



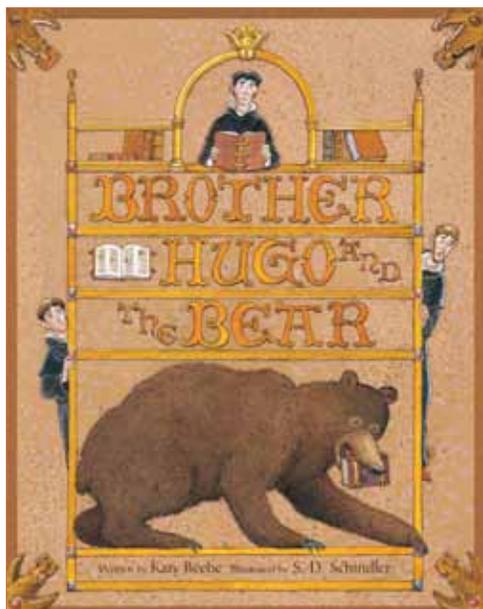
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EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

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BROTHER HUGO AND THE BEAR

Written by **KATY BEEBE** Illustrated by **S. D. SCHINDLER**



It befell that on the first day of Lent, Brother Hugo could not return his library book. The Abbot was most displeased. "Our house now lacks the comforting letters of St. Augustine, Brother Hugo. How did this happen?"

The precious book, it turns out, has been devoured by a bear, and so Hugo must replace it. Letter by letter and line by line the hapless monk crafts a new book, all the while being trailed by a hungry new friend who thinks that the words of St. Augustine are truly far sweeter than honey.

Based loosely on a note found in a twelfth-century manuscript — and largely on the creative imaginings of the author — this humorous tale will surely delight readers who have acquired their own taste for books.

ABOUT *the Author*

KATY BEEBE teaches history at the University of Texas at Arlington and has a doctorate in medieval history from the University of Oxford. She spent many years studying the kinds of medieval manuscripts that Brother Hugo might have made. This is her first book for children. Visit her website at www.katybeebe.com.

ABOUT *the Illustrator*

S. D. SCHINDLER is an award-winning illustrator of many best-selling picture books, including *Come to the Castle!* (Flash Point), *The Story of Salt* (Putnam Juvenile), and *Big Pumpkin* (Aladdin). He lives in Pennsylvania. Visit his website at www.sdschindlerbooks.com.

PRAISE FOR *Brother Hugo and the Bear*

★ "Prepare to be charmed by a bear who loves words — or at least loves to eat them."

— *Kirkus Reviews* (starred review)

★ "Combines suspense, humor, and information in a handsome, entertaining package."

— *School Library Journal* (starred review)

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9" x 11½" ❖ 34 pages ❖ Ages 5–9

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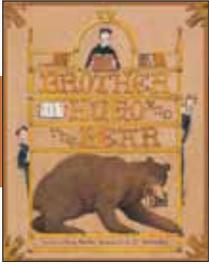
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If you have any suggestions for using *Brother Hugo and the Bear* with young readers, we would be happy to hear from you.

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EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

- ❖ Bookmaking
- ❖ Friendship
- ❖ History
- ❖ Humor

VOCABULARY USE AND ACQUISITION

Find and define the following words from the story — if you do not know the meaning, look up the definition in the glossary or a dictionary: manuscript, cloister, scriptorium, parchment, orchard, monastery, monk. (RL. 4.4 / L.4)

“Curlicue” is a descriptive word to describe a swooping, curving line. Can you think of other words to describe images or lines on a page? Onomatopoeia is the use of words that sound like their meaning, such as “woof,” “buzz,” or “tick-tock.” Can you think of words that could be described as visual onomatopoeia (known as “calligrams”), such as **D**U**m**b**e**LL, **c**ur**v**ed, or **r**ig**h**t **a**n**g**le? (L. 4.5, 6)

In the passages where Brother Hugo is running from the bear, the sentences (such as the one that begins, “When Brother Hugo was in sight of the Grande Chartreuse . . .”) become very long and run together, using a lot of commas instead of periods. Why do you think the author chose to describe those parts of the story in that way, instead of using shorter sentences with more periods? (L. 4.2, 1)

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

What must Brother Hugo do when he loses his library book? (RL. 4.1)

How does Brother Hugo replace the library book that he lost? (RL. 4.1)

What help does Brother Hugo need to make a book? Who helps him, and why? (RL. 4.1, 3)

Describe how Brother Hugo and his friends make a new book. What supplies do they need? (RL. 4.1, 3)

How does Brother Hugo hope to escape the bear? Does it work? (RL. 4.1, 3)

What are some of the main themes of *Brother Hugo and the Bear*? (RL. 4.2)

Why do you think Brother Hugo goes back to the Grande Chartreuse, even though he knows that a hungry bear is waiting for him? (RL. 4.1, 3)

The story ends after Brother Hugo has made yet another new friend and the brothers of the Grande Chartreuse say, “We are most right glad to see you, Brother Hugo. Your library book is due today.” Who is Brother Hugo’s newest friend at the end of the story? What do you think will happen next? (RL. 4.1, 3)

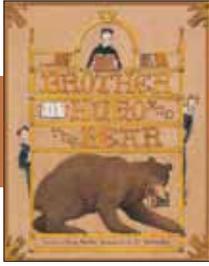
INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS

Look at the way S. D. Schindler has decided to illustrate the story of Brother Hugo. His letters often have curlicues and leaves sprouting from them, elaborate lines frame many of the words and images, and the letters that begin an important sentence are much fancier and larger than the others. How do you think that S. D. Schindler’s illustrations “match” the story? (RL. 4.1, 7)

In the Illustrator’s Note, S. D. Schindler says that his process of creating this book was not so different from the process Brother Hugo used to create his manuscript. What are the major similarities between them? In what ways has the process of creating a book changed from the medieval era to our own? (W. 4.2, 4, 7, 8, 9)

Download the medieval letter worksheets from the website www.katybeebe.com and design your own illuminated letters. Then, present your letters to the class and explain why you chose to illuminate your designs in a particular way. (SL. 4.1, 5)





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SPEAKING AND LISTENING / WRITING

Brother Hugo finds that tackling a big project, such as making a book, is much easier with the help of friends. Discuss with your classmates other big projects that you can see yourself attempting. Divide into groups, and choose a hypothetical big project. Then, plan out the steps you would take together to complete the project. Finally, present your plan to the rest of the class. **(RL. 4.3 / SL. 4.1, 4, 5 / W. 4.7, 8, 9, 10)**

Brother Hugo and the Bear is set in the Middle Ages, when books were very rare and precious. Using print and electronic resources, find examples of a few medieval manuscripts. Many museums, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the British Library, and the Morgan Library & Museum feature digitized medieval manuscripts online. A few famous manuscripts to feature are *The Book of Kells*, *Les très riches heures du Duc de Berry*, and the manuscript that inspired Brother Hugo himself — Bodleian Manuscript MS. Bodl. 717. Write a short description of a page of each of these manuscripts and compare them. What do the designs remind you of? How colorful are they? What do you think the words say? Present your descriptions to the rest of the class. **(RI. 4.1, 3, 6, 9 / W. 4.2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9)**

In real life, the Abbot of Brother Hugo's monastery, Peter the Venerable, and the Prior of La Grande Chartreuse often exchanged letters about the books they were reading. Pretend that you live in one of these monasteries, and write a short letter to a friend in the other monastery about a book that you have heard or read lately. **(RI. 4.3, 6, 9 / W. 4.3, 4)**

Write a short paragraph about the illustration that you like best in *Brother Hugo and the Bear*. How does the illustration work together with the words to tell the story? How do you feel when you look at the illustration? Can you think of a different image that could tell the story in another way? **(W. 4.1, 4, 9)**

RECOMMENDED FURTHER READING

Ashman, Linda. *Come to the Castle!: A Visit to a Castle in Thirteenth-Century England*. Illus. S. D. Schindler. Flash Point, 2009.

De Hamel, Christopher. *Scribes and Illuminators*. University of Toronto Press, 1992.

Noble, Marty. *Illuminated Manuscripts Coloring Book* (Dover Art Coloring Book). Dover, 2013.

Robertson, Bruce. *Marguerite Makes a Book*. Illus. Kathryn Hewitt. J. Paul Getty Museum, 1999.

Film: *The Secret of Kells*. Directed by Tomm Moore. New York: GKIDS, 2009. 75 min.

(RL. 4.6, 9, 10)

