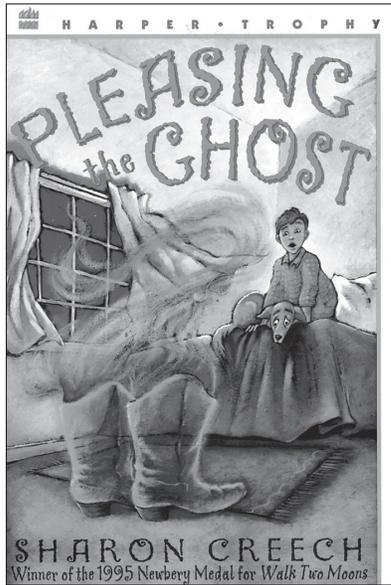


# PLEASING THE GHOST



## Setting the Scene

Ever since nine-year-old Dennis's dad died, a veritable parade of ghosts has been passing through his bedroom. When the ghost of his uncle Arvie blows into his room on a warm breeze, Dennis isn't surprised, but Uncle Arvie is the first ghost who wants something from Dennis. Dennis would love to help Uncle Arvie, but he can't quite understand what his uncle is asking for. What, for example, is "Fraggle pin Heartfoot a wig pasta?" Dennis has to find out, because this is one ghost who isn't going to leave until he gets what he came for.

## Before Reading

Ask students to consider the title *Pleasing the Ghost*. What can they determine about the book from the title? What type of book do they think this will be? A funny book? A scary book? Ask them to list things they know about ghosts. After the class has finished the book, ask them if their initial impressions were confirmed by the story.

## Discussion Questions

1. Uncle Arvie tells Dennis that only kids can see ghosts. Why do you think that's so? Are there other things that kids are better at believing in than adults?
2. Due to his stroke, Uncle Arvie tends to mix up his words. Did you have a hard time understanding what he was saying? What were some of the clues Dennis used to understand his uncle?
3. There are several instances of foreshadowing in *Pleasing the Ghost*. One of these occurs when Dennis first talks about wanting to see a particular ghost. What is he referring to?
4. Dennis's teacher tells him, "You and Billy have something in common" (p. 4). What do the two boys share? When are their similarities revealed?
5. When Uncle Arvie arrives, he asks Dennis for "three pleases" (p. 11). What are these three pleases? How does Dennis help Uncle Arvie?
6. When Dennis shows his aunt Julia the box with the letters and money, she calls it a miracle. Is it a miracle? Is Dennis's ability to communicate with Uncle Arvie a miracle?
7. Why is Billy such a bully? Do you think that Dennis and Billy will ever become friends?



