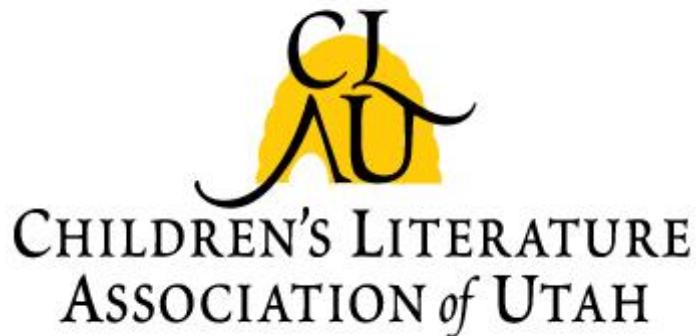


**Children's Literature
Association
of
Utah**

**Beehive Children's Fiction
Book Nominees
2018
Book Activities**



Adventures With Waffles by Maria Parr

Illustrator: Kate Forrester

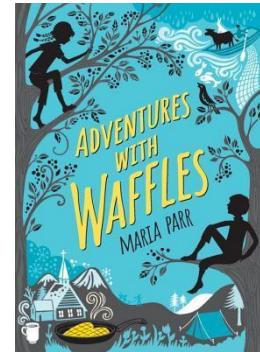
Publisher: Candlewick Press

Publication date: 2005

ISBN 978-0-7636-7281-2

Grade Level 2-5

Pages: 240



Description:

Hardly a day passes without Trille and Lena inventing some kind of adventure that often ends in trouble. Whether it's coaxing a cow onto a boat or sledding down the steepest and iciest hill with a chicken, there is always a thrill—and sometimes an injury—to be had.

General Review:

For all its emotional resonance, the narrative is never soppy ... this appealing chapter book has a distinctive setting, plenty of humor, and unusual emotional clarity.

—Booklist (starred review)

Themes:

Family; Humor; Social Issues; Friendship; Religion, Sports & Recreation

Author/Illustrator Information:

Maria Parr is a Norwegian children's author. Her debut novel, *Vaffelhjarte* (*Waffle Hearts*), has been translated into more than 25 different languages and won France's Prix Sorcières in 2010, the Dutch Zilveren Griffel in 2008, and was shortlisted for Norway's prestigious Brage Prize. It has been made into a popular children's television series in Norway. Her second novel, *Tonje Glimmerdal*, won the Brage Prize and the Norwegian Critics' Prize in 2009. Maria has a master's degree in Nordic languages and literature and works as a primary school teacher. She lives in Norway with her family.

<http://www.walker.co.uk/contributors/Maria-Parr-11691.aspx>

Kate Forrester is a freelance illustrator, designer and hand-lettering artist based in Brighton, UK. With more than 10 years of experience in the industry, she has worked for a range of international print and design clients on book covers, packaging, advertising campaigns and more.

<http://www.kateforrester.co.uk>

Discussion Questions:

1. How does it feel to have a good friend? What do you do together? How would you feel if one of you were to move away? How would you keep your friendship alive?
2. Have you had a relative you're close to? What activities do you do together? Is there a special bond you've created? How would you feel if the relative were to die? How can the support of your family help? How could help a friend who has lost someone close to them?
3. Do you know someone or are you part of a one-parent family? What are some of the issues surrounding a single parent household?

Activities:

1. Try making some creative waffle flavors or toppings.
2. Make friendship bracelets to share with each other.
3. Create a story together, starting with characters both friends develop and then have one friend write one page and the other friend continues it on another page.

Similar Books:

Fiction Titles:

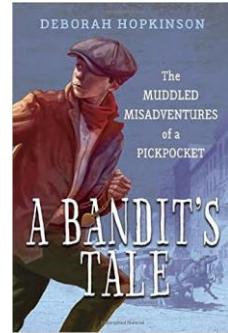
Honey by Sarah Weeks

Ava and Pip by Carol Weston

The Story of Diva and Flea by Mo Willems

A Bandit's Tale: The Muddled Misadventures of a Pickpocket
By Deborah Hopkinson

Publisher: Knopf Books for Young Readers
Publication Date: April 5, 2016
ISBN: 978-0385754996
Grade Level: 3-7
Pages: 304



Description:

Eleven-year-old Rocco is an Italian immigrant who finds himself alone in New York City after he's sold to a padrone by his poverty-stricken parents. While working as a street musician, he meets the boys of the infamous Bandits' Roost, who teach him the art of pickpocketing. Rocco embraces his new life of crime—he's good at it, and it's more lucrative than banging a triangle on the street corner. But when he meets Meddlin' Mary, a strong-hearted Irish girl who's determined to help the horses of New York City, things begin to change. Rocco begins to reexamine his life—and take his future into his own hands.

General Review:

"A strong choice for fans of Rodman Philbrick's *The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg* (Scholastic, 2009) and those who enjoy adventures about scrappy and resourceful kids who have to rely on their own smarts and the kindness of strangers to change their lives." —*School Library Journal* starred review

"A dynamic historical novel ideal for both classroom studies and pleasure reading." —*Publishers Weekly* starred review

Themes:

19th Century Life, Advocacy, Child Abuse, Child Labor, Crime, Honesty, Immigrants, Independence, Journalism, New York, Pick-pockets, Photography, Social Change, Survival

Author/Illustrator Information:

Deborah Hopkinson's Website <http://deborahhopkinson.com/>

Discussion Questions:

1. How did Rocco help Luigi and Marco? Why do you think he did these things?
2. Rocco was sent to the House of Refuge twice. Compare the two events. What was different and what was the same?
3. What motivated Rocco to steal Jacob Riis' camera? Do you think it was a good idea?
4. If there was a cause that you felt strongly about, would you be willing to be a "meddler" like Mary Hallanan? How would you go about it?
5. How did your opinion of Rocco change after you found out what really happened back in Italy?

Activities:

1. They boys Rocco lives with when her first arrives in New York, are given musical instruments with which to earn money, but are not trained in music. Bring in some musical instruments and let the kids try them out.
2. While at the House of Refuge, Rocco works at the print shop. Let the kids create their own stamps by cutting shapes out of sponges. Then let them “print” their own piece of art.
3. Rocco escapes the House of Refuge only to wind up in the middle of a blizzard. Follow these links to some snow based science experiments:
<http://www.weatherwizkids.com/weather-winter-storms.htm>
<http://blissfullydomestic.com/life-bliss/how-snowflakes-form-homeschool-lesson-plan/112666/>
<https://wehavekids.com/education/Easy-Snow-and-Ice-Experiments>
4. Jacob Riis used pictures to communicate the plight of people in the tenements. His book became one of the most influential of its time, but would it have been as influential without the pictures? Have the kids set up an experiment to compare the effect that pictures have on information dissemination by gathering and displaying interesting facts. Use pictures and text with half and text only with the other half. Then invite a group of people into the classroom to look around. When they leave, give them a questionnaire based on the facts. Gather all the results and see which facts were noticed most; the ones with pictures or the ones with text only. Have the kids create a chart or graph to display the results.
5. Rocco decides that he wants to be a reporter for a newspaper like Max. Gather some newspapers and put your kids into teams or pairs. Have each team or child select a picture from the newspaper and cut it out. Have them make up two or three fake headlines to go with it and write them down along with the real headline. Then have the kids trade pictures and headline lists and try to pick out the real headline.

More Resources:

Jacob Riis' photographs <https://www.moma.org/artists/4928>
Randall's Island Park Alliance <https://randallsisland.org>
Tenement Museum <http://www.tenement.org/>
New York Historical Society <http://www.nyhistory.org/library>
Classroom Bookshelf <http://www.theclassroombookshelf.com/2016/05/a-bandits-tale-the-muddled-misadventures-of-a-pickpocket/>

Similar Books:**Fiction Titles:**

The Great Trouble: a mystery of London, the blue death, and a boy called Ee” by Deborah Hopkinson
Chasing Secrets by Gennifer Choldenko
Water Street by Patricia Reilly Giff
A Night Divided by Jennifer A. Nielsen
The War that Saved My Life by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley
Letters from Rifka by Karen Hesse

Non-Fiction Titles:

Nellie Bly and investigative journalism for kids: mighty muckrakers from the golden age to today by Ellen Voelckers Mahoney

Breaker Boys: how a photograph helped end child labor by Michael Burgan

Kids at work: Lewis Hine and the crusade against child labor by Russell Freedman

Shutting out the sky: life in the tenements of New York, 1880-1924 by Deborah Hopkinson

Guide to Photography by Nancy Honovich

The Book Scavenger by Jennifer Chambliss Bertman

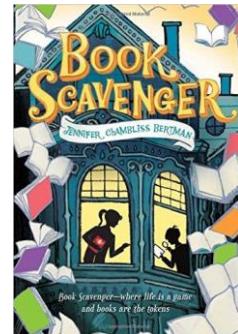
Publisher: Christy Ottaviano Books (Henry Holt and Co.)

Publication Date: June 2, 2015

ISBN: 978-1-62779-115-1

Grade Level: 3-6

Number of Pages 368



Description:

For twelve-year-old Emily, the best thing about moving to San Francisco is that it's the home city of her literary idol: Garrison Griswold, book publisher and creator of the online sensation Book Scavenger (a game where books are hidden in cities all over the country and clues to find them are revealed through puzzles). Upon her arrival, however, Emily learns that Griswold has been attacked and is now in a coma, and no one knows anything about the epic new game he had been poised to launch. Then Emily and her new friend James discover an odd book, which they come to believe is from Griswold himself, and might contain the only copy of his mysterious new game.

General Review:

From School Library Journal

Gr 4–6—Twelve-year-old Emily doesn't have enough time to get attached to places. She and her family move yearly, pursuing a Kerouac-inspired, footloose family adventure. Through their travels, Emily anchors herself through an online community called Book Scavenger, a geocaching-style game where participants hide books in public places and reveal the locations through encoded clues. Book Scavenger is the brainchild of Garrison Griswold, the "Willy Wonka of publishing," a San Francisco-based publisher with a penchant for elaborate spectacles and games. When Emily's family moves to San Francisco, she's excited to encounter the elusive Griswold and to participate in his newest game. Unfortunately, he is attacked on his way to a press conference, and even Emily's beloved Book Scavenger may be in jeopardy. The key to it all just might be in a mysterious book that Emily and her new neighbor James found at the BART station, but time is running short, and sinister (if bumbling) forces pursue them. Sprinkled with ciphers, San Francisco landmarks, and literary allusions, Book Scavenger is a fun, light, implausible adventure. The action drags occasionally, and the characterizations are sparse and sometimes overly cute, but the book's goofy, feckless charm is undeniable. VERDICT This will appeal to fans of Blue Balliett's art-world mysteries.—Katya Schapiro, Brooklyn Public Library --This text refers to the [Hardcover](#) edition.

Themes:

friendship, mystery, cyphers, puzzles, codes, problem solving, treasure hunts, history, San Francisco, Edgar Allan Poe, famous authors, family, belonging

Author/Illustrator Information:

Visit Jennifer Chambliss Bertman's site at <http://jenniferchamblissbertman.com/>

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is moving becoming for difficult for Emily? How would you feel if you moved almost every year?
2. What obstacles do Emily and James over come in their friendship and how does their friendship become stronger?
3. How does Emily's family come together to make sure the needs of everyone are met?
4. Emily deals with an unkind girl in her class who cheats. How does she and James handle the situation? Have you ever found yourself in a similar situation? What do you think is the best way to handle it?
5. What did you anticipate ending treasure would be? What is your reaction to what the treasure was, and why do you think it was valuable? What is something you treasure in your own life and what makes it valuable to you?

Activities:

1. Visit bookscavenger.com and participate in scaled down version of the Book Scavenger game found in the book! If you would like a similar challenge visit bookcrossing.com. [This website was part of the inspiration for Book Scavenger. Through this site 1.3 million readers have hidden more than 10 million books!](#)
2. In the Book Scavenger Emily discovers a hidden code in the Gold Bug book. Get your own discarded book and use the text to create a code of your own.
3. James and Emily exchange messages with each other in a bucket. Create a fun way to exchange messages in your classroom/family/library etc.
4. Go on a library book scavenger hunt. For example, find a book about an animal, find a book with no pictures, find a book about science etc. Example here:
<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/blogs/scholastic-parents-raise-reader/challenge-kids-to-bookshelf-scavenger-hunt>
5. Emily gains a great deal of appreciation for her neighborhood. Create a detailed map of your own neighborhood making sure to include your favorite places.
6. Look up "Edgar Allan Poe and Music" on Wikipedia. Learn about the different composers who wrote music about some of Poe's works then listen to them.

Similar Books:

Fiction Titles:

The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin
Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library by Chris Grabenstein
The Egypt Game by Zilpha Keatley Snyder
Chasing Vermeer by Blue Balliet

Non-Fiction Titles:

Top Secret: A Handbook of Codes, Ciphers and Secret Writing by Paul B. Janeczko Illustrated by Jenna LaReau
A City by the Bay: A Magical Journey Around San Francisco by Tricia Brown
Edgar Allan Poe's Tales of Mystery and Madness by Gris Grimly
The Gold Bug and Other Tales by Edgar Allan Poe

Clover's Luck (The Magical Adoption Agency #1) by Kallie George

Publisher: Disney-Hyperion

Publication Date: February 3, 2015

ISBN: 978-1-4231-8382-2

Grade Level: 3-7

Number of Pages 160



Description:

Despite her name, Clover has always felt decidedly *unlucky*. So when she stumbles upon a mysterious cottage in the woods, she can hardly believe her good fortune. It's the Magical Animal Adoption Agency, and it houses creatures of all kinds. Fairy horses, unicorns, and a fiery young dragon are just the beginning! Mr. Jams, the Agency owner, agrees to hire Clover as a summer helper, and she hopes her luck has finally changed. But when she's left alone to care for the Agency, a sneaky witch comes after the magical creatures! Will Clover outsmart her in time to protect the animals?

General Reviews:

Kirkus Review | 11/04/2014

Clover might have a lucky name, but she is sure that she's the unluckiest girl ever.

Clover believes in luck, and she's tried everything to improve hers. She painted her room green (the color of clovers), she hung a horseshoe above her bed, and she carries a wishbone everywhere. Nothing works. Now her best friend, Emma, has gotten the last space at Pony Camp, and Clover will be alone all summer. When her pet canary escapes through a hole in her window, Clover chases the bird into the dark and forbidding Woods that surround the town. She doesn't catch the bird, but she sees an ad for volunteers at an animal adoption agency posted on a tree. When she finds the cottage on Dragon Tail Lane, she learns that Mr. Jams fosters *magical* animals. He accepts her as a volunteer but must leave on a special rescue mission almost immediately. He places Clover in charge. Can she do the job without her bad luck tripping her up—especially with a wicked witch about? George kicks off her *Magical Animal Adoption Agency* series with the tale of how Clover discovers her luck isn't what she thought it was. All works out appropriately conveniently for the audience, and the solidly written, gentle tale of magic and self-reliance will entertain confident new independent readers.

Clover's sweet story is a good next step for lovers of the Magic Tree House. (*Fantasy*. 6-10)

Themes:

Animals, Fortune, Mythical Animals, Magic, Perseverance, Pet Adoption, Volunteering

Author Information:

Kassie George's Website <http://www.kalliegeorge.com/bio.html>

Alexandra Boiger's Website <http://www.alexandraboiger.com/>
<http://alexandraboigerillustration.blogspot.com/>

Discussion Questions:

1. Do you believe people are born lucky or unlucky?
2. Why does Mr. Jams say on page 24, "It is just that our animals' true tales are not so enchanting"?
3. Of all the magical animals mentioned in the book, which one would you most like to adopt?

4. What did Mr. Jams mean when he told Clover, "You will need to guard your heart, even as you keep it open."?
5. Does "being plucky make you lucky?"
6. Do you think it is possible to change your luck? Do you think Clover's luck changed?
7. What do you think will happen in the sequel to this book?

Activities:

1. Clover takes care of unicorns while Mr. Jams is away. Here are many different unicorns you can print off to color. <http://freecoloringsheet.blogspot.com/2015/01/unicorn-coloring-sheet.html>
2. If you have a subscription to Scholastic Printables, here is a four-page printable complex text passage for grade 2 about unicorns that helps students understand the fantasy genre and connect text details to a labeled illustration.
<https://printables.scholastic.com/shop/prcontent/Unicorn-Secrets-Grade-2-Complex-Text-Passage/9780545577083-009>
3. Draw a picture of the animal you would most like to adopt from the book.
4. Make a pipe cleaner dragon out of 4 pipe cleaners, craft foam, craft sticks, googly eyes, scissors, and a hot glue gun. <http://frugalfun4boys.com/2015/08/25/pipe-cleaner-dragons/>
5. Make origami dragons. <http://foldsomething.com/2011/origami-videos/dragons/>
6. This free printable activity compares frog vs. toads. It also teaches students about the difference between fiction and non-fiction. <http://firstgradeshenanigans.blogspot.com/2012/03/feeling-froggy.html> Click on **Fiction and Non-Fiction Posters** link in red.

Similar Books:

Fiction Titles:

Big Bad Detective Agency by Bruce Hale
The Case of the Weird Blue Chicken: The Next Misadventure (A Chicken Squad Misadventure #2) by Doreen Cronin
Harriet the Invincible by Ursula Vernon
The Isle of the Lost by Melissa de la Cruz
Magic Treehouse – Dinosaurs Before Dark by Mary Pope Osborne
Magic Treehouse – Blizzard of the Blue Moon by Mary Pope Osborne
Pip Bartlett’s Guide to Magical Creatures by Jackson Pearce
Secrets of Droon by Tony Abbott

Non-fiction:

Adoption Option (Matti’s Mutts Book1) by Marisa Mikel
Biscuit by Ellen Miles
Frogs, Toads, and Turtles by Diane L. Burns
My Limp Dog: A Dog Adoption Story: A MUST READ, If You Want a Pet, from 8 to 14 to 114 Years Old (Limpy Dog Series) by Joana Slodownik and Adam Slodownik
Shelter Dogs: Amazing Stories of Adopted Strays by Peg Kehret and Greg Farrar
Slippery Babies: Young Frogs, Toads, and Salamanders by Ginny Johnston
The Summer Cat (Cat Tales Book 3) by Linda Benson

Ghost by Jason Reynolds

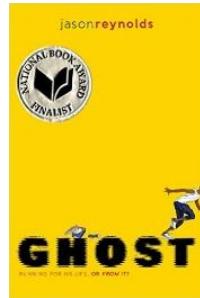
Publisher: Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy

Publication Date: 2016

ISBN: 978-1481450157

Grade Level: 5th and up

Number of Pages 192



Description:

Ghost has a crazy natural talent, but no formal training. If he can stay on track, literally and figuratively, he could be the best sprinter in the city. But Ghost has been running for the wrong reasons—it all starting with running away from his father, who, when Ghost was a very little boy, chased him and his mother through their apartment, then down the street, with a loaded gun, aiming to kill. Since then, Ghost has been the one causing problems—and running away from them—until he meets Coach, an ex-Olympic Medalist who blew his own shot at success by using drugs, and who is determined to keep other kids from blowing *their* shots at life.

General Reviews:

From School Library Journal

Gr 5–9—Castle "Ghost" Crenshaw lives with his single mother; his father is serving time in prison after firing a gun at Ghost and his mom three years ago—and Ghost has been running ever since. While running one day, he stops to watch a track practice and decides to crash the race. Impressed, the coach offers him a position on the team. His mom reluctantly agrees to let him join as long as he can behave himself and stay out of trouble in school. This is a struggle for the impulsive Ghost, but with Coach's help, he learns the advantages of diligent practice and teamwork. Reynolds paints a realistic picture of a boy who needs the support of his community to channel his talent and energy.

Supporting adult characters, like shop owner Mr. Charles and Coach, are positive, nuanced, and well-developed. The diverse team members are dealing with their own struggles, which will be explored in three future installments. The consequences for Ghost's misbehavior are somewhat inconsistent, but the detailed and informative descriptions of running and training with an elite track team more than make up for this. VERDICT The focus on track athletics—a subject sorely lacking in the middle grade space—combined with the quality of Reynolds's characters and prose, makes this an essential purchase.—Karen Yingling, Blendon Middle School, Westerville, OH

Author Information:

Jason Reynolds is crazy. About stories. He is the author of critically acclaimed *When I Was the Greatest*, for which he was the recipient of the Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe Award for New Talent; the Coretta Scott King Honor books *Boy in the Black Suit* and *All American Boys* (cowritten with Brendan Kiely, also the winner of the Walter Dean Myers Award); *As Brave As You*, his stunning middle grade debut that was a *Time* Book of the Year and winner of the Kirkus Award; and *Ghost*, the first book in his middle grade Track series, which was also a National Book Award finalist. You can find his ramblings at JasonWritesBooks.com.

What Jason knows is that there are a lot — A LOT — of people, young, old, and in-between, who hate reading. He knows that many of these book haters are boys. He knows that many of these book-hating boys, don't actually hate books, they hate boredom. If you are reading this, and you happen to be one of

these boys, first of all, you're reading this Jason's master plan is already working (muahahahahaha) and second of all, know that Jason totally feels you. He REALLY does. Because even though he's a writer, he hates reading boring books too.

So here's what he plans to do: NOT WRITE BORING BOOKS.

Themes:

African American boys
Children of prisoners
Cranshaw, Castle (Fictitious character)
Fathers and sons
Middle schools
Runners
Schools
Sprinting
Track and field

Discussion Questions:

1. The cover of Ghost includes this question: Running for his life, or from it? Explain the role that running plays in Ghost's life. Why does he start running? How does his reason for running change?
2. What memory is triggered about Ghost's dad from the sunflower seeds? How does this flashback help develop Ghost's character? What other things bring back memories of his father? Are any of his memories positive?
3. Initially, what sport is Ghost interested in playing? Why isn't he interested in track? What do you think makes him decide to race Lu?
4. How did Castle get his nickname? Why do you think he likes the name Ghost better than his given name? Which name do you think suits him best: Ghost or Castle? If you gave yourself a nickname, what would it be? Have others given you a nickname? If so, does it properly reflect who you are?
5. Ghost has to deal with bullying at school. Why do you think Brad Simmons picks on Ghost? How does Ghost respond? Instead of fighting, how could Ghost have retaliated?
6. Think about the consequences Ghost faces as a result of his decision to steal a pair of running shoes. Do you think that the way that Coach punishes him is fair? What would the consequences have been if Ghost had been stopped by the police instead? What would the consequences have been if his mother had discovered the theft? What would have happened if Ghost had never been caught? Why might it have been better for him to get caught?
7. In addition to training the Defenders to be competitive runners, Coach also teaches them to work together as a team, helping them learn to be responsible and empathetic. What tactics does he use to teach these life lessons?

Activities:

1. Throughout the novel, Ghost has a number of adults who act as advocates for him: Mr. Charles, Coach, his mom, and even Principal Marshall. Consider the importance of each of these figures in Ghost's life. Then write an essay or prepare a speech about a trusted adult in your own life. Why do you trust this person?
2. Jason Reynolds uses world records as a framing motif in the novel. Research world records and create a poster about some of the most interesting world records that you find. If you were going to try to break a world record, which one would you attempt?
3. One of Ghost's heroes is Jamaican runner and Olympic gold medalist, Usain Bolt. Research

Bolt's biography or the biography of another great runner and present your findings to the class either with a traditional report or a multimedia presentation. A list of famous runners in history can be found here: <http://www.biography.com/people/groups/track-and-field-athletes>. And a contemporary list of runners can be found here: <http://rw.runnersworld.com/the50/>.

4. When Coach asks Ghost's mother to let him join the team, Ghost reflects, "I felt like I had seen this in every single sports movie I had ever watched. All of them. *Ma'am, your son has potential.* If this went like the movies, I was either going to score the game-winning touchdown (which is impossible in track) or . . . die." As a class, compare *Ghost* to a classic sports movie (ex. *Rudy*, *Bend It Like Beckham*, *Miracle*, *Hoop Dreams*, *42*, *The Bad News Bears*, *Jim Thorpe—All American*). Are there any similarities between the film you watch and *Ghost*?

5. Work with your physical education department to organize a *Ghost*-inspired class, trying out some of the training exercises and races. How did this experience enrich your understanding of Reynolds's novel?

6. One of the central conflicts in the novel involves Ghost's desire to acquire an expensive pair of running shoes. Research the development of running shoe technology. What types of shoes are on the market? What features are important in a running shoe? Which brands have the highest ratings? If you had to choose one pair of running shoes, which one would you choose? Write a persuasive essay that uses rhetorical appeals to justify your choice.

7. Look back at Chapter Five, paying specific attention to the scene in *Everything Sports*. Rewrite this scene from Tia's point of view. What do you think happened when she realized that Ghost stole the shoes? How would she have felt when Ghost returned with Coach and apologized?

8. Coach tells Ghost that he wants to show him, "You can't run away from who you are, but what you can do is run toward who you want to be." How does Castle try to run from who he is? What kind of person does he want to be? How has finding his team helped him start to become that person? Try applying Coach's advice to your own life: What kind of person do you want to be? What could help you become that person?

9. Working with a group, try to translate *Ghost* into film. Which aspects of the book would translate especially well to film (ex. dialogue, setting, character, conflict)? You may choose to create a book trailer for the novel or adapt a scene in the book into a screenplay and film it.

Similar Books:

- The Crossover by Kwame Alexander
- As Brave as You by Jason Reynolds
- Running Dream by Wendelin Van Draanen
- Strider by Beverly Cleary
- Getto Cowboy by Greg Neri

Related Non-fiction:

- Undefeated by Steve Sheinkin
- Who was Jesse Owens? By James Buckley
- Guinness World Records
- Scholastic Book of World Records
- Kid Athletes: true Tales of Childhood from Sports Legends by David Stabler

The Girl in the Tower by Lisa Schroeder

Publisher: Henry Holt and Company

Publication Date: March 29th, 2016

ISBN: 0805095136

Grade Level: 3-7

Number of Pages 256



Description:

Ever since she could remember, Violet and her mother have been locked away in a tower by the evil Queen Bogdana, who has the kingdom under her spell. The queen has all she wants except one thing—beauty. Violet possesses this beauty. She also has a secret: though she is very small, both her spirit and her heart are mighty.

When Violet is summoned by Bogdana to start training to become a real princess, it seems like her life might be taking a turn for the better. But hope quickly fades when Violet's mother is expelled from the castle and they're forbidden to see each other ever again. With everyone's lives in the balance, it's up to Violet to break the spell and reunite her family.

General Reviews:

"Kids will find it easy to root for determined Violet as she sets out to secure her family's freedom. . . her courage and hope light up the pages of this sweetly quaint fairy tale."—Publishers Weekly

"Recommended for fans of fairy tales and modern Disney princesses." —School Library Journal

Author Information:

Official Bio: Once upon a time, Lisa Schroeder wanted to join Encyclopedia Brown on his fun adventures. Since that didn't work out, she decided to be an author instead. Lisa's written over a dozen books for kids and teens including the popular verse novels for teens I HEART YOU, YOU HAUNT ME and CHASING BROOKLYN, and her most recent YA novels, THE BRIDGE FROM ME TO YOU and ALL WE HAVE IS NOW. She's also the author of the middle grade novels IT'S RAINING CUPCAKES, MY SECRET GUIDE TO PARIS and THE GIRL IN THE TOWER. Her books have been translated into foreign languages and have been selected for state reading lists. Lisa is a native Oregonian and lives with her family outside of Portland.
<http://www.lisaschroederbooks.com/>

Themes:

Banishment, Beauty, Captives, Good and evil, Greed, Kidnapping, Mothers and daughters, Princesses, Secrets, Spells, Towers, Witches, Women Rulers

Discussion Questions:

1. How does this story compare to "Rapunzel"?
2. How does Violet show bravery in this story?
3. What did you think of the secret garden George made for Violet?
4. If you had your own secret garden, what would you want in it?
5. Violet and other characters in this story lie to keep each other safe, do you think lying is ever justified? In what cases?

6. In the story no one wanted to visit the place where the secret garden was created because it was rumored to be ancient burial grounds. What do you think of this? Do you believe in any superstitions that cause you to avoid places, things, animals, or numbers?
7. What do you think of the things Queen Bogdana did in order to reach her goal to become beautiful?
8. Violet cuts off all of her hair in her plan to escape. Would you do the same? Why or why not?
9. Violet believes that a person doesn't need to be beautiful to be royalty. What personal qualities do you think are more important than beauty?
10. The garden and harp brought Violet comfort during her imprisonment. When you go through a hard time, what brings you comfort?
11. Nuri sometimes liked to be alone to think and make plans. Do you ever like to be alone in order to concentrate or relax?

Activities:

STEM/Physics - Play Jenga

<https://www.amazon.com/Hasbro-53557-Game-Jenga/dp/B000GBA60W>

STEM/Physics - Have a contest to see who can build the highest tower with playing cards

<http://www.wikihow.com/Build-a-Tower-of-Cards>

STEM/Plant Life - Plastic cup greenhouses

<http://www.cbc.ca/parents/play/view/plastic-cup-mini-greenhouses>

STEM/Plant Life - Color Changing Flower

<http://laughingkidslearn.com/science-experiment-with-colour-changing-flowers/>

STEM/Animals - Create a hummingbird feeder

<http://www.fivelittlechefs.com/craft/easy-crafts/hummingbird-feeder.html>

Art - Create a Terrarium

http://www.parents.com/kids/education/math-and-science/how-to-make-a-terrarium/?socsrc=Parents_PINTEREST_20160222224500

Art - Make a picture of your family

More Resources:

Children's Household Tales – The Brothers Grimm

Composting: <http://askabiologist.asu.edu/experiments/composting>

Hummingbirds: <http://askabiologist.asu.edu/explore/hummingbirds>

Similar Books:

Dragon Slippers by Jessica Day George

The Wide-Awake Princess by E.D. Baker

The Girl Who Drank the Moon by Kelly Barnhill

When Mischief Came to Town by Katrina Nannestad

Princess Juniper of the Hourglass by Ammi-Joan Paquette

Baker's Magic by Diane Zahler

Related Non-fiction:

Hummingbirds: A Beginner's Guide by Aziz, Laurel

What Were Castles For? by Cox, Phil Roxbee

You Wouldn't Want to be in a Medieval Dungeon!: Prisoners You'd Rather Not Meet by Macdonald, Fiona

The Humming Bird: The World's Smallest Bird by Paige, Joy

How Does Your Garden Grow?: Great Gardening for Green-Fingered Kids by Matthews, Clare

Secrets of the Dragon Tomb by Patrick Samphire

Publisher: Christy Ottaviano Books / Henry Holt and Company

Publication Date: January 12, 2016

ISBN: 9780805099065 (trade)

Grade Level: 4-8

Number of Pages 660



Description:

Twelve-year-old Edward Sullivan has always dreamed of becoming a spy like the ones he reads of in his favorite magazine, *Thrilling Martian Tales*. Instead, he spends his days keeping his eccentric family from complete disaster ... that is, until the villainous archeologist, Sir Titus Dane, kidnaps Edward's parents as part of a scheme to loot an undiscovered dragon tomb.

General Reviews:

Twelve-year-old Edward Sullivan wishes his life on 19th-century British Mars were more like the adventures he reads about in his *Thrilling Martian Tales* magazine. Sadly, it's school break and instead of being off with his friend Matthew Harrison, he's staying home trying to keep his family on track. His father is a brilliant yet absent-minded mechanician, and his mother's main concern is gaining back the family status she lost when her own father lost the family fortune. When dim-witted cousin Freddie literally comes crashing down, Edward wonders how much worse things can get, but before he knows it, he is tangled up in a madcap adventure with even more action than his magazines. It seems that Edward's father's latest invention, the water abacus, is thought to be the key to perhaps one of the last of the great dragon tombs of Mars. In the past, it was these tombs that held the wonderful Martian technology that enabled British Mars to thrive—and made the tomb explorers rich. There are many who want to use the water abacus for their own purposes, which leads to fights, kidnappings, attempted murder, and a great chase. All of this is set in a perfectly delightful steampunk and fantasy world complete with clockwork automatic servants, dragon paths, and spaceships. Deeper topics of race relations and colonization are deftly explored through the political unrest among the British, the French, and the Martians. VERDICT A smart addition for middle grade collections; be prepared to purchase planned sequels.—Stacy Dillon, LREI, New York City. Grades 4-6. (Reviewed October 1, 2015) (School Library Journal, vol 61, issue 10, p94)

Author Information:

Patrick Samphire has been charged at by a buffalo in Zambia, lost in a rain forest in Guyana, and scared by a camel in Egypt. He has worked as a physicist, teacher, editor, and web designer. He now lives with his wife and two sons in Wales, in the U.K. He has not yet gotten to Mars, but he's still trying. *Secrets of the Dragon Tomb* is his first novel.

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

Themes:

Mars, kidnapping, rescues, steampunk, offbeat

Discussion Questions:

1. This story is a sort of “alternate history,” a type of science fiction in which the author explores the ways the world would change if one event had happened differently. What details about the world of this book are similar to actual history, and what things have changed?
2. Edward sometimes feels like he does not quite fit into his family or have the talents and skills that his parents value. Is he right? Do you ever feel like this? What are good ways that Edward and his family members find to get along and solve problems together?
3. Think about how Edward and the other British characters interact with the native Martians throughout the book. Do they do so in positive, respectful ways? What are good ways to communicate and work with people of a culture and history different from your own?

Activities:

1. *Secrets of the Dragon Tomb* features machines and inventions with purposes similar to many we use today, but running on spring power or steam power rather than electricity. Invent a new machine or device that uses spring, steam, or some other non-electrical power source to function. You can draw up design plans, write a description of your invention, make a video explaining how it works, or even create a model of the invention.
2. Explore the 19th century futurist drawings of [Albert Robida](#), whose creations inspired the author in his retro-futuristic world building. Draw or make your own piece of futurist art or write a story about an alternate future. (For examples of Rubina’s drawings, visit <https://www.pinterest.com/nababul/albert-robida/>.)
3. Watch the short film “Le Voyage dans la lune” (“A Trip to the Moon”) created by the illusionist and early motion picture innovator George Méliès. This is possibly the first science fiction movie, and, similar to *Secrets of the Dragon Tomb*, shows the ways in which people at the end of the 19th century viewed space travel and technology. (Link to watch: <https://archive.org/details/youtube-7JDaOOw0MEE>. A nicely colorized version that is easier to view can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CYFsQVhQX34>)

Similar Books:

The Mark of the Dragonfly and The Secrets of Solace by Jaleigh Johnson
The Adventurer’s Guide to Successful Escapes by Wade Albert White
Larklight by Philip Reeve
The Lost Kingdom by Matthew J. Kirby
Northanger Abbey by Jane Austen
Journey to the Center of the Earth by Jules Verne

Related Non-fiction:

Historium by Jo Nelson and Richard Wilkinson
How the Sphinx Got to the Museum by Jessie Hartland
The Sky Sailors: True Stories of the Balloon Era by David Bristow
The Steampunk User’s Manual by Deserina Boskovich and Jeff VanderMeer

Shadow Magic by Joshua Khan

Illustrator: Ben Hibon

Publisher: Disney-Hyperion

Publication date: 2016

ISBN: 9781484732724

Grade Level: 4-7 grades

Number of Pages 336



Description:

Thorn, an outlaw's son, wasn't supposed to be a slave. He's been sold to Tyburn, an executioner, and they're headed to Castle Gloom in Gehenna, the land of undead, where Thorn will probably be fed to a vampire. Lilith Shadow wasn't supposed to be ruler of Gehenna. But following the murder of her family, young Lily became the last surviving member of House Shadow, a long line of dark sorcerers. Her country is surrounded by enemies and the only way she can save it is by embracing her heritage and practicing the magic of the undead. But how can she when, as a girl, magic is forbidden to her?

General Review:

School Library Journal

Gr 4–6—Normally, getting purchased by an executioner wouldn't be a good thing. For Thorn, however, it's the beginning of a thrilling adventure. Captured while out looking for his missing father, Thorn is taken by new owner Tyburn to the kingdom where he serves as executioner. Arriving at Castle Gloom in Gehenna, Thorn meets 13-year-old Lady Lily Shadow, the last surviving member of the ruling family of House Shadow, one of six ancient families of sorcerers. The rest of Lily's family, save for one drunken uncle, have been brutally murdered, and she is a reluctant ruler. Betrothed sight unseen to the son of a rival ruler in the name of peace, Lily is also a reluctant bride-to-be. A sudden death quickly throws Thorn, Lily, and their friend, K'Leef, into a maelstrom of mistaken identities, murder, magic, necromancy, and narrow escapes. Thorn's skill with animals, evidenced by his relationship with an elderly, gigantic, voraciously hungry bat named Hades, proves invaluable. Working together but never losing sight of their individual objectives, Thorn and Lily uncover surprising truths about their families. The book's hand-drawn map is a helpful resource. Occasional black-and-white illustrations appear throughout. The bat flip-book feature is a fun surprise. Despite the gloomy setting, this book vibrates with hope. VERDICT Short chapters filled with action, appealing characters, and cliff-hanger endings make this fantasy the kind of book readers will find hard to put down. Recommended for all middle grade collections.—Sara-Jo Lupo Sites, George F. Johnson Memorial Library, Endicott, NY

Themes:

Magic, fantasy, death, mystery, shadow, hope, royalty, bats, loyalty, murder, ghosts, zombies, coming of age

Author Information:

<http://www.joshuakhan.com/>

Joshua Khan was born in Britain, a land filled with ancient castles, dark forests, and tales of legendary heroes and fantastical monsters. He can tell you who King Arthur fought on Baden Hill, but can't tell you

what he himself had for breakfast. So, his head stuffed with magical stories, it was inevitable that Joshua would want to create some of his own. Josh lives in London with his family, but he'd rather live in a castle. It wouldn't have to be very big, just as long as it had battlements.

Illustrator Information:

<https://www.artstation.com/artist/benhibon> Ben Hibon's Website

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some of Tyburn's best qualities?
2. What is the most important theme of this book to you and why?
3. How did Thorn use the skills he learned from his father?
4. What did you learn about bats?
5. How did Lilith's perspective on who to trust change throughout the story?

Activities:

1. Make shadow puppets. <http://www.kidspot.com.au/things-to-do/activities/make-a-shadow-puppet-theatre>
2. Bat science experiments--echolocation. <http://preschoolpowolpackets.blogspot.com/2015/10/bat-science-experiments-echolocation.html>
3. Home in the cave teacher's guide.
http://www.arbordalepublishing.com/documents/TeachingActivities/HomeCave_TA.pdf
4. 7 Science activities--<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/bat-cave-7-science-activities/>
5. Bats in the classroom. http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson031.shtml

Similar Books:

- The Book of Three by Lloyd Alexander's
Forest of Wonders by Linda Sue Park
The Screaming Staircase by Jonathan Stroud
Going Wild by Lisa McMann
The Dragonet Prophecy by Tui Sutherland
Silverwing by Kenneth Oppel
The False Prince by Jennifer Nielsen
Sabriel by Garth Nix
Colossus Rises by Peter Lerangis

Some Kind of Courage by Dan Gemeinhart

Publisher: Scholastic Press
Publication Date: January 26, 2016
ISBN: 0545665779
Grade Level: 3-8 Guided Reading Level V
Number of Pages 240



Description:

Joseph Johnson has lost just about everyone he's ever loved. He lost his pa in an accident. He lost his ma and his little sister to sickness. And now, he's lost his pony--fast, fierce, beautiful Sarah, taken away by a man who had no right to take her.

Joseph can sure enough get her back, though. The odds are stacked against him, but he isn't about to give up. He will face down deadly animals, dangerous men, and the fury of nature itself on his quest to be reunited with the only family he has left.

Because Joseph Johnson may have lost just about everything; but he hasn't lost hope. And he hasn't lost the fire in his belly that says he's getting his Sarah back--no matter what.

General Reviews:

"[T]his is true adventure with strong underpinnings of moral courage and love. Poignant and real." --
Kirkus Reviews, starred review

* "Exhilarating and enthralling, *Some Kind of Courage* promises even the most reluctant readers a breakneck adventure that will keep them turning the pages with utter devotion." -- *Booklist*, starred review

Themes:

Westerns, Historical Fiction, Moving, Orphans, Horses, 1890's, Washington

Author Information:

<http://dangemeinhart.com/>

Some Kind of Courage is Dan Gemeinhart's 2nd novel. After 10 years of not being published, Scholastic Press published his book *The Honest Truth*. He currently lives in Washington with his wife and three kids where he is a librarian at an elementary school.

Discussion Questions:

1. Mr. Davidson says that Joseph and Ah-Kee have "some kind of courage" what different kinds of courage can you think of? What kinds did the boys in this book have?
2. Joseph often thinks about what his parents would want him to do, when he is faced with a difficult decision. What makes a person a good role model? Who is your role model that you can look to when you have a difficult choice to make? How can you be that kind of role model for someone else?
3. What do you think gave Joseph the courage to keep going through each of the setbacks he encountered?

4. Joseph meets many people on his journey. Some are good and some are not. What are the qualities that each person possessed that made them either helpful or hurtful to Joseph and his goal?
5. Is there anything in your life that you would be willing to chase after like Joseph chased after Sarah? Why would you be willing to do that?

Activities:

1. Joseph was not able to give his father a proper headstone, but his mother and sister did have them. Help to preserve the memories of the past by taking a field trip to a local graveyard and making rubbings of the headstones. See <http://saveagrave.net/gravestone-rubbing> for guidelines and information.
2. Joseph encounters many obstacles on his path as he races to find his Sarah. He also participates in a real horse race at the Native American camp. Create and run an obstacle course or foot race.
3. Joseph is involved in the capture of the outlaw Caleb Fawney. Visit <http://www.legendsofamerica.com/we-outlaws.html> for a list of "Outlaws of the American West." Have each person pick an outlaw and research if/how they were captured and what happened to them in the end.
4. Joseph and Ak-Kee have a close encounter with a Grizzly bear. The western United States is home to many bears. Visit <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/bears/safety.htm> to learn what to do if you run into a bear and practice it.

More Resources:

<http://www.thebooksomm.com/home/some-kind-of-courage>
<http://www.compassbookratings.com/reviews/index.php/review/view/2051>
<http://www.goodcharacter.com/ISOC/Courage.html> (for grades 7-12)

Similar Books:

Pax by Sara Pennypacker
The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane
Mr. Tucket by Gary Paulsen
By the Great Horn Spoon by Sid Fleischman

Related Non-fiction:

The Homestead Act by Elaine Landau
Projects about nineteenth-century Chinese immigrants by Marian Broida
When Bears Attack by Richard Gaines
Wild West Lawmen and Outlaws by Ryan P. Randolph
Horses in American History by Norman D. Graubart

Wolf Hollow by Lauren Wolk

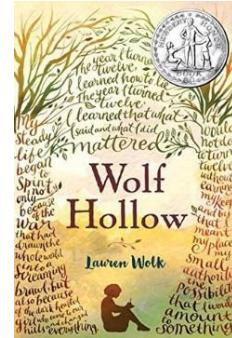
Publisher: Dutton Books for Young Readers

Publication Date: May 3, 2016

ISBN: 978-1101994825

Grade Level: 5 and Up

Number of Pages 304



Description:

The year is 1943 and Eleven-year old Annabelle loves her home in a small, rural Pennsylvania town. Her close family knit family is a joy to her and she loves the woods around her home. Even Toby, a World War I vet, who generally shuns people and social connections, seems to be a friend. Then, Betty Glengarry arrives. Betty is no bully with a soft side; she is truly terrifying, reveling in the pain of others and cruel to the core. As the conflict between Betty and Annabelle increases, Betty's violent nature becomes more pronounced. Then, one day Betty disappears and Toby is blamed. Annabelle is certain of his innocence and sets out to prove he is guiltless. This is a book full of powerful topics for discussion – bullying, prejudice, and social injustice.

General Reviews:

School Library Journal 04/19/2016

Gr 5-8 —Eleven-year-old Annabelle lives in a rural Pennsylvania community in 1943. The continued fighting of World War II haunts everyone, but life is mostly peaceful—until Betty Glengarry's arrival. Betty is cruel and threatening and thrives on inflicting pain. At first, Annabelle is slightly comforted to know that Toby is watching out for her. Toby is a local vagabond, a World War I veteran of few words who has become something like a friend of Annabelle's family. Meanwhile, Betty's violent malice only grows, until one day she goes missing. Toby immediately becomes the prime suspect in Betty's disappearance. Annabelle is sure of Toby's innocence and is determined to prove it. Readers are alerted from the outset that this is the story of how the narrator loses her childish naïveté in a life-altering way. The narrative is powerful, complex, and lifelike. There are pointlessly cruel people, courageously kind people, and those who simply pass the gossip. Despite the jaded feelings that come with witnessing unjust persecution, the heart of this story is ultimately one of hope and empathy. Thematically, this book raises some of the same issues as *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but with social status rather than racism as the basis for injustice. Vicious bullying is also a highly relevant topic, and this aspect is sure to spark important conversations. **VERDICT** Highly recommended for purchase; a truly moving debut.—*Sara White, Seminole County Public Library, Casselberry, FL*

Author Information:

Lauren Wolk's Website: <http://www.laurenwolk.com/>

Themes:

Second World War era (1939-1945)

Bullying and bullies

Families

Homeless persons

Preteen girls

Twelve-year-old girls

World War I veterans

World War II home front

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is this book titled *Wolf Hollow*?
2. There are several occasions of lying in the book. Are all lies the same? Was Annabelle's lie about the picture justified?
3. What are some reasons that Betty is a bully like she is?
4. Why do you think Toby chooses to live apart from the community?
5. How has Annabelle changed by the end of the book?

Activities:

1. Fill a chalkboard with mean words. Let children come up and erase the cruel words and replace them with kind words.
2. Create an anti-bullying poster.
3. Write a letter or draw a picture to send to a veteran.
4. Mystery and photography play key roles in the story. Bring a bucket of small items to class – have children or groups of children choose several items to lay on a large piece of colored paper. Have students take a photograph of their paper. Use the photographs to create an "Eye Spy" style book.
5. Family is essential in Annabelle's world. Draw a family portrait. Have children make and decorate a frame for their picture.

More Resources:

- <https://www.stopbullying.gov/kids/>
<http://www.dkfindout.com/us/history/world-war-ii/>
<https://kidsconnect.com/holidays-seasons/veterans-day/>
<http://kidsactivitiesblog.com/61699/11-photography-projects-kids-can>

Similar Books:

- Raymie Nightingale by Kate DiCamillo
The War That Saved by Life by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley
Wonder by R. J. Palacio
Paperboy by Vince Vawter
Max by Sheldon Lettich

Related Non-fiction:

- Dive! World War II Stories of Sailors and Submarines in the Pacific by Deborah Hopkinson
Irena's Children: A True Story of Courage Tilar Mazzeo
Word War I For Kids: A History With 21 Activities by Kent Rasmussen
National Geographic Kids Guide to Photography: Tips & Tricks on How to Be a Great Photographer From the Pros & Your Pals at My Shot by Nancy Hanovich and Annie Griffiths