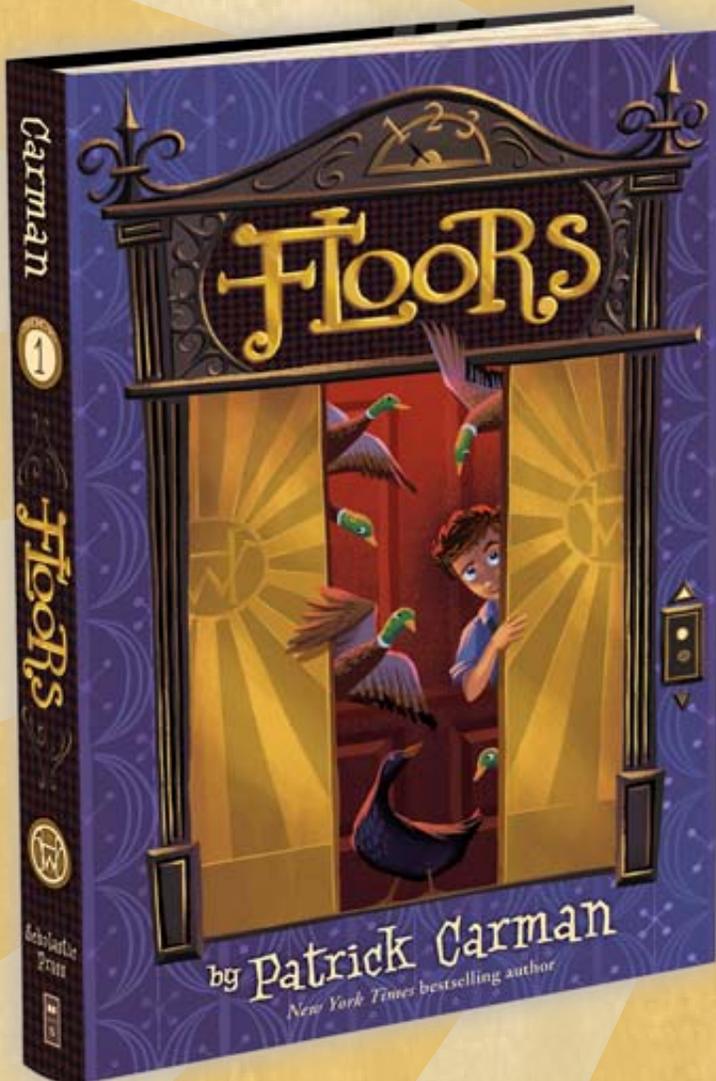


Teaching Guide



Try to solve the mysterious puzzles left by Merganzer D. Whippet, the exclusive hotel's missing owner. Help Leo and Remi uncover hidden floors and top-secret rooms that must be revealed in order to save the hotel from certain ruin! Mystifying boxes, madcap inventions, and moody ducks will have your students flipping wildly through the pages of *Floors* to discover the ultimate fate of the one-of-a-kind Whippet Hotel.

Pack your bags and get ready for the adventure of a lifetime as you check into the wild and wacky Whippet Hotel.



Discussion Questions

1. In the beginning of the story, we learn that Merganzer D. Whippet's father's dying words to him were "You will prosper in the field of wacky inventions." How do these words shape Merganzer's life as a young man? As he grows older, he discovers they have an entirely different meaning. Explain the true meaning of his father's dying words.
2. Compare Merganzer D. Whippet to his father. How are they alike? In which ways are they different?
3. Describe the ways in which Leo Fillmore and Merganzer D. Whippet are alike. How might these similarities affect their relationship?
4. Why do you think Merganzer D. Whippet has made it so difficult, and at times so dangerous, for Leo to find the hidden floors and rooms in the Whippet Hotel? Why did he choose to write such baffling clues for Leo to decipher? How were the secret boxes helpful to both Leo and Merganzer?
5. How does the scene inside each mystery box relate to Merganzer D. Whippet's childhood experiences? How does the discovery of each hidden room change the life experiences of Leo and his father?
6. As the story progresses, Leo gets the sense that his father, Clarence, is changing; he is becoming less sad. Do Leo's actions bring about any of these changes? If so, which ones?
7. Clarence and Pilar seem to be heading toward a somewhat romantic friendship. What, if any, impact do you think this may have on Remi and Leo's friendship?
8. The Whippet Hotel is filled with unusual guests. Which guest would you most like to meet? Captain Rickenbacker, Mr. Yancy, Jane Yancy, Ms. Pompadore, or Theodore Bump? Why?
9. If you could live in any room in the Whippet Hotel, which room would you choose?
10. Do you believe Ms. Sparks should have been fired? Why or why not?
11. Leo and Remi develop a wonderful friendship in *Floors*. What qualities do you think Remi possesses that make him a true friend to Leo? What qualities do you think are important for a true friend to have?
12. Why do you think Merganzer D. Whippet chooses to leave the Whippet Hotel to Leo Fillmore? Would you have made the same choice? Why or why not?

Student Activities

Check Into a Brand-New Room!

The Pinball Machine, the Cake Room, the Room of Ponds and Caves...so many fabulous places to stay! Merganzer D. Whippet designed each floor and room of the Whippet Hotel to be extraordinary and unique. Challenge your students to create a new, top-secret room for the Whippet Hotel. They can even design a mysterious new box for Leo and Remi to find in the duck elevator, or anywhere else in the wild and wacky hotel! As your students begin their designs, encourage them to keep the following points in mind:

- Each room in the Whippet Hotel is extremely detailed but functional.
- Each room has an opening to ensure that Leo and Remi can escape when the time is right.
- The mysterious secret box looks just like each hotel room.
- A special key card is required for entry into each room. Don't forget to design an appropriate key card!

After your students have finished sketching their designs, they can write clues that will help Leo find his way through the new, top-secret rooms.

Finally, encourage your students to use their original designs to create new, mini, action-packed chapters for *Floors*. These new chapters should have Leo and Remi using the students' clues and mysterious secret boxes to help the characters find their way out of the recent additions to the Whippet Hotel.

But beware! As soon as you display your students' published writing pieces, you just may find yourself being questioned about the next available vacancy at the Whippet Hotel!

Invention Convention

Merganzer D. Whippet created all kinds of wonderful, useful inventions for the Whippet Hotel. Who can forget Daisy, the ticker-tape producing message board in the form of a man-eating shark—or the Double Helix, which can take only the bravest of passengers from the lobby to the roof of the Whippet Hotel in no time flat!? Encourage your students to “prosper in the field of wacky inventions” by having them create actual, useful inventions.

Remind your students that an invention is any new thing that makes something easier, faster, or more productive, efficient, or powerful.

Be sure to set parameters for the inventions. Young inventors need to be safe. You may wish to address electrical inventions, height and weight restrictions, etc., with your class before sending them off on their own to invent. Your students could explore inventions and inventors on the Internet. They could also use everyday items to create their inventions.

When all inventions are complete, invite your students' siblings and parents to your very own Invention Convention! This is where your proud inventors can present their fine new creations!

Writing Prompts

1. Think about your favorite character in *Floors*. Write about an adventure that you and the character have in the Whippet Hotel.
2. Do you think a duck would make a good pet? Explain why or why not.
3. Imagine you woke up one morning and found yourself in the Pinball Machine Room at the Whippet Hotel. Write a story telling what you see and do for the rest of the day.
4. Write a letter to your best friend, describing the Whippet Hotel both inside and out! Try to persuade him or her to visit the hotel.
5. List 20 good reasons to stay at the Whippet Hotel.
6. Write about your idea of a perfect day spent at the Whippet Hotel. How would it begin? What would you do?
7. Mr. Phipps has asked you to help him with the grounds of the Whippet Hotel. He is looking for help with new designs for the shrubbery. What types of animals will you suggest? Why?
8. If you could have any of the jobs at the Whippet Hotel, which job would you like to have? Would you be the gardener, the maintenance worker, the person who works at the front desk, the doorperson? Would you choose a different job? Explain why.

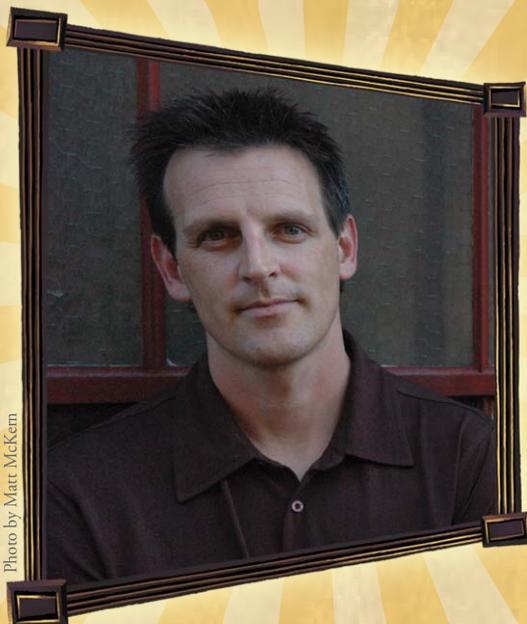


Photo by Matt McKern

Patrick Carman is the *New York Times* bestselling author of many favorite series for kids, including *Floors*, *Skeleton Creek*, *3:15*, *Trackers*, the *Land of Elyon*, and *Elliot's Park*. He is also the author of the bestselling fifth book in *The 39 Clues* series, *The Black Circle*. He got his start as a storyteller weaving bedtime tales for his two daughters. He lives in Walla Walla, Washington with his family. Visit Patrick Carman online at www.patrickcarman.com. For more information on Patrick Carman and his various projects, and to download materials, please visit: <http://mediaroom.scholastic.com/patrickcarman>.

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