



BOOK STATS

Grade Level Equivalent: 3–6

Ages: 8+

Lexile Measure®: 730L

Pages: 24

Genre: Fantasy, Adventure

Guided Reading Level: R

Subject/Theme: Courage, Quest, Good and Evil

Common Core State Standards	Reading	Writing	Listening & Speaking	Language
Grade 3	RL.3.1, RL.3.3, RL.3.4	W.3.1, W.3.3	SL.3.1, SL.4	L.3.4, L.3.5
Grade 4	RL.4.1, RL.4.3, RL.4.4	W.4.1, W.4.3	SL.4.1, SL.4.4	L.4.4, L.4.5
Grade 5	RL.5.1, RL.5.3, RL.5.4	W.5.1, W.5.3	SL.5.1, SL.5.4	L.5.4, L.5.5
Grade 6	RL.6.1, RL.6.3, RL.6.4	W.6.1, W.6.3	SL.6.1, SL.6.4	L.6.4, L.6.5

Teaching the Book

The Capture begins the magical saga of Guardians of Ga’Hoole, in which four owls band together to seek the truth and protect the owl world from unimaginable danger. This compelling fantasy story provides an unusual opportunity to analyze characterization through animal characters and to use context clues to understand the rich vocabulary of the book. Activities will engage students in learning the science behind flight, researching owl species, and creating their own owl character.

Theme Focus: Animal Fantasy

Comprehension Focus: Main Idea and Details

Language Focus: Using Context Clues

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kathryn Lasky is the author of over 100 fiction and non-fiction books for children and young adults. Her books range from *Sugaring Time*, a non-fiction Newbery Honor book, to *The Night Journey*, a fiction winner of the National Jewish Book Award, to *Beyond the Burning Time*, a non-fiction ALA Best Book for Young Adults.

In 2003, Lasky published *The Capture*, the first of the wildly popular Guardians of Ga’Hoole fantasy series about owls. Lasky has a long fascination with owls and loves researching their behavior and natural history. She lives close to Harvard University and its department of ornithology where she frequently consults with scientists. “My responsibility as a author is to write with authenticity and accuracy, and it does not vary whether the character is real or fictional,” states Lasky.

Kathryn Lasky lives with her husband in Cambridge, Massachusetts. For more information about her, please visit <http://www.kathrynlasky.com/>.

OVERVIEW

Book Summary

Deep in the tranquil forests of Tyto, nestled into the arms of the fir trees, Soren lives with his family and other Barn Owls. But evil lurks in the owl world, evil that threatens to shatter Tyto’s peace and change the course of Soren’s life forever. First, eggs begin to mysteriously disappear from their nests, then Soren himself is captured by strange yellow-eyed owls after mysteriously falling out of his family’s hollow.

His captors take Soren to a dark and forbidding canyon that is called an orphanage, the St. Aegolius Academy for Orphaned Owls. However, Soren and his new friend Gylfie, an Elf Owl, soon realize that it is something far worse. Together, the two owls manage to evade brainwashing and find two like-minded owls who are fighting against the evil of the leaders of the orphanage. Deep within his gizzard, Soren keeps the hope for freedom alive, no matter how many rules, punishments, and sleepless days he faces at St. Aggie’s. And, at last, he and Gylfie manage to escape by doing something they have never done before as young fledgling owls—fly.

By the end of the book, Soren and Gylfie have banded together with two other owls—Twilight and Digger—to seek the great Tree of Ga’Hoole and become knights of this ancient kingdom.

Get Ready to Read

Pre-Reading Activities

Owls Introduce students to the main owl characters in the book by having them view the color illustrations of Soren, Gylfie, Twilight, and Digger at the front of the book. Give them the following information:

Soren is a Barn Owl.

Gylfie is an Elf Owl.

Twilight is a Great Gray Owl.

Digger is a Burrowing Owl.

Then ask students to compare the appearance of the owls, looking for distinguishing features of each. Provide more information about real owls by sharing the owl facts at Scholastic's Guardian of Ga'Hoole website: <http://bit.ly/RqpAfx>. You might also like to preview the movie trailer, which covers the first three books in the series, and decide if you would like to show students to engage their interest in the book: <http://bit.ly/Vncu0h>.

Preview and Predict Show students the map of Ga'Hoole at the front of the book. Tell them to look back at the map as they read the story to help them visualize the setting and action. Then ask students to look at the illustration on the page before the title page. Do they recognize the little owl that is in the talons of the bigger owl? What do they think is happening in the picture?

Vocabulary

Using Context Clues As Kathryn Lasky wrote *Guardians of Ga'Hoole*, she made up many words to describe her amazing fantasy world of owls. Explain to students that context clues are words or phrases that help to identify the meaning of a word and then demonstrate for students how to use them. Guide students to use the other words in the sentence to figure out the unknown word's part of speech, it's meaning, or its connotation. In addition to the made-up words in the novel, Lasky uses a sophisticated vocabulary to describe the characters and actions.

Encourage students to use context clues to figure out the meaning of the following words and then check the definitions and write them on the vocabulary cards.

Distribute copies of **Resource #1: Vocabulary Cards** on page 7 to students.

predator (p. 10)

monitor (p. 40)

maneuver (p. 158)

vitality (p. 179)

contradict (p. 25)

aghast (p. 107)

ferocious (p. 161)

devastated (p. 189)

STORIA ENRICHMENTS

To assess and enhance students' comprehension, this Storia e-book contains a Reading Challenge Quiz, as well as the following enrichments:

- Word Twister (2)
- Do You Know?
- Who Said It?
- About You
- Word Scramble (2)



BIG QUESTION

Critical Thinking Ask students to think about this question as they read and be ready to answer it when they have finished the book. Write the question on chart paper or have students record it in their reading journals.

How will Soren manage to survive the evil owl orphanage?

As You Read

Reading the Book

Modeled Fluent Reading Read aloud the first chapter of the book, asking students to follow along. As you read, stop to model metacognitive processes such as predicting what will happen next: Will Kludd like his little sister more than he likes Soren? What will happen to the missing owlets and eggs? Will we find out if Ga'Hoole is real? Remind students to pause to make predictions as they read.

Independent Reading Assign students to read *The Capture* independently. Pair students to share their responses and questions about the book. Monitor their comprehension by asking questions and observing their reading behaviors.

Comprehension Focus

Analyze Characterization *The Capture* has characters that students might identify with or dislike—even though all the characters are owls. How does Kathryn Lasky manage to create owls with so much character? Remind students that a reader can get to know a character by watching how he or she speaks, thinks, and acts. These pieces of evidence are clues to the character's traits or personality.

Use the graphic organizer on **Resource #2: Analyze Characterization** to model for students how to use evidence to analyze how the author creates her characters. Project the page on a whiteboard or pass out copies to students.

Model: What do we know about Soren? What are his main character traits? One thing I like most about Soren is that he is a questioner. I'll write that down as one of his traits. What evidence is there in the text that makes me think he is a questioner? On page 25, right after he is captured, Soren questions his captor: "'That's not true,' said Soren. 'You dare contradict me!' screeched the owl." And Soren often gets in trouble at St. Aggie's because he questions what is happening there.

Have students fill in the rest of the organizer for another of Soren's traits, for Gylfie's traits, and for the traits of another character of their choice. Remind them to always list text evidence for the traits and the page number where the evidence is found.

After You Read

Questions to Discuss

Lead students in a discussion of these focus story elements.

1. Genre of Fantasy How does the author make the fantasy world of the owls real? List parts of the story

that made their world seem real. (*Sample answer: Sore and Gylfie were such great characters and I wanted them to escape so much that I forgot I was reading about owls, not humans.*)

2. Analyze Character How does the author make you like Soren and Gilfie? How does she make you dislike Skench and Spoon and the other evil owls? (*Sample answer: I like Soren and Gilfie because they are brave enough to fight against the evil owls and I identify with their desire to be free. I dislike Skench and the bad owls because they are mean, they lie, and they try to brainwash the owlets.*)

3. Using Context Clues Use context clues on page 70 to tell what the word *yoicks* means. (*Sample answer: When I read, "Was this owl totally yoicks?" I figured out that yoicks meant crazy.*)

WORDS TO KNOW

Using Context Clues

Ask students to hold up the vocabulary card for each of the definitions below. Then have them turn to the page in the text and explain what context clues they found that helped them understand the word's meaning.

1. What is an animal that hunts other animals to kill? (*predator*, p. 10)
2. What do you call someone who observes and checks on other's behavior? (*monitor*, p. 40)
3. What is another word for feeling horrified? (*aghast*, p. 107)
4. How would you describe someone who is fierce and intense? (*ferocious*, p. 161)
5. What word describes Soren and Gylfie's flying movements and exercises? (*maneuver*, p. 158)

Ask similar questions about the remaining vocabulary words, as well as, the made-up words in the book.

Questions to Share

Encourage students to share their responses with a partner or small group.

1. Text-to-Self How would you react in St. Aggies? Do you think you would become moon blinked?

2. Text-to-World Are there governments or rulers in the real world that are like Skench and Spoorn? Give an example.

3. Text-to-Text Compare Soren to another character in an animal fantasy book or movie. Compare him to a human character in a book or movie.

Extension Activities

Reading/Writing Connection

Book Review and Rating Fantasy is a genre that students often have strong opinions about. Challenge students to write a review of *The Capture*, giving it a rating of one to four stars. First, have them each create a star rating system, or rubric. Ask stu-

dents to decide the characteristics of all levels from a four-star book to a one-star book. Then ask students to rate the book according to their own criteria and write an opinion essay that explains their rating. Emphasize that every opinion is legitimate as long as it is supported by reasoning and evidence.

Don't forget the



BIG QUESTION

Critical Thinking Give each student an opportunity to answer the big question. Encourage students to support their answers with details and evidence from the text. Remind them that there is more than one right answer.

How will Soren manage to escape the evil owl orphanage?

Content Area Connections

Science The Science of Bird Flight For Soren and Gylfie, their chances of escape from the orphanage hinge on their ability to fly for the first time. Challenge students to research the physics of bird flight and how birds' wings are built to make flying possible. Ask students to report on their research by drawing a diagram of a bird in flight that shows how they use their wings and the wind to stay aloft.

Art Owl Mobile Scholastic's Guardian of Ga'Hoole website has a full-color illustration of the main owl characters to cut out and put together into a mobile. After students create their mobiles, ask them to provide at least five facts about each of the owl species of the characters. Download the illustration by visiting: <http://bit.ly/UhsBvF>.

Language Arts Owl Song/Rap The book contains several owl songs with rhyming sequences similar to rap songs. Some rhyming sequences are found on pages 62, 106, and 209. Challenge interested students to write their own rap song for one of the characters or events in the book; for example, when Soren and Gylfie learn to fly and escape from St. Aggies. Ask students to study the rhyme schemes of the

songs in the book, decide how to use the rhymes, and then write their songs.

Math Owl Species and Numbers Encourage interested students to create a chart that lists five owl species and the number of birds in each species. Suggest that students research the subject first, take notes, and then arrange the numbers in the chart in order from most of a species to least. They might want to integrate other kinds of information in the chart including, habitat, country, and number of offspring.

BIG ACTIVITY

Fly to Ga'Hoole Ask students to create an original character they want to play in the fantasy story of Guardians of Ga'Hoole. Will they want to join forces with Soren, Gylfie, Twilight, and Digger? Or do they want to throw in their fate with Skench and Spoorn? Pass out the printable for the **Big Activity: Fly to Ga'Hoole**. After they answer the question prompts, ask students to write a short scene that stars their character from Ga'Hoole. Encourage any interested students to extend their scene into a full-length scene.

Name: _____ Date: _____

BIG ACTIVITY: Fly to Ga'Hoole

Imagine that you could take wing and fly to Ga'Hoole as one of the owl characters. Which side would you choose? What kind of owl would you be? Fill out the description and draw a picture of your owl.

MY CHARACTER IN GA'HOOLE

Name: _____

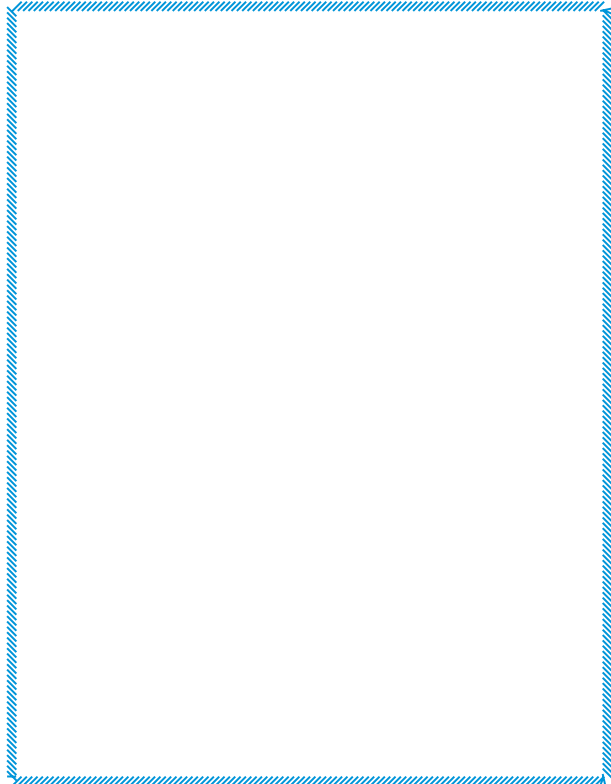
Kind of Owl: _____

Physical Characteristics: _____

Emotional Characteristics: _____

Who I Want to Fight With: _____

My Special Powers: _____



Draw your picture here.

Write a short scene about your character in the land of Ga'Hoole.

READ MORE AND LEARN MORE

Use these books and other resources to expand your students' study of the book or theme.

Series/Author Connections



Guardians of Gahoole #2: The Journey

Kathryn Lasky

Ages: 8–12

Grades: 3–6

Lexile Measure: 750L

Pages: 256

Guided Reading Level: V

After Soren the owl and his friend Gylfie escape from the evil St. Aegolius Academy for Owls, they go on the search for the Great Ga'Hoole Tree. They've heard that at this special tree they can learn new skills and receive training to fight against the evil of the world. Soren discovers that he has unique and powerful gifts of his own. **Available as a Storia e-book**



Guardians of Gahoole #3: The Rescue

Kathryn Lasky

Ages: 8–12

Grades: 3–6

Lexile Measure: 850L

Pages: 208

Guided Reading Level: V

Soren the owl has finally been reunited with his sister, but now his beloved teacher, Ezylyrb, is missing. When Soren learns of Ezylyrb's whereabouts, he knows he is in danger. Determined to save his teacher, Soren teams up with his owl friends Gylfie, Digger, and Twilight and they set off to help him. Soren ends up in a fierce battle with an owl who wears a metal mask. Who could be hiding beneath the mask? **Available as a Storia e-book**



Guardians of Gahoole #4: The Siege

Kathryn Lasky

Ages: 8–12

Grades: 3–6

Lexile Measure: 840L

Pages: 224

Guided Reading Level: V

Soren's cherished mentor has returned to the Great Tree in the kingdom of Ga'Hoole, but there is still tremendous unrest in the owl kingdom. A war has broken out between the Ga'Hoolian owls and an evil band of owls known as the Pure Ones, who are determined to take over the Great Tree. Can Soren and his friends stand up against the evil forces? Will the goodness of Ga'Hoole prevail? **Available as a Storia e-book**



Guardians of Gahoole #5: The Shattering

Kathryn Lasky

Ages: 8–12

Grades: 3–6

Lexile Measure: 790L

Pages: 192

In the midst of war, Soren's sister Eglantine is brainwashed into becoming a spy for Kludd, the leader of a group of evil owls called the Pure Ones. As Kludd continues to battle against the Guardians of Ga'Hoole for control of their tree, Soren reverses the effects of the brainwashing, and Kludd and his forces are defeated in the end. But his conflict with Soren isn't over yet—not even close. **Available as a Storia e-book**

Theme Connections



Infinity Ring #1: A Mutiny in Time

James Dashner

Ages: 8–12

Grades: 3–6

Lexile Measure: 800L

Pages: 192

Guided Reading Level: V

Best friends Dak Smyth and Sera Froste discover a device called the Infinity Ring. Joining a secret society known as the Historians, they discover that history is broken—and only they can set it right. They'll have to use the Infinity Ring to travel through time. Their first mission is to repair the Great Breaks in history, starting with Christopher Columbus, who is about to be thrown overboard by a mutinous crew. But they may already be too late.... **Available as a Storia e-book**



Miracle Pets

Allan Zullo

Ages: 8–12

Grades: 3–6

Lexile Measure: 1050L

Pages: 128

Guided Reading Level: S

Ever heard about the dachshund who was snatched up by an eagle, but fought back in midair? How about the two pigs who escaped from a sausage factory, leaped into an icy river, and swam to safety? And what about the pet cat was trapped for two months under the concrete floor of a new building under construction? **Available as a Storia e-book**



Underworlds #1: The Battle Begins

Tony Abbott

Ages: 8–10

Grades: 3–4

Lexile Measure: 550L

Pages: 112

Guided Reading Level: S

Best friends Owen and Dana are regular fourth graders, until one morning when the floor of their school opens up and Dana is sucked down into a fiery black pit. Owen and his friends Jon and Sydney are determined to find Dana. The trio learns that she was taken to the Underworld—below their school! Their only hope is to enter the Underworld and make a deal with Hades, king of the dead. But will the deal be more than they bargained for? **Available as a Storia e-book**

To find PDF versions of the Storia teacher guides and links to purchase the related books, visit:
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/ereading-resources/>

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devastated (p. 189)

Name: _____ Date: _____

RESOURCE #2: Analyze Characterization

How does the author create her owl characters? Fill in the chart below with character traits and evidence from the text.

Character	Trait	Evidence	Page
Soren	1.		
	2.		
Gylfie	1.		
	2.		
_____	1.		
	2.		