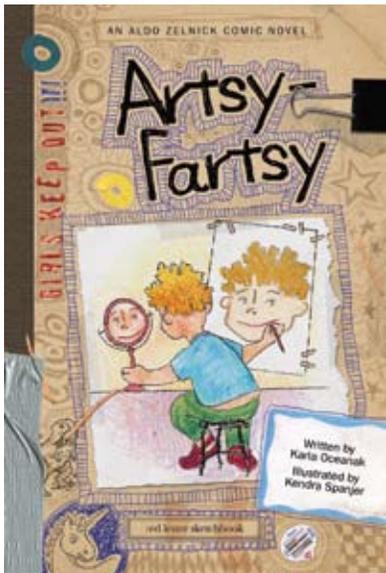


ARTSY-FARTSY!

TEACHER'S GUIDE



About the Book

Ten-year-old Aldo lives with his family in Colorado. He's not athletic like his older brother, he's not a rock hound like his best friend, but he does like bacon. And when his artistic grandmother, Goosy, gives him a sketchbook to "record all his artsy-fartsy ideas" during summer vacation, it turns out Aldo is a pretty good cartoonist.

In addition to an engaging cartoon story, *Artsy-Fartsy* includes an illustrated glossary of fun A words used throughout the book, such as *absurd*, *abominable*, and *audacious*.

About the Author

Karla Oceanak has been a voracious reader her whole life and a writer and editor for more than twenty years. In her career as a marketer, Karla has written everything you can imagine, from brochures and packaging copy to ads, video scripts, and feature articles. She has also ghostwritten numerous self-help books. She lives with her husband, Scott, and their three boys in a house strewn with Legos, hockey gear, Pokémon cards, video games, books, and dirty socks in Fort Collins, Colorado. This is her first novel.

About the Illustrator

Kendra Spanjer divides her time between being "a writer who illustrates" and "an illustrator who writes"—an ambitious amalgam, indeed. She decided to cultivate her artistic side after discovering that the best part of chemistry class was entertaining her peers (and her professor) with "The Daily Chem Book" comic. Since then, her diverse body of work has appeared in a number of group and solo art shows, book covers, marketing materials, fundraising events, and public places. When she invents spare time for herself to fill, Kendra enjoys skiing, cycling, exploring, discovering new music, watching trains go by, decorating cakes with her sister, and making faces in the mirror.

Activities to use in the classroom

BEFORE READING

First Impressions from the Cover: Making Predictions

Primary Students: Read the title and examine the cover illustration with your students. Ask students what they notice about the cover, from specific pictures to words to doodles to stuck-on objects. Be sure students support their impressions and predictions with examples from the cover.

Intermediate Students: Read the title and examine the cover illustration with your students. Ask students what they notice about the cover, from specific pictures to words to doodles to stuck-on objects to the colors and typeface. What impressions do students have about the book? What do they think it might be about? Be sure students support their impressions and predictions with examples from the cover. After discussing a few examples as a model, allow students to work in pairs. They should record their first impressions and predictions and their evidence in a table. For example:

| First Impression and Predictions | Evidence |
|--|---|
| The book is about a boy named Aldo. | "An Aldo Zelnick Comic Novel" is written at the top. |
| Aldo doesn't like to play with girls. | The cover says, "GIRLS KEEP OUT!!!" |
| The book feels friendly. | The title "Artsy-Fartsy" looks like it is hand-lettered, and there are lots of doodles. |
| The book is about a boy who likes to draw. | The main picture on the cover is a boy looking in a mirror and drawing himself. |

GIRLS KEEP OUT

Activities to use in the classroom

BEFORE READING

Anticipation Guide

Use several or all of the generalizations below to create an anticipation guide. Pass out the guide to each student before reading *Artsy-Fartsy*. Students should indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each statement. Discuss. Students should keep their guides as they read, taking notes about the issues which address each generalization. After reading *Artsy-Fartsy*, students can re-evaluate their opinions to see if any of them have changed. This can be the basis for further discussion and/or a writing assignment.

Anticipation Guide for *Artsy-Fartsy*

| <i>Before Reading</i> | | <i>After Reading</i> |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------|
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Parents know what is best for their children. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Boys and girls can't be good friends. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Learning new words can be fun! | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Good friends can have different interests. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | It's important to try new things, even if you think you won't like them. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | Parents should not be able to make plans for their children without asking permission. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | There are no "boy" activities and "girl" activities. Boys and girls can do whatever they're interested in. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 strongly disagree somewhat disagree somewhat agree strongly agree

Activities to use in the classroom

DURING READING

Re-entering the Story

This activity can be used with any age student and serves as a bridge between the reading from the previous day and the reading and/or discussion that will take place on the current day. It helps students re-enter the world of the story and is an interesting alternative to asking students to summarize the prior day's reading.

Choose a pivotal word or very short phrase (two or three words that go together) from the previous day's reading and ask students to explain its significance. In *Artsy-Fartsy*, the chapter titles happen to work very well for this purpose! For the first section, which is not titled, you might like to use "rock candy" or "ambitious amalgam."

Alternately, you can ask small groups of students to select the word that they think is most important from the prior day's reading and defend their choice.

Vocabulary (Of Course!)

Artsy-Fartsy and *Bogus* both have astonishingly awesome vocabulary, and Aldo writes bodacious definitions. Here are a couple of ideas for using the letter and vocabulary components of the books:

Primary Students: Find the A words in the pictures. It may be an anvil on Aldo's t-shirt or an accordion propped against a railing. If students are up for the challenge, have them write definitions a la Aldo. Here's an example:

anvil: a really heavy iron block. Blacksmiths used them for hammering out hot metal, and they fall on cartoon characters a lot.

Intermediate Students: In *Artsy Fartsy*, Aldo points out that abysmal means "really, really, hopelessly bad (the abyss of badness). This is a great opportunity to teach some word analysis skills. For example, students may already associate an abyss with something really deep. If you teach that mal means bad, this definition makes a lot of sense. When students learn the definitions for acronym and acrophobic, you can also teach them that acro means tip or height, onym means name, and phobic means fear or hate. Then help students extend their knowledge by brainstorming other words—or going on a word hunt in their other reading—for words that use these word parts.

Activities to use in the classroom

AFTER READING

Character Development

When Goosy first gives Aldo the sketchbook, he is disappointed and thinks, "Dang. It felt like a video game." And, while he thinks he "might even be good at" drawing, he worries that only girls draw. In fact, Aldo has been bullied by Tommy Geller for his drawing of a unicorn. Aldo isn't sure he wants to be artsy-fartsy. To complicate matters, Aldo doesn't know what to draw.

By the end of the book, Aldo thinks, "everyone is artsy-fartsy, each in our own way," and he wants to show his finished sketchbook to Goosy and Mr. Mot.

Have students skim the book looking for parts where Aldo writes about his sketchbook. You may decide to put students into pairs and divide the book among the partners. Then, record these examples on a chart, along with words that describe Aldo's feelings about his sketchbook. Discuss Aldo's growth.

Example:

| Event | Aldo's Emotions | Reasoning |
|---|---|--|
| Aldo receives the sketchbook (p. 6). | Disappointed | Aldo thinks, "Dang. It felt like a video game," so he wasn't excited to get the sketchbook. |
| Aldo asks Mr. Mot's advice (p. 10). | Uncertain about his abilities as an artist, starting to accept the idea of keeping a sketchbook | Aldo isn't sure what he is supposed to draw, so he asks an adult he trusts and respects for advice. This shows he has started to accept the idea of using the sketchbook, as well. |
| Aldo puts the sketchbook in the crook of the spruce tree (p. 35). | Proud, his sketchbook is special | The fort is a special place. Since he says the sketchbook is a "nice addition," the sketchbook must be special, too. |

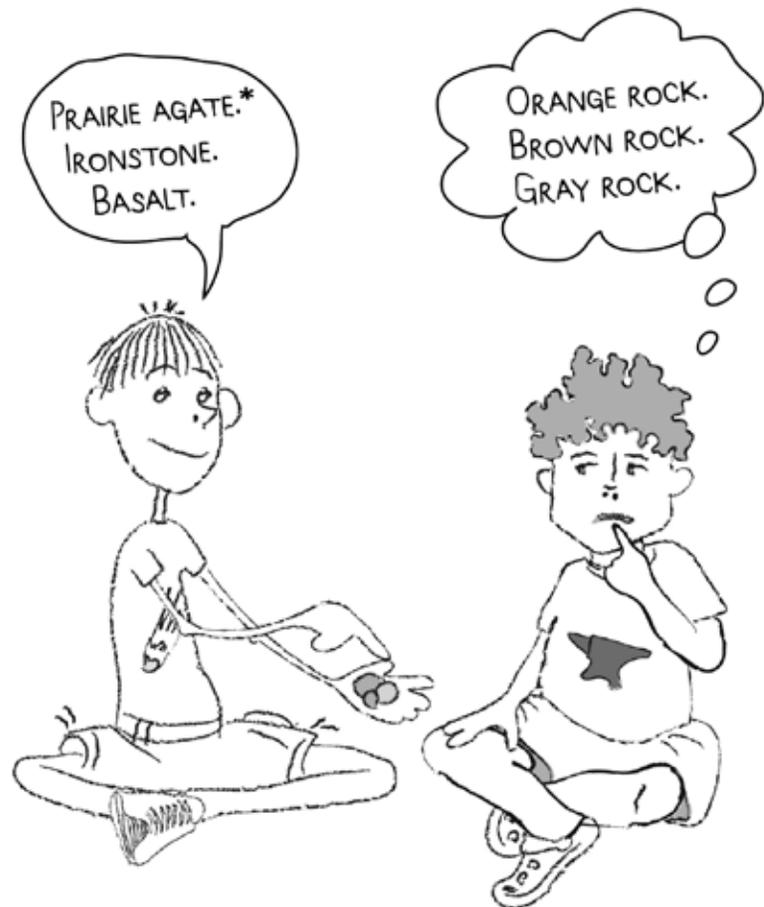
Activities to use in the classroom

AFTER READING

Writing Connection

Artsy-Fartsy is an ideal mentor text for helping children see how they can expand a small, ordinary event in their narrative writing into a truly terrific scene. For example, reread “The Fort” chapter with your students. Discuss all of the details the author uses just to set up this scene, from the food Aldo brings to the ways Aldo and Jack make their fort homier. How do these details make the story more interesting? What do they reveal about Aldo and Jack? If students are attempting dialogue, they can also pay attention to the exchanges between Aldo and Jack. The dialogue is entertaining, but it also either reveals something about the characters’ personalities and relationships or it moves the plot along.

Have students write a personal narrative about a seemingly ordinary event, focusing on the details. Encourage them to write it Aldo-style, with plenty of sketches.





The whole gang! Timothy, Dad, Mom, Goosy, Jack and me — the cute one in the middle!



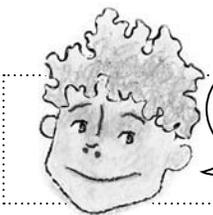
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Aldo and Jack set out in search of Squirrel Girl.



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Jack loves nothing more than a good rock.



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A J D W B O R Q F T J Y P M Z Y D A A S U P C F D P P Y W U Y A A W Y
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| AARDVARK | AFICIONADO | AMBITIOUS | ANONYMOUS | ASKANCE |
| ABC GUM | AGAPE | AMBIVALENT | ANTARCTICA | ASKEW |
| ABOMINABLE | AGATE | AMBLED | APOPLECTIC | ASPARAGUS |
| ABSURD | AGITATION | AMBROSIAL | APPALLING | ASSUME |
| ABUT | AJAR | AMERICAS PASTIME | APPREHENSIVE | ASTONISHING |
| ABYSMAL | AKA | AMIALE | APPROPRIATE | ATHLETIC |
| ACRONYM | ALERT | AMISS | APPROXIMATELY | ATTITUDE |
| ACROPHOBIC | ALIEN | AMUCK | APT | AUBURN |
| ADDLED | ALLERGIC | ANAGRAM | APTITUDE | AUDACIOUS |
| AD NAUSEUM | ALLITERATION | ANCIENT | ARBITRARY | AUGMENT |
| ADVENTURE | ALLURING | ANGELIC | ARCHENEMY | AUTHORITY |
| AFFABLY | AMALGAM | ANNIHILATE | ARTSY FARTSY | AUTHORIZE |
| | AMBIDEXTROUS | ANNOYED | ASININE | AWKWARD |



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