

**Dorothy Canfield Fisher
Book Award**

DCF

2015 - 2016

**BOOK REVIEWS
&
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

Vermont Department of Libraries
Montpelier, VT

http://libraries.vermont.gov/services/children_and_teens/book_awards/dcf

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About This Guide

This guide was compiled by members of the Dorothy Canfield Fisher (DCF) Award Committee. Our intent is to provide a booklet that will support the use of the DCF program in schools and libraries.

For the guide to be most effective, we strongly suggest that the librarian or teacher supervising the program read all the books on the list. Many public libraries will have the new list by the summer, which means you can get a head start before the school year begins. No synopsis can possibly take the place of reading a book; however, we recognize that reading and *remembering* the details of 30 books can be a challenge. It is hoped that the reviews will jog your memory!

Since many DCF readers choose and read books on their own, the intent of the questions is to promote discussion among readers of DCF books. This dialogue can take place between student/adult, student/student or in small groups of readers. Most, but not all, of the questions were written to promote critical thinking and to seek opinions, not “right” answers. None of the questions was designed for purposes of assessment.

The generic questions at the end of the booklet can be used in discussions in which readers have read different books. They are taken from Susan Zimmerman's book, *7 Keys to Comprehension: How to Help Your Kids Read It and Get It!* (Three Rivers Press, 2003. ISBN 0-7615-1549-6).

Author websites, if available, are found at the end of the reviews. Some reviews include additional relevant websites. If the author does not have a website, check the website of the publisher of the book. Their author biographies are usually easy to access and often quite informative.

Compilers:

- Meg Allison
- Lisa Buckton
- Lauren Chabot
- Caitlin Corless
- Jane Knight
- Julie Pickett
- Hannah Peacock, Committee Chair
- Sharon Colvin, Vermont Department of Libraries liaison to DCF Committee

Paul Acampora
I KILL THE MOCKINGBIRD

Roaring Brook Press, 2014. ISBN: 978-1-59643-742-5. \$16.99. 166 pages.



When Lucy, Elena, and Michael receive their summer reading list, they are excited to see *To Kill a Mockingbird* included. But not everyone in their class shares the same enthusiasm. So they hatch a plot to get the entire town talking about the well-known Harper Lee classic. They plan controversial ways to get people to read the book, including re-shelving copies of the book in bookstores so that people think they are missing and starting a website committed to “destroying the mockingbird.” Their efforts are successful when all of the hullabaloo starts to direct more people to the book. But soon, their exploits start to spin out of control and they unwittingly start a mini revolution in the name of books. (Macmillan)

Curriculum Connections:

Language Arts:

- Create a Fat Bob “Rules for Life” Guidebook. What would his precepts be?
- Create your own “I Kill the Mockingbird Manifesto” (p. 105).
- If you were selected to design a summer reading list for the whole school, what ten titles would be included? How would you encourage your peers to read them? Create book trailers for each title.
- You are the new manager of all “I Kill the Mockingbird” social networking. Design a series of posts for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Collaboratively create a website and blog to promote the “I Kill the Mockingbird Manifesto.”

Art/Dramatic Art:

- Design flyers to advertise the mission of “I Kill the Mockingbird.”
- Collaboratively create window displays based on literary themes.

Social Studies:

- What exactly is a conspiracy theory? How have these theories influenced public thought and belief throughout history? Have students research and present examples of conspiracy theories and their impact.

Discussion Questions:

- What do you think of Michael, Elena, and Lucy’s antics of “literary terrorism?” Does hiding all available copies of the titles help or hinder these books being read?
- If you were part of *I Kill the Mockingbird*’s grand scheme, what book(s) would you hide?
- Why and how do you think the “I Kill the Mockingbird phenomenon” began spreading beyond West Glover?
- Why do you think Lucy chooses not to start the bonfire? Do you agree with her choice?
- If you had to give a speech at Mockingbirdpalooza what would you say?
- Have you ever had a teacher or adult that inspired you like Fat Bob? What did you learn from him or her that made such a great impact?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Eeland, Lindsay. *A Summer of Sundays*. Egmont, USA, 2013.

Leal, Ann Haywood. *Also Known as Harper*. Square Fish, 2009.

Lee, Harper. *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Lippincott, 1960.

Wilhelm, Doug. *The Revealers*. Square Fish, 2011.

Author's Website: <http://www.paulacampora.com/>

Kwame Alexander
THE CROSSOVER

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-544-10771-7. \$16.99. 237 pages.



Twelve-year-old twin brothers Josh and Jordan (JB) Bell are kings on the basketball court. As their winning season unfolds, things begin to change. JB becomes more interested in a girl than in the big game, and their father's health deteriorates. Josh, who narrates the story, has a hard time coping with the changes around him. He wants to win it all and is dismayed by the distractions. Written in dynamic verse infused with hip-hop and jazz rhythms, this fast and furious middle grade novel bounces with energy and bursts with heart.

Curriculum Connections:

Music/Drama:

- Several of the poems in this novel employ rhyme and rap. Invite your students to choose one to practice and perform for the class: “Filthy McNasty” (p. 10), “The Show” (pp.30-31), “Ode to my hair” (p. 33), “Man to man” (p. 59), “The last shot” (pp. 221-222).

English:

- Some of the poems are titled with vocabulary words that are written in dictionary format; ex., “ca-lam-i-ty” (p. 38). Look up these words and read the definition. How does the poem illustrate the meaning of the word? Have your students pick a word in the dictionary and then write a poem about that word.

History, Sports & Music:

- There are references in the book to famous sports figures and musicians. Have your students choose either a sports figure or a musician and research who he/she is (or was) and what that person accomplished.

Discussion Questions:

- What is the meaning of the title *The Crossover*? Does it have two meanings?
- There are ten poems in the book called “Basketball Rules.” Discuss these poems and how they fit into the overall story.
- Why did the boys’ father not want to go to a doctor? How did you feel about that decision?
- Discuss the importance of sports in the lives of the Bell family. How did playing basketball help each person become who they are or want to be?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Burg, Ann E. *All the Broken Pieces*. Scholastic, 2009.

Grimes, Nikki. *Planet Middle School*. Bloomsbury, 2011.

Howe, James. *The Misfits*. Atheneum, 2001.

Korman, Gordon. *Pop*. Balzer + Bray, 2009.

Pinkney, Andrea Davis. *The Red Pencil*. Little, Brown, 2014.

Author’s Website: www.bookinaday.org

Five questions for Kwame Alexander: <http://www.hbook.com/2015/02/authors-illustrators/interviews/five-questions-kwame-alexander/#>

Curriculum Guide: http://www.fcps.edu/fairfaxnetwork/mta/kalexander/TheCrossover_BG.pdf

Jonathan Auxier
THE NIGHT GARDENER

Amulet, 2014. ISBN: 978-1419711442. \$16.95. 368 pages.



After the disappearance of their parents, fourteen-year-old Molly and her younger brother Kip are left to take care of themselves. They flee from their native Ireland during the Great Potato Famine and arrive in England, where they find themselves penniless and homeless. Desperate to find jobs and a place to live, Molly and Kip seek employment as servants at the Windsor house despite the many warnings that the local townspeople give them. Upon entering the estate, they immediately sense that something isn't quite right. The house is eerie and dark, a creepy twisted old tree grows alongside the house, and the Windsor family is strange and unnaturally pale. Soon Molly and Kip discover that the estate is haunted by the Night Gardener, a spirit who grants wishes but also feeds off the souls of those who inhabit the house. Together, Molly and Kip must overcome the powers the spirit holds over them and come to accept the truths of their past.

Curriculum Connections:

Language Arts:

- Read *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* by Washington Irving. Compare and contrast the legend with *The Night Gardener*.
- Molly is a gifted storyteller who uses her abilities to both comfort her brother and talk her way into and out of situations. Examine different kinds of stories: legends, fairy tales, fables, etc.
- Using various writing prompts, have students create their own stories. (Examples: Write an Aesop's Fable, a fractured fairy tale, a collaborative story with other students.)
- Invite a storyteller to speak with students about his or her writing craft or Skype with an author. (Some authors offer free Skype sessions to classes and library groups. Visit www.katemessner.com/authors-who-skype-with-classes-book-clubs-for-free for details.)

Social Studies:

- Molly and Kip flee from Ireland during the potato famine. Research the Irish Potato Famine and the effects it had on Ireland and migration.

Discussion Questions:

- How did you feel about the Windsor family when you met them? As the story progressed, did your feelings toward them change?
- Did any of the characters surprise you?
- Did this remind you of any other book?
- What do you think the difference is between storytelling and lying?
- Did you find this book to be scary? Why or why not?
- The tree can sense a person's greatest wish. What wish do you think the tree would grant for you?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Barnhill, Kelly. *The Witch's Boy*. Algonquin Young Readers, 2014.

Blakemore, Megan Frazer. *The Spy Catchers of Maple Hill*. Bloomsbury, 2014.

Gaiman, Neil. *Coraline*. HarperCollins, 2002.

Gaiman, Neil. *The Graveyard Book*. HarperCollins, 2008.

Gidwitz, Adam. *A Tale Dark and Grimm*. Dutton Books for Young Readers, 2010.

Author's Website: <http://www.thescop.com>

Podcast Interview with Jonathan Auxier: <http://geekdad.com/2014/05/be2-jonathan-auxier>

Cece Bell EL DEAFO

Abrams, 2014. ISBN: 978-1419710209. \$21.95. 248 pages.



Cece Bell lost her hearing from a bout of meningitis when she was four years old. In this memoir, told and illustrated as a graphic novel, Cece relates how her family tried to help her cope with this loss. She attempts to learn lip reading until she is outfitted with a Phonic Ear in the first grade. The best thing about wearing the Phonic Ear is that it equips her with secret super powers because suddenly, she can hear her teacher not just when she's in the classroom, but in the teacher's lounge, the hallway, and even the bathroom. When Cece's family moves and she has to start a new school, her loneliness and need for friendships are complicated the self-consciousness she feels wearing her clunky Phonic Ear. Will the superpowers it brings help her with what she wants more than anything else, a true friend?

Curriculum Connections:

Science:

- What is meningitis? How can it cause deafness?
- Explore the technology that made the Phonic Ear work. What improvements have been made it to during the last 40 years?
- Will there ever be a cure for deafness? Research advancements in medical research.

Art:

- Explore the form and structure of a graphic novel: panels, speech bubbles, narrative arc. Explore apps and websites to create comics, including [Make Beliefs Comix](#), [Bitstrips](#), [ToonDoo](#), and ReadWriteThink's [Comic Creator](#).

History/Social Science:

- Many deaf and hard of hearing individuals have made history, including Helen Keller, William Ellsworth Hoy, and Juliette Gordon Low. Research these or other deaf or hard of hearing individuals throughout history and today. How did being deaf affect their lives? What were their accomplishments?

Discussion Questions:

- What are the qualities of a friend? Can people who are different from one another become friends? What would be some of the challenges and/or benefits?
- Have you ever felt as if you were in a bubble of loneliness like Cece? (pages 46 - 49) When was it? What did you do to help pop your bubble? Would you rather have a friend like Laura or be in a loneliness bubble?
- What are some misconceptions about deafness that other people have throughout *El Deafo*?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Draper, Sharon. *Out of My Mind*. Atheneum, 2010.

Kehret, Peg. *Small Steps: The Year I Got Polio*. Whitman, 1996.

Gownley, Jimmy. *The Dumbest Idea Ever!* Graphix, 2014.

Telgemeier, Raina. *Smile*. Graphix, 2010.

Telgemeier, Raina. *Drama*. Graphix, 2012.
Telgemeier, Raina. *Sisters*. Graphix, 2014.

Author's Website: <https://cecebell.wordpress.com/>

Author on Twitter: @CeceBellBooks (<https://twitter.com/cecebellbooks>)

Teaching Guide, Abrams Books:

http://www.abramsbooks.com/academic/El_Deafos_TeachingGuide.pdf

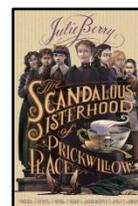
A Guide to Using Graphic Novels with Children and Teens, including educator guide and discussion questions: <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/guide-using-graphic-novels-children-and-teens>

Interview with Cece Bell on NPR: <http://www.npr.org/2014/12/14/369599042/el-deafos-how-a-girl-turned-her-disability-into-a-superpower>

Julie Berry

THE SCANDALOUS SISTERHOOD OF PRICKWILLOW PLACE

Roaring Brook, 2014. ISBN: 978-1-59643-956-6. \$15.99. 351 pages.



It's Victorian England and seven girls at a finishing school are having dinner with their nasty headmistress and her brother. Suddenly, the adults drop dead and the girls have to decide what to do. Neither wanting to go home nor to get into trouble, the girls decide to bury the bodies in the garden. They impersonate their late headmistress while trying to solve the mystery of her death. Eventually it all falls apart in a darkly hilarious turn of events.

Curriculum Connections:

Art:

- How would you disguise yourself as a cranky old lady? Draw a picture of yourself and then add features to make yourself look old.

Language Arts:

- Do you think you could pretend to be someone else? Who would you have trouble fooling? Write a paragraph about how you would try to fool people in your life.
- How would this story be different if it were told from someone else's point of view? Choose a character and tell part of the story from their perspective.

Social Studies:

- What was life like in England in 1890? How was it different from your life now?
- What was a Victorian boarding school like? Was education different for boys and girls?

Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think the girls avoided going home? Was school a better place for all of them?
- Do you think this story would have been different if the students were boys? Why or why not?
- Is this story realistic? Why or why not? Do you think they really could have fooled all those people?
- Were you surprised by the twists in the plot? Who did you think killed the headmistress in the beginning of the book? Were you right?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Landy, Derek. *Skulduggery Pleasant*. HarperCollins, 2007.

Ritter, William. *Jackaby*. Algonquin Young Readers, 2014.

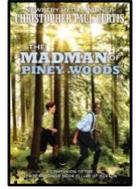
Stroud, Jonathan. *Lockwood & Co: The Screaming Staircase*. Disney-Hyperion, 2013.

Author's Website: <http://www.julieberrybooks.com/>

Book Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9NJHszL3hA>

Christopher Paul Curtis
THE MADMAN OF PINEY WOODS

Scholastic Press, 2014. ISBN: 978-0545156646. \$16.99. 384 pages.



Forty years after *Elijah of Buxton*, two boys unravel the mystery of Piney Woods. Benji is a black boy who wants to be a reporter and gets an internship at a newspaper. Red is an Irish boy who wants to be a scientist and lives with his angry grandmother. Piney Woods separates the two boys, but they both know the stories of the madman. The boys become friends and together they learn about racism, war, family, and compassion.

Curriculum Connections:

Language Arts:

- Why do you think Grandma O'Toole was so angry? What happened to her that might have contributed to her meanness?
- Piney Woods is so well-described it almost seems to be a character in the story. Do you agree?
- There were a lot of characters in the story. Write a chapter from someone else's point of view.

Social Studies

- What was the Irish Potato Famine? How did it affect people?
- The coffin ships were a real thing. Research them and find out what it was like to be a passenger on one of these ships.
- Think about what historical events your grandparents experienced. How do you think those experiences affected them?

Discussion Questions:

- Were you surprised by the way that Benji's family reacted to Red? What about Red's to Benji?
- Would you rather have been in Benji's place or in Red's when the Madman died? Why or why not?
- Do you think it's possible to be close friends with someone when you're so different? Why or why not?
- Do you think people are still racist today? What makes you think that?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Curtis, Christopher Paul. *Elijah of Buxton*. Scholastic Press, 2007.

House, Silas. *Same Sun Here*. Candlewick, 2012.

Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. The American Publishing Company, 1876.

Watts, Jeri. *Kizzy Ann Stamps*. Candlewick, 2012.

Author's Website: <http://nobodybutcurtis.com/>

Teacher Guide: <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/christopher-paul-curtiss-buxton-novels-discussion-guide>

Kathryn Erskine
THE BADGER KNIGHT

Scholastic Press, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-545-464420. \$17.99. 352 pages.



In Northern England, 1346, war is being waged against neighboring Scotland, and young men are leaving for battle. Adrian is nearly thirteen, but you wouldn't know it if you looked at him. Asthmatic, small for his age, and albino, most people in his village see him as being sent from the devil – or at the very least useless. Even his father, a bowyer, doesn't think Adrian is strong enough to be a bowyer's apprentice. But when the Scots invade England, Adrian sees an opportunity to prove his worth. He follows his best friend Hugh into battle, bow on his back. But war is not as glorious as he thought it would be and chasing down the enemy is not as black and white as he imagines.

Curriculum Connections:

History:

- Medieval culture was difficult and dirty but also quite festive. Here is an extensive list of medieval games:
<http://www.lscacamp.org/portals/0/medieval%20games%20and%20recreation.pdf>. Some will already be familiar, but break into groups and try some new ones.

Language Arts:

- Learn more about Old English and sayings such as “St. Jerome’s Bones!” Have students explore folk etymology at Ye Olde English Sayings. Then brainstorm a list of additional common words or phrases of unknown origin. Arrange students into groups and have each group research the origins of the words on their list.

Technology:

- Encourage students to explore The Medieval Technology Timeline, which traces the advance of technology, from the plow and horseshoe in the epoch between A.D. 500 and 700 through the development of the blast furnace between 1300 and 1500:
<http://scholar.chem.nyu.edu/tekpages/Timeline.html>. What kinds of inventions were being created during the 14th century, when Adrian was alive?

Drama:

- Choose short scenes from the book to act out. Research the costumes and props that might be used for each.

Discussion Questions:

- Why do the townspeople treat Adrian like an outcast? What does that tell you about their cultural beliefs back then? Do you think this influences how Adrian’s father treats his son?
- Why do the Englishmen call the Scottish “pagan Scots?” What does that mean?
- What does Adrian learn about the nature of war through his adventures?
- How does his opinion change throughout the book about becoming a bowyer and a scribe?

If you loved this title, you may like:

de Angeli, Marguerite. *The Door in the Wall*. Doubleday, 1949.

Nielsen, Jennifer. *The False Prince*. Scholastic Press, 2012.

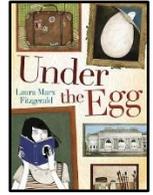
Palacio, R. J. *Wonder*. Knopf, 2012.

Philbrick, Rodman. *The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg*. Blue Sky Press, 2009.

Author's Website: http://www.kathrynerskine.com/Kathryn_Erskine/Home.html

Laura Marx Fitzgerald
UNDER THE EGG

Dial Books for Young Readers, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-8037-4001-3. \$16.99. 243 pages.



Theo Tenpenney can't stop thinking about the last words her grandfather, Jack, uttered to her before dying: "It's under the egg...there's a letter...and a treasure." Theo can't get these words out of her head, but she also can't figure them out. She's desperate for a hidden treasure. She's trying to survive on the \$463 Jack left in a mason jar. Her mother is present, but preoccupied by her obsessive work on math theorems. Jack was Theo's caretaker and now she's left to fend for herself. Theo discovers her first clue when she accidentally spills alcohol on a painting that hung above the mantle. This reveals another, much older, and potentially valuable painting. Where did this painting come from and why did Jack keep it hidden? Is this the treasure Jack referred to? Theo embarks on a quest to discover the origins of this painting. Along the way she learns about her grandfather's secret past.

Curriculum Connections:

Art:

- Explore the websites for the museums mentioned in the novel. Are there virtual tours you can take? What are you drawn to? Find images of the paintings mentioned. What do you think of them?

Social Studies/Geography:

- The city is almost its own character in the novel. Create an interactive map of the novel. Locate the real places mentioned in the book on a map (paper or virtual) and embed images of these places and quotes from the book if applicable.

Discussion Questions:

- Do you think Jack made the right choice to hide the painting for all those years?
- What do you think was Theodora's greatest challenge in the novel?
- What makes art valuable?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Balliett, Blue. *Chasing Vermeer*. Scholastic, 2004.

Broach, Elise. *Shakespeare's Secret*. Holt, 2005.

Fitzhugh, Louise. *Harriet the Spy*. Harper & Row, 1964.

Konigsburg, E. L. *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*. Atheneum, 1967.

Author's Website: www.lauramarxfitzgerald.com

Ryan Gebhart
THERE WILL BE BEARS

Candlewick, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-7636-6521-0. \$16.99. 217 pages.



When Tyson's best friend, Bright, decides he would rather hang out with the cool kids, Tyson knows that he still has his grandfather for companionship. They are planning an elk hunting trip together and Tyson is psyched. When his grandfather is sent to a nursing home and his parents cancel the big hunting trip, it is almost more than Tyson can handle. So in defiance of Mom and Dad's strict orders, and despite reports of a scary, stalking, man-eating grizzly named Sandy, the two sneak off to the Grand Tetons. Will his grandfather be able to handle the trip? Will Tyson get his elk and be the talk of his middle school? Or will Sandy make a ferocious appearance and destroy everything?

Curriculum Connections:

Geography:

- Where are the Grand Tetons? Have your students research Wyoming and this mountain range, including its natural habitat. What is a famous landmark near this range? This project could also extend to researching other National Parks in the U.S.

Natural Sciences:

- Research grizzly bears. What is the habitat range of a grizzly bear? Are they really the biggest, fiercest bear? What kind of bears live in VT?

English:

- Assign your students a nature writing assignment. Go for a nature walk and have them write about it, or have them write about a camping trip or other outdoor adventure.

Discussion Questions:

- Although there are serious themes in this book, there are also humorous elements. Talk about the funny scenes and why the author put them in the book; i.e.: the prune game.
- Why was it important to Tyson to hunt and shoot an elk. How do you feel about hunting?
- What role did the financial situation of Tyson's family play in the book?
- Why did his grandfather have to be sent to a nursing home?
- Do you think Tyson and his grandfather were wrong to lie about their trip?
- Why or why not? What if something had gone wrong? Did Tyson feel bad about lying?
- How did Tyson feel when he learned that Gene was not his biological grandfather? Did it matter to him?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Collard, Sneed B. III. *Double Eagle*. Peachtree, 2009.
Hobbs, Will. *Take Me to the River*. HarperCollins, 2011.
Key, Watt. *Alabama Moon*. Farrar Strauss Giroux, 2006.
Paulsen, Gary. *Hatchet*. Bradbury Press, 1987.

Author info: <http://www.kidsreads.com/authors/ryan-gebhart>

YouTube book review: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sRnt1J82c4o>

Lisa Graff
ABSOLUTELY ALMOST

Philomel, 2014. ISBN: 978-0399164057. \$16.99. 304 pages.



Fifth-grader Albie has always been an “almost.” In kindergarten, he was *almost* ready to use markers. In the first grade, he was *almost* big enough to walk his dog. In second grade, he *almost* moved up to the red reading group. And in the third grade, his poem was *almost* chosen to be put up on the bulletin board for Parents’ Night. For once, Albie wants to be something more.

Due to learning difficulties, Albie fails out of his private school and enters public school where he continues to struggle both academically and socially. Misunderstood by his parents who think he simply isn’t trying hard enough, Albie is also bullied at school. His luck begins to change when Calista, his new babysitter, enters his life. Calista is a creative and kindhearted artist who sees the very best in Albie. With the help and support of Calista and a few others, Albie begins to recognize his own strengths and to understand that he is absolutely much more than an “almost.”

Curriculum Connections:

Art:

- Create your own superhero comic.
- Design a new book jacket for an old book.

Language Arts:

- Write about a time when you felt “absolutely almost.”
- Calista tells Albie that everyone deserves a sad day once in a while, and she takes him to the zoo to cheer him up. Describe and explain where you would go if you took a sad day.

Discussion Questions:

- How did you feel when Albie’s mom wouldn’t let him read *Captain Underpants*? Why? Do you think she had the right to tell him what he could and couldn’t read?
- Why do you think Mr. Clifton starts off every class with a math joke?
- Calista believes that Albie’s superpower is that he is kind. Do you agree? Is kindness a superpower? Explain.
- Did Calista have the right to let Albie skip school and go to the zoo?
- How did you feel about the “helpful hints” Albie left for Betsy? Do you think Albie is a good friend?
- When his teacher asks for a note to explain his absence, Albie forges his mother’s signature. What would you have done if you were in his situation?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Korman, Gordon. *Ungifted*. Balzer + Bray, 2012.

Palacio, R.J. *Wonder*. Knopf, 2012.

Sachar, Louis. *There’s a Boy in the Girls’ Bathroom*. Yearling, 1988.

Schmidt, Gary D. *The Wednesday Wars*. Clarion, 2007.

Vernick, Audrey. *Screaming at the Ump*. Clarion, 2014.

Author's Website: <http://www.lisagraff.com/>

Reading Group guide:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1T0XR0dI_pZgTGOkBnvRcd17vR1wDHI1RomxhZfmSB2M/edit?pli=1

Book Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MwjgsnY_8M

George Hagen

GABRIEL FINLEY & THE RAVEN'S RIDDLE

Schwartz & Wade, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-38537-103-2. \$19.99. 375 pages.



George Hagen sets the tone for his exciting middle grade fantasy novel with the dedication, the first of many riddles you will have the pleasure of solving throughout the book. Gabriel loves riddles, as did his father before him and, as it turns out, so do ravens!

On his twelfth birthday, with the astounding information from his father's diary racing through his head and the special key his dad left for him for this very day, Gabriel begins to realize that the time has come for him to search for his father, missing now for three years.

After rescuing a baby raven Gabriel begins this new phase of his young life – one in which he can *paravolate* with the bird and will begin a huge adventure. With a mismatched set of new friends at his side, Gabriel leaves his Brooklyn brownstone for Aviopolis, an underground world where he hopes to find his father and his uncle Corax, who has become more monster than man. “You’ll always see me first in a running race, third in a marathon, fourth in a tear, but never in a dash! Who am I?”

Curriculum Connections:

Language Arts:

- Using the author’s “Stinky Pinky Riddles” (<http://gabriel-finley.tumblr.com/STINKY>) as a starting point, create your own series of rhyming pair riddles.

World Cultures:

- Research birds in folklore. Whose myths and legends prominently feature birds? What birds appear most often? What is the significance of using birds to enhance a story? Be specific about type of bird and its symbolism in folklore.

Discussion Questions:

- What is the difference between a raven and a valraven?
- What does it mean to *paravolate*? Is this a real word?
- Would you like to have a magical connection with an animal? If so, which animal and what would you be able to do together?
- What is the significance of turning twelve for Gabriel?
- Even though this is quite a serious story, there are many silly/funny scenes. Which parts did you find funny?
- Puzzles and puns appear throughout the text. Which were you able to solve? Which were your favorites and why?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Grabenstein, Chris. *Escape from Mr. Lemoncello’s Library*. Random, 2013.

Milford, Kate. *Greenglass House*. Clarion Books, 2014. (on this year’s DCF list)

Stewart, Trenton Lee. *The Mysterious Benedict Society* (series). Little, Brown, 2007.

Author’s Website: <http://www.georgehagen.com/>

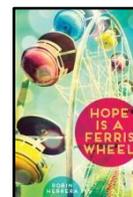
Author's blog: <http://gabriel-finley.tumblr.com/>

Publisher's Educator Guide:

http://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/GabrielFinley_EducatorGd_WEB.pdf

Robin Herrera
HOPE IS A FERRIS WHEEL

Amulet, 2014. ISBN: 978-1419710391. \$16.95. 272 pages.



Ten-year-old Star Mackie is the new kid in town. She lives in a trailer park with her mom and her older sister Winter, and she is having difficulty fitting in with the other kids at school. She is constantly being made fun of for living in a trailer park and for having a blue layered haircut that many of her classmates insist is a mullet. In an effort to make friends, Star decides to form the Emily Dickinson Club, a group dedicated to discussing the poems of Emily Dickinson. The club brings together an unlikely group of kids who, despite their differences, have a lasting effect on one another. As Star works to improve life at school, she must also face some hard truths about her family and deal with difficulties at home. Through it all, Star must cling to her sense of hope.

Curriculum Connections:

Language Arts:

- Emily Dickinson wrote that “hope is a thing with feathers.” Star writes that hope is a Ferris wheel. Write about what hope is to you.
- Read some of Emily Dickinson’s work. Using her poetry as inspiration, have students use some of her techniques and stylistic choices to write their own poems.
- Star uses her weekly vocabulary words to write sentences that teach us a lot about her. Using a list of vocabulary words, have students use these words in sentences that directly apply to their lives.
- Start a poetry club.

Discussion Questions:

- When Star forms the Trailer Park Club, she struggles to find members. Would you have joined her club? Why or why not?
- Winter is kicked out of school after she writes stories that her teachers find disturbing. Do you feel like her school had the right to expel her?
- Why doesn’t Star hand in her vocabulary sentences?
- Star develops a love for Emily Dickinson’s poems. Is there an author or poet whose works speak to you?
- Star uses a Ferris wheel as a metaphor for hope. How is hope a Ferris wheel? Do you agree?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Bauer, Joan. *Close to Famous*. Viking, 2011.
Harrington, Karen. *Courage for Beginners*. Little, Brown Books, 2014.
Holczer, Tracy. *The Secret Hum of a Daisy*. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2014.
Lloyd, Natalie. *A Snicker of Magic*. Scholastic, 2014.
Lord, Cynthia. *Half a Chance*. Scholastic, 2014.

Author’s Website: <http://robinherrera.com/>

Poetry Club Guide: http://www.abramsbooks.com/academic/Hope_PoetryClubGuide.pdf

Book Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNq08cVjFoQ>

Jennifer Holm
THE FOURTEENTH GOLDFISH

Random House, 2014. ISBN: 978-0375870644. \$16.99. 208 pages.



Eleven-year-old Ellie is going about her everyday middle school life when her mother is called to pick up her scientist grandfather from the police station. Instead of coming home with her 76-year-old grandfather Melvin, Ellie's mom returns with a thirteen-year-old boy with the same curmudgeonly attitude as Melvin. We soon learn that Melvin has discovered a way to reverse the aging process and was able to return his body to that of his teenage self. However, his mind and memories of his entire life are still present. He dresses in his favorite polyester pants and tie and still lectures Ellie's mom about everything from her longtime boyfriend to when to put out the trash. Melvin attends school with Ellie and begins to scheme ways to get back into his lab to resume work on his experiment. As Ellie and Melvin spend more time together, he teaches her about famous scientists like Salk, Galileo, Oppenheimer, Curie, Pasteur, Newton and Einstein. Ellie becomes interested in the sciences, but begins to question whether the work and their contributions to the world are always for the best. Ultimately, she comes to believe that the best of science is the belief and search for what may be possible.

Curriculum Connections:

Science/Inquiry:

- Senescence is the process of aging. Melvin cites several examples of regenerative abilities in nature. Research the examples he provides. Are they real? Can you find other examples?

Science/History/Inquiry:

- Melvin introduces Ellie to many famous scientists. Choose one to research. What were their contributions to science and to humanity? Were those contributions all beneficial? Defend your answers.

Discussion Questions:

- Melvin is able to reverse his body's aging process. Is this a good idea? What are some of the pros and cons of this discovery? Would you want to reverse the aging process?
- What is a scientific discovery you would like to make? Why?
- Famous scientist Salk said, "Our greatest responsibility is to be good ancestors." What does this mean? What can you do as a young adult to be a good ancestor?
- What do you think is going to happen to Melvin?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Babbitt, Natalie. *Tuck Everlasting*. Farrar Strauss Giroux, 1975.

Pincus, Greg. *The 14 Fibs of Gregory K*. Arthur A. Levine, 2013.

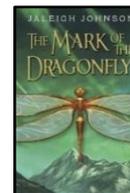
Rupp, Rebecca. *Octavia Boone's Big Questions About Life, the Universe, and Everything*. Candlewick, 2010.

Author's Website: <http://www.jenniferholm.com/>

Jaleigh Johnson

THE MARK OF THE DRAGONFLY

Delacorte Press, 2014. 978-0-385-37615-0. \$16.99. 388 pages.



Part fantasy, part steampunk, *The Mark of the Dragonfly* plunges readers into a vivid dystopian world where Piper survives by salvaging artifacts left behind by meteor storms. Piper has a gift for machinery; she refurbishes old items, scraps of metal and gears that others could not imagine reconfiguring into new life. However, she dreams of escaping the harsh lifestyle of Scrap Town #16. When Piper discovers an unconscious girl in the wreckage of a traveler's caravan, she heroically decides to rescue her and deliver her safely home. But returning Anna to her family proves to be a complicated feat. How will Piper return Anna home if Anna has no memory to guide them? And who is the strange man stalking their every move?

Curriculum Connections:

Language Arts:

- Write a short story dystopian narrative.

Social Studies:

- Have students create a time capsule. Discuss what items they would select to include and why. How do they think their time capsules would be interpreted by discoverers in the future?

Science:

- Have students cultivate curricular connections to the world described in *The Mark of the Dragonfly*. What are meteors? How are they made? What do they look like? How are they created and destroyed?
- Take students on a virtual field trip into space and watch footage from a meteor shower.

Art:

- Create your own interpretation of a map of The World of Solace.

Discussion Questions:

- What do you think motivated Piper to return Anna to her family?
- Why do you think Piper dreams of leaving Scrap Town #16?
- Do you think Anna, Piper, and Gee make a good team? What do you think are their strongest and weakest characteristics?
- Why does Gee initially dislike Piper and Anna? What changes his mind?
- Do you think Doloman is legitimately evil, or is he just misled?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Black, Holly and Cassandra Clare. *The Iron Trial*. Scholastic Press, 2014.

Grove, S.E. *The Glass Sentence*. Viking, 2014.

Kirby, Matthew J. *Icefall*. Scholastic Press, 2011.

Oppel, Kenneth. *Airborn*. HarperCollins, 2005.

White, J.A. *The Thickety: A Path Begins*. Katherine Tegen Books, 2014.

Author's Website: <http://www.jaleighjohnson.com/>

Terry Lynn Johnson
ICE DOGS

Houghton Mifflin, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-547-89926-8. \$17.99. 288 pages.



Fourteen-year-old Vicky Secord’s dad taught her everything she knows about sled dogs and survival in the remote area of Alaska where she lives. But since his death a year ago, she feels lost without his guidance, and distant from her mother. Even worse, she feels she might have been able to save him if she had been with him the day of his accident. One day she heads out with her dogsled team without telling anyone and the routine outing takes a perilous turn – she comes upon a snowmobile twisted around a tree, and she has to use everything her dad taught her to save the life of its only occupant, Chris, a “citified” boy who Vicky decides has no right to be out in the woods at all. Vicky and Chris’s relationship evolves when they face hunger, hypothermia, wild animals, and icy waters as a four-hour trek becomes a harrowing six-day battle for survival.

Curriculum Connections:

Outdoor Education:

- Divide into small groups and discuss how your group would fare in an ordeal similar to Vicky and Chris’s. What do you think are the most important qualities for survival in the Alaskan wild? Which personal qualities and skills does each member think they would contribute to the survival of the group? Have you read any other stories about physical survival? If so, compare the kinds of skills needed in that particular story to this one.

Social Studies/Math:

- Research women’s role in the history of the most famous dog-sledding race in the US, the Iditarod. How many women have won the race? What kinds of challenges do you think women might encounter in that type of competition?
<http://d3r6t1k4mqz5i.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/SallyLessonPlanMath.pdf?db746e>

Geography/Map:

- Use a map of Alaska to have students map out the trail of the Iditarod Race, including the checkpoints along the way. Calculate the miles between checkpoints. How many miles long is the official race? And why is that number significant?
<http://iditarod.com/about/the-iditarod-trail/>

Science:

- Musherers spend a lot of time with their dogs, just like Vicky does in the novel. Read about musher dogs – how they are trained and how their trainers/owners learn how to communicate with them. Do you have a dog at home that you have trained? Are there similarities to the way mushers train their huskies? What qualities do huskies have that make them perfect for this kind of physical activity?
<https://itteacheronthetrail.files.wordpress.com/2010/07/amazingracearticlepdf.pdf>
<http://www.examiner.com/article/sled-dog-psychology-communication>

Discussion Questions:

- Vicky's relationship with her mother has been strained since the death of Vicky's father. What led to the tension between mother and daughter and how did this friction affect Vicky's decision to head out alone with her dogs?
- Vicky's dogs are of the utmost importance to her. What do they represent in her life?
- Name some of the essential survival skills that Vicky knows and that helped her and Chris navigate through their six days in the wilderness. Compare those skills to what Chris brought to the experience. How does Chris contribute to their survival?
- Chart Vicky's attitude toward the people in her life through the arc of the book – before she takes off on her own, when she meets Chris, through their ordeal together and afterwards. How does her attitude affect her ability to connect with the people in her life?

If you loved this title, you may like:

George, Jean Craighead. *Julie of the Wolves*. Harper & Row, 1972.

Miller, Debbie S. *The Great Serum Race*. Walker, 2002.

O'Dell, Scott. *Black Star, Bright Dawn*. Houghton Mifflin, 1988.

Paulsen, Gary. *Dogsong*. Simon & Schuster, 1984.

Paulsen, Gary. *Winterdance*. Harcourt, 1994.

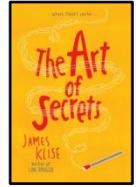
Riddles, Libby. *Storm Run: The Story of the First Woman to Win the Iditarod Sled Dog Race*. Paws IV, 1986.

Schultz, Jeff. *Dogs of the Iditarod*. Sasquatch Books, 2003.

Author's Website: <http://www.terrylynnjohnson.com/>

James Klise
THE ART OF SECRETS

Algonquin Young Readers, 2014. ISBN: 978-1-61620-195-1. \$16.95. 258 pages.



When Saba Khan's apartment burns in a mysterious fire everyone formulates an opinion. Is it a hate crime? Did her family concoct the fire themselves? Saba's father even worries that her younger, pyromaniac brother is to blame. But things take an unexpected turn for the better when Kendra and Kevin Spoon decide to organize a fundraiser for the Khan family; that is, until the Spoons discover an odd piece of art in a back alley and learn that it is worth a mighty sum. Told in multiple narratives, *The Art of Secrets* explores the greed, jealousy, and suspicion that cloud its characters' points of view as they vie for a hunk of the newfound artwork's reward and lose sight of Saba's struggle.

Curriculum Connections:

Language Arts:

- *The Art of Secrets* is a novel comprised of multiple narratives and points of view. Have students adapt a short story or chapter of a novel to be told from a different character's point of view.
- Have students create character backstories. For example, describe Dr. Regina Stickman's childhood. When did her obsession with aesthetics begin?
- Explore the many forms of communication utilized to depict characters and plot. Have students create portfolios of these unique forms of narrative. For example, create a series of emails written from Steve Davinski's point of view.

Art/Dramatic Art:

- While *The Art of Secrets* is a work of fiction, the artist Henry Darger is not. Create a digital field trip to explore his life and art.
- Reader's Theatre: have students take on character roles and read/perform the book aloud.
- Create a mystery map and/or game that charts the possible outcome of the book.

Discussion Questions:

- All of the characters depicted in *The Art of Secrets* are innately human; they possess both good and bad qualities. Did the characters' flaws surprise you? Did you find it easier to relate to them, or easier to mistrust and dislike them?
- What do you think fueled the Spoons' desire to create a fundraiser to help the Khans?
- What would you do if you found a piece of abandoned artwork in an alley and later learned it was worth a great deal of money?
- How do you think race plays a role in this book?
- *The Art of Secrets* is a novel comprised of many points of view, including text messages, journal entries, newspaper articles, emails, and incident reports. How did you piece this information together? How is the structure of this novel different from other mysteries you've read?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Buyea, Rob. *Because of Mr. Terupt*. Delacorte Press, 2010.

Fantaskey, Beth. *Buzz Kill*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014.

Korman, Gordon. *Schooled*. Disney-Hyperion, 2008.

Miller, Ashley Edward. *Colin Fischer*. Razorbill, 2012.

Author's Website: <http://www.jamesklise.com/>

Jessica Lawson

THE ACTUAL & TRUTHFUL ADVENTURES OF BECKY THATCHER

Simon & Schuster, 2014. ISBN: 978-1-48140-150-0. \$16.99. 218 pages.



Becky Thatcher is a whippersnapper who has plenty of time to get up to scads of mischief. Her daddy, Judge Sawyer, is a busy and important man and her mama is still mourning the loss of their son, Becky's older brother Jon. This leaves Becky with little supervision and ample opportunity to put her wild imagination into action. Her adventures lead her into some potentially dangerous territory as she decides to investigate the Pritchard Brothers herself, two outlaws suspected of train robbery, bank robbery and possible murder. Becky also manages to convince her new friend Amy Lawrence to join her in accepting a bet from Joe Harper and Sid Sawyer – a bet to steal from the Widow Douglas during Saturday's full moon. Becky's fearlessness and knack for telling whoppers makes for great stories as we join her for these daring escapades.

Curriculum Connections:

History:

- Samuel Clemens is a riverboat pilot in the book. What did that job involve? What other occupations are mentioned in the story? Research other ways people could have made a living back in the southern United States in the late 19th century.
- The Widow Douglas is a quiet recluse and has therefore become a target for all kinds of made-up tales and unfair labels. During this period in history, what would likely happen to someone who was accused and found guilty of being a witch?

Language Arts:

- Many words and expressions are used with which you might not have previously been familiar. Using the following list of words and phrases from the text, and others you choose, discuss their meanings and whether or not you think they are, or should be, still in use today: Skitter-bit (p.9), fishskin (p.14), dob-head (p.28), weasel-faced grease head (p.30), smacking me a good one (p.31), give a rat's tail (p.32), scare the hair off a baby (p.43), knee-slapper (p.43), the story spread easy as warm butter (p.101).
- In the author's note, Jessica Lawson calls this book an origin story. What does that mean? Find some other books that are origin stories.

Discussion Questions:

- Why does Becky always seem to find herself in the middle of some kind of trouble?
- Is Becky a "typical" girl? Why or why not? Do you know any other girls (or boys) like her?
- Why do Becky and Amy become best friends so quickly?
- Why do you think the author had Tom Sawyer be the one to tell everyone that Becky had gone to the cave?
- What is the significance of the conversation that Becky has with Sam Clemens at the end of the novel?
- Several of the characters have suffered loss. Explain how each of them has handled loss differently.
- Describe Becky's relationship with Jon.

If you loved this title, you may like:

Cushman, Karen. *Will Sparrow's Road*. Clarion Books, 2012.

Fitzhugh, Louise. *Harriet the Spy*. Harper & Row, 1964.

Rose, Caroline Starr. *May B*. Schwartz & Wade, 2012.

Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. The American Publishing Company, 1876.

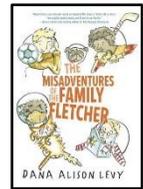
Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (Tom Sawyer's Comrade)*. Charles L. Webster and Company, 1885.

Author's Website: <http://jessicalawsonbooks.com/>

The Becky Thatcher Curriculum Guide:

http://jessicalawsonbooks.com/Resources/Becky_Thatcher_Curriculum_Guide.pdf

Dana Alison Levy
THE MISADVENTURES OF THE FAMILY FLETCHER
Delacorte Press, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-38537-652-5. \$18.99. 261 pages.



It's a new school year for the four Fletcher boys and each of them is excited for very different reasons. The ever-energetic six-year-old Frog is off to kindergarten with his imaginary friend Flare (a cheetah). Eli is trying a new school "for exceptional academically focused students who are seeking a superlative intellectual experience," leaving the other ten-year-old in the family, Jax, to move on to Upper El on his own.

All Jax cares about is living up to the image of his older brother Sam, who is at the absolute top of the food chain. Sam is stressed about sixth grade, as grades are now starting to really matter. His main interest is soccer and making the elite team, but soon a new interest will become a part of his life, something he feels the need to hide from everyone.

While the four adopted boys do not look alike, this heart-warming story about love and individuality reminds us all what it means to be part of a caring family, with all the bumps and blips that families go through.

Curriculum Connections:

Language Arts/Creative Writing:

- Holidays at the Fletchers always seem to teeter on the brink of disaster. Write about a holiday with your family that did not turn out exactly as planned.

History:

- Jax has to complete a yearlong research project for school, for which he must interview a war veteran. What war does his interviewee hail from? If you had to complete the same assignment, do you have someone you could ask? Who is he/she? What wars could a living veteran have served in?

Social Studies:

- The Fletcher family is made up of four adopted boys and two dads. The response from the community in the novel to having a gay married couple at the helm of this family is pretty positive; in fact it is quite insignificant. How would this have been different had the novel been written when your parents were your age? Look at the evolution of same-sex parenting and marriage over the past 20-30 years.

Discussion Questions:

- Which of the boys are you most like? Which are you least like?
- Why is the character of Mr. Nelson important to the story?
- Describe the two dads. How are they the same and how are they different? How do they complement each other? What makes them effective parents?
- If your family had first-day-of-school dinner, what would each member of your family choose?
- Do you have any family traditions?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Birdsall, Jeanne. *The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy* (series). Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2005.

Cleary, Beverly. *Beezus and Ramona* (series). Morrow, 1955.

Enright, Elizabeth. *The Saturdays: A Novel in the Melendy Quartet* (series). Henry Holt & Company, 1941.

Author's Website: <http://danaalisonlevy.com/books/>

Interview with the author: <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/blog/keshet/2014/07/29/just-your-typical-interfaith-interethnic-two-dad-family/>



Sharon Lovejoy
RUNNING OUT OF NIGHT

Random House, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-385-74409-6. \$16.99. 304 pages.

Girl lives with her brothers and her bad-tempered Pa, on the small farm that was her grandfather's in Virginia in 1858. Since the death of her grandfather, the only person that showed her tenderness, Girl has become housekeeper and servant to the remaining menfolk – tending the garden, cooking, cleaning, and staying clear of their casual abuse as best she can. Still, Girl hasn't given in. She is sustained by memories of her grandpa and all he taught her about wild and garden plants, stars, and animals, plus daily conversations with the mother she only knows from her grandpa's stories. When a runaway slave girl named Zenobia shows up seeking refuge, Girl (later named Lark by Zenobia) decides to flee from her own horrible home life with Zenobia. Their dangerous escape brings them up against copperhead snakes, evil slave catchers and Lark's own Pa and brothers who are chasing her down. Lark and Zenobia are joined by another runaway slave named Brightwell as they make their way to a Quaker safe house, where Lark believes Zenobia and her friends will be helped to freedom.

Curriculum Connections:

History:

- Looking at a map of the Underground Railroad, predict what route Zenobia and Brightwell might take to Canada. Would they pass through Vermont? Research the Underground Railroad in Vermont. Where did it pass through the state?
<http://vermonthistory.org/educate/online-resources/underground-railroad-project>

Science/Biology:

- The native flora and fauna play an important role in the novel. Are any of the plants mentioned also native to Vermont? Which ones?

Discussion Questions:

- Why does the author choose to make Lark a nameless character at the beginning of the story? Why is a name important, and what does Lark's new name signify? Does your name have a significance or meaning?
- How are Lark and Zenobia's situations the same? How are they different?
- How does Lark use her knowledge of local herbs and plants to help them along their journey?
- What Quaker tenet does Auntie keep drilling into Lark's head as she tries to outwit Shag? Do you agree with Auntie's stance on non-violence? How would you treat your enemy if you were in the same situation as Lark?
- Why were the Quakers involved in the Underground Railroad? What part of their faith dovetails with the principles of abolitionism?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Chains*. Atheneum, 2008.
Going, K. L. *The Liberation of Gabriel King*. Putnam, 2005.
Hesse, Karen. *Witness*. Scholastic Press, 2001.
Levine, Kristin. *The Lions of Little Rock*. Putnam, 2012.

Pearsall, Shelley. *Trouble Don't Last*. Knopf, 2002.

Sterling, Dorothy. *Freedom Train: The Story of Harriet Tubman*. Doubleday, 1954.

Author Website: www.sharonlovejoy.com

Ann M. Martin
RAIN REIGN

Feiwel and Friends, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-312-64300-3. \$16.99. 226 pages.



Fifth grader Rose Howard is obsessed with homophones, rules and prime numbers. She lives alone with her father, who spends most of his time working at the local garage or hanging out at The Luck of the Irish bar. One rainy night he comes home with a dog for Rose. He never brings Rose anything, so she is thrilled. She names the dog Rain (Rein, Reign – a special homonym trio!) and he becomes Rose’s companion and best friend. When a really bad hurricane hits their small town, Rain goes missing. Now, Rose must find her dog, even if it means leaving her routines and safe places. During her search for Rain, one that lasts for weeks, Rose discovers an uncomfortable truth – Rain’s original owners are also looking for him.

Curriculum Connections:

Language Arts:

- What are homonyms and homophones? Have your students come up with their own list of homonyms or homophones, or have them write down the ones in the book. Google *Homophone Go Fish* or *Homophone Bingo* and download these games to play with your students.

Science/Social Studies:

- In the author’s note, Ann Martin says she based the hurricane in the book on Hurricane Irene which damaged the New York region. Have your students research this hurricane and/or Superstorm Sandy, two storms which occurred in their lifetimes. Was Vermont affected by these storms?

Math:

- Rose loves prime numbers. What is a prime number? Print out a Prime Number Maze for your students to play or come up with other games to help students learn prime numbers. <http://www.worksheetworks.com/math/numbers/prime-sequence-maze.html>

Discussion Questions:

- Everyone is different; every person has particular interests and habits. What makes Rose different? Are her outbursts in class something she does on purpose?
- How does Rain help Rose? Describe the roles that pets play in peoples’ lives.
- Rose made a very brave decision. Would you have done what Rose did? How hard would it be to give up your pet?
- Does Rose’s father have any redeeming qualities? Why do you think he is so hard on her? What role does Uncle Weldon play in Rose’s life?
- Discuss Rose’s future – what lies ahead for her now?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Erskine, Kathryn. *Mockingbird*. Philomel, 2010.
Lord, Cynthia. *Rules*. Scholastic Press, 2006.
Pyron, Bobby. *A Dog’s Way Home*. Katherine Tegen, 2011.
Sloan, Holly Goldberg. *Counting by 7’s*. Dial, 2013.

Ann Martin official fan page: www.facebook.com/AnnMMartinAuthor

TeachingBooks/meet the author: <http://www.teachingbooks.net/tb.cgi?tid=40897&a=1>

Kate Milford
GREENGLASS HOUSE

Clarion Books, 2014. 978-0-544-05270-3. \$17.99. 376 pages.



Twelve-year-old Milo is ready to spend a cozy holiday season snuggled up with his mother and father. Much to his dismay, his family inn begins receiving an unexpected number of guests, each more secretive than the next. Why are they all arriving at the Greenglass House? And what secrets are they hiding? Even the impending blizzard doesn't slow the rush of incredible characters to the inn's doorstep. With the help of his newfound friend Meddy, Milo concocts a plan to unravel the visitors' shadowy pasts and their connection to the Greenglass House.

Curriculum Connections:

Social Studies:

- The Greenglass House's guests are traditionally surly but endearing smugglers. What is the history of ship smuggling in Nagspeake?

Art/Dramatic Art:

- Milo and Meddy create characters to solve the spiraling mysteries of the Greenglass House and its occupants. Have students create their own characters and identify their role, description, and skills.
- Milo concocts a way to get to know the suspicious and silent guests better – by having them each tell a story of their own (p. 101). Have students create a piece of folklore to share.
- Have students collaboratively recreate the architecture of the Greenglass House.

Science/STEM/Gaming:

- If the “Whilforber Whirlwind” truly existed how would it work? Create a contraption or draw a diagram that brings this awesome piece of steampunk technology to life.
- Create and play an RPG (role playing game) similar to Odd Trails.

Discussion Questions:

- Which characters were you suspicious of during the story and why?
- Why do you think Milo is able to feel braver when he is acting as Negret?
- If you were a character in this story, who would you cast yourself as? Why?
- What was your favorite piece of folklore from the novel and why?
- How does Milford paint an interesting portrait of smugglers in *Greenglass House*?
- Did the ending of *Greenglass House* shock you? Why or why not?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Foxlee, Karen. *Ophelia and the Marvelous Boy*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2014.

Hagen, George. *Gabriel Finley & the Raven's Riddle*. Schwartz & Wade, 2014. (on this year's DCF list)

Konigsburg, E.L. *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*. Atheneum, 1967.

Neumeier, Rachel. *The Floating Islands*. Knopf, 2011.

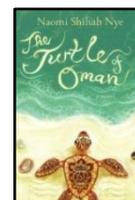
Turnage, Sheila. *The Ghosts of Tupelo Landing*. Kathy Dawson Books, 2014.

Vaughan, M.M. *The Ability*. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2013.

Author's Website: <http://clockworkfoundry.com/>

Naomi Shihab Nye
THE TURTLE OF OMAN

Harper Collins, 2014. ISBN: 978-0062019721. \$16.99. 304 pages.



Aref lives in the small, Middle Eastern country of Oman with his parents, but the family will be moving to Michigan for three years so his parents can complete their doctoral studies. Aref doesn't want to leave his beloved home, friends and most of all his grandfather, Siddi.

The Turtle of Oman takes place during the week before Aref must leave. Aref avoids packing and is more of a nuisance to his mother, so she sends him off to spend time with Siddi. The pair embark on series of seemingly magical adventures. They wander through the local market, watch sea turtles on the beach, travel through the desert to spend the night at a special camp where they meet and interact with a falconer. The story closes with Aref finally finishing his packing and coming to terms with his departure. With its soft tone and slow pace, this novel celebrates a child's connection with his home and the little things that make a place a home.

Curriculum Connections:

Social Studies/Geography:

- Research the country of Oman. Identify and find images of the places mentioned in the book. Is this how you imagined this country? Is there any recent news about Oman? Does the portrayal of Oman in the book seem accurate?

Language Arts:

- Aref loves to create lists of facts. Over the period of a week or two, create lists similar to Aref's but based on the experiences or thoughts you have over that time period.
- This novel takes place over one week. What do you think happens to Aref when he moves to Michigan? How do you imagine his homecoming to Oman in three years? Write an epilogue that explores one of these futures for Aref.

Discussion Questions:

- If you needed to leave Vermont for three years, where are the places that you would like to visit before you left? Or, what are the experiences that you would like to have before your departure? What would you want to pack in your suitcase, but wouldn't fit?
- At one point, Aref wonders, "What makes a place your own? What makes a home a home?" How would you answer these questions?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Broach, Elise. *Masterpiece*. Holt, 2008.

Cheng, Andrea. *The Year of the Book*. HMH Books for Young Readers, 2012.

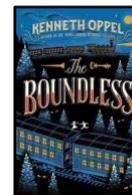
Kinsey-Warnock, Natalie. *As Long as There Are Mountains*. Dutton, 1997.

Lin, Grace. *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon*. Little, Brown, 2009.

Author's biography from the Poetry Foundation: <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/naomi-shihab-nye>

Kenneth Oppel
THE BOUNDLESS

Simon & Schuster, 2014. ISBN: 978-1442472884. \$17.99 336 pages.



Twelve year old Will Everett longs for excitement. Easier said than done for this shy and retiring boy who's an artist, not an adventurer. He's nothing like his strong father, who works on the first transcontinental Canadian railroad. After the ceremony to commemorate the maiden voyage of the magical train the Boundless, Will is thrust into adventure when he is caught in a deadly avalanche and later witnesses a murder. Will's courage will be tested against gun-wielding villains, the Canadian wilderness, and a Sasquatch while he rides on the Boundless, all 18 miles of it. Will joins forces with Maren, a strong-willed tightrope walker who is traveling with the circus, and together they risk their lives to save the Boundless from disaster. Come aboard the most magnificent train ever built and be prepared to be thrilled!

Curriculum Connections:

Art:

- The Boundless is an amazing train, with steampunk elements, old-fashioned flair, and out-of-this world scale. Draw, paint, collage, or build a model of how you see this train, drawing on specific details from the book about this “rolling city.”

Inquiry/Social Studies:

- There are several mythological creatures from Canadian folklore in this story, including the Sasquatch and the hags. Conduct short, sustained research around them. What is their impact on the plot of the story? Why did the author include them?
- Board the Boundless! Brochure: Students create a trifold brochure that advertises the Boundless, describing its route and its attractions to potential customers. Students can start with the information in the book and then supplement it with research.

Discussion Questions:

- Fairness is a big theme in *The Boundless*. Why is it so important to Will? What are examples of unfair treatment and bias that Will encounters on the train? How does he react and why?
- What does it mean to be courageous?
- What happens in the story to make Will more independent?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Oppel, Kenneth. *Airborn*. HarperCollins, 2004.

Selznick, Brian. *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*. Scholastic Press, 2007.

Westerfeld, Scott. *Leviathan Trilogy*. Simon Pulse.

Author's Website: <http://www.kennethoppel.ca/>

Author's blog: <http://www.kennethoppel.blogspot.com/>

Twitter @KennethOppel: <https://twitter.com/kennethoppel>

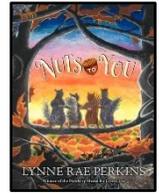
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/KennethOppelFan>

Curriculum Guide: http://www.kennethoppel.ca/images/the_boundless_study_guide.pdf

Book Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BSYIR7MYKc4>

Lynne Rae Perkins NUTS TO YOU

Greenwillow Books, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-06-009275-7. \$16.99. 259 pages.



Several members of the squirrel community witnessed that evil hawk snatch Jed up into his talons, but only TsTs saw him fall. While the rest of the squirrels mourn his loss, Chai and TsTs set off along the *buzzpaths* to save their friend. They venture into unknown territories, facing predators and allies along the way. They meet new squirrel communities and show us their incredible sense of ingenuity and ability to problem-solve. What is that ear-splitting rumbling, grinding, winding and cracking they hear that is slowly taking the forest apart, piece by piece? This novel will make us think differently about the little gray, brown and red rascals we see in our yards every day.

Curriculum Connections:

Art:

- The author wanted the story to have pictures. Choose your favorite scene and draw an accompanying illustration, using either the author's "cartoon-y, graphic novel-y" style (from <http://lynnerae.com/novels/nuts-to-you/>) or your own unique style.

Environmental Studies:

- Study the ways in which humans have displaced animals. Name some animals that are either extinct or threatened due to deforestation.

Life Sciences:

- Learn more about squirrel communities. What are their habitats? Mating patterns? Who are their predators? How do they communicate? What do they eat?
- Do you believe the author accurately depicted squirrels in her novel?

Discussion Questions:

- What did you learn about squirrels?
- Which squirrel are you most like?
- Would you have stayed behind or gone off to help save Jed?
- Describe the relationship between humans and squirrels in the novel.
- Lynn Rae Perkins drew the pictures in the book herself. Do you think they enhance or detract from the story?
- In the illustrations, she did not add clothing to the squirrels. What does she do to distinguish one squirrel from another?
- What thoughts does *Nuts to You* leave you with? What do you think the author was trying to say?

If you loved this title, you may like:

DiCamillo, Kate. *Flora and Ulysses: The Illuminated Adventures*. Candlewick, 2013.

Horvath, Polly. *Mr. and Mrs. Bunny—Detectives Extraordinaire!* (series). Schwartz & Wade, 2012.

Kurtz, Chris. *The Adventures of a South Pole Pig*. Harcourt, 2013.

White, E.B. *Charlotte's Web*. Harper & Brothers, 1952.

Author's Website: <http://lynnerae.com/>

On her website, Lynn Rae Perkins refers to a TED talk about how to create a mini-forest ecosystem anywhere:

https://www.ted.com/talks/shubhendu_sharma_how_to_grow_a_tiny_forest_anywhere?language=en

Jordan Romero with Linda LeBlanc
NO SUMMIT OUT OF SIGHT: THE TRUE STORY OF THE
YOUNGEST PERSON TO CLIMB THE SEVEN SUMMITS
Simon & Schuster, 2014. ISBN: 978-1476709628. \$17.99. 368 pages.



On May 22, 2010, at the age of thirteen, American teenager Jordan Romero became the youngest person to climb to the summit of Mount Everest. At fifteen, he became the youngest person to reach the summits of the tallest mountains on each of the seven continents. In this energizing memoir for young adults, Jordan, now seventeen, recounts his experience, which started as a spark of an idea at the age of nine and, many years of training and hard work later, turned into a dream come true. (Simon & Schuster)

Curriculum Connections:

Service-Learning:

- Jordan Romero founded a service-learning project called “Find Your Everest.” What would be your service-learning campaign and why? What are you passionate about and how can you make a difference?

Opposing Viewpoints:

- Jordan and his family garnered a lot of criticism over his climbing accomplishments. Can parents go too far in supporting their kid’s dreams? Read the article “How Young is Too Young.” Which side are you on?

<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Global-News/2010/0523/Jordan-Romero-13-summits-Everest-How-young-is-too-young>

Science:

- What are the dangers to humans when exposed to high elevations? How does the body adapt? What equipment do hikers need and why?

Inquiry/Information Literacy:

- Research the Seven Summits, each of the continent’s highest peaks:
 - Aconcagua (South America)
 - *Carstensz Pyramid (Australia/Indonesia)
 - Mount Elbrus (Europe)
 - Mount Everest (Asia)
 - Kilimanjaro (Africa)
 - *Mount Kosciuszko (Australia)
 - Mount McKinley/Denali (North America)
 - Mount Vinson (Antarctica)

*Debate rages over which of these two counts as the Australian continent’s highest summit. Jordan Romero climbed both.

- Research Vermont’s highest peak. What is its history, flora, fauna? How did it get its name? What is an alpine zone and what makes it a unique and fragile ecosystem?

Discussion Questions:

- What inspired Jordan Romero to climb the seven summits? What resources did he have available to him to help him accomplish his goals?

- How did these climbs influence and shape Jordan Romero? Is he a different person? Why or why not?
- How do we go about achieving our goals? Does it involve training, preparedness, luck, or a combination of all these? What else does it take?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Korman, Gordon. *The Contest* (Everest series). Scholastic, 2002.

Moreau, Roger. *Mountain Mazes*. Sterling, 1996.

Pfotzer, Mark. *Within Reach: My Everest Story*. Dutton, 1998.

Ralston, Aron. *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*. Atria, 2004.

Author's Website: <http://jordanromero.com/>

Team Jordan on Twitter @TeamJordanR: <https://twitter.com/teamjordanr>

Find Your Everest on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Find-Your-Everest/324335447580136>

Steve Sheinkin

THE PORT CHICAGO 50:

DISASTER, MUTINY AND THE FIGHT FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

Roaring Brook Press, 2014. ISBN: 978-1596437968. \$19.99. 208 pages.



On July 17, 1944, in the midst of World War II, there was a major explosion at Port Chicago in California. Over 300 servicemen were killed and countless more were injured. It was in this port that hundreds of black servicemen were ordered, day after day, to load ammunition onto ships despite the fact that they were never trained how to properly handle such dangerous cargo. The men handling this cargo knew it was only a matter of time before an accident occurred. This deadly accident triggered a series of events that no one anticipated. On August 9, 1944, the servicemen of Port Chicago were ordered to resume loading ammunition. Joe Small, one of the black servicemen, simply would not continue to load ammunition. He was scared of what might happen and he believed the black servicemen were being singled out for this dangerous job. Others followed Joe's lead and would not load ammunition. This group was charged with mutiny and faced a death sentence if found guilty. *The Port Chicago 50* provides a riveting account of the events leading up to and following the explosion and sheds light on this little known tragedy and the trial that ensued. He reveals the layers of racism and prejudice facing black Americans in the armed forces and in daily life in the United States. This is a compelling read about a little known, but very significant event in United States history.

Curriculum Connections:

Social Studies

- Research other historical examples of mutiny. Compare the events in the mutiny you research to the events described in *Port Chicago 50*. How are they different and similar?

Language Arts:

- Choose one of the people mentioned in the book. Write a series of journal entries or letters to a friend from their perspective and from several different points in time during the events.

Discussion Questions:

- Were you surprised by the way the black servicemen were treated both before and after the explosion? Why or why not?
- Do you think there is a hero in this story? Who and why?
- Had you heard of this tragic event before reading this book? If not, why do you think it's not well known? What do you think makes some historical events widely known and studied while others are lost to history?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Hoose, Phillip. *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*. Farrar Strauss Giroux, 2009.

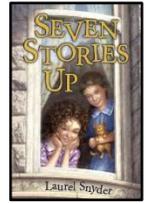
Sheinkin, Steve. *Bomb: The Race to Build and Steal the World's Most Dangerous Weapon*. Flash Point, 2012.

Stone, Tanya Lee. *Courage Has No Color*. Candlewick, 2013.

Author's Website: <http://stevsheinkin.com/>

Laurel Snyder
SEVEN STORIES UP

Random, 2014. ISBN: 978-0375869174. \$16.99. 240 pages.



Twelve-year-old Annie is thrilled to finally have the chance to meet her estranged grandmother. When Annie and her mother arrive at her grandmother's estate, however, Annie is devastated to learn that her grandmother is a bitter and mean old woman. When Annie wakes up the next morning in her grandmother's house, she is surprised to discover that she is not alone; there is another girl in the room with her. She soon realizes that she has traveled back in time to 1937, and that the strange girl is Molly, her grandmother at twelve years of age.

Due to illness, Molly has been kept up in her bedroom for much of her life and has been deprived of many life experiences. But with a little push from Annie, Molly is exposed to a whole new world. The girls set off on several adventures throughout the city of Baltimore, developing a friendship that has a profound effect on both of their futures.

Curriculum Connections:

Language Arts:

- Read *The Secret Garden* and compare and contrast with *Seven Stories Up*.
- Annie's grandmother kept a scrapbook of important events that took place in her life. Have students keep a journal or scrapbook to document moments in their lives.
- Annie gets the chance to see firsthand what life was like when her grandmother was a child. Have students interview a grandparent or other senior to learn more about what life was like when he or she was growing up.

Social Studies:

- As Annie and Molly ride in a taxicab through the city, they see a long line of people. The taxi driver explains that the people are waiting for free bread. Research the Great Depression and discuss the effects it had on everyday life.
- When Annie and Molly meet Bayla at the orphanage, they learn that she was sent to America from Poland to escape the war. Research the Holocaust and find stories similar to Bayla's story.

Discussion Questions:

- Molly says to Annie, "We do have a lot in common...You're more like me than my own sisters!" Do you think Molly and Annie have a lot in common? How are they similar? How are they different?
- Annie and Molly both share the same illness: asthma. If Annie grew up in 1937 with asthma, do you think she would have turned out like her grumpy grandmother? Why or why not?
- Were you surprised by the ending? Did you think it was a satisfying ending? Why or why not?
- The fortune teller at the fair tells the girls, "Magic is what people call it when the universe corrects itself and they happen to be watching." Do you believe in magic? Has anything magical ever happened to you?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Shang, Wendy Wan-Long. *The Great Wall of Lucy Wu*. Scholastic, 2011.

St. Antoine, Sara. *Three Bird Summer*. Candlewick, 2014.

Stead, Rebecca. *When You Reach Me*. Wendy Lamb, 2009.

Williams, Garcia. *One Crazy Summer*. Amistad, 2010.

Woods, Brenda. *The Blossoming Universe of Violet Diamond*. Nancy Paulsen, 2014.

Author's Website: <http://laurelsnyder.com/>

Megan Jean Sovern
THE MEANING OF MAGGIE

Chronicle Books, 2014. ISBN: 978-1-4521-1021-9. \$16.99. 220 pages.



Maggie Mayfield is turning eleven and looks forward to becoming President of the United States. When her Dad loses feeling in his legs and becomes confined to a wheelchair, he quits his job, turning Maggie’s mother into the family breadwinner. In the months that follow, as the family dynamics change, Maggie becomes more and more aware of her father’s condition and its prognosis, first through comments from her teenage sisters and later through her own science project. Though she is often overwhelmed – both by being left out of family discussions and by her growing knowledge that her father will never be cured – she faces everything with determination, humor, and hope.

Curriculum Connections:

Art:

- Design a book cover in the same style for one of the other members in the family, and tell what each item says about that character.

Literacy:

- Pick one of the older sisters and write a short description of the very same year from their point of view. How would their age change their outlook on their family’s situation?

Science:

- Research multiple sclerosis. Have there been any breakthroughs in treatment since Maggie's childhood?

Discussion Questions:

- When does the novel take place? What kinds of clues can you find in the text that help you determine the timeframe?
- How does writing her story in her notebook help Maggie deal with the changes in her family?
- Why do you think the author chose to include footnotes as part of Maggie’s story? Do you think it enhanced her voice? Why or why not?
- Do you think that it was a good thing that Maggie’s family kept the reality of their Dad's health condition from Maggie as long as they did? Why or why not?
- At what point/s in the story do you feel like Maggie has actually “pulled up her boot straps?”

If you loved this title, you may like:

Connor, Leslie. *Waiting For Normal*. Katherine Tegen Books, 2008.

Law, Ingrid. *Savvy*. Dial, 2008.

Tarshis, Lauren. *Emma Jean Lazarus Fell Out of a Tree*. Dial, 2007.

Urban, Linda. *A Crooked Kind of Perfect*. HMH Books for Young Readers, 2007.

Weeks, Sarah. *So B. It*. HarperCollins, 2004.

Author’s Website: <http://meganjeansovern.com>

Tania Unsworth
THE ONE SAFE PLACE

Algonquin, 2014. ISBN: 978-1616203290. \$15.95. 304 pages.



Devin lives on a farm with his grandfather. When his grandfather dies, Devin travels to the mysterious city to look for help. He finds a run-down world of extreme poverty and extreme wealth. The rich people control the water in this hot, dry world. Devin befriends a girl named Kit who shows him how to survive on the streets.

There is rumored to be an orphanage at the edge of the city where children can be safe. Kit and Devin go in search of comfort but find a nightmare. Rich people pay to “borrow” their bodies and memories to relive their childhoods. And children like Kit, with unhappy childhoods, disappear mysteriously. How can they get out?

Curriculum Connections:

Science:

- How important is water to our society? What would happen if water became extremely scarce? Who would get the little water we have?

Language Arts:

- Why do you think people want to relive their childhoods? Do you think people would pay to experience someone else’s happy memories? Why or why not?
- Write an additional chapter to this book. What would happen next?

Social Studies

- Where in the world is water scarce? What is life like there? Who controls the water?
- How do you think the rich got so rich while the poor got so poor? Has this happened before in history?
- What part do you think the government plays in this book? What does the government do to help us in our lives?

Discussion Questions:

- If a resource like water became scarce, is there a fair way to make sure everyone gets what they need?
- Why do you think so many children were poor and homeless in this story? What happened to their families?
- Do you think the end is realistic? Do you think they could live happily ever after?
- What do you think life was like for the old people in this story? Were they happy? Sad? Lonely?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Bacigalupi, Paolo. *Ship Breaker*. Little, Brown, 2010.

Clayton, Emma. *The Roar*. Chicken House, 2009.

Connor, Leslie. *Crunch*. Katherine Tegen, 2010.

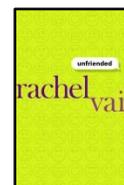
Dashner, James. *The Maze Runner*. Delacorte, 2009.

Westerfeld, Scott. *Uglies*. Simon Pulse, 2005.

Author’s Website: <http://www.taniaunsworth.com/>

Rachel Vail UNFRIENDED

Viking Press, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-670-01307-4. \$16.99. 282 pages.



When thirteen-year-old Truly is invited to sit at the Popular Table by a former best friend, she willingly goes, leaving behind her good friend Hazel. She is surprised at how nice the popular kids are, and how mean Hazel has become. Before she knows what's happening, Truly finds herself caught in a web of lies and misunderstandings, made all the worse by the relentlessly public social media world. Told from the point-of-view of six eighth-grade boys and girls, the story unfolds with complexity and no easy answers, revealing the insecurities that each person feels, regardless of popularity status.

Curriculum Connections:

Social studies:

- What is cyber-bullying? Have your students research cyber-bullying statistics, facts, and legal consequences. Have a law enforcement officer or someone from the Vermont Technicool organization come speak to your students. Some websites on this topic are: <http://cyberbullying.us/facts>; <http://www.bullyingstatistics.org/>; www.stopbullying.gov/; <http://www.pcavt.org/technicool.html>.

History:

- The students in this story do a history project on Benedict Arnold. Have your students research Benedict Arnold and his role in the Revolutionary War.
- Do they agree with Truly that he was more than just a traitor?

Discussion Questions:

- Who is your favorite and least favorite character in this book? Why?
- How do the parents influence the behavior of some of the characters – specifically Natasha's mom versus Truly's mom? How does Clay's father make him feel?
- Why does the author tell this story from differing points of view? Did you change your mind about a character once you heard their point of view?
- What role does social media play in this story? Who was guilty of cyber-bullying?
- What parallels are made between the events in this book and the events surrounding Benedict Arnold?

If you loved this title, you may like:

Asher, Jay. *Thirteen Reasons Why*. Razorbill, 2007.

Palacio, R. J. *Wonder*. Knopf, 2012.

Shull, Megan. *The Swap*. Katherine Tegen, 2014.

Telgemeier, Raina. *Drama*. Graphix, 2012.

Author's Website: <http://rachelvail.com/>

Five questions with Rachel Vail: <http://www.reading.org/literacy-daily/literature/post/books/2014/11/07/five-questions-with...-rachel-vail-%28-em-unfriended-em-%29>

For Skype information, contact Melinda Quick, Penguin Author Appearance Coordinator, at penguinauthorvisits@gmail.com.

Generic Questions that can be used for any book:

- Can you make any connections between this book and events in your own life? (text to self) What about connections between this book and other books you've read? (text to text) Can you make any connections between this book and experiences that people you know, or know about, have had? (text to world)
- What research do you think the author of this book had to do in order to write this story? (inferring)
- If this book were turned into a play and you could play any character in the story (without regard to gender) which character would you pick and why?
- Illustrate a scene from this book. (visualization)
- Having read the book, what connections can you make between the book jacket, the title and the story itself. (inferring)
- Design a new book jacket.
- While reading this book, did you make any predictions? What were they? Were they accurate? (inferring)
- **For non-fiction:** See your teacher/librarian, take a brief look at this book together and talk about how it is organized. (determining importance)
- What did you wonder about as you read this book? (questioning)