**Curriculum Guide for Educators and Librarians: The Vanishing Window**

***The Haunted Chronicles***

**Target Age Group:** 9-13 years

**Theme:** Mystery, resilience, friendship, and overcoming fear.

**Learning Objectives:**

* Foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills through literary analysis.
* Develop comprehension of narrative structure, themes, and character development.
* Enhance vocabulary and writing skills with creative and analytical activities.
* Explore teamwork, resilience, and the power of friendship.

**Discussion Topics:**

1. **Understanding Character Motivation:**
   * Why do you think Grace feels so drawn to the window, even though it frightens her?
   * Discuss Zoey’s role in the story. How does her friendship help Grace?
2. **Themes and Symbolism:**
   * What does the window symbolize in the story?
   * Explore the theme of fear. How does Grace confront and overcome hers?
3. **Foreshadowing and Suspense:**
   * What clues hint at the reflection’s growing strength?
   * How does the author build suspense throughout the story?
4. **Resilience and Problem-Solving:**
   * How does Grace’s resilience evolve?
   * What creative solutions do Grace and Zoey use to combat the reflection?

**Interactive Activities:**

1. **Character Journal:**
   * Have students write a journal entry as Grace or Zoey, reflecting on a pivotal moment in the story (e.g., their first encounter with the reflection).
2. **Mystery Mapping:**
   * Create a visual map of the house, marking key events in each room to track the story’s progression.
3. **Reflection Art Activity:**
   * Ask students to draw what they imagine the reflection looks like as it becomes more distorted. Discuss how this visual represents the reflection’s power.
4. **Rewrite the Ending:**
   * Have students write an alternate ending or epilogue, imagining how the story could have resolved differently.

**Classroom Discussion Questions:**

1. *Why does the reflection become stronger when Grace feels afraid? What can we learn from this about how fear affects us in real life?*
2. *How does Zoey demonstrate courage and loyalty throughout the story?*
3. *What do you think happens after the epilogue? How might Zoey try to help Grace?*

**Vocabulary and Writing Exercises:**

1. **Vocabulary Words:**
   * Identify challenging or descriptive words from the text (e.g., distorted, ominous, resilience, sinister) and create definitions, sentences, and drawings to solidify understanding.
2. **Creative Writing Prompt:**
   * Write a short story inspired by *The Vanishing Window*, where another seemingly ordinary object begins to behave mysteriously.
3. **Compare and Contrast:**
   * Compare Grace’s reaction to the reflection at the beginning and end of the story. What changed about her mindset?

**STEM Integration:**

1. **The Science of Mirrors and Reflections:**
   * Teach students about how reflections work in mirrors. Discuss optical illusions and how warped glass can distort images, tying it back to the warped glass in the window.
2. **Create a Reflection Experiment:**
   * Set up mirrors and light sources to explore how reflections can change based on angles and surfaces.

**Group Projects:**

1. **Design a Haunted Object:**
   * In small groups, have students create a backstory for a haunted object. Include its origin, powers, and how the characters in their story interact with it.
2. **Build a Book Trailer:**
   * Students work in groups to create a short video trailer for *The Vanishing Window*, using text, images, and narration to capture the story’s suspense and mystery.

**Assessment Ideas:**

1. **Reading Comprehension Quiz:**
   * Include questions on plot details, character motivations, and themes.
2. **Essay Prompt:**
   * *How does the theme of friendship play a crucial role in Grace’s journey? Provide examples from the text.*
3. **Creative Project Submission:**
   * Students can present their alternate endings, art projects, or haunted object designs.

**Resources for Educators and Librarians:**

* **Companion Website:** Access activities, puzzles, and games designed to engage young readers in the world of *The Vanishing Window*.
* **Reading Guide:** Includes additional discussion questions, chapter summaries, and literary analysis tips.
* **Author’s Q&A Video:** A pre-recorded Q&A with Stacey Bottone discussing the book’s inspiration and themes, perfect for classroom use.

**Visit:** [www.thehauntedchronicle.com](http://www.thehauntedchronicle.com) for more resources!