours and motto and invent a catchy rhyme or slogan. If you have access to a computer, create your banner using a computer program you are familiar with. If not, design it on a piece of paper or cardboard.

Henry's Amazing Decathlon

The purpose of a story recount is to tell a sequence of events so that it entertains the reader. Re-read Henry's amazing decathlon (chapters 56 and 57) as he is chased by Chomp. Write a recount of this section of the book and include some illustrations.

Events of the Decathlon

List all the events in a decathlon. Use books or the internet to research the events and write a brief description of each. Have your own class decathlon where you rotate through 10 events. Modify the events using school and classroom equipment; for example, the hurdles may be school benches, the shot-put may a tennis ball or beanbag ... You may wish to substitute the pole-vault with something less dangerous. Be creative!

Book Review

Write a short book review for *Mascot Madness!*.
Include the following:

- title
- author
- favourite characters
- brief plot summary
- favourite part of the novel
- recommendation (who you would recommend the book to and why)
- an illustration.

