

# Something Fishy at Macdonald Hall

(A Novel Study)

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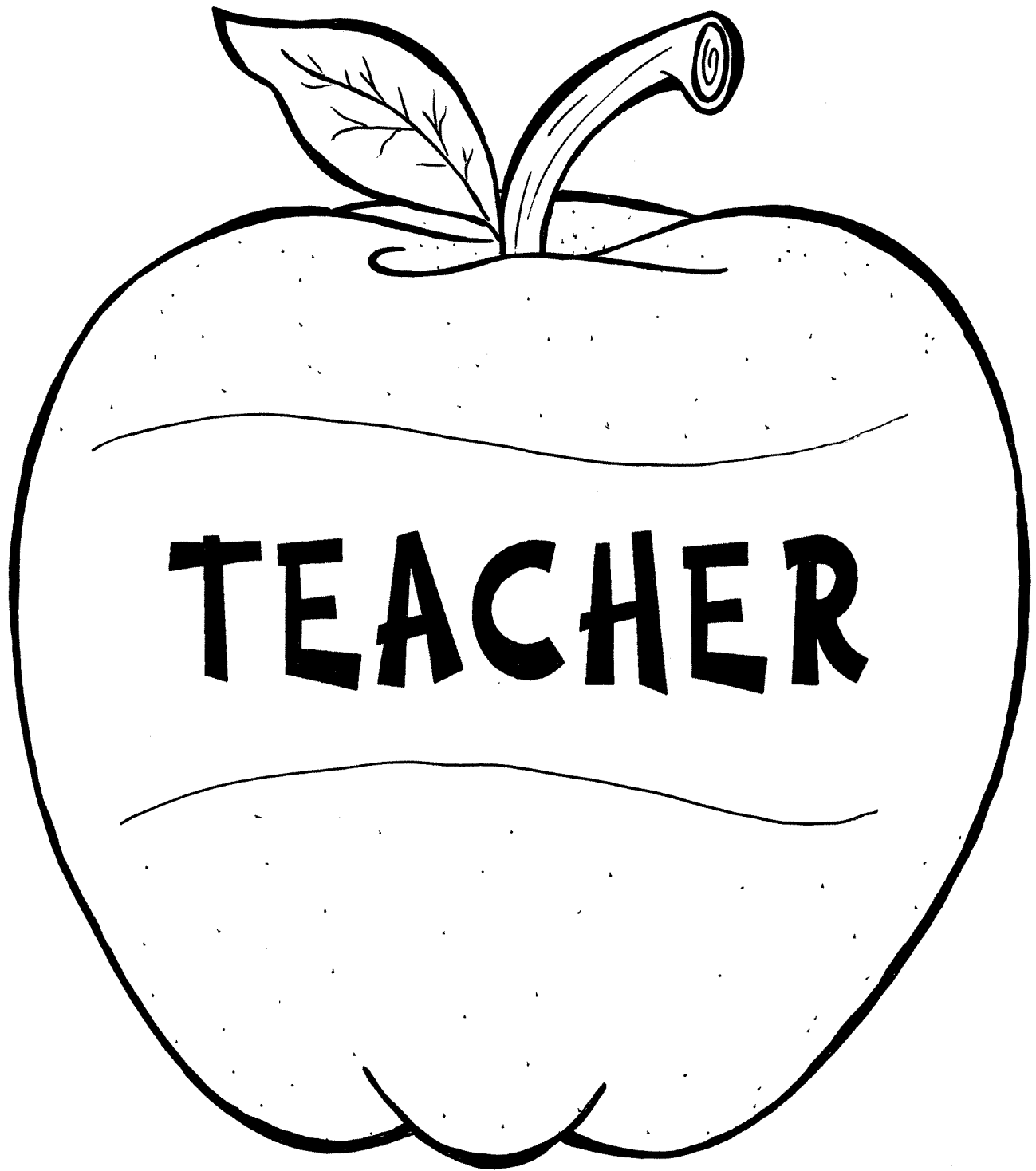
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*For the*



## UNIT OVERVIEW

### *Something Fishy at Macdonald Hall*

#### OVERVIEW

This novel study provides teachers with a highly structured format for teaching language arts, as students develop a love for reading longer materials, like novels. Various areas such as reading comprehension, vocabulary development, spelling, grammar, and writing are all entwined in this integrated approach, eliminating the need for teaching these skills separately. Activities are divided into three main sections:

1) **Chapter Questions**

For each chapter, students answer a thorough set of questions requiring answers in complete sentences. Reading comprehension is key as students must read and understand the *entire* book, in order to answer the questions. (One major strength of the novel study approach is that students *must understand* the novel or they will be unable to do the required assignments.)

2) **Vocabulary and Language**

Each chapter also includes activities dealing with such things as word meanings, use of the dictionary, spelling, parts of speech, syllables, antonyms/synonyms, punctuation and grammar.

3) **Writing and Creativity**

In this section, students apply what they have learned about language and grammar skills to write more effectively. Creative writing is the focus of this less-structured segment, allowing teachers more opportunity to incorporate their own ideas into developing creative writing skills. A puzzle activity is incorporated into this section to add more variety to the lessons.

## READING STRATEGIES

A variety of reading approaches seems to work best. One proven method is for the teacher to read the book outloud to the entire class the first time through, stopping after a chapter or two. In answering the questions, students will essentially be required to reread the chapter on their own. Not only does this "outloud" method insure that students are read to daily, but it also helps all students to understand the book, regardless of reading level.

Having students read sections silently by themselves, outloud with partners or in small groups, are all possible variations that will help keep student interest high.

\*\*\* Note \*\*\*

One way to gain a measure of the effectiveness of the novel study and to gauge student interest, is to instruct students *not* to read ahead on their own. Basic reverse psychology dictates that students will invariably be slouching down into their desks to sneak in a chapter, while the teacher knowingly turns a blind eye.

## ASSIGNMENTS

With the assignments, teachers can photocopy entire booklets for each student or only the portions that the teacher wishes to use. One possible method of reducing this large amount of photocopying, is to have the students write down the chapter questions and answers in their notebooks.

Teachers are free to pick and choose assignments as they see fit, as well as adding in any optional lessons they develop.



## STORY SUMMARY

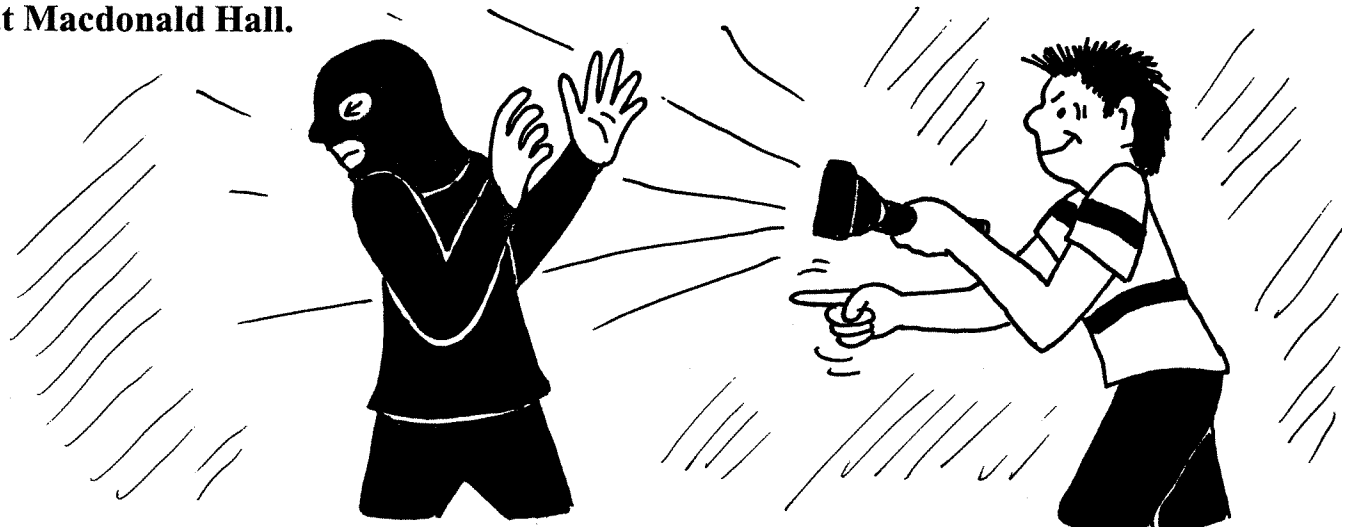
### *Something Fishy at Macdonald Hall*

Edward, Boots O'Neal's younger brother, has just enrolled at Macdonald Hall. Edward tells Bruno that they're old men who are over the hill.

Mr Sturgeon, the Headmaster of Macdonald Hall, is considering resigning . He feels that there are no more challenges left. In addition to this "no brain" situation, Mr. Sturgeon also has a medical condition - an ingrown toenail.

A series of escapades captures everyone's attention: the dressing of Sir John A. Macdonald's statue in a scuba suit; the Kitchen Soap-O-Rama; the blue-dyed swimming pool; apples on oak trees; loaded toasters; water balloons; class-change clocks altered; detour signs on Highway 48; underwear on a flag pole; the stuffing of the cannon with a human mannequin.

Naturally, Bruno and Boots are the logical suspects. While trying to apprehend the "Phantom", the boys are caught out after curfew. They are in the Headmaster's office and are about to be expelled when the Phantom strikes again - firecrackers in the waffle mix. The boys are exonerated. A plan to capture the Phantom succeeds and the practical joker is unmasked - it's Mrs. Sturgeon, the Headmaster's wife. She wanted to give him a purpose in life and a reason to stay at Macdonald Hall.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

### *Something Fishy at Macdonald Hall*

#### Gordon Korman

Gordon Korman was born on October 23, 1963 in Montreal, Quebec. He received a B. F. A. in 1985 from New York University. His memberships include: Writers Union of Canada; Canadian Society of Authors, Illustrators and Performers; Canadian Authors Association; and the Society of Children's Book Writers. His writings have won many awards, among which are the Air Canada Award, the Children's Choice Award, the International Reading Association 1986, and the American Library Association Best Book Award for Young Adults 1990.

His first book, "This Can't Be Happening at Macdonald Hall", was written as a seventh-grade English assignment. By the time he entered high school, Mr. Korman was a best-selling author. His books have been inspired by things that have happened in his own life, and these life experiences are the support guidelines for his writings. His books have slapstick humour, zany settings and fun-filled escapades. There are highly energetic characters and authority figures to break up the fun. Many of his books are written for pre-adolescents and adolescents to show that kids' concerns are important. Everywhere he goes, he collects pieces of information that are stored for future books. Books written by Gordon Korman include:

**This Can't Be Happening at Macdonald Hall, 1977.**

**Go Jump in the Pool!, 1979.**

**Beware the Fish!, 1980.**

**Who is Bugs Potter?, 1980.**

**I Want to Go Home, 1981.**

**Our Man Weston, 1982.**

**The War with Mr. Wizzle, 1982.**

**Bugs Potter: Live at Nickaninny, 1983.**

**No Coins, Please, 1984.**

**Don't Care High, 1985.**

**Son of Interflux, 1986.**

**A Semester in the Life of a Garbage Bag, 1987.**

**The Zucchini Warriors, 1988.**

**Radio Fifth Grade, 1989.**

**Losing Joe's Place, 1990.**

**Something Fishy at Macdonald Hall, 1991.**

**The Twinkie Squad, 1992.**

**The Toilet Paper Tigers, 1993.**

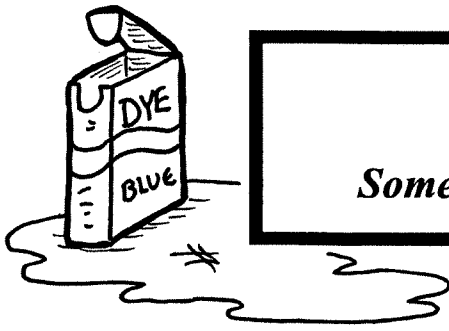
**Why Did the Underwear Cross the Road?, 1994.**

**The Chicken Doesn't Skate, 1996.**

**Save Macdonald Hall, 1996.**

**The 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Nickname Game, 1997.**

**Liar, Liar, Pants on Fire, 1997.**



**JUST THE FACTS**  
*Something Fishy at Macdonald Hall*

1. **Title of the Book:** *Something Fishy at Macdonald Hall*
2. **Author:** Gordon Korman
3. **Type of Book:** Fiction - Humour
4. **Publisher:** Scholastic Canada Ltd.
5. **Countries of Publication:** United States, Canada, England, New Zealand, Australia
6. **Copyright Date:** 1995 by Gordon Korman Enterprises Inc.
7. **ISBN:** 0-590-51447-4
8. **Number of Chapters:** Twenty-one
9. **Main Characters:** Bruno and Boots
10. **Other books starring the main characters:**
  - Go Jump in the Pool
  - Beware the Fish
  - The Zucchini Warriors
  - The War with Mr. Wizzle

