

INTRODUCTION

Based on a concept by Wimpy Kid author Jeff Kinney, Poptropica is a brand-new graphic-novel adventure series by Jack Chabert and Kory Merritt. In book one, *Mystery of the Map*, Oliver, Mya, and Jorge take a ride in a hot-air balloon, only to crash-land on an unknown island filled with extinct animals and a horde of angry Vikings. Welcome to Poptropica, an uncharted group of islands whose existence is hidden from the rest of the world. As the three friends embark on a perilous search for a way home, they quickly discover the shocking reason they were brought there—something that threatens the very existence of Poptropica and their ability to ever make it off the island!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR

JACK CHABERT is a game designer for Poptropica, the creator and author of *Eerie Elementary*, and, writing under a different name, the author of more than 25 titles, including licensed books for *Adventure Time*, *Regular Show*, *Uncle Grandpa*, and *Steven Universe*. Chabert lives in New York with his wife.

KORY MERRITT, co-creator of Poptropica comics, started cartooning and illustrating while attending SUNY Brockport. His weekly comic strip *Brockport Chronicled* won the John Locher Memorial Award for cartooning. He is also the author of the online comic strip *The Lost Side of Suburbia* and the upcoming illustrated series *The Dreadful Fate of Jonathan York*. Merritt lives in Hammondsport, New York, where he teaches art for grades K–6.

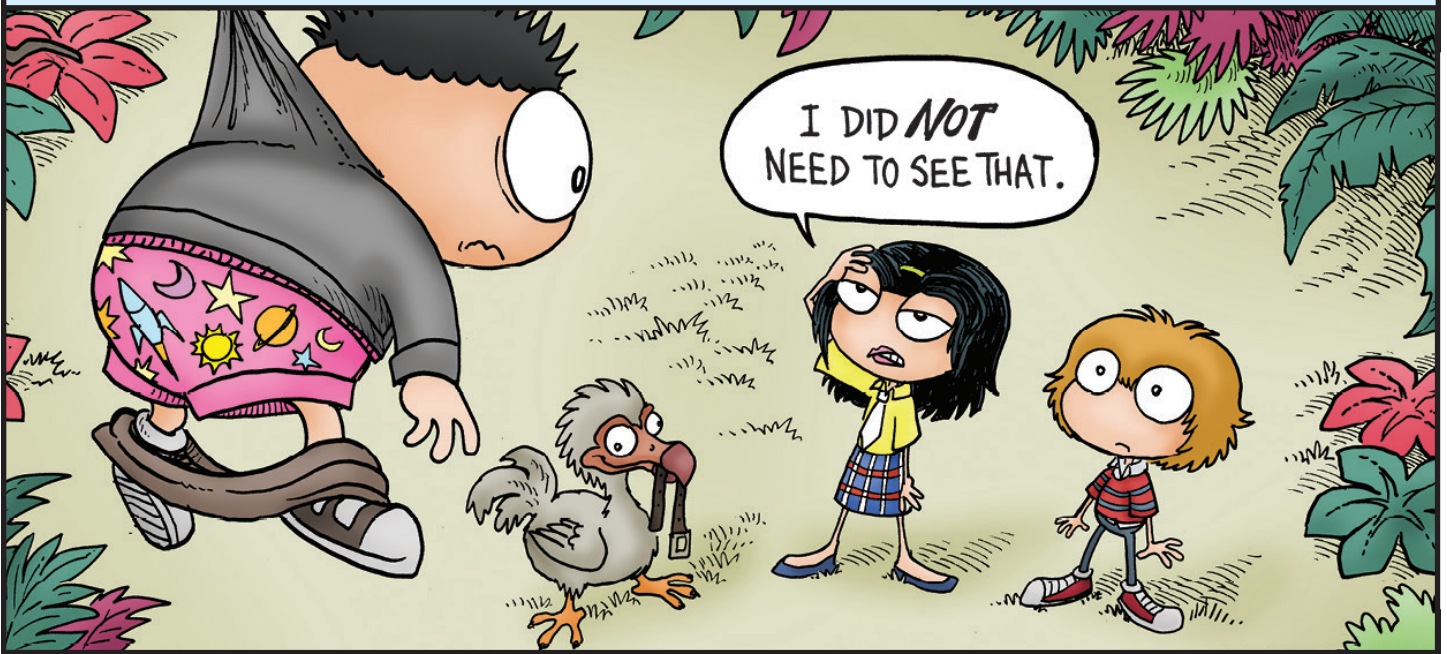
AGE RANGE

Ages
8 to 12



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide consists of vocabulary words, activities, and discussion questions that can be used cross-circularly when teaching or discussing *Mystery of the Map*. These ideas are jumping-off points for the discussions that could be had while reading *Mystery of the Map*. Each discussion question/activity is written as if a student is being questioned.



VOCABULARY

These vocabulary words can be found on the pages listed, as well as throughout the book. Use these words as a starting point for a vocabulary study with *Mystery of the Map*. Research shows that reading and discussing a wordlist within the context of reading is one of the most effective ways to learn vocabulary.

- indigestion (p. 16)
- extinct (p. 17)
- longship (p. 23)
- runes (p. 28)
- mutton (p. 40)
- civilization (p. 46)
- sophisticated (p. 46)
- canisters (p. 61)
- confer (p. 61)
- retrieve (p. 69)
- fortress (p. 75)

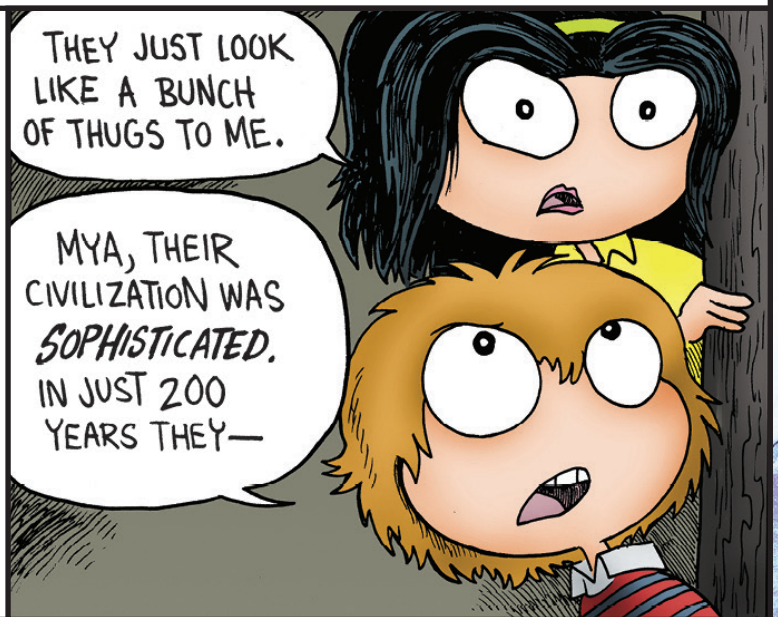
FUN ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

LANGUAGE ARTS

- Visit <http://poptropica.com> and play the game that inspired *Mystery of the Map*. How was the book inspired by the game? What characteristics of the game can be found in the book?
- Each character has a clear purpose in *Mystery of the Map*. For example, the Vikings are the obstacle that keeps the protagonists from defeating the antagonist. What was each character's "job" in the story? Use evidence from the text to support your analysis.
- If the story was a prose novel written in first person from Oliver's point of view, what thoughts would we "hear" from him at different points of the story? What about from Jorge's point of view? Mya's? Octavian's? Erik the Red's? Sabertooth Tiger's?
- Scaffolded creative writing activity: Have students rewrite *Mystery of the Map* as a first person narrative from a character's point of view of their choosing.
- The author used onomatopoeias throughout the story. Why would an author choose to include onomatopoeias? How does including these sound words make your reading experience more enjoyable?
- An old man is found on the beach and says he is not a Viking—who could he be? (p. 76)
- What do you predict is going to happen in the sequel?

SCIENCE

- Dodo birds and saber-toothed tigers have been extinct for a long time. What happened to cause their extinction? What could have been done differently to help preserve these creatures?



SOCIAL STUDIES/HISTORY

- The map is a large part of the story. Using the progression of the story and the map on the front endsheet, map where the characters went over the course of the story then, using the compass on the map and a scale you create, write out directions for someone to follow to show where the characters' adventure took them.
- Oliver mentions that Erik the Red discovered North America. Using Britannica.com, <http://www.britannica.com/biography/Erik-the-Red>, read about Erik the Red, then explain why Oliver said this and how Erik the Red first discovered North America.
- What did it take to survive as a Viking? Play the BBC online game *Viking Quest* to see! http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/vikings/launch_gms_viking_quest.shtml
- Oliver mentions that Vikings were a sophisticated civilization. Using BBC History, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/vikings/>, research Viking culture and explain how the Vikings were more sophisticated than other cultures at the time.

STANDARDS

English Language Arts Common Core State Standards

- Anchor standard 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- Anchor standard 3: Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- Anchor standard 4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
- Anchor standard 6: Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Next Generation Science Standards

- MS-LS4-1: Analyze and interpret data for patterns in the fossil record that document the existence, diversity, extinction, and change of life-forms throughout the history of life on Earth, under the assumption that natural laws operate today as in the past.