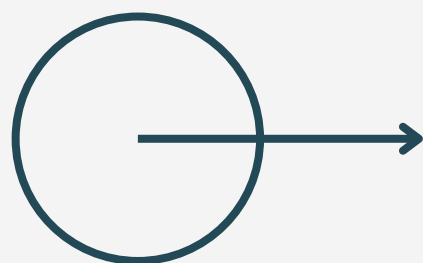




SMUDGE EPISODE 3

4-7 GUIDE

Integrating SEL, ELA, and Creative Expression





OVERVIEW

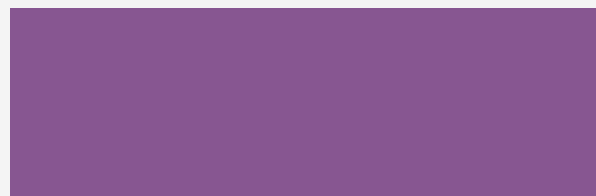
In this episode, Smudge explores the “Unfiniverse”, a place of unfinished stories. Here, Smudge meets the Inkompletes, fellow characters without stories, who could just be the ones to help Smudge escape the Unfiniverse. Finding the Storyteller with take creativity and teamwork, as tricksters and problems stand in their way. With plenty of new characters, and lots of imagination, this episode investigates the power of thoughts, the impact of characters, and the impact of creativity on stories.

Key Themes

- The Power of Characters: Characters add depth, intrigue, and excitement to stories by giving the reader someone to relate to, root for, or despise.
- Imagination as a Force of Creation: Imagination is portrayed as a tool that brings stories to life and defines our understanding of the world.
- The Complexity of Collaboration: The Inkompletes’ differing perspectives highlight the challenges and benefits of working together on a shared mission.



EP 3



LEARNING PATHS

With our comprehensive set of resources, teachers can focus on three key paths to maximize engagement with Smudge Episode 3:

1

ELA

- Focus: Strengthen understanding of story structure, character analysis, and symbolism through engaging narrative activities.

2

SEL

- Focus: Develop students' self-confidence, resilience, and empathy by connecting them to Smudge's journey and challenges.

3

Creative Expression

- Focus: Encourage visual storytelling and imaginative thinking as students interpret and expand on Smudge's world.



PRE-WATCH DISCUSSION

These questions encourage students to actively listen for key literary elements, identify story themes, and reflect on character motivations, sparking discussions on creativity, storytelling, and perseverance.

Prompts:

- Why do you think it is important for stories to have villains or characters that have flaws?
- How do you make new friends or become part of a team?
- If you could create a new character to fit into your favorite story, who would they be?



DURING-WATCH DISCUSSION

DURING

Prompts:

- Scene: Hocus explains the different lands in the Unfiniverse to Smudge
 - Why did Smudge choose the Thicket of Thoughts? Which one would you choose to visit first? Why?
- Scene: Smudge meets the Inkcompletes
 - How is Smudge feeling about the Inkompletes and the Unfiniverse now?
- Scene: Smudge learns why the Storyteller is in the Unfiniverse
 - How will the skills or traits of each member of the Inkcompletes help their journey to find the Storyteller? What skills or traits does Smudge add?



POST-WATCH DISCUSSION

Prompts:

- How do each of the Inkompletes' personalities make them a stronger team?
- What might happen if Smudge and the Inkompletes do find the Storyteller?
- How do you think Calumbra might impact the other characters in the Unfiniverse?

AFTER



CHARACTER PROFILES



- **Smudge:** A creative but timid character determined to share their story, representing resilience and self-expression.
- **Hocus:** A tricky creature who sends Smudge down a shadowy path at the entrance of the Unfiniverse
- **Fleck:** The brave leader of the Inkcompletes who is looking for a story that needs a hero
- **The Inkcompletes:** Spinks, Dot, Iggy and Fleck- a team of characters without stories stuck in the Unfiniverse
- **Calumbra:** A mysterious, shadowy character who does not seem very friendly nor fond of the Inkcompletes

PLOT BREAKDOWN



- **Introduction:** Smudge falls through the nexus and finds themselves in the Unfiniverse. With a little “help” from Hocus, and determined to prove themselves a real author, Smudge sets off towards the Thicket of Thoughts to find new ideas and stimulate creativity.
- **Conflict:** Smudge is determined to find their own way out of the Unfiniverse, even though it seems an impossible task. Deep in the Thicket of Thoughts, Smudge discovers the magic and mystery of this place, and ends up in a sticky situation.
- **Climax:** With some luck, and a little help from Fleck, Smudge finds the Inkompletes and a chance to escape the Unfiniverse. Forgotten by their authors, the Inkompletes need to find the Storyteller. This Architect of Imagination, and Creator of the World Book, holds the power to set them free, if Smudge and the Inkompletes can find him in the Unfiniverse.
- **Resolution:** Just as Smudge decides to join the Inkompletes on their journey, Calumbra arrives. Now, the Inkompletes face an uncertain, shadowy path ahead in hopes of finding a way to escape the Unfiniverse and finish their stories.



MIDDLE GRADE ELA RESOURCES

Name: _____ Date: _____

Story Map

In this episode, Smudge goes quite a journey! Use the space below to map out Smudge's story, just like an author would. Include specific details from the story for each section.

Introduction- How does the reader first meet Smudge? What happens to set the story into motion?

Conflict- What big challenge or main problem does Smudge have to solve?

Climax- What's the turning point in the story, when the characters make the most important decision?

Resolution- How does the story end?

STORY MAPPING

Organize the main parts of a story.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Share Your Thoughts

In the scenes below, there are important story details. Can you use these scenes, and details from the episode, to answer the questions?

 Why do you think Smudge chose to explore the Thicket of Thoughts first in the Unfiniverse?

 Why is Hocus an untrustworthy character? Why does Smudge trust Hocus?

 How does Smudge get into trouble in the Thicket of Thoughts? Who helps Smudge escape?


COMPREHENSION


Discussion questions based on plot and story analysis.


Name: _____ Date: _____


Setting Shuffle

Each of the Inkompletes is looking for an author to finish their stories. Can you get them one step closer? For each member of the Inkompletes, use story details to describe a setting in which they'd be most happy as a character.

 A Setting for Fleck.

 A Setting for Spinks.

 A Setting for Dot.

 A Setting for Iggy.

SETTING SHUFFLE

Design settings to match the Inkompletes based on text details.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Story Vocabulary

Each box has a word that describes an important story element. Can you fill in the boxes with details from this episode in Smudge's story? Some have more than one answer!

Protagonist (Main Character)

Antagonist (Villain)

Conflict (Problems the Characters have to solve)

Setting (Where different parts of the story take place)

Sidekicks (Minor Characters that help the Protagonist)

This story ends on a cliffhanger, instead of resolution. Explain what a cliffhanger is at the end of a story:

Cliffhanger: _____

STORY VOCABULARY

Identify key story details to match elements of a well-written story.

ADDITIONAL ELA & WRITING RESOURCES

Name: _____

Date: _____

Story Prompt

In the Unfiniverse, we meet Fleck when they rescue Smudge, but what happens to Fleck before that moment? Use this story starter to write a new adventure for Fleck!

"Oof!" Fleck landed in a heap of leaves and twigs after a long fall through the sky. "I knew I shouldn't have opened that door!" Fleck said to no one. "This is no place for a hero!" Just then, a rustle from a nearby tree caught Fleck's attention. Whatever was in that tree was whistling and growling at the same time! Fleck walked towards the noisy tree and was surprised when a strange looking creature popped out.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Imagine a Villain

Calumbra presents a cliffhanger in this story, leaving Smudge to wonder who this character is. Can you predict parts of Calumbra's character and backstory? Make your predictions below!

What skills or powers does Calumbra have?

How did Calumbra come to be a villain in the Unfiniverse?

What problems might Calumbra cause for Smudge and the Inkompletes?

What traits does Calumbra have that are opposite of Smudge's traits?

What might be Calumbra's goal in the Unfiniverse?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Predict the Ending

When Calumbra arrives, this story ends on a cliffhanger. Predict what happens next and write the ending of this story. Map your story before you start writing.

Introduction- When Calumbra arrives, what happens next to set your new story in motion?

Conflict- What problem will Smudge and the Inkompletes have to solve to defeat Calumbra?

Rising Action- What 3 events happen in the story that lead Smudge and the Inkompletes at the most exciting point of the story?



MIDDLE GRADE SEL RESOURCES






POSITIVE MINDSET

Explore ways to reframe negative thoughts and doubts.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Think Differently


In the Thicket of Thoughts, Smudge's happy ideas quickly turn to negative thinking. Changing your thoughts from negative to positive takes practice. For each character, give them advice, a plan of action, or a more positive way of thinking about their problem.

<p>"How can I get people to believe that I am a good author?"</p> 	<p>"It would be easier to go and find the Storyteller myself."</p> 
<p>"I need to get better at being a character meant for a royal story!"</p> 	<p>"Am I a good leader? I'm not sure how to become a hero."</p> 
	<p>"How can I make more friends in the Unfiniverse?"</p> 

Name: _____ Date: _____

Smudge's Dream Team

At the end of the story, Smudge joins the Ink completes on the search for the Storyteller. The Ink completes are a good team, but can you make the team stronger? Choose 3 characters from your favorite books and describe why they'd be helpful on this quest.

<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Book: _____</p> <p>How can they help the Ink completes?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Book: _____</p> <p>How can they help the Ink completes?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Book: _____</p> <p>How can they help the Ink completes?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	

TEAMWORK

Consider how different characters build a stronger team together.



MIDDLE GRADE CREATIVE RESOURCES

CREATING A SETTING


Add new lands to the Unfiniverse, along with setting details or characters that might live there.



Name: _____Date: _____


Welcome to the Unfiniverse

Hocus describes a few of the places in the Unfiniverse for Smudge. The Thicket of Thoughts, Grimshadow Hollow, Halfway Haven... all of these are home to specific stories. What types of creatures would be most at home in each of these places? Describe them below!




Grimshadow Hollow

Describe a character that would enjoy this place:



Thicket of Thoughts

Describe a character that would enjoy this place:



Neverwood

Describe a character that would enjoy this place:

Name: _____Date: _____

Create an Inkcomplete

The Inkcompletes are other characters without stories that Smudge meets in the Unfiniverse. Use the questions below to create another Inkcomplete. Then, draw their picture.

What is their name?

What genre would they like best? Why?

What skills do they have?

What makes them different from the other Inkcompletes?

What type of character are they?

Draw their picture:

CREATE AN INKCOMPLETE

Profile and draw a new character to join the Inkcompletes.

