

Floridius Bloom and the Planet of Gloom

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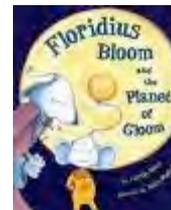
Illustrator: Matt Phelan

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Grade Level: 3rd (GLCs: [Click here for grade level guidelines.](#))

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Synopsis: from barnesandnoble.com: Floridius Bloom has found a source of light on his planet of Gloom and he's not sharing it with anyone. He's even built a wall so that no one else can see it! Of course, Floridius is convinced that he needs it for his prize cherriflox to blossom. Not to mention the fact that he's afraid of the monsters and the wigglyfluffs that lie beyond his wall. But when Floridius meets a curious creature named Zrill who invites him to come out from his self-imposed isolation, Floridius begins to understand that beauty is a thing to be shared . . . and friendship can supply its own kind of light.

Note to readers:

- Read the poem on the first page as it sets up the story

Discussion topics for *before* reading:

- Which character do you think is Floridius Bloom? Have you ever heard of that name?
- Where do you think the story takes place?
- Do you think the two characters on the cover look any different?
- Have you ever heard of a planet named "Gloom"? What planets do you know?

Discussion topics for *during/after* reading:

- What would you see if you were riding through space in a rocket? (Planets, stars, sun, moon....)
- What do you think is in Floridius' garden?
- Where do you think Zrill is leading Floridius Bloom?
- How do you make friends?
- Do you think Zrill is Floridius' friend?
- Are the monsters Zrill's friends?
- Why do you think Floridius was afraid of the monsters before he met them? Why did he stop dreaming of the monsters after he met them? (Because he met them and they were friendly)
- Do you have pictures of friends and family in your house?
- Is it better to share your favorite things or to lock them up so no one can see them?
- Is Floridius happier now that he has a friend named Zrill?

Craft ideas:

- Create a viewfinder. Cut out 2 large circles the same size in different colors. On one circle, draw and create your own universe with planets, suns, moons, aliens, space stations/ships and other things you would see in space. Cover the drawn circle with the other circle. Make a small hole in the center of both circles. On the other circle (not the one you drew on), cut out a pie wedge shape or circle. Do not cut all the way to the hole in the center. Knot a string/yarn and thread it through the hole and knot again. Swivel the view finder to see what your universe looks like.
- Draw your own aliens on your own planet. For fun, draw the aliens and planets on a Valentine's Day card to give to an alien friend you may meet on a different planet.
- Make a Floridius costume. Cut out an antenna and large elephant-like ears and attach to a paper headband.