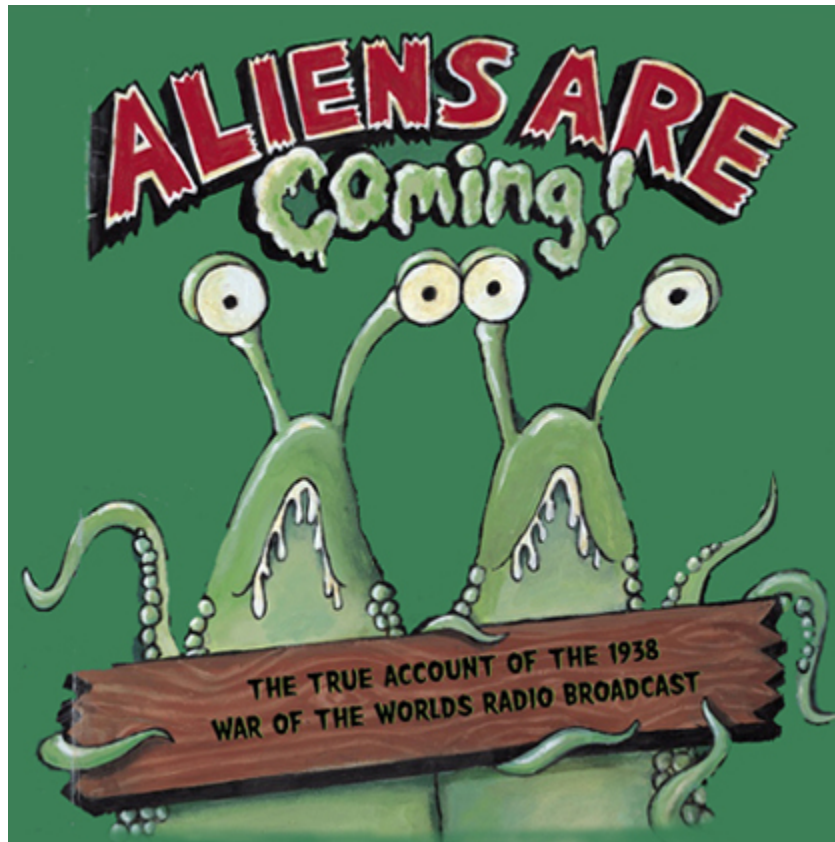


YHBA Novel Resource



Title: Aliens are Coming

Author and Illustrator: Meghan McCarthy

Copyright date: 2006

Publisher: Alfred A. Knopf, New York

Interest Level and Reading Level: IL K-2, RL 2.3

About the Author and Illustrator: Meghan McCarthy built a spaceship in her garage at the age of six. Ever since then she has been fascinated with all things alien - from crop circles to *The X-Files* to unidentified flying objects. She is a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design and lives in Brooklyn, where she has yet to be abducted by aliens.

Art Medium Used: *Allover comic format with a dark color pallet*

Annotation: One of history's greatest hoaxes was the fictional radio play performed in 1938 by Orson Welles and a cast of actors. Based on the popular science-fiction novel "The War of the Worlds" by H.G. Wells, the show terrified listeners. It predated the age of television. To a fearful world already contemplating a spreading conflagration in Europe, its ring of authenticity sounded exactly like a late-breaking news bulletin.

What a great way to introduce children to this fascinating slice of historical fact. And what an inventive style the inimitable McCarthy possesses! Only someone who, as a child, built a space ship in her garage and has waited in anticipation every year since to be abducted by Martians could have illustrated "Alien" with as much imagination.

Genre: Historical Fiction

Point of View: This story is a retelling of the 1938 Radio broadcast by Orson Welles using actors.

Theme: War of the Worlds, radio

Conflict: The fear and panic of the potential end of the world

Conflict Resolution: The realization of the Halloween by CBS radio.

Characters: Americans of 1938 across America, Orson Welles, and the CBS radio actors

Setting: 8:00.m., October 30, 1938 in the United States, the Columbia Broadcasting System

Booktalk: IT was an ordinary night in October 1938 when a news bulletin interrupted the program of dance music on CBS Radio with an alarming report-aliens from the planet Mars had invaded New Jersey!

Radio listeners across the United States panicked, unaware that the broadcast was really just a fictional radio play performed by Orson Welles and a cast of actors based on the popular science-fiction novel *The War of the Worlds* by H.G.Wells.

Language: I believe this book would lead to much confusion for many students without some pre-teaching. The vocabulary and text is like many historical fiction writings, difficult to read, comprehend, and contextualize.

Aliens: something from outer space, not from earth

Orchestra: a group of stringed music instruments playing together

Tango: a dance

Observatory: a place used to watch the sky, stars, and planets

Meteor: large firey objects fallen from the sky

Mars: a planet

Evacuate: leave an area

Martian: and alien from Mars

Indiana Academic Standards met by novel content:

MATH No direct standards found, but could easily create extensions to include Math standards.

- Science

K.1.1 Raise questions about the natural world.

1.1.2 Investigate and make observations to seek answers to questions about the world

2.6.1 Investigate that most objects are made of parts.

3.1.6 Give examples of how tools, such as automobiles, computers, and electric motors, have affected the way we live.

- Social

K.1.1 Compare children and families of today with those in the past.

1.1.10 Distinguish between historical fact and fiction in American folktales and legends that are a part of American culture.

2.4.2 Identify community workers who provide goods* and services* for the rest of the community and explain how their jobs benefit people in the community.

3.3.11 Identify and describe the relationship between human systems and physical systems and the impact they have on each other.

- Language Arts

K.1.1 Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.

K.1.22 Listen to stories read aloud and use the vocabulary in those stories in oral language.

1.2.7 Relate prior knowledge to what is read.

1.3.3 Confirm predictions about what will happen next in a story.

2.2.6 Recognize cause-and-effect relationships in a text.

2.3.6 Recognize the difference between fantasy and reality.

3.3.1 Recognize different common genres (types) of literature, such as poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction.

3.3.6 Identify the speaker or narrator in a selection.

Anticipation Statements:

BEFORE		Aliens are Coming The true account of the 1938 war of the worlds radio broadcast	AFTER	
Agree	Disagree		Agree	Disagree
		Aliens are real.		
		A dance program can be on the radio.		
		People had televisions to watch in 1938.		
		If aliens came to earth it would be the end of the world.		
		Spaceships are seen in the sky.		

Discussion Questions:

Pre:

What do you think this story is about? (looking at the cover of the book)

Do you think this is a true story? Fiction or nonfiction?

During:

Did you know that most Americans did not own TV's in the 1930's? (p.4)

Why is the water tower mistaken for a Martian spaceship? (p. 26)

Post:

Do you think this could happen again?

If so, do you think that they would use the television or the radio?

If you like Aliens are Coming, you'll love....



George Upside Down, Show Dog, Steal Back the Mona Lisa, Strong Man, The Adventures of Patty and the Big Red Bus, and Astronaut Handbook are all written and illustrated by Meghan McCarthy

Across the Curriculum Connections: I believe that this book offers many opportunities for extension activities according to your classroom interest.

1. Create an alien or a spaceship based on student's own prior knowledge or knowledge after reading this book.
 - Supplies: writing tools, assorted paper, scissors, glue
 - Recommended Resources: **Aliens are Coming**
 - Standards:

K.4.1 Identify and describe common geometric objects: circle, triangle, square, rectangle, and cube.

K.4.3 Identify and use the terms: *inside, outside, between, above, and below.*

1.4.5 Give and follow directions for finding a place or object.

1.4.7 Identify geometric shapes and structures in the environment and specify their location.

2.4.4 Identify congruent* two-dimensional shapes in any position.

2.4.5 Recognize geometric shapes and structures in the environment and specify their locations.

3.4.6 Use the terms *point*, *line*, and *line segment* in describing two-dimensional shapes.

2. Locate Grovers Mill, Chicago, St. Louis, and any of the other locations mentioned in the book and map out locations. Identify which location is the closest to and farthest away from the school.
- Supplies: US map, map pins, measuring device
 - Recommended Resources: Atlas, *Aliens are Coming*

K.3.2 Identify maps* and globes* as ways of representing Earth and understand the basic difference between a map and globe.

1.3.2 Identify and describe continents, oceans, cities and roads on maps and globes.

2.3.4 On a map, identify physical features of the local community.

3.3.1 Use labels and symbols to locate and identify physical and political features on maps and globes. Label a map of the Midwest, identifying states, major rivers, lakes and the Great Lakes.

Resources:

Aliens are coming

This website offers many resources including the actual broadcast, a virtual tour of Grovers Mill, and fun stuff for kids and educators.

(2008). Aliens are coming. Retrieved July 6, 2008, from The true account of the 1938 war of the worlds radio broadcast Web site: <http://www.aliensarecoming.com>.

Meghan McCarthy Website

This is a fun website filled with information from and about the author, including blogs, bio, and a watch and listen.

McCarthy, M. (2008). Meghan McCarthy welcomes u. Retrieved July 6, 2008, from author Meghan McCarthy Web site: <http://www.meghan-mccarthy.com/homepage.htm>

Book Activities:

- **ALIEN SLIME!** This would work best as a small group activity.

The mixture is fun to play with. It goes from dry and crumbly to wet and runny. It's easy to make and safe for kids to do!

INGREDIENTS: Corn starch, water, small bowl, green food coloring, plastic bag

DIRECTIONS: In a small bowl, combine 1/2 cup of corn starch and 1/4 cup of water. Add 3 drops of green food coloring for a bright atomic green and more if you want your slime to look dark and mucky. If you mix the food coloring in with your hands then be prepared to have green fingers! Store in a plastic kitchen bag and refrigerate for safe keeping!

- **Create a radio broadcast** This would work best as a small group activity.

SUPPLIES: Paper, writing tools, tape recorder and tape or some sort of screen to block view (large piece of butcher paper)

DIRECTIONS: Based on the students understanding of the book, allow each group to create a radio broadcast of their choice. These can be recorded or simply read from behind a screen. When students are comfortable with their broadcast allow each group to share with the class.

Bibliography:

(2008). Aliens are coming. Retrieved July 6, 2008, from The true account of the 1938 war of the worlds radio broadcast Web site: <http://www.aliensarecoming.com>.

Scholastic, (2008). Scholastic Teacher. Retrieved July 6, 2008, from Scholastic Teaching Resources Web site: <http://bookwizard.scholastic.com/tbw/viewWorkDetail.do?workId=1158999&>