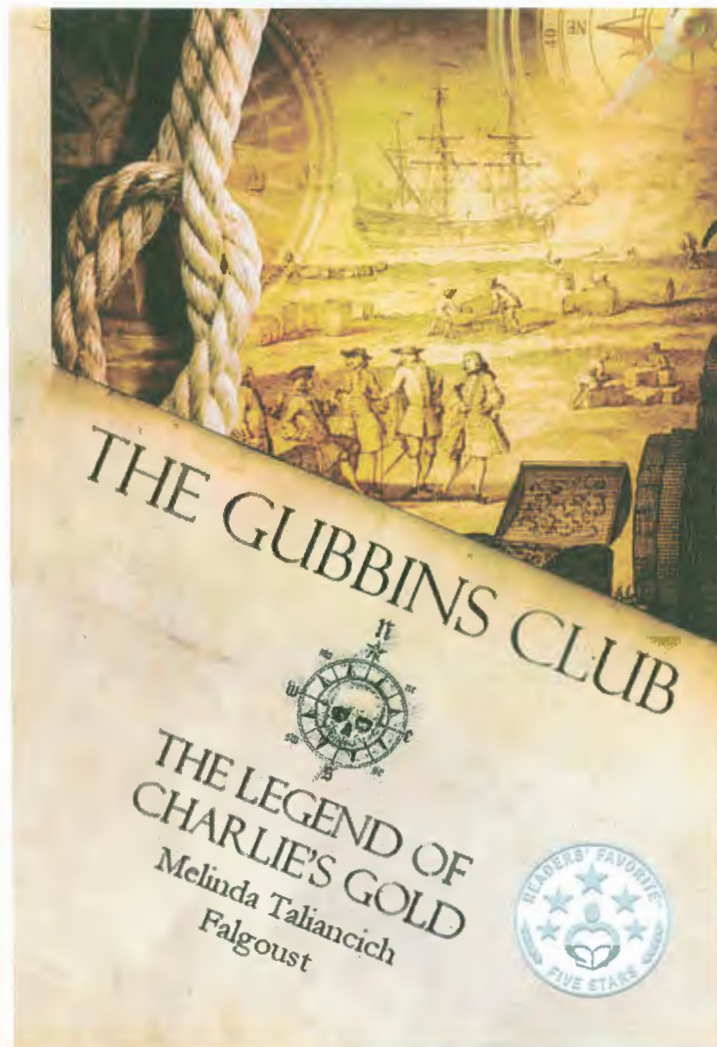


# EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



## THE GUBBINS CLUB



## THE LEGEND OF CHARLIE'S GOLD





## BEFORE YOU OPEN THE BOOK

(Pre-Reading Activity)

As Emma points out in Chapter 7, you can't really know where you're going unless you know where you've been...but, sometimes even the boldest adventurer needs a map! Locate a copy of Robert Louis Stevenson's adventure classic *Treasure Island* and review Flint's map of Skull Island. Pay particular attention to the compass rose.

### CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

#### ART

##### Treasured Trash

###### *Materials Needed:*

Brown Grocery Sacks  
Colored Markers or Crayons

One man's trash is another man's treasure. Students will create their own "treasure maps" from recycled brown grocery sacks. Have students evaluate things in their school that might be considered a "treasure". It could be the school football team trophy. It might be the school library. It could even be a snack food vending machine! Once they have individually decided upon what they value most, encourage students to draw and color a treasure map that, if followed correctly, would lead to their "treasure". Then have students exchange maps, follow them to their destinations, and discover a little about each other on the way!

##### Tricky Trompe L'Oeil

###### *Materials Needed:*

3 Rectangular Sponges (*slightly damp*)  
Poster Board  
White Tempera Paint  
Red Tempera Paint  
Black Tempera Paint  
Paper Towels  
Apron or Old T-Shirt

Things aren't always what they seem as the members of The Gubbins Club discover – in more ways than one. *Trompe l'oeil* is a French phrase which means to "fool the eye". It is an artistic method artists can use to create realistic illusions. In the story, the children disappear into a natural *trompe l'oeil* near Holyrood Park in Chapter 28 of the book. You can see some brilliant real-world examples at:

<http://www.creativebloq.com/illustration/examples-trompe-loeil-12121498>.



## Tricky Trompe L'Oeil (Cont'd)

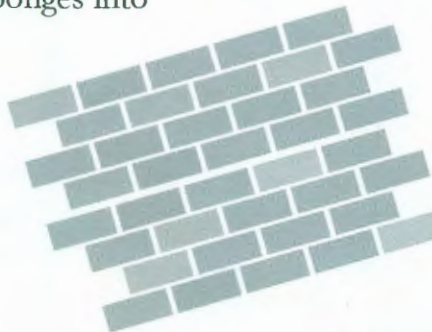
Then you can create your own masterful illusions with the activity below.

① First, put on your apron or old t-shirt to protect your clothes from the paint.

② Second, examine a real brick wall, either in person or through online photographs. Notice how the bricks appear in staggered rows. Some bricks are even only partially visible near the edges. Also notice the mortar lines in between the bricks.

③ Next, dip one of the sponges into the red paint. Gently press the painted side of the sponge in the top left corner of your posterboard and lift the sponge straight up. Move the sponge over about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.27 cm) and repeat until one row is complete.

④ Start a second row of "bricks" about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.27 cm) below the first row, staggering the position of your first brick about halfway under the brick above it. Refresh the red paint on your sponge as needed. Continue until the poster board is filled with



rows of staggered bricks.

⑤ Dip your second sponge into the black paint – not too hard. Gently press the sponge over each brick you painted with the red paint, creating "shadows" on the bricks. Don't worry if the two paints slightly blend. Imperfections occur in natural bricks, too.

⑥ Next, dip the final sponge into the white paint. You will now create "highlights" on the bricks. Gently press the sponge over all of your bricks. Again, don't worry if the colors blend a little. It will help create the realistic effect.

⑦ **CLEAN UP!** Be sure to rinse out all of your sponges. Use the paper towels to wipe up any spills.

⑧ **Show off your artwork!** Try hanging it on a real brick wall to see how close you came to creating a realistic illusion.

## SCIENCE

When the heroes of *The Gubbins Club* first meet, the mix of their very different personalities is explosive! However, each one of the characters has something special to offer the



## SCIENCE (CONTD)

group. For instance, "Mad Dog" turns out to be a science whiz, creating glue from ordinary milk and exploding bubbly bangs in the teachers' lounge. Test your students' science skills with one of Mad Dog's experiments below.

### **Bubbly Bangs** (An Experiment to Study the Reaction between an Acid and a Base)

#### *Ingredients:*

Baking Soda  
Paper Towels  
Measuring Cup  
Tablespoon  
Plastic Zip-Seal Bags  
(sandwich-sized)

Water  
Vinegar  
Ruler  
Scissors

- 1 Put on your safety goggles. Then, cut a paper towel into a 5-inch by 5-inch square.
- 2 Measure 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoons of baking soda and carefully tap it into the center of the paper towel square.
- 3 Fold the right, then left, sides of the paper towel to the middle, over the baking soda pile and crease. Then, fold the bottom edge of the paper towel up to the middle and crease. Then, fold the top edge of the paper towel down to the middle and crease. This forms the time-release package you will use later in the experiment.

- 4 Measure  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of vinegar and pour it into the plastic zip-seal bag. Then measure  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of warm water and pour it into the plastic zip-seal bag also.

- 5 Partially zip the plastic bag closed. Leave an opening just large enough to slip in the time-release package. Slide the package in and *quickly* seal the bag completely. Give your bubbly bang a gentle shake, place it on the ground, and stand back! The bag will start to expand, bubbling, then BANG!

*NOTE: This experiment can be very messy. You may want to perform it outside.*

#### **What Happened?**

Vinegar contains an acid called *acetic acid*. Baking soda is a base called *sodium bicarbonate*.

When the two react, they form carbon dioxide, a gas. The gas continues to expand the closed bag until the resulting pressure bursts the bag open.



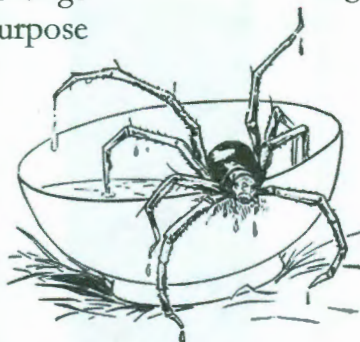


## SCIENCE (CONTD)

**Moo Glue** (An Experiment to Examine How a Chemical Change Turns Ordinary Milk into All-Purpose White Glue)

### *Ingredients:*

Two Paper Cups  
1 T. White Vinegar  
¼ c. 2% Milk  
Baking Soda  
Spoon  
Paper Towels  
Measuring Tablespoon  
Safety Goggles



*Trivia:* Have you ever heard the children's nursery rhyme "Little Miss Muffet" and wondered what curds and whey are? This experiment can show you EXACTLY what they are. Curds are the solids left in the paper towel filter in Step 4 and whey is the clear liquid that passed through.

**A** good scientist asks many questions and makes an educated guess or *hypothesis* as to what the possible answers might be. The smart scientist then performs an experiment to test his or her hypothesis. He or she must observe all parts of the experiment to determine if the hypothesis was correct.

❶ Put on your safety goggles. Then measure ¼ c. milk. Pour it into one of the paper cups. What does the milk look like?

❷ Next, measure 1 T. of white vinegar. Stir for one minute. Observe what the milk looks like now. Have any changes occurred?

Has it given off a smell, changed temperature or appearance? All of these are examples that a *chemical* change has taken place.

❸ Then, lay a paper towel over the opening of your second cup and slightly tuck it into the cup to act as a filter.

❹ Next, carefully pour the milk and vinegar mixture through the paper towel

filter. The solids will remain in the paper towel while the liquid will pass into the cup.

❺ Gather the paper towel into a small sack and carefully squeeze the remaining liquid from the solids. Dispose of the liquid.

❻ Last, use your clean spoon to scrape all of the solids off the paper towel and spoon them into the empty cup. Add a pinch of the baking soda and stir thoroughly. Your glue is ready to use!

### **What Happened?**

Milk contains a protein called *casein*, but like a solution of sugar water, the casein is dissolved in the milk and not easily visible. It is a natural polymer,



## SCIENCE (CONTD)

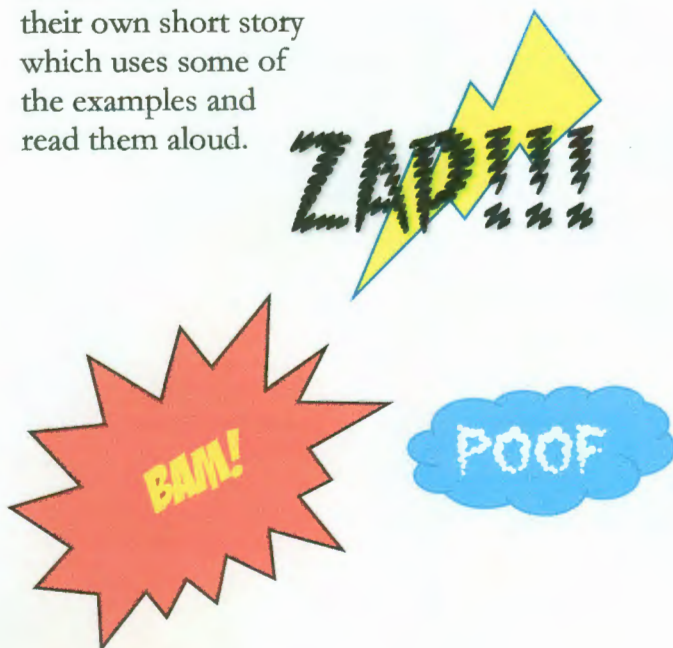
which is a very long molecule. Some polymers are rubbery. Some are hard and tough. Some, like casein, are sticky and gooey. A chemical reaction occurred as the vinegar transformed the casein into a solid.

## ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

*Onomatopoeia* is a figure of speech which imitates the sound of the object or action to which it refers. An example can be found in Chapter 3 when Smout hears a familiar sound in the Edinburgh Academy hallways.

“...a peculiar noise filtered through the narrow locker slats.  
*Thump. Drag. Thump. Drag.*”

Ask students to find other examples of *onomatopoeia* in Smout's story and share with the class. Then have students write their own short story which uses some of the examples and read them aloud.



There are other examples of literary devices used in *The Gubbins Club: The Legend of Charlie's Gold*. As well. Some of these are *simile* and *metaphor*. A simile compares words in a sentence. You can usually tell if a simile is present in a sentence when you see the words as or like.

**Ex.** The livid, white scar...crawled its way down the tanned canvas of his cheek like a fat pale snake.

Similarly, a metaphor also compares words in a sentence. However, a metaphor uses words such as is, are, and was to rename an object, making it become something else entirely.

**Ex.** The station was a busy beehive...

**Exercise 1:** To practice recognition of simile and metaphor, have the students skim through the book and find some other examples, then colorfully illustrate the examples they found and share. Be sure to have students label their pictures as simile or metaphor.

**Exercise 2:** Have each student pick a different character in the book. Using the character's name, students should create an acrostic poem. Each line should be a simile or metaphor.



## MATHEMATICS

In Chapter 11, the children discover a mysterious collection of dominoes. Dominoes are the collective tile playing pieces used in the various games that have been played around the world for centuries. They are numbered with various numbers of dots, or *pips*, on each end and are used to play many different types of games with names like *Maltese Cross*, *Matador*, and *French Draw*. Students can use dominoes, similar to those found by Smout and his crew, to practice multiplication facts.

### Multiplication Maze

Players: 2 to 4  
Goal: To get rid of all your dominoes before the other team.

Rules:

- 1 Mix all the dominoes face down on a flat surface. This pile of dominoes is called the *boneyard*.
- 2 Each team takes 20 face down dominoes from the boneyard.
- 3 Each team flips over one of their dominoes and adds the pips. The team with the most pips is the dealer

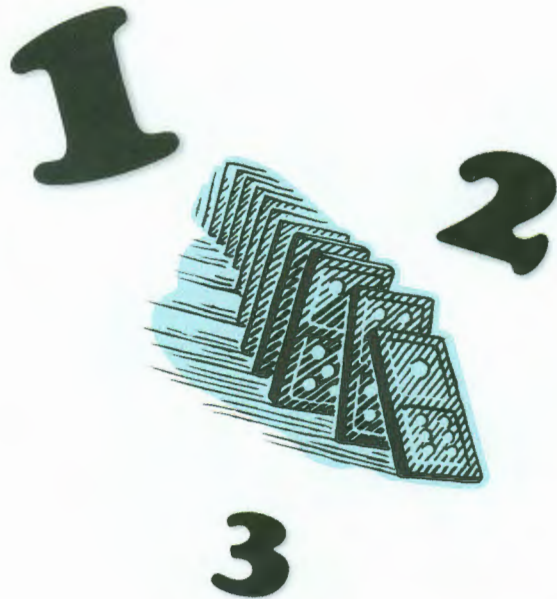
- 4 The dealer takes another domino from the boneyard and places it face up in the center. This will be the *seed domino*.

- 5 The dealer decides which math range to play. (Ex. 0-9, 10-36)

- 6 Play begins as the dealer's team places a domino next to the seed domino in the center so the two touching numbers multiply to fit within the chosen math range.

- 7 Each team takes turns playing a domino, announcing their equation with each turn. If a team announces an incorrect equation, the opposing team gets to take an extra turn.

- 8 The team which plays the most dominoes wins.





## THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

### IDENTITY

**I**n Chapter 8, Rector Staid surveys the reluctant assortment of children assembled in his office after the food fight. From his point-of-view he only sees an athlete, a know-it-all; a bully; an outcast; and a weakling. If he looked closer, he might have noticed there was much more to each one of them. How do we form our identities? How does what others think about you affect how you think about yourself? Do you think that identity can be shaped by personal experiences and the relationships we have with other people?

Robert Louis Stevenson was born into a well-to-do, conservative family of lighthouse engineers in Edinburgh. It was expected he would follow in the family business, but young R.L.S. had a very different sense of his own identity and, against his family's wishes, became a productive, if financially struggling writer. What can we learn about ourselves by studying the lives of others? When should an individual take a stand against an individual, or larger group?

### CHOICES

**A**t the end of Chapter 8, the children are faced with a choice: work together to find the mysterious treasure, or allow "Mad Dog" to rat them out to the Rector and ruin Smout's only chance at finding his missing uncle.

We are faced with decisions every day. Some are as simple as deciding what color shoes to wear. Others are far more important, like deciding if it is safe to cross the street. When we are faced with choices, we must think about which choice will have a positive result. We exercise control in situations when we make a decision, but every decision we make has a consequence. How do we make good decisions? What is the relationship between decisions and consequences? How can a person's actions change his or her life? How do decisions and actions of Smout and the others reveal who they are?

### DETERMINATION

**T**oward the close of Chapter 26, Smout's friends have just about given up on the hope of finding Charlie's lost gold. Things have just gotten too dangerous. Smout, however, is determined to see the quest through till the end. Think of the goals we set for ourselves in our own lives: receiving a good grade on a test; getting that shiny new bicycle we've been looking at; or, finding out if the person we like likes us. What types of conflicts do we face in pursuit of our goals? What figures in history have shown great determination in spite of tremendous obstacles? Examine those individuals. What personal characteristics do they have that have aided them in pursuit of their goals? Smout is driven by loyalty to family to achieve his goal. What else can moti-





## DETERMINATION (CONTPD)

vate people to be persistent in achieving their goals? What problem-solving techniques can people use to overcome conflict?

## FRIENDSHIP

**F**riendship is about making connections with others. Smout and the other members of The Gubbins Club are five very different individuals who put aside their differences and connect to pursue a common goal – finding Charlie’s treasure. What does it mean to be a good friend? What do you value most in a friend? Is it ever acceptable to lie to a friend? Why or why not? Explain. Consider your favorite hobby. What made you take an interest in that particular hobby? “Mad Dog” has an interest in science. Why do you suppose that is? None of the children in The Gubbins Club have ever attempted a great treasure hunt like the one they face in the book. If you were faced with something you never had to do before, what would you do? What part would your friends play in your choices? Finally, Smout and the others start out as merely allies, but by the end of the story, they have become much closer. Describe how friendships change over time. Why do you suppose that is? Explain.

## POINT-OF-VIEW

**C**onflicts often arise when people cannot see a situation from another person’s perspective. When we allow ourselves to realize people may have different opinions on things, we can more easily come to an agreement in tough situations. When we look at things from every point-of-view, we gather more knowledge to make the most informed decision. Smout and the other children all come from different backgrounds and experiences. How do they combine their knowledge to work towards a common goal? How do our personal experiences shape our view of others? Why is it important to understand another’s point-of-view? Do you think someone’s point-of-view and how they see the world affects the way they deal with others? Why or why not?





## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

❶ Where does *The Gubbins Club* take place? Think about the important settings of the story and explain the importance of each to the narrative.

❷ When does the story take place? Does it take place in the past, present, or future? Then examine how much time passes during the story. Skim through the book and mark places where the author demonstrates the passage of time and share.

❸ Like a pirate crew in days of old, *The Gubbins Club* is populated with interesting characters. Identify the main character/s in the story. Why is/are this/these character/s important to the story?

❹ Often, we can discover certain things about a character by the way they speak and act. Were there any particular words spoken or actions taken by a character in the story that taught you something about the kind of person he/she was? Locate two examples in the story and discuss.

❺ Like Jim Hawkins in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, characters often discover something about themselves or their friends throughout the course of the story. Consider



the characters of *The Gubbins Club*. Choose one particular character and discuss what he or she learned about himself or herself or others.

❻ Think about the characters in the story. Do any of them undergo a change throughout the story? If so, what events or decisions do you think caused them to change?

❼ The first time all our heroes are in one place, a giant food fight erupts. All good stories have con-



flict between one or more characters. Identify a conflict between two characters in *The Gubbins Club*. How was it resolved, or was it resolved? Did you learn anything about the characters involved from the way they reacted to the conflict?

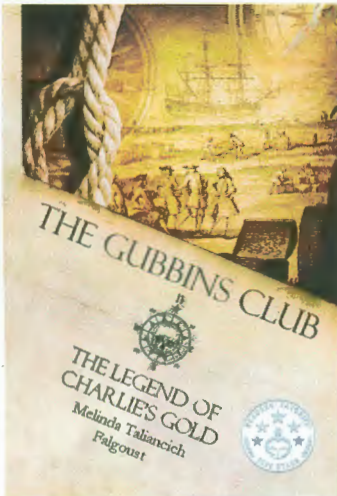
⑧ What is the genre of *The Gubbins Club: The Legend of Charlie's Gold*? Skim through the text and give specific examples that support your choice.

⑨ Choose a character in the book. Do you share anything in common with the character? What is different between you?

⑩ Did the story change your opinion or way of thinking about a particular subject? Can you give some examples of events in the story that helped you make that decision? If you did not experience a change, what were some examples of events that helped you confirm your way of thinking. Share and discuss.



## ABOUT THE BOOK



**The Gubbins Club:  
The Legend of  
Charlie's Gold**  
by Melinda Taliencich  
Falgoust

Publication  
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Genre: Middle-Grade  
Action/Adventure  
ISBN: 9781482690408

**X** marks the spot. At least in fiction. That's what ten-year old Colin "Smout" McManus always thought. But, when a mysterious package arrives at Edinburgh Academy from his archaeologist uncle, Smout finds himself embarking on a dangerous adventure throughout the historical streets of Edinburgh to find a lost pirate treasure. Smout and his group of ragtag friends must solve a series of strange clues and riddles to puzzle out the mysterious trail. But, they're not the only ones in search of the gold. Someone as ruthless as the pirates of old is hot on their heels. Will they find the treasure before he finds them?

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*For more fun and educational games,  
please visit the author's website at  
[www.melindatfalgoust.doodlekit.com](http://www.melindatfalgoust.doodlekit.com).*

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**F**ive kids, four jobs, three dogs, two cars, and one burning passion...to write books. With her sincerest apologies to her husband, that is award-winning writer Melinda Taliencich Falgoust in a nutshell. Her works have appeared in Reader's Digest, Writers' Journal, and has published with Harlequin. A former elementary educator, Melinda is voracious reader herself - anything from mysteries, to sci-fi/fantasy, to the tube of toothpaste in the bathroom. Tom Clancy said it best. "A writer can use everything." She is confident that one day, she will write about a protagonist whose fate will certainly rely on knowing what sodium monofluorophosphate is.