



Detective LaRue: Letters from the Investigation

Mark Teague

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Ike LaRue--the devilish dog hero of Mark Teague's Book Sense Book of the Year, *Dear Mrs. LaRue*--goes from obedience school dropout to shrewd sleuth in this exceedingly funny sequel.

As if obedience school wasn't bad enough, Ike now finds himself in jail--wrongly accused (of course!) of terrorizing the Hibbins' cats & stealing their cat treats. Once again, he pleads his case to Mrs LaRue, who's vacationing in France, but to no avail. When a string of canary burglaries stalls the Snort City Police force's investigation--and reveals their crime-solving ineptitude--Ike flees custody and takes matters into his own paws. Expect more mad-cap comedy in Ike's daring escapades (real and imagined), as well as ingenious split-screen visuals from the incomparable Mark Teague.

Detective LaRue: Letters from the Investigation Details

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Author : Mark Teague

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From Reader Review Detective LaRue: Letters from the Investigation for online ebook

Taylor O'Connor says

Detective LaRue: Letters from the Investigation is an interesting spin on classic mystery books. The crime has been committed, innocent bystanders overhear that there is no justice being served. Detective LaRue is on the case! With her huge fan base of supporters constantly mailing in clues, comments, and concerns, the case has been opened, and the thieves are far from celebrating their gluttonous victory.

The book is based around animal fantasy where the main characters, as well as the surrounding supporting characters are all animals, and possess human like qualities and characteristics. The tone of the book is mysterious and off-putting, as well as having a splash of being uniquely hilarious to the books plot. The entire time, the reader, along with the detective, are trying to comprehend the situation all while attempting to apprehend the criminal before it is too late.

The letters sent in to the detective are part of this stories illustrations, creating a very personal feel to the book. The letters coincide with the feeling of being pictures as well as becoming useful information for the reader. Detective LaRue and the real criminals roaming the streets are drawn in a cartoonish light, however, they are realistic enough as to not be confused for a made up animal. There are no bright colors filling the pages, but rather ominous lighter, warmer colors to fit the mood of mystery.

Ally Copper says

In “Detective LaRue: Letters from the Investigation” by Mark Teague, wire fox terrier Ike Larue, falsely accused and wrongly imprisoned for harming his neighbor’s cats, decides to escape police custody and look for the cats on his own. Along the way he begins investigating another crime that may or may not involve the very cats he seeks. This story of detective dog Ike is told completely through newspaper clippings and letters that Ike writes to his owner Mrs. LaRue. The picture book is humorous and so much fun because the dire straits described in the letters to Mrs. LaRue don’t always match the reality in which Ike is living. The acrylic paint illustrations, also by Teague, are big and bold and artfully done. Each page features black and white illustrations that show the deplorable circumstances and the difficult detective work Ike describes in his letters to Mrs. LaRue, as well as color illustrations that reveal the reality of Ike’s pleasant life. The juxtaposition of the opposing illustrations add to the humor of this book. “Letters from the Investigation” is more than a story to read; it’s a fun experience to be had. Readers in grades 1-4 will have a lot of fun with Ike, and parents, teachers, and librarians will find much material for discussion related to story-telling and context clues in this enjoyable picture book.

Jeanine says

The Detective LaRue series, is not one of my favorites. The cartoon illustrations are captivating, it has humor, and the vocabulary is wonderful for lessons. I think the length is why I am exhausted by the series. This picture story book is intended for Preschool to third (ages 4-8 years). In my opinion I would use this book for 3rd grade and higher. I do not believe this would keep our preschool friends enthralled the entire story. However, this would depend on the intellectual and attention spectrum of the children.

Ike is a dog who was framed for kidnapping the neighbors' cats, while his owner (Mrs. LaRue) is away on vacation. He writes her a letter explaining the situation, as well as awaiting her return and rescue. However, Ike realizes this will not be the case. He must solve this mystery, and clear his name.

Although this series is not one of my favorites I would still utilize it with the appropriate curriculum. The vocabulary words used, the newspaper article style clipping illustrations, and use of the typewriter all paint an educational picture. Most children are unaware of the newspaper, and the delight it possesses. I would have each child bring in a section of the paper, and have them compare their article to the ones recreated in our story. I would refer to the typewriter, and ask if anything from todays technology resembles this supposed relic. This would focus on their cognitive skills of decision making, and problem solving.

The realistic cartoon drawings, do not paint a representational picture. Ike a white dog, with grown ears, and two black dots for eyes can type! He is the one begging his owner to come home due to his false "arrest". There is a thought bubble where he is in black and white playing the harmonica in a jail cell, next to a mouse who is strumming a banjo. Of course this traumatic scene is created by his imagination, because Ike is at the typewriter with a cup of coffee, a donut, and a doggy biscuit in his mouth. The caption and illustrations which follow is how the humor is successfully created. In one scene we have Ike (white dog, with a thick black stripe on his back) playing cards with one of the officers, while the caption reads "P.S. Imagine how I feel cooped up inside this loathsome dungeon!"

Cindy Sarnowski says

The story is told using newspaper clippings of missing cats. The illustrations convey a very innocent dog tracking some very mischievous felines. It is text heavy, certainly not designed to read to preschoolers, who would not sit still for the entire story of even one page.

Maryruth says

Fun story told through letters and newspaper articles.

Anthony says

Ike Larue framed for the disappearance of his neighbor's two cats, he escapes from jail to prove his innocence of the alleged crime, and also solve the mystery of the canary burglars, which started on the same day of his neighbor's cat disappearance.

Susan says

Picture Book Project
Category:Picture Book Soak

Readers familiar with Mark Teague's first book about Ike LaRue's adventures in obedience school will already know what to expect of Ike's wild imagination. The story is told through newspaper clippings and letters from Ike to Ms. LaRue, his owner. Ike's letters stretch through truth in an attempt to "paint" a completely different picture.

This book would be useful as an example of character perspective. After reading the book, the students could retell the story from the perspective of one of the Hibbins cats.

The dust cover of the book is in black and white and shows an image of how Ike sees himself, but by looking underneath, the actual hard cover is brightly colored and shows Ike as he really is. This mimics the method of illustration and storytelling in the book. The reader quickly gathers that the very colorful images are reality and the black and white images are part of Ike's embellishments.

I came across this book while doing my picture book soak at the public library. It was placed on the top of the shelf and quickly caught my attention. I fell in love with the first Ike LaRue book and did not know Mark Teague had written more about this funny dog. As always, Mark Teague is a brilliant author and illustrator capable of bringing a story to life.

Elora Sommerauer says

I chose this book because my mother used to read all of the Detective LaRue books to my sisters and I when we were little, and I loved how this book was all about a dog, who was determined to be a detective, solve mysteries, and have fun. This book is great for all primary school grades, because it is hard enough for older students to read, interpret, and analyze, and it has great pictures for for little kids to enjoy, as well as older kids as well. This book is also great for students to see an interesting dynamic between dogs, cats, and humans and how they all have interactions with each other.

Mya says

This story was not one to disappoint. I will definitely read it again.

Hannah says

Excellent supplement for teaching letter writing.

Isabel says

Illustrations differ - if true -in color if false-in black & white- very good illustrations - text sometimes too much- depends on the reader.

McKenzie Richardson says

For more reviews, check out my blog Craft-Cycle

Interesting story. I enjoyed the epistolary style, but I could see how it may not resonate with young children. The story is really driven by the letters so it may be a bit confusing. The wording is often vague so I think it is suited for more advanced readers than very young ones.

This is a surprisingly dark story in my opinion. Although I did like the placement of the idea that cats should be kept indoors to protect small animals.

Good overall.

Mariela Berrocal says

This book is about a dog (Ike La Rue) who gets blamed unfairly by neighbors and police. They think that La Rue is responsible for the disappearance of the neighbors' cats. La Rue then decides to solve the case and find out the truth. While in prison, La Rue writes letters to his owner who is on vacation. After escaping prison, detective La Rue discovers that the cats have been on the streets chasing people's birds, something that started happening when the cats had gone missing. The book ends with a happy ending, La Rue solving the crimes, clearing his name, and receiving a medal.

I liked this book but did not love it. I did not like the colors or the pictures in the book that much. They were not very colorful or attractive. However, maybe the intention was to portray darker colors to keep the suspense going in the story.

This book can be used in the classroom to teach students specific context vocabulary or synonyms (interrogate, investigate, burglars, criminals), retelling (asking students questions about specific events from letters), sequence of events, as a read aloud book, and to practice problem-solving skills.

This book would be appropriate for Second, Third, and maybe even Fourth graders.

The genre of this book is Mystery/Adventure.

Allison says

"Detective LaRue" written and illustrated by Mark Teague is about a dog who is framed for two missing cats while his owner is away on vacation. He writes letters to his owner exaggerating what he is going through. The dog soon realizes that he cannot wait for his owner to come back to solve the case for him, he must do it himself. He escapes jail and starts looking for the cats. Will he be able to solve the case without the help of his owner?

This book uses double page spreads of illustrations to show what is actually happening (in color) versus how he sees what is happening (in black and white). It uses a lot of exaggeration, sarcasm, and humor. This is very entertaining for readers. However, it is also very confusing to decipher what is the purpose of the two illustrations. Because of this, the book is likely more ideal for older children. The author uses different fonts representing where he is at. In example, in the beginning he uses a formal font for the dog using a type writer versus when the dog runs away the text is written in a sloppy font. Throughout, the use of newspapers are

apparent. This creates the overall theme that "you can't believe everything you hear". The newspaper often is exaggerated and makes this apparent for children.

By: Allison League and Taylor Ray

Michele.Lyles says

Love the dry sense of humor with which Mark Teague writes.
