

The Mysteries of Harris Burdick

by Chris Van Allsburg

Each thought provoking illustration in this book will be sure to have your imagination racing to places it has never been.



Read

Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow that with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *This book is a collection of pictures drawn by an artist. We'll have to use our imagination to figure out the story that goes with each picture.* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder if these people are going to that castle way off in the distance?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, and ask questions. Talk about the illustrations and discuss the feeling each portrays. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

Rare Words in *The Mysteries of Harris Burdick*

- Venice: a city in Italy
- mighty: strong and powerful
- reverse: to go backwards
- liner: a passenger ship
- canal: an artificial waterway
- harp: a triangular-shaped stringed instrument
- warned: to tell somebody about something that might cause harm
- France: a country in Europe
- schooner: a fast sailing ship with at least two masts

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- Archie Smith, Boy Wonder: Where is the tiny voice coming from? Do you think this sleeping boy is the only one in the room?
- Under the Rug: What do you think is under the rug? Do you think this picture is scary? Or do you think it is funny?
- A Strange Day in July: Who do you think these two little kids are?
- Missing In Venice: What do you think will happen next?
- Another Place, Another Time? Do you think these people are going to that castle? What do you think they are looking for?
- Uninvited Guests: The door seems very small. Who or what do you think made the doorknob turn?
- The Harp: Do you think that person knows how to play the harp?
- Mr. Linden's Library: How would plants be growing out of a book? Do you think this book is magic?
- The Seven Chairs: What do you think the person in the chair is thinking? What do you think the two people on the ground are thinking? Where do you think the other six chairs are?
- The Third-Floor Bedroom: Who do you think left that window open? Whose room do you think that is?
- Just Desert: Do you think that lady is scared? Where do you think the pumpkin came from?
- Captain Troy: What do you think is on that boat?
- Oscar and Alphonse: Do you think the young girl is happy or sad?
- The House on Maple Street: Do you think there are people in this house?



Do

Pencil Shading Techniques

Give each child paper and pencils so they can experiment with different pencil shading techniques.

Blended shading: Scribble with pencil on your paper. Using a facial tissue or eraser, blend the pencil in a vertical back and forth motion.

Circulism: Draw tiny circles in a continuous motion that overlap and intertwine.

Blended Circulism: Scribble with pencil on your paper. Using a facial tissue or eraser, blend the pencil in small circular motions.

Dark Blacks: Scribble extra hard with pencil on your paper to make a dark black shade. Notice the glare/shine that results.

Loose Crosshatching: Draw a set of diagonal lines next to each other leaving a fair amount of space between them. Rotate your paper 90 degrees and draw another set of diagonal lines that overlap the first set. Repeat as many times as you want.

Tight Crosshatching: Draw a set of diagonal lines next to each other leaving very little space between them. Rotate your paper 90 degrees and draw another set of diagonal lines that overlap the first set. Repeat as many times as you want.