

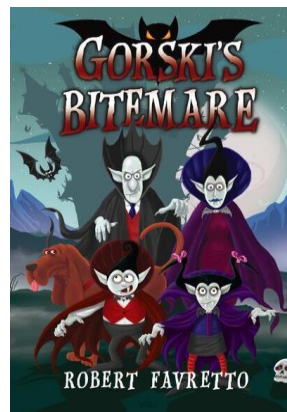


Teacher's Notes

# Gorski's Bitemare

By Robert Favretto and Danny Willis

**Target Audience:** Primary School Age.



*A Vampire's tale for thirsty readers eager to get their fangs into a good read.*

## Synopsis:

Gorski the vampire is in a flap! He has encountered a grave problem – so horrid that his life could be at stake, or at the very least drive him batty.

Following an unexpected event, he has noticed some disturbing and dramatic changes. Among other things, his fangs are shrinking, he faints at the sight of blood, and he really sucks at being a vampire!

What is he going to do? Can he find a cure, or will he go from *bat* to worse?

Read if you dare, for it is now time to lift the lid on this dark chapter of Gorski's life.

## About the Author:



Robert Favretto lives on the Mornington Peninsula where he is a primary school teacher and author of children's books. His stories often include puns and word play with creative twists to engage younger readers. Robert's books include *Lost for Words*, *Leonardo's Spot of Trouble*, *On the Nose*, *CAT-astrophe*, *CAT-apult* and *Home of the Cuckoo Clock*.

## Story Inspiration:

Robert's inspiration for *Gorski's Bitemare* came from watching the great classical flicks like *Dracula*, *Frankenstein*, *The Mummy* and *The Wolfman*. As a long-time fan of Count Dracula and the actors who played him, Lon Chaney, Bela Lugosi and Christopher Lee, he was excited to write this hilarious tale as a fresh take on the vampire. He hopes young readers will enjoy the humour, puns, similes and play on words in the story (including Danny's wonderful illustrations) as much as he enjoyed writing it.

## Reasons for Studying *Gorski's Bitemare*:

- To respond to text and share feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in the story.
- To use text as a springboard for general discussion and exploration of major themes.
- To describe plot including beginning (orientation), how the problem (complication) is introduced and solved (resolution), and consider how these features construct meaning.

- To discuss how authors and illustrators make stories exciting, moving and absorbing and hold readers' interest by using various techniques.
- To discuss how language is used to describe the setting in the text, and explore how the setting shapes the events and influences the mood of the narrative.
- To identify and study literary techniques: puns, similes and word play, and experiment with improving expression in student's own narratives.

### **Pre-reading Activities:**

- Look at the cover of *Gorski's Bitemare*. What do you think this story will be about? What might happen in the story? What genre do you think it will be? (A genre is a type of story such as an adventure, science fiction, fantasy, mystery, horror or romance etc.)
- What do we call the writing on the back of the book? (Blurb) What does the blurb tell us?
- Where and when do you think the story takes place? What gives you this impression?
- Brainstorm vampires in small groups. Write a list of things you have heard about them: from books and movies, their appearance – and likes and dislikes.

### **Post-reading Activities:**

- Which part of *Gorski's Bitemare* is your favourite or least favourite? Why?
- Would you change any part of the story? How?
- Would you change any of the characters? How?
- Which part of the story was the funniest, scariest, saddest and happiest? Find some evidence in the text to support your opinion.
- If you met one of the characters from the story, what would you say to them?
- Which parts of the story made you feel most emotional?
- Have you had any experiences like those in the story?

### **Discussing the Themes:**

The themes explored in *Gorski's Bitemare* include: Family, Friendship, Fear, Bullying, Bravery, Problem-solving and Consequences.

- As a class, list any other themes explored in this book.
- With a partner, choose one theme. Find one event in the book that illustrates your theme. Draw a picture of this event. Record on your picture the page where this scene occurs. Quote a line from the book as a title for your picture.
- How does Gorski feel when he is sent to the Fruit Bat Class? In pairs, discuss a time when you felt you didn't belong. What was this like? How did you respond?

### **Character:**

*Gorski's Bitemare* has wonderful characters with fantastic names such as Gorski, Drusella and Dr Acula. The reader can imagine them easily because they are so vividly described (and illustrated).

- Choose your favourite character and fill out the profile under these headings: Name, Age, Occupation, Physical Description, Personality Traits and Skills.
- Find your favourite description of a character and share this with the class.
- Create your own story character using the given profile.

### Creative Writing:

- Write an acrostic poem inspired by the book using the title: *Gorski's Bitemare*. (An acrostic poem is a type of poetry where the first, last or other letters in a line spell out a particular word or phrase.)
- Write a diary of the life of a mother bat. Finding a roost, caring for a baby bat and teaching it to fly and feed.
- Write a narrative of a night in the life of a bat.
- Write a conversation between a bat family looking for a new home. What would they look for, what would be safe, what are the dangers?
- Ask students to think of words with bat in them; wombat, cricket bat etc. Ask them to draw these as bats and compile them in a class book.

### Literary Techniques:

- Identify and study literary techniques: puns, similes and wordplay. Students can experiment using these in their own narratives.
- List some examples of similes used in *Gorski's Bitemare*. Explain that a simile compares two things using the word – 'like' or 'as'. Have students complete some similes of their own.
- Discuss that a pun is a play on words using a homonym or homophones. How many can you find in the book? Encourage students to create their own puns.

### Language and Structure:

- As a class, identify the various stages of the plot using the story frame below:

<b>GORSKI'S BITEMARE – Story Frame (Review)</b>	
<b>Orientation</b> Introduces the setting, time and characters.	
<b>Complication</b> Where the conflict or main problem in the story is introduced.	
<b>Rising Action/Sequence of Events</b> The events that move the story along and create suspense.	
<b>Climax</b> The high point, or most exciting moment of the story.	
<b>Resolution</b> How the problem is resolved, for better or worse, happily or unhappily.	

### Vocabulary:

- Refer to Student Worksheet 1: *Gorski's Bitemare* – Glossary
- Refer to Student Worksheet 2: *Gorski's Bitemare* – Wordsearch.

## WORKSHEET 1: GORSKI'S BITEMARE (GLOSSARY)

Use different colours to match the words and their meanings:

<b>aerobatics</b>	transported by air
<b>airborne</b>	spectacular flying feats and manoeuvres
<b>Beef Carpaccio</b>	the location of objects by reflected sound
<b>belch</b>	done in a hurried way and in a state of excitement or confusion
<b>bon appétit</b>	a movement or series of moves requiring skill and care
<b>coagulate</b>	an object surviving from an earlier time, especially one of historical interest
<b>descendent</b>	a minor wrongdoing
<b>drool</b>	(of an animal) preying naturally on others
<b>echolocation</b>	thinly sliced raw meat or fish served with a sauce
<b>emblazoned</b>	brightened with light
<b>frantically</b>	emit gas noisily from the stomach through the mouth
<b>illuminate</b>	marked or shown in order to be very noticeable
<b>instinct</b>	a building in which monks live and worship
<b>manoeuvre</b>	good appetite: enjoy your meal
<b>misdemeanour</b>	descending from an ancestor
<b>monastery</b>	the way people or animals react or behave, without having to think or learn about it
<b>predatory</b>	to let saliva dribble from the mouth
<b>ornate</b>	extremely hungry
<b>Ossenworst</b>	feeling or expressing jubilation after a victory or achievement
<b>ravenous</b>	elaborately or highly decorated
<b>relic</b>	cause (a fluid) to change to a solid or semi-solid state
<b>simultaneously</b>	a column of rock that hangs from the roof of a cave and is formed over a very long period of time by drops of water containing lime falling from the roof
<b>stalactite</b>	at the same time
<b>triumphant</b>	raw beef sausage originating in Amsterdam

## WORKSHEET 2: GORSKI'S BITEMARE (WORSEARCH)

Find the list words. They could be forwards, backwards, up, down or diagonal. Once all of the words have been found, use the left over letters to find the hidden message.

T	B	N	O	I	T	A	C	O	L	O	H	C	E	D
S	D	A	D	C	A	S	T	L	E	A				R
R			S		M	O	N	A	S	T	E	R	Y	A
O	V	A	T	E	U	M	P		I	R	E	S	S	C
W			A		M	F	L	Y	I	N	G	T	O	U
N		T	L		A	E		L		E		A		L
E	F		A		O		N		R		G	B		A
S	M	I	C	R	O	B	A	T	S	U		A		Y
S	T	H	T		I	R	S		L	T	Y	G	T	M
O		R	I	E		A	D	A	E	R	S	E	E	E
T	E		T	N	A		T	G		E	R	M	L	D
R	I		E		O	E		T		R		O	B	A
E	K	B	S	T	G	I	E		A		T		O	C
F	S	E		H	D	R	S	T	O	K	E	R	G	A
L	R	L	E	G	T	H	C	U	E		I		R	Y
E	O	L	T	I		E	F	A	F	N		G	S	R
C	G	T	I	L	N	A	L	L	E	S	U	R	D	F
T		O	B	N	I		N		T		N		O	L
I	A	W	G	O	O	B	L	O	O	D	O	A	D	E
O	R	E		O	E		S	T	A	B	A	D	R	B
N	M	R	S	M	A	N	G	O	S	T	E	E	N	T



BASEMENT  
 BATS  
 BELFRY ACADEMY  
 BELLTOWER  
 BITE  
 BLOOD  
 CASTLE  
 COAGULATE  
 DAD  
 DRACULA  
 DR STOKER  
 DRUSELLA  
 ECHOLOCAATION  
 FLYING  
 GOBLET  
 GORSKI  
 MEGABATS  
 MICROBATS  
 MONASTERY  
 MOONLIGHT  
 MRS MANGOSTEEN  
 MUM  
 NECTAR  
 OSSENWORST  
 REFLECTION  
 STALACTITES  
 TRANSFUSION

Hidden Message: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Science / Visual Art / Technology / Geography / Research:**

- Have students design bat ears they can wear to increase their hearing powers.
- Get students to research types of bats, postures and shapes to produce hanging mobiles. Introduce prey and predator animals and plant foods for fruit and blossom bats. Use origami bat patterns to make decorative mobiles. Use plant and other materials to make your bats, banksia bodies, hakea seed nut ears and big leaf wings etc. Use this activity to lead into the construction of food chains and webs.
- Ask students to design and fly bat kites.
- Discuss a plan of action to protect a small area of bush where bats roost in your local area.
- Develop and design a program to make and market bat roost boxes, and monitor the success of boxes. Produce a video or photo-board display on making bat boxes for other schools.
- Show students pictures of a variety of bats, and using the question ‘What is a bat?’ Record their ideas on a chart. Return to these basic concepts and expand on them as students learn more about bats.
- Devise a menu for a bats birthday party. Invite megabat and microbat guests and design menus, invitations and table settings etc.
- Design a bat stamp for the post office. What are some batty addresses to send your bat mail to?
- Organise a visit to a zoo, sanctuary or museum to see bats.
- Organise students to go on a bat treasure hunt through your resource centre. Ask them to research children’s literature on bats in the library, and develop a list of bat terms to increase their bat literacy.
- Ask students to find examples of bats from around the world and design a large world map display to present their findings of the bats. Include information on size, habitat, diet etc.
- Organise to visit a hospital to see how an ultrasound machine works. Discuss other applications of sound technology and use by humans.

## **Health / Physical Education:**

- Develop an exercise routine or aerobics based on bat movements and flight. Wing-stretch, moth catch, bat scurry, roost, wing wrap, hang and flutter, etc.
- Ask students to hang upside down in the playground. Discuss the difficulties and advantages of this position. Bats have special valves in their blood vessels to stop the blood rushing to their heads. Special clawed feet let the force of their mass help them to hold on to objects as they hang.

## **Mathematics:**

- A microbat can eat 500 to 1000 insects in an hour. Some bats only feed for two 30-minute periods every twenty-four hours. How many insects could a bat eat in: a day? a week? a month? and a year?
- Some fruit bats can eat up to two times their own mass in fruit in three hours. Weigh a banana. If a fruit bat weighs a kilogram how many bananas will it eat in: three hours? two hours? one hour?
- Bats are quite long lived for their size. Research the longevity of other animals in comparison to bats. Display your results.

