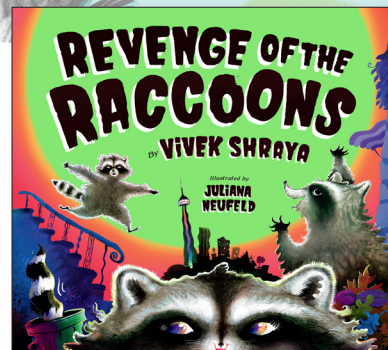


Revenge of the Raccoons

Activity Guide by Anna-May King for Grades 2 to 3

About the Book

Raccoons are hitting the streets to finally tell their story. The bushy-tailed bandits take over the town, swinging from cranes, scampering through subway cars, and pestering the police. Amid the mischief, the raccoons describe themselves as humans see them: thieving “trash pandas” that steal doughnuts and cash, topple our green bins, and frighten our cats. But when asked why they’re invading the city, the raccoons insist they aren’t pests, but survivors of the *real* invaders: humans.



Written by Vivek Shraya and
illustrated by Juliana Neufeld

CONNECT AND ENGAGE BEFORE READING: What do you know about raccoons?

Give students an opportunity to discuss what they know about raccoons using the guiding questions below. Write their answers down on chart paper to refer back to.

- What is a raccoon?
- What do raccoons look like?
- How do they behave? Are they friendly?
- Would a raccoon make a good pet? Why or why not?
- Where do raccoons live?
- What do they eat?

QUESTIONS AFTER READING

Give students a chance to turn and talk to a partner as they consider the answers to some of the following questions. Listen to their conversations and then discuss some responses as a whole group.

- Do you think the raccoons in the story are upset? Do they like humans?
- On Page #14, the raccoons say: “You’ve been careless oh so long. We’ve come to right the past...” What do they mean by this? How have humans been careless?
- How have humans changed the environment over the years?
- What does adaptation mean? How do raccoons adapt to their environment?
- What are some negative/positive impacts that human activity has had on raccoons and where they live?
- How can raccoons and humans live in space?

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CURRICULUM LINKS
Language Arts: Reading, Rhyming,
Word Patterns
Character Education: Adaptability

READING LEVELS
Grade: 1 and up
Fountas & Pinnell: H
Lexile® Measure: AD340L
Reading Recovery: 14
—
COMMON CORE
RL.1, W.1, SL.1, L.1



QUESTIONS AFTER READING (continued)

- Should humans feed raccoons? Why could this be harmful? How can we prevent raccoons from going into our garbage cans?
- What are raccoons good at?
- What does nocturnal mean? Why do you think raccoons come out at night?
- What are some physical and behavioral characteristics of raccoons that are similar to humans?
- How can raccoons be helpful to the environment? Should they be protected?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Use these activities to extend your student's thinking and experience with *Revenge of the Raccoons*.

Activity 1: Brainstorming

As a class, have students brainstorm what they know about raccoons. Write down their ideas. Further engage and expand on their knowledge by watching the video below:

- <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/facts/raccoon>

As a class, discuss what the students learned about a raccoon's appearance, habitat, behavior, and offspring. Add these additional facts to the list.

Activity 2: Using our senses to adapt

Discuss with students how raccoons use their senses to help them adapt to their surroundings. Watch the following video that demonstrates how raccoons use their sense of touch to survive:

- <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/raccoon-nation-raccoon-fact-sheet/7553/>

Discuss how raccoons have sensitive hands, with five long, tapered fingers and long nails. They lack thumbs, so can't grasp objects with one hand the way humans can, but they use both forepaws together to lift and then manipulate objects.

Explain to students that they will learn how raccoons use their senses to help them adapt to their surroundings. Let the students know they will take turns hunting like a raccoon. First, instruct the students to tape up the fingers on one of their hands with masking tape. Have each student come to the front of the class one at a time. As they come, have them reach into a brown paper bag (no looking) with more food items in it than the number of students in the class. Tell the student what item they will be looking for in the bag. For example, you might say "grape" or "pretzel". Students will then reach in with just their taped hands. They must feel around inside of that bag without looking until they think they've found the correct item. Students then lift the item they chose out of the bag, and the class sees if they were right.



Activity 3: Point of view - Classroom book

Why do you think the author decided to tell the story from the perspective of a raccoon? Why is this an important perspective? As a class we are going to rewrite the story from the human's point of view. Brainstorm reasons why humans might not want to share space with a raccoon (e.g., Raccoons damage our property). Provide students each with one piece of blank paper. Have them illustrate a picture and write out an interesting sentence to match their drawing.

About Anna-May King

Anna-May King is an experienced Primary Teacher of 12 years with Toronto District School Board. She spent 2 years teaching at the Canadian International School in Vietnam. Her mission is to instill a love for learning (specifically reading and writing) in her students.

