

Teacher's Manual  
**Le Nouvel Houdini**



Written by

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French adaptation by Lynnette Francesca St. George

## Introduction to the *Le nouvel Houdini* Teacher's Manual

### I. Organization

The teacher's manual is aligned with research concerning reading strategies.

Good readers:

- Predict
- Make connections between the a) text and themselves, b) text and other texts, and c) text and the world around them.
- Visualize what they read
- Reread
- Use contextual clues to decipher unknown vocabulary

There are plenty of activities to help students become better readers. Instill an interest in the topic and steer students into conversations in the target language about the events and the characters in the novel, both before and during the reading of the chapters.

Ensure students know the essential vocabulary before reading the chapter. **More time should be spent on pre-reading activities** than post-reading activities.

### II. Topics

The novel has some very basic topics grounded in high-frequency vocabulary that would fit any level-one curriculum:

- Family relationships
- Growing up and developing independence
- Numbers & telling time
- Relationships with friends
- Dating
- Schedules
- Phone conversations
- Peer pressure
- Honesty
- Likes and dislikes
- Variety of verb conjugations presented through dialogues
- Driving

### III. Cultural Context: American Culture vs. Target Culture

This novel is based on everyday events and activities. Although the novel is based on American culture, there are a multitude of cultural topics that can be explored by using the novel as a springboard to launch into cultural discussions and comparisons.

The following are some of the topics that can be explored and/or enhanced using the novel as a springboard.

- Family relationships in the Target Culture
- Extended family relationships in the Target Culture
- Automobiles in the Target Culture
- Student activities in the Target Culture

### IV. Major themes in the novel

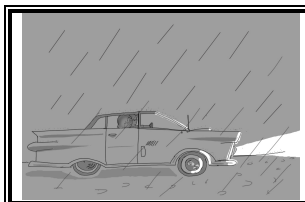
- Honesty versus mischievousness
- Male-female relationships
- Friendships
- Grandparent-grandchild relationships
- Peer pressure

### V. Author of the Novel

*Carol Gaab has been an ESL and Spanish teacher since 1990. In addition to teaching language, Carol has been a teacher trainer and curriculum designer since 1997. She has written and published foreign language curricula for elementary through high school students and also serves as a TPRS consultant/editor for various textbook publishers. She is known for creating materials that are extremely teacher- and student-friendly and highly effective for language learners, young and old. Her passion for and expertise in teaching and learning language are evident in the materials she creates.*

### **Special dedication for this French adaptation of the Nouvel Houdini Teacher's Guide**

*Lynnette aka "Madame" would like to dedicate this Teacher's Guide to her AP class at Wheaton Academy. These students cheerfully supported, edited and proofed many versions of this Teacher's Guide. Your love for our common mission to promote all things French at Wheaton Academy restored my smile during a challenging time and working with you on this project restored my faith in teamwork. Je garderai pour toujours un très beau souvenir de nos quatre ans ensemble. Je vous aime tous! Remerciements particuliers à Annie Vigneron mon prof, mon amie, et éditrice extraordinaire !*



## Vocabulaire

Pre-teach chapter vocabulary.

Chapter-specific vocabulary lists are located in the '*Chap. Vocabulary*' folder.

**Note to teachers:** Peruse **Chapter One vocabulary list**, which is located on this CD in the '**Chap. Vocab**' folder. Please note that there are vocabulary lists for both the Present and Past Tense versions of the novel. Review the appropriate list and determine if you want/need to pre-teach any of the key vocabulary structures.

Do not feel pressured to teach all of these words before reading. Your students may already know some or all of this vocabulary depending on their level. Even if they do not know the words, you may opt to simply read the book with them, helping as you go, or, if students are reading independently, instruct them to view the glossary in the back of their novel.

Keep in mind that the meaning of many of the vocabulary structures can be ascertained from the appearance of the word and the context of the sentences in which they appear. (ex.: *Brandon **se connecte** à Facebook. Katie **habite** un appartement.*) You will notice that many words are listed multiple times in each chapter list, and that is to help students understand verb conjugation, **but only as it impacts meaning**.

With beginning students, it may be helpful to read the novel aloud, translating as you go along. Alternately, you may wish to only translate unknown vocabulary. If you feel strongly about not speaking English in the classroom, you may also wish to put some key vocabulary on the board and refer to it as you read.

Vocabulary practice and review activities can be found in the '**Puzzles**' folder on this CD.



## Before the Reading

### Pre-reading Discussion Questions

For a successful discussion to take place students must be engaged in the topic and they must be able to understand. Speaking in the target language is not enough. Teachers must assure that students comprehend the message and that they are attentive to the discussion. The more lighthearted you can be, the better. Take time to stop and enjoy a moment chatting in Spanish with some individual students. Joke and laugh a bit. Use dramatic pauses or voice inflection to increase interest (just as you would if you were reading a story to a young child or telling a story around a campfire). Focus first on gaining their interest and second on the “curriculum at hand.” And always be sensitive to those students who may have difficulties going on in their lives. They may not want to talk about their families, what their home is like, or where they have traveled.

Remember to go SLOWLY and continually check that students are comprehending the discussion. For some really helpful techniques in leading class discussions, you may wish to read the book *PQA in a Wink* by Ben Slavic, available at [www.tprstorytelling.com](http://www.tprstorytelling.com).

The first line of the book is Brandon’s mom calling his name. With your students, make some guesses about why she is calling him.

On page 2, we see Brandon’s Facebook page. Have your students pair up first and discuss what they think various phrases on Brandon’s page mean. Then, have them compare or contrast themselves in one way with Brandon. Do a quick “whip-around” activity in which each pair quickly shares their comparisons with the class.

Here are some potential words they may need for “une situation sentimentale:”

Célibataire

Avoir une réaction

C’est pas simple

Est fiancé(e)

Est marié(e)



## Pre-reading Discussion Questions

**Teacher Note:** You may want to write the following key vocabulary structures on the board as you ask the questions below:

*Ils vont en vacances; (pouvoir) rester; la grandmère; la soeur*

This chapter discusses the fact that Brandon's parents are going on vacation. He is happy, because his sister, Katie is coming to stay with him. At the last minute, Katie cannot stay, so Brandon has to stay with his grandmother. Brandon is not happy about staying with 'Grandma'; he prefers to stay home alone.

- **Point to the front cover of the book:**
- *Comment s'appelle le livre?*
- *Pourquoi le livre s'appelle-t-il Le Nouvel Houdini?*
  - ⇒ *Le personnage principal s'appelle Brandon Brown.*
  - ⇒ *Qu'en penses-tu? De quoi s'agit-il, dans ce livre? Quelles sont les idées principales?*
  - ⇒ *Brandon, possède-t-il une voiture élégante?*
  - ⇒ *As-tu une voiture élégante? Est-ce que ta famille a une voiture élégante?*
- *As-tu une soeur? Un frère? Combien de frères et de soeurs as-tu?*
- *Quel âge ton frère a-t-il? Ta soeur, quel âge a-t-elle? Quel âge as-tu?*
- *As-tu un frère ou une soeur qui étudie à l'université?*
- *Vit il/-elle au foyer, ou vit-il à la maison?*
- **Keep in mind some students may have siblings living with another parent in another home.** *Vit-il à la maison? Vit-il dans une autre maison?*
- *Est-ce que ton frère ou ta soeur peut rester seul(e) à la maison?*
- *Peux-tu rester avec ton frère?*
- *Si vos parents vont en vacances, pouvez-vous rester seuls, toi et ton frère?*
- *Peux-tu aller seul en vacances?*
- *Quand vos parents vont en vacances, toi et ton frère, allez-vous avec tes parents, ou restez-vous à la maison?*

**Have students complete the following sentences, according to their opinions:**

Un garçon ou une fille peut-il/elle rester seul(e) (pour 1-2 heures) quand il/elle a \_\_ ans.

Un garçon ou une fille peut-il/elle rester seul(e) (pour 1-2 jours) quand il/elle a \_\_ ans.

Un garçon ou une fille peut-il/elle rester seul(e) (pour 1-2 semaines) quand il/elle a \_\_ ans.



## During and After the Reading

### During and After the Reading Discussion Questions

- *Brandon a une page de Facebook. Il parle beaucoup avec ses amis sur Facebook. As-tu une page de Facebook?*
- *Parles-tu avec tes amis sur Facebook? Combien d'heures passes-tu à parler avec tes amis sur Facebook?*
- *Combien d'amis as-tu sur Facebook?*
- *Brandon a besoin de plus d'amis sur Facebook. Invite-le à être ton ami sur Facebook.*

*Son nom: Brandon Ben Brown. Son email: Brandonbenbrown@cox.net*

**TEACHER NOTE:** You may want to encourage students to 'friend' Brandon on Facebook and post on his Facebook page.



## After the Reading Discussion

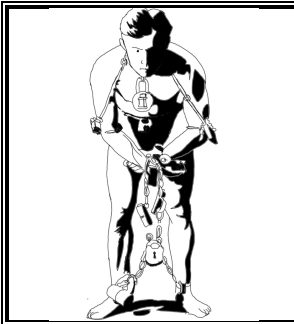
- *Qui ne va pas rester dans la maison avec Brandon pendant les vacances de ses parents?*
- *Qui va être là avec Brandon?*
- *Où vont les parents de Brandon?*
- *Quel âge a Brandon?*
- *Quelle est la règle la plus importante selon le père de Brandon?*
- *La voiture du père de Brandon est sa possession inestimable. As-tu une possession très importante? Est-ce que ton père ou ta mère a une possession extrêmement importante?*





### **Le Contrôle - Quiz**

Chapter quizzes (and answer keys) are located in the 'Quiz' Folder.



### **Beyond the Text**

#### **Itinéraire**

In this chapter, we see the flight itinerary for Brandon's parents' trip to Hawaii. Visit this site <http://www.airfrance.fr/cgi-in/AF/FR/fr/common/home/home/HomePageAction.do> (Air France) with your students. Have the reserve a flight and create a mock "itinéraire" for themselves. See if they can find the following words in French:

One way  
Passenger  
Round trip  
Route

#### **Règles**

Brandon's parents leave a list of "règles."

Here is a list of a school's rules for a French High School in Egypt, L'école Français d'Hurghada

<http://www.efhurghada.com/fr/regs.htm>

Are there any rules on the list that you can figure out?