

Calvin Coconut

EDUCATORS GUIDE

Grades
2-5



About Calvin Coconut

Calvin Coconut may seem like an average boy, but trouble is always waiting for him just around the corner. From natural disasters to animal escapades, Calvin and his friends live quite an exciting life. Throughout this series, Calvin learns how to be a responsible son, brother, friend, and student. Travel to Hawaii and join Calvin on his adventures!

In the Classroom

Explore the Calvin Coconut series with your students using these interactive, literary, and creative activities and allow them to experience Hawaiian culture through the eyes of the characters. Watch them develop into engaged readers and thinkers as you take them on an educational journey through the life lessons learned by Calvin and his friends.

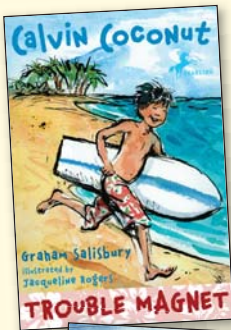

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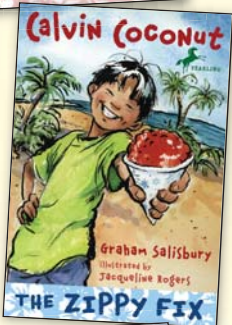
About the Books



TROUBLE MAGNET

How many ways can Calvin find to get into trouble? Lots! He has a new addition to his family, has to move his bedroom into the garage, and is starting fourth grade. Throw in a centipede, free food from the local lunch truck, and a bully named Tito and you have a recipe for disaster. Being responsible sure can be tough, but Calvin certainly has fun along the way.

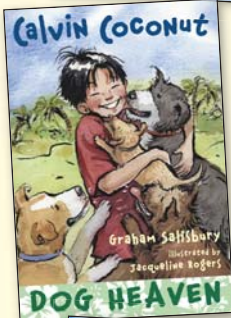
PB: 978-0-375-84600-7 HC: 978-0-385-73701-2 GLB: 978-0-385-90639-5 EL: 978-0-375-89393-3



THE ZIPPY FIX

A seemingly harmless prank goes wrong when Calvin tries to get revenge on Stella, his live-in babysitter, for calling him names. He knows she is allergic to cats, but lets the neighborhood cat, Zippy, into her room to take a nap on her pillow. Calvin didn't plan on having a guilty conscience, though, and works hard to make up for his mistake.

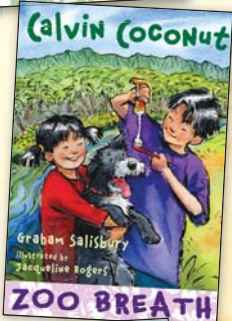
PB: 978-0-375-84601-4 HC: 978-0-385-73702-9 GLB: 978-0-385-90640-1 EL: 978-0-375-89394-0



DOG HEAVEN

What do you want so badly you can taste it? This is a question that Calvin and his friends have to answer for their fourth-grade writing project. Calvin learns that he wants a dog more than anything; only his mom doesn't think it is a good idea. The real project is convincing her that she is wrong before someone else takes home the dog of Calvin's dreams!

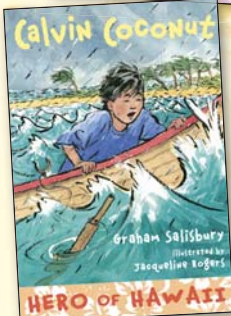
PB: 978-0-375-84602-1 HC: 978-0-385-73703-6 GLB: 978-0-385-90641-8 EL: 978-0-375-89541-8



ZOO BREATH

Calvin's dog, Streak, has made herself at home with his family, but something stinks . . . her breath! So when Calvin's fourth-grade teacher, Mr. Purdy, assigns a discovery project, Calvin knows just what to do. He is going to find a way to make Streak smell like roses. However, this is not an easy task and Calvin is exposed to lots of smells along the way that he was not expecting. Yuck!

HC: 978-0-385-73704-3 GLB: 978-0-385-90642-5 EL: 978-0-375-89739-9



HERO OF HAWAII

As a big storm approaches the islands of Hawaii, Calvin's sister, Darci, has to reschedule her birthday party. It rains for days, and Calvin watches the river by his house rise higher and higher. Danger awaits when Calvin's friend Willy accidentally falls into the raging river, and is carried towards the vast ocean. It is up to Calvin to save his friend and prove that bravery and heroism are innate qualities.

HC: 978-0-385-73962-7 GLB: 978-0-385-90796-5 ebook: 978-0-375-89795-5

Classroom Activities

BULLYING: Bullyproof Your Classroom

In the Calvin Coconut books, Tito and his friends seek out Calvin and bully him in various ways. Sometimes they tease, sometimes they steal, and sometimes they even threaten. Calvin tries to avoid these bullies and stay out of their way, but there are many other ways to deal with bullies. Bullyproof your classroom by role playing the following scenarios from the books and discuss additional methods for dealing with bullies:

- In *Trouble Magnet*, Calvin spills grape juice all over Tito's shirt and Tito swears that he will come looking for Calvin after school. Calvin runs and hides from Tito in order to avoid getting beat up.
- In the *Zippy Fix*, Tito steals cans from Calvin and exchanges them for money. Tito also takes advantage of Calvin while he works at Uncle Scoop's lunch truck by not paying for his shave ice.
- In *Dog Heaven*, Calvin and his friends get teased about having 'ukus (head lice). This time they are brave enough to tease Tito back!



HAWAII: Geography and Climate

Hawaii consists of a string of islands in the Pacific Ocean. This book series takes place on the island of Oahu, in a town called Kailua on the southeast coast. Use reference books and maps to acquaint your students with the geography and climate of the Hawaiian Islands and then have them choose one of the following activities to illustrate what they learned:

- Make a relief map that shows the islands, ocean, volcanoes, and other geographic landmarks of Hawaii.
- Play Jeopardy! using key facts about Hawaii such as the capital, population, and major industries.
- Build a tropical climate diorama that features native plants and animals.

Mr. Purdy's Writing Projects

Mr. Purdy is Calvin's fourth-grade teacher. He is tough on the kids, but knows how to have fun too. Mr. Purdy assigns his class various writing projects to stimulate their imaginations and teach them important writing strategies. Assign these same projects to your students and see how they stack up against Calvin and his friends!

- As in *Dog Heaven*, what do you want so badly you can taste it? Write a persuasive paragraph or essay that answers this question. Then revise your writing and include an interesting "pretzel." (p. 56)
- As in *Zoo Breath*, conduct a discovery project based on primary research. Students can select their research topic and then present their findings to the class along with appropriate props.

classroom Activities

STORY STARTERS: **Become the Author**

The titles of these books are very telling about the plot of each story. But they also leave some room for imagination. Use the titles as story starters . . . but create an entirely new story! Take an opportunity to discuss various literary genres as well. Here are some examples:

- *Trouble Magnet*—a science fiction story about a giant robot with magnetic hands that attract metal objects causing trouble for himself and those around him.
- *The Zippy Fix*—an adventure story about Zippy the cat who is unhappy living in Hawaii and decides to travel to the mainland, meeting cats and making friends in different states.
- *Dog Heaven*—a fantasy story about a boy who loses his dog and imagines all of the places he could be.
- *Zoo Breath*—a mystery about animals escaping the zoo and what tools the zookeepers use to find them.
- *Hero of Hawaii*—a historical fiction story about a famous Hawaiian hero.

DESCRIBING A SETTING: **calvin's neighborhood**

At the beginning of each book, there is a map of Calvin's neighborhood. It shows his friends' houses, his school, local stores, and other important landmarks. Imagine that you are standing inside that map. Use your five senses to describe what it is like to live in Kailua—what do you see, hear, and smell? What can you touch and taste? Now draw a map of your neighborhood that shows important people and places and pay close attention to your five senses!

HAWAIIAN CULTURE: **Eating and Speaking**

As we can see in these books, Hawaiian culture is both similar and different from our own. There are different foods and a different language, but the kids seem just like us. Explore some of the different foods and words found in this book using the following activities:

- Create a Hawaiian menu featuring the foods found in the Calvin Coconut books. List the food being offered, and then write a detailed description of what it looks and tastes like. It has to be appealing enough for diners to order!
 - Ahi tuna
 - Dried shrimp
 - Spam
 - Teriyaki
 - Aku
 - Kimchee
 - Dried cuttlefish
 - Shave ice
- Create vocabulary flash cards for someone who might be traveling to Hawaii using the Hawaiian words (pidgin English) found in the Calvin Coconut books. On each card, write one word and then write a sentence using that word.
 - 'Ukus
 - Bufos
 - Okole
 - Fut
 - Uku
 - Haole

Classroom Activities

PROBLEM AND SOLUTION: A Road map

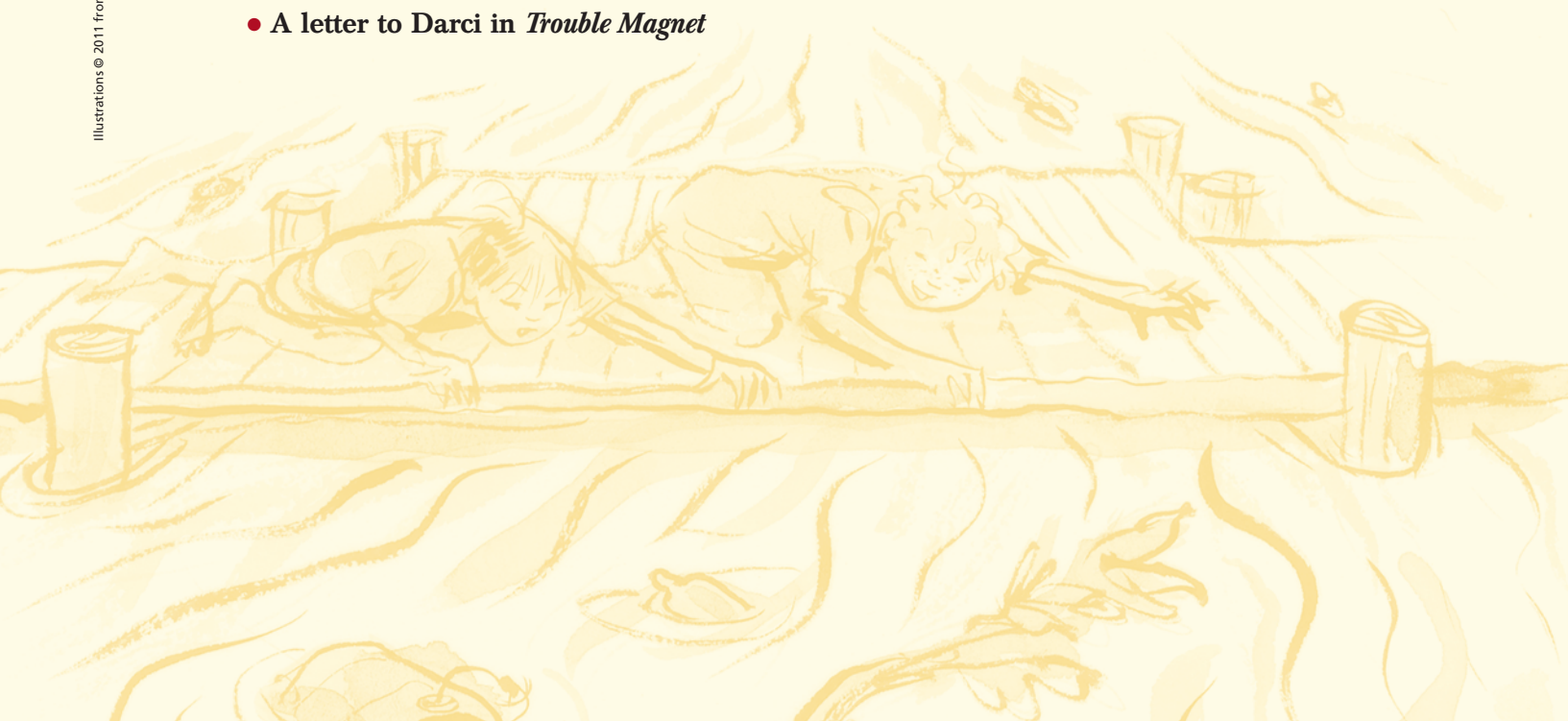
While the plot of each Calvin Coconut story is unique, the basic structure of each story is the same—there is a problem and a solution. Yet there are various steps that are taken to get from point A, the problem, to point B, the solution. Draw a road map that shows the path each story takes from point A to point B. Start by illustrating and describing the problem, and then illustrate and describe the things that happen along the way until you get to the solution. Illustrate and describe the solution as the final destination point on your map.



CHARACTER STUDY: Relationships

Throughout this series, Calvin develops meaningful relationships with many of the other characters. These relationships develop at home and at school because of specific situations that Calvin finds himself in. Regardless, each relationship is important in making Calvin who he is. Write a letter from Calvin to one of the characters in the book thanking him/her for being a part of his life. Use the plot from these stories to add details to your letter:

- A letter to Clarence in *Hero of Hawaii*
- A letter to Ledward in *Dog Heaven*
- A letter to Streak in *Dog Heaven*
- A letter to Calvin's dad, Johnny Coconut, in *Zoo Breath*
- A letter to Stella in *The Zippy Fix*
- A letter to Willy in *Hero of Hawaii*
- A letter to Darci in *Trouble Magnet*



classroom Activities

Bookworm Awards

Host an awards show in your classroom honoring the characters in the Calvin Coconut books. Assign each student a category and ask them to nominate a winning character from one of the books. Then ask each student to write an acceptance speech on behalf of that character. The class can even make awards to hand out during the ceremony!

- Best Hero
- Best Villain
- Funniest Character
- Most Changed Character
- Most Adventurous Character
- Best Supporting Character
- Character Who Made the Most Mistakes
- Character with Whom You'd Like to Be Friends
- Character with Whom You Would Not Want to Be Friends

CREATIVE COLLAGES: Guess the Book

Ask students to pick their favorite book in the Calvin Coconut series and create a collage that represents it. They should keep their book choice a secret until all of the collages are finished. Then post them around the classroom and have students guess which books match each collage!



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

GRAHAM SALISBURY is the author of the Calvin Coconut books, as well as several novels for older readers, including the award-winning *Lord of the Deep*, *Blue Skin of the Sea*, *Under the Blood-Red Sun*, *Eyes of the Emperor*, *House of the Red Fish*, and *Night of the Howling Dogs*.

For more information about the author, visit GrahamSalisbury.com