

# HOBGOBLIN

## and the SEVEN STINKERS of RANCIDIA

Hazy Fables Book #1



## EDUCATION GUIDE



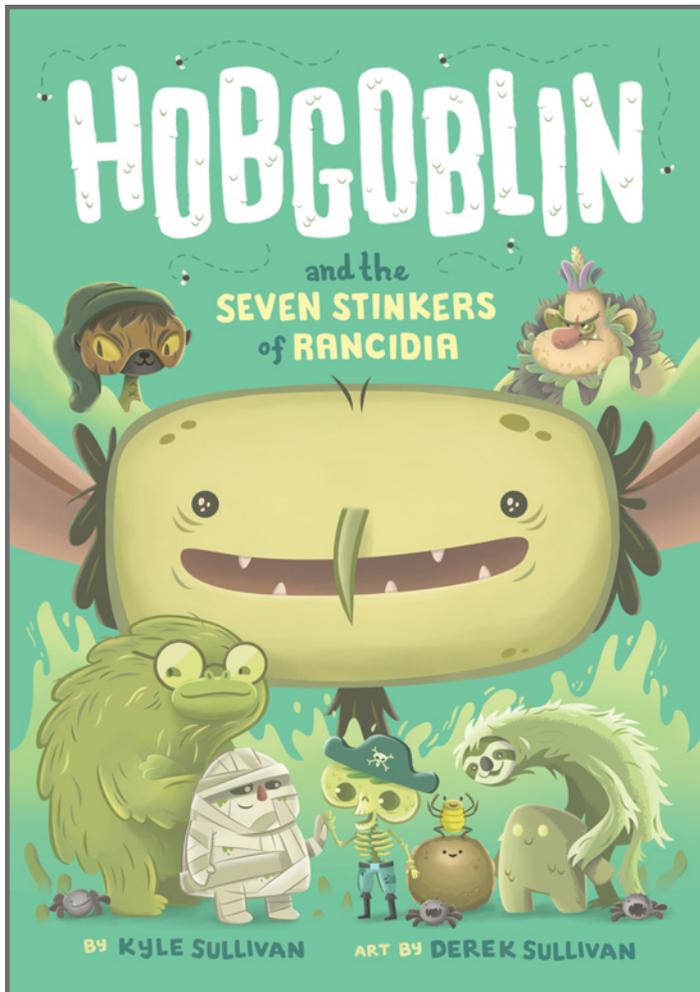
### About this guide:

This education guide contains classroom discussion questions and extension activities to help teachers, librarians and parents help their students and children to consider and expand on the learning themes presented in *Hobgoblin and the Seven Stinkers of Rancidia*. This guide will help students meet several of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts.



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## About the Book



### **HOBGOBLIN AND THE SEVEN STINKERS OF RANCIDIA**

Hazy Fables Book #1

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Lexile: 860L

Guided Reading Level: Q  
Grade Level Equivalent: 4

#### **LEARNING THEMES**

- **Inclusivity**
- **Democracy**
- **Government**
- **Activism**

The *Hazy Fables* middle-grade chapter book series kicks off with this hilarious send-up of *Snow White*. Set in the faraway, terrible-smelling land of Rancidia, where it's good to smell bad and bad to smell good, this adventure story follows the profoundly stinky Hobgoblin as he flees the jealous wrath of a democracy-hating ogre named Fiddlefart and learns the incredible value of a healthy—and fully inclusive—democracy.

#### **About the author:**

Kyle Sullivan is a writer and creative director based in Portland, OR. He holds an MA in English Literature from the University of British Columbia, and a BA in Creative Writing from the University of Washington. His works for children include the board book *Get Dressed, Sasquatch!*, the picture book *The Cyclops Witch and the Heebie-Jeebies*, and the forthcoming middle-grade chapter book, *Zombie, Or Not to Be (Hazy Fables #2)*.

## Discussion Questions

1. The Seven Stinkers, Niffy (the Huntress) and, eventually, Hobgoblin, all fight for an inclusive democracy. Why is it so important for democracies to be inclusive—for all voices to be heard?
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2. Niffy (the Huntress) tells Hobgoblin on page 39: “Anytime a creature is treated unjustly—no matter who they are or where they’re from—it’s everyone’s business.” Why does she say this? Do you think she’s right?
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3. When Fiddlefart is in charge of Rancidia, he makes decisions that only benefit him—and, often, decisions that harm others. Why should leaders not behave this way? What would happen if all world leaders made decisions selfishly instead of making decisions that benefit everyone, a.k.a. “the greater good”?
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4. Hobgoblin is very hesitant to get involved in Rancidia’s political situation. Why is he so afraid to take action? Is his hesitation understandable?



5. King Fiddlefart is obsessed with being known as “The Grossest Smelling in the Land.” He goes to great lengths to maintain this title, including scrubbing any Rancidians who threaten to out-stink him. Do you think his obsession is healthy? Why or why not? How might his life be improved if he didn’t focus all of his energy on how others think of him?
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6. Yucky only uses big words, but luckily for her, Icky is there to translate into language that is easier to understand. How would Yucky’s life be different if she didn’t have her friend Icky around to help?

## Discussion Questions



7. Niffy (the Huntress) and King Fiddlefart are both strong leaders, but Niffy is a hero, and King Fiddlefart is a villain. Which of Niffy's attributes make her a hero? What are Fiddlefart's attributes that make him a villain?
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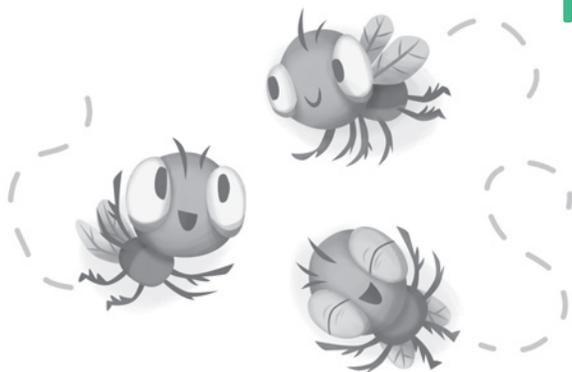
8. From page 118: “The bullfrog had grown accustomed to this life, but it was a far cry from his humble beginnings in the Mucklands. Back then, the hobgoblins were nice to him because he shared their land. Not because they wanted to use him to become powerful or gain wealth. They were nice because they were neighbors. And back then, that’s what neighbors did.”

The Burping Bullfrog makes a big decision to let the flies escape in Chapter 11. What inspires him to make this decision? How do the differences between his current life and his childhood influence him to let them flee?

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9. King Fiddlefart blocks Rancidians from the precious (and stinky) sulfide gas that they use to power their homes. How does blocking Rancidians from their power source help Fiddlefart stay in power? How is it helpful to Fiddlefart's tyranny to make sure Rancidians are cold and miserable?
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10. Hobgoblin and his flies have a symbiotic relationship—meaning, they equally benefit from their relationship together. In what ways does Hobgoblin benefit from his flies? In what ways do the flies benefit from Hobgoblin? Can you think of other examples of symbiotic relationships?

## Extension Activities

1. Each of the Seven Stinkers have a name that is a synonym or related to the words “stinky” or “gross”: Grody, Yucky, Icky, Fusty, Musty, Poot and Toot. Have the students imagine that there are seven characters in another world that values cleanliness and smelling good, and then ask them to invent synonymous or related names for these characters. Ask them to explore the specific meanings of each of the Seven Stinkers’ names and how they relate to each other as a whole. Ask them to do the same for their names for the imagined seven characters in the land of cleanliness.



### Language

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.5c

Demonstrate understanding of words by relating them to their opposites (antonyms) and to words with similar but not identical meanings (synonyms).



2. Rancidia is a country that values freedom, democracy and smelling terrible. Ask students to break into small groups and create their own country with its own set of values. Ask them to explain what the values are and how these values are reflected in the country’s culture. What

is the country’s name? What are the citizens like? Ask them to explain how their country upholds its values. Finally, ask them to create a travel brochure to help people understand their invented country. The brochure should include a flag for their country that visually depicts the values of the land.

### Speaking & Listening

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

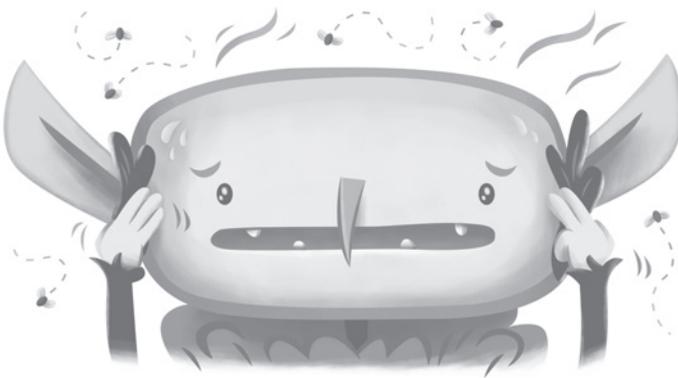


## Extension Activities

### 3. Ask students to write a paragraph in response to the following prompt:

On page 96, Hobgoblin has just participated in a fun, silly musical performance with the Seven Stinkers. They are all rolling around on the ground in laughter, and then we read:

“Although he felt very far from the comfort of his flies and the bean farm, Hobgoblin was beginning to understand the value of larger community. He was starting to see why the Stinkers and the Huntress were so committed



to bringing back Rancidia as it once was. Each of these Stinkers represented a unique district, they each came from a completely different background, and they each blessed the world with their own particular stench. And yet, here they were, living, laughing, and tooting as equals.”

Why do you think Hobgoblin is starting to understand the value of a diverse and inclusive democracy?

#### Writing

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.9a

Apply grade 4 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text [e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions].”).

### 4. Ask the students to choose one of the characters and write a paragraph describing their next day after the book concludes. How do they celebrate their victory? Or, if they choose Fiddlefart, what is his new life like? Does he have regrets? Ask the students to consider how the events of the book have changed the characters’ lives, and ask them to reflect these changes in their paragraph.

#### Writing

CCSS.ELALiteracy.W.4.3e

Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.



## Extension Activities

5. Niffy (the Huntress) is committed to restoring Rancidia's democracy, but Hobgoblin is reluctant and hesitant to take action. Ask the students to write about a time when they were hesitant or scared to take action. Ask them to explain whether they took action or not, and if they did, were they happy that they did? What happened, and what was the outcome? If they didn't take action, why not?



Ask them to use as many sensory details as possible—what were the sights, sounds and feelings associated with the event? And ask them to be sure to organize the sequence of events clearly using transitional words and phrases.

### Writing

CCSS.ELALiteracy.W.4.3c, 3d

3c: Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.

3d: Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.

