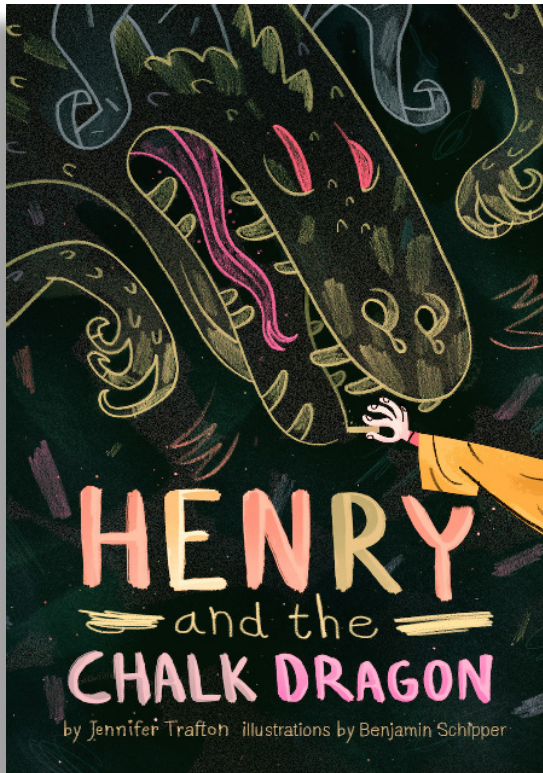


# Curriculum Guide

## HENRY AND THE CHALK DRAGON

by Jennifer Trafton  
illustrations by Benjamin Schipper



ISBN 978-0986381881 • RABBIT ROOM PRESS

IN THE TOWN OF SQUASHBUCKLE, just about anything can happen, and when Henry Penwhistle draws a mighty Chalk Dragon on his door, the dragon does what Henry least expects—it runs away.

Now Henry's art is out in the world for everyone to see, and it's causing trouble for him and his schoolmates Oscar and Jade. If they don't stop it, the entire town could be doomed!

To vanquish the threat of a rampaging Chalk Dragon, Sir Henry Penwhistle, Knight of La Muncha Elementary School, is going to have to do more than just catch his art—he's going to have to let his imagination run wild. And *that* takes bravery.

## You have to be brave to be an artist.

“Altogether, a delicious faceoff between forces of conformity and creativity run amok, spiced with offbeat names as well as insights expressed with eloquent simplicity.”

—BOOKLIST (starred review)

“Jennifer Trafton has done it again, crafting a whimsical story that will delight readers young and old. For all who feel that they have art inside of them that needs to come out—this book will give you the courage to be who you are and make something beautiful for the world.”

—Sarah Mackenzie, READ-ALOUD REVIVAL

[www.jennifertrafton.com](http://www.jennifertrafton.com)



# Contents

This curriculum guide is intended to provide a teacher or parent with ideas and tools for using *Henry and the Chalk Dragon* to enhance writing, vocabulary, and comprehension skills while at the same time encouraging kids to use their imaginations and to be creative. Suitable for a traditional classroom, a homeschool group, or a family reading the book together, the activities and worksheets are aimed at 2nd through 4th grade students but are adaptable to other ages as needed. **Where appropriate, relevant Common Core State Standards are noted. For more information on the Common Core, visit [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org).**

## Teacher's Guide

Discussion Questions **(see individual questions for CC standards)**

Activities **(see individual activities for CC standards)**

## Student Worksheets

Rules of Chivalry **(CCSS.ELA.RL.2.3, 3.3, 4.3)**

Heroic Poetry **(CCSS.ELA.L.2.1, 2.6, 3.1, 3.5, 4.1, 4.5)**

My Unusual Pet

Bunny Boxes

Similes **(CCSS.ELA.L.2.5, 3.5, 4.5)**

Metaphors **(CCSS.ELA.L.2.5, 3.5, 4.5)**

Superteacher

Dictionary Quest **(CCSS.ELA.L.2.4, 3.4, 4.4)**

Once Upon a Circle **(CCSS.ELA.W.2.3, 3.3, 4.3)**

I Am Unique **(CCSS.ELA.L.2.1, 2.6, 3.1, 3.5, 4.1, 4.5)**

## Printables

Knight of La Muncha Certificate

Bookmarks

## About the Author



# Discussion Questions

- How many things does the Chalk Dragon turn into during the story? Can you list them all? If *you* could draw one picture of your own and make it come to life, what would you draw? Why?  
(CCSS.ELA.RL.2.1, 3.1, and 4.1)
- Why is Henry afraid to show his art at school? Have you ever been afraid to let people see something you made? Which characters help Henry grow braver during the story, and how do they help?  
(CCSS.ELA.RL.2.1, 2.3, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, and 4.3)
- What caused the argument between Henry and Oscar? Have you ever worked really hard at something and been proud of it, only to have someone laugh at it? How did that make you feel? How did you respond?  
(CCSS.ELA.RL.2.1, 2.3, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, and 4.3)
- For a long time, Henry believes that Principal Bunk is the villain of the story. What happens to change his mind about the principal? Have you ever changed your mind about a person once you got to know them better? What do you think might have happened to the principal in the past to make him sad?  
(CCSS.ELA.RL.2.1, 2.3, 2.6, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1 and 4.3)
- We understand characters (and people) best when we understand what they really, truly want deep down inside—their heart's desire. What do you think is the heart's desire of each of these characters: Henry, Oscar, Jade, Miss Pimpernel, Principal Bunk, Mr. Bruce, the Lunch Lady, and the Chalk Dragon?  
(CCSS.ELA.RL.2.3, 2.6, 3.3, and 4.3)
- A hero goes on a *quest* in order to find something he or she wants or to do something very important. How does Henry's quest change during this story? What is his quest when he gets off the bus with the dragon-spider in his lunchbox? What is his quest after he sees the "angry" picture in his sketchbook? What is his quest when he crosses the flooded hallway? At the end of the book, does Henry achieve his quest? How? (CCSS.ELA.RL.2.5, 3.3, and 4.3)
- What does it mean to be a good *knight* in this story? What does it mean to be a good *artist*?  
(CCSS.ELA.RL.2.1, 3.1, 3.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4)
- Is imagination only for artists? Who uses their imagination in this story, other than Henry? Why is imagination important for a scientist? A poet? A cook? A bus driver? A school principal? A teacher? A parent?  
(CCSS.ELA.RL.2.1, 3.1, 4.1, and 4.2)



# Activities

## Inspired by the Classics

*Henry and the Chalk Dragon* alludes to a number of classic children's books and includes a recommended book list at the end. This can serve as the springboard for a literature unit. Alternatively, choose a book from this list and read it aloud. After you finish, have each student choose one of the *minor* characters in the book, discuss that character's personality and motivations, and rewrite the story (or one of the scenes) from that character's point of view. **(CCSS.ELA.RL.2.6, RL.3.3, RL.4.6, W.2.3, W.3.3, and W.4.3)**

## Name the Smiles

How many different kinds of smiles can your class make? Take photos of the students smiling in as many ways as they can think of. Pin the smile photos on a bulletin board and give a name to each smile, such as the "I-Just-Ate-Something-Delicious" Smile, the "I-Love-My-Teacher" Smile, the "I-Know-Something-You-Don't-Know" Smile, and so on.

## Vegetable Week Art Show

Hold your own version of La Muncha Elementary School's National Vegetable Week Art Show! Spend time as a class exploring the great variety and beauty of vegetables—their diverse colors, shapes, textures, smells, and tastes. Split students into small groups. Have each group collaborate on an art project that promotes healthy eating. You could also try creating temporary art with the vegetables themselves.



## Shape Collages

*Henry and the Chalk Dragon* is about shapes—the shapes we draw, the shapes we imagine, and the shapes we *are*. Have students cut lots of different shapes, in different sizes and colors, out of construction paper. Then let them play around with and combine these shapes into a collage, using glue sticks to affix the shapes to large sheets of white paper. You can use the Wassily Kandinsky painting featured on the "Once Upon a Circle" worksheet (as well as other Kandinsky paintings) as inspiration for these colorful, abstract works of art.



# Activities



## Quest Sketchbooks

Just as keeping a regular journal helps a young writer practice writing skills, keeping a regular sketchbook exercises a young artist's eye, hand, and imagination. Encourage the students to follow Henry's example and start their own Quest Sketchbooks to keep a record of their imaginations' wild adventures. Provide blank notebooks and let them decorate the covers and create a title page with their own name on it: "\_\_\_\_\_’s Quest." Allow students to share their drawings and describe each "adventure" out loud to the class. **(CCSS.ELA.SL.2.4, 3.4, 4.4)**

## Bouncing Stories

Mr. Bruce tells Henry that he made up a story once that bounced from person to person and caused a kerfuffle. Seat students in a circle. Have each student write the first sentence of a story, then pass papers to the right. Give students two or three minutes to add to the new story in front of them, then call, "Time!" and pass papers to the right again. Keep writing and passing until everyone has had a chance to contribute to all the stories, then read out loud. **(CCSS.ELA.RL.4.6, W.2.3, W.3.3, and W.4.3)**

## The Class Dragon

On a chalkboard or white board, draw the rough outline of a dragon with large wings (no need for your drawing to be very good since it's going to get erased!) Assign each student one part of the dragon's anatomy (multiple students can contribute to the wings). One by one, have the students come up and erase their assigned part of the existing dragon drawing and add something in its place. Students assigned to wings can draw anything they want inside the wings. Encourage the students to be creative with their New Dragon: instead of a leg, they could draw a wheel; instead of a horn, they could draw a trumpet; instead of a tail, they could draw tentacles; etc. Give the finished creature a name.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Rules of Chivalry



Sir Henry Penwhistle, like the knights of King Arthur's Round Table, has a Code of Chivalry he tries to follow. In his armor, he writes reminders to himself about how to be a good knight, how to treat other people, and how to live bravely and honorably. In the left column, list some of Henry's rules. In the right column, write your own rules of chivalry.

## Henry's Rules

## My Rules


Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Heroic Poetry



Jade Longswallow tells Henry and Oscar that she will be their *bard* during their adventures. A bard is a poet who recites or sings poems in praise of a hero's brave deeds. Think of someone you know (a friend, a parent, a sibling, a teacher, etc.) who has done something that deserves praise. It doesn't have to be something big and "important." Small, everyday acts of kindness, love, or courage can also be heroic. In the box below, draw a picture of this person doing his or her heroic deed, just as Henry drew Oscar flying heroically on the *Stegosaurus*. Then, below the picture, write a short poem describing this person and his or her awesome deed.

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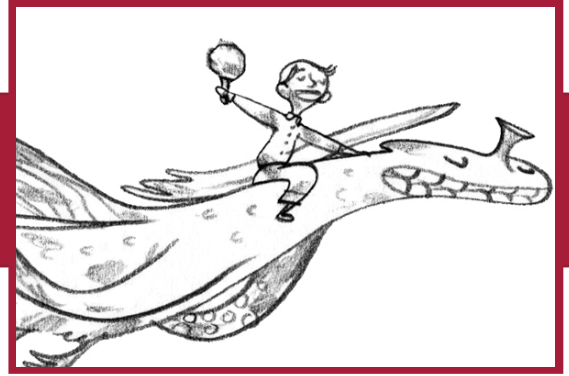
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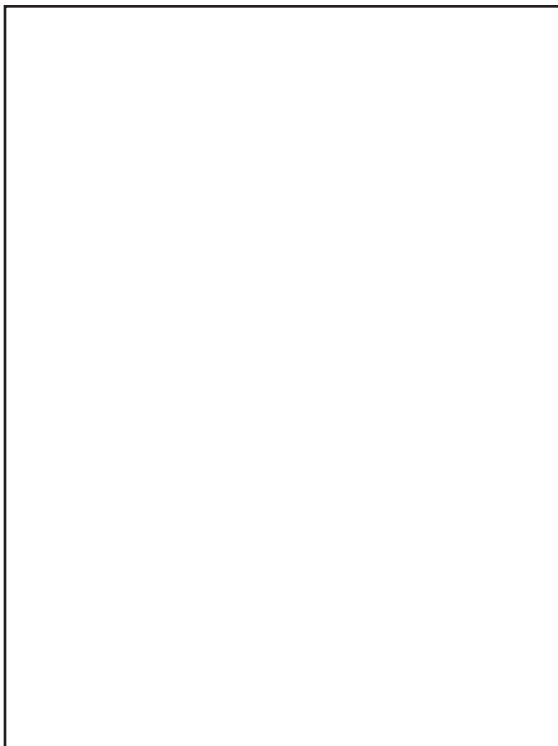
Name \_\_\_\_\_

# My Unusual Pet



Oscar has a pet octagon. Jade has a pet paperclip. Have you ever had an unusual pet? Just for fun, try it this week. Find an *inanimate* object (something that is not alive) that you can carry around easily. Bring this object to “life” using your imagination.

## A Portrait of My Pet and Me



My unusual pet is a \_\_\_\_\_

Its name is \_\_\_\_\_

It eats \_\_\_\_\_

It lives in \_\_\_\_\_

It loves \_\_\_\_\_

It does not like \_\_\_\_\_

It has these special abilities: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My favorite thing to do with my pet is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

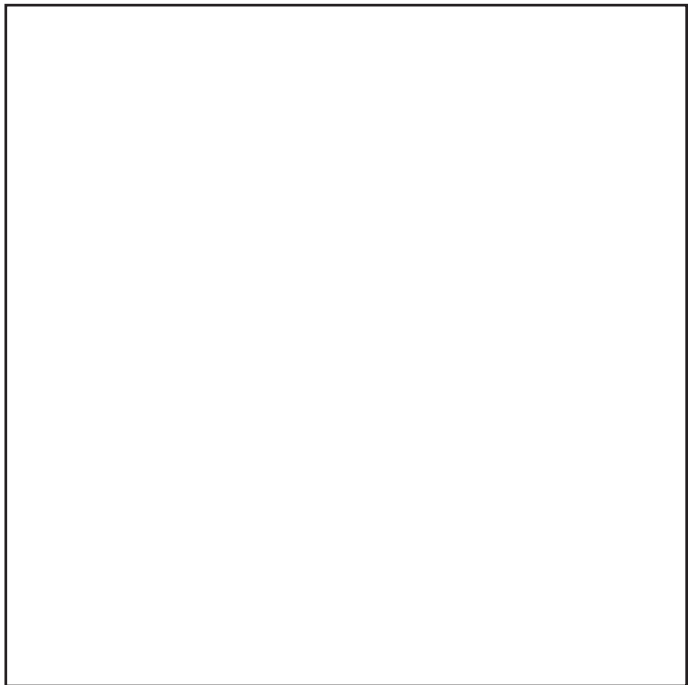
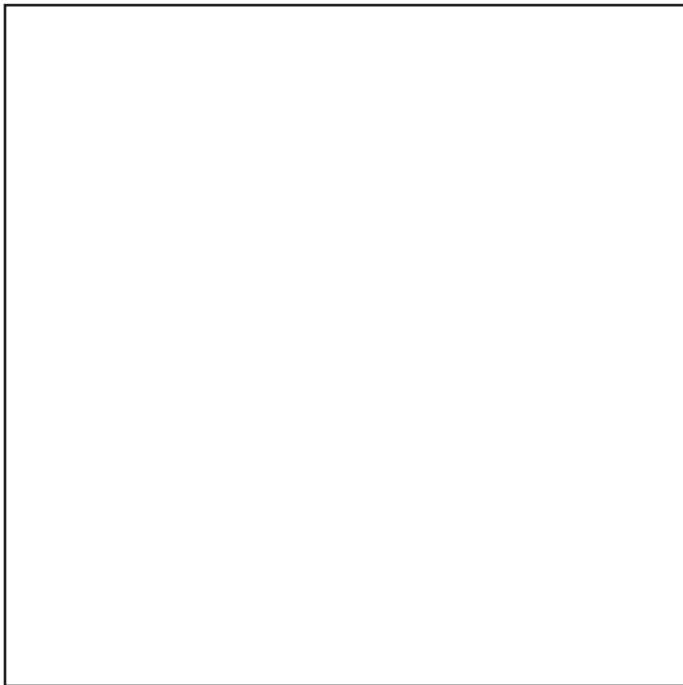
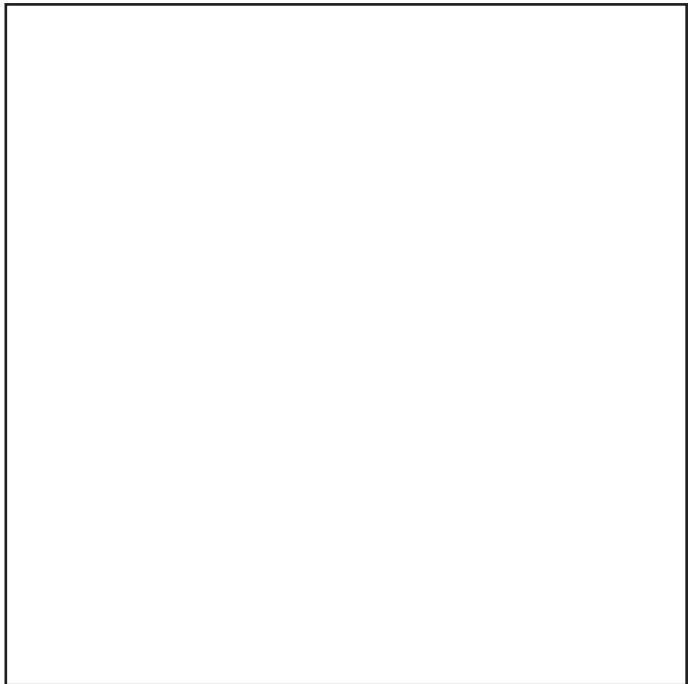
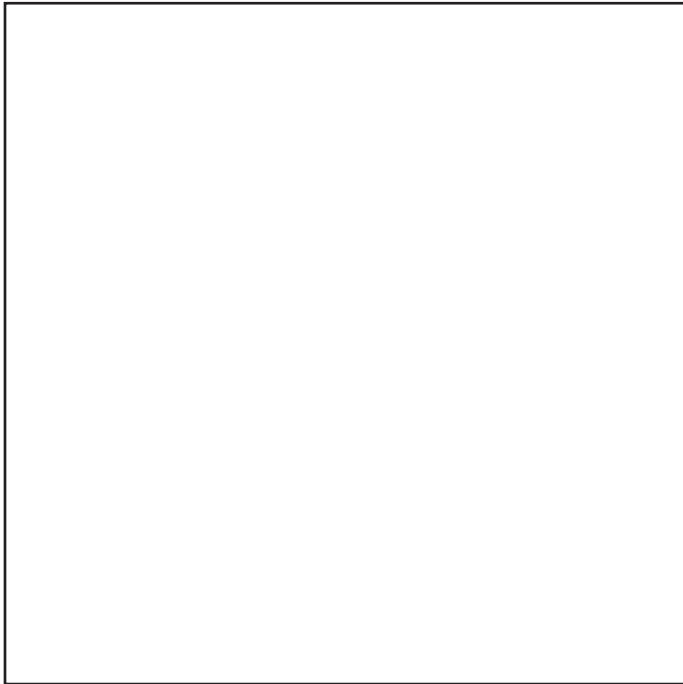


Name \_\_\_\_\_



# Bunny Boxes

Draw a bunny *four* different ways, doing different things. Make sure none of the bunnies look alike!



Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Similes



Have you ever looked at a tree and thought, “Those wavy branches look like tentacles”? When we compare something to something else using the words *like* or *as*, that’s called a simile. Below are some similes in *Henry and the Chalk Dragon*. Rewrite each simile using your own words, comparing that thing to something different.

The dragon’s teeth were like silver daggers.

The dragon’s teeth were like \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The sunset is like a huge red-hot bowling ball that smashed into a rainbow and melted it.

The sunset is like \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Her fuzzy scarf swirled around her neck like a wild purple cloud.

Her fuzzy scarf swirled around her neck like \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

His sword was as swift and swishy as a hummingbird caught in a washing machine.

His sword was as swift and swishy as \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

She stood as straight and proud as a flagpole.

She stood as straight and proud as \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The unicorn horn glittered like glass.

The unicorn horn glittered like \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Metaphors

Sometimes we compare one thing to another without using the words *like* or *as*. That's called a metaphor. People use metaphors all the time without even thinking about it.

**"My dad is such a clown."** My dad does not have a red nose, ride on a unicycle, or juggle bowling pins. But he loves to joke around and make people laugh *as if* he were a clown.

**"Benji is a walking dictionary."** Is Benji actually a little book with legs sticking out of it? No, of course not! But he knows so many big words that he's *like* a dictionary.

**"Lucy won't ride the roller coaster because she's a chicken."** Lucy does not have a beak or feathers, and she doesn't say, "BWAAAK!" But chickens are scared easily, and so we all know that being a "chicken" means being a coward.

**"Our house is an ice cube during the winter!"** Our house is not built with frozen water, and it will not melt into a puddle when spring comes. But it's so cold it *feels like* living in an ice cube.

Now you try. Pick *one* of the choices in the box below and describe it using a metaphor.

- Your brother or sister
- Your best friend
- The snow
- A crack of thunder
- A hot car
- The ocean

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Superteacher



Do you think your teacher might be a superhero in disguise? Or maybe your teacher *was* a superhero a long time ago, but has now forgotten? Let's help him (or her) remember. Draw a picture of your teacher, from head to toe, in proper superhero clothes. Then, to the right of your drawing, list your teacher's secret superhero name and superpowers.

My Teacher

My Teacher's  
Superhero Name

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My Teacher's  
Superpowers

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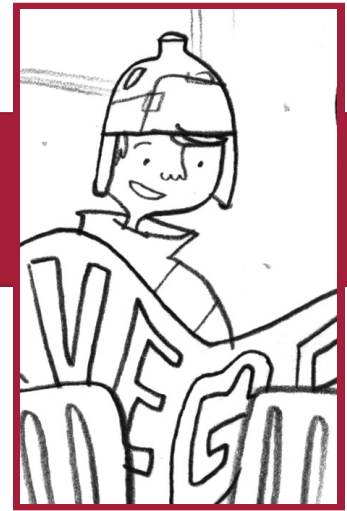
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Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Dictionary Quest



Oscar thinks he knows all the best words in the dictionary. Do you? Can you help these words find their definitions? Draw an arrow from each word on the left to its correct definition on the right. Use a dictionary if necessary!

apocryphal

too strong to be defeated

bedraggled

rotten and stinky

bumbershoot

probably false even though many people think it's true

cliché

wasting time

cockamamie

walking around a place

invincible

umbrella

lollygagging

soggy, limp, and dirty

nincompoop

harmful, wicked

perambulating

a rascally, mischievous person

pernicious

a foolish person

putrefied

ridiculous

scallawag

a phrase or idea we've heard over and over again

Name \_\_\_\_\_



# Once Upon a Circle

The Lunch Lady tells Henry that he would like the wild shapes and colors in the paintings of Wassily Kandinsky (va-SEE-lee kan-DIN-skee), a Russian artist. Here is a painting he made in 1923:



Wassily Kandinsky, "Throughgoing Line," 1923

How does the picture make you feel? Do the colors and shapes in the picture remind you of anything? When I look at clouds, I see the shapes of animals and people. When you look at this picture, what do you see? Does anything look like an eye? a turtle? a moustache? a shark? If you use your imagination, do you see a hero and a villain? On a separate sheet of paper, write a story about what you think is happening in this picture.

Name \_\_\_\_\_



# I Am Unique

*Unique* means one-of-a-kind. In the empty frame to the right, draw a portrait of yourself. Then, complete the sentences below to write a poem about the unique person that you are.

There is no one else in the world like me.

My face is the color of \_\_\_\_\_.

I have named my left ear \_\_\_\_\_

and my right ear \_\_\_\_\_.

My nose is a king, and its kingdom is \_\_\_\_\_.

When I look at the world, I see \_\_\_\_\_.

When I listen to the wind, I hear \_\_\_\_\_.

If I could open my mouth as wide as a \_\_\_\_\_

and speak as loudly as a \_\_\_\_\_,

I would say, “\_\_\_\_\_.”

My wildest dream is to \_\_\_\_\_.

My deepest wish is that \_\_\_\_\_.

Behind my eyes is a secret door that leads to \_\_\_\_\_,

and the key to open it is \_\_\_\_\_.

But if you want to come inside, you must first \_\_\_\_\_

And I will let you in.



On this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_  
in the year Two Thousand \_\_\_\_\_  
it is hereby proclaimed, declared, and betrumpeted  
that \_\_\_\_\_,

being brave of heart, mighty of imagination,  
and chock-full of chivalry, has been dubbed a

**Knight of La Muncha.**

Sally Forth!



Witnesses:

**Sir Henry**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(person of great worth)

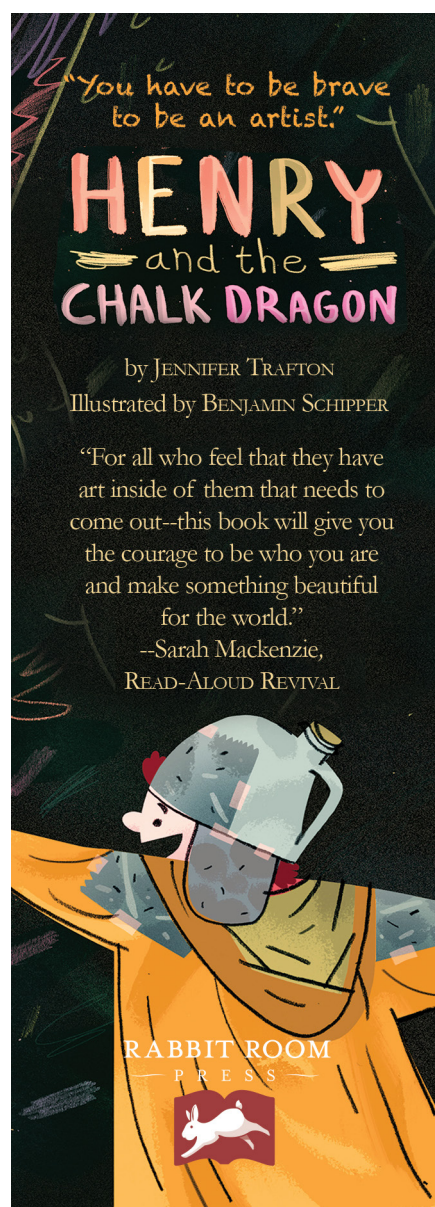
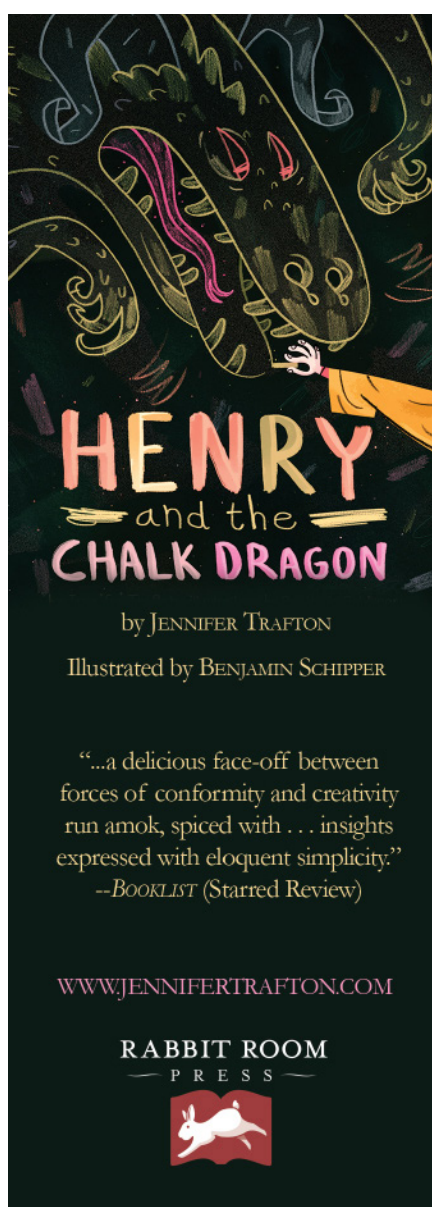
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sir Henry Penwhistle





# Bookmarks

Print out or photocopy this page on cardstock-weight paper, then cut out the bookmarks below.





# About the Author



JENNIFER TRAFTON is the author of *The Rise and Fall of Mount Majestic*, which was a nominee for Tennessee's Volunteer State Book Award and the National Homeschool Book award. *Henry and the Chalk Dragon* arose from her lifelong love of art and her personal quest for the courage to be an artist. When she's not writing or drawing, she teaches creative writing classes and workshops in a variety of schools, libraries, and homeschool groups, as well as online classes to kids around the world. She lives in a 150-year-old farmhouse in Nashville, Tennessee, along with her husband, an energetic border collie, a miniature rooster, an assortment of chickens and ducks, and a ghost who haunts the staircase.

## Also by Jennifer Trafton: *The Rise and Fall of Mount Majestic*



ISBN 978-0142419342 • PUFFIN

Oh, how ten-year-old Persimmony Smudge longs for Glory! Heroism! Adventure! But instead she leads a very dull life on the Island at the Center of Everything, weaving baskets and sweeping floors. Until, that is, the night she overhears a life-changing secret. It seems that Mount Majestic, the rising and falling mountain at the center of the island, is not a mountain at all. It's the belly of a sleeping giant! Now it's up to Persimmony and her new friend Worvil the Worrier to convince all the island's other quarreling inhabitants—the Rumblebumps, the Leafeaters, and most of all, the stubborn young king—that a giant is sleeping in their midst, and must not be woken.

With dazzling illustrations by the legendary Brett Helquist, Jennifer Trafton's fantastical debut tells the story of one brave girl's efforts to make an entire island believe the impossible.

[www.jennifertrafton.com](http://www.jennifertrafton.com)