

EDUCATORS GUIDE

because of  
mr. terupt

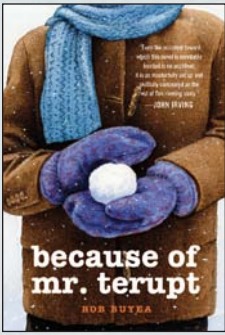


mr. terupt  
falls again

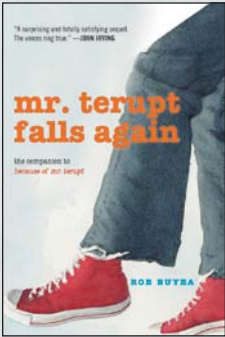
Includes  
Common Core  
State Standards  
Correlations



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## About the Books:

**Because of Mr. Terupt** It’s the start of fifth grade for seven kids at Snow Hill School. There’s . . . Jessica, the new girl, smart and perceptive, who’s having a hard time fitting in; Alexia, a bully, your friend one second, your enemy the next; Peter, class prankster and troublemaker; Luke, the brain; Danielle, who never stands up for herself; shy Anna, whose home situation makes her an outcast; and Jeffrey, who hates school. Only Mr. Terupt, their new and energetic teacher, seems to know how to deal with them all. He makes the classroom a fun place, even if he doesn’t let them get away with much . . . until the snowy winter day when an accident changes everything—and everyone.

**Mr. Terupt Falls Again** Fifth grade was full of unforgettable events for Mr. Terupt and his class at Snow Hill School. Seven students were particularly affected by Mr. Terupt. Now those seven students are back, and they’ve been granted the rare opportunity to spend one more year with their beloved teacher before they graduate from elementary school. Peter’s parents expect him to attend private school after sixth grade, but Peter has plans to stay right where he is. Eager to grow up, Alexia gets in over her head with some older kids. Danielle suspects that her family is keeping a secret from her, and she’s determined to find out what it is. Jeffrey makes a life-changing discovery. Curious about her teacher’s past, Jessica uncovers startling details about Mr. Terupt. Anna finally decides she’s ready for the truth about her absent dad. And Luke’s keen observations lead to questions with unexpected answers. It’s a roller coaster of a year as Mr. Terupt helps his students be the best they can be—and enlists their help to pull off an extra-special project. But will there be a happy ending for all?

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS: Reading, Writing, and Researching

**Pre-Reading Activity** As a pre-reading activity, have students complete an anticipation guide structured in the following manner:

Before Reading	After Reading	Statements
		Building a relationship with an adult authority figure can be difficult.
		Teachers can change the lives of their students.
		Children should value opportunities to work and learn from each other.
		Feeling guilt or remorse for one’s actions can be life changing.
		Adults are always right to choose to keep children ignorant about problems in their world.

Instruct students to complete the guide by placing a “+” sign in the box next to the statements for which they agree, and a “0” next to those for which they disagree. They must commit to agreement or disagreement—there are no conditional responses. Students should be assured that there are no correct or incorrect positions.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details R.L. 6.2.; Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration S.L. 6.1., 6.2., 6.3.

## Exploring *Because of Mr. Terupt* and *Mr. Terupt Falls Again* Through Writing and Research

The following questions may be utilized throughout the novel study as reflective writing prompts or, alternatively, they can be used as targeted questions for class discussion and reflection.

- At the opening of *Because of Mr. Terupt*, Peter offers, “It’s our bad luck to have teachers in this world, but since we’re stuck with them, the best we can do is hope to get a brand new one instead of a mean old fart.” (p. 1). For what reason do you think Peter finds hope in having Mr. Terupt as his teacher? Why does he choose to push his boundaries as a means of “testing” him out? Based on your personal experience, do you agree with his assessment about new vs. old teachers? Why or why not?
- Describe Mr. Terupt. What makes him a dynamic person? Is he the type of teacher you would want? Why or why not? What makes being a student in his class challenging? What are the advantages to being taught in such a manner?
- In what ways does Mr. Terupt’s loss of his parents as a teen impact his philosophies regarding family and relationships? Do you think his expectations would have been different had he not had this experience? Why or why not?
- Consider the novel’s cover art. In what ways are the images represented symbolic for the events that transpire throughout the course of the books?
- While secretly hanging out with high schoolers Lisa, Reena, and Brandon, Lexie feels torn between these two worlds. What makes this time in her life so particularly difficult? Why does she ultimately welcome Mr. Terupt’s interference? Have you ever been in a similar situation? If so, what did you do to overcome it?
- Explain the significance of the titles, *Because of Mr. Terupt* and *Mr. Terupt Falls Again*. In your opinion, do they accurately describe the events and relationships portrayed in the book?
- Consider the seven students/narrators of the novels: Who did you like the most? The least? For what reason? Of all of the characters, who did you feel was most similar to you due to his/her personality or experiences?
- How does Mr. Terupt’s accident profoundly impact and change the lives of each of his students? Do you think they are ultimately better people because of what happens to him? Why or why not?
- *Because of Mr. Terupt* and its companion, *Mr. Terupt Falls Again*, are told from a first-person, multiple-narrator perspective. How would the stories be different if there were a single narrator telling it? Do you think changing or limiting the point of view would make the story better or worse? Why?
- Using the phrase, “These are stories about . . .,” supply five words to describe *Because of Mr. Terupt* and *Mr. Terupt Falls Again*. Explain your choices.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration S.L. 6.1., 6.2., 6.3.

## Extended Writing and Research Prompts

- In *Because of Mr. Terupt* and *Mr. Terupt Falls*, readers witness all of the students mature and grow throughout the course of the novels. Based on your observations, which character do you believe demonstrates the greatest growth? Compose a short persuasive essay offering your position on this issue. While considering your selected character’s experiences, use textual evidence to provide specific examples to support your case.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details R.L. 6.1. and Writing: Text Types and Purposes W. 6.1., W. 6.2., W. 6.3.

- In *Because of Mr. Terupt* and *Mr. Terupt Falls*, the story focuses on Mr. Terupt and his connection and relationship with his students and their relationships with each other. Consider your most special relationships. What makes these individuals so important? Compose a personal journal entry where you share their thoughts, and be sure to answer the following questions:

- Who are the individuals who mean the most to you?
- Why is that particular relationship so special?
- What’s the greatest sacrifice you’ve made for the people you love?
- In what ways have the changes you’ve experienced in your life affected those to whom you are closest?

To culminate, ask for volunteers to share their writing with the class.

**Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details R.L. 6.1. and Writing: Production and Distribution W. 6.4.**

- Mr. Terupt uses books and reading as a way to feel connected with his students, as well as helping them connect to each other and the world at large. Consider the significance that the books he shares have in the lives of his students. In what ways does reading and sharing *Summer of the Swans*, *The Westing Game*, and *The Whipping Boy* change his students? Though all three books are meaningful, which book do you believe has the most profound impact on his students? Compose an email to Mr. Terupt explaining which book you believe to have left the biggest impression on the greatest number of his students and why (using evidence from the books).

**Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details R.L. 6.1. and Writing: Production and Distribution W. 6.4.**

- The accident that befalls Mr. Terupt is life changing for not only him, but also for all of his students. Using library resources and the Internet, research traumatic brain injuries, being sure to consider the following:

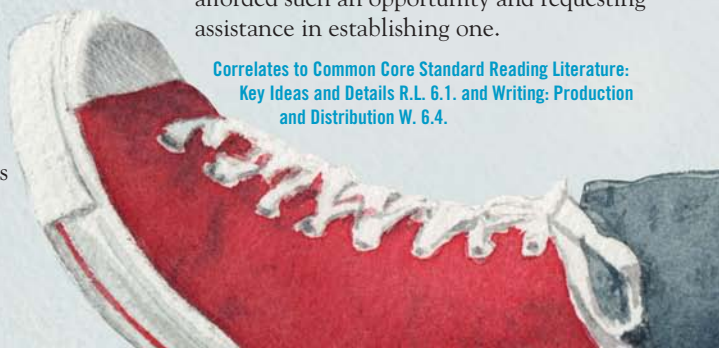
- On average, how many people in the US suffer from TBI (traumatic brain injuries) each year?
- What are the most common causes for brain injuries?
- What are common symptoms of those who have sustained a TBI?
- What are common types of brain injuries?
- What impact can prior injuries (such as concussions) play in a new TBI?
- What are common side effects of brain damage?
- What different types of rehabilitation are used to work with people who have suffered a TBI?

After gathering facts, create an original slideshow which highlights newly acquired knowledge using a presentation product such as Prezi or PowerPoint.

**Correlates to Common Core Standard Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge W. 6.4.**

- Though some of his students are initially reluctant to work closely with the special needs kids in the Collaborative Classroom, ultimately, each of Mr. Terupt’s students is changed after the experience. Do you believe all students should be afforded such an opportunity? What do you believe are the benefits of such an experience for an elementary or middle school student? Are there any drawbacks? Does your school have a similar classroom that targets helping students with profound special needs? If it doesn’t, what programs are offered within your community? Using the experiences of characters in *Because of Mr. Terupt*, draft a letter to be sent to either your school district’s superintendent or your town’s mayor explaining the benefits of a program that allows all students to be afforded such an opportunity and requesting assistance in establishing one.

**Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details R.L. 6.1. and Writing: Production and Distribution W. 6.4.**



# Looking at Literary Elements

## Thematic Connections:

Making thematic connections: consider the following themes of *Because of Mr. Terupt* and *Mr. Terupt Falls Again*: friendship, loyalty, courage, and perseverance. Select one of the themes and find examples from the book that helps support this theme. Create a sample Life Lesson Chart using the model at: [www.readwritethink.org/lesson\\_images/lesson826/chart.pdf](http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson826/chart.pdf).

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details R.L. 6.2.

## Considering Character—Create an “I AM” Poem or a Biopoem

The purpose of this strategy is to help students demonstrate knowledge of a character in *Because of Mr. Terupt* and *Mr. Terupt Falls Again* by following written prompts to complete a poem about the individual. Students can be given the prompts to follow on a worksheet or alternatively, students may create an original slideshow using PowerPoint, Prezi, or Movie Maker.

### “I AM” Poem

*First Stanza:*

I am (name the character)

I wonder (something the character is actually curious about)

I hear (an imaginary sound the character might hear)

I see (an imaginary sight the character meet see)

I want (something the character truly desires)

*Second Stanza:*

I pretend (something the character actually pretends to do)

I feel (a feeling about something imaginary)

I touch (an imaginary touch)

I worry (something that really bothers the character)

I cry (something that makes the character very sad)

I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

*Third Stanza:*

I understand (something the character knows is true)

I say (something that the character believes in)

I dream (something the character might actually dream about)

I try (something the character really make an effort about)

I hope (something the character actually hopes for)

I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

### Biopoem:

Line 1: First name

Line 2: Three traits that describe the character

Line 3: Relative of \_\_\_\_\_

Line 4: Lover of \_\_\_\_\_  
(three things)

Line 5: Who feels \_\_\_\_\_  
(three things)

Line 6: Who needs \_\_\_\_\_  
(three things)

Line 7: Who fears \_\_\_\_\_  
(three things)

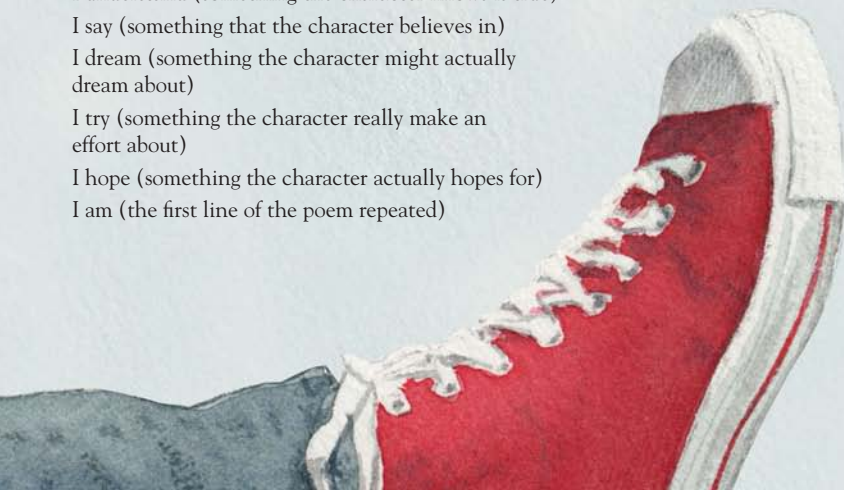
Line 8: Who gives \_\_\_\_\_  
(three things)

Line 9: Who would like to see \_\_\_\_\_  
(three things)

Line 10: Resident of \_\_\_\_\_

Line 11: Last name

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details R.L. 6.1. and Craft and Structure R.L. 6.5., R.L.6.6.



## Considering Character— Create a Character Silhouette or Character Analysis T-Shirt

Select a favorite character from *Because of Mr. Terupt* and *Mr. Terupt Falls Again* and create a character analysis T-shirt. Identify the literary elements used by the author to describe the character, and then create a visual representation of the character traits. The front of the shirt must include the book title, author's name, and the character's name, picture, and description. The right sleeve must list the character's strength and the left sleeve should list the character's weaknesses. List internal and external conflicts, figurative language, and the story's climax on the back of the T-shirt.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details R.L. 6.1.

Working with others, create a character trait silhouette about your favorite or least favorite character in *Because of Mr. Terupt* and *Mr. Terupt Falls Again*. Begin by tracing an appropriately sized member of the group onto butcher paper. The silhouette must be “life size.” The traced silhouette should reflect physical traits of the character, so modify as you draw. Next, cut out the silhouette and include 10 values from your list. These need to be the *most important* traits of your character. For each trait, a quote that supports the description needs to be included. Inside the silhouette, include symbols that represent your character's interests, personality, beliefs, skills, or profession.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details R.L. 6.1.

## Essential Quotes Analysis

The language that an author uses in his work is essential to getting across the intended meaning. Select four quotes from *Because of Mr. Terupt* and *Mr. Terupt Falls Again* that seem to signify key ideas that the author hopes that readers take from the text. These might be quotes spoken by characters or might be from the narration, and page numbers should be included with the quotes. Have students develop a chart with the following four columns:

Quote	Page Number	Relevance to the Novel	Intended Meaning for Readers
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The intended meaning should have relevance not only to the characters in the text, but to the lives of anyone who reads the book.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details R.L. 6.1.



## About the Author:

**Rob Buyea** taught third and fourth graders in Bethany, Connecticut, for six years before moving to Massachusetts, where he now lives with his wife and three daughters. He teaches biology and coaches wrestling at Northfield Mount Hermon School. *Because of Mr. Terupt* and the companion, *Mr. Terupt Falls Again*, are his first two novels. You can learn more about Rob by visiting [RobBuyea.com](http://RobBuyea.com)

This guide was created by Rose Brock, a teacher, school librarian, and doctoral candidate at Texas Woman's University, specializing in children's and young adult literature.