






# SNAZZY CAT CAPERS

## Teacher guide

## What's in here?

-  2 pre-reading activities
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# Pre-reading 1



Ophelia von Hairball is the world's number one cat burglar and the Furry Feline Burglary Institute (FFBI) likes all their cat burglars to have inventor helpers—but Ophelia likes to work alone!

What teams or groups are you a part of? (A family, sport team, or club?)

What kind of experiences have you had with teams or groups?

Would you rather work alone, or in a team?

Give reasons for your answer.



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## Ideas:

To answer this question, students do individual work, or work in a group work and discuss. Extend to create a poster illustrating “the perfect team.”

## Core curriculum:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.1](#)

Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.

# Pre-reading 2



You can tell a lot about characters from how they act, the choices they make, what they say, and what they say about others.

If someone looked at you today, from when you woke up until right now, what would they learn about you? Create a timeline of your day so far. Write (or draw!) what you've done and what conclusions someone might come to about your character.



## Ideas:

This could be a creative exercise where students work on their own timeline and then other students have to make the 'character conclusions.'

## Core curriculum:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3](#)

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3.C](#)

Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order.



# Comprehension 1

In chapter 1, when we are introduced to Ophelia von Hairball, she is in the middle of a heist. **What are three things we learn about Ophelia from this first chapter?**

For each point, include a direct quote from the book that proves it.



## Ideas:

This could be done as a simple list, or as an organized diagram for pre-paragraph building.

## Core curriculum:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7](#)

Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2.B](#)

Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.

# Comprehension 2



In chapter 2, how do the author and illustrator let you know how bad Ophelia's teamwork score is? What reasons does she give for sending back her FFBI inventors?

Pretend you're Ophelia and you are sending back another inventor (use one from the story, or make one up.) Create a letter or email, or prepare a speech to deliver to FFBI's Director MEW. Be sure to give reasons why you have to send the inventor back.



## Ideas:

This could be a functional letter-writing exercise, or a creative one. Maybe students think Ophelia should use decorated stationery (because she's old-fashioned and prefers paper to email). Maybe she does a draft on her computer, gets another agent to proofread it, and then does a final draft on paper. Or perhaps it's a speech she will give Director MEW over a conference call.

## Core curriculum:

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.5

With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.1.B

Provide reasons that support the opinion.

# Comprehension 3



In chapter 4, we learn about Ophelia's cousin, Pierre von Rascal.

From the words and illustrations, how would you describe Ophelia's relationship with Pierre?



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## Ideas:

This could be done as a simple list, or as an organized diagram for pre-paragraph building. It might be fun to have a visual “outline” for Pierre and then label him with his qualities. (Example: pointy ears for eavesdropping on Ophelia's plans. Long tail for pilfering jewels. Large pocket for holding the stolen Captain Claw-some.)

## Core curriculum:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7](#)

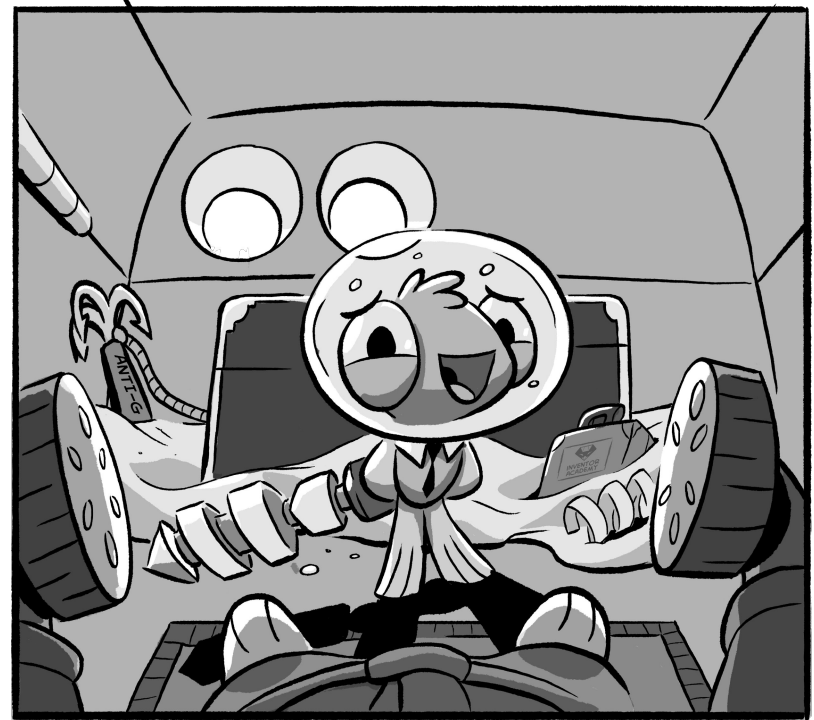
Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

# Comprehension 4



In chapters 4-6, we meet Oscar F. Gold, the latest FFBI inventor assigned to help Ophelia. He tricks Ophelia and becomes a stowaway in her travel box so he can go to Paris with her.

Pretend you are Oscar, and write to her, explaining why you did this. Bonus: if you were Oscar, would your delivery message be creative? Would you deliver it in an email or via a drone or write it on a paper airplane?



## Ideas:

If there's time, have the students do a rough draft, and a good draft—with a bonus sketch.

## Core curriculum:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7](#)

Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2.B](#)

Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.

# Comprehension 5



In chapter 8, Ophelia and Oscar land in an unexpected (and stinky!) place, and Oscar builds a boat out of found objects.

Alone or with a small group, pretend you need to construct a boat—only using things in your classroom. What items could you use? Would you have to take things apart? Draw a diagram and label the parts of your boat.



## Ideas:

Have students present their ideas to the class. Alternatively, have students bring “found objects” from their junk drawers at home and physically build a ‘boat’ from them.

## Core curriculum:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.5](#)

Add audio recordings and visual displays to presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.

# Comprehension 6



Sometimes in books and movies, there are hints of things to come. That's called **foreshadowing**.

In Chapter 8, Ophelia discovers that Pierre is responsible for their travel box being rerouted to their stinky location. Describe how Pierre accomplished this. If you need help, go back to Chapter 6 and look at the picture with the mail person and the travel box!



## Ideas:

Have students discuss other books or movies where there was foreshadowing.

## Core curriculum:

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.7](#)

Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7](#)

Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

At the very end of chapter 9, there is a picture of Oscar standing with his suitcase. From looking at the image, describe how do you think Oscar feels? How did the illustrator communicate Oscar's feelings to the reader? If Oscar were to say something to Ophelia at this moment, what would he say? Write it in a speech bubble.



## Ideas:

This might be a chance to discuss the first-person voice of the comic vs. the third person voice of the rest of the book.

For fun, have students pick scenes from the book and express the characters' feelings using only emojis.

## Core curriculum:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7](#) Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.7](#)

Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting)



# Comprehension 8

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In chapter 12, Ophelia puts her mew-seum plan in action. Step by step, describe how Ophelia steals the jewel.



## Ideas:

Students could simply do a list, or draw this as an illustrated timeline.

## Core curriculum:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3.C](#)

Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order.

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To help her understand her characters better, the author of *Snazzy Cat Capers* creates quotes for all her characters before she starts writing.

Pick a few of Ophelia's quotes and write what you think they say about Ophelia's character. Do you agree or disagree with how Ophelia looks at the world?

**“You can't possibly be your best if you haven't had a manicure. Or if you're a dog.”**

—Ophelia von Hairball V



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## Ideas:

Have students write quotes that they would say to describe their own philosophies, or do them for different characters in this book or other books.

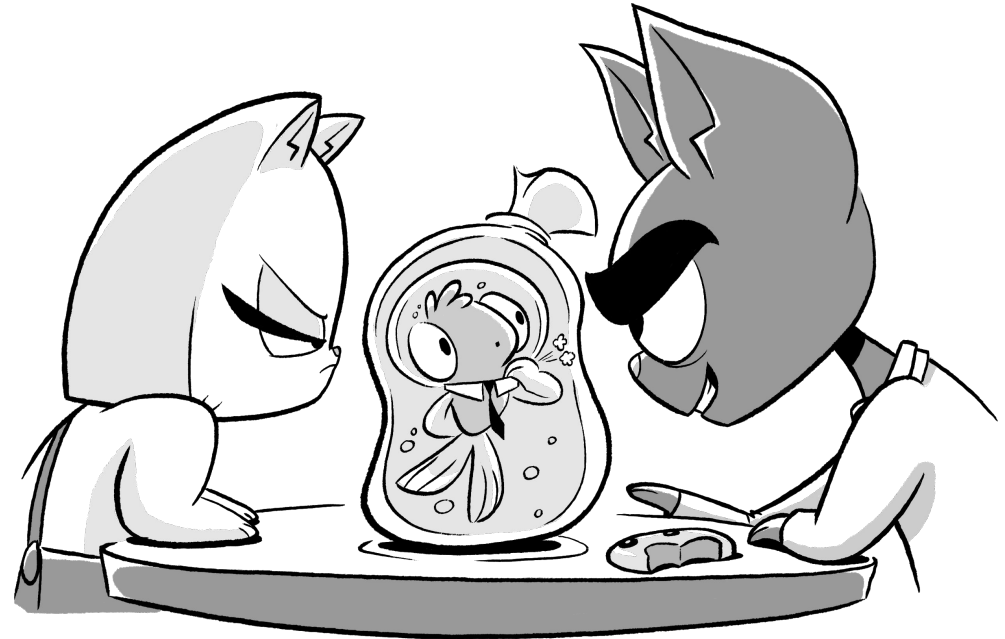
## Core curriculum:

[SS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.6](#)

Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

In chapter 13, things do not go as Ophelia expected and she has to decide whether to save Oscar or hand over the jewel.

How do you feel about the decisions Ophelia makes? Would you have done the same?



## Ideas:

Discuss or write a different scene where Ophelia tells Pierre to keep the fish—and the consequence of that decision. Would Pierre have a temper tantrum? Would Oscar find a clever way to escape? Would Ophelia feel regret?

## Core curriculum:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7](#)

Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.6](#)

Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3](#)

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

In chapters 15 and 16, Pierre tries one more trick to win the competition. What does he do? How did Ophelia outsmart him in the end?



## Ideas:

Discuss the points in the story where Ophelia had to make a decision about her special handbag based on the knowledge she had, but that Oscar and the reader did not have. (Example, in Chapter 9, she insists on taking her handbag off the garbage barge, and in Chapter 14, she steals back the whole bag and not just the jewel.)

## Core curriculum:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7](#)

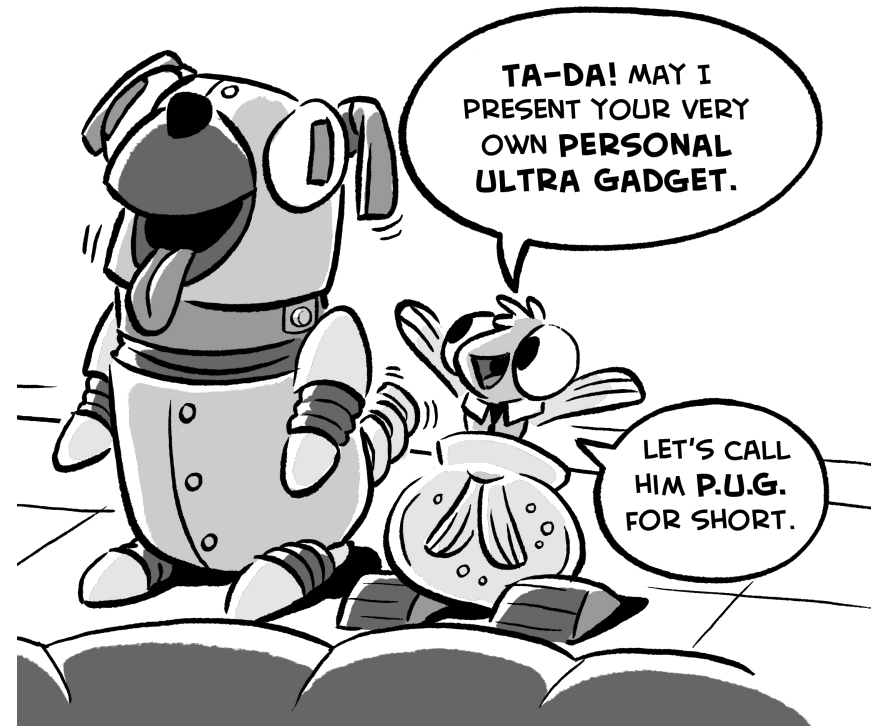
Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

# Post-reading 1

Your own robot helper!

If you could make your very own robo-pet with special features, what features would you include, and why?

If you want to draw a robot dog like P.U.G., you can use the how-to-draw sheet. If you want to have a different robot pet, draw from your imagination, and label it!



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## Core curriculum:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2.A

Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.

**HOW TO DRAW:  
OPHELIA'S PERSONAL ULTRA GADGET (P.U.G.)**

**1. BOWLS**  
START WITH 2  
BOWL-LIKE  
SHAPES. DRAW ONE  
FACING DOWN, THE  
OTHER FACING UP!



**2. ARMS & LEGS**  
ADD SOME ROUNDED  
CONE SHAPES FOR  
THE SHOULDERS,  
HANDS, ANKLES, AND  
FEET!



**3. EYES & MOUTH**  
NOW DRAW P.U.G.'S  
EYES AND MOUTH. IT  
ALMOST ALWAYS HAS  
ITS MOUTH OPEN IN A  
BIG SMILE.



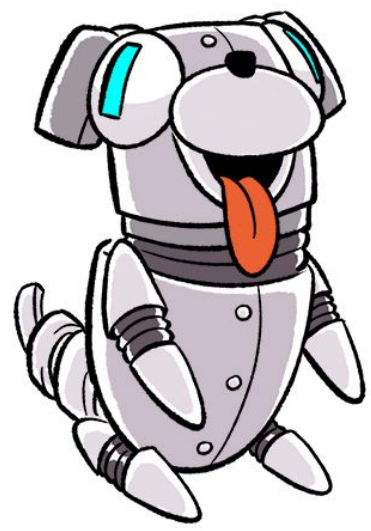
**4. DETAILS**  
ADD SOME RUBBER  
HOSES FOR THE  
ARMS, THE PUPILS,  
THE INSIDE OF  
THE MOUTH, AND  
THE TAIL!



**5. MORE DETAIL**  
NOW ADD THE NOSE,  
TONGUE, SEAM LINE  
AND SOME SCREWS  
TO HOLD P.U.G.  
TOGETHER!



**6. COLOR**  
NOW ADD SOME  
COLOR! P.U.G. IS FUN  
TO COLOR BECAUSE  
IT IS MOSTLY METAL!



# Post-reading 2

Pretend you are part of the FFBI and someone asks you to give Ophelia some advice about how to be better at teamwork.

Prepare a speech or create a poster giving her three ideas about how to be a great team member.



## Core curriculum:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

# Post-reading 3

During Snazzy Cat Capers, we find out that Oscar's dream is to be a cat burglar's helper who gets to travel and be useful! There are a lot of times that Oscar F. Gold could have given up, but he keeps going. Has there been a tough time where you wanted to quit something you were doing, but you kept going?

Write a paragraph describing a situation where you've had a tough time, but you didn't give up. Do a first draft, then let a peer and your teacher read it and give you suggestions about how to make your writing stronger. Then do a final draft.



## Core curriculum:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.5

With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grade 3 [here](#).)



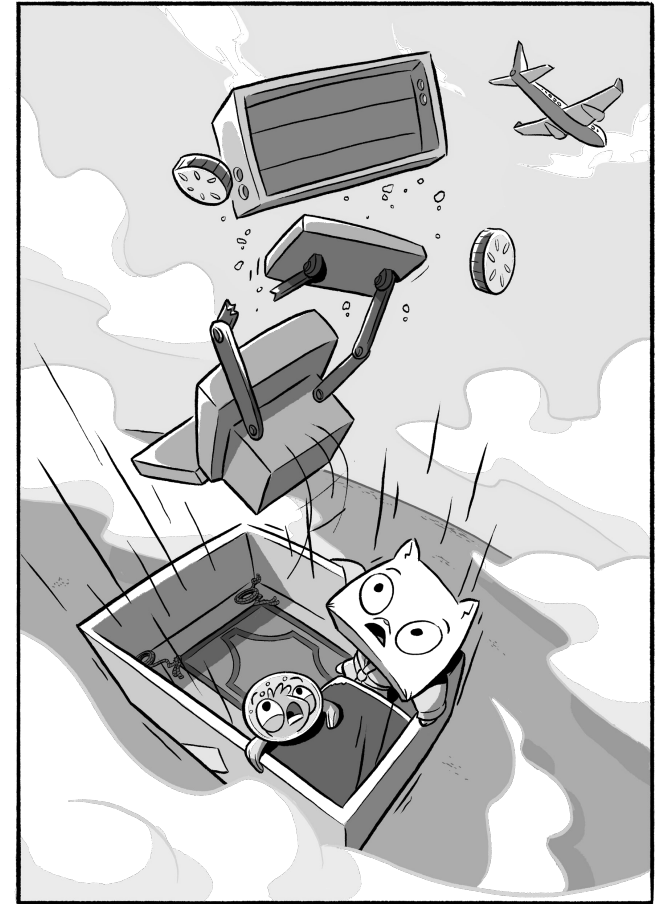
# Post-reading 4

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Choose a scene from Snazzy Cat Capers that isn't illustrated, then turn it into a comic with pictures, speech bubbles, and narrative frames. Change or create dialogue (what the characters say to one another in speech bubbles or narrative frames) if you need to make the scene easier to understand.

If you want, send your art to the author and illustrator (sign it with just a first name—no personally identifiable information!) to [snazzycatcapers@gmail.com](mailto:snazzycatcapers@gmail.com).

They might put it on the [snazzycatcapers.com](http://snazzycatcapers.com) website in the fan art section!



## Core curriculum:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3.B

Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations.

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# Post-reading 5

Choose a scene from the book and, with a small group, dramatize it—with sound! Get your teacher’s help to do an audio recording and add music and sound FX. Use different voices as you speak different character lines.



## Core curriculum:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.3.4.B

Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.