Curriculum Guide

Why I Was Late for School Again
by Dan Greenburg, illustrated by Deborah Zemke

Ages: 7-11

Lexile level 500L, Guided Reading Level M, Grade Level Equivalent 2
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.2.3,3a,4,4a,4b,4c,4d,5,5a,5b
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.2.3,3d,3e,3f,4,4a,4c
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.1,2,3,4,5,6,7,10
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.1,1b,1c,2,4,6
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.3,5,6,8
Problem solving, deductive reasoning, figurative language, idioms, hyperbole, metaphor, humor

Themes: Problem solving, cause and effect, humor

Danny faces a series of problems on his way to school. Each time he has to figure out a way how to deal with whatever is making him late. Do you agree with his solutions? Make a list of the problems (for example, pirates, zombies, etc) and how Danny deals with each one. Put a check by the ones you think he manages well.

Sometimes each time Danny does something, another problem arises. An example is when the troll gets her head stuck down her body. List the causes and effects of this situation step by step. How does solving one problem create another one? What could Danny have done instead?

Although Danny finds himself in some tricky situations, he uses some quick thinking and a sense of humor to get out of them. Give an example of when he does this. Now give an example to show how what could be scary (such as pirates or zombies) are made funny by the way the author writes about the situation.

Write your own adventure for Danny, adding a new chapter to this book. For example, what would happen if Danny met a T-Rex? If he met a group of clowns in a clown car? If he met a werewolf?

Character:

Draw your own picture of Danny and describe his personality. Is he brave or timid? Patient or impatient? Kind or mean? Give examples of where you see these aspects of his personality in the story.

Do the same thing with some of the other characters in the story, for example, the pirate leader, the pizza guy, or one of the zombies.

Plot:

Each time Danny thinks he's finally on his way to school, he meets another obstacle. Which obstacle is the biggest in your opinion? Which is the smallest? What is the obstacle that Danny faces at the end of the book? How does Danny use his experience with all the earlier problems to deal with this last one?

Projects:

Write your own story about someone or thing you could meet on your way to school and how they might make you late. You can do this as a comic strip if you like.