

THE EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURES OF ORDINARY BOY

THE HERO REVEALED BY WILLIAM BONIFACE

HARPER COLLINS 2006

ILLUSTRATED BY STEPHEN GILPIN

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William Boniface remembers when he first began to read, comic books are what enticed him. His absolute favorite book was Doctor Doolittle by Hugh Lofting. When Boniface was in high school he worked in a bookstore then in retail. He also worked in publishing for Penguin Books. Does he really exist? He likes to play around and say maybe he isn't real. Maybe it's because the story is told by Ordinary Boy, so maybe Ordinary Boy is the real-live author. Boniface gave an interview to FirstBook that clearly shows his motivation for using superheroes to motivate young readers. His interview is available at <http://blog.firstbook.org/2006/05/20interview-with-william-boniface/>

His biography is posted on the Harper Collins website.

<http://www.harpercollinschildrens.com/harperchildrens/teachers/authors>

One award he has received is a nomination for the Young Hoosier Book Award.

Other books written by Boniface include: Ordinary Boy Book 2 The Return of Meteor Boy? Harper Collins, 2007, The Great Power Outage, Harper Collins, 2008

Mystery in Bugtown, Accord, 1997, Easter Bunnies Everywhere, Price Stern Sloan, 2003 and Santa's Sleigh is Full, Price Stern Sloan, 2002.



ANNOTATION

A different approach toward superheroes is used by William Boniface in The Extraordinary Adventures of Ordinary Boy, The Hero Revealed. He uses a popular medium among young readers and gives it a twist. Instead of a single great hero that constantly saves the town, there are many, many such heroes, but only a few with anything more than slight powers. A further twist of the plot is when the major character, Ordinary Boy (O Boy for short) is the only town member with no power whatsoever. This is the first in his new series where maybe, just maybe, O Boy isn't quite so ordinary.

GENRE

Juvenile Fiction is the genre of this Young Hoosier Book Award Nominee

POINT OF VIEW

This adventure story is written in the first person. Ordinary Boy tells us the entire story in his own words. That is why the author, William Boniface, hints that maybe O Boy is the real author.

THEME

Perhaps a very famous theme is used here – Good always prevails over evil. However, there is another very important theme that has to appear in the reader’s mind as the story is being read to oneself. The most obvious person to prevail may not in fact be the smartest and most creative with the powers he was born with. A super hero may really be a normal person who uses his brains very carefully.

CONFLICT

The main conflict ns the first book of the series is man versus man. Different heroes are matched against other heroes depending on the powers they were born with. The biggest match during most of the story seems to be Amazing Indestructo against any evil, but especially against Professor Brain-Drain. There is also the internal conflict each character experiences when dealing with the limitations they were born with.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Along the progression of the story small problems are solved by minor super heroes that have powers to deal with only one particular problem. Examples of characters solving these minor uprisings include: Snowflake freezing something that is burning, Thermo burning things up with his hands, Stench forcing people away because of the smell, and Plasma Girl turning herself into gelatin to sneak under the door. The major resolutions are determined when the old time heroes try to make their way back once again to being members of the League of Ultimate Goodness. The Amazing Indestructo is the only hero believed to be able to conquer all, but he collapses when he’s up against his ultimate match, Professor Brain-Drain, Sneak, and the Tycoon. He is forced to accept the help of less than super heroes, Ordinary Boy and his father, Thermo.

CHARACTERS

The first group of characters is the Junior Leaguers. They are all in elementary school. They are; Stench, Tadpole, Halogen boy or Hal, Plasma Girl, and Ordinary Boy (O Boy, OB). They work, play, and try to be ready to fight crime together. O Boy is their leader, and he lives with his parents Snowflake and Thermo. O Boy wears ordinary jeans and a t-shirt. He is the only town member to have been born without any superpowers. It's probably because his parents cancelled each other out. His mom can freeze things and his dad catches things on fire. He feels he is always at a disadvantage, but oh well, that's just the way it is. In fact, he may eventually realize he is very quite smart and pretty special with his regular brainpower. The next group of characters is the members of the League of Ultimate Goodness, and it appears their super powers are usually pretty limited and lame. The leader of LUG is Amazing Indestructo, and his cast of enemies includes the Multiplier, Professor Brain-Drain, Tycoon, and Sneak.

SETTING

The story takes place in Superopolis and its environs, such as Ornery Ocean and Carbunkle Mountains. The action never leaves this town, it just moves around to various locations around town, like Lava Park, Cavalcade of Candy, Dr. Telomere's Potato Chip Factory, Watson elementary, and Indestructo Industries. The entire setting of the story takes place during the present.

INTEREST LEVEL AND READING LEVEL

This book has an interest level of ages 8 through 12. The reading level of this book is fifth grade.

BOOKTALK

Superopolis – home of super powers, super villains, and super chips, is the setting for the first book of an adventure packed series. What would friends named Stench, Halogen Boy, Plasma Girl, Tadpole, and Ordinary Boy have in common and where did they get those ridiculous names? In a metropolis where the most revered citizen is named Amazing Indestructo, good and evil live side by side and seem to be able to usually function daily. Oh there is that occasional outburst by one of the evil powers, but then certainly some member of the League of Ultimate Goodness must be close by to thwart off all the bad guys. Actually, the character with the most amazing power wasn't born with a super power like all the others. That character, Ordinary Boy; we'll just call him O Boy, has more available to him than all of the other citizens of Superopolis. He just has to figure out what it is and how to use it before Professor Brain-Drain, Tycoon, and Sneak remove the brainpower from the honest do-gooders.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR EACH CHAPTER

Pre-reading questions

If you were to write a handbook and include names and descriptions of your family and friends, what would it be called and what would it look like?

Can you name the one best quality of each of your family members?

How do they best put it to use? (Blooms Taxonomy, knowledge)

Design a costume on paper that represents strength of yours (Blooms Taxonomy, synthesis)

During Reading Questions

PROLOGUE

Reread pages 1-2 and analyze what are thinking about the novel you are about to read.

Explain what you know so far about the “Li'l Hero's Handbook”. P.9 (Bloom's comprehension)

CHAPTER 1

What is O Boy watching on TV? P.11 (Bloom's knowledge)

Compare his show of super heroes to any that you've watched. P.11 (Bloom's comprehension)

What are your first impressions of Professor Brain-Drain? P.14-19 (Bloom's knowledge)

CHAPTER 2

Compare O B's mother and father's super hero abilities. P.22-23 (Bloom's evaluation)

What is the inner conflict Thermo is having on p.24? (Bloom's knowledge)

On p. 29, why does it say Big Bouncer is "often a victim of the three laws of motion"? (bloom's knowledge)

CHAPTER 3

Evaluate the scene at the Mighty Mart. P.32-40 (Bloom's evaluation)

What are your personal feelings on the Multiplier? P. 33 (Bloom's analysis)

CHAPTER 4

Who are the members of the Junior Leaguers? P.44-52 (Bloom's knowledge)

Where do they privately meet? P.42 (Bloom's knowledge)

CHAPTER 5

How had the Mighty Mart recovered from the earlier episode? P.55 (Bloom's knowledge)

Describe how O Boy knew how many packs of cards they had to buy. P.56 (Bloom's comprehension)

Explain the shock the kids felt when they saw a card with Meteor Boy on it. P.60 (Bloom's comprehension)

CHAPTER 6

What was the only thing OB could think about that night? P. 61

Describe the discussion where Dad takes OB back in time to early super hero days. P.64 (Bloom's comprehension)

CHAPTER 7

What were the complications that went along with being Lobster Boy? P.69 and Melonhead? P.78(Bloom's knowledge)

CHAPTER 8

Name the 3 reasons to find the missing card in the collection. P.81 (Bloom's knowledge)
Who was the surprise they found at the end of this chapter? P.89 (Bloom's knowledge)

CHAPTER 9

Summarize the situation with so, so many different Professor Brain-Drains p.90 (Bloom's comprehension)

Is the new character on p.95 a superhero or a villain?

CHAPTER 10

Explain how OB figures out the mystery of the 3 collectors' cards p. 104 (Bloom's comprehension)

What is the review lesson on types on rocks the kids get? P.105

CHAPTER 11

Why did the little kid destroy his card on p. 113?

CHAPTER 12

Describe Fly Guy. P.116

How many tickets were the Jr. leaguers trying to win? p.122

CHAPTER 13

Elaborate on the diversion the team creates on p129?
(Bloom's comprehension)

CHAPTER 14

What was the fate of the Metamorph? P.135

Explain the conversation going on in OB's house about metamorphic. p.136(Bloom's comprehension)

What was so important about dad's quote "Its time to wipe the slate clean and start over."? P.139

CHAPTER 15

Where did they find the only remaining Brain-Drain card? P.146

CHAPTER 16

Describe the Banshee. P. 149

CHAPTER 17

Relate the uniqueness of Fuzz Boy. P.153 (Bloom's comp.)

CHAPTER 18

Review why the old duper heroes were in OB's living room. P.160 (Bloom's comprehension)

CHAPTER 19

What does the title "What Goes Up..." make you think of? P.164

Identify the catastrophe going on in this chapter. P. 167 (Bloom's comprehension)

CHAPTER 20

What do you think "Hot on the Trail" will end up meaning? P.173

What is all the commotion about the Multiplier on p. 178?

CHAPTER 21

Illustrate something that is miniscule. P.183 (Bloom's application)

Draw something that illustrates the word "monstrosity". P.192

CHAPTER 22

Explain what is happening with the conveyer belt. P.201

CHAPTER 23

Can you describe what the word vertigo means? P.209

CHAPTER 24

What is the name the Professor gives the Junior Leaguers? P.213

CHAPTER 25

Give the characterization of Professor Brain-Drain on p. 214.

Describe the statues in the secret headquarters. P.224

CHAPTER 26

Why couldn't the Professor take brainpower from his own tenants? P.227

Determine the reason Brain-Drain was so outraged over the collector's cards. 228

(Bloom's application)

CHAPTER 27

Who was the mysterious guest that shows up on p.237?

Can you explain the absurdity of the show caps? P.238

CHAPTER 28

Why were OB's "emotions being played like a yo-yo"? p.247

Analyze the breakdown of the Amazing Indestructo on p. 249 (Bloom's analysis)

CHAPTER 29

Recreate how Stench arrives just in the nick of time. P.259

CHAPTER 30

What other super heroes arrive on the scene at this point? P.261

CHAPTER 31

What is meant by "an evil looking leer spread across the Multiplier's face"?p.270

What is your opinion of this quote on page 274? "...the Amazing Indestructo is a buffoon. Outwitting him is about as difficult as cheating in solitaire."

CHAPTER 32

What is the craziness that is happening on p.280?

What did Ordinary Boy slip into his pocket?p.281

CHAPTER 33

Verify what is so comical about the notes the students all take to school to give to Miss Marble.p.289 (Bloom's evaluation)

Post-reading Questions

Summarize the details of the AI collector Card Series. (Blooms, comprehension)

Identify who the New New Crusaders are and report their past histories in crime fighting. (Blooms, comprehension)

Elaborate on the climax climbing higher and higher on p. 206.(Blooms, synthesis)

Can you compare AI's character at the beginning in the grocery store to that at the end on p. 206? (Blooms, evaluation)

LANGUAGE

Scarcity, p.76 when something isn't very available and it is high in demand

Slate, p. 139 a type of rock that is used in the story to for a clue

Scowling, p.173 a bitter and unhappy look on a person's face

Squabble p. 174 a minor argument or fight

Oblivious p. 179 not paying any attention to what is happening

Competent p.182 able to handle or do something

Monstrosity, p.192 a very large thing of an unusual size

INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS

The Indiana standards used in the content of this novel are as follows:

Grade3 – Eng/LA 3.1.2, 3.1.3, 3.1.9, 3.3.3, 3.3.6, 3.3.8

Math 3.1.14, 3.3.1, 3.6.2

Science 3.1.6, 3.1.7, 3.2.6, 3.6.3, 3.6.5

SS 3.3.1, 3.3.10, 3.4.1, 3.4.4

Grade 4 - Eng./LA 4.1.1, 4.1.6, 4.3.3, 4.3.5, 4.3.7

Math 4.6.1, 4.7.1, 4.7.2, 4.7.7

Science 4.6.1, 4.6.3

SS 4.3.2, 4.3.9, 4.3.12, 4.4.5

Grade 5 – Eng/LA 5.1.2, 5.1.6, 5.3.2, 5.3.3, 5.3.5, 5.3.8

Math 5.6.1, 5.7.1, 5.7.2

Science 5.6.1, 5.6.2, 5.6.3

SS 5.3.2, 5.3.3, 5.4.5, 5.4.6, 5.4.7, 5.4.9

ANTICIPATION STATEMENTS

Read the following statements before *Ordinary Boy* is introduced and Mark A for agree and D for disagree. Do the same once again after the story is completed.

1. It's a clever idea to give setting and characters names that help identify them, such as; Riverton and Dr. Dogood. _____
2. Heroes and Superheroes in books and movies need costumes to show who they really are. _____
3. Having a hobby like collecting cards is popular among most kids. _____
4. A really good book loses its specialness when it becomes a series. _____
5. When reading a book with many characters, the illustrations help the reader to keep them all straight in his/her head. _____

READ-ALoud PAGES/PASSAGE

This first passage is a good introduction to the characters and an explanation to some of their various powers. Using the following quote will help students to start using their imagination about what it might be like living in Superopolis. "As the handbook makes abundantly clear, everyone here, except for me, has a superpower. ...Some folks have an awesome power, like the Amazing Indestructo, who can't be harmed by anything. And *I mean anything!*...On the other hand, there are plenty of people who have powers that are less impressive, like this kid in my class named Puddle Boy." P.4

This next example is an explanation to the major characters' names and their individual uniqueness. Readers will begin to see the cleverness and creativity used in the writing of this novel. "I'm not so sure why I'm so ordinary. Both of my parents have superpowers... Of course, when they were younger, my parents spent most of their time fighting crime. After all, that's what people with superpowers do-at least until they realize they have to get real jobs... Just like any town, ours has some people who aren't very nice... You can't really be a superhero if you don't have any villains to battle." P.7

IF YOU LIKE THE EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURES OF ORDINARY BOY, YOU WILL ALSO LIKE.....

Super Hero ABC by Bob Mcleod, Harper Collins 2006, Captain Underpants by David Pilkey, Scholastic, The Art of the Incredibles by John Lasseter, Chronicle Books 2004, are examples of books in the same genre of Juvenile Fiction/Action & Adventure. Books by the same author and the same series are Book 2 The Return of Meteor Boy? and Book 3 The Great Powers Outage.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Two different subject areas that can be included in this novel study are Science and Social Studies, namely geography. The book begins with a very creative map of the imaginary metropolitan area of Superopolis. Students will research how to make maps according to scale and using a map key and a compass rose. Their maps will be created in small groups and poster paper will be handed out. Directions will be given orally and put on the overhead. Students will use their textbook and books of maps available in the classroom as resources. A whole-class discussion will be held to understand the importance of using a model and scale.

IN standards used are: Social Studies 5.3.2 & 5.3.3 and Science 5.6.2

Another way to incorporate Social Studies into the curriculum is a study on scarcity in economics. Using the IN Academic Standards in S.S: 5.4.5, 5.4.6, 5.4.7 & 5.4.9 students will explore supply and demand and personal spending. As a whole class, the internet and student texts will be used to get a better understanding of economics.

<http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/articles/economics/scarcityandchoices1.htm>

<http://www.purdue.edu/uns/x/2007b/071203dayherschel.html>

RESOURCES

[The Extraordinary Adventures of Ordinary Boy Book 1 The Hero Revealed](#)

<http://blog.firstbook.org/2006/05/20interview-with-william-boniface/> This website has a video interview held with the author, William Boniface.

<http://www.harpercollinschildrens.com/harperchildrens/teachers/authors> This website is the author's homepage and originates from the publisher.

Bloom's Taxonomy wheel of Critical Thinking, developed by Michael I. Lujan, 2005 Mentoring Minds. All Rights Reserved.

BOOK ACTIVITIES

The classroom as a whole will discuss the part of the story that revolves around collecting super hero cards. What kinds of collections are popular among kids today? Their answers to this question will be listed on the whiteboard. Possible responses may include; trading cards, coins, stamps, and stuffed animals.

Students will be told they can bring in examples of their collections. They will submit a brief explanation of the items they collect and a parent signature if they are permitted to bring a collection or part of a collection to the classroom. Then they will receive permission and a scheduled date from the teacher before they bring them in to share. This activity is done individually and shared with the whole class.

Social Studies 5.4.5, 5.4.6, 5.4.7, 5.4.9

The next activity will be done in small groups. The groups will divide and use their novels to search for good examples of the differences in characters personalities, actions, and motives. Students will note passages that they will rehearse and read orally to the class. As a small group they will role play 2 or 3 small scenarios from the story. (Eng 5.3.3 & 5.7.11) When presenting to the class they will identify the speaker they are portraying and tell why his/her version is important to the story. (Eng 5.3.8)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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