



## **Hypnotized**

Don Trembath

Reading level: 3.1

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AR Quiz # 114173

### **Book Summary**

Rufus and his sister Alexa hate each other at the best of times. When Rufus's friend Phil manages to hypnotize Alexa, Rufus is ready to enjoy the power. They begin by ordering Alexa to be kind to her parents and Phil. The plan backfires when Alexa sweetly suggests canceling an expensive family vacation in favor of a week at home playing board games. Then Alexa turns on the charm with Phil and suddenly Rufus has to deal with a lovesick amateur hypnotist. Rufus is certain it can't get any stranger until Alexa, still in her hypnotic state, is kind to the brother she's always hated and Rufus is more confused than he's ever been.

### **Author Biography**

**Don Trembath** is the bestselling author of several books for juveniles and young adults, including *Rooster*, *The Tuesday Café* and the popular Black Belt series. Don lives in Morinville, Alberta, with his wife Lisa, their three children, three laid-back cats and a neighbor's big dog.

## Connecting to the Text

### Language

1. Similes connect ideas, giving us images that expand our understanding of situations and characters. There are many original, and often humorous, examples in *Hypnotized*. Read the following examples aloud to the class. How does the use of simile expand our understanding of the situation or the character?

(ch. 4) *Alexa rushes toward them like they've just stepped off a plane from Afghanistan.*

(ch. 5) *Alexa stares at me like I just stuck a fork in my ear.*

(ch. 6) *He's looking at me like I said that the neighbor's tree just blew me a kiss.*

(ch. 7) *He sounds like a deranged physicist.*

2. Invite the students to complete the following sentences using similes.

- ◆ The brother and sister never seem to get along. The last time I saw them arguing at the mall, they were going at it like \_\_\_\_\_ .
- ◆ That hypnotist was amazing! When he had our teacher in a trance, she was completely limp, like a \_\_\_\_\_ .
- ◆ Sometimes she really misses her old town and her old friends. Once, I saw her sitting alone behind the bleachers in the gym. She was really sad, like a \_\_\_\_\_ .
- ◆ I could tell he didn't understand me. He was looking at me like I \_\_\_\_\_ .
- ◆ The principal knew something was up. When she saw the broken glass on the floor, she looked at us like we were \_\_\_\_\_ .
- ◆ He thought that if she had a small brain, she'd be easy to hypnotize. Boy, was he wrong. She had him completely fooled! He was as surprised as a \_\_\_\_\_ and now he thinks her brain must be as big as a \_\_\_\_\_ .
- ◆ In Winnipeg, there was always lots to do. We were always as busy as \_\_\_\_\_. Now that we're living in Callton, I'm as bored as a \_\_\_\_\_ .
- ◆ If I imagine it's ten years from now, I imagine that I'll be as rich as \_\_\_\_\_ .

3. In *Hypnotized*, Don Trembath uses many words to describe characters' thoughts, feelings and behaviors. Write the words listed below on the blackboard and also on index cards. Distribute the index cards to the students and challenge them to act out each word while the other students guess.

amazed	depressed	passive	self-destructive	surprised
apologetic	excited	peaceful	self-important	suspicious
brave	frustrated	proud	sensitive	sympathetic
confident	heartbroken	relaxed	serene	worried
confused	hypnotized	relieved	serious	
deflated	indignant	reluctant	sincere	
demoralized	intimidated	sarcastic	stunned	

- ◆ Ask students to identify the point in the story where their character thought, felt or behaved in this way. For example, Phil was proud when he thought he'd hypnotized Alexa; Mr. and Mrs. Crowden were worried when they saw the pancake breakfast all laid out. Note that there may be more than one correct answer.
4. Invite students to use at least five of the words above to write a short story or skit, working in pairs or small groups. Students may choose from the ideas below or write a story or skit on their own. Students should be prepared to share their stories or perform their skits in front of the class.
- ◆ A sister and brother don't get along now that their family has moved to a new town. Nothing seems to work to bring them together until...
  - ◆ Two friends have simultaneously hypnotized the same person!
  - ◆ One friend has hypnotized two others, and now he/she has forgotten the trigger word that snaps them out of it!
  - ◆ One friend can't seem to hypnotize another until he accidentally stumbles upon the special trigger word...
  - ◆ On the last day of school before summer vacation, something really unusual happened...
  - ◆ When a new kid comes to school and hypnotizes the teacher...

### Connecting to the Curriculum

#### *Language Arts*

1. Phil has been interested in hypnotism for a long time and has read a few different books about it. Imagine that Phil is really able to hypnotize people. Write a paragraph or journal entry which describes this experience. What would be the advantages of being able to hypnotize people? Are there ways to apply this skill to help people? Could this ability be harmful? How?
2. Rufus and his sister do not get along. Rufus thinks Alexa is evil, and Alexa thinks Rufus is a schmuck. Write a letter to Rufus, advising him of the best approach to getting along with Alexa. Use examples from *Hypnotized* in your letter. For example, Rufus and Alexa seem to get along only when they're on vacation. Why?
3. Rufus has found it hard to adjust to life in his new town. His family used to live in Winnipeg, but now they live in Callton, a small rural community, and he can't find anything to do. Make a list of five things Rufus can do to enjoy life in a small town. What do small towns have that large cities don't?

4. Rufus feels like he doesn't belong in Callton. When his family lived in Winnipeg, he had his place at school and in the community. In Winnipeg, he had many friends, but now he has only one. What can Rufus do to make more friends and feel like a part of his community? Make a plan for Rufus. Give him one month to find two new friends. In your plan, list one task that Rufus must do for each week.
5. To encourage reading comprehension, hold a novel "scavenger hunt." As the students read the novel, invite them to answer the questions below. For each question, have students record the page number where they found their answer. Award points for each correct answer for a total out of 20.

**Option:** If students need a hint to complete the scavenger hunt, you may wish to tell them that the questions are in sequential order.

**Hypnotized Scavenger Hunt**

Question	Points
1. What does Rufus grab from the fridge to drink?	
2. What is Phil's command word for Alexa?	
3. What is Alexa's closet full of?	
4. Alexa offers to fix Phil three things to eat. What are they?	
5. How many brothers and sisters does Phil have?	
6. Who called Phil "hot" in the weight room at school?	
7. What kind of clothes did Alexa get for Christmas last year?	
8. What is the name of the Chinese restaurant in Callton?	
9. What is the name of the trendy little coffee shop in Callton?	
10. What is the name of Alexa's ex-boyfriend?	
11. What did Rufus buy for Alexa at the coffee shop?	
12. What is the name of Rufus' school counselor?	
TOTAL =	

**Hypnotized Scavenger Hunt Answer Key**

Question	Points
1. What does Rufus grab from the fridge to drink? <i>a Coke</i> (ch. 2)	1
2. What is Phil's command word for Alexa? <i>Ophelia</i> (ch. 2)	1
3. What is Alexa's closet full of? <i>costumes and wigs</i> (ch. 3)	2
4. Alexa offers to fix Phil three things to eat. What are they? <i>a sandwich, soup and a can of spaghetti</i> (ch. 4)	3
5. How many brothers and sisters does Phil have? <i>none—he's an only child</i> (ch. 5)	1
6. Who called Phil "hot" in the weight room at school? <i>Melanie Davis</i> (ch. 6)	1
7. What kind of clothes did Alexa get for Christmas last year? <i>blue jeans, walking shoes, a white sweater and a peach-colored hat and matching scarf</i> (ch. 8)	5
8. What is the name of the Chinese restaurant in Callton? <i>The Elegant Dragon</i> (ch. 8)	1
9. What is the name of the trendy little coffee shop in Callton? <i>The C-Town Café</i> (ch. 8)	1
10. What is the name of Alexa's ex-boyfriend? <i>Scott</i> (ch. 9)	1
11. What did Rufus buy for Alexa at the coffee shop? <i>a large latte and a low fat, mixed fruit bran muffin</i> (ch. 11)	2
12. What is the name of Rufus' school counselor? <i>Mrs. Roland</i> (ch. 12)	1
TOTAL =	20

**Vocabulary**

1. The following words or terms are used in *Hypnotized* in the context of Phil's attempts to hypnotize Rufus and Alexa, and Alexa's passion for drama and theater. Invite students to complete one of the following activities from the two themes, using words from the list below.

**Hypnotism**

brain	credentials	hypnotist	role-playing
command words	expert	instructions	routine
concentration	gold medal	intense	spell
confused	hoax	remember	trance

- ◆ Write a song, rap, poem, or short story using four or more of the words above.
- ◆ Write a short skit using at least six of the words above. Be prepared to perform your skit in front of the class.

**Theater and Acting**

acting career	costumes	musicals	theater buff
backstage	director	overacting	troupe
big star	impersonation	performance	wigs
Broadway	leading role	rehearsals	
character	makeup	stage actress	

- ◆ You are a theater critic who writes for a New York newspaper. Write a review for an imaginary Broadway show. Be sure to use at least six words from the list above. Did you enjoy the show, or dislike it? Explain why.
- ◆ Imagine that you have stowed away with a theater troupe for a weekend. You have a secret hiding place behind the stage where nobody can see you but you can see everyone—and the show. Write a short story describing your adventure. Be sure to use at least six words from the list above.
- ◆ Write a short skit using at least six of the words above. You may use one of the ideas below or choose one of your own.
- ◆ It's opening night and the star of the show is sick, and we can't find the understudy!
- ◆ A student is meeting with their guidance counselor to discuss their future in acting. What are the student's questions? What advice does the counselor give?
- ◆ It's ten years from now and you are a famous actor. You've come back to your hometown to talk to a class on career day. One kid, in particular, has a lot of questions...

***Drama***

Ask students to improvise skits based on key scenes from *Hypnotized*. Have students improvise their own scenarios or choose from the examples below:

- Rufus' parents have come back from their nature walk to the pancake breakfast that has been laid out by Alexa. Immediately, they know something is wrong. Instead of denying that anything is going on, Rufus and Phil decide to confess everything. What will they say? How will Mr. and Mrs. Crowden react?
- When Phil first hypnotized Alexa, his command to her was to be nice to him and to her parents. Imagine that Phil told Alexa to do something completely different. Using only the existing characters and setting in *Hypnotized*, create a new command for Phil to give to Alexa. How would the story have changed?
- Imagine that it is ten years in the future. You are sitting in the C-Town Café and are discussing what's happened in your lives over the last ten years. How did you get to where you are now?
- Phil hypnotizes Rufus, and Rufus is now able to face Alexa and tell her what he's really feeling. What does he long to tell her that he can't do unless he's in the hypnotic state? Will Alexa be rude and nasty, or receptive and responsive? Does Alexa secretly have the same feelings as Rufus?
- Imagine that Alexa had been hypnotized by Phil. When Phil says the command word and she snaps out of it, how will they respond when she asks what happened? How will they explain everything that happened?

***Science***

Rufus says that Alexa is a good candidate for hypnosis because she has a small brain. Phil studied a little bit about the brain in the introduction to his hypnosis course. Research the human brain, answering the following questions:

- What are the parts of the brain? Draw a picture of the brain, labeling the four cerebral lobes and cerebellum.
- What is the brain's job in the body? Can the body do anything without the brain?
- How much does an adult human brain weigh? Do some people's brains actually weigh less than other people's, as Rufus suggests?
- List three interesting facts about the human brain and its job.
- Why is it important to wear a helmet when biking, skateboarding or skating?

***Health Sciences***

Alexa plays the music so loud on her iPod that Rufus can hear the music she's listening to from the other side of her bedroom door. Research the dangers of listening to loud music using headphones. It can lead to hearing impairment—even deafness. What happens inside the ear? Can the damage to the ear be reversed?



### Connecting to the Students—Ideas for Exploration

1. Imagine that it is ten years into the future and you are exactly where you always wanted to be. It took hard work, but you're doing what you've always dreamed of. Prepare a short presentation for your class about what your new life is like, and what you do in a typical day. Then list the steps that brought you to where you are. For example:

*I am a magician and I perform at festivals, parties and special events.*

*A typical day means I...*

*To get to where I am now, I had to go to a special school in...*

*I had to work hard and practice a lot. Some examples of this are...*

**Option:** If students are unsure of what they want to do in the future, you may wish to have a list of ideas handy that they can choose from. Alternatively, you can present a list of public figures, celebrities or members of your community, and then ask students to choose one of those people. How did these famous people get to where they are now?

2. Alexa likes to act and Rufus likes to write. What are some ways they could find other kids who like to act or write? Is there a writing or drama club in your school? If not, how could you go about starting one? Make a list of all the steps you would have to take to put together a club in your school. For example, *First, we'd have to get permission from our teacher or principal; then, we'd have to make some posters and see if other kids are interested in joining; then...*
3. Rufus's dad enjoys photography. Research the history of photography. How has it changed from its earliest stages in the 1820s to now? What is the oldest known permanent photograph and where is it? What principles of photography are still used today?
4. Rufus's mom and dad are nature buffs and enjoy autumn walks. Choose a destination in your community for a nature walk. How would you prepare? Draw a map of your route. Make a list of the items you would take. Ideas could be: waterproof hat, hiking boots, long socks, a first-aid kit, garbage bag for picking up litter or for use as a makeshift raincoat, flashlight, emergency blanket, cell phone, map, etc.
5. Rufus is having a hard time right now. He doesn't fit in at his new school, he only has one friend, and he is in a constant state of conflict with his sister. His school counselor thinks he might be depressed. If you were having trouble fitting in, making friends and getting along with your siblings, where could you turn for help? Does your school have a counselor or other resources? As a class project, make colorful, eye-catching posters that list places students can turn to if they need help. Where is the best place to hang the posters in your school?

6. Sometimes growing up can mean growing apart. When Rufus and Alexa were younger they used to do lots of things together. Now, they don't talk to each other, unless it's to argue or make sarcastic or rude comments. What changed? Have you experienced this with your siblings? What are some ways that siblings can find common ground and get along? How can they rebuild their relationship? Brainstorm at least five strategies that siblings can use to get along. Include ideas for parents too!