



Messy Miranda

Jeff Szpirglas and Danielle Saint-Onge
illustrated by Dave Whamond

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About the Book

Have you ever had a big mess that you just could not clean up? Miranda does. Poor Miranda has had to stay in every week and miss skip roping at recess in order to do her desk clean up. And she is fed up! But a weekly visit to her uncle Aldo's house reveals a magical solution to her problem...A magical hat! What would happen if she just borrowed the hat for a little while to help clean her desk?

About the Authors

Jeff Szpirglas and **Danielle Saint-Onge** are elementary school teachers who live in Toronto. They love teaching and coming up with stories that will entertain their students, but also reflect their experiences in the classroom.

About the Writing

Jeff and Danielle seem to come up with their best writing ideas on long car trips. The inspiration for *Messy Miranda* occurred during a drive to Pittsburgh to visit Danielle's sister. Their goal with this series is to come up with original stories that reflect the different and unique challenges faced by elementary school students. They want their students to be able to connect with their characters and to help brainstorm creative solutions.

Teaching Ideas—Curriculum Connections***Prereading Ideas***

- Have you ever had a mess that you just couldn't clean up? A mess so big that you did not even want to start?
- The main character Miranda has difficulty keeping her things at school organized. What are some creative ways that you use to keep things tidy at school and home?

Classroom Discussion Questions

1. Do you think that Miranda should receive a consequence for taking Aldo's hat without permission? Why or why not?
2. What if you could jump into Uncle Aldo's magic hat? What would you find there? How big would it be? Students can write and/or draw their responses.
3. In the story, Miranda is excited to check *The Biggest Book of Big Things* out from the library. What kinds of topics or subjects would be in that book? Brainstorm with a partner or small group. Make a list or draw a picture to help.

Suggested Activities

1. Does your school have a Lost and Found? As a class or in small groups, can you think of things that you could do as a school to help keep things better organized?
2. Does your school have a clean up day where everyone goes around to tidy the schoolyard? As a class, can you organize something like this?
3. Make posters and design advertisements for keeping the school and community clean.

Other Titles and Websites of Interest

1. *Extra Yarn* (Balzer & Bray, 2012) by Mac Barnett.
2. *Oddrey* (Owlkids, 2012) by Dave Whamond.
3. <http://ontarioecoschools.org>
4. www.earthday.ca/pub

Other Books by the Authors from Orca Book Publishers

Something's Fishy (Orca Echoes)