


The Slippery Slope

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This is based on *A Series of Unfortunate Events: The Slippery Slope* by Lemony Snicket.

About the Book

Pack your snow picks, folks, because once again, you're in for the adventure of your lives in this action-packed tale of the Baudelaire children and their continuing conflict with the evil Count Olaf.

The story opens as Violet and Klaus, the older Baudelaire orphans, are speeding uncontrollably in a caravan along a high mountain path, heading fast down Mortmain Mountain, about to topple into the swirling waters of Stricken Stream. But Violet—ever the clever inventor—quickly concocts a sticky substance that helps to slow down the moving caravan and save the two from a painful fate.

Meanwhile, Sunny, the youngest Baudelaire sibling, is traveling uphill, kidnapped by Count Olaf and forced to share a car ride with the evil man, his girlfriend, Esmé, and other assorted characters.

The story takes twists and turns until Violet and Klaus—suffering indignities from snow gnats to a casserole dish—rescue Sunny from Olaf's clutches. Once united, the three children find themselves in a toboggan on Stricken Stream, separated from their friend, Quigley. Will the orphans ever be reunited with Quigley? One can only hope.

Set the Stage

Get students ready to read by discussing the cover and reviewing what they know about the main characters, which they probably recall from reading other books in the series.

- The Baudelaire children often find themselves in dangerous situations. Read aloud the title and study the illustration. What new perilous predicament do you see there? Which character is in trouble? How would you feel if that were you?

Review

After students have read the story, lead a spirited discussion using these questions:

- In what ways do the Baudelaire children support each other in this story? Provide examples.
- What does it mean to fight fire with fire? Do you think the Baudelaire children were justified to try to fight Olaf with the same villainous strategies he used on them?
- If you were to meet Count Olaf, what would you say to him?
- The letter on the back of the book from author Lemony Snicket to his readers describes the Baudelaire experiences as a sad tale. Do you think that *The Slippery Slope* is a sad tale? Give reasons for your answer.
- At the end of the story, the Baudelaire orphans get separated from Quigley as the triplet is dragged down the opposite tributary of Stricken Stream. Do you think the Baudelaire children will meet up with him again in the future? What makes you say that?

Student Activity

This reproducible will test students knowledge of the characters in *The Slippery Slope* by identifying each character using the context of the story.

Related Activities

To extend students enjoyment of the book, try these:

- **Literary Language:** Review the meaning of the literary term alliteration as the repetition of two or more consonants, usually in words near each other. Point out that the titles of all the books in the series use that device. Have students make up an alternative title for this story using alliteration (for example, *The Challenging Chase*). Encourage students to also create alliterative titles for the 13 chapters in the book.
- **Break a Leg!:** Ask collaborative groups of students to rewrite their favorite part of the story as a readers theatre. Have groups perform the skits for the rest of the class. Talk about the strengths of each script.
- **Map-Making:** Working in cooperative groups, have students make a map of the main locations in the story. Be sure to include a legend, explaining the symbols for the mountain range, bodies of water, caves, and land. Students can use the map to retell the travels and travails from the point of view of one Baudelaire child.
- **Poetry Fest:** Lemony Snicket refers to some of his favorite poems and poets. Read some books of childrens poetry and hold a poetry celebration in which each student reads aloud their favorite. Combine the poems, with the poets names, in a class book and place in the library for all to enjoy.
- **Create Bookmarks:** What award would students give to this book? Most Outrageous Plot? Funniest Story? Best Laugh-Out-Loud Adventure? Have each student bestow an award on *The Slippery Slope*. Have students use art materials to create a bookmark stating the award, and the title and illustrator of the book. Have them add an illustration of their favorite scene from the book. Students can use the bookmark to keep their place as they read other books.
- **Subjects:**

Challenges and Overcoming Obstacles, Literature, Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences, Literary Devices, Plot, Character, Setting, Story Elements, Reading Response, Literature Appreciation, Maps and Globes, Drama, Theater, Musicals
- **Skills:**

Literary Elements, Drawing Conclusions, Making Inferences, Plot, Character and Setting, Maps