

Find
what makes
YOU
RAD!



VLAD THE RAD

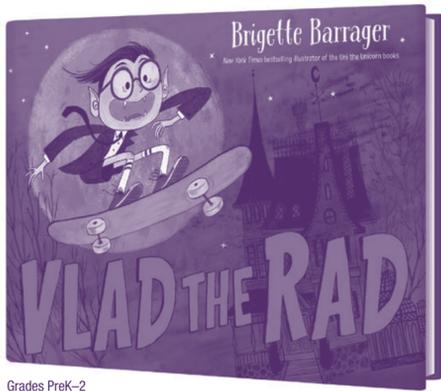
Educators' Guide

About the Book

From the bestselling illustrator of *Uni the Unicorn* comes a mythical—and totally rad—character to laugh with and love.

Vlad is always getting in trouble at Miss Fussbucket's School for Aspiring Spooks. Unlike the other little vampires, witches, mummies, and ghosts, Vlad isn't interested in learning spookiness. That's because . . . Vlad loves to skateboard! How can he possibly think about being a good spook when all he wants to do is practice his latest gnarly trick? Maybe Vlad can find a way to do both!

Brigette Barrager's debut as an author-illustrator is full of energy, fun, and sweet tricks! Passionate kids will identify with Vlad, and appreciate the way he combines his love of skateboarding with his schoolwork. A perfect Halloween read-aloud for the classroom!



Grades PreK-2
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About the Author-Illustrator

BRIGETTE BARRAGER is an artist, designer, illustrator, and writer of children's books. She spent some time at Pixar and Walt Disney Animation Studios before taking the plunge into freelance illustration, where she's lived happily ever after. She resides in Los Angeles with her handsome husband, cute doggy, and terrible cat. Visit Brigette at bridgetteb.com.

Pre-Reading Activity

Introduce your students to Vlad's world—the world of skateboarding! Using books from the library, online resources, and videos, teach your class about the history of skateboarding, how skateboards work, and skateboarding terms such as *half-pipe*, *fakie*, *grind*, and *ollie*. Then dive into the X Games and learn about the various skateboarding competitions and famous skateboarders. And for some extra fun, give students a chance to try out a skateboard themselves!

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening 1



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Classroom Activities

I'm Not Perfect

In the book, Vlad explains that skateboarding is not about being perfect and that messing up is part of the fun and helps him learn. What other activities are like that? Ask students to think about something they do that is hard and takes a lot of practice. Have them write down the steps they take toward accomplishing that task, making sure that failing and trying again are part of the process. They can then use their list to create a how-to booklet:

- The cover should have the title of the activity, an illustration, and their name.
- Each page should describe and illustrate one step of the learning process.
- The last page should be an illustration of the accomplished task.

When complete, students can present their booklets to the class and swap booklets so that they can try new things!

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Writing 2

Scary Classes

Miss Fussbucket's School for Aspiring Spooks is a place to learn how to be scary. But what exactly are the children learning there? As a group, brainstorm some subjects that could be taught at the school. This could include the history of spooks, how to hide in the dark, or new scaring techniques. Then ask your students to imagine that they are spook students at the school. Give them a blank class schedule, like the one you use in your classroom, and have them fill it in with the scary classes they might take. They should also make a list of school supplies they might need for those classes and imagine what kind of homework would be assigned. For that day, change the name of your class subjects to sound *spoooooookier!*

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards Literature 1

A Different Outcome

In the book, Vlad skateboards down the back of a dinosaur and scares the museum visitors, which earns him the nickname Vlad the Rad. But that ride could have turned out quite differently. Show students the illustration of Vlad on his skateboard on top of the dinosaur and ask them to think about what else could have happened. Could he have skateboarded down the dinosaur's back and out the door of the museum? Could he have fallen off the dinosaur and crashed into Miss Fussbucket? Have students write an alternate version of Vlad's experience at the museum and share them with the class to see how many different outcomes there could be!

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Writing 3

Two Things at Once

Vlad knew that he had to learn to be spooky, but he wanted to skateboard, too, and he eventually figured out a way to do both at the same time. What two things can you do at the same time? Ask students to think about two completely unrelated things that they can do at the same time, such as drawing a picture and singing, doing jumping jacks and reciting the alphabet, or even juggling and skipping. Give them a chance to show these skills to the class, and assign each student a nickname for their accomplishment!

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening 4



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Classroom Activities

Build a Simile

When the author describes Vlad's feelings about skateboarding, she uses a beautiful simile: "When I'm skateboarding, it's like my heart has bat wings and my feet have wheels. I feel like sugar-frosted lightning bolts!" Explain that a simile is a figure of speech that compares two different things using the words *like* or *as*. Write Vlad's simile on the board and discuss which things are being compared, why the author might have chosen to use a simile, and the image that it creates in the reader's mind. Now ask students to build a simile of their own that imitates the one from the book. It should follow this structure:

When I'm _____, it's like my heart has _____ and my feet have _____. I feel like _____!

When they are finished, students can share their similes with the group and ask their classmates to explain what images it brings to mind.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Literature 4

Classroom Rules

At spook school, skateboarding was not exactly allowed, but it was not exactly "unallowed" either. Explain the difference between written and unwritten rules. Then create a T-chart on the board with two columns: WRITTEN RULES and UNWRITTEN RULES. Ask students to share written rules in your classroom that everyone knows to follow, such as raising their hands to speak, being respectful of school property, or not eating or drinking. Then challenge them to think about unwritten rules in the classroom, such as putting the lid on the glue stick, keeping your desk in one spot, or putting trash in the garbage. Discuss how students learn about unwritten rules. Are there unwritten rules at home, at grocery stores, in the movie theater?

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Language 5

Stoked

Whenever Vlad is skateboarding, he is stoked. Explore this word with your students by examining context clues. When you reach the word in the book, stop and reread the sentence. Ask them to think about the meaning of the surrounding words and use what they know from the context to make an educated guess about the meaning of *stoked*. Then check that the meaning they chose makes sense in the sentence and in relation to the story. Give each student a sentence strip and ask them to use *stoked* in a sentence of their own. As a challenge, ask students to find a word they don't know in a book and use these same steps to determine its meaning.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Language 4

Spark Debate

When Miss Fussbucket is frustrated with Vlad, she asks, "Why can't you be more like your classmates?" Split the class into two groups and assign one viewpoint to each group:

- 1) It is better to be like everyone else and blend in with the crowd.
- 2) It is better to be different and stand out from the crowd.

Give each group time to talk about how to support their viewpoint, as well as arguments to counter the other viewpoint. While they are in discussion, separate the desks in the classroom down the center, with each side facing the other. Mediate a debate where each group argues their point, allowing for meaningful but respectful conversation. After the debate, ask students to share their true opinions of whether they think it is better to be like everyone else or to be different.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening 1

Guide prepared by Jamie Simon, an educational consultant in the Washington, DC, area, who has been involved in education for over fifteen years as both a teacher and an administrator.

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Name _____

Welcome to Spook School

Become the new spook at school! Create a character who could be a student at Miss Fussbucket's School for Aspiring Spooks. Draw a picture of your spook in the circle, and then fill in the surrounding boxes.

EDUCATORS: Reproduce this activity sheet for your students.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Anchor Standards for Literature 7



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