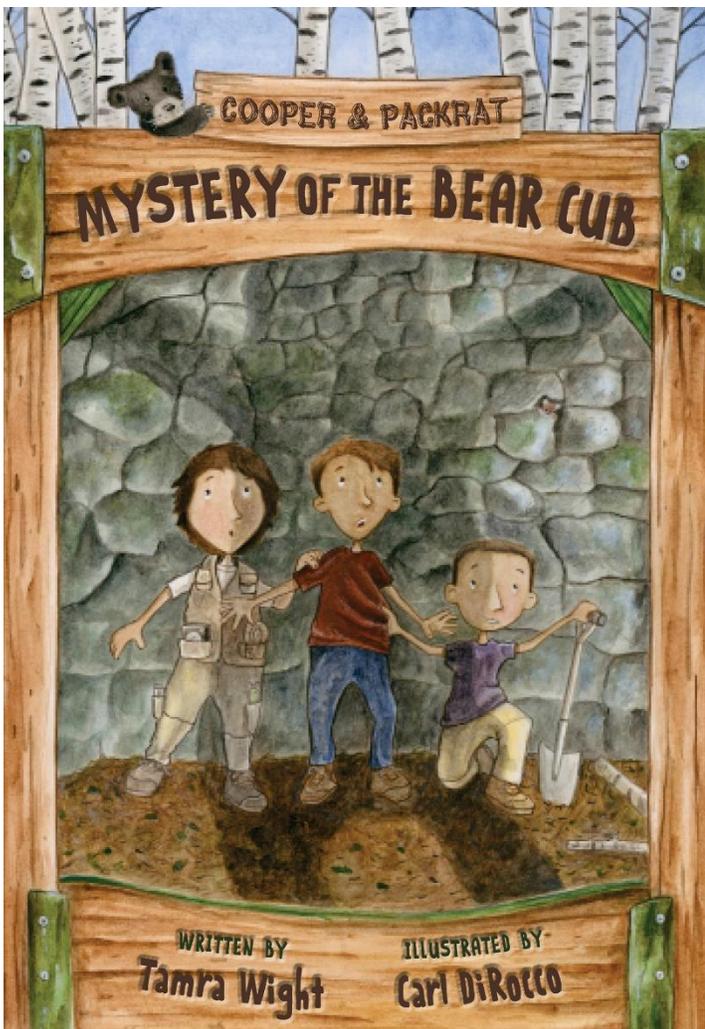


**A TEACHING GUIDE**  
for  
**COOPER AND PACKRAT: MYSTERY OF THE BEAR CUB**



**A JUNIOR LIBRARY  
GUILD SELECTION**

**2018 Green Earth Book  
Award Short List**

The boys are down in the dumps – literally!

Someone is dumping trash on the Wilder Family Campground's property. It's bad for the campground and bad for the wildlife there, too. When Cooper, Packrat, and Roy find a fox in the woods with its head stuck in a jar, they know it's time to investigate. But when the boys start digging, they stumble headlong into the path of a garbage truck and a hungry black bear.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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TAMRA WIGHT spent 27 years running Poland Spring Campground in Poland, Maine with her husband and two children. Every summer at the campground, she met interesting families and had grand adventures which inspired the Cooper and Packrat series. She also works as a teaching assistant at Whittier Middle School. When Tamra isn't writing, she's nature watching, hiking, geo-caching, kayaking, power-walking or reading. She also loves to take wildlife photos, many of which you'll see on her website and blog, at [www.tamrawight.com](http://www.tamrawight.com). She now lives in Turner, Maine.

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

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CARL DIROCCO is a graduate of the New England School of Art & Design, and has illustrated *Dear Big, Mean Ugly Monster* (a Minnesota Humanities Book Award Finalist) and *Our Principal Promised to Kiss a Pig* (a Children's Choice Selection). Carl lives in Reading, Massachusetts, and loves to camp with his wife and three sons. You can read more about Carl on his website, [www.carldirocco.com](http://www.carldirocco.com)



## ABOUT OUR TEACHING CONSULTANT and GUIDE CREATOR

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SHANNON SHANNING – Is Maine's 2013 Teacher of the Year. She's also the first special education teacher to be awarded this honor in her state. She has developed an Integrated Learning Program in her classroom which gives students the opportunity to make connections within their community. To learn more about Shannon, see her biography on the Maine Department of Education website,

## PRAISE FOR *MYSTERY of the BEAR CUB*

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"The author's love for the forests and wildlife of Maine is evident in every detail of the environs. Readers familiar with the Maine woods will recognize it, while those who aren't will feel like they're visiting for the first time . . . good-old fashioned summer fun with a mystery at the center." ~ *Kirkus Reviews*

". . . An impressively crafted and consistently entertaining read from first page to last—making it unreservedly recommended, especially for elementary school and community library Mystery/Suspense collections." ~ *Midwest Book Review*

"Kids can try to solve the mystery, but they are also learning about the environment, endangered species, interesting facts about animals, as well as the challenges kids face in their daily lives with family and friends. It really has it all and is written in such an engaging style. I cannot recommend this series enough. You may want to start at the beginning, but each makes a great stand-alone book!"

~ Paula Bourque, literacy coach and author of *Close Writing*

## FORMAT OF THE GUIDE

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This curriculum guide was tested and shared with students in our co-taught classroom. Like many educators, the staff at our school has done a significant amount of work around transitions. We recognize that during the beginning and ending of class, we lost up to 5 minutes per instructional block, per day. Although this may seem small in the grand scheme of things, collectively these minutes add up to losing a considerable amount of instruction during the course of a trimester or school year.

### **Sit and Begin**

In order to maximize student engagement and time on task during instructional blocks, our school adopted a universal “*sit and begin*” procedure. Although some teachers may call it something different (commonly referred to in our school as “*do now*” activities), these academic tasks are posted at the beginning of an instructional block. These brief activities either review concepts from the previous lesson or preview what will happen in the upcoming lesson.

### **Exit Slips**

Exit slips are a way to wrap up a lesson. These activities completed during the last few minutes of an instructional block can be used as a formative assessment, student reflection, or as a way to preview what will be taught in the next lesson. Again, this strategy is used to maximize student engagement during an entire instructional block.

### **“The Hook”**

This refers to a probing question, quote, or prompt that requires student to think about at topic or theme related to what they are reading and write and/or respond. This is intended to grab the attention of your students and increase overall engagement.

### **Other Components**

All teachers structure lessons differently. The intent of this curriculum guide is to give teachers the creative freedom to “pick and choose” various strategies or instructional activities so that they can create their own lesson plans that meet the needs of the students that they are working with. Under each chapter heading, teachers can find both the “sit and begin” and “exit slip” activities as well as vocabulary words (which can be used in word wall activities or centers) and discussion questions. In addition to this Shannon has created some project-based learning activities that can be integrated across content areas. Working in a special education classroom, I have found that students are most engaged when working on these types of projects!

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## Pre-Reading

*Strategies to be used before reading Cooper and Packrat in order to activate prior knowledge and allow students to make connections with what they are about to read. Students who feel connected to what they are reading are more engaged and motivated to learn.*

### **Essential Question/s of the Unit**

Is there a price to pay for doing the right thing?

### **Pre-Reading Activities**

**Prime the Pump** - A great engagement tool! Use [Tamra's Video Clip](#) which shows an actual turtle fight!

**ABC Graphic Organizer** - Prior to having your students talk about a topic, it's important to activate their background knowledge about it. One way to do this is the ABC Organizer. Using a graphic organizer, students try to think of a word or phrase associated with bears, camping, or trash dumping, and match each to a letter of the alphabet. Sample Below

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## During Reading

*Strategies to use during reading so students can comprehend and process the text.*

- Create an Interactive Word Wall using the vocabulary words listed in each chapter below and other words you may find the students interested in.
- Thinking Notes Chart: Where students log a character trait, a new-to-them vocabulary word, a discussion point and a lingering question. Sample Below
- Making Connections: Text to Self, Text to Text, Text to World – This strategy allows readers to make connections to text so they can better understand what they're reading. It's important to model this strategy with students, ensuring they understand a difference between a coincidence and connection. A good connection enhances comprehension. There are numerous resources, guides, and templates for teachers to use that can easily be implemented across content areas.

### **Begin with “The Hook”**

Ask students: Have you ever had a special place that only you, your friends, or family knew about? Describe this place. Now, imagine someone you didn't know found out about this place and threatened to destroy it. What would you do to protect it?

## **Chapter 1**

### **Sit and Begin**

Have you ever seen animals fighting in nature? What was happening and did you intervene?

### **Vocabulary**

Thrift store, clocking, scheming, bobber, underdog, soundlessly

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What is different about Packrat's appearance compared to the previous books?
2. Packrat sounds surprised that Roy's father will be joining Roy and his mother at the campground, what can you infer about his father based on this?
3. What does Cooper mean when he says on page 3, "it's nature"?
4. Based on the description, what do you think they spotted on the shoreline?

### **Exit Slip**

Do you think it is wise for Cooper and Packrat to go find the "would-be dog"? Why might this be dangerous?

### **Links to turtle fight:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P2zVarVHEzA>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovD-PBUi3so>

## **Chapter 2**

### **Sit and Begin**

Have you ever found something old out in the woods or while you were playing outside? What was it and what did you do with it?

### **Vocabulary**

bank, uprooted, markings, intact, firebox, hauling, abandoned,

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What does Packrat mean when he says, "Does a bear poop in the woods"?
2. Who made the trail that Cooper and Packrat were walking on and what did they use it for?
3. What did Cooper and Packrat find in the woods that surprised them and what did they think would be fun to do there?
4. What does Cooper decide to do in an effort to make his mom less angry at him for being late?
5. What type of paw print did they find in the sand and why might this be more dangerous than the other animals that they have tracked?

### **Exit Slip**

What does Cooper mean when he says, "saying my mom was not going to be angry with us is like saying a bee sting hurts a tiny bit"?

## Chapter 3

### Sit and Begin

Read the intro passage for Chapter 3 to the students, then have them complete a Venn Diagram comparing human mothers and bear mothers.

### Vocabulary

attentive, registration, unexpectedly, chanted, persuasive, honors, doable, rally, trailed, customer service, transfer station, mandatory, landfill, incinerator, upgrade

### Discussion Questions

1. Why did Cooper's mother forgive him for being late?
2. Why is Cooper nervous when he first sees Ms. Marco at the campground.
3. What do you think is the job of a Town Manager?
4. What does Mr. Talbot mean when he says, this project is something that "landowners could rally behind"?
5. What were some of the recycling facts that surprised Packrat and Ms. Marco?
6. What happens to the trash that gets buried in a landfill?
7. Mr. Talbot really wants Cooper to present his idea at the town meeting, do you think it is really to give him credit or do you think it is for another reason?
8. What does Cooper observe Charlie do and what might this foreshadow?
9. What might be a potential problem if the campground were to follow Cooper's plan?

### Exit Slip

Trash sort. Gather some of the "trash items" listed on page 201 with the decomposition facts listed on each card. Have the students match each fact with each item and then reveal the answers!



## **Chapter 4**

### **Sit and Begin**

Have you had a “stressful dream” in which something was happening that you couldn’t control? What happened in the dream and was happening in your life at that time? Do you think that life stress and dreams are connected?

### **Vocabulary**

mammals, wavered, incinerator

### **Discussion Questions**

1. At the beginning of this chapter, Cooper has a dream about collecting trash at the campground and trying to recycle it. In the dream he and Packrat are getting buried in trash and Cooper is frozen and can’t grab the trash. What do you think that this dream means?
2. Why is Cooper a little unsure about the recycling plan being a good idea for the town?
3. On page 21 Cooper shares that in his research he found that about half of the people don’t participate in recycling programs. Why do you think this is?

### **Exit Slip**

At the end of the chapter, Big Joe wishes the boys good luck and indicates that they will need it. What do you predict will happen at the town meeting and why might they need “luck”?

## **Chapter 5**

### **Sit and Begin**

Create a T-Chart where you compare the pros and cons of recycling.

### **Vocabulary**

applause, hoppers, landfill, propose, murmuring, restructure, gavel, harrumphed

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Why do you think that they only posted the Town Meeting sign on Main Street “two days ago”?
2. What does the phrase “prize student” mean?
3. What does the incinerator in Bangor turn trash into?

4. How did Cooper know that when the older gentleman spoke at town meeting that “public speaking” wasn’t his “thing”?
5. How does Cooper’s plan impact little businesses?

### **Exit Slip**

Create a pro and con list for Cooper’s Plan.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Sit and Begin**

Have you ever proposed a idea, only to have it turn out not how you expected? What was it and who was impacted?

### **Vocabulary**

nature, cutoff, clenched, upgrades, in favor, opposed,

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Why can’t the town make decisions based on each business?
2. What made Cooper feel even worse than everyone yelling? Why do you think that it made him feel so bad?
3. How might Cooper’s plan affect his family?
4. What does Cooper propose to do at the Campground to address the recycling issue?

### **Exit Slip**

What does Cooper notice as his mother his checking out Charlie’s family at the register? What do you predict Charlie did and why might he have done this?

## **Chapter 7**

### **Sit and Begin**

How should Cooper handle the situation with Charlie? Should he tell his mother? Explain your thinking.

### **Vocabulary**

snitch, dispenser, client

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Dad tells Molly that there are a lot of reasons why people lose their homes. What might be some of these reasons?
2. What does Packrat mean when he asks Roy if he still likes “snow days”?
3. On page 33, Roy’s father glances at him with eyes that are full of “an unspoken I am sorry”. What do you think that this means?

### **Exit Slip**

Roy is pretty angry with his father, do you think that it is his father’s fault? What could his father do to help fix the situation?

## **Chapter 8**

### **Sit and Begin**

In the last chapter Cooper and Packrat built a fire, stacking the logs into a tee-pee. Why do you think that they stacked the logs this way?

### **Vocabulary**

routine, cellar hole

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What does Roy do to prove that he is “officially” back?
2. Why can’t they drive the trash to the incinerator themselves as opposed to hiring a trash service?
3. When Warden Kate sees the tiger lillies she asks Cooper, “what did you do?”, what does she mean by this?
4. What does Warden Kate tell them about the location of where they found the bottle?
5. Why might the bottle be worth money?

### **Exit Slip**

Charlie got to taste his first smore. Write a recipe (including ingredients and steps) for your perfect smore!

## **Chapter 9**

### **Sit and Begin**

At the beginning of the chapter the author describes a bear den. Draw a picture to show what you think a bear den might look like.

### **Vocabulary**

den, collector, worrywart, hesitate, boundaries, consequences, sympathetic, legends, flask, prompted, archeology,

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Why does Cooper hesitate when Charlie asks to bottle digging with them?
2. Why do you think Lynn doesn't want Charlie to go to the bottle dump with just the boys, but an adult too? Why do you think she is so protective?
3. Kate describes the Wayside Inn while sitting around the fire. What does she say some people think the "stairs that lead nowhere" actually went to?
4. What does Warden Kate tell them about the location of where they found the bottle?
5. Roy starts sharing more about what is going on between his mom and dad. What did he mean when he said, "the straw that broke the camel's back"? What does this tell us about how his mom is feeling and what might happen to their relationship?
6. Why might bottle diggers be secretive when digging up old bottles?

### **Exit Slip**

Many authors use their own experiences or what they know about a topic when writing a story. In the author's hometown is the famous, Poland Spring Inn and Resort. Using a Venn Diagram and the website provided. Compare and contrast the Poland Spring Inn and the Wayside Inn. Do you think the author used this as inspiration for the Wayside Inn?

<http://www.polandspringps.org/pshistory.html>

## **Chapter 10**

### **Sit and Begin**

What would you do if you found an old, valuable bottle?

**Vocabulary** range, encouragingly

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Why is Cooper's dad angry with the response he got from Mainely Trash?
2. Why might a boy Cooper's age not like watering the flowers? What other jobs do you think he might like more?
3. Roy snaps at Cooper when he moans about helping his dad get the spot ready for the dumpster. What do you think that is about?
4. How does Lynn propose to help with the trash problem? Do you think that she has enough experience to help? Explain your thinking.
5. Why did Charlie steal the loon?

### **Exit Slip**

Charlie returns the loon to Cooper's mom. Think of a time when you were younger and might have taken something that didn't belong to you. How did you feel? Did you return it? Were there consequences?

## **Chapter 11**

### **Sit and Begin**

Bear dumps were popular in Yellowstone National Park from 1920-1970. Why might this have been a popular practice? What dangers could people or bears face?

<https://www.yellowstonepark.com/things-to-do/yellowstone-bears-no-longer-get-garbage-treats>

### **Vocabulary**

blustery, bail, triumphant, rotary, toiletries, forage, privy

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What does Roy do that makes Packrat feel like he is mad at or against him?
2. What does the phrase “over a barrel” mean and how was it used as a pun?
3. Why has business slowed down for Mr. Goodwin? Do you think that this has happened to a lot of general stores?
4. What do they hear and see getting into the trash cans while at the store? What threat does this create?

### **Exit Slip**

Both Cooper and Mr. Goodwin are children of family owned businesses. Compare and contrast their businesses and experiences using a t-chart or venn diagram. Make a prediction, do you think that Cooper will one day take over the campground?

## **Chapter 12**

### **Sit and Begin**

Mr. Goodwin shares a story with the boys about the Inn and how there is a legend of gold coins hidden in a privy hole. Do you think that the boys will start looking for the coins? If they find them, what might they do with the money?

### **Vocabulary**

trailhead, black water, squeamish,

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What does Cooper suggest Charlie do while collecting trash? Why did he suggest this?
2. What are some of the wildlife that the boys see while headed to the trailhead?
3. Why does Roy not want the boys to tell anyone about what they are doing?
4. Why does a blogger suggest that when looking for old privy holes that diggers look for “low spots”?

### **Exit Slip**

Each of the three boys think they have found the spot. Who do you think has found the right spot and why?

## **Chapter 13**

### **Sit and Begin**

At the beginning of the chapter the author shares a myth about black bears. What are some “myths” about animals that you have heard and how do you think these “myths” are started?

### **Vocabulary**

hesitant, smug

### **Discussion Questions**

1. When digging in the soil, what type of sand signifies a filled in privy hole? What would this mean for the boys if they came across this type of soil?
2. What did Roy find in the dirt?
3. What marks did they find on the tree?
4. Where did the boys end up hiding?

### **Exit Slip**

Do you think the boys are in danger? What do you think they should do?

## **Chapter 14**

### **Sit and Begin**

If you were to dig in your backyard, what types of artifacts do you think you would find based on the history of your area?

### **Vocabulary**

notch, plodding, foraged, lectures, recyclables

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What markings does the bear have and what do you think this means?
2. Why is the bear not interested in the boys? What is he really looking for?
3. What did the bear have on his paw and what do you think it means?
4. Why is Cooper annoyed with Roy when they are helping Cooper’s Dad build the recycling center?
5. What does Cooper suggest they make for the recycling center and why is it important for their customers?
6. Why did Mrs. Marco come to visit?

### **Exit Slip**

Cooper designed a recycling center for the campground. If you were put in charge of this task, what would your design look like? Sketch and label a recycling center designed specially for Wilder Family Campground.

## **Chapter 15**

### **Sit and Begin**

Throughout the book the author shares bear facts both at the beginning of each chapter as well as throughout the story. You can use these facts as well as the following resource, to make a T chart comparing grizzly bears and black bears.

<http://www.bearsmart.com/about-bears/know-the-difference/>

### **Vocabulary**

excavating, protesters, furrowed, boycotting, translation,

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Why does Warden Kate call the boys a “trouble magnet”. What evidence from the story supports this?
2. What are the protesters doing to show that they are angry that the transfer station has closed? What impact do you think that this might have over time?
3. What might be a more effective way to protest the closing of the transfer station?
4. What does the gull get caught up in and what does this mean?
5. What do the boys find in the privy hole?

### **Exit Slip**

Compare and contrast what you might find digging in a bottle dump compared to a privy.

## **Chapter 16**

### **Sit and Begin**

Imagine you and your friends are digging in an old privy hole. What would you be most excited to find?

### **Vocabulary**

dehydrated, crooned, emerged

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What did finding the ceramic pitcher mean?
2. Why are the boys using the screen box?
3. What do you think the letters on the button mean?
4. How do the boys help the fox kit?

### **Exit Slip**

For the second time this week the boys have found animals caught up in some type of trash. What do you think is happening?

## **Chapter 17**

### **Sit and Begin**

At the beginning of the chapter the author notes that the female bear raises the cubs on her own. What are some of the parenting characteristics of other animals that you know? Do one or both parents raise the offspring? How long do the parents stay with their young?

### **Vocabulary**

reunite, scat, curfew, client, defend, pleading, swiveled,

### **Discussion Questions**

1. The mayonnaise jar that was on the kit's head still had the label on it. What can you infer about this?
2. How does Roy get "under Cooper's skin"? Why do you think that he is behaving this way?
3. The boys pack up all of the treasures that they found, however what do they do with the button and why?
4. Who shows up at the camp unexpectedly?
5. Based on how Roy's dad is dressed, what do you predict he does for a job?
6. What do you think it means when Cooper references that Roy asking his father if he wants to stop in and see his mother "sounds more like a challenge than a question"?
7. What surprising news does Roy's dad share with them and why might this upset all of them?
- 8.

### **Exit Slip**

Based on the interaction between Roy and his Dad at the campground, what do you think might be going on with Roy and his family?

## **Chapter 18**

### **Sit and Begin**

At the end of the last chapter a lady arrives at the campground stating that her trash was never picked up. Why do you think Lynn and Charlie are falling behind? Do you think that they might have taken on more than they can manage? Explain your reasoning.

### **Vocabulary**

obvious, “bottled-up” angry, nudge, sarcastic, satisfied, incinerator, suspicious,

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What does the author mean when she describes Roy as being “all business” on page 98? What evidence from the text supports your claims?
2. Why do you think Cooper is surprised that there is something going on with Roy’s parents? Explain your reasoning.
3. According to Cooper’s research, what type of button did the boys find? What makes this button special?
4. Who do Cooper want to give his share of the money to and why?

### **Exit Slip**

Do you think that Cooper’s Dad is worried about Lynn and Charlie being able to keep up with all of the accounts? Explain your reasoning.

## **Chapter 19**

### **Sit and Begin**

What recycling practices does your family have in place. Take the Home Recycling Survey to see where you are doing well and areas you can improve!

<http://eekwi.org/earth/recycle/recyquiz.htm>

### **Vocabulary**

traitor

## **Discussion Questions**

1. What is Roy's new nickname for his dad and why do you think he calls his father that name?
2. How did the boys camouflage the privy?
3. When Cooper finds the longer, square stones, what does he think they are? What makes him think this?
4. What has the boys laughing so hard that they can barely breathe?

## **Exit Slip**

When the boys spotted the cub, Cooper declared that they needed to help it. What do you think that this was the first time that Roy and Packrat refused to help?

## **Chapter 20**

### **Sit and Begin**

At the beginning of the chapter the author lists potential predators for first year bear cubs. What might these animals also be predators to? Brainstorm a list of animals!

### **Vocabulary**

Bluff, aggressive, muttered, coincidence,

## **Discussion Questions**

1. Cooper shares that black bear moms will "bluff-charge". What do you think that means?
2. Cooper tells the boys that he can help the bear on his own, but Roy says, "yeah right and give you all the glory". What does he mean by this?
3. In a previous chapter the author shared that bear claws, unlike a cat's are always "out". Why might this make helping the bear cub more dangerous?
4. On page 114, Cooper says that he couldn't help frightening the cub, so he had to use the "band-aid" method. What do you think this means and does it apply to other areas of life?
5. The bag that was stuck on the bear was new. What do the boys propose that this means.

## **Exit Slip**

The boys find a large dumpsite in an open field. Cooper predicts that it might be Lynn and Charlie. Who do you think is dumping the trash. Explain your reasoning.

## **Chapter 21**

### **Sit and Begin**

We see the phrase “mama bear” used a lot. Based on the facts that you have learned, what you have read so far, and any background knowledge that you have, what does this mean and do you think it can apply to people too? Give an example!

### **Vocabulary**

Suspects, rotary, etched, relocate, pests, habituated, nuisance

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Who do the boys list as potential suspects?
2. What does Roy do on the bike ride into town that has Cooper’s “insides all knotted up”?
3. What do the boys see in front of the six farmhouses. Why are the owners not putting their trash in their barns? Do you think what they are doing will help?
4. What types of tips does Warden Kate suggest to Mr. Goodwin to discourage the bears from getting into his trash?

### **Exit Slip**

Thinking of your own yard, what are some ways you could or already do “bear proof” it?

## **Chapter 22**

### **Sit and Begin**

What do you think the town could do to deal with the trash and bear situation?

### **Vocabulary**

Pact, hibernation, urged,

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Warden Kate gets a call on her radio that a homeowner is having an issue with a bear. Even though the homeowner wants to shoot it, Warden Kate has a different solution. What does she suggest and why might this be a better way?
2. The boys decide to skip privy digging to do what instead? Do you think this will help?
3. Instead of being mad, Cooper is really sad. Why does he feel this way?
4. What do the boys decide to do in order to see who is dumping the trash?

### **Exit Slip**

According to this website: <https://www.gamewarden.org/state/maine>

the role of a Maine Game Warden is to preserve and protect natural resources such as animal and plant populations. Check out the requirements listed on this site! Do you think it is a challenging job? What might be so pros and cons for this line of work?

## **Chapter 23**

### **Sit and Begin**

Roy names the little bear Red. What might you have named the bears that they saw at the dump site and why?

### **Vocabulary**

Scuffed

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What trash do they use to “plant? What makes them unique?
2. Charlie asks the boys where they are going, and Cooper gets suspicious? Why? Do you think Charlie is up to something? Explain.
3. What is Charlie doing when he almost gets hit by a car?

### **Exit Slip**

What do you think Charlie asked his mother as they drove off?

## **Chapter 24**

### **Sit and Begin**

Why do you think bears scared of loud noises, but not human noises?

### **Vocabulary**

Prototype

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Do you think their plan will work?
2. While in town they notice that Stu has a new truck. What can you infer?
3. Why don't the boys want Mr. Goodwin to know the real reason they want to put a baseball in his trash?

### **Exit Slip**

Why didn't the boys call Warden Kate? Do you think it is wise for them to handle this situation on their own?

## **Chapter 25**

### **Sit and Begin**

Living in Maine there are a number of wild animals that can become a nuisance if precautions are not taken. What animals do you know of that can become problematic? Have you or your family ever had a problem with a wild animal and what did you do to keep them from coming back?

### **Vocabulary**

Subjects, logical, abandoned

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Packrat comes up with a plan that will allow the boys to clean the bathrooms without getting interrupted so that they can continue on with their privy digging and can check to see if their plan worked. What was Packrat's idea?
2. Why is Roy ignoring his father? Do you think that he should talk to him? Explain your reasoning.
3. What did Packrat overhear in the store about Lynn and Charlie? Do you think it is possible for them to ever catch up?
4. What do they find at the trash site?

### **Exit Slip**

At the garbage site Roy gets angry with Cooper when he talks about his dad and the real reason that Roy has been acting so weird around Cooper is revealed. Although the boys try to cheer him up, Roy is done and shares the he, "quits this adventure". What does he mean? Is Roy really mad at Cooper or is he jealous? Do you think that they can stay friends?

## **Chapter 26**

### **Sit and Begin**

At the beginning of the chapter the author talks about bear paws being poached for medicine. Do you know of any other animal parts are poached for different reasons?

### **Vocabulary**

Poachers, riddance, retreated, compacting, incinerator

### **Discussion Questions**

1. How do the boys escape the bear?
2. The boys end up in garbage truck hopper. Why is this so dangerous?
3. What does it mean when Cooper says on page 159, “the universe is not on our side”?

### **Exit Slip**

Imagine you are Cooper and Packrat stuck in the back of the hopper. What would you do?

## **Chapter 27**

### **Sit and Begin**

At the end of the previous chapter the truck stops after traveling down a bumpy road. Where do you predict the truck has taken them?

### **Vocabulary**

Condiment, peephole, harrumphed

### **Discussion Questions**

1. The boys hear two voices. Who do they belong to?
2. Who is with the boys in the trash pile?

### **Exit Slip**

Why do you think Stu and Mr. Talbot went in on this plan together?

## **Chapter 28**

### **Sit and Begin**

The boys take off running in the woods. Where do you think that they will hide?

### **Vocabulary**

Flue

### **Discussion Questions**

1. While the boys are hiding, they overhear what Stu and Mr. Talbot are planning to do to the competition. Who is the competition and what is their plan?

### **Exit Slip**

A scapegoat is a person who is blamed for the actions of others. Who are the scapegoats in this story?

## **Chapter 29**

### **Sit and Begin**

What do you think will happen to Red?

### **Vocabulary**

Dehydrated

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Who is holding Cooper's ankles as he tries to save Red? What do you think this means?
2. Who else helped Roy find the boys?

### **Exit Slip**

Throughout the story animals and characters from the author's previous novels make an appearance. How many were you able to find? List them! Can you remember which the books they were in?

## **Chapter 30**

### **Sit and Begin**

In several situations the boys have covered an animal's head to help it. Why do they do this? How do humans protect themselves when they are scared? Is this similar?

### **Vocabulary**

Plodding, frantic, hesitation, retreat

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Who or what shows up in the field that helps the boys make it to the truck?
2. What do the men threaten to do?
3. What does the bear do to the men?

### **Exit Slip**

Who has more to lose if they get caught, Stu or Mr. Talbot?

## **Chapter 31**

### **Sit and Begin**

Do you think Cooper and Packrat's families will be angry or relieved when they find out that they almost were compacted in the back of a trash truck?

### **Vocabulary**

Provoke, ironic

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Why do you think that the bear is chasing Mr. Talbot?
2. How do the boys get Mr. Talbot away from the bear, but keep him from getting away?

### **Exit Slip**

What consequences do you think Stu and Mr. Talbot will face?

## **Chapter 32**

### **Sit and Begin**

Animals that are fed in the wild often experience changes in their behavior. Why do you think that this is the case?

### **Vocabulary**

Attorney-client privilege

### **Discussion Questions**

1. How did Mr. Goodwin's trash end up in the dump site?
2. How does Roy's father respond when he finds that Mr. Talbot put his son in danger and was committing a crime?

### **Exit Slip**

What do you think Warden Kate will do with the bears?

## **Chapter 34**

### **Sit and Begin**

Do you think that the boys will find something valuable in the privy or is it all just a legend?

### **Vocabulary**

Rotation, ambled

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Who do the boys invite to join them on their last privy dig?
2. Why do the boys have to fill in the privy?
3. Why does Cooper ask Charlie to sift the last bit of dirt?
4. Besides the bear family, who else's family is going to be alright?

### **Exit Slip**

Do you think this story had a good resolution? Explain your thinking!

## Potential Post Reading Projects

- **Create an infographic** - with facts about Black Bears (size, habitat, fun facts, etc).  
<https://blog.americanexpedition.us/black-bear-infographic/>
- **Argumentative essays** - Require students to take a stand and use evidence to support their claim. Often these essays can be used to perpetuate change as was the case with Cooper. Think of an issue in your school or community and write an essay, like Cooper did (ie: cellphones in school, recycling, nutritious school lunches, therapy pets at school, later start times in school). Submit the essays to a town counselor or school official!
- **Create a Googlesite or website** – have students create pages that give facts and suggestions about recycling in your home, school, or your community!
- **Record a “Cooper and Packrat” podcast episode** – have students pretend to interview one of the following: Warden Kate discussing bear facts, a privy digger, Mr. Goodwin and his tale of the old Wayside Inn, or an environmentalist and the impact that recycling can have on a community.
- **Create a chart on how long it takes different types of litter to decompose.** You can find the information at [Leave No Trace](#), a fabulous website with many activities revolving around the importance of disposing of trash properly, and the risks involved if you don't.
- **Keep track of the items in Packrat's coat:** Create an interactive bulletin board in which students keep track of the items in Packrat's coat as they are revealed in the book. Students can write descriptions of each item on the back of the card, and note how it was used to help solve a mystery. Card are then placed in the coat on the board.
- **RAFT Writing Activity** Create a RAFT writing assignment in which the teacher determines the Role, Audience, Format, and Task. A sample is provided below:

**R-** Cooper, Packrat or Roy (Role)

**A** - Mr. Talbot, Town Manager (Audience)

**F-** Letter (Format)

**T-** Persuade or convince Mr. Talbot to open the Transfer Station (Task)

Using their knowledge from the text about these characters and the consequences associated with trash dumping to black bears and other wildlife, students would write a letter to Mr. Talbot trying to convince him to open the transfer station to businesses. This activity would allow students to really get to know the characters better, by putting themselves in a specific role. In order to modify this for younger students, a sample letter could be created so the format would be less daunting. This approach requires students to think about the characters and is easier to comprehend than a traditional essay format.

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## Common Core Standards

By implementing the some of the above mentioned reading strategies in conjunction with the vocabulary and discussion questions, the following Core Standards are addressed:

### Grade 4:

English Language Arts Standards, Reading-Literature:

#### **Key Idea and Details:**

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.2
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3

#### **Craft and Structure:**

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.4
- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.4.5

#### **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:**

- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.4.9

### Grade 5:

English Language Arts Standards, Reading-Literature:

#### **Key Idea and Details:**

- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.5.1
- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.5.2
- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.5.3

#### **Craft and Structure:**

- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.5.4
- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.5.5

#### **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:**

- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.5.9

### Grade 6:

English Language Arts Standards, Reading-Literature:

#### **Key Idea and Details:**

- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.6.1
- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.6.2
- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.6.3

#### **Craft and Structure:**

- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.6.4
- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.6.5

#### **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:**

- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.6.9

### Grade 7:

English Language Arts Standards, Reading-Literature:

#### **Key Idea and Details:**

- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.7.1
- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.7.2
- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.7.3

#### **Craft and Structure:**

- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.7.4
- CCSS.ELA -LITERACY.RL.7.5

## **SAMPLE WORKSHEETS**

Shannon has taught Cooper and Packrat's adventures several times in her 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classroom. Below are many of the worksheets tested by the students and given a "thumbs up". They are meant to be examples and can be "tweaked" to meet your needs in multiple chapters, or across the series of books.

# Scavenger Hunt Worksheet

Topic: **Litter**

Some words I know that are related to the topic:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Three facts I already know about this topic:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Two experiences that I have had related to this topic are:

- 1.
- 2.

Given this topic, I would like to know more about:

- 1.
- 2.

# DURING READING WORKSHEETS



## Thinking Notes

Chapter or Page Number	 <b>Character Traits</b> <i>This part really showed me something about a particular character.</i>	 <b>Vocabulary Words</b> <i>I think that this word is important to my understanding of the text or topic.</i>	 <b>Discussion Point</b> <i>This raises some questions or perhaps is a great discussion for our class!</i>	 <b>Questions</b> <i>This part or word is confusing and I may need help.</i>



***Sit and Begin  
Frayer Model Vocab Sheet***

Vocabulary Word:

Definition in your own words:

Graphic or picture

Sentence using this word:



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### ABC Brainstorming Strategy



### GEOCACHE

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P
Q	R	S	T
U	V	W	XYZ

# KWL CHART

Topic: Bears

What do I already know?	What do I want to know?	What have I learned

# Four Square Perspective

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Block / Period \_\_\_\_\_

**Different Perspectives on:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

A large square divided into four quadrants by a vertical and a horizontal line. In the center, where the lines intersect, there is a smaller horizontal rectangle.

Conclusions / Connections / Questions / Realizations . . .