
Poopendous!

The Inside Scoop
on Every Type and Use
of Poop

a teacher's guide

created by Marcie Colleen

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Poopendous!

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How to Use This Guide

This classroom guide for *Poependous!* is designed for students in preschool through third grade.

It offers activities to help teachers integrate *Poependous!* into English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies curricula. Art and drama are used as a teaching tool throughout the guide.

All activities were created in conjunction with relevant content standards in ELA, math, science, social studies, art, and drama.

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English Language Arts

Reading Comprehension

Before reading *Poependous!*,

Help students identify the basic parts of a picture book: front cover, back cover, title page, spine, end papers, and jacket flap.

- When you look at the front cover, can you identify the author? What is his job?
- Who is the illustrator? What is his job?

Read the dedication/copyright block.

- What is a dedication?
- What do these dedications tell you about the author and illustrator?
- “Muse” is spelled incorrectly in the author’s dedication. Why do you think he chose to spell it that way? What is a “muse”?

Discuss predictions about the book.

- What do you predict the book will be about?
- What clues to the story are found on the cover and in the end papers and title-page illustrations?
- What do you think this book wants to teach you?
- Is there anything you hope to learn from this book?
- What would you like to “look for” or investigate while we read?

After students read or listen to *Poependous!*,

Help students summarize in their own words what the book was about.

- What are some of the animals mentioned in the book? What can you remember about their poop?
- What are some of the different words that mean poop?

- What are some of the uses of poop?

Start a discussion based on the illustrations.

- Count how many animals and people you find on each spread. Look closely. Some are tiny and hard to spot.
- There is lots of humor in the illustrations. Which illustrations make you laugh?
- Why do you think Mike Moran chose to draw the illustrations instead of using real photographs? Would that have changed the book?

Lead a discussion in which the students evaluate *Poopendous!*

- Were you entertained by *Poopendous!*? Did you find the book funny?
- Do you feel any differently about poop after reading the book?
- Do you think *Poopendous!* set out to accomplish what it wanted to? What do you think the intention of the author was?
- Did you learn anything new?
- Were the questions you had before we read answered?
- What questions do you still have?
- Do you think if we re-read the book, your questions will be answered? If not, how can we find the answers to the questions? What other sources can we explore?

Reading comparative texts.

As a class, read *Everyone Poops* by Taro Gomi; *All About Poop* by Kate Hayes, illustrated by Brenna Vaughan; and/or *The Truth About Poop* by Susan E. Goodman, illustrated by Elwood H. Smith.

- Summarize each book.
- What is the audience for each book? What does the book aim to teach?
- How are these books similar to *Poopendous!*?
- How are they different?
- What other books can you find about this topic?
- Where else would you expect to be able to research poop?

Rhyme Time

Poependous! is written in rhyme.

- Why do you think Artie Bennett chose to write the book in rhyme? Does it make it more memorable or enjoyable?
- What other books have you read that are in rhyme?
- What is a verse? What is a stanza?

Here are some activities that can be used to introduce rhyming words.

Engine and Caboose

- Introduce the concept of producing rhyming words with train engines and caboose pictures or objects. Explain that the caboose always stays the same but the engines will be different.
- Pick a sound for the caboose such as "at" and place many different beginning engines/sounds in front to make rhyming words (e.g., h-, m-, c-).

"I Spy"

- Start the activity by sitting with the children in a large circle. Provide them with a sentence containing two rhyming words. For example: "I spy a chair and a bear." The first object name is something in the room and the second object name doesn't have to be in the room. Both objects must rhyme.
- Have the child to the right create a different "I Spy" sentence.
- Continue around the circle until all students have the opportunity to create their own rhyming sentence.

Tip: Place objects around the room that are easy to rhyme. Point them out to the children if they need suggestions.

Fill in the Blank

Re-read *Poependous!* to the class. At the end of the second sentence of each stanza, pause and have children raise their hands to give the correct rhyming word to complete the sentence.

For example:

*Some use poop to mark their scent,
And let them know which way they _____.*

- Allow children time to make up silly sentences using other words that rhyme but don't make sense.
- Continue through the book until all children have participated.
- Additional activity: Try this with other rhyming books.

Scrub-a-Dub Rhymes

To kill germs after using the toilet, it is best to scrub with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. This is the amount of time that it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice.

As a class, write an original hand-washing rhyme.

Examples:

*"Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star"
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.
Look how clean my two hands are.
With soap and water, wash and scrub.
Got those germs off, rub-a-dub.
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.
Look how clean my two hands are.*

*"Wash, Wash, Wash Your Hands"
Wash, wash, wash your hands
And sing this short refrain.
Rub and scrub, rub and scrub.
The germs swirl down the drain.
Scrub, scrub, scrub your hands
And sing this short refrain.
Rub and scrub, rub and scrub.
The germs swirl down the drain.*

*"If You're Dirty and You Know It"
If you're dirty and you know it,
Wash your hands.
If you're dirty and you know it,*

*Wash your hands.
If you're dirty and you know it,
Then your hands will surely show it.
If you're dirty and you know it,
Wash your hands.*

From www.azein.gov

Onomatopoeia

The word "poop" comes from the Middle English word "poupen" or "popen," which used to be the root of the word we now call a fart. Clearly, "poop" is onomatopoeic.

Onomatopoeia is an imitation of a sound in words. Some examples from *Poopendous!* are "boom-boom," "ruff," and "grrrrr." The book *Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You?* by Dr. Seuss is another excellent way to introduce onomatopoeia to your students.

- Discuss why someone might choose to use onomatopoeia in place of regular words in a story.
- Does the onomatopoeia do anything to bring the story to life?
- Create a list of onomatopoeia for other bodily functions (i.e., sneezing, coughing, burping, yawning, etc.).

WHOMP! There it is!

Re-read *Poopendous!* and ask students to raise their hand when they hear onomatopoeia.

If a page does not include onomatopoeia, have the kids write fun onomatopoeia for that page.

Zip! Zap! Boing! Game

- The class starts in a circle. One of the players points to another player to either side of them and says "zip." That player turns to the next player in the circle, points to them and says "zip." Thus the "zip" is passed around the circle in one direction.
- At any time, any player can say "zap" to the person pointing at them. When they do, the player that said "zip" must change the direction of the pointing. This means that they must react quickly by passing the "zip" to the person that just pointed at them. Now the "zip" is passed around the circle, changing direction every time there is a "zap," and vice versa.

- Lastly, the person that receives the “zip” or “zap” may elect to yell “boing” and point at someone anywhere in the circle. That player then restarts the “zip,” going in the direction of their choice. The group must really pay attention for this to work.
- (Once kids have gotten the hang of this game, it could be fun to make up other rules using onomatopoeia. For example, when someone says “grrrr,” everyone acts like a dog, or when someone says “achoo,” everyone spins around.)

Vocab Detectives

Poependous! has some new and challenging vocabulary. Words like “decompress” and “enriches” may be unknown to some young readers.

Re-read *Poependous!* aloud and ask students to listen carefully for words they do not know.

- As soon as they come across a new vocabulary word, they should raise their hand.
- Repeat the phrase using the unknown word. What might it mean, based on context?
- Look up the word in the dictionary. (*Depending on the level of your students, a student volunteer can do this or the teacher can.*) Read the definition.
- Come up with a way to remember what the word means. *Using Total Physical Response, students can create an action that symbolizes the word and helps them remember it.*
- Create a list of the vocabulary words and hang it on the wall. Revisit it again and again.
- “Poependous” — Ask students to look up “poependous” in the dictionary. This is a word that was made up by Artie Bennett, therefore they will not find it. What do they think it means? Write a definition for the word.

Math

How Much *is* That?

Use a measuring tape to “see” these facts:

- An average adult human’s small intestine is 23 feet long. The average large intestine is 5 feet long.
- With the help of a high-fiber diet, the longest poop ever recorded was 26 feet long.
- Some caterpillars can fling their feces a distance of up to 3 feet to elude predators.
- What else can be measured with the tape? Allow students to explore and record their findings.

Use M&M candies or raisins to “see” this fact:

- Rabbits produce 500 pellets of poop a day. Have students create piles of 10 or 25 candies or raisins until they reach 500.

Use potatoes or rocks to “see” these facts:

- Elephants produce up to 80 lbs of poop a day.
- Scientists found some fossilized *Tyrannosaurus rex* poop that weighed 16 lbs.

Use a scale to figure out these facts:

- The average human poops 1 ounce for every 12 lbs of body weight per day. Weigh each student and divide their weight by 12. The answer is how many ounces of poop they would produce a day.
- Find out the weight of famous people and do the same.

Table Talk

Below is a table to help calculate the quantity of poop an animal produces.

Some of the calculations might be difficult for younger students.

Use props (buttons, M&Ms, etc.) or pictures if it will help students visualize numbers.

Students can then research other animals they are curious about and add them to the table.

<u>Animal</u>	<u>Poop/Sec</u>	<u>Poop/Min</u>	<u>Poop/Hr</u>	<u>Poop/Day</u>	<u>Poop/Wk</u>	<u>Poop/Mo</u>	<u>Poop/Yr</u>
Sloth					1		
Goose			5				
Cockroach	15						
Other							

Science

Text-pplorers

Explain to students that *Poopendous!* is nonfiction, meaning it is based on facts and information that is true. However, that does not mean that it includes *everything* to be researched and discussed about the topic.

Real scientists are always asking questions and seeking answers.

Re-read *Poopendous!*, but this time ask your students to be scientists or “text-pplorers.”

For example:

- Read the first spread:

I’m Professor Pip Poopdeck. Welcome aboard!

We’re exploring a substance that most have ignored.

An icky-poo subject folks don’t care to visit.

Quite putrid and shocking and horrid . . . or is it?

Poop is yucky, poop is foul.

Step in poop and you will howl.

To read this book, you must be strong.

Just hold your nose and come along!

- Ask the class if they have any questions after reading this spread. (Why is poop smelly? What is the building that Professor Poopdeck is emerging from on the first page?) On later spreads, questions might be about certain animals or countries, etc.
- Continue through the book in this manner, pausing after each spread and asking students to raise any questions they have.
- Make sure to record all questions.
- At the end of the book, review the list of questions and discuss possible answers. Maybe some kids would want to guess or “hypothesize” the answers.
- Now research the answers in the library or on the computer. Assign certain questions to specific students or the entire class may research together as a way to demonstrate good research skills to those who might not be as experienced.
- Optional: Explain what a “footnote” is. Create index cards for each question/answer and fix them with tape to the appropriate pages in the book as a reference.

The Digestive System

Create a large diagram of the human digestive system on the floor of the classroom. There should be 4 “stations” for activities:

- Mouth
- Esophagus
- Stomach
- The intestines (small and large)

As a class, travel through the “stations” of the digestive system with the following activities/experiments.

Mouth

The process of digestion starts in the mouth with the teeth and saliva.

Saliva

Give each student a small piece of cracker.

Do not chew the cracker. Just let it sit on the tongue.

Ask the following questions:

- What happened to the cracker when it was in your mouth?
- Why did it start to get softer?
- What did you taste?
- Has the taste changed? Did it become sweet?
- Did the cracker get soft in your mouth even if you were not chewing?

Explain that saliva starts to break down food before it is even swallowed. It breaks down the starches, which gives us the sweet taste.

Teeth

Give each student half of an apple.

- Take a bite and chew
- Which teeth did you use to bite?
- Which teeth did you use to chew?
- Try biting with your molars (back teeth).
- Try chewing with your front teeth (incisors).

Explain that there are different kinds of teeth in our mouths and they all have certain jobs when it comes to breaking down food.

Esophagus

Once food is swallowed, it takes a 7-second trip down the esophagus.

Give each student a cup of very cold water.

- Take a sip.
- Feel the water travel through their esophagus.

Muscles help the food move down the esophagus. Demonstrate this with a tennis ball and a leg from pantyhose (with the toes cut off).

- Put the tennis ball (food) into the pantyhose.

- Using hands (muscles), move it through to the end.
- Kids can take turns making the ball pass through the pantyhose esophagus.
- Try to get the ball from one end of the pantyhose to the other in 7 seconds (the time food travels from mouth to stomach through the esophagus).

Stomach

Once food reaches the stomach, muscles mash it up and break it down. Gastric juices, made up of chemicals and digestive enzymes, help to break down the proteins.

- Place some crackers in a Ziploc bag.
- Kids, representing the muscles of the stomach, can take turns mashing and smashing the bag until the crackers are reduced to very small pieces.
- Add a little soda or orange juice to the bag and continue to mash and mix it up. (MAKE SURE THE BAG IS TIGHTLY CLOSED OR THIS CAN BE MESSY!) The liquid represents the gastric juices.
- Kids will have fun with this gross activity. It is optional to let each student have their own Ziploc bag.

Small and Large Intestines

Once the food leaves the stomach, it travels into the small intestine, where it is further broken down and absorbed into the body. Blood cells carry the nutrients throughout the body. Anything that is not absorbed travels into the large intestine, where it is made into poop.

The average intestines (small *and* large) are ten times longer than the length of the individual's body.

- Using yarn, have students measure out ten times the length of their body.
- Compare the length to other things in the classroom (i.e., rug, chalkboard, distance from one wall to another, etc.).
- Each child should get their own piece of yarn.

Where My Food Goes

On large pieces of paper, create traced silhouettes of each student.

Using what they have learned about the digestive system as a reference, direct students to draw and label parts of the digestive system (from mouth to anus) into their life-sized silhouettes.

They should use the piece of yarn for the digestive tract.

You Are What You Eat

Choosing their favorite food, kids will write a story from the food's point of view as it travels from the mouth through the digestive system, or write a story in which they somehow become microscopic and travel through the digestive system.

Social Studies

Everyone Poops . . . Around the World

Countries around the globe have many different customs. They speak different languages. They eat different foods. They celebrate different holidays. And they even have different bathroom customs.

- In America, it is called the "bathroom" or "restroom."
- In the Philippines, it is called the "comfort room" or "C.R." for short.
- In England, it is often called the "loo."
- In some areas of Taiwan, mostly in subways, public bathrooms charge for the toilet paper, but not the use of the toilet.
- In some developing countries, there is a lack of toilet paper, so people use their left hand for wiping.
- In China, many toilets are just a hole in the ground, and children, once they can walk, do not wear diapers—even *before* they are potty-trained.
- In rural India, many areas do not have a sewer system, so villages use a large field for defecating.

Using the Internet and the library, research a few different countries to learn about their bathroom habits, including public restroom signs.

The activity can either be done individually, in small groups, or as a class.

Everyone Poops . . . in My School

Although we all poop, we are also all unique. Create and conduct a survey of students and teachers in the school. Include questions about their bathroom habits such as:

- Do you prefer the toilet paper to roll over or under?
- Do you wad or fold your toilet paper?
- How many squares of toilet paper do you use for each wipe?
- If you run out of toilet paper, what do you use?
- Do you read on the toilet or not?
- Do you read the graffiti in a public restroom?
- Have you ever walked out of a public restroom with toilet paper stuck to your shoe?
- How long, on average, do you spend in the bathroom?
- Have you ever texted or surfed the Internet on the toilet?
- Have you ever dropped something by accident in the toilet?
- What is the strangest bathroom you have ever been in?
- What is the best bathroom you have ever been in?

Display the results on a bulletin board for all to read. You might want to keep the answers anonymous.

The Best Toilet Ever!

A search on the Internet for interesting toilets will find toilets that are fancy, toilets that are very rustic, and even toilets that look like musical instruments!

Have students create a story about the day they used the best toilet ever! What makes the toilet so wonderful? Does it wipe for you? Does it have a built-in television? Does it talk? Wackiness and imagination are encouraged.

Optional activities:

- Accompany the story with an illustration.
- Create a television commercial for your toilet.