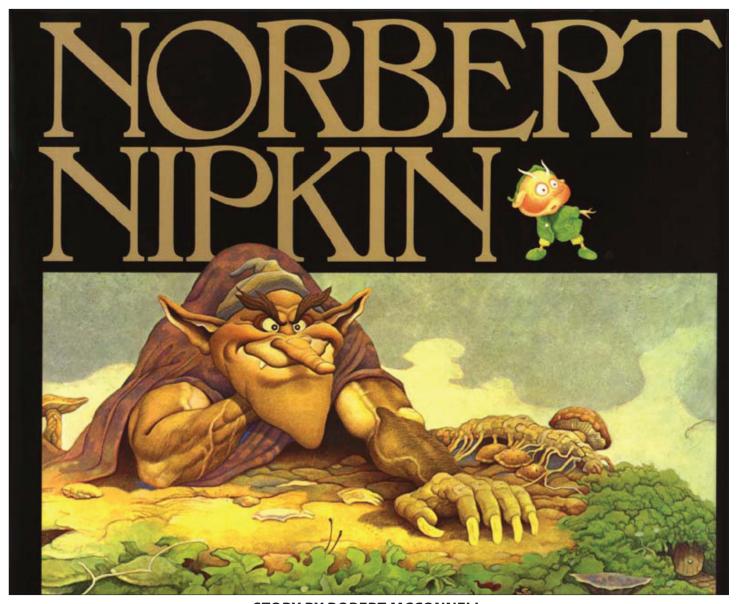
TEACHER'S GUIDE



STORY BY ROBERT MCCONNELL ILLUSTRATIONS BY STEVE PILCHER

Drama Suggestions for the Classroom

prepared by
Elaine Bandermann
Language Consultant
Scarborough Board of Education



Norbert Nipkin

Story by Robert McConnell • Illustrations by Steve Pilcher

Classroom suggestions for Norbert Nipkin

Using the story as a read-aloud

A teacher who wishes to use Norbert Nipkin as a read-aloud will find that the language flows easily, the poetry is natural, and the images are powerful. The reader/listener is drawn into the story through the imaginative, yet believable, characters and their developing dilemmas. The students can share their own experiences in which they have felt shy and perhaps afraid in unfamiliar situations. With the whole class or in small groups, the students, imagining themselves as Nipkins, can relate rumours that they have heard about Norbert, who loves playing in the forest. (Does he ever get into trouble?)

The beautiful illustrations provide another dimension for discussion and exploration. Many teachers will delight in using the story as a read-aloud, as a source for discussion, as a selection to compare with stories and characters that the children already know, and as a piece for the children to respond to through writing. Norbert Nipkin is an ideal starting point for making connections with other books written by Robert McConnell.

Using the story as a source for drama in the classroom

Through drama in the classroom, the students extend the story uniquely and personally. They step into the story themselves and actually become Nipkins and Zlogs. In their own language, the participants confront each other as Norbert and Grog. The book can be used with students at various ages and in several grades because the participants extend the characters themselves, adding detail and complexity issuing from their own experiences, creativity, and capabilities. Later, they can make connections from experiences in drama with the story as it appears in the book.

Elaine Bandermann, 1991

In contrast to plays, the following suggestions for drama do not require memorizing lines or following stage directions. The drama develops as the students create and unfold the story. The activities are open-ended, allowing the teacher to decide whether the story will be explored over several days or in a single session.

• Warm-up game: "Deep in the Woods" The school gym would provide plenty of space for this activity. Needed: 4 pylons or 4 frisbees to mark the length and width of the bridge. The bridge, above a rushing river, is travelled by friend and foe. The teacher guards the bridge at one end, while the class lines up to cross. Each person finds a way of travelling across the bridge. Make sure that a pause between individuals enables each person to cross safely. The only rule in the game is that no one can travel across the bridge using any of the methods that has already been demonstrated. For example, if someone hops backwards on the left foot, then no one else can do the same. Original responses are valued. Sliding, moving from side to side, doing cartwheels, travelling with hands and feet would all be permissible. If, however, the rule is broken, because a method of travel was duplicated, then the participant must leave the group, moving alone deep into the woods (somewhere else in the room). Play the game until everyone gets two turns.

• Read aloud to the class from the beginning of *Norbert Nipkin* through the following verse:

"Nipkins live in cozy rooms
Beneath the forest floor,
And each small home is guarded
By a tiny, wooden door."

Divide the class into groups of five or six. Each group is to create a story about Nipkins. Refer to the verse:

"But I'm sure you know about Nipkins, And what they like to do, Perhaps you've heard some stories, Well, all of those are true." A possible way to develop the group story is for one person in each group to begin telling the story. The teacher might use a hand drum or other rhythm instrument to signal the next person's turn. Each person in the group has an opportunity to continue the development of the story. Once the story has been created, the group can practice how they will retell it for the class. They may wish to have one narrator, two people producing sound effects, and two people adding movement. Perhaps they will have a group chant at the beginning or at the end. Perhaps they will retell the story in very much the same manner as it was created, each person having a turn, but adding instrumental sound effects. Note that the emphasis here is on **story-telling**, not "acting out" the story.

Allow time for the groups to share their stories with the class.

• The teacher continues to read the story aloud through these verses:

"But there are things even more gruesome, Some horrible things about Zlogs, They think nothing is so delicious As gartersnakes, toads and live frogs.

Except for one thing, little Norbert, And this is the worst part of all, They like to go hunting for Nipkins When leaves start to turn in the fall."

• A whole class drama, in which the students and teacher might sit on the floor in a circle, can be an effective means of speaking in role. The teacher may wish to tell the class that in a moment he or she will pretend to be a person at a meeting, and the students will find out during the meeting who they are in the imaginary story. Rather than raising their hands for permission to speak, the students should simply speak to the group when they are ready to do so. (The teacher could signal with the hand drum; turn from facing the wall to facing the group; or simply pause, looking at the floor and then to the whole class. Any comfortable method that the teacher selects will signal that he or she is now in role.) The teacher is in role as a police officer at a Neighbourhood Watch meeting. The students are in role as parents and grandparents of Nipkin children, and the officer addresses the parents with the concern that it is the time of year that the Zlogs go Nipkin-picking.

Elaine Bandermann, 1991 3

Certain statistics might be cited from casualties of the previous year. The officer notices that attendance at the meeting is much higher than usual and asks whether there is any particular worry that the parents and grandparents have about their Nipkin children. The parents share their worries and stories about recent happenings in the forest. The officer suggests that the parents work in groups of three to come up with a list of safety rules for Nipkin children to protect themselves against the terrible Zlogs.

At this point, each group of three parents/grandparents is given markers and coloured construction paper to make the list of instructions. The officer might mention that time is getting late, and the list must be completed within the next few minutes. The parents might also draw a picture to go with the list for the very youngest of Nipkins who can't yet read. The officer needs to post the lists on trees in the forest before dusk. Once the groups are back in the circle, a representative of each group reads the list and then hands it to the officer. The officer sincerely thanks all of the Nipkin parents and grandparents for their contribution and assures them that the lists will be posted immediately.

• Continue reading the story aloud to the class through the following verse:

"And as he got speaking with Norbert, He found life is full of surprises, They really were not that much different, Except for their names and their sizes."

Have the students sit in groups of two, facing each other. Ask the students to decide who is "A" and who is "B". Norbert (person "A") and Grog ("B") converse about their various hobbies, games, and the kinds of things they like to do in their spare time. How do they feel about meeting each other? Ask all the "A's" to stand just where they are. In role as an interviewer, the teacher asks Norbert what happened when he went outside to play today. Can he really trust a Zlog? How does he know? If time permits, ask all the "B's" to stand, and interview Grog regarding his first time Nipkin-picking. Does he plan to tell his family that he has a Nipkin for a friend? It is helpful for the teacher to move about the class, speaking loud enough for everyone to hear, but talking directly to each student as Norbert or Grog.

Extensions:

- 1. Invite the students to record the stories about Nipkins that their groups had presented to the whole class.
- 2. Make a bulletin board of the posters warning Nipkin children of the terrible Zlogs.
- 3. Have the book Norbert Nipkin available for the students to read again on their own.
- 4. Invite the students, in role as Norbert or Grog, to write about their plans for the future.

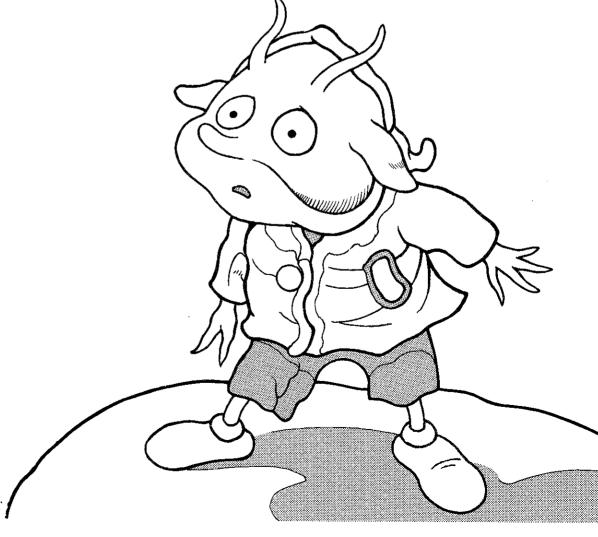
NORBERT NIPKIN

TEACHER ACTIVITY SHEETS

prepared by

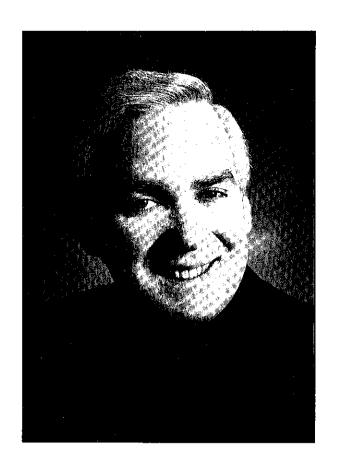
Ruth Sidorchuk

Teacher-Librarian Scarborough Board of Education





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Robert McConnell, the author of the Norbert Nipkin stories, is Co-ordinator of Modern Languages for the Scarborough Board of Education. He is also the author of more than 150 books in French as a second language, ranging from primary through university levels. He has a wide range of teaching experience, having taught both elementary and secondary school French and secondary school German. In addition, he has lectured in both French and German methodology at the University of Toronto.

Mr. McConnell's versatility is evidenced as well through his work as the author/editor of a number of trade and limited edition books on

Canadian art, including major publications on A. J. Casson and Glen Loates.

His children's publications, under the Napoleon Publishing imprint, are:

Norbert Nipkin, © 1989, illustrated by Steve Pilcher
Norbert Nipkin and the Magic Riddle Stone, © 1990,
illustrated by Steve Pilcher, translated into French as
Norbert Nipkin et la Pierre aux énigmes, © 1991
Nip and Tuck, ©1990, illustrated by James Watling,
translated into French as Émonde et Scie, © 1991
The Strawberry Jam, ©1990, illustrated by Christine Lott,
translated into French as Fraises en déconfiture, © 1991
Boid and the Bullies, ©1990, illustrated by RC Williams
Baby Boid, © 1991, illustrated by RC Williams
Sarah's Secret, ©1991, illustrated by June Lawrason
Gobley for Mayor!, ©1991, illustrated by Linda Potts
Davenport Dumpling, ©1991, illustrated by Christine Lott



Steve Pilcher, who resides in Toronto, is a self-taught, award-winning illustrator. He is particularly noted for his work with children and has been a frequent teacher at children's workshops. As well, he has lectured at workshops and conferences on the art of illustration. He is the creator of "Ted the Troll", principal character in an Addison-Wesley educational kit, and was senior illustrator for Addison-Wesley's major mathematics program, MathQuest. He is currently at work on a book about dinosaurs.

Mr. Pilcher has illustrated the following picture books for children:

Elfabit, © 1982 Hayes Publishing The Bus Ride, ©1986 Gage Publishing Norbert Nipkin, © 1989 Napoleon Publishing Nobert Nipkin and the Magic Riddle Stone, © 1990 Napoleon Publishing

NORBERT NIPKIN

Author: Robert McConnell

Illustrator: Steve Pilcher

"A Nipkin lives in the forest, Among the leaves of green, But he's so very small and clever, That he's seldom ever seen."

So begins an adventure into the magical realm of Nipkins and Zlogs. Combine the magic of Robert McConnell's poetry and the magnificent illustrations of Steve Pilcher, and you have a journey into fantasy which no child can resist.

Robert McConnell's books present important messages about friendship and about dealing with the problems that life presents to children. Each book, as well as being a gripping story, contributes to the child's values development and moral growth.

Venturing forth into Nipkinland provides the means to capture a child's imagination. Imagine a Nipkin and Zlog becoming friends! After all, Zlogs are supposed to eat Nipkins! Here, skillfully woven into poetry, is the real value of true friendship. We see the environments of the Nipkins and Zlogs depicted and how each is taught to treat the other. We are drawn to see a friendship, a special friendship between Norbert and Grog, which develops despite the odds and leaves us feeling a lot better about ourselves. "After less than an hour together, it's really not hard to be friends."

The book provides a multitude of experiences, a springboard to creative writing, values education, and a wealth of opportunity for artistic endeavours. The scope of this book's motivational impact is absolutely endless.

HOW TO USE THIS PACKAGE

This activity package contains suggestions for bulletin board displays, biographies and pictures of the author and illustrator, and reproducible blackline masters for student activities such as paper-bag puppets. Also included are activity cards which may be mounted on bristol board and laminated.

The whole unit may be stored in the envelope provided, which could also be laminated, or the cover of the envelope may be glued to a storage file folder.

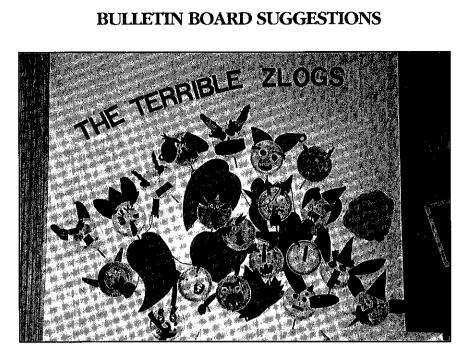
These activities may be used for whole group work, small activity centres or for independent work which would require a specific number of activities to be completed in a given time. Each child should be provided with a folder in which to store the completed material.

Before beginning the activities, be sure the children are familiar with the story and have heard the cassette of the author reading it. Use the pictures of the author and illustrator in preparing bulletin boards or author visits.

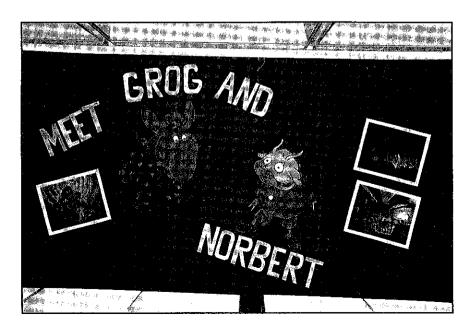
Enjoy!

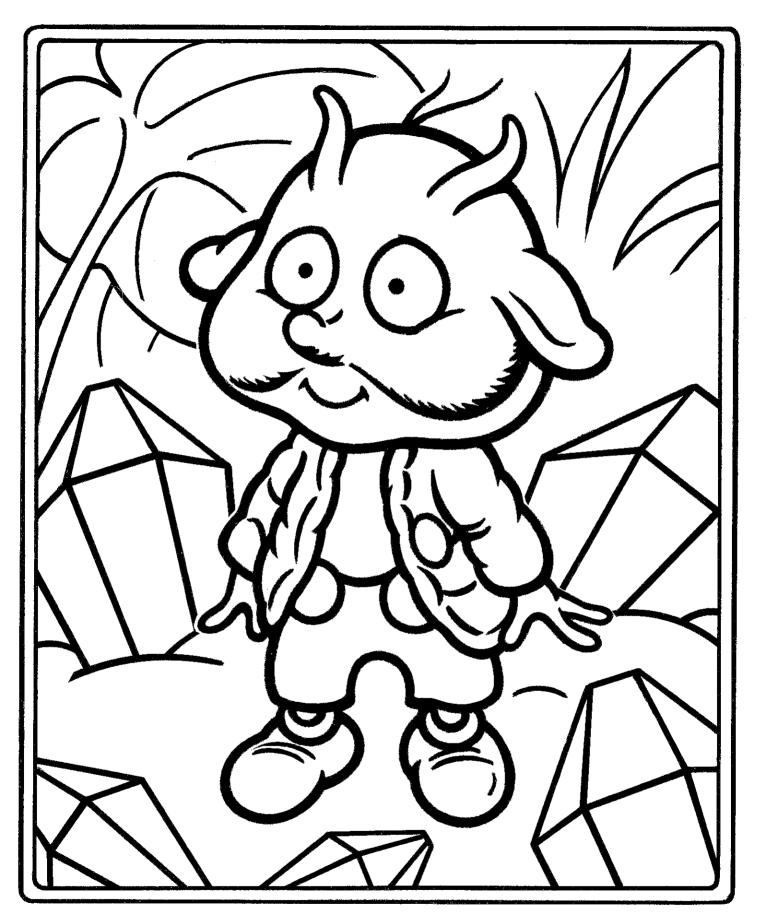


BULLETIN BOARD SUGGESTIONS



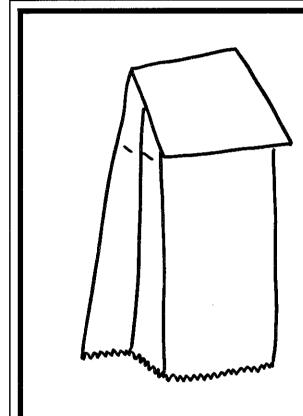






NORBERT NIPKIN TO NORBERT NIPKIN

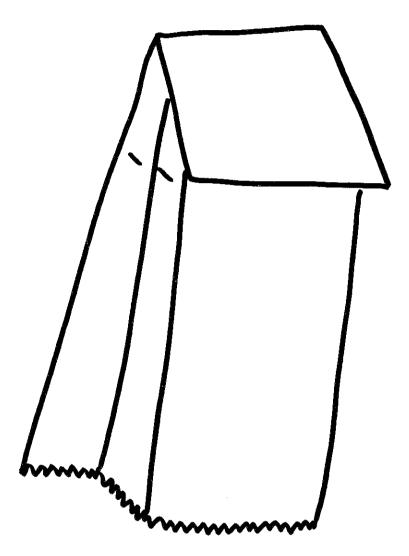
Napoleon Publishing



MAKE PAPER BAG PUPPETS IN ORDER TO ACT OUT THE STORY

Put the head of the character on the top of the bag, and put the body on the main part of the bag.

You can also use the puppets to act out a new story about Grog and Norbert.



Make paper bag puppets of the Zlogs, Norbert and Grog, so that you can act out the story.

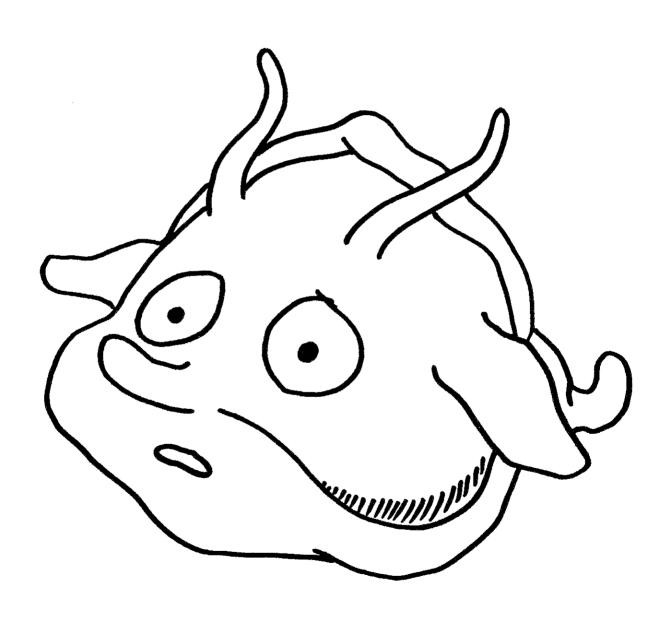
Put the head of the character on the top part of the paper bag, and put the body on the main part of the bag.

Now you can make other scenery to use when you act out the story about Norbert and Grog.



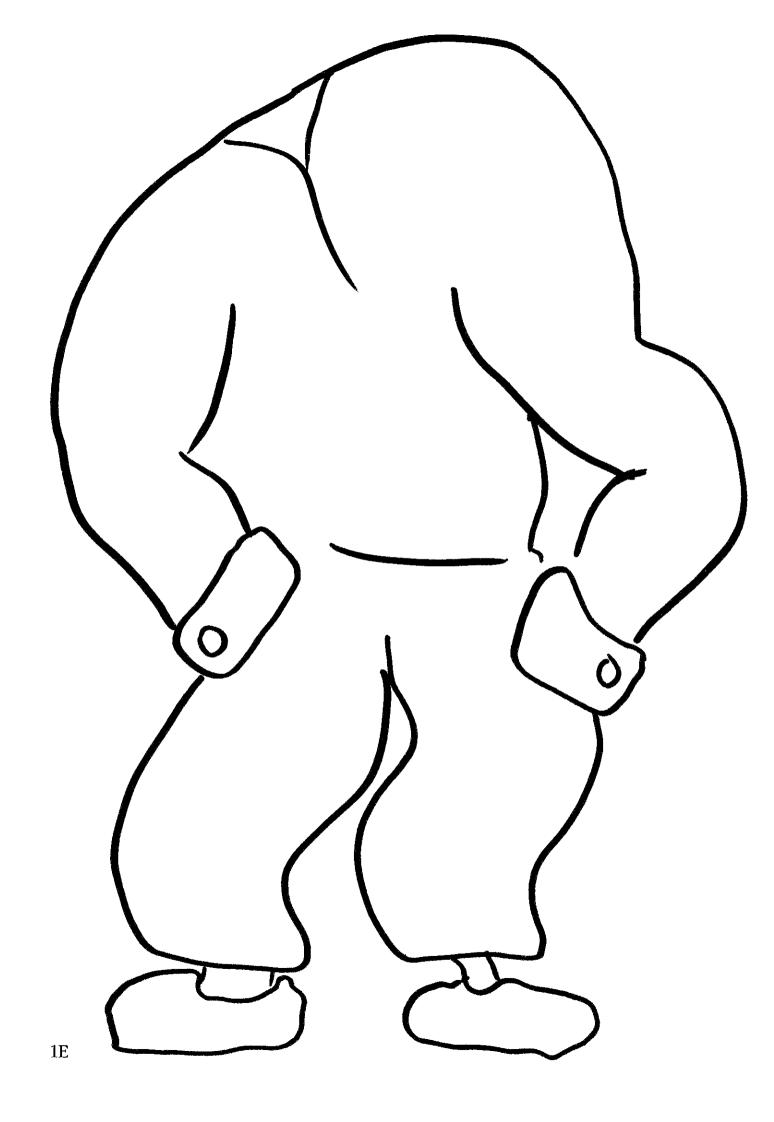
NORBERT NIPKIN PAPER BAG PUPPETS

Use the following pages to make paper bag puppets of Norbert, Grog and a Zlog. Use your puppets to re-enact the story of Norbert Nipkin, or to create a new adventure for the two friends.

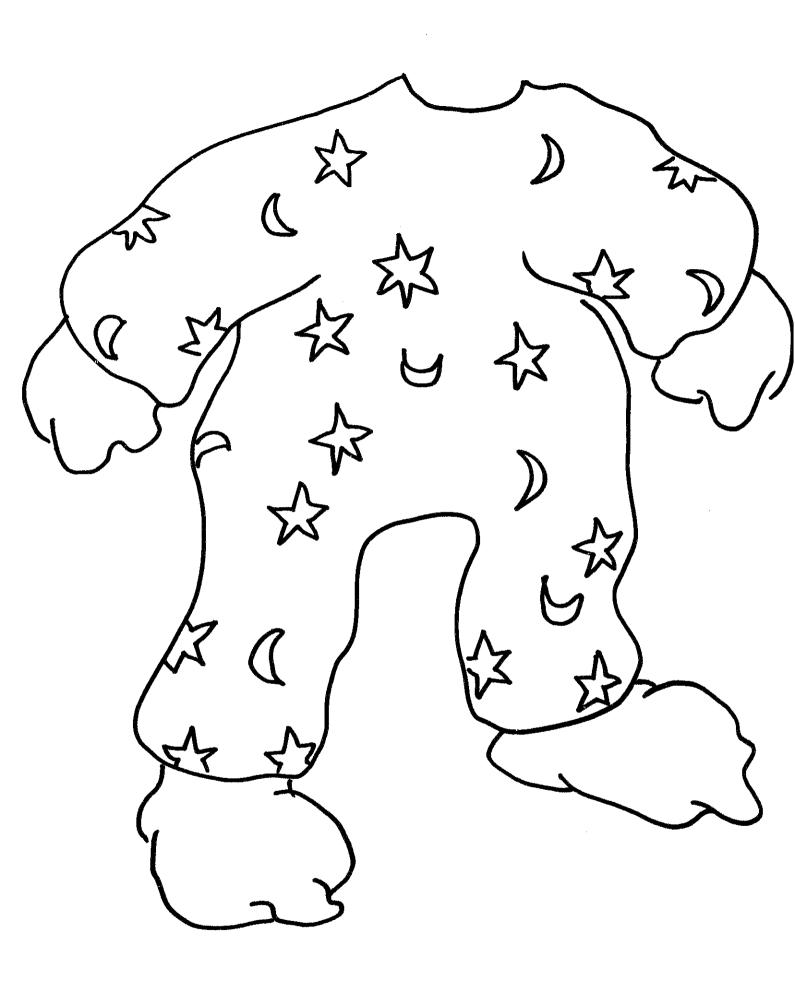


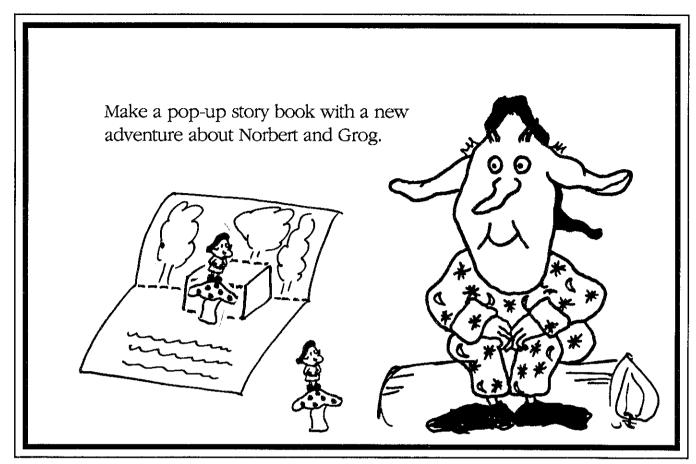


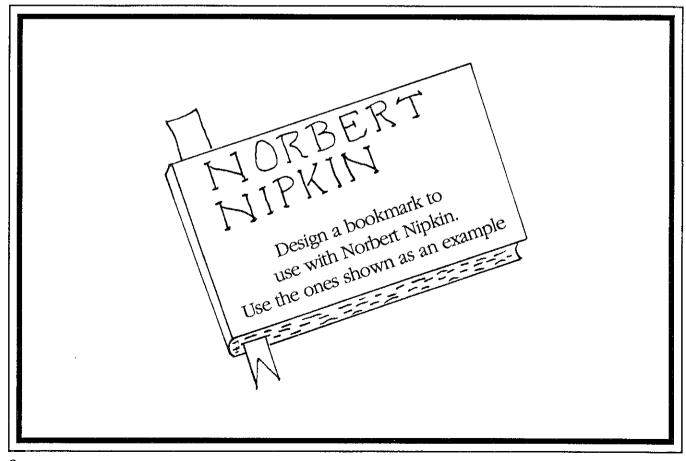




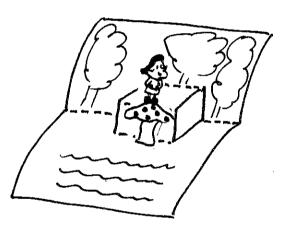








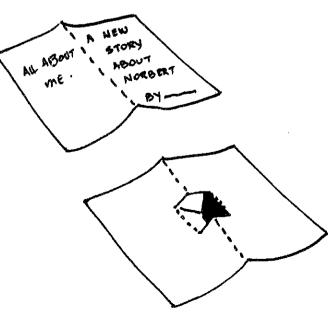


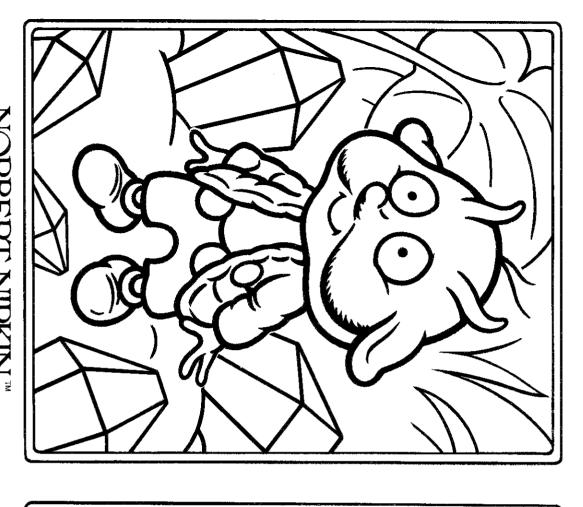


Fold a piece of paper in half. Make two cuts in the folded edge. Push the centre through to make a pop-up centre section. Add a character from your story to the pop-up section. Write your story underneath. Use the other page for scenery.

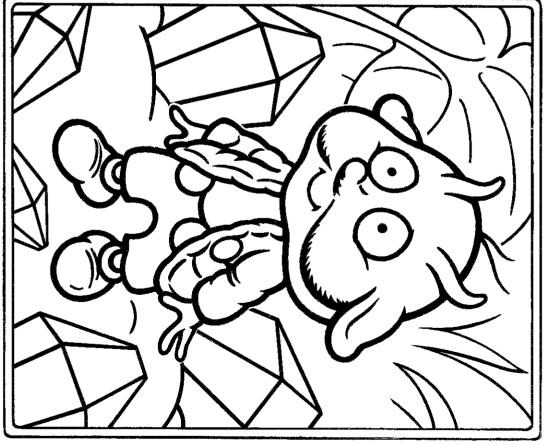
Fold in half a second piece of paper which is the same size as the first. Glue it as a cover to the back of your story.

Decorate the cover of the story. Write your own autobiography on the back.

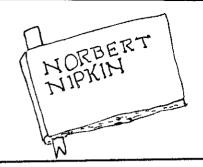






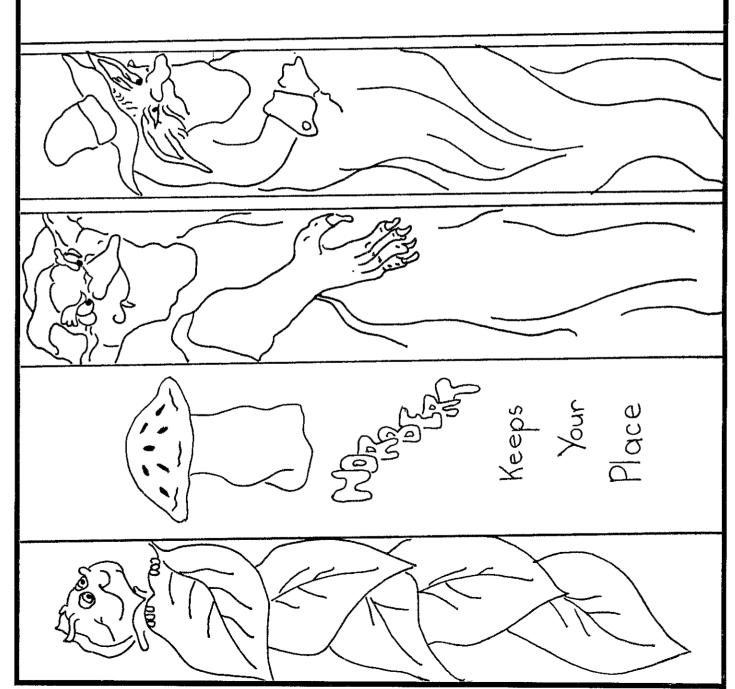


NORBERT NIPKIN



NORBERT BOOKMARKS

A book mark holds your place in a book. Here are some book marks from Norbert Nipkin. Use the blank one below to design your own.



MAKE YOUR OWN TELEVISION STORY ABOUT NIPKINS AND ZLOGS

Use the strips to tell the story in pictures. Choose the most interesting parts to show in your picture. When you are finished, cut the top and bottom of the television screen. Slide your story through the slots to show on the television screen.



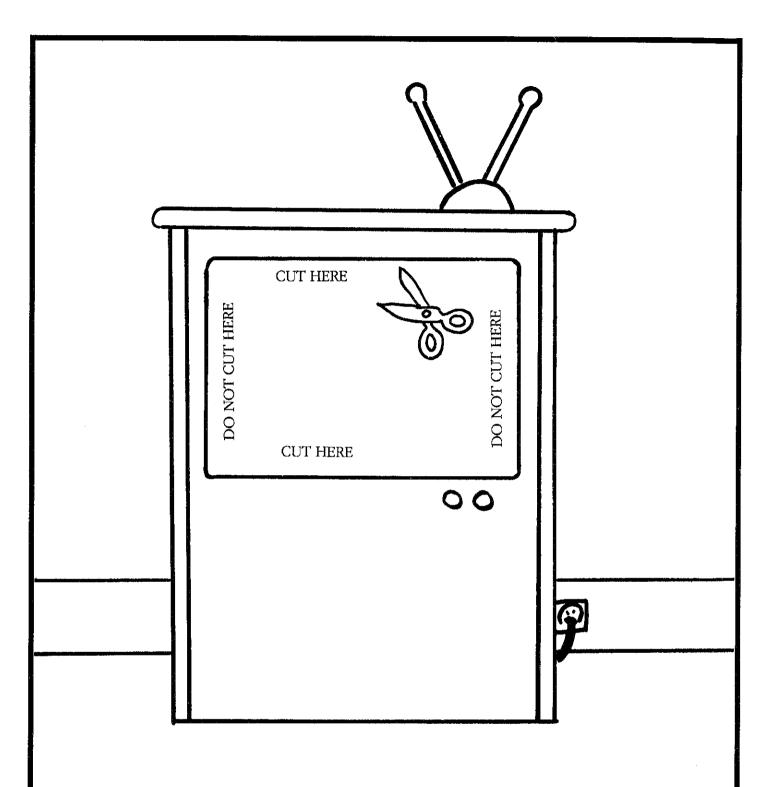
4

BE A WRITER LIKE ROBERT McCONNELL

Choose a story idea. Write a story using your dictionary to help. Illustrate your story. You may use one of the ideas below or choose a different story of your own about Norbert and Grog.

- 1. A Zlog is just going to eat Norbert!
- 2. Norbert becomes lost trying to find Grog's house.
- 3. One day Norbert woke up feeling sad.
- 4. Norbert and Grog like winter. Write a story about a winter adventure.
- 5. Write a brand new adventure about Norbert and Grog.
- 6. It is Grog's Birthday. Norbert is going to _____?
- 7. Norbert and Grog have just started school. Write about their first day at school.

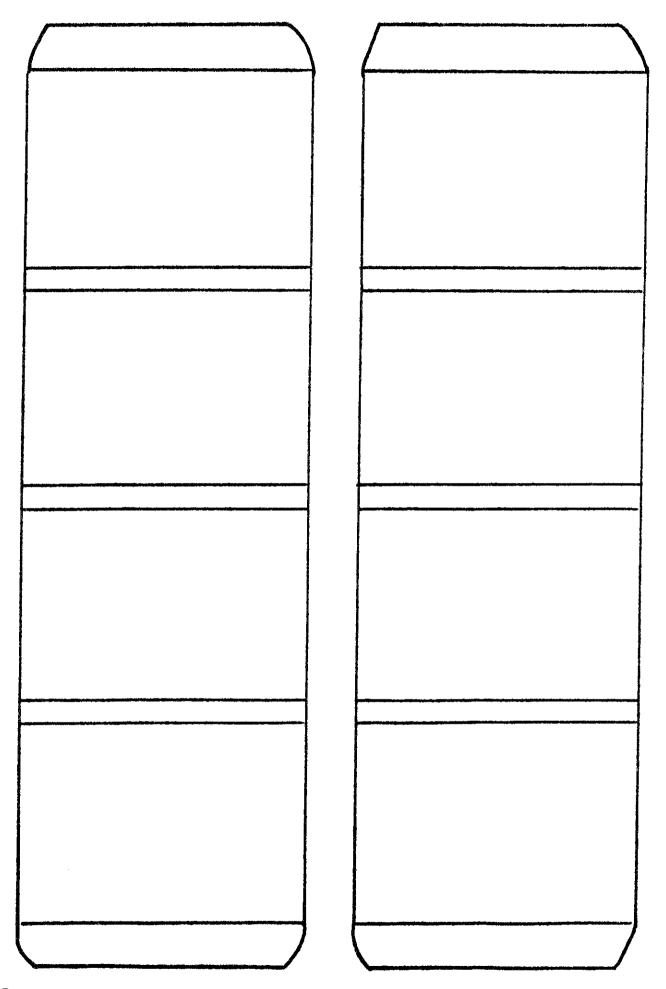




Cut along the top and bottom of the T.V. screen

Insert your T.V. strip through these slits and slide your story through to show your own story about Nipkins and Zlogs.





A NEW ADVENTURE OF NORBERT AND GROG BY ____

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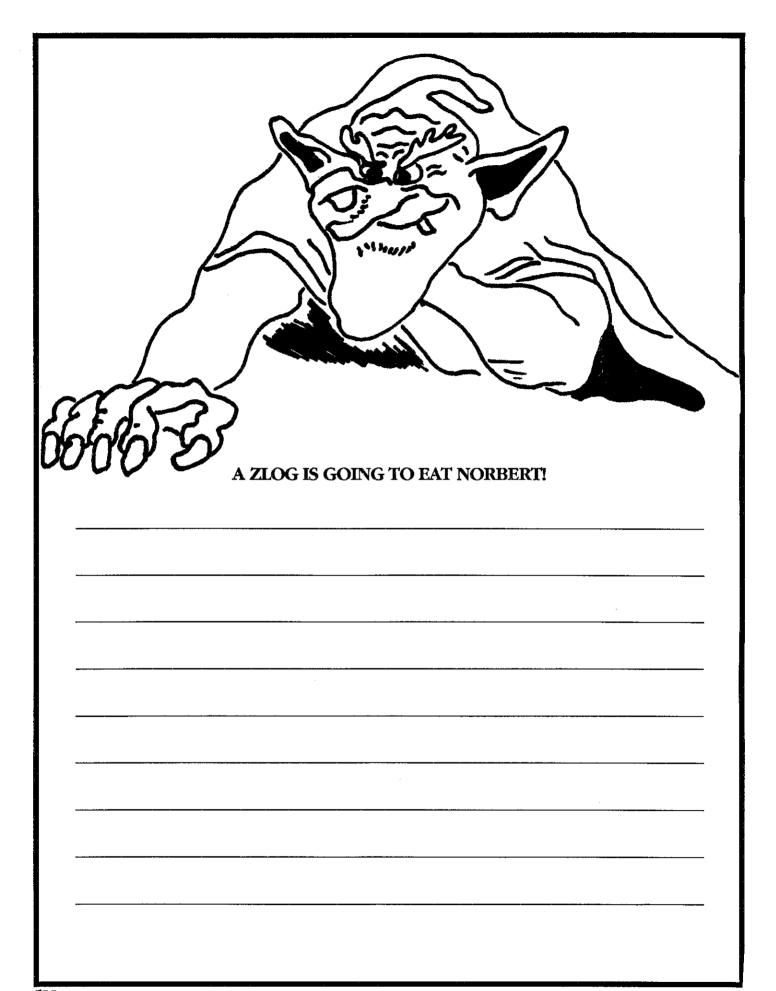
NORBERT AND GROG HAVE JUST STARTED SCHOOL. Write a story about their first day at school.

IT IS GROG'S BIRTHDAY. Norbert is going to
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NORBERT AND GROG BOTH LIKE WINTER. Write a winter adventure for Norbert and Grog.
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NORBERT BECAME LOST ON HIS WAY TO FIND GROG'S HOUSE.
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CREATE YOUR OWN CINQUAIN OR LIMERICK POEM ABOUT NORBERT AND GROG.

Use these poems as examples.

CINQUAIN Grog

Big and hungry

Listening talking sharing He's Norbert's new friend

Grog.

LIMERICK Norbert is a Nipkin quite free

Who runs through the forest with glee

But along came a Zlog In the person of Grog

Who was kinder than a Zlog ought to be.



6

MAKING A WORD WEB

Choose one of the characters in the story.

Put the name in the centre of a Word Web.

In the spaces in the Web put in other words to describe this character.

For Example:

Norbert - kind, gentle, naïve, loving.



CREATE YOUR OWN LIMERICK

Use this one as an example.

Norbert is a Nipkin quite free
Who runs through the forest with glee
But along came a Zlog
In the person of Grog
Who was kinder than a Zlog ought to be.



For a Zlog is quite nasty you see
And likes to eat Nipkins for tea
But Grog as a friend
Saved Norbert in the end
And proved what a good friend he could be.

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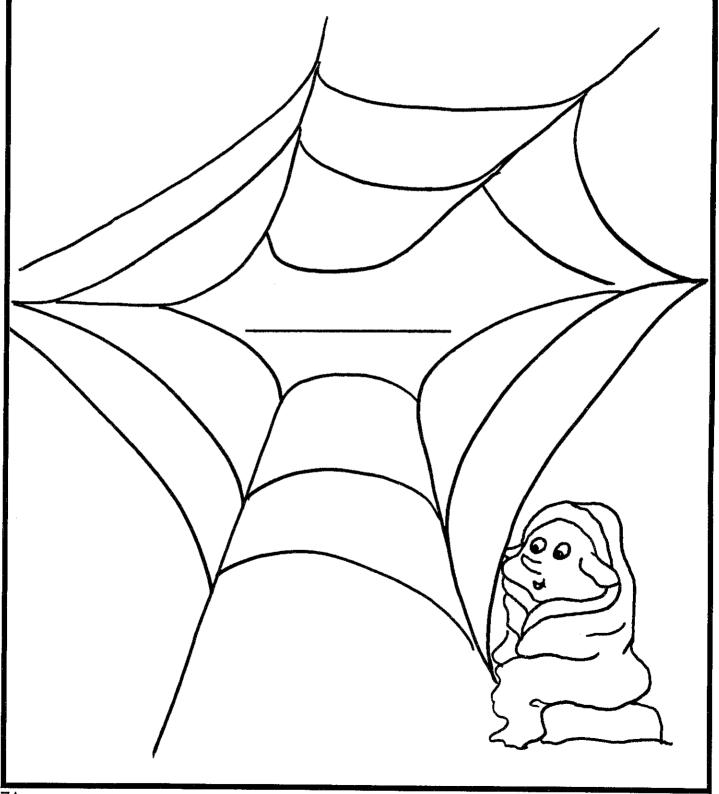
CREATING YOUR OWN CINQUAIN POEM

Use this one as an example. Grog Big and hungry Listening talking sharing He's Norbert's new friend Grog.



MAKE A WORD WEB

Choose a character from the story. Put the name in the centre of the Web. In the other spaces put words which describe this character. For example: Norbert – kind, gentle,loving, naïve.



ROBERT McCONNELL LOVES TO RECEIVE MAIL

Create your own Nipkin writing paper.

Write a letter to Robert McConnell.



Tell him all about yourself.

Tell him your thoughts about the books he has written.

8

STEVE PILCHER IS THE ILLUSTRATOR OF NORBERT NIPKIN.

An illustrator's drawings are very important to make a good picture book.



Try your hand at being an illustrator. Show how you would make a Nipkin or a Zlog look.

Be sure to read the story one more time before you begin.

Dear Mr. McConnell,	
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1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	
TW 632/	
man of house spo	

STEVE PILCHER IS THE ILLUSTRATOR OF NORBERT NIPKIN.

If I were an illustrator, this is how I think a Nipkin and a Zlog would look.



FINDING NEW WORDS

Find ten new words in the story.

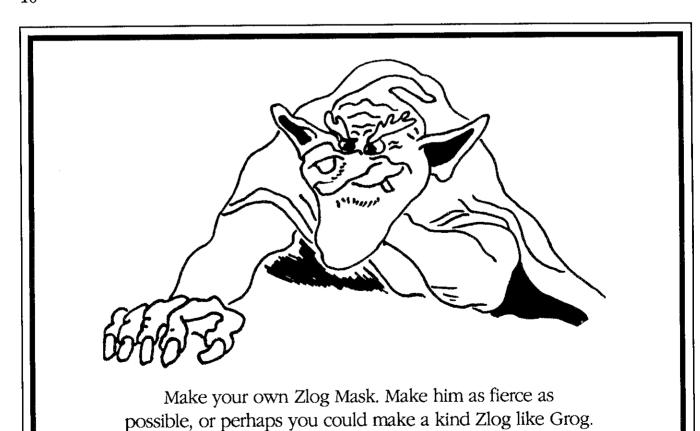
Write them down on paper.

Rewrite them in alphabetical order.

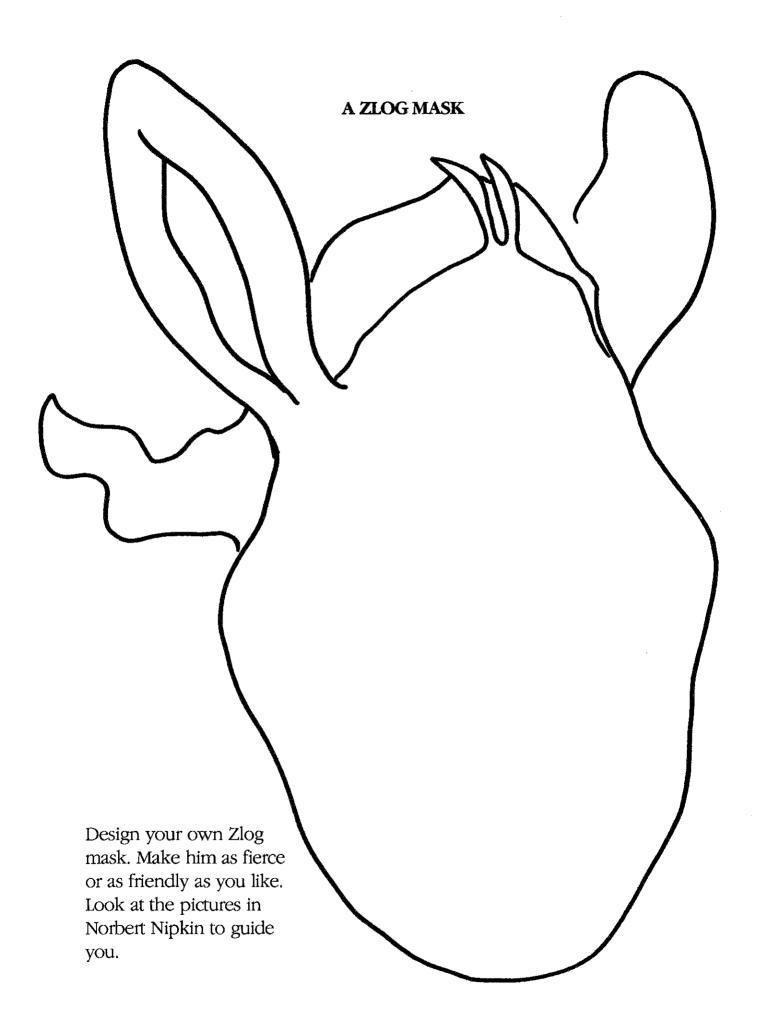
Find the dictionary meaning for the words.



10



MY TEN NEW WORDS ARE:		
1	6	
2	7	
3	8	
4	9	
5	10	
HERE THEY ARE IN ALPHABETICAL	ORDER:	
1.	6	
2.	7	
3	8	
4	9	
5	10	
I CAN USE MY DICTIONARY TO LO	OK FOR MEANINGS	5.
	•	



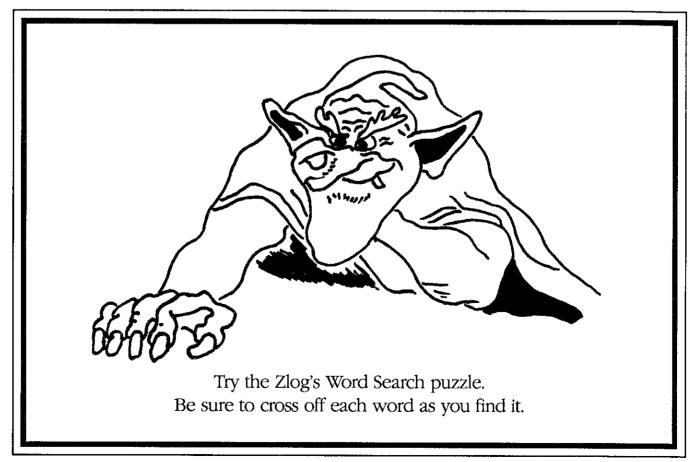
A NIPKIN CROSSWORD PUZZLE

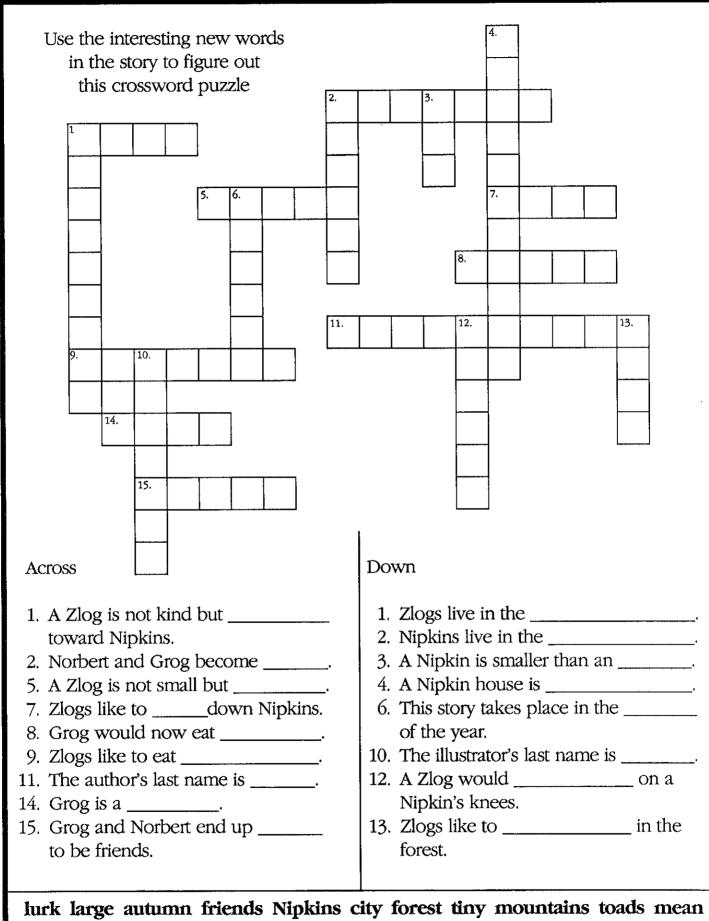
Crossword puzzles are always fun to do.

Use the interesting new words found in the story to complete the puzzle.



12





lurk large autumn friends Nipkins city forest tiny mountains toads mean elf McConnell underground Pilcher Zlog nibble happy gulp



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

Cross off the words as you find them.

DROOPED TOASTED TREMBLE JAW TOADSTOOL ROAST GULP SWALLOW BRITCHES TERRIBLE PART PICKING NIBBLE SACK GLEE GUARANTEED CAVE BLAZING LURK

A NIPKIN GAMEBOARD

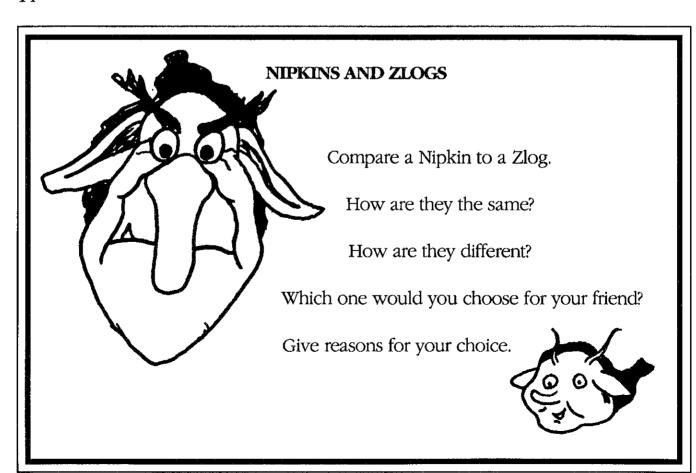
Nipkins love to play games. Design a Nipkin and Zlog gameboard for you and your friends to use.

Make your game in squares like snakes and ladders, or like a path through Nipkinland.

Be sure to include all the rules for your game.



14



A NIPKIN GAMEBOARD

Design a gameboard about Nipkins and Zlogs for you and your friends to play. Be sure to include all the rules.





ARE ZLOGS AND NIPKINS THE SAME OR ARE THEY DIFFERENT?

	How are they the same?
	>
(M)	·
How are they different?	
T	
I would choose a	for a friend because:

MAKE A MAP OF NIPKINLAND.

Be sure to label all the parts.

Where is Norbert's house?

Where is Grog's cave?

Where is the Nipkin forest?



16

NIPKIN ALPHABET

Pretend you are invited to Nipkinland.

At Norbert's school they use a different alphabet.

Show the Nipkin alphabet

Write a secret message in the Nipkin language

Put the meaning of your message on the back of the sheet.

See if others can decode your message.



MAKE A MAP OF NIPKINLAND. BE SURE TO LABEL ALL THE PARTS.



NIPKIN ALPHABET

Pretend you are invited to Nipkinland. At Norbert's school they use a different alphabet. Each letter is a sign.

For example: A

B

C

Now show what you think the Nipkin alphabet would look like.

Write a secret message. See if a friend can decode your message.



Put the answer on the back of this sheet.

DAILY MENUS

Norbert and Grog like many of the same things. It is only their **eating habits** which make them different.

Plan a daily menu for both Norbert and Grog. Will Grog's menu be the same as all the other Zlogs?

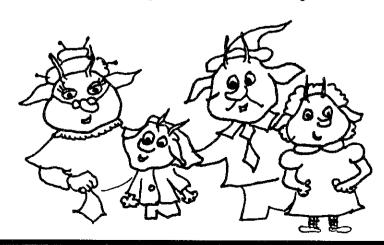


18

NORBERT'S FAMILY

Make Norbert's Family Tree.

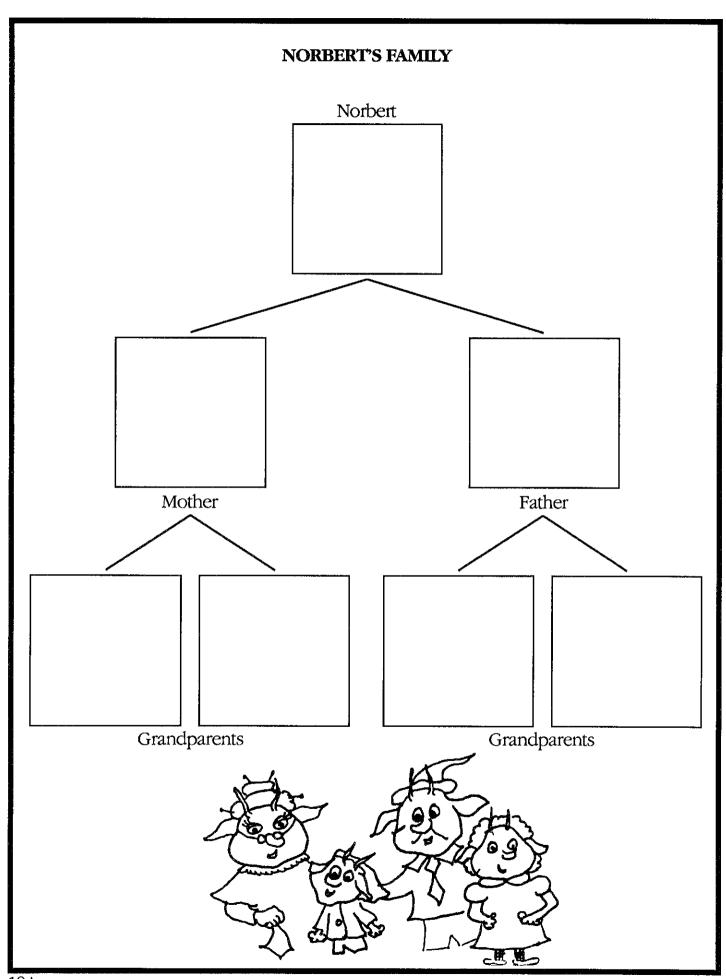
Draw a picture of how you think Norbert's family would look if you met them in Nipkinland.

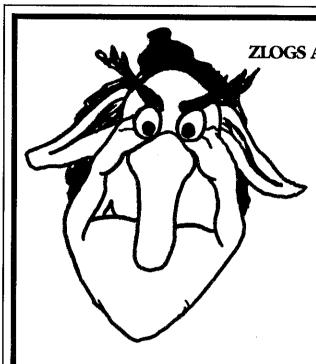


PLAN A DAY'S MENU FOR NORBERT AND GROG.

Norbert and Grog are not that different except for their eating habits. Will Grog's menu be the same as the other Zlogs? Write a Zlog menu on the back.

NORBERT'S DAY	BREAKFAST		
	LUNCH		
	DINNER		
	GI	ROG'S DAY BREAKFAST	
		LUNCH	
		DINNER	
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ZLOGS AND NIPKINS

COMPARE NORBERT AND GROG

How are they different?

How are they the same?



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A ZLOG AND A NIPKIN CAN BE FRIENDS.

Norbert and Grog have become good friends.

Make a list of friendship rules for Nipkins and Zlogs.

Be sure to mention eating habits.







ZLOGS AND NIPKINS

COMPARE NORBERT AND GROG

What are the differences? What are the similarities?

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Norbert and Grog are new friends.

Make a list of friendship rules for Nipkins and Zlogs. Be sure to mention eating habits!

