

The Librarian from the Black Lagoon



by Mike Thaler, illustrated by Jared Lee

Ages 5-8

When the class plans to visit the library for the first time, the students prepare themselves for the worst – a dark dungeon of rules and misery, run by creepy monster-like creatures who laminate children if they even whisper. Imagine their surprise, when they are welcomed to a warm and friendly place, where a smiling librarian invites them to explore some of the fun and funny books they have to offer. Brightly narrated by **Alexander Gould**, with music by **Scotty Huff** and **Robert Reynolds**. Animated by **Galen Fott**.

Humor, Libraries, School, Fears

Animated, 9 minutes

Lexile®: 580L; Guided Reading Level: M

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by Mike Thaler (Scholastic)



Weston Woods Studios
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Norwalk, CT 06851
800/243-5020
www.scholastic.com/westonwoods
Made in the USA

ISBN 0-439-02772-1



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Themes: Humor, Libraries, School, Reading, Rumors, Fears

SUMMARY

The stories circulating about the school library are downright terrifying. The librarian, Mrs. Beamster, is said to laminate people who talk or whisper. She is also known to put glue on the chairs to prevent wriggling, and to recite the Dewey Decimal System during storytime. The shelves in the library are rumored to be electrified and kids need to go through the Decontamination Room before entering. No wonder the students dread their first library visit! School legend grows to enormous proportions, up until the moment they arrive at the library entrance. Students will look forward to a trip to their school library, after learning about *The Librarian from the Black Lagoon!*

OBJECTIVES

- Students will prepare to visit the library by reviewing expectations and purposes of the library.
- Students will make text-to-self connections between the story and their own lives.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Generate a list with students about why people use libraries.

Guiding questions:

- What kinds of materials can we find in libraries? (*Books, movies, maps, magazines, newspapers*)
- Why do people go to libraries? (*To read, to study, to do research, to borrow books and movies, to learn from the librarian*)
- How do libraries help the community? (*They provide resources that people don't need to buy, they bring people together to read and learn, librarians help kids become better readers*)

Next, discuss library etiquette with students. Generate another list entitled, "How We Act in the Library." Record students' ideas and background knowledge. Talk with the students about the reasons behind library etiquette and the consequences for breaking those rules. Practice following the rules in the classroom to prepare for a visit to the library.

Lead a discussion about rumors with the students. First, define a rumor as a statement that people make about another person, place, or thing that is usually not founded in facts and often untrue. Tell students that one clue that something is a rumor is if it seems unbelievable. Next, have students think of examples of rumors. Discuss with students why rumors are usually negative and have negative effects. Guiding questions:

- If you heard a bad rumor about someone, how would it make you treat that person?
- If you heard a bad rumor about a place, would you go there?
- How can rumors hurt people?
- What happens when rumors spread?

After the discussion, brainstorm ways to deal with and stop rumors. Develop a class plan or set of protocols for disseminating rumors if they arise. Tell the students that they are going to watch a program about rumors that circulate through the school about the school library and librarian. Follow up after the program with a discussion about how the rumors in the program made the boy feel about the library and librarian.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Follow up on the rumors discussion from the Before Viewing Activity. Discuss with students how the rumors circulating about the librarian ended up not to be true. Remind students that rumors often sound unbelievable. Generate a list of some of the unbelievable rumors about the librarian. Compare and contrast the boy in the story's idea of library before he visited it with what he discovered after he visited it. Use a T-chart to organize the students' ideas. Connect this with experiences that students have had in their own lives when they were scared or nervous about some place before they went there.

Help students think of ideas by giving them cloze sentences to fill in: "Before I went to the (dentist, haunted house, school, school bus...) I felt _____. Afterward, I could see that the _____ was really _____."

Guide students to make text-to-self connections with the movie. Guiding questions:

- Is there any place or teacher in your school that you were afraid of before you went there or met him/her?
- Have you ever had a different opinion of a place after visiting than before you went? (Connected with Activity 1)
- Have you ever heard a rumor about someone or some thing that turned out not to be true? Did you believe the rumor?
- What do you think of your school library?

Visit the school or community library. Review the expectations and consequences agreed upon in the Before Viewing Activity. Arrange a tour and presentation with the librarian and give students ample time to explore the different resources. After you return to the classroom or school, follow up the visit by having students write thank-you letters to the librarian. Students can also design and create posters for or about the library, depicting their favorite section of the library or activity in the library.

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Emily's First 100 Days of School, by Rosemary Wells

Miss Nelson is Back, by Harry Allard and James Marshall

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The Teacher from the Black Lagoon, by Mike Thaler, ill. by Jared Lee

Wild About Books, by Judy Sierra, ill. by Marc Brown

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