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*Jerdine Nolen , David Catrow (Illustrator) , Brian Keliher*

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Mortimer Henryson *loves* Plantzilla, the plant he's been taking care of all year in his third-grade classroom. He loves him so much, he takes him home for summer vacation. What could go wrong with a . . . plant? But life in the Henryson household soon takes a strange turn. A pot roast disappears, then steaks from the grill--and where has Mrs. Henryson's prize Chihuahua gone?

In this hilarious story told ingeniously through letters, Jerdine Nolen and David Catrow team up to show that when there's enough love, even the most unlikely character can become part of a family.

## Plantzilla Details

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Author : Jerdine Nolen , David Catrow (Illustrator) , Brian Keliher

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## **From Reader Review Plantzilla for online ebook**

### **Ali Hembree says**

Mortimer Henryson takes the class plant home for the summer. The summer is a great success until a roast beef and the neighbor's dog disappears.

This book would be a great introductory book for talking about plants and their characteristics. It talks about the plant needing sunlight, water and oxygen. Then it explains what cilia is and the metamorphosis that takes place when the plant gets human characteristics.

The age range appropriate for this book is 1st grade-5th grade.

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### **Michalyn Easter says**

This book is wonderful! I wish it came out when I was a child! The greatest thing is that the book is written entirely in corresponding letters. There are three rotating characters: child, teacher, and parents. The writing of the letters change depending upon who is writing. I love that the writing matches the characters.

This book is a great opportunity to teach letter writing in the classroom, as well as formal correspondence. Due to the influx of technology, letter writing is really not taught as much in the classroom.

This book is also a good opportunity to discuss dialogue and conversation. I would recommend it as a read aloud. It should bring good retellings from students because it has a smooth flowing storyline.

As far as getting deep into literacy, there is a varying level of vocabulary in the book so it will accommodate different levels of readers. The last letter is written by the plant, and the words are not spelled correctly. The last letter would be a grew out-loud activity to practice phonics!

All in all, the book is great, and it may spark a huge interest of botany in students. Use it in science or reading class.

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### **Laura says**

Mortimer brings the class plant home for summer vacation. It turns out that Plantzilla is not just any old plant though -- he eats meat, develops a mouth, and shows his unplant-like personality.

The story is told through letters written by Mortimer, Mortimer's mother, and Mortimer's teacher. The letters from Mortimer's mother were most challenging for my students. The cursive handwriting is fairly small and slanted and the vocabulary is much higher than that of third grader Mortimer's.

A great fit for a friendly letter unit, this is a great book for third graders.

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### **T.E. Antonino says**

This book could have easily been made into a chapter book. I think the younger children will enjoy the book

if their parents read it to them, maybe a couple of pages a night. The story is awesome. You can totally see this kid becoming more and more obsessed with the plant. The plant even wins over the parents affection in the end. The illustrations are really cool. It was a very fun story to read.

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### **James Pritchert says**

This was delightful little book that my granddaughter and I read together. It was the perfect bedtime story. The teacher read this to my granddaughter's class and then my granddaughter brought it home for another read. The story was cute and told in a series of letter to and from the main character, his mother, the teacher, and one other but that would be a spoiler. The illustrations were rich, complex and funny too. I laughed with each page turn. Highly recommend this book to elementary school kids and their parents.

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### **Hannah Parks says**

When Mortimer comes home for the summer and requests to take care of a very special plant named Plantzilla, strange things start happening around the household. Their beloved puppy disappears, and Plantzilla keeps growing and gaining an appetite for meat! Mortimer loves Plantzilla, and is determined to keep him. Through a series of letters between Mortimer, his parents, and his science teacher, the mystery of Plantzilla is solved, and the family gains a new, leafy member.

This book is fantastically funny, wiith engaging characters and dynamic illustrations. In the classroom it could be used in a lesson about stories told through different medias, like letters. Students could then create their own story through letters. This could also lead into a lesson on the venus fly trap and other carnivorous plants, which resemble Plantzilla.

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### **Tracey Graham says**

Such a great book about a carnivorous plant....the dog doesn't get eaten!

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### **Melanie says**

Mortimer Henryson is very fond of Plantzilla, one of the plants in his classroom. When summer is approaching he petitions his teacher for permission to care for Plantzilla at his home. Mr. Lester, the science teacher, agrees. However, Mortimers' family quickly realizes that Plantzilla is not a normal plant, in fact, he eats meat! When the family dog disappears, Mortimer's mother becomes frantic and declares the plant must go. But then Plantzilla finally blooms and settles down. Mortimer is ecstatic when the family and Mr. Lester decide that Plantzilla can be permanently adopted into the Henryson family.

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## **Samantha says**

A boy and his family send letters back and forth to the boy's science teacher in regards to the plant the boy became attached to during the schoolyear and wishes to care for during the summer.

The plant is capable of many things and for a moment it's even suspected of committing villainous acts in the neighborhood. All ends well, though, with an ending that's wide open for a sequel.

Too lengthy for a read aloud. Zany artwork perfectly captures the tone of the story and makes Plantzilla a pretty lovable character. PreK-2.

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## **Amber M says**

Genre: Fantasy/Sci-Fi

Awards: None

Grade Level: K-2

This book will be a fun book to read to my students. It will lead me into a discussion about what it takes to keep plants alive and will introduce the concept of writing a friendly letter. For a follow up activity I will have the students write their own letter asking the teacher for the opportunity to keep Plantzilla for the summer. Once they have finished I will ask the students to read their letter to the class.

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## **David Smither says**

A very entertaining book about mutant plants; this one is suited for grades 3-6, as several pages are written in cursive.

Unique feature: The plant is sentient.

Genre: Fantasy (Real genre: Horror/Humor)

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## **Peacegal says**

Think "Little Shop of Horrors" for the picture book set. *Plantzilla* is cleverly narrated in letters, as a family learns to cope with an enormous, anthropomorphic houseplant that takes over their home. The plant goes from frightening to a member of the family over the course of the tale.

Veg\*n families note: Unlike most houseplants, this one boasts a craving for meat, and wrecks havoc at barbecues as its tendrils are shown clutching giant steaks, along with burgers, hot dogs, etc. The text also implies that the plant ate the family's pet dog. The artist in the story seems to soften the blow by later showing the dog popping out of a flower bud, but this is not mentioned in the text. Very young or sensitive children may be bothered by the idea.

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### **Karina Vegarra says**

Plantzilla would be a perfect book for a young student who loves the environment and connecting classroom learning to outdoor activities. The young boy becomes attached to the plant because he felt he was the one who took the most care of it in the classroom and requested to keep it during summer vacation and even with some problems, the family loves having the plant. The fantasy of the book also gives children curiosity and test and to see how they could relate to some of the plants in their homes.

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### **Matthew says**

I'll admit that the premise is a bit absurd, but the story is fun and all done in letter-form which can be equally interesting. The illustrations really carried the book for me. I enjoyed the extra content that examining each page offered. In addition to the text, there was an entire sub-plot on every page. David Catrow always does great work like that. This was a very funny, enjoyable story.

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### **Linda says**

Mortimer has been taking care of a plant at school the students have dubbed "plantzilla." He wants to be the one to adopt it for the summer and take care of it. It all works out, but then Plantzilla starts eating strange things - like meat. then the problems start. Told in a series of letters between Mortimer's house and his teacher. David Catrow did the illustrations and signed my book "i hope the book grows on you." It did and it will continue to do so.

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