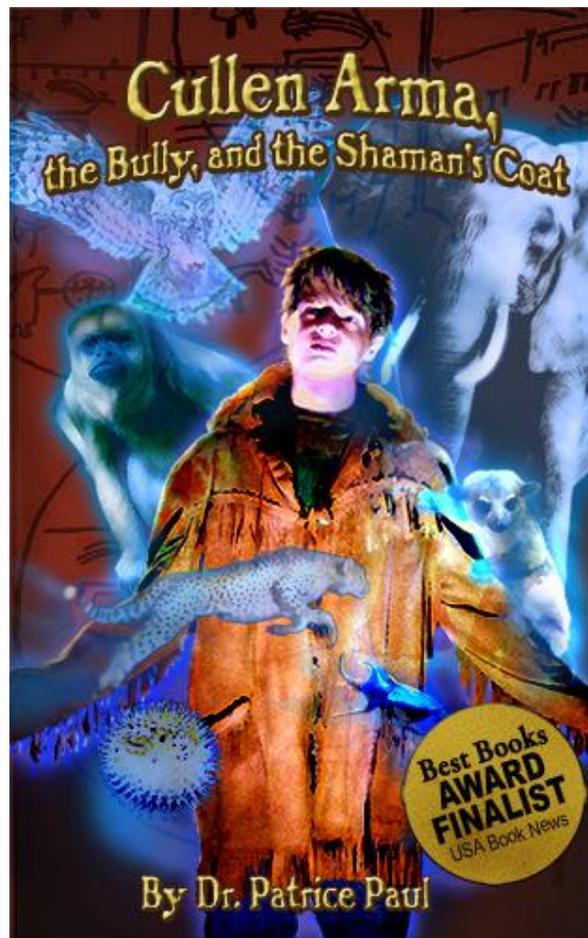


## Teacher's Quick Guide

For use with



*This quick guide could not have been made possible*

*without the input of some very special teachers.*

*Many thanks to:*

*Patricia Paulich*

*Kathleen Shaw*

*Terry Demling*

*Kathryn Rhoades-Moran*

### Purpose of this Quick Guide

Faced with new academic hurdles, leaps in cognitive ability, expanding moral ideals, and more complex social structures, adolescence can be a challenging time. *Cullen Arma, the Bully, and the Shaman's Coat* uses fantasy-based fiction as a vehicle to highlight and address some of the concerns and issues faced by the middle school/young adult population (e.g., emotional awareness, peer pressure, learned aggressive behaviors, cyber-bullying, moral development), and is based upon the work of known theorists such as Bandura and Kohlberg. Reflection questions (RQ) and self-exploration questions (SEQ) have been included at the end of the book to help the reader internalize the socioemotional concepts that underlie the conversations of and situations faced by the major characters. The *Teacher's Quick Guide* expands on the RQ and SEQ by building additional learning links to such subject areas as English Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science, as well as to the areas of career development and social/emotional learning. Teachers, school social workers, and school counselors will find the book and quick guide a useful catalyst for discussion and project-based learning.

The story revolves around an 8<sup>th</sup> grader, Cullen Arma, and the situations he faces socially and emotionally while simultaneously learning how to control a new found and unusual skill. After having tried on a coat found in his parents' Native American artifact store, Cullen, who has an affinity for animals, finds that he is able to conjure the skills of various animals to help him through emotionally arousing situations such as performance anxiety, test anxiety, and threats from a bully. Through the help of his cousin, Alyssa, and friend, Brayden, Cullen works to develop and control these skills. This becomes of the ultimate importance when he must thwart the efforts of the school's cyber-bully, Walker, who has hacked into the school's computer system and is causing havoc for students and faculty (e.g., re-routing e-mails). Early teens and

adults alike will find the story engaging and amusing, while it subtly brings the issues described above to discussion in a fun and friendly manner.

On the following pages are various ideas for building learning links as described above to the concepts highlighted within *Cullen Arma*, *the Bully*, and *the Shaman's Coat*. School professionals are encouraged to modify and expand upon these ideas to fit their specific classroom needs and goals. For convenience, these ideas are organized topically.

### Pre-Reading Activities

These pre-reading activities give students the opportunity to explore their ideas about the storyline by simply analyzing the cover. Offered below are questions to help facilitate interest and discussion as students imagine it from the cover:

- What do you think the title of the book suggests about the story?
- What do you think the picture on the cover suggests about the story?
- How do you think the title and picture relate?
- The title suggests that there is a bully involved in the story. Write three adjectives that describe what you think makes a bully. Why did you choose those three adjectives?
- In contrast, Cullen Arma, serves as the story's hero. Write three adjectives that describe what you think makes a hero. Why did you choose those three adjectives?
- What do your descriptions of a bully and a hero suggest about the story?
- Have you ever heard of a shaman? Discuss what you know of Native American culture and how you think it may relate to the book's title and cover art.
- What natural abilities do the animals in the cover art possess? How might those natural abilities tie into the story?

### Vocabulary

A vocabulary list can be found in the back of the book, and it invites students to try to decipher each word's meaning by looking at how it is used in the sentence. For convenience, the list is also included on the following page of this quick guide. *(Please note that the page numbers next to each word correspond to the traditional bound version. They may not apply to the e-book version.)* This list can be used in other ways to facilitate language development, including, but not limited to, the suggestions listed here:

- Have students get in groups and create crossword puzzles. Have them exchange their puzzles with other groups.
- Have students create word-find puzzles, but instead of listing the words, they should list the definitions. Students will have to determine the word from the definition in order to find them in the puzzle.
- To build on written expressive skills, students can write paragraphs using the vocabulary words about a culture, or other curriculum related topic, they would like to learn more about.

## Vocabulary List

### Prologue

Protégé (page 9)

### Chapter 1

Converged (page 13)  
 Congregated (page 14)  
 Devious (page 15)  
 Transgressions (page 15)  
 Retaliate (page 15)

### Chapter 2

Affinity (page 21)  
 Enticed (page 21)  
 Solace (page 21)  
 Atira (page 23)  
 Ornithology (page 23)  
 Retribution (page 24)

### Chapter 3

Arrogant (page 25)  
 Exhilarated (page 25)  
 Instilling (page 27)  
 Endure (page 27)  
 Stealthily (page 28)  
 Procrastinate (page 31)

### Chapter 4

Exquisite (page 37)  
 Melding (page 37)

### Chapter 5

Perturbed (page 49)

### Chapter 6

Sullen (page 59)  
 Sabotaging (page 60)  
 Elation (page 61)  
 Astonished (page 65)

### Chapter 7

Pummels (page 66)  
 Predator (page 70)  
 Morphed (page 71)

### Chapter 8

Contemplating (page 82)  
 Revelation (page 82)  
 Surmised (page 82)  
 Conjure (page 87)  
 Philosophizing (page 89)

### Chapter 9

Concocted (page 94)  
 Copious (page 96)  
 Trepidation (page 96)  
 Torrent (page 97)

### Chapter 11

Scurried (page 116)  
 Detrimental (page 116)

### Chapter 12

Feverishly (page 129)  
 Illuminated (page 130)

### Chapter 13

Devoid (page 141)  
 Refuge (page 142)  
 Converge (page 142)  
 Repugnant (page 145)  
 Emanating (page 145)  
 Intermittently (page 149)

### Chapter 14

Exude (page 153)  
 Angst (page 158)

### Chapter 15

Adorning (page 160)  
 Inedible (page 170)  
 Nefarious (page 170)  
 Heinous (page 171)

### Chapter 16

Mused (page 173)  
 Defiant (page 175)  
 Hypocrites (page 175)  
 Devastating (page 177)  
 Empathized (page 177)  
 Stifle (page 180)  
 Vicious (page 182)  
 Demeanor (page 183)  
 Palpable (page 187)  
 Turbulent (page 187)  
 Mayhem (page 187)  
 Righteous (page 187)  
 Pernicious (page 188)  
 Altercation (page 189)  
 Enraptured (page 189)

### Chapter 17

Indigenous (page 194)  
 Interjected (page 201)  
 Pursued (page 192)  
 Dastardly (page 193)  
 Allegation (page 200)  
 Reiterated (page 203)  
 Simultaneously (page 203)  
 Thwart (page 204)

### Discussion Opportunities/Reading Journals

The reflection questions at the end of the book provide opportunity for classroom discussion. They also can be used as prompts for journaling. For convenience, the reflection questions are listed here:

- 1) Through a mystical event, Cullen acquires animal skills that prove advantageous in various situations. If you had powers that gave you an advantage over others, what would you do with them? What consequences – good and bad – might befall you based upon your choices? Why did you make the choices that you did?
- 2) How do you choose between doing the right thing and actions that might cause you or others trouble? What are the steps you use in your decision making?
- 3) Alyssa feels uncomfortable stealing Walker's laptop, even though it is probably the best way to prove their point. Have you ever felt torn between doing something you felt uncomfortable about in order to do the right thing? How did you handle it?
- 4) When angry, Cullen's body feels certain ways and he tries to calm himself by breathing deeply. How do you know when you are angry? How does your body feel and what thoughts do you have? What do you do to manage your anger?
- 5) How do you know that Walker is a bully? What do you think makes a bully a bully? How do you feel when someone picks on you? How do you handle it and why do you choose that/those methods?
- 6) One type of situation that makes Cullen nervous is when he worries about failing at something important to him. What situations make you nervous? How do you feel when you are nervous? What do you do about it?
- 7) The re-routed e-mails cause much embarrassment for the students at M.R. Rick Junior High School. What things embarrass you? How do you know when you feel embarrassed? What do you do when you feel embarrassed?
- 8) Aaron assures Alyssa that he does not care what other people say or think about her and his friendship with her. Why do you think kids and teens put too much importance on what others think of them? Is it possible to be yourself and still survive in school? How do you handle this dilemma?

Teachers are encouraged to develop additional questions chapter-by-chapter as they see fit. Two examples are offered below:

- 1) In chapter 1, Cullen is victimized by Walker, whose actions cost Cullen a chance to place on the track team. He chose not to tell for fear of retribution from Walker. How do you feel about his choice? How would you weigh out the pros and cons of alerting an adult to the actions of a bully?
- 2) In chapter 11, Cullen shows us his loyalty to his cousin. He refuses to leave the park without her because he wants to make sure she returns home safely. With whom do you share those types of loyalties? What is it about those people that evoke those feelings in you?

### Character Analysis

Character analysis provides opportunity for students to develop a variety of skills, including higher level thinking.

- Venn diagrams are a useful tool in fostering higher level thinking. An interesting compare and contrast exercise could be constructed using the characters of Alyssa and Walker, for example.
- The storyline depicts Cullen's inner monologue as a means of highlighting sometimes self-destructive thoughts that are tied to his emotional presentation. Students can, in turn, provide the inner monologue for other characters in the book. For example, students could explore Warren's thoughts during the confrontation with Mr. Askee. Students should be prepared to discuss why they chose the inner monologue they did as it relates to the characters' attributes.

### Exercises for Different Learning Styles

Not all students are verbal learners. Visual, kinesthetic, etc. learners can benefit from exercises designed for those particular intellectual styles. Two examples are offered below, but should be viewed as a springboard for the development of other activities:

- Students could be encouraged to illustrate parts of the book, or provide one illustration per chapter highlighting what they think is a key element in the storyline.
- Reader's theater can provide opportunities for students to further explore the storyline through their interpretation of the character's responses and emotions. Although typically viewed as a resource for developing comprehension and oral reading skills, acting out particular elements of the story, with allotted time for rehearsal, will provide students with an opportunity to learn about nonverbal communication as well.

### Comprehension Assessment

Along with formal assessment through the teacher's preferred means, student groups could take turns in developing a quiz for their respective assigned chapters. This can be done in groups using an open book format. It could be fun making it like a trivia game or scavenger hunt. The team with the most quiz points at the end of the book could be rewarded according to the teacher's discretion.

### Assessing the Quality of Information on the Internet

With the convenience offered on the internet, it is understandable that students will bypass traditional library resources and instead pull information off whatever websites come up in an on-line search. Unfortunately, some students are unaware of the issues with the quality of information available on the internet. Chapter 12 of the book provides an example of this issue and suggested methods for gathering information when researching a topic. The following question is in the Self-Exploration Section to serve as a catalyst for learning about this important issue:

*When in the library, Alyssa states that resources on the internet may not always be reliable. Take time to look up something of interest on the internet and compare it to what you find in traditional resource books. Is the website information accurate? How do you know?*

To facilitate the use of this assignment, the following prompts can be used to guide students through the exercise. These should be viewed as possible suggestions from which teachers can choose in meeting their learning objectives.

- What is the name of the website?
- Is the website's URL a .com, .edu, .gov, .net, etc. Does the URL suggest anything to you (e.g., a .com could suggest commercial sponsorship that highlights a specific product base)?
- Does the website have any sponsors or advertisers? Do you think that might suggest a bias in how the information is presented?
- Who is the author of the website? Does the author appear to have the right professional expertise? Is contact information provided if you wanted to ask questions or get more information?
- Does the author write in a manner that suggests a bias about the topic? If so, how can you tell?
- Does the author provide references related to the topic?
- Can you verify the author's claims with traditional resources?
- Write three things you liked about the website.
- Write three things you did not like about the website.
- Would you recommend this website to a friend who is interested in the topic? Why or why not?

### The Study of Animals and Conservation Psychology – Learning Links to Science

The storyline introduces students to the talents of several different animals, including some that are less familiar (e.g., zorilla, kinkajous). Further, it is noted early in the story that Cullen has a deep interest in the study of animals. These prompts provide a catalyst for students to expand their knowledge of the animal kingdom while linking it to the field of Conservation Psychology. This particular branch of psychology is concerned with the scientific study of how humans and nature interact. It examines how humans and animals relate to and impact one another, with an emphasis on understanding and promoting conservation behaviors. Additional information on Conservation Psychology can be found at [www.conservationpsychology.com](http://www.conservationpsychology.com). The following question is in the Self-Exploration Section to serve as a catalyst for learning about this important issue:

*Cullen values the animal kingdom and the environment. What do you do to keep the environment safe and clean for both animals and humans? What are your values and what do you do about them?*

Suggested activities are offered below, but, again, teachers are encouraged to expand and supplement as is appropriate for their classroom goals.

- Write a report on conservation efforts currently underway in the community.
- Construct an “expert panel” (e.g., political leaders, educational leaders, biologists, psychologists) with advisors to discuss the global issues of conservation.
- Use a debate format to discuss the pros and challenges of waste management.
- Write a research paper on an unfamiliar animal.
- Write a research paper on the impact (or lack thereof) of conservation methods on the animal population in the community.
- Develop a conservation program for the classroom, school, or community, including a determination of need, the actual plan, implementation strategies, and an evaluation of the program efficacy.

### Cultural Exploration – Learning Links to Social Studies

This book introduces one aspect of Native American culture – the role of the Shaman and the importance of animals in their lifestyle. To further explore that cultural aspect, students could expand on the information in the book by completing an exercise as suggested below:

- Select four animals you would describe as your favorites.
- For each animal, briefly write out the characteristics of those animals that you like. (Students should be encouraged to think of the physical attributes, as well as the psychosocial attributes, such as pack loyalty in wolves.)
- How do those characteristics relate to how you described yourself?
- Compare your list of characteristics to those found in Native American literature. How does this analysis impact your thoughts about the animals on your list?

### Career Exploration

It's always exciting to learn about the different types of jobs people have, and how they relate to the things that interest your students. The SEQ prompt for this exercise is as follows:

*Cullen has already established an area of interest – animals – that he continues to explore and develop through his work at the zoo and his relationship with his Aunt Sherise. What interests do you have and how do you explore and develop them? Ask your school officials if there are any mentors with whom you can talk or shadowing experiences that you can do.*

There are many ways students can be encouraged to explore various career opportunities that they find interesting. Some suggestions are as follows:

- Working in groups or as a class as a whole, talk about the different types of jobs your parents, relatives, and their friends have. Make a list of the ones that sound interesting to you.
- Interview an individual who has a career of interest, but have your interview questions approved by your teacher first. (Teachers can require students to either complete a written paper or oral presentation about the information gathered during the interview. Alternatively, students could create poster presentations and conduct their own “job fair.”)
- Look at the different majors offered at a few college and university websites. Write a paper about that major, what classes are required, and how you feel about them? How does this influence your career ideas?

- Explore the classified ads to find out more about what employers are looking for in the types of jobs that interest you. What types of qualities would you look for in an applicant if you were the employer?