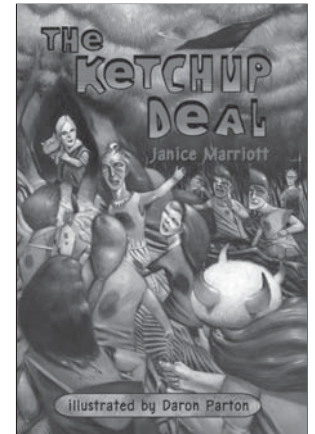


The Ketchup Deal

by Janice Marriott

illustrated by Daron Parton



Book Summary

This story is set in the future after a disaster has destroyed much of life on Earth. There are no adults and children live in tribes. An urban tribe is short of food and a searcher is sent on a mission to find supplies. A rural tribe captures him and a conflict occurs.

Features of the Book

- Science fiction genre
- The descriptions of the setting
- The first person point of view
- The structure of the story line – orientation, problem, climax, resolution, and conclusion
- The use of dashes, exclamation points, italics, and capital letters for emphasis
- Technical vocabulary – *inverter*, *alternator*, *barter*, *wind turbine*

Purpose

The Ketchup Deal can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- S** predicting events in a plot;
- S** discussing the use of descriptive language to set a scene;
- S** comparing and contrasting different settings and characters;
- S** analyzing a problem and its resolution in a narrative structure;
- S** comparing and contrasting ideas and descriptions in a text.

The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Predicting events in a plot
- S** Discussing the use of descriptive language to set a scene
- S** Comparing and contrasting different settings and characters

Introducing the text

Discuss the title and front cover of the book.

- *When do you think this story is set?*
- *What makes you think that?*
- *What do you think is happening in the illustration?*

Look at the blurb and discuss it together.

- *Why would they live in supermarkets?*
- *Why would electrical appliances be important?*

Record these ideas to refer to later.

- *Why might there be a world without adults?*

Ask the students to imagine what life might be like without adults. Brainstorm the positives and negatives. Record these for later discussion.

- *What kinds of things are essential for human survival?*
- *What might happen if there were a great food shortage?*
- *If there were a major disaster in this country, what might happen to things we often take for granted, for example, fresh water and electricity?*

Discuss the problems that arise when food, water, and shelter become scarce.

- *Do people always want to share?*
- *What often happens if people want to keep everything for themselves?*

Reading and discussing the text

Ask the students to read chapter 1 of the story.

- As you read, take special note of words that describe the setting, for example, “yellowy brown,” “shattered freeway,” “silent landscape.” Make a mental sketch of the setting.

When the students have finished reading, ask:

- Do you have enough information now to predict the time period the story is set in?
- Why would the girl have stripes of clay on her face?
- Why would skateboarding be the only form of transport?

Ask the students to scan chapter 1 for the word “Disaster.”

- Why do you think it is written with a capital letter?
- What do you think the Disaster was?

Ask the students to support their answers with words and phrases from the text, for example, the dead plants and slabs of broken concrete.

- Do you think you will find out what the Disaster was?
- How important do you think it is to the story?

Can the students predict who it is who caught the skateboarder?

Ask the students to read chapter 2.

- As you read, take note of the kind of lifestyle this tribe has.
- Can you predict what their power is?

Discuss the students’ suggestions.

Ask the students to read the rest of the book independently. As they read, they could think about the following question:

- What are the differences between the Bat Pack and the Superskaters, for example, where they sleep and how they get their food?

When everyone has finished reading, ask the students if they understand the meaning of the term “barter.”

- What is the significance of the ketchup?
- Why are seeds so precious to the Bat Pack?
- What is the value of money in this story? Why?

There are three different settings in the story – the Superskaters’ home, the Bat Pack’s home, and the open ground between them. Draw the students’ attention to the way the author has described these settings, for example, the huge ice lakes, the fallen freeway sign, and the damp, dark cave.

Revisiting the Text


The suggested activities below can be used immediately after the guided reading lesson if appropriate or could be taken as a mini-lesson at a later time.

S Analyzing a problem and its resolution in a narrative structure

Explain the form of a narrative – orientation/problem/climax/solution.

- What is the problem for both of the tribes in the story?
- Is it resolved successfully?

Ask the students to brainstorm a range of other solutions to the problem.

 Predicting events in a plot

Discuss the students’ earlier predictions about the setting and story line.

- Look at the cover illustration again. Does it make more sense now?
- Can you identify the characters?

Ask the students to think about what might happen to the two tribes in the story. The students could then write the next chapter in the story explaining how the relationship between the two tribes might develop. Before they begin, ask them to scan the final chapter again.

- Can you find any clues there about what might happen?
- Do you think the two tribes will have a close, friendly relationship?

Now ask the students to think about what the Disaster might have been.

- What kinds of big disasters have you heard or read about?
- Why would all of the adults be gone but not the children?

They could use clues in the text to discount some of their suggestions, then write the chapter that precedes chapter 1 explaining how the setting came about.

S Comparing and contrasting ideas and descriptions in a text

Ask the students to compare and contrast the two tribes in the story – how they are described, how they survive, how they think about the future, and what they have in common. They could use the blackline master on page 78 to complete a retrieval chart of the information they need for their discussion.