

MACDONALD HALL
“Lights, Camera, Disaster!”

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Unit Overview

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 out loud 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 "out loud" 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, out loud 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 the large amount of photocopying is to have the students write down the chapter questions and answers in their notebooks.

STORY SUMMARY

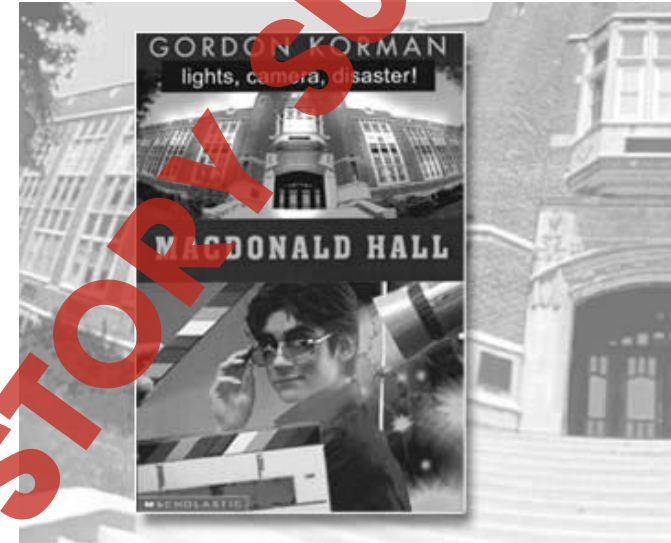
Macdonald Hall: "Lights, Camera, Disaster!"

Macdonald Hall has been chosen to be the setting for "Academy Blues", starring Jordie Jones. Bruno Walton will do anything to be in this movie. Seth Dinkman, the director, will do anything to keep him out.

Bruno tries everything from being a bush, a tap-dancing garbage picker, to a stuntman. Jordie Jones, nicknamed "Cutesy Newbar" by Bruno, would like Bruno to have a bit-part in the movie. Jordie and Bruno strike up a friendship when Jordie is invited to a card game at Macdonald Hall. Jordie also helps out the hockey team by being a spare goalie. The regular goalie is injured and Jordie takes his place in the championship game.

As part of their curriculum, the boys must go on a wilderness survival trip in Algonquin Park. Jordie, unknown to Seth Dinkman and the trip supervisors, joins them on the trip. The group gets lost in the park and is rescued by girls from Miss Scrimmage's School.

The movie gets a one-word review from the movie critic – "Fertilizer". Mark Davies's video (documenting the making of the movie) captured everyone's interest, especially that of Sir Michael Markham, the toughest critic in Hollywood.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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's 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
The Twinkle 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 6th Grade Nickname Game ©1997
Liar, Liar, Pants on Fire ©1997

CHAPTERS 1, 2

Questions

A. Match the following:

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Seth Dinkman | a) blond kid |
| 2. Mark Davies | b) wants to be in the movie |
| 3. Pete Anderson | c) child TV star |
| 4. Boots O'Neal | d) video recorder |
| 5. Mr. Sturgeon | e) world champion clutz |
| 6. Larry Wilson | f) student |
| 7. Bruno Walton | g) Housemaster |
| 8. Jordie Jones | h) student |
| 9. Cutesy Newbar | i) student |
| 10. Sidney Rampulsky | j) wore Jordie Jones T-shirt |
| 11. Calvin Fihzgart | k) amateur weightlifter |
| 12. Goose Golden | l) director |
| 13. Mr. Fudge | m) Headmaster |
| 14. Cathy Burton | n) office messenger |
| 15. Diane Grant | o) wife of The Fish |
| 16. Wilbur | p) movie star |
| 17. Mildred | q) personal manager |
| 18. Miss Scrimmage | r) Headmistress |

CHAPTERS 1, 2

Writing and Creativity

A. Illustrate (with color) Bruno Walton as he makes his entrance at Dormitory 3.



B. Draw answers to the following questions.

1. Dinkman put this over the Macdonald Hall plaque.	2. What is on Goose Golden's head?
3. It hung from the second floor balcony.	4. What did Cathy pull out from Boots bed?

CHAPTERS 1, 2

Writing and Creativity

C. Use the clues to solve the puzzle.



Academy Blues
Hackenschleimer
Newbar
stone wall
Calvin
laugh
non-toxic
sturgeon
enormous
microphone
Ra
Wednesday
golden
new
rag

ACROSS

- 4. _____ Fihzgan
- 6. Not old
- 7. The Fish
- 8. Fourth day of the week.
- 11. Wilbur's last name
- 12. Type of cheer that rocked the countryside
- 14. Goose

DOWN

- 1. Amplifies sound
- 2. Name of the movie.
- 3. Cutesy _____
- 5. To express amusement.
- 6. Not poisonous.
- 9. Where the school plaque was located.
- 10. Sun God of Egypt.
- 13. A torn piece of cloth.

CHAPTERS 5, 6

Questions

B. Why does the author introduce the hockey team into the story?

C. What did Mark's video show?

D. Describe Jordie as he was made up for the dance.

E. Briefly describe what happened when the girls discovered Jordie was at the dance.



CHAPTERS 7, 8

Questions

A. Circle if the statement is TRUE or if it is FALSE.

- T F 1) The boys were expelled for wrecking the dance.
- T F 2) The wilderness survival trip was after the big game.
- T F 3) The survival trip was considered essential to a well-rounded education.
- T F 4) They had tea and crumpets for dessert.
- T F 5) Jordie makes two million dollars a picture.
- T F 6) The team had no backup goalie until Fred appeared.
- T F 7) At first the players lobbed slow easy shots at the net.
- T F 8) Coach Flynn knew that Fred was really Jordie.
- T F 9) Bruno acted his part perfectly.
- T F 10) Bruno was going to get a major speaking part in *Academy Blues*.
- T F 11) Jordie was the starting goalie for the Macs.
- T F 12) Mark videotaped the entire game.
- T F 13) The Cougars got the opening goal.
- T F 14) At the end of the first period, York Academy led 2-0.
- T F 15) Wilbur got the first goal for the Macs.
- T F 16) Bruno got the tying goal.
- T F 17) Jordie scored the winning goal.

