



Substitute Creacher

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The troublemaking students of Ms. Jenkins' class arrive at school one day to discover a substitute *creacher* has come to put a stop to their monkey business! He regales them with mind-boggling stories about his former students who didn't follow the rules: Keith the glue-eater, Zach the daydreamer, and Hank the prankster, to name a few. But even this multi-tentacled, yellow-spotted, one-eyed monster's cautionary tales about the consequences of mischief-making can't seem to change the students' wicked ways until he reveals the spookiest and most surprising story of all: his own.

Chris Gall's vibrant artwork leaps off the page with a dynamic comic book aesthetic that will grab both parents and monster-loving kids!

Substitute Creacher Details

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From Reader Review Substitute Creacher for online ebook

Karen says

Super fun, especially as a sub myself.

Reader says

With shiny green foil and mugshots of misbehaving children, Gall's picture book is a perfect Halloween or back to school treat. There's a mischievous gnome that pops up in each story, and as the story shifts from subtle tricks to dangerous and gruesome situations, the creature's past comes to light. A good lesson wrapped in an enjoyable monster tale, young readers and storytellers alike will delight in the telling. - C

Brenda Kahn says

Don't really get the love I read on the Interwebz about this book. Loved the art and the beginning. Felt the rhyme alternating with prose awkward, the reason behind the creacher's existence felt forced and the ending just didn't make sense. Everything's the same 49 years later? Or, am I missing something?

Nick says

I had trouble figuring out the intended audience for this book. The audience has to be old enough to know about school, substitute teachers, common school rules and several other things before it will make sense, but the format seems aimed at younger than that.

The initial premise, of a substitute teacher who is wildly weird, has been used before. In this case the sub is an actual monster...at least in appearance. In action, he spends the entire day telling the kids stories that are, in fact, a bit dull. Wildly exaggerated versions of the dangers of eating glue, or stuffing too much into your school desk? The horrors of leaving the hamster cage open?? By the time it gets to the real point of the story, I think that some readers will have lost focus. The initial point of the story seemed to be about rowdy or bad behavior, but fully half of the examples are nothing of the sort. Eating glue or daydreaming in class are NOT the same as putting tacks in the teacher's chair, or putting a baby shark in the classroom aquarium, but the equates them.

Oddly, the story can even be taken as a commentary on the "Three Strikes" law, as the sub finally gets to the story about a boy whose punishment is wildly out of scale with his crime...49 years of torment for stealing Halloween candy.

I will say that kids will love the artwork in the story. It's gross and silly in a way that will appeal to kids, even if the story fails to make much sense.

Tom says

The art was decent and it shows rhyming well, but the story was fairly unfocused.

Alana says

This book really teaches children the lesson of karma and how you should really be kind to everyone through a fun rhyming book.

Kimberly says

I give this book a 4 star rating.

This book is about a class that gets a substitute monster for a teacher. This leads to the class acting worse than ever before. This leads to the substitute monster telling all the stories about former students. There were stories about students who brought pets to class, a student who ate glue, and a student who would draw instead of taking the test. This leads to the students starting to behave. It is because of this that the substitute monster turned back into a regular human being.

Ways to use this in a classroom

- 1) Teaching your students how to act in class
- 2) How to have students act during a substitute
- 3) Make up rules for when there is a sub
- 4) Make up stories of other students who have misbehaved

Alyson (Kid Lit Frenzy) says

As I read through this one, I felt that it was for an older age group (7 or 8 and up). A picture book for the goosebumps crowd in a way.

Leah Edel says

Summary:

All the students were happy at first because they saw that their normal teacher was gone, and it would be a substitute teacher. But the sub, Mr. Creacher, was very harsh on the students and told them that he was there to warn the students what would happen if they continue to misbehave. He told them stories of so many bad students and the bad things that happened to them. One story of a student was Chris, who was a thief and stole candy and other things. Mr. Creacher was Chris, and this was his punishment, but in the end of the book he gave away everything he had stolen and turned back into the young Chris.

Possible Topics:

1. Respect your all your teachers (typical teacher or not).
2. Shows the ways to behave and what not to do.
3. It is never too late to apologize and give back.

Liz says

Just ok. Didn't like that the creature spoke in rhymes, but the children didn't. It interrupted the flow of the story. Illustrations were cartoony. Eh.

Lisa says

This book is good for getting students to describe a "creacher" of their own. I used this book with 2nd grade to launch a writing, descriptive activity. Perfect for Halloween dress up season.

Candice says

I'm a substitute teacher and I enjoyed this book. It was funny and the ending was not what I expected. it's a perfect read aloud for a substitute to read with students, particularly in October (wink, wink).

Laurie says

Booklist starred (June 1, 2011 (Vol. 107, No. 19))

Grades K-2. Akin to those boxes of "eyeballs" (aka olives) that kids touch blindfolded before screaming their heads off, this is a delicious little shocker of a picture book that ought to whip your crowd of youngsters into a shrieking, laughing frenzy. A classroom of troublesome kids (they look rather like *Rugrats*) meet their match when giant, green, tentacled Mr. Creacher stops by to scare them straight. Speaking in ooze-bordered rhyme, the monster spins a series of two-page cautionary tales about the awful fates befalling misbehaving students. There was Keith, who ate glue and came to a rather sticky end; there was Kylie, whose constant doodles came back to bite her; and maybe worst of all was daydreamer Zach, who forgot to close the hamster cage before lunch: "And no one else noticed / in time to shout 'FREEZE!' / that the sandwich he held / WAS OF HAMSTER AND CHEESE!" (This and every other climax is illustrated with admirably twisted verve.) With dramatic low angles situated within comic-book panels, Gall portrays Creacher as deadly serious—until an unexpected twist reveals that the last victim in the casebook is Creacher himself, cursed by a magical gnome. A happy—though slightly ominous!—ending should help settle those still screaming.

Kirkus Reviews starred (June 1, 2011)

In this cautionary tale that combines humor and a touch of magic, good behavior is the lesson of the day when a particularly naughty class of students has a substitute teacher. The seven-tentacled, green substitute teacher, Mr. Creacher speaks in rhyme and glares from his single eye (in front that is; he's got three in back). He regales the class with tales of children who failed to behave in school and the fates that befell them. There's Keith, the glue-eater who stuck to all he touched, Zach, the daydreamer who accidentally ate the

class pet, and Kylie, the artist, whose drawing came to life and ravaged the classroom. Then, Beauty and the Beast-like, Mr. Creacher reveals that he himself was a naughty child, put under a spell and sentenced to teach children about their wicked ways. It works—the children promise to reform, and with his debt now repaid, Mr. Creacher can return to his own childhood a changed boy. Gall's illustrations use speech bubbles that drip with green slime and graphic-novel elements to great effect, creating artwork that pops off the pages and appears almost three-dimensional. Touches of humor take the edge off some of the more frightening scenes. Great for both Halloween and the start of a new school year, this is certain to provide more than a few laughs to kids who have seen through Viola Swamp's disguise. (Picture book. 6-10)

Library Media Connection (October 2011)

Ms. Jenkins' class is in for a surprise when a "substitute creature" shows up one day to take over for the teacher. The students of the class, who are always in trouble, and readers of the book are taken on a mysterious adventure full of tricks, treats, and pranks with an ending full of awe and amazement. All involved are regaled with stories of this surprising substitute's previous students. Readers will experience a wondrous journey as they spend a day with this unusual substitute teacher. Chris Gall's typical use of vibrant colors is evident here as the striking illustrations capture the events of the story in a bright and cheerful manner. Youngsters will enjoy both the story and the illustrations again and again. Laura Eisenberg Robinson, Teacher, Seattle (Washington) School District, Big6 Project Manager. RECOMMENDED

Publishers Weekly (May 23, 2011)

Six unruly children are in for a shock when a green-speckled, one-eyed, tentacled monster (wearing a neat brown suit) shows up as their substitute teacher. Mr. Creacher also has three eyes on the back of his head, the better to intercept the inevitable tack-on-the-chair prank. He speaks in rhymes—encased in slimy-looking voice bubbles—and informs his disorderly students that, over 49 years, "I've collected some tales/ whose lessons are grave/ about boys and girls/ who didn't behave." He calmly launches into brief cautionary tales of children whose deeds bring big trouble. A glue-eater sticks to everything he touches, a doodler's dragon comes alive, and—worst of all—a boy (named Chris) steals from classmates and is transformed into a monster: "'Til he repaid his debt,/ a creacher he'd be./ And by now you should know:/ That monster is me." Gall (Dinotrux) illustrates in explosive, cinematic panels; retro Ben-Day dot patterns allude to classic funnies. If the dire warnings fail to inspire repentance, Mr. Creacher's dilemma—and a conclusion that breaks the spell—may warm the cold hearts of defiant substitute baiters. Ages 3-6. (July) (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

School Library Journal (July 1, 2011)

K-Gr 2—Misbehaving kids meet their substitute—a one-eyed, green-tentacled monster that spouts rhyming cautionary tales of mischievous miscreants. There's Keith, who ate so much glue that random objects started sticking to him; Sara, who stuffed her desk so full of junk that it eventually exploded; Chris, a bully who stole candy from other kids and as punishment was turned into the monster they see before them. As he gives away the last of the candy he stole long ago, the Substitute Creacher sheds his green skin, turning back into a boy and returning to his long-lost home in the past. Gall's illustrations are colorful and catchy with their

comic-book style, but the tone of the text veers wildly from gleeful cautionary tale to maudlin sob story, and the result doesn't quite gel.-Kathleen Kelly MacMillan, Carroll County Public Library, MD (c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Racheal says

Holy moley that was fun! I had a grin on my face the entire time! It's perfectly spooky for Halloween with a ton of gross-out classroom humor that kids (I'm including myself as a big kid here) love, with a surprisingly well-developed story that's even a bit touching in the end. I also thought the rhyming was really well done, and that the way it has Mr. Creacher talking in rhymes and the narration in regular prose was really a good way to do it.

And just a note: I can totally see that this would be better for older school-aged kids so they can appreciate the humor and be able to follow the story all the way to the end, but I don't see as that's a reason to rate this down like a lot of people seem to have done here :/

Molly Daybert says

There are many books about the horrors of substitute teachers, but none like this! This substitute brought these rowdy children stories of exploding desks, smoke breathing dragons, and a hamster and cheese sandwich! The story takes an interesting turn when the students discover that this creacher of a substitute was really a young boy who was cursed for being a candy thief!

Overall, this story was kind of all over the place. While Gall told us why the Creacher was doomed to being a monster, I felt that there was a big piece of the story missing. Gall's pacing for this tale is too quick which makes the story not as enjoyable as it could've been.
