

PROFESSOR XROZA'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED STUDENTS

LESSON 2: CREATIVE WRITING & BIOLOGY

Professor Griffin Ryder has been our creative biology teacher here at PXSFGS for only a single year, but we are very pleased with his results. Today his students are presenting their homework assignments in front of the class. Professor Ryder, would you tell us a little bit about the assignment?

"Oh sure. I've asked the students to write an original story from the point of a troll, or group of trolls, living somewhere on the fictional world shown in this map. I've asked them to use physical traits of the trolls as story elements. But what sort of physical traits does a troll have? That's the fun part; I didn't give them any guidance about that."



Not a Drop to Drink: This is a story about survival for an Ansess Troll left for dead, who must trek back through the desert wasteland between the scattered Ansess villages. The physical toll of the arid environment brings about disturbing hallucinations, but in the end he is able to survive because his thick, leathery skin allows him to retain enough water to stave off total dehydration.



The Two-Fingered Gauntlet: This story tells how the Elek Trolls finally gave their boastful Huissian neighbors their comeuppance. When the Huissian hero claimed that he could win any game of chance or skill against any Elek, one clever Elek challenged him to a game the Huissian could never win-- rock, paper, scissors.

The Battle for Ottakun: This story tells of the desert nomad Borr-durpa Trolls and their failed attempt at righteous liberation of the lush forests covering most of the land of their Ottakun neighbors. While their white skin is great for keeping them cool in the desert sunlight, once they got into the forest it made them so visible to sneaky Ottakun ambush that they could not maintain the attack.



Rats!: The Forham Trolls learn that even the mighty can fall in this story of ecological disaster. The Forhams were overrun by a horde of ravenous burik rats, and while their claws were no match for the sheer numbers of the rodents, they could be used to escape by climbing the wontu trees in their area's vast forests.



The Swindled Fisherman: In this story a thieving trickster encounters an honest, hardworking Cressin Troll fisherman catching stendaw fish off the southern coast of Cressin territory. The trickster wagers that the fisherman cannot carry ten fish in his large bill, and when he tries, the trickster steals the rest of the fish and runs off while the fisherman is unable to cry out for help.



The Epic of Setayshun: This is the tale of the Gran-sen Troll war hero Setayshun. Setayshun led the Gran-sen armies headfirst – quite literally, as he often personally struck the first blow with his mighty horns – into enemy territory, which is why they now occupy the largest region of the continent Xrozarox.

Slippery When Wet: This is the story of a Dohn-fida Troll who was laughed at by a visitor from a neighboring region for having ridiculous suction cups on his feet and hands. The Dohn-fida had the last laugh, however, when a large wave crashed against the craggy cliffs he called home, and his suction cups held fast to the slippery rock while the visiting Troll was washed away to sea.



Strength in Numbers: In this story a troop of the pint-sized Huissian Trolls are traveling through their coverless region when a desert eagle decides to start picking them off one by one. Luckily the Huissians have eyes that point slightly upward and thus had enough warning of the threat from above to huddle together into a mass too heavy for the eagle to lift.





Djinn: This story begins when the stealthy Inkun Trolls observe two of their neighbors fighting over the third wish of a djinn after each had used one wish for stylish spots on their skin. When the two stash the lamp to discuss further, the Inkuns come out of hiding and steal the third wish for spots of their own; the djinn was so impressed that he made their skin green for better camouflage in their forested habitat.



What is that Smell?: In this children's story, a group of Noss Trolls smell something wonderful with their huge, powerful noses and try to figure it out what it is. Finally, they decide to follow the aroma to the southeast where they discover that the source is a great feast prepared by their neighbors the Snopas, who of course invite them to join in the festivities.

The Cure: This is the story of a Jendornu Troll who has found a substitute for the stendaw fish that his people have been addicted to for years. As the fish only live in the waters around the continent Zyzzyva they must be imported overseas, and therefore this substitute made from specially prepared flowers and snails is a welcome relief to their economy.



The Hunt: This story follows the Ottakun Trolls as they hunt the native rawkinch hares, the only wild hares on the continent Xrozarox. The hares are very fast, but in the end the muscled legs of the Ottakun allow them to prevail and then release the strongest of them, in order that the hunt next year will be more difficult.



A Bit of Fresh Air: This story opens as a Kass Troll discovers another Kass Troll suffering from heatstroke in the local harsh desert air. Thinking quickly, the healthy Kass carries the other toward their region's beach where the coastal wind helps dissipate the heat through the sick Kass's large, veiny ears and he recovers.



Memoirs of a Fishmonger: This is the (fictional) autobiography of a Peht Troll merchant who deals exclusively in the sought-after stendaw fish. The amphibious Peht was well suited for catching the biggest and best fish off the Peht coast, understood the fish well enough to keep them fresh over long periods of time, and had the business sense to set up successful maritime trade routes all over the world.

Sink Like a Stone: In this story a young Loca-less Troll wants to catch a stendaw fish because he has heard tales from all five neighboring territories that it is a challenge like no other. Sadly he was not to make the required walk from his landlocked home territory to the ocean because the armor of Loca-less Trolls makes them all poor swimmers.



Avalanche: This story takes place in the snow-capped mountains of the continent Yerrup, where the Qes Trolls thrive in large tribal units nestled in the valleys. When one of the large nearby mountains had an avalanche that cascaded into one such valley destroying many of the homes, the industrious Qes wasted no time in seeking out improvisational resources to build them anew, kept warm only by their thick fur.



The Hunger: This story tells of the hardship faced by a Mintz Troll family as a result of the famine in their territory. The Mintz require so many calories that many have turned to cannibalism and their numbers have dwindled to the point that they now occupy the smallest area on the continent Yerrup.



Crimson: This ancient tale of the Ri-motican Trolls tells of the defeat of the horrible monster, the shape-shifting red rydenhud, deep in the central forest of Ri-motican territory. Led by hypersensitive vision, the story explains why, to this day, the Ri-moticans will attack anything red that venture near their borders until it is either driven away or wiped out.

None but the Juiciest Fruit: This is a compilation of tips and tricks written by a gourmet Snopa Troll about the proper harvest time and preparation for the fruits of the wontu trees that are found almost everywhere in Snopa territory. The Snopas have very long limbs and can reach the best fruits which grow on the topmost branches of the trees, leaving the lower fruits for seed.



The Hair of the Hare: This is a coming-of-age story about a young Toiler Troll working on his family's rawkinch hare ranch. His parents teach him why the hares, which are ubiquitous in Toiler territory, cannot survive in the planet's southern hemisphere, before teaching him to shear the hare with his pincers and inviting him to accompany them to the Loca-less wool market just over the border.



MAP OF PLANET TROLLA

