

GECKO PRESS
Teaching Notes



Follow Finn

By Peter Goes

Synopsis

Finn wakes up with a start. The goblins are on the loose and the house is in an uproar! When they flee, Finn's dog Sep follows, so Finn quickly gathers his clothes to join the chase...

Each spread in this exquisitely drawn book is packed with detail, and the text gives the reader tasks along with telling the story: help Finn gather his clothes; find a mouse, three bulls, five rabbits; find the right keys for the right lock; locate the beginning and end of each maze...

The Author

Peter Goes lives in Belgium where he works as a freelance illustrator. He has also worked as a stage manager and studied animation at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts (KASK) in Ghent, Belgium.

Themes

Peter Goes has included an amazing array of cultural and literary references in this story – achieved with succinct text and beautifully clever and intricate drawings. The book is a wonderful visual adventure and riddle that takes you to places where people, places, and animals take on peculiar forms.

The story includes themes that will appeal to readers of all ages:

Quest story

Finn and Sep are on a journey following the goblins, which brings them to a surprising ending.

Curiosity

Not only are our main characters curious in undertaking their quest, but they are also eager to explore the strange and magical world beyond their home. The wonderful illustrations in this book will encourage readers' curiosity as they examine the superb details and look for clues.

Bravery

Finn and Sep venture into strange places with bizarre creatures and many fantastical obstacles along the way. No matter how precarious their journey, they are determined to keep going.

Activities:

Level One – Text (Before and While Reading)

1. Before you read the book, look at the cover (front and back) of the book. What can you tell about the story from the title, font, illustrations, and blurb? Think about the colours and style of illustrations and what they might tell you about what sort of story this is.
2. Either on your own or in pairs find the definition of the following words that appear in the story and then use them in a new sentence:
 - Chaos
 - Pursuit
 - Labyrinth
 - Astray
 - Swarm
3. There are many wonderful surprises in the illustrations, but the story also ends with a (very good) surprise. Tell a friend or classmate about a time that you had a wonderful surprise. This could be an unexpected visit from a friend or relative, a party, or an adventure. Describe how the surprise made you feel.

Level Two – Responding to the Text and Reading Between the Lines (While Reading)

1. First Maze (Red, Finn's House): Find three objects that appear to be out of place and/or not where they belong.
2. Second Maze (Blue, Garden): How many different animals or creatures can you see on the other side of the river from the maze?
3. Third Maze (Green, Below castle): Why is the castle on a hill? What do you know about why castles are usually built on hills? Can you think of other good places to build castles? Discuss in pairs.
4. Fifth Maze (Blue, Inside castle): Identify the jobs of as many of the creatures inside the castle as you can. For example, the Teapot (bottom right) provides tea and biscuits for the King of the Castle.
5. Sixth Maze (Red, Towers): One of the creatures is holding a special treasure in its mouth. Can you see what it is? (Clue: bottom left of picture).
6. Seventh Maze (Blue, Storm): How has Peter Goes shown the storm? Look at what he's drawn as well as how he's drawn the different objects. How has he shown their movements to create the impression of a storm?

Level Three – Creating Based on the Text

1. **Quest story.** In a quest story the main character or characters go on a journey to find something. They must overcome many obstacles along the way. For example, in this story, Finn and Sep must find their way through mazes and pass many bizarre and fantastical creatures. In pairs write and illustrate your own quest story. You could do this in the style of a cartoon. Be clear about what your main character(s) wants to achieve or find out.
2. **Maze.** Design and/or create your own maze. There are several ways you could do this. One is to draw the maze on a piece of paper. Alternatively, you could build a miniature 3D maze. If you have the patience, you could even grow a miniature maze using alfalfa sprouts! Include surprises, treasures, and traps in your maze.
3. **Eyes.** In the second maze, Finn and Sep find their way with the help of mysterious eyes. Create your own glow in the dark eye. You could use fluoro paint and/or glitter.
4. **Flying carpet.** Design and make your own mini flying carpet. You could use fabric or paper. Look up Oriental magic carpets for inspiration. You might like to make up your own story for your carpet and share with your class.
5. **Ship building.** Build your own ship using Lego or other building blocks. Also, do you know how model ships fit inside glass bottles (see Green Maze, Sea)? If you don't, see if you can find out.
6. **Dragonflies.** In the eleventh maze (green, forest), Peter Goes has included many small dragonflies. Draw your own dragonfly using no more than 4 colours.

Level Four – Beyond the Text

1. **Goblins.** In small groups of 3-4, discuss what you already know about goblins. Have you come across goblins in other stories? What do you know about how they behave. Come up with 4-5 questions about goblins and then research the answers using the Internet or library. Report back to your class.
2. **Fourth Maze (Purple, Underground caves):** Can you think of other stories in which characters travel to the underground? Why do the characters go underground? Is it to do with their quest? (see Level 3, question 1 above).
3. **Glow worms.** Glow worms are spectacular animals that live in caves. Have you ever seen any? In pairs, create a poster that shows how glow worms live. Include colourful illustrations and at least 5 facts.
4. **Anemones and star fish.** Find 5 facts about either anemones or star fish. In pairs, create a poster that shows anemones or star fish live, that includes at least 5 facts. Make the illustrations bold and colourful!

