



“The more you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.”

-Dr. Seuss, *“I Can Read With My Eyes Shut!”*

#### **WHAT:**

**In This Together Media** and **Be a Noble Kid** have combined their unique strengths to create a collaborative reading program, ready-made for teachers to engage upper elementary and middle school students in interactive and social literacy experiences.

- Building the reading and critical thinking skills children need to succeed in the 21st century
- Communicating the benefits of collaborative efforts
- Providing upper elementary and middle school students with a positive social experience centered around reading
- Promoting girls as strong, independent thinkers

Created for teachers by teachers, this engaging concept makes reading come alive by choosing books that address current, age-appropriate issues, and providing a template of questions and discussion topics for teachers to lead in group settings.

#### **WHY:**

Upper elementary school and middle school students are at a crossroads: still young enough to consider their parents as guiding forces, yet beginning to experiment with the power of peer influence. Reinforcing positive values during these formative years can impact the way children act and interact for years to come. Presenting these values in relate-able stories helps readers learn from their “peers” experiences.

#### **WHO:**

In This Together Media publishes great books about real girls. Our characters are bold, funny, and fearless. The only thing sacred here is the story. When you pick up an In This Together book, you're going on an adventure. Our stories aren't ones you've read before — they come from new perspectives, take on established ideas and turn them inside out. We embrace the journey, and the awe-inspiring women and girls in the pages of our books will educate, inspire, and enthrall.

Be A Noble Kid endeavors to cultivate character, values, and a sense of responsibility in

elementary-aged children by providing resources, lessons, activities, volunteer opportunities, support, and inspiration to parents, teachers, and all adults who are active in a child's upbringing.

Kati Robins, co-founder of Be A Noble Kid, created the detailed Reading Guide which includes vocabulary lists, discussion questions and activities for each chapter. Kati has been an educator for nearly twenty years. In addition to teaching preschool, kindergarten and fourth grade, Kati worked in preschool management before making the decision to stay at home with her small children.

### **HOW:**

The program is easy, whether you want to incorporate it into your daily curriculum or after-school book club. We provide:

- 1) A copy of The Book of The Month.
- 2) A detailed Reading Guide, created by BE A NOBLE KID founder and teacher, Kati Robins, which includes vocabulary lists, discussion questions, and activities for each chapter.
- 3) A Skype/Google Hangout with the book's author, to walk through the questions with your group.

### **GET STARTED!**

The first book for reading and discussion is: *Kat McGee and The Halloween Costume Caper* by Kristin Riddick. In it, plucky 11-year-old Kat McGee rushes to rescue Halloween from the clutches of evil Dr. S, who wants to ban trick-or-treating, hay mazes, and spooky seasonal delights ... forever. Riddick packs a punch not only in the fun department but also in terms of life lessons: resilience, creative problem-solving, overcoming insecurity and believing in oneself. While *Kat McGee* is a fantastic read for kids of all ages, it is specifically geared toward those ages 8 to 11.

The first chapter of *Kat McGee* and the Reading Guide are below.

# Kat and The Halloween McGee Costume Caper



Kristin Riddick

## CHAPTER 1- THE QUEEN OF HALLOWEEN

And the winner of the Totsville Elementary Halloween Costume Contest... For an epic sixth year in a row, is... Kat McGee and her Bride of Frankenweenie costume! Come on up and claim the Golden Mask. Kat McGee? Kat McGee, are you out there? Kat McGee? KAT MCGEEEEEEEE!

Kat McGee woke from her vivid and marvelous daydream to find her Science teacher Mr. Huckabee shaking her shoulder.

“Kat McGee! Do not sleep in Study Hall! If you’re not going to study, you should get on home. I’m going to call your mother about this. Always falling asleep in Study Hall,” Mr. Huckabee said, shaking his head in disappointment.

“Sorry Mr. Huckabee,” Kat said, grabbing her things and running out the door.

Thank goodness he woke her up! She didn’t have much time to get to the Totsville Town Hall. Today was big. Today was huge. Today was the day that could change her life... forever.

For Kat McGee, the countdown began every year on November first. Three hundred and sixty-four days until Halloween. There were a few highlights along the way: Christmas, of course, as her adventure in the North Pole had solidified her love for that holiday; St. Patrick’s Day, Chinese New Year, Easter, Diwali, Fourth of July...

Okay, more than a few highlights. She was, quite simply, a sucker for holidays. But Halloween blew the fireworks off the Fourth of July. It even knocked the stuffing out of Thanksgiving. Kat McGee was hopelessly devoted to All Hallow’s Eve.

Halloween was tops for Kat because she was tops at Halloween. See, being Kat McGee was not always easy. She finally outgrew her nickname, Kat McPee, from an unfortunate roller-coaster incident way back in the first grade, but it wasn’t easy.

Her long, curly mousy brown hair sometimes looked like a bird’s nest when she tried to control it. She was clumsy, like when she tripped in science class and spilled everything from her biosphere all over Joel Madigan, the most popular boy in her grade. She wasn’t as smart as her sister Hannah or athletic like her brother Abe. In fact, she had six brothers and sisters who were practically perfect, and they loved to tease her when then she wasn’t.

Which was most of the time.

But Halloween was different. Kat was a grand champion trick-or-treater and could get to more houses than any of her brothers and sisters. She could out-bob any apple-bobber at the school carnival. And don’t even get her started on costumes! She never chose the most popular costumes like Katniss from The Hunger Games or Bella from Twilight. Instead she invented her own.

Kat could transform anything into a treasured costume. Tin foil, cardboard, a piece of rope, and an old sheet became a sword, tie, and robe for her Jujitsu Princess in the third grade. Last year, she spray-painted her way to a red and white striped Candy Cane Witch. She washed and dyed an old pair of her brother Abe’s discarded Little League socks three times, construction paper and pipe cleaners from her sister Emily’s trashed art project became her hat, and Gram sewed a cape out of her sister Polly’s old Karate uniform.

Each year, Kat used anything she could grab or find to make her look and feel strong or beautiful, smart or interesting, funny or brave...all of the things she wished

she could be the rest of the year.

And it worked. Starting with her Casper the Fluorescently Friendly Ghost in first grade, Kat had won the Halloween Costume Contest at Totsville Elementary for an unprecedented five straight years. Kids knew who she was at Halloween. She had friends. The year she was a green crayon two of the most popular girls in her class, LeeAnna Mayfield and Mollie Lerner, wanted to be other crayon colors! One of her proudest moments came in third grade when she saw some younger kids copy the Brainy Bumblebee she'd made the previous year. After she won last year, Davis Herring even came up to her and said, "Impressive McGee. You're like the Queen of Halloween."

Halloween was the one time of year she felt awesome. And she did it all on her own. She didn't need help from any of the people who made fun of her the rest of the year.

This year would be no different. For her first year at Totsville Middle School, Kat had created her best costume yet: the Bride of Frankenweenie. After saving Christmas, she felt unstoppable. How could she not win?

Her brothers and sisters were so sick of hearing her talk about it. Yeah, yeah, yeah, we get it, Kat. You're going to win again. You're good at Halloween. So what? Enjoy it while it lasts. Even though she pretended to be annoyed, Kat heard something in her sister Hannah's voice when she spoke. Hannah sounded almost jealous, and Kat couldn't help the flip her stomach did with pride. She was the girl who ruled Halloween.

But now something, or actually someone, was threatening to ruin it all. And not just for her, but for everyone. The town of Totsville, Maine, was under attack. The menacing and mean Dr. S hated Halloween.

With the bushiest black eyebrows and a huge mustache to match, Dr. S was a cross between the Swedish Chef's evil twin and The Hunchback of Notre Dame. Some kids swore they'd seen bugs of all shapes and sizes crawl out of that mustache. A poof of black and ashen hair peeked out from under his tattered black top hat. His huge bulbous pink nose made him seem as though he always had a cold, and his protruding belly and slightly hunched back made him look even more like the bigtime fun-crusher that he was. His voice, deep and frightening, sounded even scarier with his unidentifiable accent. But the icing on the scary cake was one long, fanglike tooth that seemed to be about two inches from you whenever he spoke. Most kids had only heard the words Git outta my way! or Leave me alone! come out of his mouth. Everyone was more than happy to oblige.

Other than his utter distaste for Halloween, no one knew much about Dr. S. Now, he was a hermit who hid away in his dilapidated house at the top of Hidden Meadow Hill, but rumors circled he used to be a scientist and had invented something that made him a lot of money many years ago, before Kat was even born. He moved to Totsville as a young man, bought the beautiful old Kirkwood Mansion on the outskirts of town, disappeared into it, and let it slowly decay. Now it was just a shadow of what it had been, creepy and scary and haunting.

When Dr. S did appear once a year, he was a man on a mission, and his mission was always the same: to end Halloween. He ventured into town a few weeks before October thirty-first and lobbied the town council at their monthly

meeting to end Halloween. At first, people just laughed. Why would they ever end Halloween? That was crazy talk.

But then things started happening in Totsville, and Dr. S's evil plan gained momentum. Two years ago, the beloved Totsville Ten-Forty, a restored old train caboose from the first train ever to pass through town, was almost destroyed by vandals on Halloween. The police never found the culprits, and Dr. S started telling the adults how dangerous it was to let their kids out after dark. He accused them of being bad parents who allowed their kids to 'terrorize neighborhoods' and 'exposed them to unnecessary danger' and 'scared innocent children'.

That year, a couple of the council members actually voted for Dr. S's ban, but they were overruled.

Then, last year, a bunch of kids became so sick from eating too much candy on Halloween that they had to miss school for three days. That really got Dr. S going. He said it was all because of Halloween, the holiday that made their children sick, literally.

Coupled with the vandalism incident, people started seeing Dr. S's point. For Kat, this was the most shocking and potentially devastating twist of all. But sure enough, last year the council's vote at the October meeting was almost tied.

Dr. S clearly hated Halloween, and he was slowly influencing the most prominent adults in the community to hate it too. Even though Totsville usually prided itself on how festive it was for holidays--the Fourth of July Picnic, the St. Patrick's Day Parade, and especially the Fall Harvest Festival were events the entire town enjoyed-- a veil of apathy covered the small town in the wake of Dr. S's campaign.

Events this year had added more fuel to his Halloween banning flame. A few weeks ago, strange things started to happen: smashed jack-o-lanterns appeared on the streets every morning, decorations were torn down in the middle of the night, and costumes even disappeared off store shelves.

Times had changed. First, the members of the council laughed at Dr. S. Then were a little scared of him. And now, it seemed to Kat, they joined him in making everyone scared of everything.

So, just one week before Halloween, many of the die-hard, tried-and-true Halloween fans and all the Halloween-haters anxiously awaited the results as the Town Council met to vote on the ordinance one more time. Kat couldn't miss it.

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"We must save Halloween. We must save Halloween," Kat muttered, pacing frantically around the living room, waiting for the news conference on television to announce the council's decision. She'd wanted to be in town to hear the results live, but her mother insisted she come straight home after Mr. Huckabee called about the Study Hall incident. To her surprise and complete bafflement, no one in the McGee house seemed to be bothered by the events taking over the town.

"What's the big whoop?" Polly asked from the couch, without looking up from her phone.

Gus joined in, "Yeah, we can just download the Halloween app. This game's

more fun than Halloween ever was, anyway.” He went back to playing his own game of X Combat 47 on his tablet.

“Are you guys crazy? The end of Halloween! No more ghost stories, no more trick-or-treating or hay mazes... no more COSTUMES!? This is catastrophic!” Kat looked at them like they were aliens, but they were so mesmerized by their video games that they didn’t notice. Kat shook her head in disbelief and turned around as the news reporter came on the screen.

“We have just been informed that the Town Council of Totsville has approved the ordinance to end Halloween. I repeat: there will be no more Halloween effective immediately. Dr. S, who spearheaded the movement, is on his way out now. “

The reporter tried to catch up with the surprisingly quick waddle of Dr. S and pushed her microphone toward him. “Dr. S, how exactly will the end of Halloween be enforced? Don’t you think you’re disappointing a lot of children?”

His fat hand swatted the mic away. With his head still down, he muttered, “Git out of my way. Leave me alone.”

The news reporter looked confused. She turned back to the camera and stuttered, “Well, umm, apparently Dr. S has some unfinished business. We will have reactions from the citizens of Totsville after this break.”

Kat slammed the remote down and screamed, “NOOOOOOOO!!” She ran into the kitchen, almost knocking over Gram. In her distraction, she’d forgotten all about her date with Gram to bake Gram’s famous Black Cat Cookies for Halloween. On any other day, Kat would be front and center, helping.

Kat’s grandmother, Gram to all who knew and loved her, was the only person in the family who totally understood Kat. Only Gram thought Kat had potential all year long. Only Gram could make her smile on a rainy day. Only Gram didn’t make fun of what everyone else thought was her mostly-average, normal-to-mediocre, nothing-spectacular middle-child way of doing things. Gram made Kat feel special, regardless of what day it was. And even though she lived far away in Seattle, she always seemed to show up for a visit when Kat needed her most. Kat couldn’t have been more thankful she was here now.

“They...they...actually did it. They t-t-took it away,” Kat sniffled as she held back tears, “There isn’t going to be a Halloween. No costume contest. Nothing. I’m back to being a nobody.”

Gram enveloped Kat in a big bear hug. Even the wonderfully familiar scent of peppermint and evergreen from Gram’s sweater couldn’t change the sense of doom and utter sadness Kat felt.

Gram lifted Kat’s chin and wiped away a tear, “Cheer up, buttercup. You know, it isn’t always about winning. You’re always special to me, with or without a costume.”

Kat pulled away. “You don’t understand. I was good at this. Halloween was MY holiday. This was important.”

Gram looked at Kat and shook her head, smiling sadly at her. “Kat, one of these days you’ll understand how important you are. But you know when things look the worst, that’s when something special could just POP up!”

With that, Gram pulled a lollipop with a tiny orange pumpkin atop it from behind her back.

“Thanks, Gram, but I don’t feel like eating--”

Gram cut her off and took a step back. “Now, now Kool Kat. You’re not going to turn down my homemade Pumpkin Pop? I made it just for you, and I’m almost sure it will make you feel better.” She winked and held it out.

Kat didn’t think anything could make her feel better. But if anyone could do the trick, it was Gram. Only semi-reluctantly, she accepted the pop and studied it. It was a perfect miniature of a pumpkin, complete with a little twig-looking stem on top and creases from stem to bottom.

She licked it and tasted honey and pumpkin and cinnamon... And something else that she couldn’t quite put her finger on.

“Hmm. so many different flavors,” she said, looking at Gram and taking another lick, “but still delicious.”

“Well, they say it takes a lot of small pieces to make one amazing puzzle,”

Gram said in her usual sweet but cryptic way, as if she was giving Kat a secret and Kat had to figure out what it meant. She handed Kat a few Black Cat cookies and gave her another hug. “Let me get back to baking. Go enjoy your pop and cookies,” she said, a smile on her face and a twinkle in her eye.

“Thanks, Gram,” Kat said, licking her lollipop. She headed upstairs to her room in the corner of the fourth floor. Was it the taste of toffee or a sliver of syrup? Kat couldn’t figure out what made the lollipop so good and so unique, but she couldn’t get enough of it.

She closed her door, thinking about what Gram said. Most of her old costumes were laid out on her bed; Kat had pulled them out earlier thinking they would inspire her into action. She sighed as she looked down. They weren’t much help now, with Halloween banned. The pink and green polka-dotted Preppy Pirate from kindergarten looked small; Jujitsu Princess was a little dingy; even her Candy Cane Witch costume looked dated. But still, Kat couldn’t help it: she cherished them all, and she was sad that after turning her closet and the attic inside out, she still couldn’t find the Green Crayon costume or her Casper the Fluorescently Friendly Ghost.

Next to her old costumes, was her latest and greatest triumph. The Bride of Frankenweenie. She had worked on it for weeks, and Gram had helped her finish just two days ago. Kat had made it up by combining some of her favorite Halloween movies, The Bride of Frankenstein and Frankenweenie. She made a papier-mache hot dog and painted it with borrowed paint from her brother Ben’s forgotten art set. She found an old big black wig and cut, ironed, and straightened it until it stood straight back. Instead of a white stripe, like the Bride of Frankenstein, she made a yellow Silly String stripe that was puffy and looked like mustard. No one could beat her. This costume would help Kat make her mark in Middle School.

But now it lay neatly beside the others, ready for a day that might not happen. Sorrow hit Kat like a wave. She had to think of a way to stop this horrible ban.

Kat grabbed her backpack and shoved the cookies Gram gave her and a couple of her costumes inside. Maybe if she went downtown, she could show the council her costumes, plead her case, and be back by dinner. She finished her pumpkin pop, put her backpack on—and suddenly felt a little dizzy and a lot sleepy.



Kat half-walked, half- swayed towards her beloved cats Salt and Pepper. Maybe she should wait until morning. Her entire body felt like a Slinky. Slumping down on the pink and purple beanbag Gram had given her for her birthday, her eyelids drooped. They felt so heavy! As her eyes started to close, Kat almost forgot about what Dr. S had done to her hallowed holiday.

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**Kat McGee and The Halloween Costume Caper**  
By Kristin Riddick

**CHAPTER 1: THE QUEEN OF HALLOWEEN**

**Vocabulary Words:** solidified, unprecedented, discarded, jealous, pride, menacing, oblige, momentum, vandalism, influencing, bafflement, catastrophic

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What nickname has Kat finally outgrown? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Have you ever had someone call you a nickname that was hurtful or embarrassing, and how did it make you feel?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How is Kat described in Chapter one?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Why do Kat's brothers and sisters tease her?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Why does Kat love Halloween so much? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Name the 6 adjectives that Kat feels at Halloween, that she wishes she could feel all year long. \_\_\_\_\_
7. What events were happening this year to add to the Halloween-banning fire?  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Who is the only person in the world who totally understands Kat? \_\_\_\_\_

9. What piece of advice does Gram give Kat at the end of the chapter? \_\_\_\_\_

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10. What do you predict will happen next, in Chapter 2? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Activities:**

Fold a piece of construction paper in half. On one side of the paper, draw a picture of Kat's appearance as she is first described in chapter 1. On the other side of the paper, draw a picture of Kat as she looks and feels on Halloween. Explain the differences.

As a group, make a list of the unfortunate events that have occurred in Totsville that make Dr. S's argument to ban Halloween gain momentum (vandalism, sickness, smashed jack-o-lanterns, torn down decorations, missing costumes, etc.), and acknowledge who is affected by these events. Next to each item on the list, brainstorm ways to stop these events from happening, or positively react when an event like this occurs.

Dr. S goes before the Town Council to present his argument for banning Halloween. Write a counter-argument that defends Halloween, and explain why it should not be banned.

Kat always invented her own costumes. Invent your own Halloween costume that would make you feel strong and powerful, and illustrate it.

Create an original recipe for Gram's famous black cat cookies.

## CHAPTER 2: TREATSVILLE

**Vocabulary Words:** Cacophony, sultry, inquisitive, overwhelmed, intriguing, descended, enveloped, dynamic, luminous, dilapidated

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Who does Kat meet at the beginning of Chapter 2? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. When Kat reaches for Dolce's hand, she trips and falls. She quickly gets back up and says, "Sorry. Two left feet." What does it mean when someone says that they have "two left feet", and why does Kat feel the need to apologize? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. When Dolce says, "You're just what we expected, and exactly what we need. Your Gram was right about you", what do you think she means? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Name 5 costumes that come to life in Treatsville.
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_
  4. \_\_\_\_\_
  5. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Why do the costumes that Kat sees, seem sad and afraid? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What does Dolce mean when she says, "Darkness is our friend, and it is only as scary as you make it"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Who does Snaggletooth resemble? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Kat has to save Halloween, but starts to have doubts that she can. She starts to remember how everyone believed in her at the North Pole, and when Kat had confidence she was able to save Christmas. Why is it so important to have confidence in yourself?

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**Activities:**

The author, Kristin Riddick, uses many adjectives and imagery to describe Treatsville. In small groups, use the descriptions in this chapter to create a drawing, or model, of Treatsville.

Using construction paper and a stapler, create a photo album of the main characters in this story. Include a drawing and description for each character.

As a group, create a running list of adjectives that are used in this story, and keep them on display as a way to help students learn to use a variety of adjectives in their own writing.

**CHAPTER 3: THE SPELL OF SNAGGLETOOTH AND THE HALLOWEEN HANDBOOK**

**Vocabulary List:** lavish, translucent, foray, ominous, daunting, ghastly

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What is *The Halloween Handbook*? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Kat is faced with a difficult decision about whether to accept the challenge to save Treatsville, or not, and it takes a lot of courage for her to accept. Have you ever been faced with a difficult decision that required a lot of courage, and how did you face the challenge? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you believe that Kat will be successful in defeating Snaggletooth? Why, or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Activities:**

Create your own Halloween Handbook, and include in it some of your own simple lessons on how to appreciate the goodness of Halloween.

## CHAPTER 4: THE RECRUITS

**Vocabulary List:** plethora, vague, humble, genuinely, encouragement, worthy, intuition, cower, seep, reticent

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Kat decides to recruit costumes to help her on her quest to defeat Snaggletooth. If you were chosen to stop Snaggletooth's spell, what five costumes would you recruit to help you save Halloween, and why would you choose them?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

2. When Kat is speaking to Dolce about the costumes available to recruit, she gets panicked and calls them "rejects". She instantly feels bad about what she said and wants to take it back. Have you ever said something hurtful that you didn't mean, and wanted to take it back but couldn't? What was it that you said, and what can you do in the future to avoid saying something that you don't really mean?

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3. What does Kat mean when she said, "She ruled the roost"? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What does Dolce mean when she says, "People who love you don't notice you because of a costume, Katherine McGee"? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What 3 qualities did Kat know that Candy Cane Witch would bring with them on their adventure? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Activities:**

Kat's house in Treatsville is extremely different from her real house. The steps were made of jellybeans, there was a doughnut doorknob, and a couch made of Jell-O. Use your imagination to create your own wacky and magical version of your real-life home.

When Kat encountered her old costumes, she was surprised that she didn't get a warmer reception, "but reminded herself that her old costumes had lost some of their Halloween magic and weren't themselves." But as Kat began to speak to her old costumes, and they began to perk up, it was "as if Kat was spreading her own brand of magic". Make a list of 5 things you can do to encourage your friends when they aren't feeling quite like themselves. Consider these 5 things your very own brand of magic that you can spread!



## **CHAPTER 5: COURAGE CAMP**

**Vocabulary List:** elaborate, quizzically, embark, intimidating, underestimate

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Why didn't Kat want anyone to know that she was nervous? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Kat creates a Courage Camp to help her, and her costumes, conquer their fears. If you could go to Courage Camp, what fear would you want to train to overcome?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. When the Jujitsu Princess doubts Kat's plan and asks, "What if it doesn't work", Dolce responds by saying, "You won't know until you try". Has anyone ever given you the same advice? If so, what were the circumstances? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Activities:**

Identify your greatest fear and create your own Courage Camp. Design 5 different exercises or activities to complete that will help you overcome this fear. Where would your camp take place, and who would you invite to your camp?

**CHAPTER 6: LESSON ONE: SPOOKY STORY HOUR: PREPARE FOR THE UNEXPECTED**

**Vocabulary List:** vivid, cautious, emanating, eluded, gruesome, fiendish, outlandish, startled

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What did Kat and the costumes begin to realize as they sat around the campfire telling scary stories? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Finish this sentence. "In voicing their fears, they \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_."

What does this sentence mean? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What was Snaggletooth's greatest weapon? \_\_\_\_\_

4. When you prepare for the unexpected, what do you gain? \_\_\_\_\_

**Activities:**

Write your own vivid ghost story. Use as many vocabulary words and adjectives as you can. And remember the more details you include, the scarier the story!

Kat realized that fighting Snaggletooth would be like David fighting Goliath. Do some research in the library or on the computer, and make a list of other historical battles where the underdog prevailed.

## **CHAPTER 7: LESSON 2: THE HAY MAZE: PREPARE FOR CHALLENGING OBSTACLES**

**Vocabulary List:** intricate, disoriented, accomplishment, unscathed, formidable, momentum, perplexed, defiantly, corridor, practical, empathetically, listless

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. While navigating through the maze, Kat disagreed with the Candy Can Witch and Princess Jujitsu on which direction to travel. Kat demanded that they go the direction that she chose, and it led them right into a trap. How did Kat and the costumes resolve their disagreement? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How did Kat and the costumes decide which passageway to choose? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. After Kat fell into the ravine, Candy Cane Witch wanted to follow her because it sounded fun. But, thankfully, Princess Jujitsu reasoned with her to wait until they find a way out of the hole before all jumping in. Why is it important to assess a situation before jumping into it? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What lesson do Kat and the costumes learn from successfully making their way out of the maze? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Activities:**

Create an original design for a hay maze. Don't forget to include obstacles, challenges, and booby traps along the way.

In any classroom or family, it is always necessary to work together as a team to overcome obstacles, just as Kat and the costumes did. Use construction paper, craft foam, or cardboard to create a "Together Everyone Achieves More" display in your classroom made of Teamwork Tiles. Have students illustrate or describe moments in their life when they've conquered an obstacle with teamwork. Take pictures of your students working together and add those to the display, as well.

**CHAPTER 8: LESSON 3: THE HAUNTED HOUSE: PREPARE FOR STARTLING HORRORS**

**Vocabulary List:** frazzled, looming, nefarious, apprehensive, luring, transpired, splendiferous

**Discussion Questions:**

1. When Kat says, “We jumped to conclusions and went a little wackadoo”, what does she mean? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. After making it through the haunted house safe and sound, Kat, the costumes, and Dolce discuss the 5 important life lessons that they have learned. Complete the sentences below:

Things aren't always \_\_\_\_\_.

You can't judge \_\_\_\_\_.

Get past the fear in your \_\_\_\_\_.

Accepting people as they are \_\_\_\_\_.

The only thing to fear \_\_\_\_\_.

**Activities:**

Create a journal, and at the top of each page write one of the life lessons that Kat and the costumes have learned. Beneath each lesson, write a paragraph about what it means and how it applies to your life.

**CHAPTER 9: THE TRUE TEST: TRICK-OR-TREATING TO SNAGGLETOOTH**

**Vocabulary List:** minions, thwart, threatened, queried, miniscule, phosphorescent, bedlam, rickety, apparitions, monotony, desolate

**Discussion Questions:**

1. The first line of the chapter says, “Kat never performed well under pressure.” Do you consider yourself someone who performs well under pressure? Why, or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Snaggletooth is bullying Preppy Pirate into telling him information about the Candy Cane Witch and Princess Jujitsu. Have you ever had anyone try to bully you into saying something about someone else? Why is sharing private information about someone a hurtful thing to do, and what does it say about the kind of person you are if you participate in this kind of bullying? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. When the Riddler is threatening Kat and the costumes, Jujitsu exclaims about Candy Cane Witch, “ She used to think her power and magic came from that hat and broom, but things are different now. *We’re* different now.” What have Kat and Jujitsu realized about their powers? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Why would Snaggletooth tell the Riddler and Headless Horsemen that they don’t need any friends? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Activities:**

In this chapter, Team Kat has many obstacles to overcome. Kat, the Candy Cane Witch, and Princess Jujitsu all take turns displaying their strengths when helping to navigate the group through the spooky terrain. Make a chart and list the ways in which each team member does their part to help the group succeed.

Kat

Candy Cane Witch

Princess Jujitsu

## **CHAPTER 10: THE LEGEND OF SNAGGLETOOTH**

**Vocabulary List:** nonchalantly, demeanor, ashamed, reluctant, wary

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What are the reasons Kat gives Snaggletooth for how they got to his House on the Hill? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. When Kat confronts Snaggletooth about why he hates Halloween so much, she is surprised to see sadness in his eyes. What caused the sadness that Kat sees in him?

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3. What does Kat realize Halloween is all about? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Kat helps Snaggletooth realize that it's not really Halloween that he hates, and that it wasn't other people that made him feel like a monster or untalented; it was him. What does Kat realize about herself, and about Halloween, as she is explaining this to him?

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### **Activities:**

Snaggletooth was known for his unique, homemade, delicious Halloween candy. Invent your own specialty Halloween candy. What would it look like, taste like, and what would it be called?

**CHAPTER 11: THE RETURN TO AND THE RETURN OF TREATSVILLE**

**Vocabulary List:** conjure, enchantment, merriment, boisterous, acceptance, respectfully, affirmation, enthralled, contentment, bittersweet

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Lesson Four says, “Everyone has good inside; sometimes it’s just forgotten. So be kind to those who are unkind to you, and they may choose good over rotten.” What does this poem mean to you? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What do you predict will happen in the final chapter of Kat McGee’s Halloween adventure? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Activities:**

After Dr. S expresses his gratitude to Dolce for giving him the chance to do good, Kat says “We all deserve second chances, Snaggletooth.” Think of someone in your life who has given you a second chance when you’ve made a mistake. Write them a Thank You note, and express your gratitude for their forgiveness.

Each chapter and lesson includes a brief poem. Choose one of the important life lessons that Kat and the costumes learned along their journey, and write your own poem about it.

## **CHAPTER 12: HALLOWEEN RETURNS TO TOTSVILLE**

**Vocabulary List:** skeptically, ordinance

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Do you think it was all a dream, or that Kat’s adventure in Treatsville really happened? What evidence is there in Chapter 12 that supports your argument?

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2. Did you enjoy the ending of the story? Why, or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Would you recommend this book to a friend? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Activities:**

Kat and the costumes used courage, teamwork, trust, and creativity to successfully make it through their adventure in Treatsville. In a group, create 4 Halloween activities based around these four words, wear your most inventive, original costumes, display your Treatsville model homes and *Halloween Handbooks*, prepare your unique, homemade, delicious Halloween candy to share with your friends, and have your own magical Halloween celebration!

For more educational and character-building activities, visit [beanoblekid.org](http://beanoblekid.org)