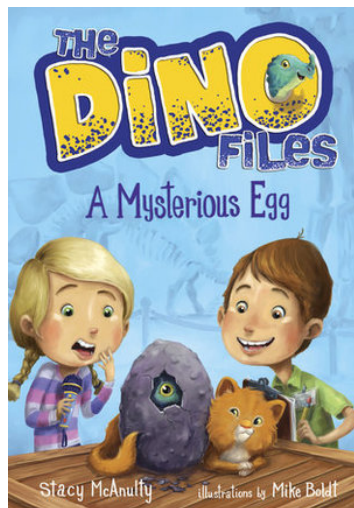


# A Curriculum Guide for Educators & Readers



Discussion points, activities, and writing prompts to help educators use *The Dino Files: A Mysterious Egg* as a classroom read-aloud or as a selection for independent reading. Great for book clubs, too!

## About the Author, Stacy McAnulty

Stacy McAnulty does not have a dinosaur. She does have three kids, three dogs, and one husband. She has been on a dinosaur dig in Wyoming, where she found a small fossil. It wasn't an egg. Stacy grew up in upstate New York but now calls North Carolina home. (She still really wants a dinosaur—preferably a *Spinosaurus*.) Visit her online at [stacymcnulty.com](http://stacymcnulty.com).



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## Common Core Aligned for 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

1<sup>st</sup>: ELA.RL.1.1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9; W.1.1, 2, 3, 7; ELA.SL.1.1, 2, 3, 4, 5

2<sup>nd</sup>: ELA.RL.2.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; W.2.1, 2, 3, 7; ELA.SL.2.1, 2, 3, 4

3<sup>rd</sup>: ELA.RL.3.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; ELA.W.3.1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8; ELA.SL.3.1, 2, 3, 4

*The Dino Files* can also be used as a springboard for activities based on the Next Generation Science Standards 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade LS-4 Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity.

## Before You Read...

1. Take a close look at the cover of *The Dino Files: A Mysterious Egg*. What do you see? Describe the characters. Can you guess what the story might be about? What clues can you find in the cover art to support your prediction?
2. Read the text on the back of the book. What do you learn about the story from this blurb? What questions does it raise about the story?
3. Open the book and read the chapter titles. Do the titles give any further information regarding what the book might be about?
4. Read the "Dear Reader" letter and the About the Author section in the front of the book. List at least five facts about Frank Mudd. List at least five questions you would ask Frank if you could.
5. Using all this information, can you make any predictions about what might happen in the book?

## Chapters 1-4

1. Describe the Dinosaur Education Center of Wyoming (DECoW) in your own words.
  - a. Using the description in chapter one, create a brochure for visitors to DECoW, including a map.
  - b. Frank mentions several DECoW rules. What are some of the museum rules? What rules would you add?
2. Using chapters one through four as evidence, who is Frank L. Mudd? Draw an outline of a human figure, which will represent Frank, on a large piece of paper.
  - a. Write any known details about Frank inside the outline. Outside of the outline, discuss and write any questions about Frank that you might have.
3. Who is Samantha McCarthy? Draw an outline of a human figure, which will represent Samantha, on a large piece of paper.
  - a. Using chapters one through four as evidence, write any known details about Samantha inside the outline. Outside of the outline, discuss and write any questions about Samantha that you might have.
4. What are some of the jobs that Frank has around DECoW?

- a. Why is Frank unable to go to the dig?
5. What is so exciting about finding a dinosaur egg?
6. What is the agreement between the Crabtrees and the Mudds, regarding the land?
  - a. Does the agreement seem fair to you? Why or why not?
7. When the dinosaur hatches, Frank struggles with whether he should tell Gram and PopPop. What does he decide and why? What would you decide?
8. Why does Frank think the dinosaur is an herbivore, meaning it feeds on plants, not meat?

Making Connections:

The Scientific Method is an eight-step series that scientists use to problem solve.

As a Future Paleontologist, Frank uses the scientific method to observe the baby dinosaur and decide what it would like to eat.

- Describe how Frank decides what to feed the dinosaur using the eight steps below.

Step 1: Ask a Question—what would the dinosaur like to eat?

Step 2: Do Research

Step 3: Guess an Answer (also called a Hypothesis)

Step 4: Test Your Guess/Hypothesis

Step 5: Did it Work? Could it Be Better? Try Again

Step 6: Draw a Conclusion

Step 7: Write a Written Report of Results

Step 8: Retest

- What do you think would happen if Frank skipped a step?

## Chapters 5-8

1. Why does Mr. Crabtree want the dinosaur egg?
2. While Frank keeps Peanut hidden, what is Samantha's plan with the egg? How is this plan supposed to stop Mr. Crabtree?
3. Why do Samantha and Frank decide to keep Peanut a secret?
4. List some of the difficulties the kids have with trying to keep Peanut a secret.

### Making Connections:

Samantha wants to name the dinosaur a *Samanthasaurus*, but Frank objects.

There are many ways to create a dinosaur name. Sometimes the dinosaur is given a name that describes something unusual about its body, head, or feet, like Peanut and his peanut-shaped horn. Some are named after the place where they are found, others are named for their behavior or size, and some are named to honor a person.

Often, a name for a dinosaur is chosen by combining Greek and Latin prefixes, roots and suffixes. Research these prefixes, roots and suffixes.

See <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/dinosaurs/allabout/Nameroots.shtml> for a detailed chart of prefixes, roots and suffixes.

Using the dinosaurs mentioned in *The Dino Files: A Mysterious Egg*, determine the meaning of their names. For example, Spinosaurus=thorn or backbone lizard.

Then, create a unique dinosaur by combining prefixes, roots, and suffixes.

- Draw a picture of the dinosaur based on its name and characteristics.
- Write a paragraph about the new dinosaur. Don't forget to write about its teeth!

Make a poster of your dinosaur, with the descriptive paragraph at the bottom, and display your project around the classroom or in hallway.

## Chapters 9-12

1. List at least three rules regarding Peanut that Samantha doesn't follow.
2. How does Samantha "not following the rules" result in the following:
  - a. Peanut being seen by Aaron Crabtree?
  - b. Peanut going missing?
3. Why do Frank and Samantha finally decide to tell Gram and PopPop about Peanut?
4. Why does Aaron Crabtree finally admit he has the dinosaur? How did Peanut get sick?
5. The kids decide to get both Mr. Crabtree and Gram to help Peanut. Why?
6. The kids realize that if Peanut is okay, then the Crabtrees and the Mudds will continue to fight about who owns him. Therefore, they devise their own plan for where Peanut, now named Peanut Zeke McCarthy, should live.
  - a. Where do they get Peanut's new name?
  - b. What do you think Peanut should live? Support your opinion with evidence from the book.

### Making Connections:

A theme within *The Dino Files: A Mysterious Egg* is responsibility. In fact, Samantha seems to be lacking in responsibility. Discuss *responsibility* with your class.

#### 1. What is *responsibility*?

- Being accountable for what you do, for your actions, and behavior.
- Doing the right thing at the right time, so others can trust and depend on you.

#### 2. How do the following demonstrate *responsibility*?

- Complete your homework and chores on time without being reminded.
- Follow through on your commitments, even when you don't feel like it.
- Accept responsibility for your mistakes and learn from them. Don't make excuses or blame others.

- Take care of your things and those of other people. Return items you borrow.
- Find out what needs to be done and do it.
- Make wise choices, such as choosing to eat healthy foods and wearing a helmet.
- Always do your very best. Others are counting on you!

3. How would you demonstrate *responsibility* if...

- You broke the wheel off your brother's new skateboard?
- Your friend asks you to play and you haven't finished your homework?
- You're playing a really fun game at your friend's house and it's time to go home?
- You promised your mom or dad you would clean your room but you just don't feel like it?
- It is time to go to bed and you just remembered that your book report is due tomorrow?
- You agreed to take care of your neighbor's dog while she is away, but now a friend has invited you to a sleep over?
- Your mom is not feeling well and could really use some extra help around the house?
- You forgot to bring your homework home from school, including the book you need to study for tomorrow's test?

4. Choose at least FOUR characters in *The Dino Files: A Mysterious Egg* and explain how they demonstrate responsibility. Back up your answers with evidence from the book.

5. Choose at least FOUR characters in *The Dino Files: A Mysterious Egg* and explain how they act irresponsible. Back up your answers with evidence from the book.

6. Design a poster encouraging *responsibility* to hang around the school.

## Chapters 13-14

1. Describe the kids' plan in your own words.
  - a. How does Gram react?
  - b. How does Mr. Crabtree react?
  - c. What is the final decision?
2. Imagine that you are Peanut and rewrite chapter fourteen from Peanut's point of view.
3. What do you think Gram found at the dig site this time that is bigger than a dinosaur egg?

## After You Read...

Here are a few extension activities to further the learning and the fun!

### **Samantha McCarthy Television**

Imagine you are Samantha and create a television broadcast about the adventure of the story to present to your classmates. Write a script and take on the roles of anchors and on-site reporters. You can choose to interview characters and eyewitnesses. Videotape the final newscasts and share with classmates and parents.

### **Dinosaur Research Project: Become an Expert Like Frank**

Take a trip to the school library and research a dinosaur of your choice. You may even want to choose a dinosaur mentioned in *The Dino Files: A Mysterious Egg*.

Possible sources for information:

- Nonfiction books
- Encyclopedias
- The Internet

Take notes and gather as much information as possible on the following 6 topics:

- Physical traits (including teeth!)
- Food
- Habitat
- Babies
- Predators/Survival

- Other fun facts

Once the information is gathered, work to create either an illustrated poster or booklet of the findings.

How does Peanut compare to the dinosaurs you have researched? What are the similarities? What are the differences?

### **Dinosaur Museums and Archaeological Digs**

Visit a few of these dinosaur museums and digs on the Internet.

- Museum of Western Colorado in Grand Junction, Colorado
- Wyoming Dinosaur Museum in Thermopolis, Wyoming
- Judith River Dinosaur Institute in Billings, Montana
- Casper College Tate Geological Museum in Casper, Wyoming
- The Mammoth Site of Hot Springs, South Dakota
- Fossil Butte National Monument in Kemmerer, Wyoming
- Dinosaur State Park in Rocky Hill, Connecticut
- The Bunny Museum in Pasadena, California

Explore all of the things to see and do at one of these museums or dig sites and create a tourism brochure encouraging people to visit.

DOUBLE BONUS: Learn more about dinosaur museums at the following sites:

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/travel/destinations/2013/08/11/10-best-places-to-see-dinosaurs/2637807/> and <http://travel.cnn.com/worlds-best-dino-museums-658206>

### **Ask the Paleontologist**

Invite a paleontologist to your class or ask them to visit via Skype to teach about dinosaurs and fossil digs. The list of museums and dig sites above can be a great resource in contacting a paleontologist.

What do you want to know about? Write a list of questions ahead of time and provide them to the paleontologist.

During the visit, practice taking notes and creating follow up questions.

After the visit, draft a written report and present what you learned.

*For something fun and extra watch this short YouTube video on paleontologists.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1FjyKmpmQzc>.