



# Inspire Your Reader: Spark a Conversation!

**BRANCHES** books, which bridge the gap between leveled readers and early chapter books, now include thought-provoking questions at the end of each book! Subversively educational, these questions check for your reader's understanding alongside illustrations and favorite characters.

Included here are the questions that correspond to each of the **BRANCHES** books – use them to engage your child in a conversation about what they have read and to reinforce their critical thinking skills.

With these questions for each book, you can guide your young reader in:

- Identifying key ideas and details
- Understanding craft and structure
- Building foundational skills through phonics, word recognition, and fluency
- Acquiring new vocabulary

Happy reading with **BRANCHES**!

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# THE NOTEBOOK OF DOOM

## #1: Rise of the Balloon Goons



Look at the map on pages 14-15. Make a map of your town. Include your home, school, and spooky places.



Adjectives describe nouns. For example, **tall**, **spooky**, and **bumpy** are adjectives. List 3 adjectives to describe the balloon goons.



On page 65, Mr. Hoarsely shows Alexander how to make a balloon animal. How did the balloon animal help Alexander free Rip from the gigantic balloon snake?



How do balloon goons compare to monsters from other books?



Create a new monster! Give it a name. Draw and write about its **habitat**, **diet**, and **behavior**. And be sure to add a **WARNING!**

# THE NOTEBOOK OF DOOM

## #2: Day of the Night Crawlers



Why was Rip sure the night crawlers were **not** megaworms? Was he right or wrong? Reread pages 8-11 for clues.



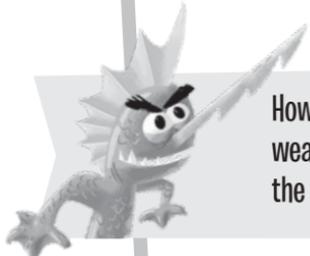
Why are so many night crawlers coming above ground?



Look at pages 68-69. What items in the caboose help explain what the place is used for?



Do you think it is a good idea for Alexander and Rip to team up with Nikki? Why or why not? Use examples from the story to make your argument.



How do Alexander, Rip, and Nikki use their unlikely weapons to save themselves from the fish-kabob and the tunnel fish? Reread pages 78-86 for the answers!

# THE NOTEBOOK OF DOOM

## #3: Attack of the Shadow Smashers



What does *S.S.M.P.* stand for? What does the S.S.M.P. do? And who are the members?



Look at pages 44 and 45. What are the **differences** between the old description of the jampire and Nikki's new description?



Why does Rip want to kick Nikki out of the S.S.M.P.? Do you think he is right or wrong?



How does Al figure out what scares the shadow smashers? Reread Chapter 9 for clues.



Look at the filmstrip on pages 34-35. Now make your own filmstrip! Include the major events from this story. Use descriptive verbs like *groaned*, *scrambled*, *wiggled*, and *quivered*.

# THE NOTEBOOK OF DOOM

## #4: Chomp of the Meat-Eating Vegetables



What clues help Alexander see that something is wrong at school?



Create a flyer like the one on page 3 BUT change it so the veggie monsters can hand it out to their veggie-monster friends! Include **what** is on the menu, **why** the veggie monsters are changing the menu, **where** the supper will take place, and **when** it will happen.



Strong verbs clearly describe the action such as *stumbled*, *grumbled*, and *chomped*. Look back through the book to find two more strong, descriptive verbs.



Look at page 17. Why is it funny that Rip has to wear this outfit?



The S.S.M.P. uses a bunny, a gopher, and windmill blades to defeat the veggie monsters. What other animals or kitchen tools might scare the veggies? Draw a picture of the tools or animals, and describe how the veggie monsters could be defeated.

# THE NOTEBOOK OF DOOM

## QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES!



How does Alexander know that the latest monster is not a trample hamster or a skyscraper scraper? List these monsters' characteristics that are similar to and different from the characteristics of the P-rex.



Reread page 45. Alexander's dad says, "I bet your ant farm was a big smash!" Explain how this sentence has a double meaning to Alexander.



What was the S.S.M.P.'s plan to fool the P-rex? Did it work? Why or why not?



What was the sweet surprise Rip expected to find after defeating the P-rex? Did he find what he thought he'd find?



If you had to encounter a monster, which monster would you choose to run into? A trample hamster, a skyscraper scraper, a P-rex, or a candy-saurus? Use the information from the book to explain your answer.

# THE NOTEBOOK OF DOOM

## QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES!



Is Mr. Hoarseley helpful to the S.S.M.P.? Explain.



Look back at page 42. What are the literal and nonliteral meanings of “spring into action”?



What does the bubble-wrap warrior use the stolen treasures for?



How does Nikki trick the bubble-wrap warrior and save Alexander and Rip?



The Bumpy Mummy is a mystery. Is he a cowboy who sat on a cactus, a toad person, or something else? Write a story about how he got his bumps!

# THE NOTEBOOK OF DOOM

## QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES!



What are some odd things about Ranger Harry?



How are snombies **similar to** and **different from** normal snowmen?



How does the weather at Camp Gloamy change throughout the story?



How is the ice-crusher defeated?



Look at the survival skills on page 28. Which skill would you most like to learn? Write about why you chose it.

# THE NOTEBOOK OF DOOM

## QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES!



Name some clues that show something weird is happening in Stermont.



Al *raced*, *dashed*, and *scooted* to get to school as fast as possible. Think of words with similar meanings that could describe his trip to school. Use the dictionary or thesaurus for help!



Look at the picture on page 17. How is the new Stermont Elementary building the **same** and **different** from your school?



How does Rip's fashion choice help the students escape the planetarium?



Reread pages 5-6, 34-35, and 48-49. Then choose a monster: trash-squatch, manta x-ray, or rust-buster. Explain your choice and write about how you would defeat it.

# THE NOTEBOOK OF DOOM

## QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES!



How is the amusement park **different** than what Rip expected?



How does the S.S.M.P. know the monster is not a cutterfly or a whiry-whisp?



New girl to the rescue! How does Dottie save the day?



Who is the boss-monster? Write your opinion and explain your thoughts.



What is *your* favorite ride at the amusement park?  
Draw the ride and write why it is your favorite.

# THE NOTEBOOK OF DOOM

## QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES!



Why was Dottie invited to join the S.S.M.P.? Do you think she will be a good monster fighter? Why or why not?



What **clues** hinted at Dr. Tallow's true identity?  
Reread if necessary.



How does the super-goop use information from the S.S.M.P.'s animal reports against them?



Do the members of the S.S.M.P. defeat the super-goop? Explain your answer.



Animals are awesome! Work with a partner to research an animal. Create a report similar to Alexander's on page 2. Be sure to add true and exciting facts about the animal!