



## The Game Masters of Garden Place

Author: Denis Markell

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### Synopsis

What if your favorite fantasy game characters showed up on your doorstep IRL?

Sixth graders Ralph, Jojo, Noel, Persephone, and Cammi are hooked on fantasy tabletop role-playing games. When they somehow manage to summon their characters to Ralph's house, things take a truly magical turn!

The five are soon racing around town on a wild adventure that tests their both their RPG skills and their friendship. Will Ralph and crew be able to keep their characters out of trouble? Trying to convince a sticky-fingered halfling rogue not to pickpocket or a six-foot-five barbarian woman that you don't always have to solve conflicts with a two-handed broadsword is hard enough. How will they ever send the adventurers back to their mystical realm?

### Author Bio

Denis Markell has written all sorts of things, from sitcoms to off-Broadway musicals, but nothing has given him as much enjoyment or satisfaction as writing novels for kids—the puzzle-packed mystery *Click Here to Start* and the Dungeons & Dragons-inspired adventure *The Game Masters of Garden Place*. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife, illustrator Melissa Iwai, and his son, Jamie.

Although their apartment is not haunted, they suspect their Shiba Inu puppy, Nikki, might be demonically possessed.

You can find Denis on Twitter at @DenisMarkell, and yes, he'd be happy to do a Skype author visit for your kid's class.



# Curriculum Links

English - Literature Year 6

Health and Physical Education Year 5/6

## Themes

Fantasy  
Adventure  
Mystery

Friendship  
Cooperation  
Teamwork

### RPG - Role Playing Game

*A tabletop role-playing game (or pen-and-paper role-playing game) is a form of role-playing game (RPG) in which the participants describe their characters' actions through speech. Participants determine the actions of their characters based on their characterization,[1] and the actions succeed or fail according to a set formal system of rules and guidelines. Within the rules, players have the freedom to improvise; their choices shape the direction and outcome of the game.[2]*

*Unlike other types of role-playing game, tabletop RPGs are often conducted like radio drama: only the spoken component of a role is acted. This acting is not always literal, and players do not always speak exclusively in-character. Instead, players act out their role by deciding and describing what actions their characters will take within the rules of the game.[3] In most games, a specially designated player called the game master (GM)—also known as the Dungeon Master (DM) in Dungeons & Dragons, Referee for all Game Designers' Workshop games, or Storyteller for the Storytelling System—creates a setting in which each player plays the role of a single character. The GM describes the game world and its inhabitants; the other players describe the intended actions of their characters, and the GM describes the outcomes. Some outcomes are determined by the game system, and some are chosen by the GM.[2]*

*The terms pen-and-paper and tabletop are generally only used to distinguish this format of RPG from other formats, since neither pen and paper nor a table are strictly necessary.*

Source- Wikipedia

**The tag line of this book is:**

**What if your favourite fantasy game characters showed up on your doorstep IRL?**

- So, imagine if they did.
- Choose a character from a role playing game, computer game, book or movie to show up on your doorstep.
- Who would you choose and why?

**The first time the characters play their RPG in the book, they have to create their characters.**

**Read Chapter 3 for more information on characters and their traits.**

**Have each class member create their own character.**

#### CREATE A CHARACTER

**Choose from:**

- Elf
- Human
- Dwarf
- Halfling (like a hobbit)

**Class/Job**

- Cleric
- Fighter
- Wizard
- Rogue
- Anything else

When completed, write each class members name on the board with their created character.

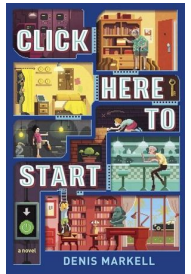
Then, based on the idea that each group playing an RPG should have a balance of particular character traits, as a class, discuss who would work well together, those who wouldn't and why.

## English - Literature Year 6 ACELT1616

Identify, describe, and discuss similarities and differences between texts, including those by the same author or illustrator, and evaluate characteristics that define an author's individual style.

Denis Markell has also written a book called **Click Here To Start**.

This is a book about a boy obsessed with **Escape Room** games.



### *Click Here To Start*

BLURB:

What if playing video games was prepping you to solve an incredible real-world puzzle and locate a priceless treasure?

Twelve-year-old Ted Gerson has spent most of his summer playing video games. So when his great-uncle dies and bequeaths him the all so-called treasure in his overstuffed junk shop of an apartment, Ted explores it like it's another level to beat. And to his shock, he finds that eccentric Great-Uncle Ted actually has set the place up like a real-life escape-the-room game!

Using his specially honed skills, Ted sets off to win the greatest game he's ever played, with help from his friends Caleb and Isabel. Together they discover that Uncle Ted's "treasure" might be exactly that real gold and jewels found by a Japanese American unit that served in World War II. With each puzzle Ted and his friends solve, they get closer to unraveling the mystery but someone dangerous is hot on their heels, and he's not about to let them get away with the fortune.

**After reading both books, look at:**

- the similarities and difference between the texts

**Did you like one book more than the other?**

**Discuss the reasons for this.**

## Health and Physical Education Year 5/6 ACPPS055

**Practise skills to establish and manage relationships**

- exploring reasons why relationships may change, such as starting a new school, changing priorities or interests, family break-up, or joining a new sports team
- assessing the impact of different relationships on personal health and wellbeing

One of the themes in the book is that of changing friendships.

In the case of the characters in the book, they begin to spend less and less time with each other due to new interests taking their time away from the role playing

Think about the friends you have had.

How many of your friends have you had for a long time? How many are new friends?

Think of reasons why you may not stay friends with the same people forever.

- **Changing schools**
- **Changing interests**
- **Moving away**
- **Just don't like them anymore/they stop liking you**

When someone stops being friends with you, how does that make you feel?

What can you do deal with these changing friendships?

- Look at strategies for managing the changing nature of relationships, including dealing with bullying and harassment and building new friendships

**In groups, make a list of attributes that make a good friend.**

**When each group has their list, write each groups list on the board.**

**Think about:**

1. How to identify what characteristics are important in a friend.
2. How to identify what a good friend does.

**Discuss as a class, and see which attributes are common among all groups.**

Then talk about skills that we need to help us make friends AND be a good friend.