**Curriculum Guide for Educators and Librarians: The Sinister Auction**

***The Haunted Chronicles***

**Age Group: 9–13**

**Genres:** Supernatural Mystery, Suspense  
**Themes:** Courage, Teamwork, Consequences of Greed, Problem-Solving

**Overview**

This curriculum guide is designed to help educators and librarians incorporate *The Sinister Auction* into their classrooms or libraries. The guide includes discussion questions, activities, reading comprehension exercises, and creative projects that engage young readers and encourage critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.

**Objectives**

By engaging with *The Sinister Auction*, students will:

1. Analyze themes such as courage, morality, and teamwork.
2. Develop critical thinking skills through puzzles and challenges.
3. Enhance creative writing abilities by crafting their own endings or short stories.
4. Collaborate with peers in group activities and discussions.
5. Explore decision-making and the consequences of choices.

**Suggested Schedule**

| **Week** | **Focus** | **Activities** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Week 1 | Introduction to the Book | Pre-reading activity, author research, and setting analysis. |
| Week 2 | Chapters 1–3: Plot and Characters | Character mapping, discussion questions, and plot prediction. |
| Week 3 | Chapters 4–6: Themes and Symbolism | Theme exploration, symbolism activity, and creative writing. |
| Week 4 | Chapters 7–10: Resolution and Reflection | Group project, moral dilemma discussion, and epilogue writing. |

**Lesson Plans**

**Week 1: Introduction to the Book**

**Focus:** Setting the stage, exploring the author’s purpose, and making predictions.

* **Pre-Reading Activity:**  
  Ask students to imagine they’ve stumbled into a mysterious auction house. What would they bid on, and why? Discuss how an item’s past could affect its value.
* **Author Research:**  
  Research Stacey Bottone’s other works (*The Haunted Chronicles* series). Discuss how authors use supernatural elements to engage readers.
* **Activity:**  
  Create a visual map of the auction house based on the description in Chapter 1. Highlight key elements (e.g., the eerie auctioneer, shadowy bidders).

**Week 2: Chapters 1–3**

**Focus:** Plot development and character exploration.

* **Discussion Questions:**
  1. Why does Logan feel drawn to the pocket watch?
  2. How does Charlie’s cautious nature contrast with Logan’s adventurous spirit?
  3. What role does foreshadowing play in creating suspense?
* **Activity:**  
  Create a character map for Logan and Charlie. Include their traits, motivations, and how they handle challenges.
* **Prediction Exercise:**  
  Pause at the end of Chapter 3 and ask students to predict what will happen next. Encourage them to use textual evidence.

**Week 3: Chapters 4–6**

**Focus:** Themes of teamwork, greed, and moral choices.

* **Theme Exploration:**  
  Identify and discuss key themes:
  + *Courage vs. Fear:* How do Logan and Charlie face their fears?
  + *Greed and Consequences:* What does the pocket watch symbolize?
  + *Teamwork:* How does Charlie support Logan, and why is teamwork important?
* **Symbolism Activity:**  
  Ask students to analyze the pocket watch as a symbol. What does it represent in the story?
* **Creative Writing:**  
  Students write an origin story for the pocket watch. How did it become cursed?

**Week 4: Chapters 7–10**

**Focus:** Resolution, moral dilemmas, and reflection.

* **Group Project:**  
  Divide students into groups to create an alternate ending for the book. They must explain how their ending changes the story’s message.
* **Moral Dilemma Discussion:**  
  Discuss Logan’s choice to keep the watch or pass the curse to someone else. What would students do in his place, and why?
* **Epilogue Writing:**  
  Ask students to write an epilogue from Charlie’s perspective. How does he cope with what happened at the auction house?

**Activities and Extensions**

1. **Escape Room Activity:**  
   Create an escape room based on *The Sinister Auction* where students solve puzzles to deactivate the watch. (See detailed activity provided earlier.)
2. **Interactive Timeline:**  
   Have students create a timeline of events, including major turning points and character decisions.
3. **Auction House Blueprint:**  
   Students design their own version of the sinister auction house, adding rooms and cursed items.
4. **Creative Craft Project:**  
   Craft a "cursed item" and write a backstory for it, explaining its significance and how it became cursed.
5. **Debate:**  
   Host a debate: Was it ethical for Logan to involve Charlie in the curse-breaking process?

**Assessment Ideas**

1. **Comprehension Quiz:**  
   Create quizzes focusing on key events, characters, and themes.
2. **Creative Writing Rubric:**  
   Assess originality, use of themes, and connection to the story in creative projects.
3. **Presentation:**  
   Students present their auction house blueprints or cursed items to the class.

**Discussion Questions**

1. What do you think the auctioneer represents in the story?
2. How do Logan’s and Charlie’s personalities influence their decisions?
3. What is the moral of *The Sinister Auction*, and how can readers apply it to their own lives?
4. What role does suspense play in keeping the reader engaged?
5. How would the story change if the auctioneer had helped Logan instead of hindering him?

**Resources**

* **Printable Worksheets:** Word searches, character maps, and symbolism charts.
* **Recommended Reading:** Other books in *The Haunted Chronicles* series.
* **Companion Website:** Visit www.thehauntedchronicle.com for additional resources, puzzles, and activities.