

THE DEMONS' DOOR

(Originally published as *Hanging Hill*)

Study Guide

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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Chapters 1-5

1. Where is Zack living? Why?
2. What musical will premiere at the Hanging Hill Playhouse?
3. Who is Zipper?
4. Who is Mad Dog Murphy? What warning does he give Zack?
5. Irony is when the opposite of what is expected happens. Why is it ironic when the woman says, "You look like you just saw a ghost"?
6. Who is Reginald Grimes?
7. Describe Reginald's childhood.
8. Who is Jinx?
9. What does Reginald see outside his window?
10. What does Zack discover about Mad Dog Murphy?
11. Why doesn't Zack tell Judy about Mad Dog Murphy? Do you think he should have? Explain.
12. Who is Kelly Fagan?
13. Whom does Kelly see in the mirror?
14. Where are Hakeem and Habib visiting the professor? Why?
15. What do readers learn about the professor?

Chapter 6-10

1. What happens to the Marriot sign?
2. What does the professor give Hakeem? Why?
3. What does the professor say about Mad Dog Murphy?
4. What happens to Habib?
5. When will the professor and Hakeem speak again?
6. What happens to the professor?
7. What happened to Zack's real mother?
8. Describe the trucker in Chapter 8.
9. What happens to Reginald's left arm? How does his deformity affect him?
10. How did Reginald afford drama school? How did he become artistic director of the Hanging Hill Playhouse?
11. Who visits Reginald at the end of Chapter 10?

Chapters 11-15

1. How did Hanging Hill Playhouse get its name?
2. Who became a star in 1955 in *Bats in Her Belfry*?
3. Describe the appearance of the Hanging Hill Playhouse.
4. Who waits under the Hanging Hill Playhouse?

5. What did the man in the turban do to Diamond Mike?
6. What ghost does Zack see in the theater? Whom do you think she is?
7. What does the janitor say about children?
8. What does Zack think about the flurry of bright flashes?
9. What is Hakeem attempting to open?
10. Who are Reginald's benefactors?
11. What does Hakeem reveal about Reginald's family?
12. According to Hakeem, why did Reginald need to study theater?
13. Who is the chosen one?
14. What is in the ancient book?

Chapters 16- 20

1. Who is Derek Stone?
2. Who is Megan McKenna?
3. What warning does the janitor give Zack?
4. What does the janitor tell Zack about the ghost light?
5. What happened to Brad Doyle?
6. How does Derek feel about his acting skills?
7. What happened to the elevator?

Chapters 21-25

1. Who are the chosen children?
2. Who is one of the producers of Curiosity Cat?
3. Zack sees two ghosts in Chapter 22. Describe them.
4. Why did the Brothers of Hannibal choose to produce Curiosity Cat?
5. What book must Reginald read?
6. What is "special" about the prop Hakeem's men install?
7. What does Diamond Mike plan to do when he comes to life?
8. Why did the children in The Music Man quit?
9. Do you think the janitor is good or evil? Why?

Chapters 26-30

1. What does Meghan tell Zack about the hill where the theater is built?
2. What ghost do Meghan and Zack see?
3. What does Zack tell Meghan about the "Juggler Girl"?
4. Why doesn't Zack tell Judy about the ghosts?
5. What does Walter say about the basement?
6. What is a necromancer?
7. Who is Reginald's grandfather?

Chapters 31-39

1. Who is invited on the ghost hunt with Meghan and Zack?
2. What was the Hanging Hill Playhouse in the 1940s?
3. How is the janitor planning to scare the children?
4. What do Zack and Meghan tell Derek about ghosts in Chapter 34?
5. What does Judy discover in Rehearsal Room A?

6. What do Zack and Meghan realize about the "ghosts" Derek saw?
7. What ghost do Zack and Meghan see in the basement?
8. What strange meal does Reginald eat in Chapter 37? Why?
9. What is the giant creature that scares Derek?
10. Whose spirit is summoned by Reginald?

Chapters 40-50

1. What does the ghost of the young Native American girl tell Zack and Meghan?
2. What do Meghan and Zack realize about Derek?
3. According to Hakeem, what happens when vile spirits are called back?
4. Whom does Judy see in the hallway?
5. Whom does Walter contact with the ouija board? Why?
6. How does Walter become trapped?
7. What does Zack tell Judy?
8. What happened at the Hanging Hill Playhouse in the late 1930s?
9. What ghost do Zack and Meghan see in Chapter 47?
10. Who is William Bamfield?
11. What ghosts does Zack see in Chapter 50?

Chapters 51-59

1. What does the jolly man call Zack?
2. Who is the jolly man?
3. Who is the ghost of the Native American girl?
4. What does Mr. Willowmeir warn about Judy, Derek, and Meghan?
5. What are Reginald and Hakeem planning?
6. Why are Derek and Meghan the chosen children?
7. What does Reginald give Derek?
8. What does Meghan wonder about Princess Nepauduckett?

Chapters 60-70

1. Who doesn't show up for work?
2. What kind of party is Reginald planning?
3. According to Buckingham, what must Zack find?
4. What ghost does Zack see in Chapter 65?
5. What is unusual about the cat Zipper sees? Whom might the cat be?
6. Who leads Zack to the trunk?
7. Whom does Zack confront in the dark? What does he tell her?

Chapters 71-79

1. What does Zack find in the trunk?
2. What is Reginald's plan for all of the cast and crew except Meghan and Derek?
3. What is Judy going to research?
4. Why is Wilbur able to translate the Latin words?
5. Where does Derek hide his script?

6. What ghost with a hatchet do Zack and Meghan encounter?
7. What ghosts appeared in the second half of Professor Nicodemus' 1939 show?

Chapter 80-89

1. What do Zack and Meghan find out about the word pandemonium?
2. Who is Susan Potter?
3. . Do you think Susan Potter has come back to the Hanging Hill Playhouse? Explain.
4. What does Juggler Girl ask Zack to do?
5. What important information is in the article Doris Ann Norris finds?
6. Why is Derek starting to panic?
7. How does Kathleen Williams know Zack?
8. What does the janitor call the statue of the man with the head of a bull? When have readers heard this name before?

Chapters 90-99

1. . What is Reginald planning to do to Derek and Meghan?
2. What does Zack find in the stuffed pig?
3. What happened when the janitor said the Latin words seventy years ago?
4. What does Reginald take from Judy and Mary McKenna?
5. What happens to Mrs. Stone, Mrs. McKenna and Judy in Chapter 94?
6. What animal does Zipper see?
7. Who is the curly-haired ghost? If you were Zack, would you trust her? Explain.
8. Who is Doll Face?
9. What does Zipper find out about the cat?

Chapters 100 - 109

1. Who helps Judy and Mary escape?
2. Where does Bartholomew Buckingham lead Zack?
3. What does Dr. Nicholas Nicodemus tell Reginald about the boy who recites the Latin script?
4. Who is Pietro Bacigalupi? How does he help Zack?
5. What does Reginald learn about his father, sister, and mother? What does Reginald learn about his arm?
6. In Chapter 108, what is Derek allergic to?
7. Who offers to recite the script? Why?

Chapters 110- 118

1. What happens to the thug's gun?
2. What does Moloch say?
3. What happens to Grimes and Hakeem?
4. What does Sassakus do?

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. Apparition p.2
2. Sparsely p.7
3. Tepid p.7
4. Infamous p. 7
5. Dank p.8
6. Ravenously p.9
7. Ascended p.17
8. Dilapidated p. 17
9. Cavernous p.18
10. Brood p. 20
11. Sheen p. 35
12. Thespian p. 35
13. Revulsion
14. Swarthy p. 35
15. Gaunt p. 50
16. Oeuvre p. 62
17. Suave p 70
18. Pandemonium p. 67
19. Precipice p. 82
20. Vacate p. 86
21. Forlorn p. 91
22. Tentatively p. 91
23. Kindred p. 92
24. Perturbed p. 95
25. Esteemed p. 95
26. Devious p.100
27. Labyrinth p. 100
28. Serenely p. 100
29. Warily p. 100
30. Dire p. 102
31. Inaudible p. 113
32. Colossus p. 124
33. Robust p. 128
34. Vital p.128
35. Heir p. 128
36. Tedious p. 132
37. Obsequiously p. 133
38. Vile p. 134
39. Fetid p. 139
40. Gauzy p. 144
41. Benevolent p. 144
42. Renowned p. 150
43. Debonair p. 150
44. Rotund p. 164
45. Ornate p. 164
46. Vortex p. 168
47. Acolytes p. 172
48. Magnitude p. 173
49. Munificent p. 172
50. Gait p. 175
51. Avant-garde p. 176
52. Voracious p. 181
53. Unfathomable p.184
54. Interlopers p. 212
55. Oblivious p. 216
56. Abominable p. 217
57. Grisly p. 225
58. Traipse p. 230
59. Notorious p. 231
60. Egregious p. 231
61. Tawdry p. 231
62. Ingrate p. 244
63. Commence p. 264
64. Invoke p. 277
65. Translucent p. 291
66. Furrows p.302
67. Raspy p. 302
68. Vast p. 304
69. Lethal p. 304
70. Cacophony p. 307

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you think Zack will see his biological mother again? Explain.
2. Of all the characters in the book, who is the most evil? Why?
3. How are Zack and Derek alike? How are they different?
4. Do you think that the janitor should have told the children exactly what he knew right from the beginning? Explain.

5. The Hanging Hill Playhouse is full of surprises. What shocked you the most? Explain.
 6. Do you think Zack should forgive his mother? Explain.
 7. At the end of the book, Meghan says that Zack is her hero. Who is your hero? Why?
 8. Has Zack changed from *The Crossroads*? Explain.
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SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. In both *The Crossroads* and *The Demons' Door*, history plays an important role in the story. How much do you know about the history of your town? Do some research and share what you find with your class. When was your town founded? How was it named? What are the important historical places in your town? What famous people are from your town? Are there any mysteries or legends in your town? Brainstorm ideas and write a short story that incorporates the history of your town.
2. What happens to the "good" ghosts in the story? Write an epilogue telling what happens to the good ghosts.
3. Write a letter to the author telling him what you liked about the book. Ask him any questions that you still have after finishing the book. Tell him where he should set his next spooky story.
4. Research the following topics mentioned in the book: vaudeville, the Minotaur, Sobek, and/or Sekhmet. Share your research with your class.
5. Use an example of a playbill to create a playbill for the novel.