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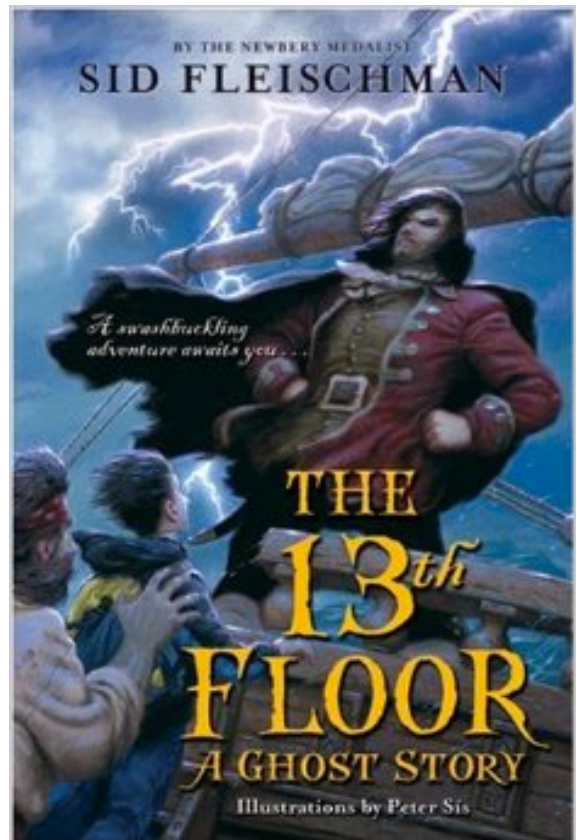


Building Communities that
Support Children's Reading

Texas
The 13th Floor
A Ghost Story

By Sid Fleischman

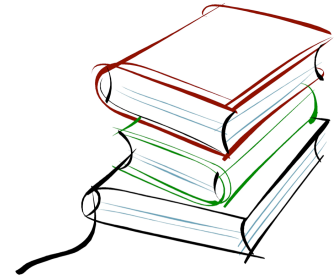
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5th Grade - M

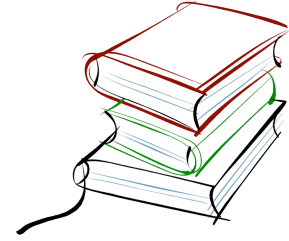
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Synopsis

The 13th Floor – A Ghost Story

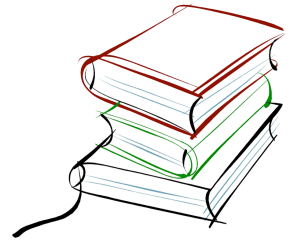
The 13th Floor a Ghost Story is an action packed adventure filled with pirates, witch-hunts, and humor. Buddy is twelve and, following the death of their parents, he is living with his sister, a young lawyer. Liz and Buddy come from a family who settled in Massachusetts in 1910 but the family history goes back even further to a Captain Crackstone a pirate from 300 years ago. Legend has it that the Captain buried some treasure which has never been found and that his real name was John Stebbins is thus related to our hero Buddy Stebbins.

Money is short and it seems Liz will need to sell the family home. She heads off to work one morning and never returns. The evening before someone left a cryptic message on the answer machine. It is from a girl called Abigail Parsons. Her language and instructions are very strange, almost old fashioned. Searching for this sister leads Buddy to the Zachary Building where he finds the non-existent 13th floor and is transported onto a pirate ship in 1695 where he meets the real Captain Crackstone. Luckily Buddy has his school backpack with him. It is fun to discover how many items in this bag prove useful along the way.

Liz has also been transported via the 13th floor but she arrives as Abigail is about to be tried for witchcraft. Liz is a passionate advocate and is ready to fight the case, but 17th century Boston is not ready for an outspoken young woman to speak at the trial. Buddy needs to find his sister, Liz needs to save Abigail, and of course our 20th century family need to find a way to restore their fortune and keep their house. There is a very neat little twist at the end.

Vocabulary

The 13th Floor – A Ghost Story



curdle - to spoil or cause to go bad

debts - amounts of money owed to others; obligations; liabilities

evidence - materials and facts gathered as proof

flung - thrown with force or energy

hull - the main body or framework of a ship, boat, aircraft, or other large vehicle

relative - someone who is part of the same family; a person who is part of an immediate or extended family

rogue - a person who causes trouble, often out of mischief

deceitful – a unreliable person; a scoundrel or cheat; a rascal

shoved - pushed purposely, with rudeness or force

testimony - information presented by a witness in a court of law; a sworn statement

voyage - a journey by land or sea



High Level Questions

The 13th Floor – A Ghost Story

1. Which events in this story could NOT have happened?
2. What technology is different today than was used in the book?
3. What 5 questions would you ask the author if you could meet him?
4. Why do you think people were so quick to accuse others of witchcraft in the story?
5. If Abigail had been convicted of witchcraft, what might have happened?
6. How do you think living on their own impacted Buddy and Liz's relationship?
7. What are some advantages and disadvantages of living on a pirate ship?
8. What other time travel novels could you compare this book to?
9. How is the life of a woman different now than in 17th century New England?
10. What was the climax of the story?



Using Choice Boards

Choice boards give students the opportunity to participate in multiple tasks that allow them to practice skills they've learned in class or to demonstrate and extend their understanding of concepts. From the board, students either choose or are assigned tasks to complete. Individual tasks address learning style modalities.

To scaffold the activities for struggling readers, teachers can modify the tasks using the blank template provided or give more details for performance criteria. Some teachers like to assign point values for the different tasks.

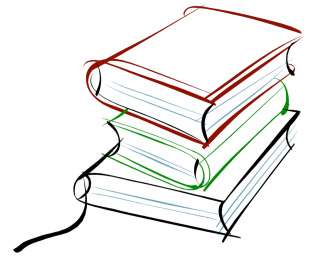


Choice Board

The 13th Floor – A Ghost Story

<p>Choose 3 of the characters from the book and describe a challenge each had to overcome.</p>	<p>Compare the first and last chapter of the 13th Floor. What role did each chapter serve in the overall plot of the story?</p>	<p>Choose an important visual from the text. Sketch it, then write an explanation on why this is your choice.</p>
<p>Create a table of 3 items that Buddy used that are no longer in style today. What would take their place?</p>	<p>Draw a family tree for Buddy and Liz. Fill in relatives discovered in the novel.</p>	<p>Decide on three multimedia elements to enhance <u>The 13th Floor</u>. Explain how they would improve this novel.</p>
<p>Create a poem that would describe Buddy's life on the pirate ship.</p>	<p>With a partner, create a play from the court scene with Abigail, Buddy and Liz. Act out your play for the class.</p>	<p>Choose 1 chapter and draw 3 different scenes to accompany the text.</p>

Choice Board



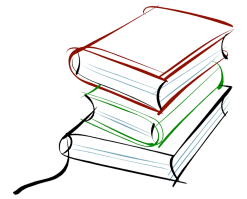


Using a RAFT Matrix

A RAFT matrix enhances students' comprehension of novels they're reading and information they're learning. It also provides a fun way to encourage student writing. RAFT is an acronym for *role*, *audience*, *format*, and *topic*:

- **Role.** The role is the person or people the student becomes for this project. Sometimes students take on the role of a book character, historical figure, or contemporary personality, such as Peyton Manning, and at other times, they are themselves.
- **Audience.** The audience is the person or people who will read or view this project. They may include students, teachers, parents, or community members, as well as simulated audiences, such as book characters and historical personalities.
- **Format.** The format is the genre or activity that students create. It might be a letter, brochure, cartoon, journal, poster, essay, newspaper article, speech, or digital scrapbook.
- **Topic.** The topic pertains to the book. It may be an issue related to the book, an essential question, or something of personal interest.

RAFT is an effective way to differentiate instruction by providing tiered activities. The BSCSR RAFT matrices are scaffolded and can be adjusted according to students' achievement levels, English proficiency, and interests.



RAFT Matrix

The 13th Floor

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Captain Jack Crackstone	TV Audience	Talk Show	Life of a Pirate
Buddy	Future Son	Letter	How he got the money to save his home
Abigail	Village Elders	Numbered List	Things Girls Can't Do
Liz	College Entrance Committee	Interview	Why she wants to be a lawyer

RAFT Matrix Rubric



STUDENT NAME: _____ **NOVEL:** _____

Accuracy
Information is accurate and supported with specific details from the novel.

5 4 3 2 1

Comments:

Role
The writing is credible in the role assigned.

5 4 3 2 1

Comments:

Format
The proper format was used.

5 4 3 2 1

Comments:

Conventions
The writing had no errors in grammar, punctuation, capitalization, or spelling.

5 4 3 2 1

Comments:

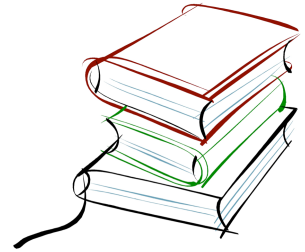
Creativity
Writing shows imagination and originality.

5 4 3 2 1

Comments:

Assessment Guide
5 = Above and Beyond
4 = Meeting Standard
3 = Working to Standard
2 = Developing
1 = Incomplete

RAFT Matrix



Role	Audience	Format	Topic

Extended Resources

The 13th Floor – A Ghost Story

Kid friendly writing rubrics and checklists Grades 3-6

<http://allwritewithme.com/for-teachers/kid-friendly-writing-rubrics-checklists/>

Pirates

<http://www.the-pirate-ship.com/piratefacts.html>

Video on Pirates

<http://www.history.com/videos/bet-you-didnt-know-pirates#bet-you-didnt-know-pirates>

National History Day Resources

<http://www.nhd.org/ClassroomConnection.htm>

Video on Witch Trials

<http://www.history.com/topics/salem-witch-trials>

Salem Witch Trials

One of the most bizarre times in the history of what would become the United States occurred in Salem, Massachusetts in 1692.

It all began in late January of 1692 at the home of Samuel Parris. His daughter and niece, Betty and Abigail, began exhibiting strange and destructive behavior. They shrieked throughout the house, had convulsions and seizures, entered trance-like states and suffered from high fever. Parris tried desperately to keep the girls' condition a secret, but finally agreed to contact his physician. Upon examining the girls, Doctor William Griggs could find nothing physically wrong with them. He suggested their condition might be the result of witchcraft. The diagnosis of witchcraft, while certainly devastating, was not uncommon at the time. Throughout February, Parris prayed for the evil forces to release the girls.

The Puritan townspeople began pressuring the girls to identify the reasons for their suffering. The girls named three women as witches. One was a slave named Tituba who had often told them magical stories from her native Barbados, another was a peasant mother named Sarah Good, and the last was an elderly woman named Sarah Osborne who regularly failed to attend church. The women were arrested and examined in the village meetinghouse. During the examinations the girls described how they had been attacked by "spectors" of these three women. While the two Sarahs denied engaging in witchcraft, for some reason, Tituba confessed! Tituba then claimed the two Sarahs were also ghosts and had conspired with her to torment the girls.

Soon, more young girls began acting in a similar manner to Betty and Abigail. One of the girls, Ann Putnam, was the daughter of one of the most influential families in Salem. Her family's support of her accusations helped to legitimize the guilt of the "witches".

Other townspeople soon would be accused of engaging in witchcraft. The people within the town of Salem became hysterical. Even Rebecca Nurse, a mother of eight, would be tried and convicted of witchcraft. Several girls claimed that Nurse's apparition (ghost) tortured them and other witnesses linked her to the unusual deaths of several Salem residents (some residents of Salem used the witchcraft hysteria to settle long-standing arguments). She was even accused of having "teets" (what baby mammals suckle to obtain milk from their mother). At her trial, 39 of her

neighbors signed a petition stating she was a woman of propriety (virtue or goodness). When the jury declared her not-guilty, an uprising nearly occurred. The audience was horrified that she was acquitted, and several of the judges were left unsatisfied or left the bench. The jury was forced to reconvene and the court brought a confessed witch by the name of Deliverance Hobbs to the courtroom. When asked about Hobbs, the nearly deaf Nurse replied 'she was one of us'. After hearing the words of Nurse, the jury returned a guilty verdict. Nurse later explained that she had never really heard the question, and that when saying 'she was one of us' she meant a co-defendant. Nurse was nevertheless hanged on July 19, 1692. Other accused witches were tortured until they confessed. In all, 26 "witches" were executed in Salem in 1692.

Research Simulation Task and Literary Analysis Task Rubric

Construct Measured	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1	Score Point 0
Reading Comprehension of Key Ideas and Details	The student response demonstrates full comprehension of ideas stated explicitly and inferentially by providing an accurate analysis and supporting the analysis with effective textual evidence.	The student response demonstrates comprehension of ideas stated explicitly and/or inferentially by providing a mostly accurate analysis and supporting the analysis with adequate textual evidence.	The student response demonstrates limited comprehension of ideas by providing a minimally accurate analysis and supporting the analysis with limited textual evidence.	The student response demonstrates no comprehension of ideas by providing inaccurate or no analysis and little to no textual evidence.
Writing Written Expression	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses the prompt and provides effective development of the topic that is consistently appropriate to the task by using clear reasoning and relevant, text-based evidence; demonstrates effective coherence, clarity, and cohesion appropriate to the task; uses language effectively to clarify ideas, attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline. 	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses the prompt and provides some development of the topic that is generally appropriate to the task by using reasoning and relevant, text-based evidence; demonstrates coherence, clarity, and cohesion appropriate to the task; uses language to clarify ideas, attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline. 	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses the prompt and provides minimal development of the topic that is limited in its appropriateness to the task by using limited reasoning and text-based evidence; or is a developed, text-based response with little or no awareness of the prompt; demonstrates limited coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion appropriate to the task; uses language that demonstrates limited awareness of the norms of the discipline. 	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is undeveloped and/or inappropriate to the task; lacks coherence, clarity, and cohesion; uses language that demonstrates no clear awareness of the norms of the discipline.
Writing Knowledge of Language and Conventions	The student response to the prompt demonstrates full command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be a few minor errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage, but meaning is clear .	The student response to the prompt demonstrates some command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that occasionally impede understanding , but the meaning is generally clear .	The student response to the prompt demonstrates limited command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that often impede understanding .	The student response to the prompt demonstrates no command of the conventions of standard English. Frequent and varied errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage impede understanding .

Narrative Task (NT)

Construct Measured	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1	Score Point 0
Writing Written Expression	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is effectively developed with narrative elements and is consistently appropriate to the task; • demonstrates effective coherence, clarity, and cohesion appropriate to the task; • uses language effectively to clarify ideas, attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline. 	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is developed with some narrative elements and is generally appropriate to the task; • demonstrates coherence, clarity, and cohesion appropriate to the task; • uses language to clarify ideas, attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline. 	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is minimally developed with few narrative elements and is limited in its appropriateness to the task; • demonstrates limited coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion appropriate to the task; • uses language that demonstrates limited awareness of the norms of the discipline. 	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is undeveloped and/or inappropriate to the task; • lacks coherence, clarity, and cohesion; • use of language demonstrates no clear awareness of the norms of the discipline.
Writing Knowledge of Language and Conventions	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates full command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be a few minor errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage, but meaning is clear.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates some command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that occasionally impede understanding, but the meaning is generally clear.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates limited command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that often impede understanding.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates no command of the conventions of standard English. Frequent and varied errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage impede understanding.</p>