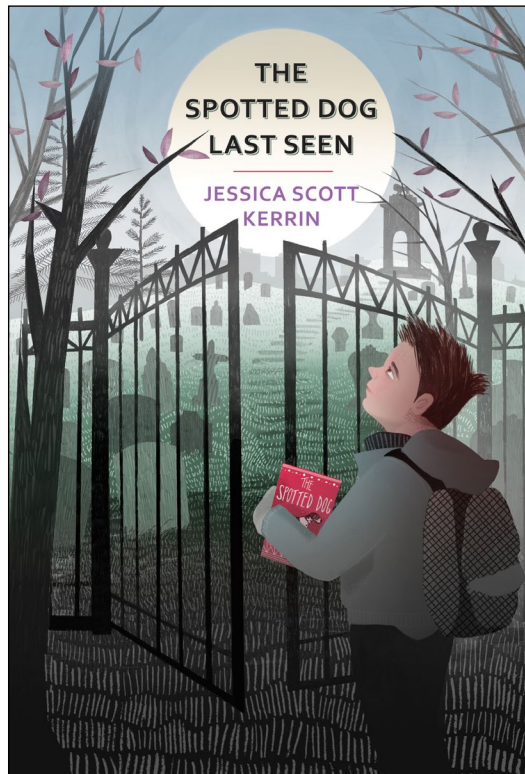




GROUNDWOOD STUDY GUIDES

The Spotted Dog Last Seen

Written by Jessica Scott Kerrin



While volunteering at a local graveyard, Derek discovers that solving a mystery from long ago will also help him put his own present-day fears to rest.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Ages 8 to 11 / Grades 3 to 6

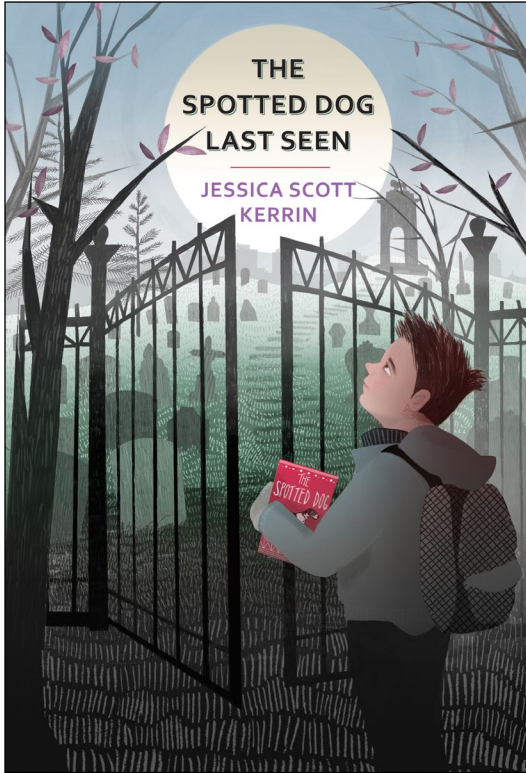
JUVENILE FICTION / Mysteries & Detective Stories

5 x 7.5 / 208 pages

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BOOK DESCRIPTION

While tracking clues from a secret code penciled in the margins of mystery novels at a public library, Derek Knowles-Collier discovers a time capsule that may finally put his haunting past to rest. Includes a secret code for readers to decipher!

GIVE YOURSELF THE CREEPS

In the prologue to the book, Derek is standing in a cemetery, describing his surroundings. Although he never tells us that the cemetery is spooky, we still imagine it that way because of the language that he uses: “The first raindrops plopped against the grave markers, which teetered this way and that over the lumpy ground. I was sure that even a ghost could knock down some of them, just by floating past at sunset.” Pick an ordinary place, like your classroom, kitchen, or bedroom, and describe this room as if it was scary or creepy. Read your description aloud to the class or your group.

REST IN PEACE

Derek and his friends learn all about epitaphs and gravestone symbols and their meanings while volunteering in the cemetery. Alone or with a partner, design a gravestone for your favorite fictional character. What would their epitaph be? How do you think they would want to be remembered? Be sure to use some of the symbols mentioned in the book.

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT, MADE THE T-SHIRT

Derek likes to make T-shirts with slogans for his family and friends. Design a T-shirt that you or your friend would wear, either using your own slogan or one from the book that you think reflects the person who will wear the shirt. Include a sentence or two on why you chose your design.

FROZEN IN TIME

Make a time capsule! Find a container (such as a shoebox). Write a letter to your future self, and put it in the box. The letter could be about an event in your life or school, or just a greeting. Then, fill the box with items that you like and want to remember. (Don't use things you'll need later — such as your favorite shirt. Remember the box is supposed to stay sealed, so you won't be able to use the things you put in it.) You could include photos, friendship bracelets, newspapers or school assignments. Decorate your box and write down the date you made it, as well as the day when the box will be opened. Seal it with tape or glue and put it in a safe place. And then... you wait!

“Derek tells his own story, allowing readers to empathize with his fears and struggles as he comes to grips with them. . . . Surprising twists and turns amid laughter and tears.” — *Kirkus Reviews*

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY



Jessica Scott Kerrin is the author of the Lobster Chronicles series and the best-selling Martin Bridge series. She has also written *The Missing Dog Is Spotted*. She once owned a nutty Springer Spaniel who inspired this book.