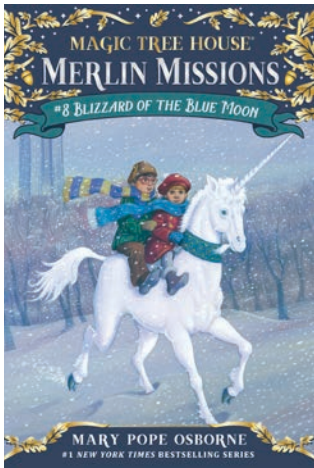


# EDUCATORS' GUIDE

## MAGIC TREE HOUSE<sup>®</sup>

# MERLIN MISSIONS

### *Blizzard of the Blue Moon*



PB: 978-0-375-83038-9  
EL: 978-0-375-89458-9  
Grades: 2–5  
F&P: N • Lexile: 570L

#### **ABOUT** *Blizzard of the Blue Moon*

Jack and Annie are off on another Merlin Mission. This time, Merlin has sent them to rescue a beautiful magical creature—the unicorn. But when they land in New York City during the Depression of the 1930s, Jack and Annie are confused. Where will they find a unicorn in a big city?

## PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Discuss with your students: How do you know if a book is a fantasy or if it is realistic fiction? What clues does the author give? Do you read these two kinds of books differently? How? How do you know if something is real or imaginary?

## CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

### **Create a *Blizzard of the Blue Moon* environment in your classroom!**

*Blizzard of the Blue Moon* has many beautiful images: from a snowy New York City to a unicorn tapestry at the Cloister's Museum. Have students create a collage of buildings using a wide variety of papers (newsprint, construction paper, even wrapping paper) that run an entire length of a wall (or hallway).

Remind your students that a haiku is a traditional three-line Japanese poem, which consists of counted syllables: five for the first line, seven for the second, and five again for the third. Haiku often gives a hint to the season or reflects on nature so it is a perfect fit for this classroom environment.

### Questions for Class Discussion

- What must Annie and Jack understand to be able to find the unicorn? How do they figure out its meaning? Is poetry always difficult to understand?
- Why does the weather play an important part in this story? How would the story be different if it was set in the summer? How does it add to the conflict?
- Who comes to the aid of Jack and Annie? How do they steer our young explorers in the right direction? Would you want to travel into the past in New York with just your sibling? Why or why not?
- A nemesis is someone who works against your goal. Who is the nemesis to Jack and Annie's goal of finding the Flower of Rome? What do they do? Who ultimately wins? Why?
- How are Jack and Annie rewarded by Merlin? Why do you think he is testing them in such difficult ways? Do you think they have proven themselves to be wise in their use of magic? How?

### New York City in Words and Pictures

Have students create illustrated brochures with facts about New York City. They may use the ones that Jack reads aloud in the novel as long as they also do research and add at least five new facts. The brochures can highlight any of the topics from the book: museums, history, parks, city transportation, or the Rockefellers.

*Teaching ideas by Tracie Vaughn Zimmer, a reading specialist and children's author.*

