

## Study Guide for CROWN ME!

CROWN ME!, Middle grade humor novel, ages 8-12, Holiday House, 2004  
Republished as HOW TO RULE THE SCHOOL in paperback, Scholastic, 2006  
Winner of the 2005 Texas State Reading Association's Golden Spur Award and 2005 Oklahoma Writer's Federation Trophy Award for best children's book of 2004.

This Guide prepared by Kathryn Lay and includes work done by Victor Intermediate School "Community Read Committee, Rochester, New York, 2007

Book themes: Leadership, Community, Friendship, School, Medieval Times, Politics

### **Large Project:**

Classes can plan a community service activity. Have each room plan their own project, or divide class into groups.

### **Learn About Elections:**

Check out website information for kids on elections at [www.kidsvotingusa.org](http://www.kidsvotingusa.org)

Other sites listed at [www.kathrynlav.com](http://www.kathrynlav.com)

### **Medieval Preparations:**

1. Create a door and/or classroom decoration. Brainstorm and select a kingdom name to represent your classroom. Be creative and make up your own kingdom name.
2. Design a flag to represent your kingdom. Use any symbols or shapes that connects to your kingdom name. Use other country's flags for examples.
3. Create Rules for your kingdom (similar to the future politician's rules for each book chapter)
4. Create a Crown Contest! Make a crown with your own materials. Crowns can be judged in 2 categories.
  - Best Creative Use of Materials (using traditional or unique materials in an attractive, creative way).
  - Best Original Design (creating an original and unique design)

### **Future Politician Rules Activities:**

Throughout the book, you will read twenty-six Future Politician Rules. Using these rules, complete the following activities/discussion with your students.

1. Categorize the Future Politician Rules into: *Rules We Like and Rules We Don't Like*

2. Choose 2 rules you think are most important to a politician—be able to support your choices
3. Choose a rule and give an example of why it would be important to follow
4. Which rule(s) do you disagree with? Why?
5. Which rule(s) do you think are important to follow in school?
6. Connect a rule to an expression you have heard that has the same meaning
7. Which rules would help make you a better leader?

**Essay project:**

Write an essay telling what you would do for your school if you were KING or QUEEN of your school. Talk about what makes a good leader and why you would be one!

Read them aloud in class or assembly and choose your King and Queen to rule the day!

**Crown Me! Vocabulary:**

Chapter 1 – obsession, vandalized  
Chapter 2 – monarchy, peasants, delinquent  
Chapter 3 – truce  
Chapter 4 – shuddered, marinate, aquarium  
Chapter 5 – humiliated, glowered, hypnotized, dungeon, treason  
Chapter 6 – campaigning, jesters, traitorous  
Chapter 8 – abroad, authentic  
Chapter 9 – podium, entourage  
Chapter 14 – dethroned, lances  
Chapter 15 – teetered, tottered  
Chapter 16 – ally, merriment, banquet  
Chapter 17 – influential, assassinate  
Chapter 20 – overthrown, corruption  
Chapter 23 – greenery  
Chapter 26 – confetti, ballots, bizarre

**Questions to Answer Throughout CROWN ME!:**

Chapter 1:

1. Chapter 1's title is "Equal Rights for Boys, Too". What are the "equal rights" that Justin wants to gain?
2. What consequence did Justin, Carlos, and Lester receive from Coach Friedman for leaving class and disrupting the girls phys. Ed. Class?
3. What is Justin good at? How do you know? What are you good at?
4. What do students do on "Hat Day" in Mr. Bailey's class?

5. What are Justin's goals? What are yours?

#### Chapter 2:

1. What do you know about the French Revolution based on Andrea's essay?
2. What is the "special project" Mr. Bailey has arranged for the class to try? What kind of special project would you like to do in class?
3. If you had two equally best friends and could only choose one person to be your "knight", what would you do? Explain your thinking.

#### Chapter 3:

1. The author, Kathryn Lay, uses many plays on words to create humor. Read the title of Chapter 3 on page 20 and see if you can find and explain the pun (word play).
2. Why did Justin choose Willie Fisher as his knight instead of Carlos or Lester? Have you ever said something you wished you hadn't said, but it was too late?
3. What do you think of "King Justin's" promises? Explain your thinking.

#### Chapter 4:

1. What unusual snacks and meals do Justin and his Father make in the kitchen? What do you typically eat as an after school snack?
2. If you were running for student council president, what goals would you set for your presidency?
3. Imagine you are writing your Kingly/Queenly goals. What would you include? What characterizes a good leader?
4. What would you do if you were crowned King or queen of the \_\_\_\_ grade for 1 week? What would you do for the school and your classmates.

#### Chapter 5:

1. Have you ever had a disagreement with friends? How did you resolve it? What would you tell Justin to do about his dilemma?
2. What does foreshadowing mean? How do you think the author did it here?

3. Write a plan for what you will present to a PTA meeting for any changes in your school.
4. How would you react if King Justin or Queen Andrea ordered you to be in the dungeon until the completion of the project?
5. Do you believe King Justin is using the “voice of his subjects” as he is making goals for the PTA meeting and for the presidency?

#### Chapter 6:

1. Do you think Justin “resolved” his friend issues by allowing Lester and Carlos to be jesters? Why or why not?
2. What do you want to be when you grow up? Explain your future job and activities you would like to do.
3. Write an acceptance speech for a class presidency. What would you say? Who would you thank and acknowledge?
4. What does it mean to be a team? “There is no ‘I’ in team.” In your own words, explain what that statement means.

#### Chapter 7

1. Design a government club constitution or a list of rules. Include a club logo.
2. Justin’s father built model ships as a hobby. Do you have a favorite hobby or collection? Tell us details about your hobby or collection.
3. What clubs or activities are you involved inside and outside of school?

#### Chapter 8

1. If you wanted to speak at an adult meeting, how would you go about doing it?
2. Design your costume as king or queen. Name who would be in your court and how they would help you.

#### Chapter 9

1. Why wasn’t the PTA meeting productive for Justin?
2. What would your ideas be for school improvement if you were your grade level student council president?

3. Mr. Bailey told Justin that timing and being tactful were important to a politician. What did he mean?

#### Chapter 10

1. Do you think if Justin becomes student council president he will be able to keep all of his promises?
2. What does Willie mean when he says, "You should use this time as king to make friends, not enemies?"
3. If you were running for student council president and could only promise your voters one change, what would it be? What would you do to make sure you fulfilled your promise?
4. At the end of the chapter, Justin decides he needs to show everyone he is a strong and brave leader. If you were running for student council president what would you do to show people you were a good leader?

#### Chapter 11

1. How would you deal with a bully like Badger?
2. Have students write their own campaign slogans.
3. Describe how Badger treats other students. How would you feel if you were treated that way? What would you do if you were treated that way?

#### Chapter 14

1. Why was Justin wearing pillows and cotton balls?
2. What would be going through your mind if you were Justin and Badger was sitting across from you ready to charge? Would you continue with the joust?

#### Chapter 15

1. What were Justin and Badger arguing about after they fell off their bikes? How did they decide who had actually won?
2. Draw a picture of Justin in his jousting gear. What else might have been good protection for him?
3. Create a jousting costume from items that you may have around your house. Be creative!

## Chapter 16

1. How are Justin and Andrea similar in their campaigning efforts?
2. Research the types of food that would have been eaten at a royal banquet during medieval times?
3. Create a menu for the food being served at the royal banquet – complete with food descriptions.
4. Display the royal feast in a brochure, poster, or any creative medeium.
5. Justin seems to be making promises that he can't keep. Do you feel it is ok to make promises that you can't keep?

## Chapter 17

1. Justin has a strategy in handing out his invitations to the royal banquet. Explain his plan.
2. This chapter title is “Beware of angry voters”. Do you think the voters had a reason to be upset at Justin? Have you ever been upset at someone? How did you resolve the issue?

## Chapter 20

1. Why did Mr. Bailey expect that Andrea and Justin would be overthrown?
2. Why is Willie in the dungeon too? Do you think loyalty is an important characteristic? Why or why not?
3. In this chapter Justin talks about some of his heroes: George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and the city councilman who helped build safer playgrounds in his district. Who are some of your heroes? How are/were they good leaders?
4. What would you want to do if you were part of a medieval festival?

## Chapter 23

1. Who do you think deserves to be the next student council president, Andrea or Justin. Explain why.

## Chapter 26

1. why is it important to never lose hope?
2. Make a prediction about this school year? What do you hope to learn?
3. What are you most looking forward to and what do you fear?
4. What improvements do you propose for your classroom and the school?
5. If you were running for an office would you vote for yourself? Why or why not?
6. What do you think Justin, Andrea and Willie might do as leaders for the rest of 5<sup>th</sup> grade?

**Math problems:**

1. Mr. Bailey's class began at 8:50 a.m. The boys arrived at 9:07 a.m. How late were they for class?
2. As you can see, Justin is very interested in the upcoming Student Council elections. The elections will take place on the Tuesday after Halloween. If Halloween is on Thursday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, what date will the election take place?
3. It took Justin three tries to open his combination lock in gym in Chapter 3. Use the clues below to find Justin's combination:  
  
Clue #1: The first number is ten less than the third number.  
Clue #2: the second number is three times the first number  
Clue #3: The third number is the product of four and five.
4. In chapter 8, the crown that Justin placed upon his head was 24 ounces. Approximately how many pounds does his crown weigh?
5. Sixty-three phones were ordered for the fifth grade lockers! The bill for the phones came to \$1,328.56! Estimate the cost of each phone to the nearest whole number.
6. The dungeon had been enlarged twice. The dungeon now holds 18 students. After the first move, there were seven less students than the current dungeon. Write a number sentence that shows how many students were in the dungeon after the first move.
7. If there are 5 pizzas in the cafeteria, and each pizza has 12 slices, how many slices are there all together?

8. Willie bought 75 buttons for Justin's campaign for \$54.85. About how much did each button cost?
9. The school courtyard is sixty by thirty feet. What is the area and parameter of the courtyard?
10. As a beggar at the medieval festival, Willie's jar was filling with coins. He had 20 coins in all. He had two fewer dimes than pennies. He had half as many nickels as pennies. The rest were quarters. If he had 8 pennies, how many of each coin did he have?
11. Justin got dunked in the dunking booth 36 times! If for one out of every four tickets purchased Justin was dunked, how many tickets were sold in all?
12. Andrea was handing out pens on Election Day. If a pack of 8 cost her \$2.40, how much did each pen cost?
13. All fifth grade students attended the election assembly. If there were 100 students at the assembly and 8 students could sit at each table, how many tables would be needed?