

***Paul and His Beast***  
**by Sarah Stup**

**Common Core Standards-based  
Teacher's Guide**

*Grade 6*

**Table of Contents**

Pre-reading Activities..... 2 - 4

During Reading Activities..... 5 - 9

Discussion Questions..... 10 - 11

End of Unit Activities and Projects..... 12 - 15

# Pre-reading Activities

## **Pre-reading Activity #1 – Meet the Author – Sarah Stup**

A. Sarah's *Are your eyes listening?* YouTube video

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O1W3q-N8o7s&feature=player\\_embedded#at=173](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O1W3q-N8o7s&feature=player_embedded#at=173)

Related questions:

- Why do you think Sarah asks the question "Are your eyes listening?"
- Have you ever met someone who communicates without using his or her voice?
- How does Sarah communicate?
- What does Sarah mean by "my body is peace opposite?"
- When Sarah talks about a "Beast" and a "naughty animal," does she mean that she is a Beast or that people with autism are naughty animals?

B. See Q&A in *Paul and his Beast* to learn about why Sarah wrote this book.

C. To learn more about Sarah, visit her website at [www.SarahStup.com](http://www.SarahStup.com).

## **Pre-reading Activity #2 – Prediction Mixer and Roundtable**

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Students will make predictions individually and as a group about the story based on short excerpts of the text. Use attached worksheet.

### **Directions:**

Choose important, telling phrases, sentences or words directly from the text to copy onto strips or index cards. You may shorten a sentence, but don't change the words.

Organize students into groups of four or five. Hand out strips or cards with phrases from the text. Each student independently reads their phrase and then students mingle around the room, reading the text to each other and discussing possible predictions.

Return to the small groups and as a group, complete the Prediction Roundtable worksheet.

Each student will write their own predictions based on the text that they gathered and then they will come to a group decision on a prediction about the book.

See attached worksheet.

### **Pre-reading Activity #3 – Bias Activity and Discussion**

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Students are challenged with eight controversial statements about disabilities that will activate prior knowledge and create discussion about important issues. Due to the nature of the statements and for privacy, the teacher may want the students to respond to the statements individually. The teacher can, however, open up the classroom for discussion and explain that they will come back to this worksheet upon finishing the book to see if their opinions have changed.

See attached worksheet.

### **Pre-reading Activity # 4 – What is the meaning of the word “Beast” in this story?**

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

- A. Identify and list on the board characteristics the students associate with the word “Beast.”
- B. Ask students to consider books and movies they have read or watched. What are some examples of “beasts”? Were they real, actual creatures?
  - *Beauty and the Beast*
  - *The Incredible Hulk*

Show a photo of “The Incredible Hulk.”



Source: <http://7-themes.com/7019221-the-incredible-hulk.html>

- C. When enraged, Bruce Banner transforms into a beast known as “The Hulk.” Is The Hulk a “good” or “bad” character?
- D. Can the students remember a time when they found themselves acting like “a beast,” even when they tried to follow the rules? How did they feel when this happened?
- E. Sometimes in a story or poem, metaphors are used. What is a metaphor? Provide examples of metaphors and ask class to provide examples.
- F. In the story, *Paul and his Beast*, “Beast” is a metaphor; there is no actual wild animal. The author is not saying that people with autism are “beasts.” When you see the term “beast,” ask yourself what the author is trying to tell the reader about Paul’s thoughts and and feelings.
- G. Others with autism may choose a different metaphor to describe their experiences. See if one of your students with autism, whom you would have spoken to ahead of time to ask permission, is willing to share with the class his perspective on a different metaphor.



# **During Reading Activities**

## **During Reading Activity #1 – Vocabulary**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.LS.5.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 5 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- A. The students will use a dictionary to define the vocabulary words in the chart on the following pages and write the definitions on a sheet of paper. This may be done individually or working in groups.
- B. The teacher may give the students the option to write down other unknown words as they are reading and add these to their vocabulary lists.
- C. Synonym activity:
  - To further knowledge of vocabulary words, the teacher may also supply synonyms for as many of the vocabulary words as possible.
  - Using the worksheet attached, list the vocabulary words randomly in the “New word” column. Then list the synonyms in random order under the “Word you already know” column.
  - Students will draw a line to match the synonyms with vocabulary words. See attached worksheet.

<p><b><u>Chapters 1-4</u></b> <b>(pp. 1-22)</b></p> <p>clamor</p> <p>compulsions</p> <p>breach</p> <p>gritty</p> <p>loped</p> <p>diesel</p> <p>protruding</p> <p>lanyard</p>	<p><b><u>Chapters 13-16</u></b> <b>(pp. 51-65)</b></p> <p>pod</p> <p>developmental</p> <p>sensory</p>
<p><b><u>Chapters 5-8</u></b> <b>(pp. 23-39)</b></p> <p>canal</p> <p>incinerated</p> <p>furrowed</p> <p>taunted</p> <p>seclusion</p> <p>residential</p> <p>harnessed</p>	<p><b><u>Chapters 17-21</u></b> <b>(pp. 66-81)</b></p> <p>intervals</p> <p>threshold</p> <p>idiom</p> <p>literal</p>

<p><b><u>Chapters 9-12</u></b> <b>(pp. 40-50)</b></p> <p>advocates</p> <p>alternative</p> <p>wisteria</p> <p>intermittently</p> <p>gawking</p> <p>tresses</p> <p>competent</p>	<p><b><u>Chapters 22-24 and epilogue</u></b> <b>(pp. 82-94)</b></p> <p>imperceptible</p> <p>subdued</p> <p>acoustics</p> <p>summon</p> <p>insolent</p>
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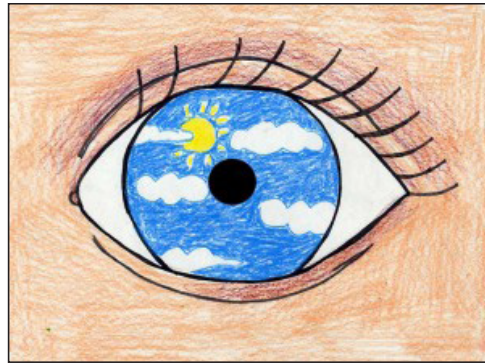
## **During Reading Activity #2 – Imagery**

This activity is inspired by the work of René Magritte, a Belgian surrealist artist, and more specifically, his painting, “The False Mirror.” Surrealist artists’ paintings are often from their imaginations and may look bizarre or dreamlike.

Integrate art into the language arts and have students use their imaginations by drawing from a character’s perspective. Use the perspective (point of view) of the main character from *Paul and his Beast*, and sketch what may be seen through his eyes.

What does he see? Repeating patterns? Fay? Jason? His classmates staring at him?

- A. Take an old CD and trace both the inner and outer circle in the center of an 8.5" x 11" piece of paper.
- B. Add lines above and below the circle to make it look like an eye. Then draw an eyelid and eyelashes.
- C. Trace all the pencil lines with a black marker.
- D. Color the center circle black.
- E. In the eye’s large white “iris,” draw an image that reflects something that Paul may be seeing. The more detailed, the better! Use mediums like colored pencils or markers.



Lesson plan inspired by: <http://artprojectsforkids.org/an-eye-for-magritte/>

### **During Reading Activity #3 – Music and the Senses**

For children with autism, sounds sometimes overstimulate their senses; or, as with music, can have a calming effect. This is seen in the story with both Paul and Timmy. In this lesson, students will listen to different types of music and respond to how their senses are affected.

- A. Working in groups, the students will skim the text for passages where music, sounds, or reactions to sounds or music are mentioned. Each group will be assigned either one chapter or several chapters, depending on the number of groups. Decide whether the sound or music is perceived as pleasant or unpleasant.
- B. The groups will share their findings with the class.
- C. A chart of music or sounds from *Paul and his Beast* is provided for you below.

Chapter 1	Classroom sounds
Chapter 2	The sound of rain and bus noise
Chapter 3	Cafeteria noise
Chapter 6	The music Paul is listening to
Chapter 8	Classroom sounds
Chapter 9	Timmy’s violin music, the music Paul is listening to
Chapter 10	Gum wrapper
Chapter 15	Autism Simulation
Chapter 16	Timmy’s scream
Chapter 18	Paul’s humming, Timmy’s violin case clicking
Chapter 22	Beacon Playoffs – violin, clapping, tambourines
Chapter 23	Whispers, coughs, bells



- D. Next, have students close their eyes and play short clips of different types of music.
- E. After each type of music, the students will respond to how the sounds and rhythms make them feel. They may write their evaluations on paper or, to tie the activity into the Arts, they may paint or draw as they listen.

**Genres of music** (choose as many as you would like):

Lullabies

Folk

Classical

Hip-Hop/Rap

Country

Instrumental

Dance

Jazz



## **Discussion Questions**

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Use one or all of the following activities to help you get more out of *Paul and His Beast* and its discussion questions. More detailed discussion questions can also be found in the Reader's Guide at the end of the novel.

- A. Book clubs – Students will work in small groups of 4-5 to discuss the questions below. Although the teacher may provide basic guidelines such as length of time for discussion and different roles of the group members, the discussion is primarily student-led and centered. The groups will share their findings with the class.
- B. Discussion Web – Choose one of the questions below and plug it into a discussion web. In small groups, students can discuss and defend their positions on whether they agree or disagree with the question. Listing supporting statements, the group will then come to a conclusion.
- C. Two-way journals – Students will respond to a discussion question by writing in a journal. Students will then turn in their journals to their teachers, who will offer their thoughts. This may be done for several discussion questions.

### Discussion Questions

1. How would the story have been different if told by another character? Give a few examples.
2. What is the Beast in this story?
3. Which of your personal behaviors or routines make you feel secure in much the same way the Beast does for Paul?
4. What character do you most relate to? Why?
5. During the gym class try-outs, Pete is described as a student with a red leather jacket and bright purple hair. Why do you think Pete is accepted although he is 'different' and Paul is not?
6. The beach is a place where Paul felt his Beast could relax. Why do you think he felt this way? Can you relate?
7. In what ways did the Autism Simulation help Miss Topper and Paul's classmates?

8. Paul wants his classmates to be accepting of his behaviors. Why do you think Paul was not as accepting of Timmy's behaviors?
9. By the end of the story, what has or has not changed for Paul? What about Timmy?



# **End of Unit Activities and Projects**

## **Activity #1 – Writing Prompts**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Using complete sentences and a well-constructed paragraph, answer the one of more of the following writing prompts.

1. Will Paul go to college? Imagine what Paul's life will be like in the future.
2. Paul is attracted to Fay. Do you think Paul and Fay would ever have a romantic relationship? Why or why not?
3. Pick an activity that you enjoy (soccer, dance, debate club, etc.) and, knowing Paul's behaviors, describe some ways you could include him in that activity.
4. Timmy's parents decide to take him out of Harbor Special School and send him to a residential home away from his family and community. Is this where Timmy is destined to be or will he ever be able to return to school? Write a possible scenario for Timmy's future.

## **Activity #2 – Research Ideas**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

Explain to students that they may have encountered terms or ideas that they'd like to know more about. The students should list three things they read in *Paul and his Beast* and would like to further research. Working in groups or individually, they will research a term or idea listed, or any of the words below having to do with the theme of the novel.

Have them share with the rest of the class in an oral presentation.

### **Sample research topics:**

- inclusion
- sensory disorder

- autism
- disability
- Asperger’s syndrome
- advocate

### **Activity #3 – School Newspaper**

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Write a newspaper article for the Beacon Middle School newspaper. Have it cover a main event of the story that could be reported on.

#### **Examples:**

- the Autism Simulation in Miss Topper’s classroom
- Paul and his team winning the the Beacon Middle School Playoffs
- Timmy running away from the bus

Include an attention-grabbing headline and an illustration. You may also choose to use quotes from the story to enhance your story. Use the attached template.

### **Activity #4 – If our Characters had Instagram**

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Imagine if the characters in *Paul and His Beast* had Instagram. What would they take a photo of? Where would the setting/location be? Which characters would leave a comment on their picture?

This activity allows students to be creative as they put themselves in the lives of their characters. Their story begins to come to life as they show how they’ve visualizing what they’re reading. They also naturally begin to make inferences as they determine how the characters would respond to each other.

## Directions:

### Worksheet A (Cell phone):

- Choose one character for whom you will make an “Instagram” from his or her perspective. Think about what photo they may take a picture of. What would it be of? Where would it take place?
- Write the character’s name on the top box of Worksheet A. In the box below the name, write the location of the photo after considering the setting in the scene of the book.
- Sketch a character thumbnail image in the small box to the left of the name and location.
- Now, in the large square, draw a picture of what your character would have photographed, making sure it is supported by the text of the story.

### Worksheet B (Comment page):

- At the top of the page, in the blue box, write the characters’ name from Worksheet A.
- Now, you get to think from other characters’ perspectives. Which other characters from the story may “like” the photo? For example, Jason may “like” Paul’s photo of their Playoffs, or perhaps Fay may “like” a selfie that Jason took with his sunglasses on.
- Next to the small heart on the first line, choose other characters that “like” the photo and write their names.
- Finally, next to the small conversation bubble, write the name of a character and the comment that he or she might have made on the photo.

The lesson plan that inspired this activity and the worksheets was found at: <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/If-the-Characters-in-Your-Story-had-Instagram-492577>

## **Activity #5 – Think Sheet**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

### Directions:

1. As a class, define the term *advocate* using a dictionary. List key words from the definition on the board.

2. As a challenge, the teacher may ask students to come up with two additional words on their own that define *advocate*.
3. Find evidence from the story that proves that Paul did or did not demonstrate the characteristics that students listed. Be able to provide the page number and a brief description of the event.
4. The teacher will call on students to share their evidence and to list it on the board.
5. Students will copy down the definitions and evidence to later help them write their essay.
6. Choose an essential characteristic that you feel best defines the term *advocate* and is best supported by the text.
7. Students will write an essay first defining *advocate* and then answering the question of whether Paul was an advocate or not, citing evidence from the text.

**Questions you will respond to in an essay:**

- What is an advocate?
- Was Paul in *Paul and His Beast* an advocate? If so, how? What did he do that showed advocacy or self-advocacy? If not, what did he do that did *not* show advocacy or self-advocacy?

See attached worksheet.