

# Literacy Skills Teacher's Guide for

## Perloo the Bold

by  
Avi

### Book Information

Avi, Perloo the Bold  
Quiz Number: 34832  
Scholastic, Inc, 1998  
ISBN 0-590-11003-9; LCCN  
225 Pages  
Book Level: 4.9  
Interest Level: MG

In this wild adventure Perloo, a rabbit-like Montmer, travels over snowy mountains, through underground tunnels, and into enemy territory and alters the future of Montmers everywhere.

**Topics:** Adventure, Discovery/Exploration;  
Adventure, Travel; Animals, Rabbits;  
Mysteries, Misc./Other; Recommended  
Reading, Children's Literature Choice

### Main Characters

Berwig Jolaine's untrustworthy son; he schemes to become the new granter

Chef Fergink the head chef of the Montmers; he helps Lucabara and Perloo escape from Berwig

Granter Jolaine the dying leader of the Montmers, who names Perloo as her successor instead of her son

Lucabara an influential member of the Montmer tribe; she helps Perloo in his struggle with being named new leader

Mogwat the Magpie the Great Teaching Bird of both the Montmers and the Felbarts

Packmaster Weyanto the leader of the Felbarts

Perloo a member of the Montmer tribe; he is named as the new granter of the tribe

Senyous the sly and distrustful first assistant to Berwig; he also schemes to become the new granter

### Vocabulary

**communal** shared by all

**nonchalance** lack of concern

**notorious** famous for bad deeds

**subterranean** underground

**traitor** one who betrays

venerated highly regarded

### Synopsis

Perloo, a member of the rabbit-like Montmer tribe, is spending the winter reading in his burrow. Suddenly, Lucabara comes to tell him that their leader, Granter Jolaine, is dying and wants to see him. The two battle the snow and cold to arrive at the Central Tribe Burrow. Perloo gets to the dying Jolaine in time for her to sign a new proclamation naming Perloo, instead of her son, Berwig, as the assigned new granter. Perloo, who only knew Jolaine from discussing Montmer history, is very surprised and does not want the responsibility.

Jolaine dies right after naming Perloo her successor, but Berwig proclaims himself as the rightful new granter, telling the Montmers that Jolaine was murdered by Perloo. Berwig is eager to use his new powers to begin a war with their enemies, the coyote-like Felbarts.

Later that day, with the help of Chef Fergink, Lucabara and Perloo escape into the cold night blizzard. As they grope through the darkness, they fall into a deep hole that leads them into the cave of the Felbarts. As they wander around, they realize that Felbarts admire the same idol that the Montmers do, Mogwat the Magpie, Great Teaching Bird. They see that the Felbarts are also preparing for war.

Lucabara and Perloo are soon discovered, jailed, and questioned by Packmaster Weyanto, who already has been alerted that the Montmers are preparing for war. Perloo is truthful in telling Weyanto everything that has occurred. Because of Perloo's honesty, Weyanto treats them both very well, but as prisoners nonetheless. After two days in the jail, Lucabara persuades Perloo that they must escape. Lucabara succeeds, but Perloo does not escape because he gave Weyanto his word he would not.

As the two sides prepare for war, Berwig and his first assistant, Senyous, battle for power. They each trick and double-cross the other to try to take

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complete control of the tribe. Within several days the Montmers march to the Felbart cave for war. Perloo can prevent a war by accepting the traditional opening challenge of the Montmer leader.

The next morning, Senyous challenges the Felbarts and is surprised to discover that Perloo, a Montmer, is his challenger. Perloo wins and declares the war over. Berwig and Senyous decide to live elsewhere as recluses.

That afternoon, upon returning to the burrow, Perloo finds that Lucabara has convinced the Montmers that Perloo did not murder Jolaine. She proves to the Montmers that Perloo is the new granter. Perloo does not want the position and feels that the government should be in the hands of the citizens rather than dictated by a granter. So he makes his first and only command -- that all the Montmers should succeed him and that there will be no more granters. Perloo is grateful to return to his quiet burrow and his reading.

### Open-Ended Questions

Use these open-ended questions as the basis for class discussions, student presentations, or extended writing assignments.

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#### Literary Analysis

Explain why Perloo has mixed feelings about becoming granter. Why is it so difficult for him to accept being named Jolaine's successor?

*Perloo does not feel he has the characteristics of a great leader. He recognizes that the Montmers and Felbarts have been enemies for years and will likely go to war again. Perloo does not want to fight nor lead others to fight. He has no desires for the power and glory that seemingly come with being a great leader. Perloo believes in being honest with others and with himself. He truly does not want to be granter, yet he feels obligated to carry out the wishes of Jolaine. He knows that Lucabara fears what would happen to the tribe under Berwig's leadership. Perloo does not want to disappoint Lucabara nor his fellow Montmers, so he accepts responsibility just long enough to resolve the conflicts with Berwig, Senyous, and the Felbarts.*

#### Inferential Comprehension

If Perloo had kept the position of granter would he have made a good granter? Why or why not?

*Probably not. Perloo recognizes that he does not have the leadership qualities that are needed to be an effective granter. He enjoys the solitude of being in his burrow studying his history books. It is likely that had he remained granter, he would have his first assistant do the real leading while he did his reading. Ironically though, he does have the integrity that a good leader needs and Berwig and Senyous lack.*

#### Inferential Comprehension

When Berwig proclaims himself the new granter, why does Senyous treat him so respectfully?

*Senyous is plotting to become granter himself. By treating Berwig respectfully, he will be able to remain knowledgeable regarding Berwig's plans and thus be able to thwart them. If Senyous were to fall into Berwig's bad favor, then Berwig, as granter, could have Senyous arrested or removed from the tribe before he could execute his planned takeover.*

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### Constructing Meaning

How has reading this book influenced your opinion of the importance of getting along with others?

*Things go well for Perloo when he is honest and does not try to be something he is not. In fact, he feels terrible after betraying Weyanto's trust in him and his sincere apology allows him to regain Weyanto's trust. But, when Senyous and Berwig lie to each other and plot to trick each other, it leads to their own demise. Had they been more honest and forthright, they could have made a great leadership team. Teamwork and cooperation are essential for getting along.*

### Teachable Skills

**Deriving Word or Phrase Meaning** *Perloo the Bold* is rich with the sayings of Mogwat the Magpie. The sayings are located in various parts of the story and are listed at the back of the book. Have the students work alone or in pairs to select one of the sayings and prepare a one-page paper or presentation that interprets that saying. The saying should be explained and followed with a concrete example. The students could also be asked to apply the saying to a real-life situation that they have encountered.

**Identifying Persuasive Language** When Berwig makes speeches to the Montmers, his presentation is very poor. He does not speak with authority or confidence. Ask the students to work in groups and select one of his speeches and re-write the speech in a strong, impressive, and persuasive tone. Then ask each group to select one person to present Berwig's original speech to the class, and another person to present the revised speech. The class can discuss the differences and reasons that make the revised speech more persuasive.

**Comparing and Contrasting** The Montmers and the Felbarts have been at war on and off for many years because of a territorial dispute. Have the students work in groups to do research on a current or recent war or disagreement between countries or within a country. Ask them to

determine the main cause of the disagreement and how far back the disagreement can be traced. Then have the students prepare a poster presentation with news clippings describing the disagreement or war. The poster display can have a follow up class discussion on identifying similarities or differences in the war between the Montmers and Felbarts.

**Making Predictions** Granter Jolaine was very aware that the new granter could change society for good or evil. Divide the class into three groups and have students write a skit predicting how the story would unfold in their assigned scenarios: 1) Perloo remains granter; 2) Berwig becomes granter; 3) Senyous becomes granter. The skit should include characters in the book and should depict the new granter, the Montmers, and the Felbarts. They can also create several new Mogwat sayings to be displayed during the skit.