



# \* \* \* Kid \* \* \*

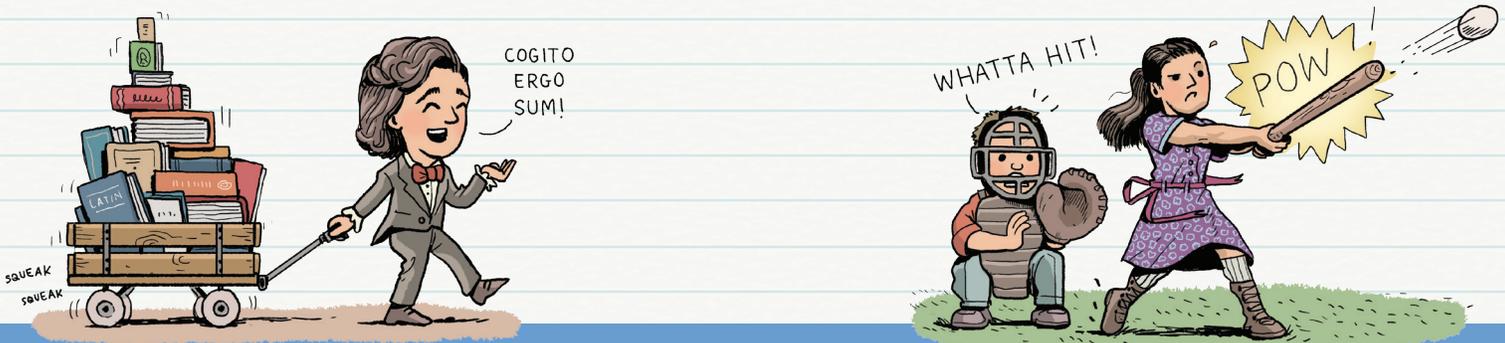
# Authors

TRUE TALES OF CHILDHOOD FROM

FAMOUS WRITERS

# CURRICULUM GUIDE

STORIES BY *DAVID STABLER* ILLUSTRATIONS BY *DOOGIE HORNER*



## COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

*Kid Authors: True Tales of Childhood from Famous Writers* contains kid-friendly and relatable childhood stories of fifteen of the world's most beloved and talented writers. This curriculum guide, with connections to the Common Core, includes an array of language arts activities, book discussions, vocabulary instruction, and more to accommodate the learning needs of most students in grades 4–7. Students are asked to be careful readers without jeopardizing the fun of reading.

Noted throughout the guide are correlations between the discussion questions and activities and specific Common Core Language Arts Standards. For more information on specific standards, visit the Common Core website at [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org).

# \* Pre-Reading Brainstorming \*

Previewing the text helps students understand the informational purpose of the book. Key characteristics of the text include the titles, table of contents, use of illustrations, chapter headings, bibliography, and index. Ask students to compare and contrast the format of *Kid Authors* with that of a narrative book.

Have students choose an author featured in *Kid Authors*. Then ask them to research the books their author wrote and choose one to read (you can help them choose a chapter or excerpt if the book is long). Invite students to share the plot of the story with the class via a multimedia book report.

Ask your class the following questions. Have students brainstorm, and then call on individual students to answer and write their answers on the board.

- \* What is your favorite story, and why?
- \* Who is your favorite author?
- \* What makes a writer great?
- \* Why do you think someone decides to become a writer?
- \* How do you think a person becomes an author?
- \* How do you think an author decides what stories to write?
- \* If you were an author what types of stories would you write?
- \* What do you think your favorite author was like as a kid?
- \* What do you think is the most important characteristic a person needs in order to become an author? Why?
- \* List five ways an author can get ideas for his or her books.
- \* Which writer featured in *Kid Authors* are you most interested in learning about? Why?
- \* Write a paragraph on why you think it's important to learn about authors' backgrounds.

## PRE-READING COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

The Discussion Points address the following Common Core State Standards:

### WRITING:

#### Text Types and Purposes

Grade 4 – W.4.1-3e

Grade 5 – W.5.1-3e

Grade 6 – W.6.1-3.e

Grade 7 – W.7.1-1c, 2-2d, 3-3e

#### Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Grade 4 – W.4.7-9b

Grade 5 – W.5.7-9b

Grade 6 – W.6.7-9

Grade 7 – W.7.7-9a

### SPEAKING AND LISTENING:

#### Comprehension and Collaboration

Grade 4 – SL.4.1-2

Grade 5 – SL.5.1-1d

Grade 6 – SL.6.1-2

Grade 7 – SL.7.1

### SPEAKING AND LISTENING:

#### Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Grade 4 – SL.4.4-6

Grade 5 – SL.5.4-5

Grade 6 – SL.6.4-5

Grade 7 – SL.7.4-5

## ★ Didactic Discussion Questions ★

- ★ What childhood memories play a role in J. R. R. Tolkien's writing?
- ★ List three examples from J. K. Rowling's childhood that inspired a person, place, or thing in the Harry Potter series.
- ★ How did Edgar Allan Poe's fear of ghosts and monsters help him become one of the most celebrated macabre authors of all time?
- ★ Why did Sherman Alexie leave his reservation? Why was it difficult for him to do this? How did his childhood influence his writing?
- ★ Why was Lewis Carroll a target for bullies? How did writing help him beat his bullies?
- ★ Name five ways that Laura Ingalls Wilder's childhood influenced her classic novels.
- ★ What advice did Zora Neale Hurston's mother give her that helped shape Zora's life? How did it help Zora succeed in life and as a writer?
- ★ Give three examples of how Mark Twain's misbehaving as a boy made him more successful later in life.
- ★ How did Langston Hughes's grandmother inspire his poetry?
- ★ How do Jules Verne's books "excite young boys to quit their homes for adventurous travel"? Use examples from *Kid Authors* to explain why you think Jules Verne would like or not like this statement about his writing.
- ★ What role did candy play in Roald Dahl's daily life as a boy, while he was at boarding school, and in his writing?
- ★ List three ways that being poor helped Stan Lee become one of the greatest comic book writers ever.
- ★ Use examples from the book to show how reading made Beverly Cleary both struggle and succeed early in life.
- ★ What was Lucy Maud Montgomery's nickname? Explain what was really behind her encounter with the "ghost."
- ★ How did being the "often overlooked middle child" set Jeff Kinney up for future success?
- ★ Compare and contrast two of the Kid Authors' childhoods and explain how each one's upbringing contributed to his or her success as a writer.
- ★ What do the authors in each of the three parts of the book—Part One: It's Not Easy Being a Kid, Part Two: All in the Family, and Part Three: The Write Stuff—all have in common? Why did the author set the book up this way?
- ★ List all fifteen authors featured in *Kid Authors*. Then write down two adjectives that describe each one.
- ★ Which author featured in *Kid Authors* do you like best? Why?
- ★ Using examples from the book, explain how you relate to one of the writers in *Kid Authors*.

## DISCUSSION POINTS COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

The Discussion Points address the following Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Text:

### Key Ideas and Details

Grade 4 – RI.4.1-3  
Grade 5 – RI.5.1-3  
Grade 6 – RI.6.1-3  
Grade 7 – RI.7.1-3

### Craft and Structure

Grade 4 – RI.4.4-6  
Grade 5 – RI.5.4-6  
Grade 6 – RI.6.4-6  
Grade 7 – RI.7.6

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Grade 4 – RI.4.7, 9  
Grade 5 – RI.5.9  
Grade 6 – RI.6.9  
Grade 7 – RI.7.9

### Range of Reading Level of Text Complexity

Grade 4 – RI.4.10  
Grade 5 – RI.5.10

# ★ Vocabulary in Verse ★

Review this list of vocabulary words found throughout *Kid Authors*. First ask students if they can guess each word's meaning by rereading it in the context of the story. Then have them use dictionaries to define the word and check their guesses. Also have them use each word in a sentence of their own. Since there are so many vocabulary words, you may choose to review these words over a few class periods and assign some for homework. You can also use them for your weekly list, daily word study, or spelling exercises.

## Introduction

legendary  
frontier  
locusts  
fend  
heroines  
formidable

## J. R. R. Tolkien Meets a Baboon

### Tarantula

realm  
encounter  
vivid  
province  
frilly  
vaulted  
rampaged  
pinafores  
incident  
rarest  
aggressive  
haste  
scuttled  
winging  
swollen  
fateful

## J. K. Rowling, A Storybook Life

defy  
aspiring  
bound  
enchanted  
sensation  
managed  
laboratory  
constant  
companions  
plummeted  
plunged  
dismiss  
inspiration  
don  
portray  
ancient  
centuries  
recalled  
severe  
promotion  
rubbish  
rumor  
tormentor  
peering  
ambush  
feisty  
ditched  
excel

regarded  
dignitaries  
resourceful  
persevered  
hailed  
dedicated

## Edgar Allan Poe, Little Orphan Edgar

supernatural  
macabre  
nursemaid  
abandoned  
distraught  
misfortunes  
tuberculosis  
prosperous  
merchant  
determined  
doted  
lavish  
recite  
theatrical  
enthralled  
adoration  
spoiled  
criticized  
humiliating  
shambling  
horde  
convinced  
suffocated  
plagued  
pursue  
earshot  
horticulture  
verses  
compiled  
manuscript  
headmaster  
adulation  
swelled  
shied  
slights  
solitary  
notorious  
submission  
episode  
feat  
subdued  
heartily  
thespian  
vacant  
traits  
panache

## Sherman Alexie, Off the Reservation

reservation  
boundaries  
slightly  
seizures  
subsided  
cultures  
strolling  
opportunity  
insomnia  
manuals  
powwows  
enlarged  
mocked  
dissatisfied  
close-knit  
reunions  
broaden  
enrolled  
hitch  
prestigious

## Lewis Carroll, One Tough Nerd

imposing  
frail  
stutter  
exterior  
relies  
populated  
complex  
logarithms  
gesturing  
protective  
advised  
stammered  
reverend  
rural  
livestock  
parsonage  
rector  
opulent  
lounging  
coax  
combat  
complicated  
regulations  
qualified  
marionettes  
instructive  
limericks  
endear  
pale  
reputation  
harsher  
rampant

vulnerable  
imposition  
sorely  
deteriorating  
contracted  
nonsense

### **Laura Ingalls Wilder, Heart of a Pioneer**

pioneer  
trailblazer  
reluctantly  
relocations  
flickering  
tomboy  
flitting  
half-pint  
tom-toms  
settlers  
territory  
restless  
irritated  
sprawling  
parcel  
stripped  
decimated  
invasion  
lore  
vain  
bombarded  
content  
projectiles  
stroke  
locomotive  
toiled  
tuition  
primary  
ritual  
homesteader  
enabled

### **Zora Neale Hurston, Jumping at the Sun**

ambled  
hovered  
hailed  
segregated  
contrast  
seamstress  
dubbed  
spools  
swap  
eavesdrop  
basis  
gatepost  
skeptical  
streetcar  
wardrobe  
troupe  
urging

### **Mark Twain, Bad Boy Makes Good**

streaking  
reckless  
dazzling  
anxious

omen  
stern  
bustling  
extrovert  
indulgent  
majestic  
vessels  
fathoms  
currents  
enslaved  
perishing  
incorrigible  
cohorts  
escapades  
shabbily  
limestone  
hideous  
cylinder  
ne'er-do-well  
inclined  
idling  
steered  
errand  
apprentice  
unwieldy  
grueling  
grimy  
ill-fitting  
scarcely  
stunt  
rambling  
uneasiness

### **Langston Hughes, History Lessons**

relented  
racism  
reunite  
massive  
scampered  
menial  
wizened  
rickety  
shawl  
squaw  
heritage  
occupied  
abolitionist  
coverlet  
seekers  
profoundly  
integrated  
unanimous  
jotted  
thunderous  
illustrious  
trademark  
admiration  
icons

### **Jules Verne, Castaway for a Day**

predicted  
innovations  
fascinated  
navigators

gaze  
schooners  
exotic  
lacked  
briny  
watchman  
clambered  
commander  
pungent  
cargo  
fancied  
helmsman  
telescope  
waterway  
franc  
leaky  
gushing  
murky  
islet  
subsisting  
provisions  
castaway  
waded  
headwinds  
foundering  
disabled  
mariner  
reproach  
harbor

### **Roald Dahl, The Boy Who Loved Candy**

spark  
inexorably  
confections  
magnet  
blisteringly  
stouthearted  
froth  
drawback  
proprietor  
dingy  
gaggle  
exaggerate  
bizarre  
gooseberry  
exacts  
triumphantly  
commemorating  
dismal  
doled out  
transgressions  
worthwhile  
posing  
subtle  
palate  
insufficiently  
plot  
mogul  
rival  
formula

**Stan Lee, The Incredible Reader**

acquired  
radioactive  
gamma rays  
mutants  
immigrants  
decade  
scarce  
economic  
inability  
specifications  
smeared  
chord  
ventriloquist  
mystical  
contrary  
galloping  
transforming  
correspondent  
dispatches  
exploits  
rebel  
distinctive  
swashbuckling  
derring-do  
dictate  
evaluated  
summarize  
polished  
excelsior  
pen name  
protégé

**Beverly Cleary, Flight of the Blackbird**

perspective  
gelatin  
cleanser  
establish  
donate  
well-stocked  
intoned  
narrate  
advanced  
struggling  
mortified

memorize  
dread  
summoned  
prancing  
conquered  
sequel  
develop  
ability  
baffled  
siege  
praised  
tour-de-force  
contribution  
appropriately

**Lucy Maud Montgomery, The Adventures of Story Girl**

knack  
motherless  
orchards  
ward  
arrangements  
reflections  
complaints  
constructed  
hinges  
blood-curdling  
grove  
wraith  
consumed  
clutches  
outskirts  
unearthly  
gloom  
uncertainty  
citing  
beggar  
indistinct  
simultaneous  
pitchfork  
specter  
solution  
dyke  
stampede

**Jeff Kinney, Stuck in the Middle**

overlooked  
bedeviled  
seemingly  
hefty  
sandwiched  
warring  
intense  
revenge  
rousted  
scrambled  
bamboozled  
pantry  
seethed  
glee  
obnoxious  
consternation  
devour  
whips up  
concoction  
retold  
renderings  
rejections  
observations  
contract

**Fun Facts about Famous Authors**

tantrum  
leap  
menagerie  
consulting  
conductor  
dueling  
enslavement  
auditioning  
lunatic  
descendent  
pygmy  
insisting

After your class is familiar with the vocabulary list, invite them to choose 15-20 words to use to write their own short stories featuring their favorite Kid Author.

## VOCABULARY COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

The vocabulary activities address the following Common Core State Standards for Language:

**Conventions of Standard English**

Grade 4 – L.4.1-2  
Grade 5 – L.5.1-2  
Grade 6 – L.6.1-2  
Grade 7 – L.7.1-2

**Knowledge of Language**

Grade 4 – L.4.3  
Grade 5 – L.5.3  
Grade 6 – L.6.3  
Grade 7 – L.7.3

**Vocabulary Acquisition and Use**

Grade 4 – L.4.4-6  
Grade 5 – L.5.4-6  
Grade 6 – L.6.4-6  
Grade 7 – L.7.4-6

# ★ An Anthology of Language Arts Activities ★

## **There Once Was a Boy Who Loved Limericks...**

A limerick is a funny, rhyming, and sometime nonsensical poem. They are great for kids to both read and write since they are short and silly. Page 59 of *Kid Authors* talks about how Lewis Carroll liked writing them when he was in school. Reread that passage to your class, and then look up some limericks to share with your class. Then lead a discussion explaining the structure of limericks. They have a rhyme scheme of AABBA—which means that lines 1, 2, and 5 rhyme and lines 3 and 4 rhyme. Lines 1, 2, and 5 should have 7–10 syllables and lines 3 and 4 should have 5–7 syllables. And the first line of a limerick usually begins with “There was a....” and ends with a person’s name and a place. Invite students to write their own limericks and share them with the class.

## **Fun Fact Presentations**

At the end of *Kid Authors* is a section of fun facts about 30 other authors. Ask students to research one of these authors, read one of his or her famous works, and then create a presentation about the author. The presentation should include a short biography of the author’s childhood, an excerpt of his or her writing, and images of the author. These presentations should be creative—some examples could be a diorama, collage, PowerPoint presentation, infographic, or brochure. Have students share their work with the class.

## **Kid Lit**

The writers featured in *Kid Authors* are very different, but the one thing that they all have in common is that they were once all kids! Ask your students to choose a writer from *Kid Authors*, research that author’s writing, and write and illustrate a children’s story in his or her writing style. For example, a student using Edgar Allan Poe for inspiration could write a scary story, a student who chooses Langston Hughes might write a poem, and a student researching Beverly Cleary may write a humorous story about his or her family. Publish all of the student books in a class anthology for everyone to read and enjoy.

## **Writers’ Blogs**

The internet hadn’t been invented when the people in *Kid Authors* were growing up. So, unlike many writers growing up today, none of them ever had a blog. Ask your students to choose an author and have them create a blog post (at [blogger.com](http://blogger.com) or in their notebooks), writing posts in the voice of their chosen author. Topics could include musings about the author’s daily life, thoughts about other authors’ works, and projects they are working on. Invite students to share their blogs with the class.

## **Famous Author Bookmarks**

Have students choose their favorite author from *Kid Authors*, and ask them to research the author’s life and famous writing. Then have them create bookmarks using illustrations, words, and phrases highlighting the author’s major life events and accomplishments.

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## Colorful Words and Phrases

Divide students into groups of two or three, and assign each group an author from *Kid Authors*. Ask them to go through the book and write down words or phrases that describe their author, and then illustrate each word or phrase on an index card. When each group has at least ten illustrated words or phrases, have them tape their creations to a wall. After every group is finished, instruct your class to share all the illustrated words or phrases with one another.

## Authors vs. \_\_\_\_\_

Currently, there are four books in the Kid Legends series: *Kid Authors*, *Kid Presidents*, *Kid Athletes*, and *Kid Artists*. Have students choose one author and another person featured in another Kid Legends book. Then have the children compare and contrast the two figures by listing things they have in common and things about them that are different. Spark interest by suggesting they look at: why each person is famous, their careers, their family life, things that inspired them, childhood experiences, how they overcame obstacles, and what they are remembered for today. Instruct students to use their lists to help them write a compare-and-contrast essay.

## Illustrated Quotes

All of the writers featured in *Kid Authors* have at least one famous quote attributed to them. Ask your students to research an author's or a few authors' works, and choose one quote they think is meaningful. Then have them write the quote on a piece of paper and decorate it with related images, words, and phrases. Finally, ask students to write a paragraph on why the quote interests them and to share the quote with the class.

## LANGUAGE ARTS ACTIVITIES COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

The Language Arts Activities address the following Common Core State Standards:

### WRITING:

#### Text Types and Purposes

Grade 4 – W.4.1–3e

Grade 5 – W.5.1–3e

Grade 6 – W.6.1–3e

Grade 7 – W.7.1-1c, 2-2d, 3-3e

#### Production and Distribution of Writing

Grade 4 – W.4.4-6

Grade 5 – W.5.4-6

Grade 6 – W.6.4-5

Grade 7 – W.7.4-6

#### Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Grade 4 – W.4.7-9b

Grade 5 – W.5.7-9b

Grade 6 – W.6.7-9

Grade 7 – W.7.7-9a

### SPEAKING AND LISTENING

#### Comprehension and Collaboration

Grade 4 – SL.4.1-2

Grade 5 – SL.5.1-1d

Grade 6 – SL.6.1-2

Grade 7 – SL.7.1

#### Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Grade 4 – SL.4.4-6

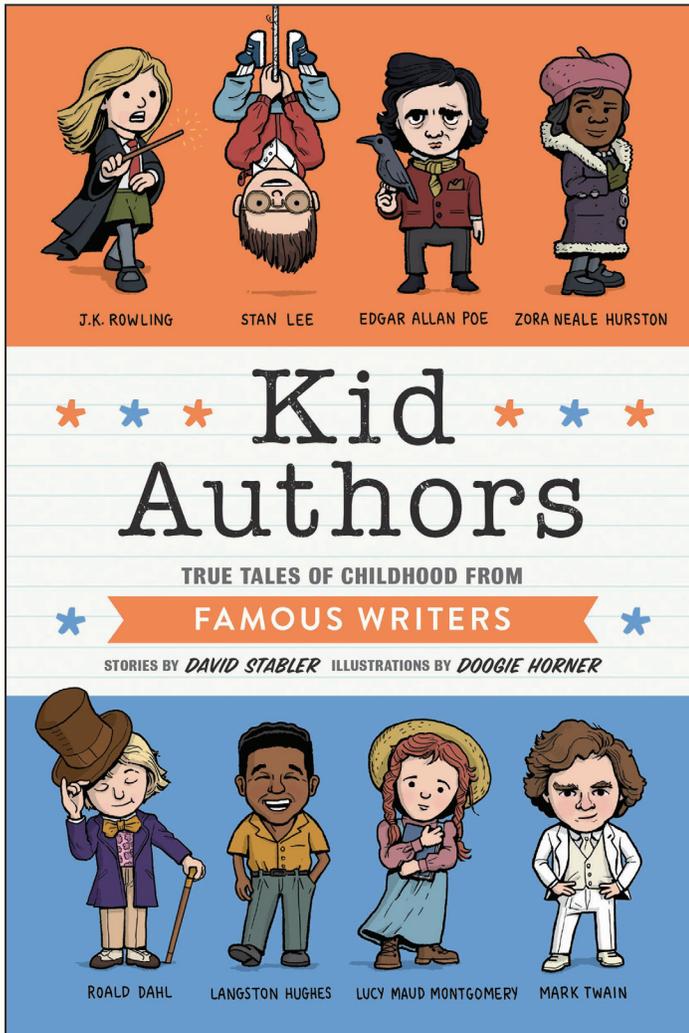
Grade 5 – SL.5.4-5

Grade 6 – SL.6.4-5

Grade 7 – SL.7.4-5

## ★ About the Book ★

“Lively glimpses of formative moments and budding talents.”—*Kirkus Reviews*



The series that includes *Kid Presidents*, *Kid Artists*, and *Kid Athletes* now chronicles the lives of *Kid Authors*! Here are true tales of famous writers, from long before they were famous—or even old enough to drive. Did you know:

- ★ Sam Clemens (aka Mark Twain) loved to skip school and make mischief, with his best friend Tom, of course!
- ★ A young J. R. R. Tolkien was bitten by a huge tarantula—or as he called it, “a spider as big as a dragon.”
- ★ Toddler Zora Neale Hurston took her first steps when a wild hog entered her house and started chasing her!

Forget all the best sellers, the sold-out book tours, and the crowds of fans seeking autographs. When the world’s most beloved authors were growing up, they had regular kid-problems just like you. *Kid Authors* tells these stories and more with full-color cartoon illustrations on nearly every page.

Learn about the young lives of Stan Lee, Jeff Kinney, Sherman Alexie, Zora Neale Hurston, J. R. R. Tolkien, Edgar Allan Poe, Lucy Maud Montgomery, Roald Dahl, Beverly Cleary, J. K. Rowling, Langston Hughes, Jules Verne, Lewis Carroll, Mark Twain, and Laura Ingalls Wilder.

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Price: \$13.95 U.S. (\$15.95 CAN) | Ages 9 to 12 | Grades 4 to 7

## ★ About the Author & Illustrator ★

Author David Stabler and illustrator Doogie Horner have created many books. Previous collaborations are *Kid Presidents* (Quirk Books, 2014), *Kid Athletes* (Quirk Books, 2015), and *Kid Artists* (Quirk Books, 2016). Stabler lives in New York City, and Horner lives in Philadelphia.