

## The Principal's on the Roof

### ABOUT THE STORY

Jill and Gwen's school is having a reading marathon. When they've read 1000 books, the principal will climb onto the roof and read an original story Gwen has written, about aliens who make people sneeze. The day comes for the principal to read, and he climbs onto the roof. Then he starts sneezing. Everyone thinks that Gwen has pulled a practical – and dangerous – joke to make her story seem true. It's up to Fletcher the basset hound to find out if aliens are really making the principal sneeze.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elizabeth Levy grew up reading a wide variety of books for children and adults. Levy has published more than 90 books for young readers, including fiction, nonfiction, young adult novels, and mysteries. She is the author of *The Mixed-Up Mask Mystery* and *A Hare-Raising Tale*, both Live Oak Media audiobooks featuring Fletcher the basset hound. She lives in New York.

### ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Mordicai Gerstein is a painter, sculptor, and prize-winning designer and director of animated films. His many picture books include *The Man Who Walked Between the Towers*, which won the Caldecott Medal, and *What Charlie Heard*, both Live Oak Media Readalongs. He has also illustrated *The Mixed-Up Mask Mystery* and *A Hare-Raising Tale*, both Live Oak Media audiobooks. Mordicai Gerstein lives in western Massachusetts with his wife and daughter.

### INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask children if they have ever had an allergic reaction that made them sneeze and sneeze. Then tell them that the book they will read is about a school principal who can't stop sneezing.

### READING ACTIVITIES

#### Vocabulary

Write these words from the story and definitions in two columns on the chalkboard and have children copy them. Then ask them to draw lines linking the words in Column A with their definitions in Column B.

A	B
allergic	dignified and important
marathon	a swinging object
irresistible	a long or difficult contest
pendulum	sensitive to a substance
distinguished	overwhelming

### Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- "Why does Mr. Leonard go up on the roof?"
- "Why does Alice have the blues?"
- "What happens to put Mr. Leonard in danger?"
- "What is Gwen's story about?"
- "Did you predict the reason for Mr. Leonard's sneezing fit? Explain. (*Make Predictions*)"

### CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

#### Language Arts: A Reading Marathon

Help children begin their own class reading marathon. Tell them that you will read aloud a story of their choice when the class has read 100 books. Keep a record of their reading where children can see it, and when the class reaches 100 books, read them the story they have chosen.

#### Music: Listening to the Blues

Alice the cat sings the blues. Play some blues recordings for children. Artists to listen to include Leadbelly, Lightnin' Hopkins, and Muddy Waters. Have children listen carefully to the lyrics and the music, and discuss what the songs sound like and what they have in common.

#### Health: Allergies

Mr. Leonard has terrible allergies. Have children work in groups to find out about allergies. They can write a brief report on one of these aspects of the topic: what causes allergies; how the body reacts to allergies; what people can do about their allergies.

#### Language Arts: Round Robin Science Fiction Story

Gwen writes a science fiction story about an alien who makes people sneeze. Have the class work together to write a round-robin science fiction story. One student can start the story, writing one or two paragraphs, and then pass the story on to the next student until the whole class has contributed. When the class has finished the story, read it aloud.

### INTERNET ACTIVITY

Before you send children to do research using any of the keywords listed below, you may wish to try them yourself to be sure the sites are suitable.

#### Flea Jokes

Jasper the flea loves jokes about fleas. Have children use the keywords *flea jokes* to find good jokes about fleas on the Internet, such as:

*What is the most faithful insect?*

*A flea, once they find someone they like they stick to them!*

Children can write down one flea joke each and then read their jokes to the class. Collect them in a class book of flea jokes.