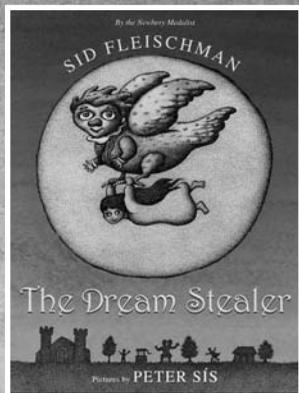


The Dream Stealer

By the Newbery Medalist **SID FLEISCHMAN**

Pictures by Caldecott Honoree **PETER SÍS**



ABOUT THE BOOK

Where do dreams go when we wake? In a small village in Mexico, eight-year-old Susana is jolted from her dream at a crucial moment. She finds out that her dream has been snatched by the infamous Dream Stealer, and she vows to get it back from him. Soon she's made a deal with the sneaky Dream Stealer, and off to his castle they go. Countless dreams and even more adventures await them there.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sid Fleischman was awarded the Newbery Medal for *The Whipping Boy*. He has written numerous other award-winning books, most recently the biography *The Trouble Begins at 8: A Life of Mark Twain in the Wild, Wild West* and the historical novel *The Entertainer and the Dybbuk*, winner of the Sydney Taylor Book Award. Sid Fleischman lives in Santa Monica, California. You can visit him online at www.sidfleischman.com.



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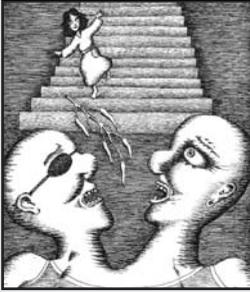
ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Peter Sís has written and illustrated many books for young children, three of which were awarded Caldecott Honors. He also illustrated *The Whipping Boy*, the novel for which Sid Fleischman won the Newbery Medal. Peter Sís lives in the New York City area. You can visit him online at www.petersis.com.



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The Dream Stealer

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. “Do you believe in marvels?” asks Sid Fleischman in the first paragraph of *The Dream Stealer*. What is a marvel? Do you believe in marvels? Have you ever experienced something marvelous?
2. Which details in the novel indicate that it’s set in Mexico? Consider the story itself, as well as characters’ names, places, food, and language.
3. Why has the Dream Stealer decided to steal happy dreams instead of nightmares? Do you feel sorry for the Dream Stealer? Or do you think it’s his fault that he’s lonely and grouchy? Explain.
4. Do you think Susana is brave to go with the Dream Stealer to retrieve her stolen dream? Or is she foolish? What would you do if someone was stealing your happy dreams?
5. How does the Dream Stealer regain his courage? Why is courage necessary for his job?
6. How does Susana discover the Dream Stealer’s kindness? Why doesn’t the Dream Stealer want anyone to know that he has a soft heart?
7. Why do you think Susana decides to be the Dream Stealer’s friend? What does the Dream Stealer help teach Susana about friendship?
8. How is Susana’s friendship with Consuelo Louisa important to the story?
9. Do you think that dreams tell the future, as Susana’s grandmother believes? Or do you agree with Susana’s father that dreams are not to be trusted? Explain.
10. The Dream Stealer stores children’s dreams as fireflies. If you could store your dreams as an animal, an object, or something else, what would you choose? Why?



BUILDING VOCABULARY WITH The Dream Stealer

Select twenty words from the word lists below, and expand students' vocabularies by having them learn the definitions, spellings, and pronunciations of those words. Then have students write short stories in which they imagine a marvelous dream that Susana might have about her adventures with the Dream Stealer. Each student's story should incorporate a minimum of eight new vocabulary words in such a way as to demonstrate meaning through contextual clues.

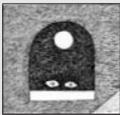
CHAPTERS 1–3



abandoned

crockery

cunning



foliage

lariat

plucky



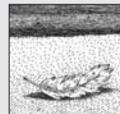
plunder

protruding

stucco

yearn

CHAPTERS 4–6



bumptious

defiant

fabled

fury



impudent

muster

relent

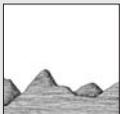


reputation

trifle

wear

CHAPTERS 7–9



abundance

brooding

curdle



galore

gawk

manacled



mesquite

nobility

unkempt

vast

CHAPTERS 10–13



braggart

burden

callow



coarse

confounded

flail



oblige

unison

varmint

wriggle



The Dream Stealer

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- 1. Personal Dream Stealers.** Peter Sís visually represents the title character in *The Dream Stealer* on the book jacket and in the black-and-white illustrations. Ask your students to reread Sid Fleischman’s description of the Dream Stealer in chapter 1. Then have them reinterpret the mythic creature by painting their own versions of him. After displaying your students’ work and discussing the similarities and differences among their interpretations, invite students to take home their Dream Stealers to steal away their own bad dreams.
- 2. Lost and Found in Translation.** Sid Fleischman uses Spanish words to help tell Susana’s story. Challenge students to locate the following Spanish words in the book: *abuelita*, *adios*, *centavo*, *gracias*, *hola*, *loco*, *muchacha*, *muchacho*, *peso*, *señor*, *señora*, *señorita*, *siesta*, and *sombrero*. How are these words incorporated into this novel, which is otherwise written in English? Do your students know what these words mean, or are they able to figure out the meanings from the context of the story? Help students define and learn the words that they don’t already know.
- 3. Night Visitors.** The Dream Stealer visits children while they are sleeping. Which other night visitors do your students know? For example, they might be familiar with Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, Elijah, Jack Frost, or the Tooth Fairy (who is even featured in *The Dream Stealer*). As a class, research and learn the histories and origins of several night visitors.
- 4. “To sleep: perchance to dream.”** Does the Dream Stealer take away your students’ bad dreams and leave them with only happy ones? What do your students remember of their dreams after they wake? Ask students to keep dream journals, recording what they remember of their dreams each morning as a warm-up exercise at the start of class.

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