

# Kenny and the Dragon

By Tony DiTerlizzi

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## *Library of Congress Summary*

Book-loving Kenny the rabbit has few friends in his farming community, so when one, bookstore owner George, is sent to kill another, gentle dragon Grahame, Kenny must find a way to prevent their battle while satisfying the dragon-crazed townspeople.

## **Book Information:**

Genre: Fantasy

## **Author/Illustrator Information**

<http://www.diterlizzi.com/>

This website includes a biography of the author, contact information, FAQ, desktop art to download, an up-close look at the illustrations from the book, and a discussion guide with summary, discussion questions, word scramble, and literacy strands (questions and activities).

## **Before I Forget...**

Journal Topic:

1. Kenny's favorite two favorite subjects to read on are fairy tales and natural history. What are two of your favorite subjects to read about and why?
2. What is something your teacher would say you are good at? What do you think is something you are good at?
3. Kenny wanted to be an astronaut, explore jungles, and travel below the sea. What are some fun and exciting adventures you want to have?

## Vocabulary:

Merit (v): claim to respect and praise; excellence; worth

Extraterrestrials (v): someone originating outside the limits of the earth; an alien

Submersible (v): a device designed for underwater exploration

Flora (vi): the plants in a particular region

Fauna (vi): the animals in a particular region

Cumulus clouds (vi): large, white, puffy clouds that sometimes carry rain

## **Chapter 1- That Devil Scourge**

### Questions:

1. Why does Kenny's father want to move?
2. How does Kenny's family react to the news?
3. What does Kenny's father discover?
4. What do you think will happen now that Kenny knows what his father has seen?

### Journal Topics:

1. Would you want to move if you knew a dragon was living nearby? Why or why not?
2. What sorts of tools would you take with you to meet a dragon? For example, Kenny takes pots and pans to shield himself, like a knight.

## Vocabulary

Adorned (3): to make more pleasing, attractive, and impressive

Dinged (4): dented or nicked

Carnivorous (5): flesh-eating

Outcroppings (5): portions of bedrock protruding (poking out) through the soil level

## **Chapter 2 – Dishes and Homework**

### Questions:

1. What is Kenny begging his mother to go do?
2. What does Kenny want to do his report on?
3. What is Kenny going to ask the dragon?

### Journal Writing:

1. Write some questions you would ask the dragon if you met him
2. Parents often say you cannot go out until the dishes and your homework are done. What was one thing you really wanted to do, but couldn't until you finished your homework?
3. What is something you could do to make yourself less nervous when talking in front of your class?
4. Kenny's dad smoked a pipe after dinner while his mom sewed Kenny's pants. What is your family's routine after dinner?
5. Kenny goes to George to hear stories and exciting tales. Describe someone in your life that tells you stories about their past experiences.

### Vocabulary:

Dainty (7): delicate, fragile

Constellations (8): a grouping of stars to make a picture

Migration (9): moving from one place to another, often seasonally

Bestiary (9): a collection of stories providing descriptions of real or imaginary animals and the moral significance of each animal

Tome (9): a very heavy, large book

Retiree (11): a person who is retired from an occupation

Albatross (11): a web-footed sea bird

Chimera (11): a fire-breathing monster with a lion's head, a goat's body, and a serpent's tail

Sinewy (11): having strong tendons

Lance (12): a long wooden handle with a pointed metal head, used as a weapon by knights

Varmint (13): an undesirable, disgusting animal

## **Chapter 3 – Grahame Like the Cracker**

### Questions:

1. How big was the dragon?
2. What noise was the dragon making when Kenny first saw it?
3. What does the dragon say he never intends to do?

### Journal Writing:

1. If you were sleeping for hundreds of years under the earth, what would you miss the most?
2. How would you feel when talking to a dragon? What would you talk to him about?

### Vocabulary:

Drake (16): a dragon

Satchel (18): a small bag with a shoulder strap

Tactic (19): a plan for promoting a desired result

Bantling (19): a very young child

Libation (19): a beverage

Nary (21): not any

Earnest (24): seriously important

Scourge (24): a thing that applies punishment

Nuisance (24): obnoxious, offensive or annoying

Fissure (25): a narrow opening

Etiquette (26): Polite behavior or good manners

Ravenous (28): extremely hungry, famished

## **Chapter 4 – You’re All Right in My Book**

### Questions:

1. How does Kenny’s father’s foot get burned?
2. Does he let Graham stay?
3. What did the headline say that Kenny saw?

### Journal Writing:

1. What is your perfect meal?
2. Do you think the townspeople will really try to exterminate Grahame? How do you think Kenny will try and stop them?
3. In this chapter it seems like Grahame is becoming a dear friend to Kenny. Describe one of your best friends. What are they like? What do they like to do?

### Vocabulary:

Recounted (29): to count again

Acquaintance (31): a person known to one, but not usually a close friend

Summit (31): The highest point or part of a hill

Connoisseur (32): a judge of the best in any field

Gingham (34): cotton fabric, usually striped or checked

Maw (35): the mouth, throat, or gullet of a carnivorous mammal

Rollicking (40): carefree and joyous, swaggering

Infamous (42): Having a bad reputation

Extermination (44): to get rid of by destroying

Imminent (44): likely to occur at any moment, impending

## **Chapter 5 – The Least Bit Worried**

### Questions:

1. Who is George?
2. Is Graham worried about the headline?
3. When do you think the posse will come?

### Journal Writing:

1. How would you feel if your town wanted to “exterminate” your best friend?  
What would you do to stop them?
2. Why do you think it is that Kenny cannot look Charlotte in the eye?
3. Why isn’t Grahame nervous about the town wanting to get rid of him?

### Vocabulary:

Ransacks (47): to search through for plunder

Cavalier (49): a horseman, a mounted soldier, a knight

Codger (51): an eccentric man, especially one that is old

Chide (52): to harass, nag

Daft (53): senseless, stupid, foolish, crazy

Ruckus (55): a noisy commotion

## **Chapter 6 – Kerfuffle Down in Roundbrook**

### Questions:

1. What were the people talking about when Kenny went into town?
2. What is George’s profession?
3. What does the King ask George to do?

4. What will Kenny do now that his old friend George is the one who is supposed to exterminate Grahame?

Journal Writing:

If you received a scroll from the king asking you to do something important, what would it be?

Vocabulary:

Throng (57): a crowd assembled together

Roving (57): roaming or wandering

Minstrels (57): a medieval poet and musical who sang or recited while playing a stringed instrument

Gallant (57): brave, spirited, noble-minded, or chivalrous

Slay (58): to kill, destroy

Emblazoned (59): decorated with brilliant colors

Squire (59): a country gentleman

Wallop (63): to strike with a vigorous blow

Kerfuffle (65): a disorderly outburst

Dispatcher (67): a person who oversees the departure

## **Chapter 7 – Imminent Extermination**

Questions:

1. What makes Graham's scales shine?
2. What is going on downtown that Kenny has to leave for?
3. What do you think the Celebration is for?

Journal Writing:

1. If the king gave you specific orders you had to follow, but you did not agree with them, would you still follow the orders? Why or why not?
2. Where is somewhere that you would try and hide Graham from George?
3. The first paragraph on page 76 explains many details of such a beautiful day. Write a paragraph about your perfect day the way the author did on page 76.

### Vocabulary:

Deluge (69): a great flood of water

Iridescence (73): changing colors

Bane (73): a person that ruins or spoils

Brethren (74): fellow members

Cadger (75): a beggar

Flabbergasted (75): overcome with surprise and bewilderment, astounded

Arduous (76): hard to endure, full of hardships

## **Chapter 8 – George Our Slayer**

### Questions:

1. When is George going to fight Graham?
2. What was on George's shield?
3. Do you think George will still fight Graham?

### Journal Writing:

What would you do if you were in Kenny's shoes? Would you try to talk to George or just wait it out? Would you come up with a plan to stop everything?

### Vocabulary:

Impudent (80): shameless

Fluted (82): grooves

Astride (82): with legs apart or on either side of something

Gauntleted (82): a medieval glove worn by a knight to protect his hand

Zealous (82): enthusiastic, eager, intense, passionate

Gussied (82): dressed in one's best clothes

Urchin (83): a small boy or youngster

Din (84): a loud or confused noise

Boisterous (84): rough and noisy

Uproarious (86): very loud

Squire (86): A young man ranked below a knight

Sprightly (88): animated, vivacious, lively

Amiss (91): improper, wrong

Agape (93): with the mouth wide open, as in wonder, surprise, or eagerness

## **Chapter 9 – A Well-Willed Chap**

### Questions:

1. Who did his mother invite over for dinner?
2. What does George say about the fight?
3. Do you think George and Grahame will get along?

### Journal Writing:

How do you feel when you introduce two of your friends to one another? What if they do not get along?

### Vocabulary:

Trinkets (94): Small collectables

Ruffian (97): a tough person, a bully

Supernatural (98): Something not of this world

Chivalrous (101): gracious and honorable toward an enemy

## **Chapter 10 – A Dragon and His Wrath**

### Questions:

1. Is Graham kind to George at first?
2. What do they discuss?
3. What do you think Kenny plans to do?

### Journal Writing:

Kenny is taught to plan ahead for events in life, like chess. What kind of things do you plan ahead for in your life?

### Vocabulary:

Beowulf (104): a hero of a specific poem who slays dragons

Uncultivated (105): educated, refined, cultured

Lout (105): an awkward, stupid person

Insolent (105): boldly rude or disrespectful

Swimmingly (107): without difficulty, with great success, effortlessly

Procession (108): A line of people moving in an order

## **Chapter 11 – Rolling Out a Purple Carpet**

### Questions:

1. How did Kenny get the crowd to leave?
2. What happened to the landscape?
3. What did they use to get Graham to come out of the cave?
4. Why do you think Kenny is saying all of this about Graham to the audience?

### Journal Writing:

1. If there were some sort of show like this going on in your town, would you show up to watch? Why or why not?
2. Place yourself in the show Kenny and his friends are putting on. What character would you be and why?

### Vocabulary:

Illuminating (111): To shine light

Miraculously (116): The act of doing something unbelievable

Amphitheater (116): a level area of oval or circular shape surrounded by rising ground; similar to movie theater seating

Tunic (118): a gown-like outer garment

Ornate (119): elaborately adorned

Cavorted (120): behaved in a high-spirited, festive manner

Mage (123): a magician

## **Chapter 12 – One Fierce Beast**

### Questions:

1. How is Graham acting during the fight?
2. Does the audience believe it is a real fight?
3. What does Porky's father plan to do?

### Journal Writing:

In the book, they talk about tying a dragon's tail in a knot to make him helpless. What other silly ways can you think of to make a dragon helpless?

### Vocabulary:

Incinerating (128): burning or reducing to ashes

Smorgasbord (128): a buffet meal of various hot and cold appetizers, salads, casserole dishes, meats, cheeses, etc.

Malicious (133): vicious, mischievous

Nigh (133): near, approaching

Frenetically (133): frantic, frenzied

Pyre (135): a pile or heap of wood or other combustible material

Thwarted (137): opposed successfully, prevented from accomplishing a purpose

Err (137): to be mistaken or incorrect

Coot (138): a foolish, old person

## **Chapter 13 – Performance of a Lifetime**

### Questions:

1. What did the audience do after Graham burned Porky's father?
2. Why did they respond that way?

### Journal Writing:

At the end of this chapter, Kenny has put on the performance of a lifetime. What is one time you put on a performance of a lifetime? It can be in sports, music, a show, or anything.

### Vocabulary:

Immense (142): vast, huge, very great

Encore (142): again; once more

Dumbfounded (142): To be in awe or shock

## Chapter 14 – A Favorable Outcome

### Questions:

Who came to speak to Kenny before they left?

What does he ask Kenny to do?

### Journal Writing:

Grahame always has a new dessert he wants to try. Create a new dessert for Grahame. What are the ingredients and why do you believe Grahame would like the dessert?

### Vocabulary:

Flanked (145): standing or placed around the side of

Jester (145): A joke teller or comedian for the king

Prehistoric (150): A time before recorded history

Reluctant (150): Hesitant or nervous

## **And So...**

### Questions:

1. If you were Grahame, would you forgive the whole town for wanting to exterminate you? Why or why not?
2. Kenny shows Grahame a book called *The Reluctant Dragon*. What do you think the story is about?

### Journal Writing:

On page 149 it describes a few of the things Kenny likes to do with his friends. What are three of your favorite things to do with your friends?

## Vocabulary:

Renaissance (150): pertaining to an era of the 14<sup>th</sup> through 17<sup>th</sup> centuries

Reluctant (150): unwilling, disinclined

## **Other Works by Tony Diterlizzi:**

- *The Spiderwick Chronicles*
- *Adventure of Meno*
- *Peter Pan in Scarlet*
- *Jimmy Zangwow's Out-of-This-World Moon-Pie Adventure*
- *Ted*
- *G is for One Gzonk*
- *Beyond the Spiderwick Chronicles*

## **Related Works**

*Reluctant Dragon* by Kenneth Grahame

*The Dragon of Doom* by Bruce Coville

*Dragon Slippers* by Jessica George

*Hatching Magic* by Ann Downer

*How to Train Your Dragon* by Cressida Cowell

*My Father's Dragon* by Ruth Stiles Gannett

## **Additional Websites**

<http://books.simonandschuster.com/Kenny-the-Dragon/Tony-DiTerlizzi/9781416939771> excerpt from the audio book, screensavers, and desktop wallpaper

<http://www.powells.com/biblio?show=HARDCOVER:NEW:9781416939771:15.99&page=readinggroupguide> Reading Group Guide