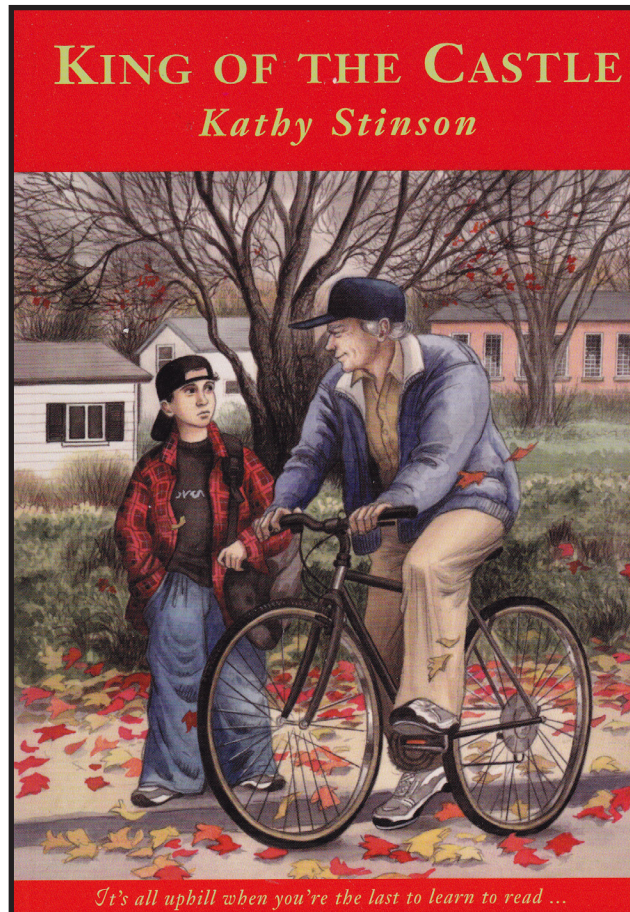


Second Story Press

High-Beginner Level ESL

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

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King of the Castle

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Book Summary

King of the Castle is an illustrated children's fiction chapter book with parallel story lines. Mr. Elliot is a senior citizen who has hidden his illiteracy for his entire life and Derek is a grade four student who cannot read and is bullied by some of his classmates. The protagonist is Mr. Elliot, a caretaker in Jessie Lucas Public School. He is loved by all the children in the school, and although he always encourages children to pursue their education, he has an embarrassing secret—he cannot read and write himself. Mr. Elliot finally realizes that his illiteracy has prevented him from achieving important goals in his life, such as becoming head caretaker of the school. The book is about Mr. Elliot's successful journey to become literate. *King of the Castle* has 57 pages, including illustrations. According to ministry guidelines, it can be used as a core reading text for an ESL B (High Beginner) credit classes, an elementary or middle school program for ESL high beginners, and for non-credit ESL high beginners. It addresses the themes of child and adult illiteracy and bullying, the value of intergenerational relationships, and empathy for those with learning disabilities.

PART A

Pre-Reading Activities

 ACTIVITY 1

Have the students discuss these questions, either as a class or in small groups:

1. Is it easy or difficult to learn to read and write either in English or your first language?
2. Are there reasons that it is hard for some people to learn how to read and write? Make a list of these reasons.
3. Why do you think that some adults would not be able to learn to read and write? Make a list of these reasons.
4. How would you feel if you couldn't read and write and everyone else around you could?

 ACTIVITY 2

Introduce the elements of storytelling: PLOT, CHARACTERS, PROTAGONIST, THEME, SETTING, CONFLICT, and CLIMAX. Give the students the meanings of these terms and use them when reading, discussing, and analyzing the story.

 ACTIVITY 3

Understanding Storytelling

To assess your students' understanding of storytelling, have the students complete the sentences below in their own words:

 ACTIVITY 3

Understanding Storytelling

Directions:

Complete these sentences in your own words.

1. My favourite story is _____.

2. Some of the main characters in my story are _____
_____.

3. The most important character or protagonist in my story is
because _____.

4. The setting of my story is _____.

5. One conflict in my story is _____.

6. The climax of this story is when _____
_____.

7. A main idea, message, moral or theme of my story is _____
because _____.

PART B

Listening And Speaking Activities



ACTIVITY 4

*Have your students give the meaning of specific vocabulary in the context of the story and without using a dictionary. Key words in the story include the following: **caretaker, soccer, bounced, harmonica, custodian, equipment, supplies, lullaby, exclaimed, inventions, comfy, munching, wonderful, rendition, assembly, and characters.** If students can't explain the meaning of a word or use the word in a sentence, they can pantomime or act out the meaning, draw a picture, or make a word wall.*



ACTIVITY 5

Have the students read the story aloud, either in small groups or as the whole class. Students might also take turns reading the words of the characters in the story.

PART C

Reading and Writing Activities

 ACTIVITY 6

Chapter Questions

Ask students to answer the following reading comprehension questions for each chapter. They can answer them orally or prepare a worksheet used for assessment and/or evaluation of learning. The questions deal with facts, inference, and vocabulary.

 ACTIVITY 6

Chapter Questions

Chapter 1

1. Describe Mr. Elliot's character or personality.
2. What is the big difficulty or problem that Mr. Elliot is hiding from the children? Why is he hiding it?

Chapter 2

3. Who are Jemma and Jason?
4. How does Mr. Elliot feel about not reading to them? How do we know that he feels this way?

Chapter 3

5. What reason or excuse does Mr. Elliot give for not reading Naomi's paper? Why does he do this?
6. What idea does Mr. Elliot have when he visits the Grade 4 class?
7. Who is Mr. Caracas? What idea or suggestion does he give to Mr. Elliot? How does Mr. Caracas' suggestion make Mr. Elliot feel?

Chapter 4

8. Why are the children laughing at Derek?
9. Why does Mr. Elliot ask Derek to help him?
10. What advice does Mr. Elliot give Derek?
11. Why does Mr. Elliot call himself a coward?

Chapter 5

12. Why does Mr. Elliot understand how Derek feels? Give two reasons.

13. Mr. Elliot tells Derek, “Keep your nose clean, eh” (page 25). What does this idiom mean? Why Does Mr. Elliot say this to Derek?
14. What is Mr. Elliot’s big decision? Why does he make this decision?

Chapter 6

15. Why does Mr. Elliot have “butterflies pounding around in his stomach”? What does this idiom mean?
16. Describe the class where Mr. Elliot is going to learn to read and write.
17. What kind of sentence does Brenda teach her students to read and write?
18. Why do you think that this is a good way to teach adults to read and write?

Chapter 7

19. Why is Mr. Elliot excited at the beginning of the chapter?
20. How is Mr. Elliot’s character or personality beginning to change? Why is he changing?
21. Explain how or why Mr. Elliot is confused when he reads.
22. At the end of the chapter, Mr. Elliot says, “Would it be such a bad thing if I didn’t learn how to read?” (page 35). In your opinion, why does he ask this?

Chapter 8

23. What words would you use to describe Mr. Elliot’s feelings at the beginning of the chapter?
24. Explain why Mr. Elliot decides to continue his reading class.
25. What does Mr. Elliot ask his teacher, Brenda? Why does he ask this?

Chapter 9

26. What kinds of words is Mr. Elliot learning to read?
27. What does Mr. Elliot now do that he had not done before? How does this action show that he has changed?
28. What does Mr. Elliot now admit to his grandson Jason? In your opinion, why does he do this?

Chapter 10

29. How does Mr. Elliot feel about reading now? What proof do we have of his feelings?
30. What does Mr. Elliot say to Mrs. Evans?
31. What does Mrs. Evans suggest to Mr. Elliot? Why does she make this suggestion?

Chapter 11

32. What does Mr. Elliot do for his grandchildren? Why is this such an important event in his life?
33. In your opinion, what is the project that Mr. Elliot has for Jason?

Chapter 12

34. What is an “end of the year assembly” (page 53)? What is the reason for this event?
35. What is Mr. Elliot’s new job?

Summary Questions

36. How is being able to read and write the same as being a king?
37. In your opinion, what is the main idea, message, moral, or lesson that we can all learn from this book? Give some reasons for your opinion.
38. How would you feel if Mr. Elliot was a member of your family? Give reasons for your feelings.
39. If you found out that a friend or a family member could not read and write, what would you do or say to that person? Please give reasons for your words or actions.
40. What is your opinion of this book? Give reasons for your opinion.
41. Would you recommend this book to someone to read? Why or why not?

 **ACTIVITY 7****Directions:**

Read the following statements and write T if the sentence is TRUE and F if it is FALSE.

1. Mr. Elliot liked his job as a caretaker. _____
2. At the beginning of the story, Mr. Elliot knows how to read and write well. _____
3. Mr. Elliot does not get along well with the students at Jessie Lucas Public School. _____
4. Mr. Elliot has two grandchildren who are both boys. _____
5. When a student or his grandchildren ask Mr. Elliot to read something, he often says that his eyeglasses are lost or broken. _____
6. Mr. Elliot doesn't like to visit all of the classes at Jessie Lucas Public School. _____
7. Mr. Caracas wants Mr. Elliot to apply for the job of head caretaker or custodian. _____
8. Mr. Elliot and Derek's classmates made fun of Derek because he couldn't read. _____
9. Mr. Elliot tries to help and protect Derek when his classmates are laughing at him. _____
10. Mr. Elliot tried to learn how to read when he was a child, but he couldn't. _____
11. Mr. Elliot's daughter doesn't know that he can't read and doesn't try to help him find a reading class. _____
12. Mr. Elliot's adult reading class has a lot of students. _____
13. Sometimes Mr. Elliot feels frustrated when he is trying to learn to read. _____
14. While he is learning to read, Mr. Elliot decides to apply for the job of head caretaker at Jessie Lucas Public School. _____
15. Mr. Elliot never tells his grandson Jason that he is learning to read as an adult. _____
16. Mrs. Evans wants Mr. Elliot to write and tell his story to the students of the school. _____
17. Near the end of the story, Mr. Elliot reads a story to his grandchildren for the first time. _____
18. At the end of the year assembly, Mr. Caracas tells the children that he is retiring and that Mr. Elliot will become head caretaker. _____

19. Mr. Elliot never told the children at the school that he couldn't read until recently. _____
20. The children of Jessie Lucas Public School were not proud of Mr. Elliot
because he has learned to read. _____

BONUS QUESTION!

Now, rewrite all of the FALSE statements to make them TRUE statements.



ACTIVITY 8

Instruct students to make three columns on a sheet of paper labeled: NOUNS, VERBS, and ADJECTIVES.

Ask them to write each of the words below in its proper column and then be prepared to explain why each word is that part of speech. You could also ask them to use the word in a sentence. Encourage them to do this activity without using a dictionary.

 **ACTIVITY 8****Directions:**

On a sheet of paper, make three columns labeled: NOUNS, VERBS, and ADJECTIVES.

Write each of the words below in its proper column and then be prepared to explain why each word is that part of speech.

Try to use the word in a sentence and try to do the exercise without using a dictionary.

caretaker	broom	classrooms
grownups	hollered	harmonica
practice	grandfather	glasses
laughter	laughed	littlest
dusting	dumb	schoolwork
memories	kicked	harmonica
lullaby	nervous	little
thumped	introduced	loves
thoughtful	grandchildren	old
happy	determined	possible
extra	pretend	realized
smiled	borrow	comfy
munching	wonderful	hoisted
awards	applause	celebrate

PART D

Socio-Cultural and
Media Literacy Activities



ACTIVITY 9

Have your students research Adult Literacy classes or programs available to adults at little or no cost. If possible, introduce your students to Internet research that can be done to find this information. If your students are not computer literate, brainstorm a list of places in your neighbourhood where students can find this information such as libraries, and community centres. The students can then go to these venues and find pamphlets or brochures that describe these programs. (For adolescent students add an anti-bullying activity/school initiative and metacognitive reflection. “How can I improve my reading and writing skills? Why is it important to have good reading and writing skills?”)



ACTIVITY 10

Establish a peer tutoring or mentoring program in your classroom or school where more advanced students assist more challenged students to improve their literacy skills. Students who participate can get credit for compulsory secondary school volunteering hours or earn certificates for their efforts.

PART E

Extension/Enrichment Activities



ACTIVITY 11

Create a Word Wall in your classroom. As you read the book, students write new words on strips of coloured paper and place them on the word wall using magnets. The words can be arranged randomly or grouped for learning purposes. For example, all nouns, verbs, and adjectives can have their own area. The word wall can be used to classify vocabulary into synonyms and antonyms. The wall is flexible because you can change the groupings from day to day. This activity can also be done on a Smart Board.



ACTIVITY 12

Organize a fundraising project to benefit an established literacy program in your neighbourhood.



ACTIVITY 13

Organize a visit to a seniors' retirement home where your students are paired with seniors and read to them.



ACTIVITY 14

If your students are adults, show a film called Stanley and Iris, which is about adult literacy. Discuss the themes of the film, the relationship between the characters, and how learning to read and write changes the life of the protagonist. This is an excellent film, but it is not appropriate for young children.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THIS GUIDE

Helen Wolfe has been an educator for almost 40 years. She has a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Education and has earned professional certification in Senior English, ESL, Law, Special Education, and a Guidance Specialist.

Helen is experienced in all grade levels from Kindergarten to Grade 12. She has taught in a wide variety of public and private school settings. Since 1988, her focus has been as an adult educator in secondary school credit programs. During that time, she has written, revised, and implemented many courses of study in English, Social Science, and English as a Second Language.

In 2011, she wrote *Terrific Women Teachers*, a non-fiction chapter book for young readers that is part of the Women's Hall of Fame Series from Second Story Press. Her belief is that every student, even those with language and other learning challenges, has the right to read and appreciate well-written children's literature. That philosophy of inclusion motivates her to write teacher's guides to help make quality literature accessible to all learners.

Helen lives in Toronto and continues to work in adult education and ESL.

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about this guide or would like to get in touch with Helen Wolfe, please send an e-mail to info@secondstorypress.ca.

FEEDBACK

Let us know about your experience using this guide by completing a short online survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CQHKZG5>