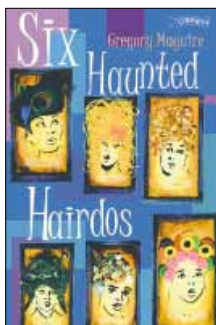


SIX HAUNTED HAIRDOS



by Gregory Maguire

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Miss Earth's class has once again 'divided along the faultlines of boyhood and girlhood' and the seven girl members of the Tattletales Club set out to prove the inferiority of the Copycat members, who admit to a belief in ghosts. But the ghosts of six hairdressers killed on a foliage tour are not the only ghosts in the hills above Hamlet, Vermont. The presence of prehistoric woolly mammoths searching for a mislaid baby and the unhappy ghost of Baby Tusker complicates matters further. The wise and wonderful Miss Earth and the independent and freethinking Pearl unobtrusively guide the members of both clubs towards a resolution.

LANGUAGE – ENGLISH

◆ Colourful writing: e.g. 'the air was rich with the smell of mothballs' (p.13); 'as if they were lounging in a square puddle of Pepto-Bismol' (p.28); 'it appeared that an attacking porcupine was standing upright on the top of her head' (p.32). Identify other examples in the book and discuss the impact of similes and metaphors on writing.

◆ Descriptive writing: e.g. 'something hovered, like a huge tattered crab, like a bony-fingered hand, like a ragged claw' (p.60); 'mothy misty moisty mouth' (p.61). Discuss the effect of the author's creative use of adjectives and identify other examples.

◆ Dictionary work: e.g. hovering, queasy, imperial, adroit, divisive, apparition, fragrant, ailment, foliage.

◆ Vocabulary extension: e.g. synonyms for ghosts (p.17). Make a word-bank of spooky words and illustrate.

◆ Word-play: 'To tea or not to tea? That is the question' (p.23). Discuss the origin of this phrase and find other examples of puns or word-play (e.g. pp. 30, 42, 44). Invent your own examples.

◆ Literary references: Identify some literary references, naming author and original work where possible, e.g. 'We came, we saw, we crumpled' (p.78); verse on p.6.

◆ Creative: Read the ingredients listed for Grandma Earth's chocolate swoons (p.23) and invent your own doughnut or other confectionery. Be as inventive as possible.

◆ Creative: The Tattletales suggested other names for the Haunted Hairdos. Many of these were alliterative, e.g. Six Damp Damsels, Six Wet Wigs. Using as many letters as you can, suggest alliterative names for the mammoth ghosts.

◆ Creative: The librarian told a story called 'The Ghost in the Toaster' (p.56). Write the story – you might choose to read it aloud to the rest of the class.

◆ Creative: Read the description of Grandma Earth on p.22 or that of Mr Dewey on p.85 and write a similarly detailed and evocative character profile.

◆ Creative: Write a passage telling how you might recognise a ghost (see p.8), or how you might have attracted Baby Tusker (see p.114).

SESE – GEOGRAPHY

◆ Human environments: people and other lands. Studying aspects of the environments and lives of people in India: location, peoples and communities that live there, languages, myths and stories, art and culture, features of the natural environments, similarities to and contrasts with Ireland (pp. 35, 57, 63–65).

◆ Weather, climate and atmosphere: weather observations. Using analysis of weather recordings to begin to associate simple descriptions of clouds, amount of cloud cover and other conditions with particular types of weather (pp. 34–36).

SESE – HISTORY

◆ Early peoples and ancient societies: Stone Age peoples. Becoming familiar with evidence we have which tells us about early peoples: homelands, weapons and animals. Mastodons and woolly mammoths (pp. 82–83, 103).

SESE – SCIENCE

◆ Energy and forces: magnetism and electricity. Learning about electrical energy, investigating electrical current by constructing simple circuits; examining and grouping materials as conductors and insulators; becoming aware of the dangers of electricity (pp. 34–36).

◆ Energy and forces: sound. Learning that sound is a form of energy, exploring the fact that sound travels through materials (p.26).

◆ Materials: properties and characteristics of materials. Recognising that materials can be solid, liquid or gaseous (p.49).

SPHE

◆ Myself: self-identity. Realising that each person has a unique contribution to make to various groups, situations and friendships. Miss Earth believes that 'we are all individuals, precious and unique' (p.18); Pearl is described as a 'rogue and a freethinker' (p.16). Exploring how the characters work together as teams (pp. 90, 124).

◆ Myself and others: exploring the different aspects of friendship. Acknowledging that friends often circulate in groups, which can be healthy or unhealthy; examining different types of friendship, such as the same-sex friendships of the Tattletales and the Copycats, and boy-girl friendships such as Pearl and Sammy Grubb's (pp. 18, 77, 87).

◆ Myself and others: relating to others.

Resisting the opinions and requests of others in a polite and firm way, expressing disagreement; presenting one's own opinions to an individual or group. Examine the way in which Pearl contributes to both groups while refusing to become part of either club (pp. 69, 94).

◆ Myself and the wider world: my school community. Examining the traditional roles that may be assigned to boys and girls in school because of their sex, and becoming aware of ways of counteracting this stereotyping. Read pp. 16–20 again. Thekla believes in 'the natural superiority of girls' (p.16), but Miss Earth does not approve when her class divides along 'the fault lines of boyhood and girlhood' (p.20). Discuss.

◆ Myself and the wider world: local and wider communities. Appreciating the diversity of people or groups within communities and the importance of mutual respect, empathy and understanding for living together in peace and harmony. Salim is welcomed into school and village community and his unique contribution appreciated (pp. 14, 65–66, 89–92).

MUSIC

◆ Listening and responding: improvising and creating. Selecting different kinds of sound to portray the storm sequence (pp. 34–37) as the wind howls, the lightning dances, the thunder resounds and the rain falls in sheets. Also, inventing simple melodic and rhythmic patterns using voice, body and percussion instruments to accompany a class or individual composition of a song for Miss Earth: 'Only love can heal a haunting.'

◆ Listening and responding: listening to music that tells a story, e.g. *The Storm* by Moving Hearts (Tara Records Ltd., Dublin).

VISUAL ARTS

◆ Hairdo mask: Use modelling clay to make eyebrows, nose, mouth and attach to a blown-up balloon with sellotape. Cut long strips of differently coloured tissue paper and stick over the face area with glue. Build up lots of layers of tissue paper, then leave it to dry. Remove the balloon and modelling clay from the mask, cut out holes for eyes and mouth.

◆ Headbands for Hairdos: see *Art and Craft Adventures 1*, pp. 6–7.

◆ Faces: see *Art and Craft Adventures 2*, pp. 20–21.