

# The Three and Many Wishes of Jason Reid

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written by Hazel Hutchins

**genre:** NOVEL, FICTION

**themes:** FAIRY TALES  
MAGICAL FANTASY  
FRIENDSHIP  
MAKING A DIFFERENCE  
CHOICES AFFECTING OTHERS

**suitable for:** GRADES 4–7

Jason is a clever eleven-year-old who, faced with the chance to have three wishes come true, decides to take very careful measures to get his wishes right. The novel combines the seriousness and determination of Jason with the magical fantasy of a stranger named Quicksilver who has come to grant him three wishes.

**Hazel Hutchins bio:** Hazel Hutchins is an award-winning novelist and a wryly entertaining chronicler of modern family life. Hazel has written over twenty children's books, and credits her family as the inspiration behind them. Her active imagination uses both real life and magic to move stories in humorous and enlightening ways.

## The following activity ideas ...

... are only a start. There are many possibilities for helping students construct meaning from text.

Comprehension activities:

- help readers to extend their general knowledge from prior experience
- develop reading strategies for comprehension
- bring relevance to the act of reading
- foster discussion and reflection through response to the text and illustrations

## Before

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### STARTING THE BOOK

*Activities to set the tone or introduce the topic of the book, establish prior knowledge and interest, and develop predictions of what the text will be about.*

- A 1. Review and list fairy tales the students know where a wish is granted: Cinderella, The Magic Fish, Aladdin, Rumpelstiltskin, etc.
  - What wishes were asked for?
  - Whom do these wishes help?
  - Are the characters better off after the wishes are granted? Why or why not?
  - What role did wishes play in those stories?
- A 2. Show the title and cover of the novel. Lead discussion about the use of wishes with questions and tasks such as the following:
  - What do you think the story will be about?
  - What would you wish for if you were Jason?
  - Turn to a partner and share what your three wishes are.
  - With the same partner, come up with a shared list of only three wishes.
  - Why was it hard or easy to come up with a shared list?
  - Record and post a list of all the wishes.

## READING THE BOOK

*Activities to check on comprehension, stimulate interest, involve readers in reflection as they read, and encourage consideration of other readers' reactions.*

- B 1. At the end of chapter 5, ask the students to consider what characteristics make up Quicksilver, where he might have come from and what his next assignment will be.
- Post a list of all the fictional characters that students can imagine in Quicksilver's life who could answer questions about him: his parents, his siblings, his dentist, his teacher, etc.
- In pairs, students make a list of five questions they would like to ask about Quicksilver.
- With some students asking the questions and other students answering in character as someone who knows Quicksilver, students take turns as interviewers to find out as much information as possible in order to develop the Quicksilver character as he appears in this story.
- Through class discussion, model on a chart the writing of a character description of Quicksilver, appropriate to the expectations of writing you have for the students.
- B 2. As students are reading through each chapter, assign recorders to list on a chart the wishes Jason makes. Try predicting what he will wish for next, before reading the next chapter.
- Compare this list with the earlier list made by the class in activity A 2. Lead a discussion about wishes and predictions with questions such as the following:
- Had anyone predicted that Jason would try to get more than three wishes?
  - Had anyone considered it unfair of Jason to try to get so many wishes more than three?
  - Are any of Jason's wishes the same as the students' wishes?
  - Were any of the wishes a surprise?
  - Have any new ideas come to you of what you would wish for? Why?

## READING THE BOOK

*Activities to inspire continued reflection and response to the text, bring conclusion to the experience of reading this particular text, and stimulate further extensions.*

- C 1. Have students reread the chart with the character description of Quicksilver from activity B 1.  
Provide art materials for students to create their own impression of what Quicksilver might look like. When students present their work, have them be prepared to explain their choice of colors, images, dimensions, etc., in their perception of the character.
  
- C 2. Ask students to pretend they are Quicksilver and to select a passage in the book where Jason encounters him.  
Writing in the character of Quicksilver, ask students to make a diary entry describing briefly what happened and, in more detail, what it is like being a wish-giver and how they feel about Jason. Remind students to make the writing interesting by focusing on the feelings and thoughts they imagine were going on in Quicksilver's head during that encounter.  
Post the diary entries alongside the students' art work on Quicksilver from activity C 1.