



Time Villains: Monster Problems by Victor Piñeiro

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Recommended Age: 8-13 years

Recommended Grade Levels: 3-8

1. Summary

- a. A few months have passed since their last crazy adventure fighting Blackbeard (who was summoned using a magical antique table named Andy). With everything back to normal for the students of Finistere Middle School, it seems nothing could go wrong for Javi, Wiki, and Brady. But when Principal Gale has to rush back to Oz for an emergency and leaves the ominous Ms. Vlad in charge, all hope seems lost once again. That is, until their new vice principal, Mr. Dragon, arrives, and things begin to look up. But in an unfortunate turn of events, Mr. Dragon proves to be a bloodthirsty monster! How will Javi and his friends defeat this latest evil that has invaded their school?

2. Discussion Questions

- a. What do you know about monsters, like Dracula, Frankenstein, and werewolves?
- b. How do you think school would be if your favorite book characters were your teachers?
- c. What did you feel when Vlad summoned Dracula without permission?
 - i. Have you experienced doing something without permission or someone doing something without your permission? How was that experience?
- d. Javi often refers to himself as a C+ person. This is another way of saying he is average at his activities and doesn't feel like he is good enough. At the end of the story, though, he saves the whole world! Have you experienced feeling average, or like you aren't good enough at something? How do you work through those feelings?

- e. What did you feel when Vlad became principal? What about when Mr. Dragon came in?
- f. Who would you summon if you had an “Andy”? Why?
- g. Frankenstein was once thought to be a scary, disastrous monster, but proves to be very misunderstood and quite nice. Have you experienced being misunderstood? How was that experience? How can we help others understand us more and how can we understand others better?
- h. What did you like about this book?
- i. What other books, movies, or shows does this book remind you of?
- j. Javi and his family speak English and Spanish, meaning they are bilingual. What are your experiences with different languages—either languages you speak, or those you have heard, read, and learned about? How are languages important in your life?

3. Extension Activities

- a. Have students think of 1-3 people/characters they would summon. Ask them to create a visual representation for these people/characters showing who they are and why they would summon them. Students can create this representation through writing, illustrations, or acting out a story that unfolds when these characters are summoned.
- b. As a drawing activity, have students create a sandwich that they could enter in their own Finistere Sandwich Making Competition. Ask students to connect their sandwich ingredients to their own life and encourage them to be creative with any kind of ingredients, food or otherwise (for example, a rainbow sandwich!)