

Grades: 4-5

Xavier Riddle and the Secret Museum
“I am Mary Shelley / I am Harry Houdini”

Inspired by the best-selling kids book series, *Ordinary People Change the World*, by New York Times bestselling author Brad Meltzer and illustrator Christopher Eliopoulos, **XAVIER RIDDLE AND THE SECRET MUSEUM** follows the adventures of Xavier, Yadina and Brad as they tackle everyday problems by doing something extraordinary: traveling back in time to learn from real-life inspirational figures like Marie Curie, Harriet Tubman and Jackie Robinson when they were kids. Each adventure will help young viewers make the connection between the skills that made these historical figures heroes and those same qualities within themselves, helping them discover that they, too, can change the world.

I am Mary Shelley Xavier and the gang are excited for a Nature Troop campout, where Xavier has volunteered to tell the first campfire story. There's just one problem: everyone is expecting a spooky story, but Xavier only knows how to tell silly stories. What's he going to do? He doesn't want to disappoint everyone. To the Secret Museum! Our heroes are sent back in time to meet an expert spooky storyteller: Mary Shelley. Mary takes our trio on an imaginative playdate where she spins the leaves and wind into a very spooky tale, which Xavier can't help but turn funny. Is all hope lost?? Mary helps Xavier see that he can tell a story that's both spooky AND silly. The most important thing is to tell stories your own way. Curriculum: "Tell stories your own way." I am Harry Houdini The time has come from Brad to spend his very first night in the museum, and he couldn't be more excited. Except, when the lights go out, Brad realizes it's kind of...gulp... scary there at night. Too afraid to stay put in his sleeping bag, there's only one thing left to do... to the Secret Museum! Our heroes travel back in time to meet someone who knew how to face a scary situation: Harry Houdini. Harry wants nothing more than to be a brave performer, just like his hero, tightrope walker Fearless Jean. But, it turns out tightrope walking is scarier than he thought! Good thing Harry has a trick to help himself, and Brad, make it through to the end: when you're scared, take a deep breath to calm down and feel better.

After watching this episode, choose from the following questions and/or tasks to extend your learning

Question Box 1

- Cite evidence from the video that demonstrates features/characteristics of the historical figures.
- What did you learn after watching this program?

- What is the program's purpose? How do you know?
- What are the key details in this program?
- What is the central message in this program? Explain?
- List two details you learned about Mary Shelley from the episode.
- How does Mary Shelley help Xavier learn how to tell stories his own way?
- List two details you learned about Harry Houdini from the episode.
- How does Harry Houdini help Brad overcome his fear?
- What strategy or trick does Brad use?

Question Box 2

- How would you have responded to a situation from the video differently than the historical figures?
- What was one section of the text(video) that stood out for you and why?
- What was your favorite program and why?
- What was most challenging or least interesting about this program?
- What about the show stood out to you?
- Why do you think Mary Shelley was the author the kids visited to learn about telling spooky stories?
- Do you know of an author who writes stories like that? If so, who is it and what can you learn about writing spooky stories from him/her?
- What kind of stories do you like to write?
- Have you ever had to overcome a fear? What was it and how did you persevere through the fear?

Box 3 (Tasks)

- Create a storyboard of the show
- Research more about Mary Shelley. What did you learn?
- Research more about Harry Houdini. What did you find?
- Was "Fearless Jean" a real person? Tell us what you discover.
- Summarize what you learned from this show.

Box 4 (Enrichment)

- Tell a story in your own way. How is your way different than the way a teacher would want you to do it? How is it similar?
- What do you do to keep calm when you're scared? Does it help?

Box 5 (Extend/Real-Life)

- Oftentimes we are faced with situations that may be scary. How can developing strategies to help you calm down and face your fears make you stronger?