

Reading Guide to *Cryptid Hunters* by Roland Smith

ABOUT THIS BOOK

After their parents are lost in an accident, thirteen-year-old twins Grace and Marty are whisked away to live with their uncle Wolfe—an uncle that they didn't even know they had! Intimidating Uncle Wolfe is an anthropologist who has dedicated his life to finding cryptids—mysterious creatures believed to be long extinct. Just as the twins and their uncle are getting to know one another, Wolfe finds out that his nemesis, Dr. Blakemoor, is headed to a Congolese jungle to poach a dinosaur and her clutch. Wolfe has to mobilize his team immediately if he wants to beat Blakemoor to the jungle. And his team does not include the twins. But Grace and Marty aren't easily left behind. With breakneck daring, they literally drop into the Congo, falling from a helicopter. Through a series of perilous adventures, they eventually uncover long buried secrets about their identity and that of their uncle. Now, the twins must play a high stakes game, where the prize is a dinosaur egg, and the penalty, death.

ABOUT THIS AUTHOR

Roland Smith was born and raised in Portland, Oregon. When he was five years old his parents gave him an old manual typewriter that weighed more than he did! It was his favorite possession. He spent hours in his room clacking away on that old typewriter. Of course, when he was five he didn't know how to spell and he barely knew how to read, but he loved the sound and the look of the letters on the crisp white paper.

Things haven't changed much since then. He still spends several hours a day in his room clacking away and he still loves the sound of the keyboard and the look of the letters and words that eventually turn into stories. The only difference is that he can read now and he spells a lot better.

Wanting to write led him to working with animals. He was going to Portland State University majoring in English so he could become a writer. One day he was looking at the job placement board hoping to find part-time work and he saw an opening at the children's zoo in town. He got the job. Soon after he started at the zoo, two agoutis escaped from their cage and disappeared into the park surrounding the zoo. (Agoutis are very large rodents from South America). His boss told him to go out into the park and catch them. He didn't know at the time, but she was playing a joke on him. Everyone thought the agoutis would never be seen again. He not only found the agoutis, but he managed to catch them and bring them back to the zoo. His boss was shocked!

Catching these animals was pure luck, but the Zoo Foreman was so impressed he offered him a full-time Animal Keeper position in the BIG zoo. He accepted thinking that he'd work there for a year or two and perhaps his experiences would make good material for a book. Little did he know that he would be working with animals for over twenty years and that the work would take him all over the world. He continued to practice his writing while he worked in the zoo, but it was hard because his animal work took a lot of time. Eventually, he published a few books and left the zoo so he could write full-time.

Roland and his wife, Marie, live on a small farm south of Portland. He spends his days in his basement office writing stories that usually include animals. If he's not writing he's traveling -- doing research and taking photos for upcoming books. Or, he is out visiting schools -- something he loves to do! His writing led him to animals and his work with animals led him back to writing. It's funny how things work out. He spent over twenty years working with animals. Now he's going to spend the next twenty years writing about animals...as well as a few other things.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why don't the bugs bite Grace like they do Marty?
2. Who once lived in the Skyhouse?
3. What happened to Rose?
4. Which river did Wolfe and Laurel have to cross to reach the twins?
5. Who is Masalito?
6. How did Grace disrupt Butch McCall's camp?
7. Why is there a Silver Back gorilla in this story?
8. What does Marty make for breakfast in the Skyhouse?
9. Should Wolfe have given Grace up when she was little?
10. How did Mary and Masalito communicate?
11. Are the eggs viable?
12. How is the grey parrot important to Grace?

13. Who wears the vid?
14. Why does no one question Noah Blackwood about his "conservation adventures"?
15. What does Butch McCall steal from Marty's pack?
16. What two precious objects do the twins discover near the lake?
17. Who is more clever, Grace or Marty?
18. Who is PD?
19. What does the GIZMO do?
20. Why did Wolfe pay for the twin's education at the boarding school?
21. Are the O'Haras dead?
22. What's the most important piece of information Grace overhears and finds out when she is hidden amongst the books, in Wolfe's library?
23. What happened to Marty when he was exploring Cryptos Island?
24. Are there still dinosaurs on Earth?
25. What do Grace and Mr. O'Hara use the Moleskines for?
26. List 6 character traits that Marty had to have to make the story work.
27. What does the Bo cam do?
28. Does Noah Blackwood love his granddaughter?
29. What is a Mokélé-mbembé?
30. How did Marty get away from Butch and Blackwood?
31. Would you like to travel through the Congo?
32. How is Laurel important to the story?
33. What will happen to the twins now?