BOLD GIRLS
RESOURCE PACK
G-BOOK project, ‘Gender Identity: Child Readers and Library Collections’

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Facilitators/Éascaitheoirí:
- Irene Barber
- Ruth Concanon
- Emily Daly
- Claire M Dunne
- Anne Gannon
- Bernadette Larkin
- Liz Morris
- Keelin Murray
- Laura O’Herlihy
- Julie Rowan
- Juliette Saumande

G-BOOK Co-Principal Investigator:
Dr. Keith O’Sullivan

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denotes an Irish author/illustrator/publisher údar/maisitheoir/foilsitheoir as Éirinn

denotes a title in the G-BOOK ‘Gender Identity: Child Readers and Library Collections’

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INTRODUCTION/RÉAMHRÁ

We all know that if you can’t see it, you can’t be it. With the BOLD GIRLS project, CBI and the G-BOOK project, ‘Gender Identity: Child Readers and Library Collections’, aim to build confidence in girls and young women by showing them female characters in children’s books with agency, power and opinions. In this resource pack, we have selected twenty books from the BOLD GIRLS Reading Guide, which includes twelve books from the G-BOOK project’s online catalogue (to go live by December 2018), for readers to explore further. With the carefully crafted, age-appropriate questions and activities, we hope to stimulate plenty of thought and debate about the characters and their worlds, the writers’ and illustrators’ craft, the position of women and girls in society and, perhaps, what readers can do to effect positive change.

The books chosen cover a variety of genres, ages, experiences and cultures, as well as writing and illustration styles. The imaginative Hilda and the Troll could be an introduction to the world of graphic novels for younger readers, while Jane, the Fox and Me takes that format to a different place in its use of words and images to explore the power of books and classic fiction, as well as the very real weight of societal expectations placed upon girls. Rosie Revere, Engineer, Ada’s Inventions and Little People, Big Dreams: Frida Kahlo in their own unique ways look at women’s ingenuity and creativity, and how they have often struggled to be taken seriously and appreciated in their time – despite the valuable contributions they have made.

In this centenary of women’s suffrage, Star by Star and Mollie on the March are timely and engaging explorations of the suffragette movement in Ireland through the lens of fiction. They bring to the fore the role of young women in the campaign and what their protesting and agitation achieved – a reward we still reap today. And further from home, but no less important and engaging, we have My Name is Parvana and I am Malala – one fiction and one non-fiction – both detailing the struggles that girls endure under oppressive regimes and the extraordinary fortitude and bravery displayed by those bold girls who refuse to accept less than their rights, in particular to education. All of these books demonstrate how we should never take our rights for granted, and that if those rights are being denied, we must never stop fighting for them.

The environment and our place within it is a theme running through several of the books – Wild, Lydia, The Girl of Ink and Stars and The Lie Tree, among other things, address how girls are expected to look and behave in society, while also looking at their deep relationship with and curiosity about the natural world. And, of course, the emotional, familial and romantic issues that are often a perplexing part of growing up are sensitively and relatably explored in many of the titles.

But the thing that binds all these books together is their focus on all the complex, difficult, messy and wonderful things about being a girl. We hope using this pack will encourage readers and reassure them that they are not alone, that there are all kinds of strength and that nothing should stop them from achieving their ambitions – that they can lead, be free, be wild and, of course, be BOLD!
**Journey**

Aaron Becker  
Suitable for ages 2–4  
Walker Books  
ISBN 9781406355345

**SUMMARY**

The first picturebook in Becker’s award-winning wordless trilogy, *Journey* sees an ordinary girl flee the boredom and loneliness of her home life by drawing a magic door on her bedroom wall and stepping into a world filled with marvels, adventure and danger. Armed with only her magical crayon, our plucky heroine uses her imagination, quick-wittedness and determination to traverse unknown lands, rescue a magnificent bird and thwart an army of captors. Her daring acts and ingenious escapes play out against a backdrop of dazzling landscapes, stunning skyscapes and beautifully elaborate architectural designs. A satisfying conclusion sees the heroine rewarded for her courage and compassion – she too is saved by kindness and imagination, finally finding a friend to share adventures with. Readers young and old will be swept away and spurred on fantastic journeys of their own.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR–ILLUSTRATOR**

Aaron Becker was born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland, USA. He received a Caldecott Honor in 2014 for *Journey*. He followed this up with *Quest* and *Return*, the entire wordless trilogy earning him great critical acclaim. Apart from his work as an author–illustrator of children’s books, Becker has worked as an artist in the film and animation industry. He has contributed artwork to films such as *The Polar Express*, *Cars*, *Monster House* and *A Christmas Carol*. He currently lives in Amherst, Massachusetts, with his wife, daughter and cat.
Questions

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. Look at the title and illustration on the front cover. What do you think this book is about?
2. Do the title and/or cover make you want to read the book? Why or why not?
3. Look at the girl on the cover. Where do you think she has come from? Where do you think she is going? What is she holding in her hand and do you think it might be important in some way? Do you think the girl fits in with her surroundings?

AFTER YOU HAVE READ

1. Look back at your answers to the earlier questions. Were you right?
2. Do you think the title or cover image captured the spirit of the book? Would you have chosen a different title or image?
3. Did you enjoy the story? Why or why not?
4. Did you like that the book was wordless? Could you still understand the story? Do you think adding words would improve or worsen the book in any way?
5. What was your favourite picture or spread (two facing pages) from the book? Describe it.
6. What did you think would happen next at each point in the story?
7. When were you most excited to turn the page? Why?
8. Did you like the shape and size of the book? Do you think this adds to the story in any way?
9. How does the girl get to the magical world? Do you think any of her other family members would be able to get into this world?
10. Do you think the world the girl enters is real or imaginary? Why?
11. Do you think this is the girl’s first magical journey? Do you think it will be her last?
12. Why do you think the soldiers are trying to capture the bird?
13. Do the soldiers have a leader? How can you tell?
14. Do you like the colours used in the pictures? Do the colours work well together? Are any colours more important than others?
15. How does each picture make you feel?
16. Do you like the world? How would you describe it? Would you like to visit it yourself? Why or why not?
17. How many places does the girl visit? Do they remind you of anywhere? Which is your favourite? Which is your least favourite? Why?
18. How many things does the girl draw? Which is your favourite? Why does she draw these things? Would you draw the same things in each of these situations? If not, what would you draw instead?
19. Do you think the girl makes good decisions? Would you do anything differently? Why or why not?
20. Would you call the girl ‘heroic’? Why or why not?
21. How many characters were in the book?
22. Who was your favourite character and why?
23. Do you like the main character? Why or why not?
24. Look at the picture of the girl’s bedroom. Does it tell us anything about the girl? Are any of the objects particularly important? Do we see any of them again in the story?
25. How do you think the girl is feeling before she goes on the journey? During the journey? After the journey?
26. Do you think the girl will change in any way after this journey? Will the journey affect her life in any way?
27. Do you like the boy who appears at the end of the book? Why or why not?
28. Does this boy appear at any other point in the story? Do you think he has anything in common with the girl? Do you think they will become good friends? Where do you think they are cycling to at the end?
29. What do you think of the crayons they each have? Would you like one? Why or why not? What do you think of the colours of the crayons? Do you think they suited the story and the characters?
30. What do you think will happen after the final pages?

For older readers

1. What words would you use to describe the characters in the book?
2. Could you relate to any of the characters?
3. How do you think the artist created the pictures?
4. Why do you think the illustrator used this colour scheme? Do you think it is effective?
5. The illustrator uses both empty backgrounds and full-colour landscapes. Why do you think he does this? Are some scenes better suited to a certain type of background? Do you like this approach? Why or why not? Would you have chosen a different type of background at any point in the story?
6. The illustrator uses both single-page and full-page spreads. Why do you think he does this? Are some scenes better suited to either type of spread? Do you like this approach? Why or why not? Would you have used different types of spreads at any points in the story?
7. On some pages, we see a character multiple times. Why does the illustrator do this? Is it effective? Do you like this technique?
8. Do you think the illustrator does a good job of giving personality to the characters or of showing us how they are feeling? How does he try to achieve this?

9. What are the pros and cons of telling this story through images only?

10. How does the illustrator encourage you to turn the page?

11. When does the story begin? On what page?

12. What age group do you think this book is intended for and why?

13. Do you think older readers can enjoy (wordless) picturebooks too?

14. Can you think of other stories in which a young girl goes on a similar adventure? How do you think *Journey* compares?

**For older readers**

- Write words to accompany the images. Think carefully about which words would accompany which images and where the words would be placed on the page. You should also consider the font, paying attention to size, shape, style, etc. Try creating your new version by scanning the images and drawing your text onto the spreads.

- Write a diary entry from the point of view of the main character, describing how she felt throughout her journey.

- Write a diary entry from the point of view of the boy character, revealing his back-story.

- In *Journey*, what technique did the illustrator use to create the pictures? Can you create your own picture using this method?

- Read *Quest* and *Return*, the follow-up books in Aaron Becker’s wordless trilogy. Do you think that they continue the story well? Would you change anything? What similarities and differences do you notice between the books? Which is your favourite and why? Do you think that the books work well as a trilogy? Why or why not? Plan a fourth book in the series.

- Take a look at the classic picturebook *Harold and the Purple Crayon* (1955) by Crockett Johnson. What similarities and differences can you find between this classic and *Journey*? Do you think this book might have influenced Becker in any way? Would you consider *Journey* a modern update of *Harold and the Purple Crayon* in any way? Which book do you prefer and why?

- Find another wordless picturebook by a different author–illustrator. List the similarities and differences between the techniques used to tell the story visually, considering which techniques are most effective.

- Argue for or against one of the following statements:
  - ‘Children have more imagination than adults.’
  - ‘Imagination is more important than reason.’
  - ‘Stories are best told through words.’

You can write a speech alone or organise a group debate.

**Activities**

- Write a short review of the book.

- Share the book with someone whose first language is different from your own. Note both of your emotional responses to each moment in the story.

- Tell the story of *Journey* using only words and no pictures. You can speak it aloud or write it down. Compare your version with a partner’s.

- Imagine the conversations between different characters throughout the story. Write them down or act them out with a partner. You could also compare your written version with a partner’s.

- Write a story set in one of the places the girl visits.

- Choose a background character from one of the spreads and imagine what their life is like. Write it down.

- Make your own wordless story in which a character goes on a journey.

- Imagine you found a magical crayon like the one in the book. Write and/or draw a story in which you use this crayon to create objects, characters and/or portals.

- Make a collage of some of your favourite magical portals from other stories. Then, using a large sheet of paper, design your own life-size magic portal. It might be a door, a window, a mirror, a tunnel or something else entirely.

- Using a single crayon and a large roll of paper or a big stack of sheets, draw a group story. You can pass the crayon from person to person, asking each to draw the next moment in the story. You could also alternate between people, asking one to draw a character in a sticky situation, then asking the next to draw an object that would allow the character to escape that situation, repeating the pattern until everyone has had a turn.
SUMMARY
"Little Red" is a retelling of the traditional story of Little Red Riding Hood. Little Red is given a basket of food to take to her sick granny who lives on the other side of the forest. On her way, she meets the wolf and tells him her business. He dashes ahead to Granny's house, devours Granny and hops into bed pretending to be her. Little Red is neither fooled nor fazed. She plays along with the ‘What big …’ routine, but it is the wolf that comes off the worse from the confrontation, as Little Red had the presence of mind to arm herself with the woodcutter’s axe on her way in. This is a darkly funny twist on the traditional tale and one that portrays Little Red as a fearless and resourceful young woman. The illustrations are primarily in muted shades, allowing Little Red to blaze a trail in more ways than one.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR–ILLUSTRATOR
Bethan Woollvin studied illustration at Cambridge School of Art and graduated with first-class honours. She currently works as a freelance author and illustrator in the UK. "Little Red" won the Macmillan Children's Book Competition 2014 and was chosen as one of the New York Times best illustrated children's books in 2016. As a child, Woollvin considered the traditional Little Red Riding Hood to be very naïve and she wanted her Little Red to be braver and more intelligent. Woollvin is the oldest of ten children and she loves reading stories to her brothers and sisters, who are big fans of Little Red.
BOLD GIRLS Resource Pack

Questions

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. The person on the cover is called Little Red. Is it a boy or a girl?
2. Does he/she look happy? Why do you think that?
3. Would you like to play with Little Red? Why?
4. Do you know any stories about a person in a red coat and hood? Can you tell it?

For older readers

1. Does Little Red remind you of any other story? Tell the story.
2. Do you think this will be the same story?
3. From looking at her picture on the front cover, what kind of girl is Little Red?
4. Did the same person write and illustrate the book?

AFTER YOU HAVE READ

1. Did you like the story? What do you think about Little Red?
2. Lift the front flap. Look at the picture. What is the wolf planning to do? Did this come true for him? Why? What happened in the end?
3. As Little Red walks through the forest before she meets the wolf, what does she see? What does she hear? How does she feel? What does she smell?
4. Turn to the second last page with the very large picture of Little Red’s eyes. What is she thinking?
5. Look at the first set of endpapers with all the trees. Can you find Little Red? Can you find the wolf?
6. Now look at the last set of endpapers. The trees are exactly the same. What has changed?
7. What colours are used for all the pictures? Go through the book and name everything that’s coloured red.
8. Look at the last page of the story. What do you think Little Red’s mother says to her when she returns home?

For older readers

1. How is this story different to the original story of Little Red Riding Hood?
2. Did you like the change?
3. What words would you use to describe Little Red?
4. Do you think younger children would like this story? For what age is it suitable?
5. On what page does Little Red kill the wolf? That’s right: it’s not on any page. So how do we know that’s what happened?

Activities

• Copy the picture of Little Red on the front cover and colour it in using only black and red.
• Pick out one kind of tree from the endpapers and draw a whole forest of them.
• Open the front flap. Put it on a sheet of paper and draw around it. Now you have half a tree. Finish it yourself and colour it in.

For older readers

• There are lots of retellings of Little Red Riding Hood, e.g. in Roald Dahl’s Revolting Rhymes. You can find more at www.goodreads.com (go to children’s/browse/lists/picturebooks about Little Red Riding Hood). With adult guidance, check out www.youtube.com for short animated retellings, e.g. Fixed Fairy Tales. Was the story of Little Red Riding Hood familiar to everyone in your group? Choose a retelling and have a group discussion comparing and contrasting it with Little Red.
• Little Red gives the girl a more important and powerful role than in the original. Draw and write a picturebook version of your retelling of Rapunzel. Limit your colours to black, grey and yellow, just as Bethan Woollvin did in her own retelling of Rapunzel.
• Write the diary entry Little Red might have written that evening recounting her day’s adventure.

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**Wild**
Emily Hughes
Suitable for ages 2–4, 5–8
Flying Eye Books
ISBN 9781909263086

**SUMMARY**
Deep in the woods we meet a wild girl who lives a happy life learning all she needs from her animal friends. The crows teach her to speak, the foxes to play and the bears to eat. This is a life she loves and understands and in which she can fully express herself and release her energy. But when she meets a different kind of animal, namely man, and is dragged into the city, the girl’s spirit threatens to break under the pressures of ‘civilisation’ and the rules of polite society. After a while, she can take no more taming and runs off in a storm of rage, going back where she’s always belonged, deep in the woods.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR–ILLUSTRATOR**
Emily Hughes was born in Hawaii, USA, but lives and works in the United Kingdom. She is inspired by Chinese cinema and illustrators such as Blair Lent and Gyo Fujikawa. Her work has been exhibited across London and her book *Nana Shaped Like a Banana* came second in the 2012 Macmillan Prize for Children’s Picture Books. She is the author of *Wild*, which has been translated into many languages, and *The Little Gardener*. As an illustrator of others’ texts, she has worked on Laurel Snyder’s *Charlie and Mouse* and Sean Taylor’s *A Brave Bear*. 
Questions
BEFORE YOU BEGIN
1. What do you think this story is going to be about?
2. Where do you think it will be set?
3. What is the character on the front cover wearing? Have you ever seen hair like that?

AFTER YOU’VE READ
1. What makes the girl happy in the forest?
2. ‘One day she met some new animals in the forest ...’ What ‘animal’ is that? Is it right to use the word ‘animal’ here?
3. The characters don’t speak directly in the whole book. How do we know how they feel?
4. What are the man and the woman trying to do with the girl? Why are they doing it?
5. How does the girl feel about it?
6. What about you? Are you on the girl’s side or on the grown-ups’ side? Or a bit of both?
7. How do the grown-ups feel when the girl leaves?
8. There are animals in the city too. How are they different from those in the woods? Do they change over the course of the story?
9. What do you think of the end? Is it a happy ending? Why or why not?

For older readers
1. Look at the endpapers. What is the main theme? Can you spot two objects that don’t fit in? What do they remind you of? Why do you think they’re there?
2. Would you say the girl has an easy life in the woods? Why or why not?
3. Look at the page where the girl meets the hunters. If you only read the text and didn’t look at the picture, would you know what happens? What extra info does the image give? Make a list. Do you think it works better than if it was all in the words?
4. What do you think the man’s job is? How can you tell?
5. Compare the following double pages: 2 and 9; 3 and 10; 4 and 11; 5 and 12. What do you notice? Why do you think Emily Hughes used this technique? Do you notice it anywhere else in the book?
6. Look at the punctuation of the last sentence. What does it suggest to you? What do you think might happen next?

Activities
• The girl is only called ‘she’ throughout the book. What would be a good name for her? What about a name in the languages of the forest? Imagine what the birds would call her, and the fox, and the bears.
• Wild life or city life? Make a chart to list the pluses and minuses of life in the city and life in nature according to you. Which wins out? Do a survey of everyone in your group and compare the results.
• Children found in the wild are called ‘feral children’. Can you think of any other stories of feral children? How do these stories end? Do the children go back to the woods as in this book or do they live in cities with other humans?
• Retell the story from different points of view:
  • From the point of view of the woman
  • From the point of view of the cat
• In groups of 2:
  • Guess what! The girl has come to stay in your house for a day and a night. Decide together what games you play, what meals you eat, where you sleep, etc. Get each person in the group to fill the sheet on page 11 separately. Don’t peek! When you’re done, compare notes!
  • Swapsies! This time, the home child goes to stay in the woods with the wild child. Play the same game as above using the sheet on page 12.
• Help the girl grow her green hair again. Gather things you find in the garden, the park or the woods – grass, twigs, etc. – and arrange them on a printout of the picture on page 13.
• Grow a head of hair! You will need:
  • Some lentils, barley or wheat
  • A clean jar, a small flower pot or an individual yogurt pot
  • Some cotton wool
  • A printout of the wild girl’s face (see page 13)
• Water
  1. Soak the grain in water for 12–24 hours, then drain well.
  2. Cut out the girl’s face and stick or tape it to the side of your chosen container.
  3. Wet a disc or ball of cotton wool and place it in the bottom of the container.
  4. Sprinkle the grain over the cotton (1 tbsp for a yogurt pot, more for bigger containers).
  5. For the next couple of weeks, water the grain morning and evening, making sure to remove excess water.
  6. Watch the green ‘hair’ grow every day!
Home child sheet

When the wild child arrived, she/he said ____________________________
And it was ____________________ because ____________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
Then we played ____________________________
And it was ____________________ because ____________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
Then we ate ____________________________
And it was ____________________ because ____________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
Then we slept ____________________________
And it was ____________________ because ____________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
When the wild child left, I said ____________________________
And it was ____________________ because ____________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
Wild child sheet

When the home child arrived, she/he said ________________________________
And it was __________________ because ________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Then we played ________________________________
And it was __________________ because ________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Then we ate ________________________________
And it was __________________ because ________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Then we slept ________________________________
And it was __________________ because ________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

When the home child left, I said ________________________________
And it was __________________ because ________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

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Large Pot

Yogurt Pot

Yogurt Pot

Jam Jar
You’re Amazing, Anna Hibiscus!

Atinuke
Illustrated by Lauren Tobia
Suitable for age 5–8
Walker Books
ISBN 9781406349139

SUMMARY
This is the final story in the series about Anna Hibiscus and her large extended family living together in a big, white house in amazing Africa. Each chapter tells a separate but related story and, read in sequence, they show surprising power and wisdom. In story one, we laugh at how Double and Trouble, Anna’s mischievous younger brothers, get into a series of scrapes – but somehow everyone blames Anna! In story two, Grandfather gets very tired and eventually dies – leaving the family very sad. In chapter three, a grieving Anna Hibiscus behaves badly to her best friend, Sunny Belafonte. And in chapter four, Anna finds a way to help all the grieving people in the house – including her troublesome younger brothers. In the process, Anna Hibiscus learns important lessons about herself and others; she learns that stories are powerful and healing, that you should always try to right the wrongs you do and, no matter what happens in life, you can still be happy.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Atinuke grew up in rural Nigeria before moving to the city of Lagos. Later, she attended boarding school in England – just like in her favourite Enid Blyton stories. At university, Atinuke studied English and French literature but her great love is storytelling. She lives in rural Wales, working as a storyteller and writer.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR
Lauren Tobia was an intensive-care nurse before she graduated with a first-class degree in illustration. Lauren has illustrated many books but she is best-known for illustrating the prize-winning Anna Hibiscus stories, written by Atinuke. Lauren lives in Bristol and her most recent book is Let’s Go to Nursery, written by Caryl Hart.
Questions

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. Do you like the bright colours on the cover of this book? What do the colours remind you of? Would this book stand out on a bookshelf in a bookshop or library?

2. What does the cover illustration show us? From the picture, could you guess what part of the world the stories are set in? Were you right?

3. Turn the book over and read the blurb on the back cover. Does this make the book sound interesting? Do you think this is a book you will enjoy reading?

AFTER YOU HAVE READ EACH SECTION

Chapter One: ‘Double Trouble’

1. Is Sunny Belafonte one of Anna Hibiscus’s cousins?

2. Briefly, Anna Hibiscus wishes that Double and Trouble weren’t her brothers. This is an instance of a good person doing or thinking a bad or unloving thing. ‘They were all sad, and they didn’t know what to do to make it better’: have you ever felt like this?

3. How did everyone get locked out of the big, white house?

4. Who rescued the key from the big, white house?

5. How did everyone get back into the house?

6. The writer sometimes uses repetition in the story, either words – for example ‘at-all, at-all’ – or phrases or sentences – for example, ‘Did you not take the key?’ Did this help you to understand the story? Does it make it easier to read? Why would the author use repetition like this?

7. The writing style takes some inspiration from the oral tradition of African storytelling. Ireland also has a strong storytelling tradition – do you know any Irish traditional tales? Write down the name of one traditional Irish story you have heard.

Chapter Two: ‘Goodbye, Grandfather’

1. What information from the first chapter would make us think that Grandfather might not be well? What does Grandfather do in this chapter that shows us he is not well?

2. People often pretend they are not worried about something when they are. What does Anna Hibiscus do to pretend that she is not worried? What do you do to pretend you are not worried? Why?

3. Anna Hibiscus is sometimes very angry at school – why is this?

4. When Anna Hibiscus feels sad and angry at school, what does she do?

5. Why does Anna Hibiscus join in with some children who are bullying another child?

6. Why did Anna Hibiscus shout at her friends?

7. What does Grandmother say to Anna Hibiscus to make her feel better? Does it work? Do you think she heard Grandfather’s voice out loud?

Chapter Three: ‘What’s Wrong, Sunny?’

1. How did Sunny Belafonte come to live in the big, white house?

2. Why does Anna Hibiscus go into the garden to talk to Grandfather in her heart?

3. Anna Hibiscus is sometimes very angry at school – why is this?

4. Why does Anna Hibiscus feel sad and angry at school, what does she do?

5. Why does Anna Hibiscus join in with some children who are bullying another child?

6. Why did Anna Hibiscus shout at her friends?

7. If one of your friends did this, what would you do to help?

8. How does Anna Hibiscus feel when she discovers that the child she has pushed over is her best friend, Sunny Belafonte?

9. What happened when Sunny Belafonte came home from school? What had Anna Hibiscus expected to happen?

10. Anna Hibiscus refuses to go to school the next day – why?

11. What does Sunny Belafonte say to Cousin Common Sense? Why would he think that?

12. What does Sunny Belafonte do?

13. Grandmother says there is only one decision people need to make in their lives – what is that?

14. Who goes to find Sunny Belafonte?

15. List the places that the uncles and Anna Hibiscus looked for Sunny Belafonte. Could you suggest any more places they could look? If you ran away, where would you go/hide? If your friend were missing, where would you look?

16. What does Sunny Belafonte say to Anna Hibiscus when she comes after him to apologise? What does Anna say back? What does Sunny do then?

17. Anna explains to Sunny that she didn’t know it was him at the centre of the circle being bullied by the other children, that she didn’t know it was him she was taunting and that she pushed over. Does this make it all right? Does it change anything?

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18. How would the story have been different if Anna Hibiscus had talked to Sunny Belafonte about how bad she was feeling when her grandfather died? Would he have understood? Why?

19. Why is Auntie Joly still cross? What does Sunny Belafonte do?

20. Why is Anna Hibiscus worried about being a witness to the bullying?

21. Anna Hibiscus hears Grandfather’s voice in her heart, telling her that ‘being a witness is a chance to right the wrong you did’. How is this?

Chapter Four: ‘No More Trouble’

1. In chapter four we are back to the big, white house with Anna Hibiscus and her large family. What has changed since chapter one?

2. Everyone is worried that Double and Trouble are sad – someone says they are too small to be sad. Can that be true? Are Double and Trouble too small to be sad?

3. How do the different members of the family try to cheer the twins up? What does Anna Hibiscus do? Does any of it work?

4. What does Anna Hibiscus realise about everyone in the house? How does she go about helping them?

5. What does Anna Hibiscus do to help Double and Trouble with how they miss their grandfather?

6. What story does Anna Hibiscus tell? Why does she tell this type of story to Double and Trouble?

7. What story does Uncle Trunde tell?

8. What animal was (not) in the story Sunny Belafonte told about the two grandfathers?

9. How can Anna Hibiscus have both a smile and tears on her face at the same time? Did anything ever make you feel like that?

10. What is the Big Lesson that Anna Hibiscus learned? It is a very important thing and Anna Hibiscus has learned it very early in life.

AFTER YOU HAVE READ THE WHOLE BOOK

1. How many chapters are there in this book?

2. Is each chapter a separate story? Are the chapters linked – does the story continue from chapter one to the end of the book?

3. How many of Anna Hibiscus’s family can you name? (Without looking!)

Activities

- When you think of Africa, what do you think of? Write down a list of words that come to mind and compare them to the words used in this book: amazing, beautiful, family, big house, garden, village, school etc. Your school or local library will have a selection of books on Africa – use them to find out what life is like in Africa today.

- Why does Anna Hibiscus always get the blame for her brothers’ antics? Did you ever get blamed for something someone else did? Can you think of any other books where the main character behaves badly or has a troublesome little brother or sister? Or do you have a story about something naughty that you or a sibling did when you were young and perhaps someone else got blamed? Could you write it out and/or tell us about it?

- Have you read or heard another story where a character dies? Sometimes the character who dies is a wicked character, e.g. the witch in Hansel and Gretel, but sometimes the character who dies is good, e.g. Mufasa in The Lion King. Find some stories where a character dies and look at how the story is told. Have a group discussion about whether the death of this character is important to the story and why.

- In the third chapter, Anna Hibiscus discovers why people sometimes behave in a mean way. Can you describe, in your own words, what the reason is? How does Grandfather explain it to Anna Hibiscus? Do you think he is right when he says that there is no such thing as a bad person, only good people who behave in mean and ugly ways because their hearts are feeling bad? Discuss the types of bad behaviour that might upset others – and what might make people behave like that.

- Anna Hibiscus and her young brothers enjoy hearing stories about their grandfather when he was a boy. Ask a grown-up in your family to tell you a story about when they were young. Record the story in writing or share it with others by retelling it to the group. How does the story make you feel?
Rosie Revere, Engineer
Andrea Beaty
Illustrated by David Roberts
Suitable for age 5–8
Abrams Books for Young Readers
ISBN 9781419708459

SUMMARY
Rosie Revere is a young inventor who uses things she finds in the rubbish to create fantastic gizmos. Rosie is too shy and afraid of failure to show her inventions to anyone until a visit from her great-great-aunt Rose. Rose teaches Rosie that a flop is something to be celebrated.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Andrea Beaty is an American author who lives in Chicago. As a child, Andrea was a big reader who loved the Nancy Drew and Trixie Beldon mysteries. She used to work for a computer software company and helped people with their computer problems. Andrea has written many books including Iggy Peck Architect, Secrets of the Cicada Summer, Attack of the Fluffy Bunnies and When Giants Come to Play.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR
David Roberts is an award-winning illustrator who has earned great acclaim for his distinctive style. He was born in Liverpool and studied fashion design at university in Manchester. After graduating, he worked as a milliner and a fashion illustrator, but always felt his true calling was in children's books. David finally realised his dream when his first book was published in 1998, and since then he has collaborated with some of Britain's finest children's authors, including Julia Donaldson, Sally Gardner, Philip Ardagh and Jacqueline Wilson. He is also the creator of the popular Dirty Bertie books. He lives in London with his partner.
Questions

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. Look at the title of the book – what do you think an engineer does? What items on the front cover are tools that will help Rosie?

2. What invention do you think Rosie has created for the man on the string on the book cover?

3. Look carefully at the front and back covers of the book – how many airplanes can you see? Can you see machines that could travel into space? How many of those can you see?

4. Rosie Revere, Engineer is a lovely title to say because it rhymes. Can you think of some more names and professions you could put together to make a rhyme? Maybe you know someone in real life whose name rhymes with their job.

AFTER YOU HAVE READ

1. What is the name of Rosie's teacher and where does Rosie go to school?

2. What treasures does Rosie find in the trash to add to her engineer's stash?

3. Have a look at all the things in Rosie's attic – are there any items you recognise from your own house? Try to pick out five things and say which room in your house you'd find them in.

4. In the picture of Rosie's uncles and aunts, which one is your favourite and why? Look at Rosie in this picture – how do you think she feels? What makes you think this?

5. What's the most important part of Zoo Keeper Fred's hat – what keeps the snakes away?

6. On the next page, how many snakes can you count around Zookeeper Fred? Would snakes in the zoo be kept in a cage like that? What's the best way to keep snakes in a zoo?

7. Rosie has a great-great-aunt called Rose. If a great-aunt is a granny or granddad's sister, what is a great-great-aunt?

8. When she's kept awake all night, Rosie is surrounded by flying machines. What machine would you like to fly in?

9. Name three things that are used to make the heli-o-cheese-copter.

10. How many different inventions can you count in Rosie's classroom at the end?

11. If you had to use your favourite food as fuel for an invention, what would it be?

Activities

- Write a short review of the book.
- In the book, Rosie's great-great-aunt reminds us of a figure called Rosie the Riveter. Find out who Rosie the Riveter was and what she did.
- There is a list of female aviators in the book: Elizabeth Thible, Harriet Quimby, E. Lillian Todd, Bessie Coleman, Amelia Earhart and Lynn Rippelmeyer. Pick one and find out more information about them. Write a short report on their work in aviation.
- Rosie comes up with lots inventions to help people. What would you invent to help at home or at school and what household items could you use in your invention? Draw your invention.
- The endpapers in the book are squares like in a maths copybook – why do you think this is? Draw a picture of Rosie on some squared paper. Does this change the way you draw?
- Can you think of a time when something you were doing went wrong? Describe what happened after it went wrong to the group and what the end result was.
- The new version of Rosie's helicopter has the words 'We can do it!' painted on the side – can you think of other positive phrases you could paint on the helicopter or that you could put up in your room? Paint a positive phrase on a sheet of paper and say it out loud.
LÍSÍN: NÍ BANPHRIONSA MÉ!
Patricia Forde
Maisithe ag Joëlle Dreidemy
Suitable for age 5–7
Futa Fata
ISBN 9781906907846

ACHOIMRE
Cad a tharlaíonn nuair a chuirtear iallach ar fhoghlaí mara a bheith mar bhanphrionsa don dráma scoile? Agus níos measa fós, gúna bándearg a chaitheamh agus i ag fanacht ar bhuaachaill cúthail teacht i gcabhair uirthi. An nglacrfaidh sí leis an éide, agus an smideadh, gan trácht ar an mbréagfholt fada? Sa tsraith Lísín, leanaimid eachtraí an t-aon fhoghlaí mara amhain i Scoil na bPáistí Deasa. Cé go ndéantar beag is fiú dá saineolas agus dá taithí mar fhoghlaí mara ag an tús, cuireann sí fén casadh beag sa scéal. Le tacalocht a muintire, mar aon lena seiftílachacht agus crógacht, éirisonn léi an dráma a shábháil. Tá imeartas cliste sa scéal seo ar na róil thraidisiúnta a thugtar do chaillíní agus do bhuaachailí óga ar scoil agus sa saol.

FAOIN ÚDAR
Tagann an leabhar seo ó pheann Patricia Forde, scríbhneoir cumasach ó Ghaillimh. Tá idir leabhair Ghaeilge agus Bhéarla cumtha aici don aos óg, mar aon le clár spreagúil te tíol Sáol faoi Shráid. D’oibrigh sí mar mhúinteoir bunscoile agus mar Cheann Féile na nEalaion, Gaillimh, agus tá tuiscint chruthaitheach don ealaíon agus don teagasc le féachaint ina saothair.

FAOIN MAISITHEOIR
Ceisteanna
SULA DTOSAÍONN TÚ

• Breathnaigh ar an teideal Lísín: Ní Banphrionsa Mé! Abair an teideal go ciúin/ go hamhrasach/ go heaglach/ go feargach/ go muiníneach/ go cróga.

• Cuir aithne ar an seisear carachtar a mbeadh tú leo sa scéal: Lísín, Claudine, an Dráidóir Gránna, an Prionsa, Múinteoir Sailí, agus Múinteoir Breandáin. Go scoibhtha, breathnaigh tríd an leabhar agus aimsigh an Dráidóir Gránna, Múinteoir Sailí srl.

Feicim X in aice le ___________. Feicim Y ar an ___________.

• Cé acu atá ciúin/ amhrasach/ eaglach/ muiníneach/ cróga/ áthasach? Cén fáth?

• Breathnaigh ar an gclúdach. An bhfuil Lísín sásta sa ghuná bándearg? Cén fáth? Céard eile atá á chaiteamh aici?


• Oscail leathanach 6. Cad atá á chaiteamh ag Lísín sa phictiúr seo? Cén dath atá ar gach rud sa bhogán smaointe?

Tá hata á chaiteamh aici/ buataisí á gcaitheamh aici. Tá cnámharlach ar an hata. Tá trilseán ina gruaig aici. Tá straidhpeanna ar a T-léine.

• Oscail leathanach 42. Cá bhfuil tuisti Lísín, meas tú?

Feicim X in aice le ___________. Feicim Y ar an ___________.

NUAIR ATÁ SÉ LÉITE AGAT

• Breathnaigh ar leathanach 23, 29, agus 39. Déan próifíl charachtair ar Lísín.

Tá sé amhrasach/ ciúin/ eaglach/ muiníneach/ cróga/ áthasach. Is maith léis X. Is fuath léis X.

• Breathnaigh ar leathanach 17 agus 37. Déan próifíl charachtair ar Eoin Searlús.

Tá si amhrasach/ ciúin/ eaglach/ muiníneach/ cróga/ áthasach. Is maith léi X. Is fuath léi X.

• Breathnaigh ar leathanach 6, 16 agus 34. An bhfuil Lísín sásta leis an dráma scoile?

Is maith léi X sa dráma. Ach is fuath léi X sa dráma.

• Bhí Lísín i ndráma scoile sa leabhar seo. An raibh tú riabh i ndráma scoile? Cuir ceist ar do thuistí.

Gníomhaíochtaí

Léigh caibidil 5 arís. Cum teideal nua don chaibidil.


• Breathnaigh ar leathanach 9. Scriobh leathanach i ndialann Lísín an oíche sin.

Ó is fuath liom X agus Y. Tá mé ciúin/ amhrasach/ eaglach/ muiníneach/ cróga/ áthasach.

• Iarrann Múinteoir Sailí ar Lísín an chead dráma eile a chur le chéile. Cabhraigh le Lísín teideal, téama agus carachtair an dráma a chur le chéile.
Hilda and the Troll
Luke Pearson
Suitable for age 5–8
Flying Eye Books
ISBN 9781909263710

SUMMARY
*Hilda and the Troll* is the first in Luke Pearson’s award-winning Hildafolk series of graphic novels. She is easily recognisable with her big moon-like eyes and turquoise hair. She lives with her mum in a remote Scandinavian country that, painted in muted tones, reminds one of a Nordic woolly jumper. Hilda fancies herself as an intrepid adventurer and, together with her pet deer-fox, Twig, launches herself off in search of magical creatures in the mountains around her house. Her adventures are a little scary – she spots a troll, gets lost in the snowy forest and narrowly escapes being trodden on by a lost giant – but eventually she is brought home safely by her friend the Wood Man. The language that Hilda uses is precocious, yet she is an endearing and positive character who constantly questions the things that happen to her. The drawings highlight her feisty nature and Hilda grows on you, as does her little Twig.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR–ILLUSTRATOR
*Hilda and the Troll* is Luke’s first comic work. He was born in 1987 and grew up close to Birmingham. From an early age he liked to make up cartoon stories and delighted his granny each time he went to visit her with the latest instalment of his *Super Rabbit* comic. Luke’s blend of the fantastic with the everyday has proved a winning combination. He has now got a number of Hilda books and, wait for it, Hilda is coming to Netflix!
Questions

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. Look at the title and illustration on the front cover. What do you think this book is about?
2. What catches your attention first – the title, the author’s name, the publisher or the illustration of Hilda?
3. The cover is divided into four sections with Hilda at the centre. What do you think this layout represents?
4. Turn the book over – on the back cover we see Hilda running. Does she look as if she is off on an adventurous mission?
5. Graphic novels are books written and illustrated in the style of comics, in which the story is told through words and pictures. How might the experience of reading a graphic novel be different from reading a novel in text?

AFTER YOU HAVE READ

1. Did you enjoy the story? What did you like or dislike about it?
2. Does the cover illustration give you a taste of the story? Can you find the troll with the bell tied on the end of his nose?
3. In the double-page spread with the map showing Hilda’s house, can you see her tent? Are there places drawn on the map that don’t feature in the story?
4. What is the title of the book that Hilda is reading at the beginning of the story? Do you think she is influenced by the writing and the pictures?
5. Did you like the drawing of the Wood Man? Can you describe the expression on his face? Is he an important character in the story?
6. What sort of work do you think Hilda’s mother does?
7. Hilda and Twig set off on their adventure to look for mystical creatures. Who do they meet?
8. Hilda finds a troll and gets Twig to tie a bell on its nose. Where did Hilda get this idea from?
9. Hilda falls asleep – what happens when she wakes up? Who brings Hilda and Twig home safely?
10. Why do you think the double-page spread of Hilda being picked up by the troll (thirteenth spread in the book) is coloured dark blue, black and white? What do you think this colour palette represents?
11. The author includes two pages from a book on trolls. Is this a made-up book? Does it make you think that trolls are real? Are trolls real?
12. What kind of character is Hilda? Is she brave? Does she care about others? Would you like to have her as your friend?
13. Would you like to read more books about Hilda and her adventures?
14. Now that you’ve read the book, how did you find reading a graphic novel compared to a text novel?

Activities

• Memory game: with a friend, look at the double-page spread of Hilda’s room for thirty seconds, then close the book and try to list as many objects as possible.
• Draw your own idea of a troll.
• Look at the inside cover of the book and use it as inspiration to make a potato-print picture. Limit yourself to the same four colours.
• Write your own adventure story about Hilda. It can be in words or a comic.
• Create your own comic! Draft your ideas on a storyboard to work out how the story will unfold in pictures (i.e. what scenes you will show, how many panels you will need, etc.). Divide your pages into panels or download and print one of the many free comic templates available online. The story can be one you’ve made up yourself or a visual retelling of a passage from one of your favourite novels.
**SUMMARY**
This documentary picturebook looks at the life and achievements of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo (1907–54). Following her through childhood and into adulthood, the book traces Kahlo’s first steps into art, her relationship with Diego Rivera and her access to fame. Vegara’s sensitive text reads like a story and highlights the many occasions on which Kahlo’s spirit shone: through terrible illness, chronic pain and heartbreak. The final double-page spread gives a factual account of Kahlo’s life, with dates and photographs. Further resources are listed at the back of the book.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**
Mª Isabel Sánchez Vegara, born in Barcelona, is a writer and creative director in constant search of new concepts for children’s books. Working for more than fifteen years for clients in top advertising agencies, she aims for her books to combine creativity with learning, establishing a new and fresh relationship between children and pop culture.

**ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR**
Gee Fan Eng is a Malaysian Chinese artist with a degree in Visual Communication. She has worked in design and is now a full-time illustrator. Gee Fan is also the founder of the independent label Minifanfan. Her aim as an artist is to make people feel happy and cheerful when they look at her creations, hence the tagline that she has created for her works: ‘Happy Drawings for Happy People’.

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**Little People, BIG DREAMS: Frida Kahlo**

Mª Isabel Sánchez Vegara
Illustrated by Gee Fan Eng
Translated by Emma Martinez
Suitable for age 5–8
Frances Lincoln Children’s Books
ISBN 9781847807700

www.childrensbooksireland.ie
Questions

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. What do you know about Frida Kahlo?
2. What sort of person do you think she might be? What clues can you find on the front cover?
3. Do you think this is going to be a story book or a fact book?
4. Do you think this is going to be a funny or a serious book? A happy or sad book? Why?

AFTER YOU HAVE READ

1. ‘Just by looking at her you could see she was special.’ Did you recognise Frida easily in the school picture and the family photo? How? Was she hard to find? Why?
2. What do you think made Frida so ‘special’?
3. Throughout her life, Frida encountered a lot of hardships. What were they? How did she react to them?
4. Why do you think Frida painted so much, even when she was very ill?
5. What do you think the final sentence means? Do you agree with Frida that this is the most important thing?
6. How is the final page different from the rest of the book? Is it useful to have it?

For older readers

1. Would you say Gee Fan Eng’s style of illustration is similar to Frida Kahlo’s? What differences and what similarities do you see?
2. The text doesn’t give a lot of detail about the accident. What extra clues can you pick up from the picture? If you only saw the image, would you understand what happened? If you only read the text, would you know how serious the accident was? Compare this page to the final page where the accident is described in more detail.
3. There are strong links between Frida’s health, her feelings and her art. What are they?
4. Here are some quotes by Frida Kahlo. Which do you think suits her life best? Which one would you pick for yourself (if any)?
   - ‘Viva la vida.’ [live life]
   - ‘Tree of hope, stay strong!’
   - ‘I am a woman, but I have talent.’
   - ‘What doesn’t kill me nourishes me.’
   - ‘Taking in one’s sorrow means risking that sorrow to eat you up from the inside.’
5. For a long time, people only knew Frida Kahlo as Diego Rivera’s wife, and not as an artist in her own right. Why do you think that was? Would you say it’s fair? Do you think it would be the same if Frida and Diego were alive today?

Activities

1. Find out!
   - Find out more about Frida Kahlo. Was there anything ‘missing’ from this book?
   - Find out more about Diego Rivera. Where can you see his work today?
   - Find out about Mexican folklore. What are the strange creatures sitting on top of Frida and Diego’s wedding cake?
2. Compare!
   - Some illustrations were directly inspired by photographs. Compare the original and Gee Fan Eng’s version. What is the same? What is different? Why do you think the illustrator made these changes?
3. Be Inspired!
   - Use a mirror to draw your own self-portrait.
   - Spice up the challenge! Draw a self-portrait while lying down. Or draw a picture of your foot, like Frida, but using your ‘wrong’ hand.
   - Make it a Kahlo-style image by adding flowers and animals all along the edges.
4. Investigate!
   - Twenty years after her death, Frida was ‘rediscovered’ and became world famous. Maybe you too have a family member or someone in your community who has achieved great things that nobody knows about. Find out as much as you can about that person and celebrate them!
SUMMARY
Mollie Carberry is a suffragette! Well, sort of. Mollie and her best friend Nora have been bravely fighting for women’s rights – even though no one else really knows about it. But when they hear a big protest is being planned, they know they have to take part. If only they didn’t have to worry about Nora’s terrible cousin, her awful brother and her neighbour’s very annoying dog … An engaging story about a strong and intelligent girl fighting for the right for women to vote.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Anna Carey is a freelance journalist from Drumcondra in Dublin who has written for the Irish Times, the Irish Independent and many other publications. Anna joined her first band when she was fifteen and went on to sing and play with several bands over the next fifteen years. Her last band, El Diablo, released two albums and toured all over the country. Her first novel for young readers, The Real Rebecca, won the Irish Book Awards Children’s Book of the Year award.
**Questions**

**BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

1. *Mollie on the March* is the sequel to *The Making of Mollie*. Have you read the first book already, and, if so, what do you expect could happen in the second instalment of Mollie’s adventures?

2. What do you think of the cover art? If you saw this book in the library or a bookshop would you pick it up?

3. *Mollie on the March* is historical fiction. Do you like reading books that are part of this genre? What are your favourite periods in history to read about? Do you find it easier to learn about history by reading a novel rather than a factual history book?

4. *Mollie on the March* is set in 1912. How might Mollie’s life differ from yours today? How might Ireland be different today to what it was in 1912?

**AFTER YOU HAVE READ**

1. *Mollie on the March* deals with the suffragette movement in Ireland. What did you know about women’s suffrage before you began? What do you know about the rights of women in Ireland today? The different suffrage movements in Ireland, Britain and America are mentioned here – do you know how each of these movements differed in its approach to obtaining the vote for women? What does it mean to be a political prisoner?

2. The National Question of Home Rule is mentioned by Mollie’s family. What do you know about Irish Home Rule? Asquith, the then British prime minister, visited Ireland at this time. How do you think Irish people felt about British rule then?

3. This is the second book in a series; however, the author does explain things that happened in the previous story. Did you enjoy this book even if you haven’t read the first adventure?

4. Mollie loves to read and mentions a number of books, including *Little Women*, *Jane Eyre*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *The War of the Worlds* and *A Room with a View*. Have you read any of these books? Do you think girls Mollie’s age read the same books? Do you think of the other students in Mollie’s class?

5. Mollie’s story is a record of Dublin in the summer of 1912 – how do her experiences differ from your own summer-time adventures? What is the biggest difference between your life and Mollie’s in 1912?

6. The language and phrases Mollie uses such as ‘I say’ and ‘jolly good’ are very different from modern ways of speaking. Did you enjoy reading something written in this way or did you find it confusing?

7. In what ways do you think Mollie is a bold or brave girl? How do you think the author represents female characters such as Phyllis, Mabel, Nora, Grace and Mollie’s mother?

**AFTER EACH LETTER**

**21 June 1912**

1. Mollie tells Frances that the suffragettes who broke windows in Dublin, whom she had mentioned at the end of her previous letters, have been jailed. What do you think of their actions? Were they committing crimes for the right reason? Mollie describes the conditions in prison – do you think the punishment matches the crimes these women have committed?

2. Mollie describes how she has to help around the house while her brother does not. Why do you think this is? Is it fair?

3. Mollie reveals that the British prime minister is visiting Dublin over the summer and that there may be a protest. How do you think the suffragettes might protest this visit?

4. Mollie reminds Frances of the suffragette meetings she has attended previously but says Phyllis won’t bring her to any more as they may be dangerous. Do you think this is true? Why might the meetings be dangerous?

5. Mollie says she is willing to face any danger for the cause. What kind of person do you think Mollie is?

6. Frances is visiting America – what do you think America would have been like in 1912? How would this compare to Ireland in 1912?

**30 June 1912**

1. Mollie has finished her school exams. What do you think school would have been like for girls in 1912?

2. Frank Nugent will be staying with the Carberrys during the summer. Nora thinks that Frank will reveal his love for Mollie during his stay. How do you think Mollie feels about Frank? Do you think Nora will be right?

3. Grace loses the much-coveted Middle Grade Cup and is nasty to the winner, Daisy. What are your first impressions of Grace? What kind of person do you think she is? What do you think of the other students in Mollie’s class?

**4 and 5 July 1912**

1. Grace is staying with Nora for two whole weeks. How will this affect Mollie and Nora’s summer plans? Do you think that Grace will behave herself during this time? Do you think that Nora and Grace might get along as Nora’s mother hopes?

2. Grace’s attitude changes as soon as she is alone with Mollie and Nora. Why do you think that adults are so blind to how awful Grace is? Why do you think Grace acts younger than she is around adults? What does this say about Grace?

3. Mollie mentions that Maggie, her scullery maid, and her sister Jenny have been working since they were fourteen. What do you think of children being allowed to work at such a young age? How do you think Maggie might feel about the fact that Mollie does not have to work?

4. Mollie begins to feel sorry for Grace. Do you think she and Nora are being fair to Grace?
6 July 1912

1. What do you think about Grace's 'good girl act'? Why might she be acting like this? Why does she only do it with certain adults? Why doesn’t her act work on George?

2. What do you think of Mollie and Nora’s system of sneaking out? Do you think they might be risking being caught?

3. Mollie speaks about clothes in this letter and mentions she wears a lot of Phyllis’s old dresses. Do you think Mollie is pleased with this? What do you imagine clothes for girls would have looked like in 1912? Do you think Mollie likes the outfit her mother makes her wear?

4. Nora’s older brother has attended boarding school for the past six years and only sees his sister during the holidays, which means they sometimes feel like strangers. How would you feel if you were in Nora’s position? How would you feel about going to boarding school for the whole year?

5. The girls visit the tennis club to watch George play. Are you surprised by Grace’s enthusiasm for tennis? Why do you think she is so gracious in defeat here when she wasn’t during the Middle Grade Cup?

6. Barnaby the dog, or ‘the menace’ as Mollie calls him, makes an appearance. Do you think Barnaby will cause trouble for Mollie? Do you think Barnaby is a funny character?

8 July 1912

1. Mollie has never been in a motor car and she mentions travelling by bus and tram. How have transport, technology and science changed in Ireland since 1912?

2. Mollie mentions that Grace was ‘delicate’ as a baby and people would fuss over her. Could this be a clue as to why she acts as she does?

3. Mollie attempts to think of ideas for protesting. How have the ways in which people protest changed since 1912? Do you think any of Mollie’s ideas are good or would make a difference? Why do you think it is important for people to protest?

4. Nora says some things are more important than buns. Why is the suffrage movement so important to the girls?

5. Mollie is embarrassed when she meets Frank in the park. What are your first impressions of Frank? What kind of person do you think he is? Why does Mollie feel uneasy about introducing him to Grace?

6. Why do you think Barnaby acts differently around Grace? Are they really ‘kindred spirits’ as Nora suggests?

7. Mollie introduces Mabel as ‘Miss Purcell’. What do you think of this custom of using her last name? What are your impressions of Mabel? How is she different to Phyllis?

8. Why do you think Grace is so against the suffragette movement, even though being able to vote would benefit her directly? Do you think she would really tell Mollie’s and Nora’s parents if she found out about their involvement in suffrage?

9. Mabel admits she didn’t know a lot about politics when she was younger. Do you think children in modern Ireland know a lot about politics? Why do you think this is?

10. Mollie complains about having to wear Phyllis’s altered clothes. Can you relate to Mollie’s position in the family as the middle child?

11. Grace says the suffragettes ‘made a disgrace of themselves’. What do people think of the suffragettes?

12. Mollie and Nora are upset and angry with Grace’s opinions of women’s suffrage. Have you ever felt angry because someone did not agree with your beliefs? Mollie attempts to be civil and to ignore Grace – do you think this is easy to do?

13. Mollie and Nora have a disagreement about trying to make friends with Grace. Who would you side with in this argument? Do you think Grace has any qualities that might make her a good friend? Are the girls being too harsh on her?

9 and 10 July

1. Mollie talks a bit more about her family. What are your opinions of her two sisters, Phyllis and Julia? How are they different? Which do you think would be the easier sister to get along with?

2. During Asquith’s visit to the Theatre Royal, a woman can only attend if a man vouches for (approves) her and is only allowed to sit in the dress circle. Are you surprised by these strict rules? Why do you think women are treated this way?

3. Mollie and Nora discuss slogans for the protest and are unsure whether to put ‘votes for women’ or ‘votes for girls’. How do you think the issue of women’s suffrage affects even young girls like Mollie who are not yet old enough to vote?

4. In Nora’s song, she points out that Home Rule will not be for girls and boys. Do you think that children are ignored in political discussions? Would you like to see more involvement?

5. Why do you think Maggie is so uncomfortable talking to Mollie about women’s suffrage, although she supports the movement? Do you think the world is a different place for Maggie than it is for Mollie?

6. Nora says that writing songs and slogans is not much compared to what some people do to support the cause. Do you think this is fair or does every little effort help, not just the big ones?

7. Mollie talks about how the suffragette prisoners are treated in prison. Why do you think they are treated differently to other prisoners? What does it mean to be a political prisoner?

8. Miss Casey believes there should be as many female tennis players as male in the tennis club. Do you think that some sports lack balance when it comes to gender? Why do you think that more girls are not involved in sports?
9. Why do you think Mollie feels so awkward when Mary and Nora discuss Grace? Do you feel sorry for Grace or are they justified in their annoyance?

10. Mollie and Nora think it might be possible to convert some people to the suffrage cause. Do you think this would be an easy thing to do?

12 and 14 July

1. Mollie mentions that the Metropolitan Life Insurance Building is the tallest building in New York at over fifty floors. Do you know what the current tallest building in New York is? How has New York changed since 1912?

2. What do you think of Harry’s attitude towards women, particularly his mother and sisters?

3. What do you think about how Mollie acts in front of Frank? Why does she run away when Nora brings Frank up in conversation?

4. What do you think of Nora’s new song? Do you think it could be persuasive? Do you think it’s fair that only wealthy men are allowed to vote? Why do you think this is? Did you know this before reading this book?

5. Mollie and Nora decide to sneak out to the IWFL meeting in the Phoenix Park. Do you think this is a good idea? Do you think Phyllis is being fair by not giving the girls any information about the protest?

6. Mollie mentions the lies both she and Phyllis have told their parents in the past few months to go about their suffrage business. Do you think it is OK to lie for reasons like this? Why do you think the girls feel they have to keep their beliefs hidden from their parents?

7. Some people at the meeting have turned up to shout insults instead of to listen. What do you think of these actions? Are they fair?

8. What do you think of Phyllis’s reaction to seeing Mollie at the meeting? Is Mollie too young to be involved in something like this? Mabel says they can’t turn away supporters but Kathleen argues that kids don’t count. What do you think of this argument?

9. Mabel reveals the plans to protest Asquith’s march – what do you think of them?

10. Mollie feels odd taking off her shoes and socks on the beach in front of Frank – how does this differ from the way girls and boys act nowadays? Why do you think Mollie feels so awkward?

15 July 1912

1. Do you think Phyllis is being fair by refusing to bring Mollie to any more suffrage meetings? Do you think that Mollie and Nora count as real suffragettes after all their work for the cause? What do you think of Mollie and Nora’s actions and the fact that they risked prison for the cause?

2. Mollie is surprised by Phyllis’s reaction to her news – how did you think Phyllis would react to Mollie’s secret? Do you think that going to Nassau Street during the protest could really be dangerous? Do you think Phyllis is correct in thinking she would be blamed if Mollie got into trouble?

3. Mollie says that Maggie does not support Home Rule as she doesn’t believe it will be enough. What do you know about the arguments around Home Rule in Ireland?

4. Maggie says Mollie is much younger than she was at fourteen because she is still in school and not working. What kind of life do you think Maggie has had? How has her life differed from Mollie’s? Do you think it’s fair that girls like Maggie and Jenny have to work while Nora and Mollie do not?

5. Phyllis describes ‘the bubbly feeling’ she gets from being involved with the suffragettes. Have you ever felt anything similar?

6. Mabel says that not everyone might agree with Mollie taking part in the protest on Nassau Street, as it might be seen as ‘using children’. Do you think that adults sometimes think children have no opinions of their own? Do you think Mabel’s idea of a disguise will work? Mollie feels she looks grown up with her hair pinned up – how would this be different in a modern world?

7. Mollie is horrified to run in to Frank in her nightdress and says it was a highly inappropriate situation. Do you think this would be a big deal in the modern world? Why is Mollie so mortified?

16 and 17 July 1912

1. Mollie attempts to avoid Frank and believes he is being awkward with her. Do you think they are making a big deal out of the situation?

2. Mollie and Nora discuss growing up and mention putting their hair up, wearing corsets and long skirts. How is growing up different for girls today? Women in 1912 are not allowed to wear trousers – what do you think of all of the strict rules about appearance for women? How is this different from today?

3. Grace talks about how much she is enjoying tennis and how the girls support each other’s victories. What do you think of this unusual display of ‘sportsmanship’ from Grace? Do you think it is difficult not to get competitive in sports? Mollie is surprised that Grace has actual friends instead of henchmen – what do you think this says about Grace’s relationships with other girls her age?

4. Mollie’s parents are glad she and Phyllis are getting along. Do you think Maggie’s parents would think children have no opinions of their own? Do you think dealing with Grace’s relationship would be the same in the modern world? Why is Mollie so mortified?

5. The plan begins to come together. Do you think everything will go according to their plan? The girls have to tell a lot of lies and think quickly to avoid anyone finding out the truth. Do you think you would be able to hide a secret mission this big?
19 July
1. Tensions begin to mount as the big day arrives; the streets are packed and busy and the girls narrowly avoid disaster a few times. How does the author build the reader’s sense of expectation and excitement?

2. The poster slogans state ‘Home Rule for Irish women as well as men’ and ‘We demand a woman suffrage amendment to the Home Rule bill’. Do you think their methods will be effective in catching the attention of the prime minister?

3. The police officers arrive suddenly. Do you think the police treat the women fairly and with respect? Are the suffragettes dangerous radicals in your opinion?

4. The suffragettes still manage to wave their protest flags and Mollie throws the confetti. All of the women get caught up in the moment to cheer for their cause – how do you imagine this might feel? Have you ever felt anything similar?

5. The women discuss how the suffragettes are viewed in the newspapers and the public opinion of them. What would people think of the suffragettes if this were an issue that faced women in modern Ireland?

6. Kathleen reveals an English suffragette has thrown a hatchet at the prime minister. How do you think these actions will affect the cause? Do you think this suffragette took things too far or was she justified in her actions?

7. Why do you think it is easier for Mabel to encourage Mollie and Nora in their suffragette interest? Do you think Phyllis regrets involving Mollie? Why does she refuse to bring Mollie to the meeting at Beresford Place? Do you think Mollie and Nora are old enough to decide for themselves? Do you think Mollie is being brave or foolish in attempting to attend the meeting without telling Phyllis?

20 and 21 July 1912

1. The newspapers report on the actions of the suffragettes, calling it a ‘Reign of Terror’ and stating, ‘Ladies who have no religion – only votes for women’. Letters to the paper say the suffragettes should be thrown in the river. Do you think the media is being too harsh on the suffragettes? Why might people have this opinion of suffragettes in general and, in particular, after the events of the day before? Do you think people will take these opinions seriously?

2. Julia seems a lot more innocent than Mollie. Do you think she will join the cause when she is older?

3. How is the crowd at the Beresford Place meeting different to the crowds at other suffragette meetings? The crowd quickly turns against the suffragettes – do you think the author captures the escalating tension and fear at this point? Would you be afraid in a situation like this?

4. Mollie and Nora witness a lot of violence towards the suffragettes – were you shocked by this? Why do you think the action becomes so violent so fast? Was Phyllis right to refuse to bring her sister in the first place?

5. A mob tries to throw Phyllis in the Liffey and Mollie risks her own safety by bravely trying to stop them. Were you shocked that the men could act this way towards a young lady? How do you think Mollie felt seeing her older sister in such danger? How do you think Phyllis would be affected by something like this happening to her?

6. The girls formulate a lie to tell their parents about how Phyllis got injured but Mollie realises Grace has witnessed all of the events. Do you think Grace will tell on Mollie? How do you think seeing something like this happening might affect Grace’s opinion of the suffragettes? Do you think Grace would listen to Nora if she asked her not to tell? Do you think Mollie’s parents will believe their story?

7. Mollie’s parents react differently to hearing about the suffragettes being attacked. Mollie’s mother feels sorry for the suffragettes but her father feels they may have brought it on themselves by causing trouble. Why do you think they have different reactions? Which one do you agree with more?

8. Like his father, Harry thinks that the suffragettes deserved to be attacked for causing trouble. Do you think this is fair? Why do you think some boys and men would have these opinions? Harry mocks Frank for saying the suffragettes have a right to protest. Why do you think he cannot see things in the same way as Frank? Do you think the men who stand up for women are brave?

9. Why do you think Grace ignores Nora and tries to run away when the girls try to confront her? Do you think she would really tell? Nora and Mollie vow to take their punishment like their heroes if she does. Do you think they would be punished badly by their parents?

10. Are you surprised by Grace’s reaction? Grace is still not convinced of the suffragette movement but thinks they should be treated fairly. Do you think this is a reasonable opinion? Do you think Grace will keep her word? Why does Grace react by crying?

11. Phyllis and Mabel decide not to let the bullies stop them from being part of the suffragette cause. What do you think this says about them? Do you think many people would continue after what Phyllis has faced? Do you think Mollie and Nora will follow their example?

12. Mabel reveals there was more than one attack on suffragettes and on other women too. Do you think public opinion of votes for women will be changed after the events of the past few days? Why do you think this is?

22 and 27 July 1912

1. How has Nora and Mollie’s opinion of Grace changed? Has your opinion of Grace changed?

2. Frank apologises for being unfriendly – why do you think Mollie is so relieved?

3. The story ends with the chaos of the dog show. Why do you think the author chooses to end the story in this way?
4. Harry overhears the girls talking about what happened at Beresford Place. How do you think he feels knowing two of his sisters are suffragettes? Do you think this will change his opinions of the movement? What do you think of Harry’s opinion that he has to protect his sisters because they are female?

5. Frank says it is not up to boys to decide what is good for girls – do you agree? Frank says that sometimes boys like Harry need a push in the right direction. Do you think boys and men need to be more educated on women’s rights?

6. Mollie says she would never deny her cause – what do you think this says about her as a person? Mollie says that once she learned about suffrage she couldn’t ignore women’s rights anymore. How has reading this book affected your opinions on the rights of women and girls?

7. The story ends with a reminder that Mollie and Nora still have their disguises – do you think this is really the end of their story?

Activities

- Mollie’s story is told in the form of letters to her friend Frances. Write letters to your friends telling them of the most exciting thing that happened to you during the summer holidays.
- Mollie mentions suffragettes such as Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington and Countess Markievicz. What do you know about these women and their fight for women’s rights? Make a profile of these woman and other women from the IWFL and their achievements in the fight for equal rights.
- Who are the women who fight for the rights of Irish girls and women in our world today? Do a project on a woman you think fights for equality in modern Ireland.
- Mabel and Phyllis sell a magazine called *The Irish Citizen*. Make your own version of this magazine with citizens of Ireland you think are important today.
- Mollie and Nora discuss making pro-suffrage protest signs. Have a competition to see who can come up with the best protest slogan and parade your efforts in your own school protest.
- Write and perform your own protest song about something that is important to you.
- Mollie feels inspired by the speakers she sees at IWFL meetings. Write an essay on a person who inspires you.
- Mollie and Nora talk about a lot of books in *Mollie on the March*. Choose one of the books mentioned and write a book report on it.
- Mollie and Nora disguise themselves twice in this story and discuss the different types of clothes worn by girls and women in 1912. Put together your own 1912 outfits and have a vintage fashion show.
- Although women in Ireland now have the right to vote, globally women and girls are not treated the same as men and boys – in many countries, they are still discriminated against. Find out about a country where the rights of girls and women are being denied and try to raise awareness of this issue in your school. Some examples you could choose are the right to vote, the right to marry whom you choose, the right to education, the right to drive, the right to leave the house unchaperoned, the right to equal pay at work or the right to be involved in politics.
- Mollie’s story ends with a hint that this might not be her last adventure. Write your own short-story version of what you would like to happen to Mollie next.
Raymie Nightingale
Kate DiCamillo
Suitable for age 9–11
Walker Books
ISBN 9781406373189

SUMMARY
Raymie Clarke has come to realise that everything, absolutely everything, depends on her. And she has a plan. If Raymie can win the Little Miss Central Florida Tire competition, then her father, who left town two days ago with a dental hygienist, will see Raymie’s picture in the paper and (maybe) come home. To win, not only does Raymie have to do good deeds and learn how to twirl a baton; she also has to contend with the wispy, frequently fainting Louisiana Elefante, who has a show-business background, and the fiery, stubborn Beverly Tapinski, who’s determined to sabotage the contest. But as the competition approaches, loneliness, loss and unanswerable questions draw the three girls into an unlikely friendship – and challenge each of them to come to the rescue in unexpected ways.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Kate DiCamillo is the beloved author of many books for young readers. She grew up in Florida and moved to Minnesota in her twenties, where homesickness and a bitter winter led her to write her first published novel, Because of Winn-Dixie. Her novels include The Tiger Rising, The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane, The Tale of Despereaux and The Magician’s Elephant. Kate now lives in Minneapolis.
Questions

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. Look at the front cover. What do you think this book is about?

AFTER YOU HAVE READ

1. What does Raymie admire about Beverly Tapinski and Louisiana Elefante?
2. Do you think that Raymie’s father will move home if he sees her in the newspaper?
3. Do you think that Louisiana and her grandmother are actually being chased by Marsha Jean? If not, why not? Why do you think Granny tells her that she is being followed?
4. Do you believe the story about Louisiana’s parents? Why do you think she believes this story about her family history?
5. Why do you think that Raymie feels so close to Mrs Borkowski and Mrs Sylvester?
6. Why is Louisiana so scared of the County Home? Do you think she might actually end up living there?
7. Raymie and her friends each have different family make-ups – Raymie’s father has run off with his dental hygienist, Beverly’s father lives in New York and Louisiana lives with her eccentric granny. Why do you think they are drawn to being friends with each other?
8. Beverly’s mom is a champion baton twirler. Why do you think that Beverly is determined to sabotage the contest?
9. This book is set in 1975. Do you think the story would be different if it were set in 2018? How would it be different?
10. What book would you bring with you to read to the elderly people in the Golden Glen? Why?
11. Why is Raymie so scared of Alice Nebbley? Why is Beverly not?
12. Do you like the way the story is written?

For older readers

1. All three girls are living in extremely stressful situations – broken families, risk of hunger, absent parents – why do you think they become so close?
2. Raymie’s mom is quite absent in this book – she is grieving her broken marriage. Who does Raymie cling to at this time, and why?
3. Raymie and Beverly go along with the plan to rescue Archie from the Very Friendly Animal Centre, even though they know that Archie was probably put down. Why do they go along with the plan?
4. Do you think that the Three Rancheros could have adventures like this in 2018? What would be different?
5. Do you believe that Raymie appearing in the newspaper would actually make her father come to his senses and come home? Why?
6. There are lots of interesting female characters in this book; only three male characters are mentioned. These are Raymie and Beverly’s fathers and Raymie’s swimming coach, Mr Staphopoulos, who all leave. Why do you think the author, Kate DiCamillo, wrote the book this way?
7. Mrs Sylvester tells Raymie, ‘Everything will be fine. It will all work out in the end.’ She says this when talking about going to do a good deed at the Golden Glen. Do you think this sentiment applies to anything else in Raymie’s life? Is that what Mrs Sylvester meant when she said this?
8. When Raymie arrives at the Golden Glen she feels that she is going to finally understand things, that some truth is going to be revealed to her. Why do you think she feels this way? Do you think she’ll ever have that revelation?
9. The adult characters in this book are distracted, eccentric, sometimes negligent or absent. What impact does this have on the girls? Why do you think Kate DiCamillo wrote the book this way?
10. What do you think the story of Clara Wingtip is meant to convey? What effect does it have on Raymie?
11. When Louisiana reads to Raymie, she makes up the story as she goes along. Do you like this idea? Why do you think Louisiana does this?
12. When faced with a traumatic event – the near-drowning of Louisiana – Raymie and Beverly process their emotions in different ways. How do they differ and what does this tell us about their personalities and experiences?

Activities

• Write a short review of the book – did you enjoy it? What were some of your favourite moments? Who is the book for? What happens in the book and why?
• Make a list of good deeds that you can do and do one for someone else every day for a week.
• Flex your toes and isolate your objectives – what are your objectives for this day, week, year?
• Write a letter from Raymie to her absent father – how would she describe the events of the book?
• Raymie feels her soul inflate when she looks at the moon and listens to the yellow bird sing. What inflates your soul? Make a list – is it spending time with your family or friends? Making something with your hands? Reading a book or looking at a piece of art?
• Think of some more adventures that the Three Rancheros could go on and write a story about them.
**My Name Is Parvana**  
Deborah Ellis  
Suitable for age 9–11  
Oxford University Press  
ISBN 9780192734044

**SUMMARY**  
In this, the fourth and possibly best in the Breadwinner series, Parvana endures torture and ill-treatment in a US military base, resisting continual interrogation by casting her mind back to the camp for internal refugees where she had finally found her family and to the school for girls they had built together. With her sister Nooria, she sought to instil in Afghan children ‘high expectations and the confidence to rebuild the country’. But a repressive patriarchal society has continually frustrated Parvana, who longs for an independent and fulfilled life. Now, with her future threatened by both the Taliban and the US military, she is forced once again to assume responsibility for herself and what remains of her family, before being dramatically reunited with her best friend Shauzia. The two girls elect to defer their long-held dreams of adventure, opting instead to work towards a more hopeful future for their countrymen (and women and children!).

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**  
Canadian author and political activist for peace and social justice Deborah Ellis has travelled the world, living among people whose lives have been turned upside down by circumstance, documenting and reflecting the indomitable spirit of these everyday heroes in her award-winning fiction and non-fiction books. She is a very bold woman.
Questions

BEFORE YOU BEGIN
1. What do you know about Afghanistan? If you type the word 'Afghanistan' into a search engine and look for images of the country, you will probably find more images of American and other soldiers and of war than of the breathtaking landscape. Write as much as you know about the country before you begin the book.

AFTER YOU HAVE READ
1. Chapter 1: In this whole chapter – over ten pages – we never hear Parvana speak. The interrogators know nothing about her, not even her name. Yet by the end of this chapter we already know much, not only about her character, but also about the political situation in the country, the personalities of her interrogators, her physical appearance ... How does the author convey so much information while all the time making us want to read on, to learn more about these characters?
2. Chapter 2 (pp. 17–19): As Parvana remembers the old peddler and his story of how he suffered at the hands of those who came to 'free' his country, we see that Parvana may be experiencing a little of what is now known as 'secondary traumatic stress' or compassion fatigue, a condition common among those who experience trauma over long periods of time.
   • Reflect for a few moments on how you might have reacted in her place in each of the three instances she describes.
   • Consider how you react to the now familiar images and stories of families fleeing war, famine, ethnic cleansing and religious persecution. What do you feel when you see these images or read of the plight of these people who have become stateless through no fault of their own? Do you still feel compassion and a desire to help, or do you feel so powerless that you, as Parvana did, shut yourself against it?
   • Do you, at the end of this chapter, feel you already know a lot about Parvana and about the circumstances in which she and her fellow Afghans found themselves?
3. Chapter 6 (pp. 61–3): What does this scene tell us about Parvana? Day-dreaming, she had wandered in to the village without really thinking and was utterly unprepared for this attack. Consider her response. What adjectives would you use to describe her response? Do you think she was right to react as she did? Discuss. Then consider her mother’s reaction – do you think she was right to address Parvana as she did?
4. The relationship between Parvana and her mother is complex, even more so than most mother–daughter relationships! Parvana had fended for herself, making her own decisions for herself and for others, for so long she found it difficult to be told what to do and when to do it. She knew she was loved but didn’t always feel liked by her equally strong-willed and determined mother. Can you think of instances through the book that show the mother–daughter relationship at its most tense and also at its most loving?
Activities

• Imagine life in Afghanistan if everyone had equal access to education. Imagine how the country would be if every child, and every adult who had left school early or who had had no education to speak of, could access free literacy classes? Write a letter to Afghanistan’s Minister for Trade and Investment explaining what benefits equal access to education would bring to the country.

• If children don’t get an education, their ability to work is affected and this is particularly true for girls. If they can work outside the home they can earn money to pay for food, water and clothes, and this makes them less vulnerable. Think how your life might be under the restrictions of Taliban rule. Then record a piece describing your life and how you feel – you might not be able to read or write if you had never received any schooling.

• Parvana, her mother and sister Nooria and Mrs Weera all fight to bring about the changes they want to see. Their creator, Deborah Ellis, does too. And, of course, so does Malala, whose real life in many ways echoed Parvana’s experience. As Meghan Markle said when addressing United Nations (UN) Women 2015, ‘It isn’t enough to talk about equality. One must believe in it. And it isn’t enough to simply believe in it. One must work at it.’ Imagine you are giving a speech at UN Women 2020 – what issues around equality are important to you? How would you achieve them? Write your speech.

• Leila’s Academy of Hope was very progressive, especially in a country where education for girls is frowned upon, in that it valued physical education as well as the more traditional subjects. In Ireland fifty years ago, education focused largely on reading, writing and maths – very few schools offered much in the way of PE or art.

• Ask your parents and grandparents for examples of things that are normal now that would have been unthinkable in their generation.

• Look to the wider world and into history to see other examples of the cultural change. What causes this to happen? Who leads this change? Is it always the younger generation?

• Think of some bold women like Rosa Parks, Rosa Luxembourg and Martha Gellhorn, or more recent role-models like Kate Adie, Veronica Guerin and Michelle Obama. Do some research to find out how these or other women changed forever the perception of what women can and do achieve.

• Millions of Afghan girls were forced to drop out of school during Taliban rule. Often families lived in one room, making it difficult to continue to study even if the students had books and light to read by. After the Taliban had allegedly been defeated, the schools often had no walls, sometimes no toilets or shared toilets, not enough desks and hardly ever enough materials for teaching or learning. Even now, students have to walk long distances to school, sometimes on their own. Consider how these factors make it difficult for children, but particularly for girls, to continue in education as they reach the age of nine or ten. As a class, write a short drama to explore an obstacle to accessing education in Afghanistan. Your play could be humorous while still addressing one or two of the issues you have read about in My Name Is Parvana.
**The Girl of Ink & Stars**
Kiran Millwood Hargrave
Suitable for age 9–11
Chicken House
ISBN 9781910002742

**SUMMARY**
This debut novel reads like a fairy tale. Isabella lives on the island of Joya, a once lush and beautiful land that no longer has birdlife other than ravens. She is following in her father’s footsteps and learning to be a map maker. She longs to complete a map of the whole island but is forbidden from travelling by the all-powerful Governor. Lupe, his daughter, has a fight with Isa (Isabella) and goes on a mission to try and prove her worth. The story takes many twists and turns, introducing us to menacing wolf-like creatures, banished folk, a brave goddess named Arinta and a fiery maze at the centre of the island. It is Isa who uses her wits and cartographer’s knowledge to find her friend and discovers that Lupe is courageous and brave. The thread running through this fast-paced novel is one of magical realism, richly layered with adventure and bravery.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**
Kiran Millwood Hargrave (27) writes with a craft that belies her years. She was born in London and studied at both Cambridge and Oxford. The Girl of Ink and Stars has garnered awards including the Waterstone’s Children’s Book Prize and the prestigious British Book Awards Children’s Book of the Year in 2017, which Kiran explains is regarded as the Oscars of the book world – including the red carpet!
**Questions**

**BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

1. Look at the title and illustration on the front cover. What do you think this book is about? Is it an adventure story or a love story? Does it look like a factual book or a book that will be about magic and mystery? Does the silhouette artwork make you want to open the cover and read it?

2. Inside the front and back covers you’ll find maps – do you think they are maps of a real island?

3. There are line drawings on each page throughout the book – stars, compasses, old ships and circles. Does this give any hint as to what the book is about?

**AFTER YOU HAVE READ**

1. Why have the smaller birds flown away from the island?

2. What do you think happened to Cata? Why does Lupe disappear into the Forbidden Forest?

3. Isa has an old map she inherited from her mother – how important is this map? What magic makes it clear to read?

4. How does Isa manage to dupe the Governor into including her in his search party to find Lupe?

5. Is Lupe a good friend to Isa? Is it unfair of Isa to call her selfish and cowardly?

6. What is Isa’s dad’s profession? Does Isa want to follow in his footsteps? She brings a piece of his old walking stick with her – how does this ‘light’ up her way?

7. Does Isa really plot the correct journey that the search party undertakes?

8. What is the significance of Lupe’s locket?

9. Who are the banished people? Why do they attack the Governor and the search party?

10. Who is Arinta? Is Isa like her?

11. What do you think the Tibicenas are? Why does Isa get a sickening feeling and hear a deafening noise before they come near her?

12. How does Isa navigate her way through the maze?

13. Who is Yota? What does he look like?

14. What does Isa use to open the dungeon and allow her father and the other prisoners to escape?

15. Did you enjoy the book? Would you recommend the book to your friends?

16. Were the language and content suitable for readers of your age?

17. Are the characters credible? Did you relate to Isa or Lupe?

18. Could you visualise the Tibicenas?

19. What images stand out after you have finished the book?

20. Are you keen to read another book by this author?

**Activities**

- There are map coordinates throughout the book. In the preface, the author thanks Sabine Karer at 28.6139° N, 77.2090° E and other people who helped her put ink to paper at 51.7519° N, 1.2578° W. Can you find where these people come from?

- Find the latitude and longitude of your school.

- Go outside on the next clear night and look at the stars. Can you recognise any constellations? The Plough, Orion? The North Star is a small, faint twinkle. Make a list of all the constellations you can find.

- Draw a picture of a big Tibicena.

- Make a bracelet similar to the one Isa gave to Lupe.

- Write the letter you think the Governor wrote to Lupe and placed in the locket.

- There are numerous references to nature and the environment throughout the book – the burnt-ash-coloured trees, a forest that is fossilised, the smell of sulphur, the dried-up river bed. Go for a walk around your local area or a nearby park or forest or mountain and make notes about the environment there, thinking carefully about wildlife, geographical features and pollution. Then create a poster map of the area, indicating the features you noted on your nature walk.
Ada’s Ideas: The Story of Ada Lovelace, the World’s First Computer Programmer
Fiona Robinson
Suitable for age 8–12
Abrams Books for Young Readers
ISBN 9781419718724

SUMMARY
Ada Lovelace was born in England in 1815 to Anne Milbanke, a wealthy mathematician, and the poet Lord Byron. Ada was raised by her mother when her parents separated and was encouraged in serious, rigorous study from an early age. The Industrial Revolution necessitated the rapid development of giant steam-powered machines and Ada became fascinated by these. Inspired by gifted people of her time – Dickens, Faraday and Charles Babbage – Ada began to invent. Babbage had already invented the first steam-powered calculator, which formed the basis for the world’s first computer. Ada invented an algorithm (set of instructions) that could be punched into cards and form a ‘program’ for Babbage’s computer. She foresaw that computers had the potential to create pictures, music and words and not just to make calculations. Ada died aged thirty-six and it took another hundred years for the first working computer to be created. But Ada had led the way.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR–ILLUSTRATOR
Fiona Robinson is an award-winning author–illustrator. Her celebrated picturebook What Animals Really Like won the Irma S. Black & James H. Black Award for Excellence in Children’s Literature in 2012. Her work has been honoured by the Royal Academy of Arts in London and has featured in many gallery shows. She was born in the north of England but now lives with her family in Brooklyn, New York.

When Fiona Robinson was in primary school her teachers called her ‘Little Leonardo’.

www.childrensbooksireland.ie
Questions

BEFORE YOU BEGIN
1. What can you learn about Ada by studying the front cover?
2. Does the picture remind you of any other story?
3. Describe what you see on the endpapers. Do you know what they are? Compare the endpapers with the cover illustration. What do you notice?
4. Can you guess the century in which Ada was born?

AFTER YOU HAVE READ
1. Ada inherited interests and skills from both her parents. Can you give an example of this?
2. What subjects did Ada study as an eight-year-old? Compare this with what you studied when you were eight.
3. What advantages did Ada have that helped her realise her potential?
4. What was happening to industry in England during Ava’s lifetime? How did this impact on her imagination?
5. Explain what each of these machines did: the Difference Engine, the Analytical Engine and the Jacquard Loom. (The endpapers are the cards that were used to produce the patterns on the fabric manufactured on the Jacquard Loom.)
6. What exactly did Ada invent?
7. Ada believed that computers could be programmed to create pictures, music and words. Did her prediction come true? Where is the evidence for this?
8. What words would you use to describe Ava?

Activities
- Research another prominent female inventor, such as Marie Curie (radioactivity/polonium/radium), Margaret Knight (paper bag), Elizabeth Magie (the board game Monopoly), Stephanie Kwolek (Kevlar, a material five times stronger than steel) or Dr Giulana Tesoro (fire-retardant fabric), and create a biographical profile of their life and work.
- Research another prominent woman of the nineteenth century, such as Jane Austen (writer), Mary Harris Jones (workers’ rights), Emmeline Pankhurst (women’s rights), Clara Barton (Red Cross society) or Emily Dickinson (poet).
- Read the Artist’s Notes at the back of the book and study the illustrations in the book. Choose your favourite illustration from the book and recreate it using Fiona Roberts’s method of painting, cutting, sticking onto bricks of varying thicknesses and then photographing the final picture. Fiona Robinson used her son’s Lego bricks to get different depths for her pictures. Before you begin check this link: http://www.designofthepicturebook.com/adas-ideas-an-interview-with-fiona-robinson-2/
- Design a poster entitled ‘Poetry and Parallelograms!’
I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World
Malala Yousafzai with Patricia McCormick
Non-fiction
Suitable for age 11+
Orion Children’s Books
ISBN 9781780622163

SUMMARY
The youngest-ever recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, Malala Yousafzai’s name is instantly recognisable. This edition, reworked especially for teen readers, without some of the family history and political detail of the original version, is an updated, more inspiring and more personal account of her life and continuing campaign for educational opportunity. We meet the real Malala in a first-hand account of her rivalries and girlish squabbles with her friends and the constant intimidation and threats from the Taliban. Though she doesn’t remember the shots that nearly killed her, her memories of waking up alone in a Birmingham hospital and her confusion, disorientation and pain are vivid and make for harrowing reading. The effects of enforced exile have also been felt by her family, but with their support, encouragement and love, Malala – not yet twenty-one – continues to fight for universal access to education through her writings, public appearances and the Malala Fund.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Activist and campaigner Malala Yousafzai now lives in Birmingham with her family. She has addressed the United Nations, spoken at the Girl Summit and met with former president Barack Obama. The Malala Fund campaigns for the right of every child to have twelve years of education. In 2014, the UN officially named 12 July, her birthday, Malala Day.

www.childrensbooksireland.ie
**Questions**

**BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

1. Malala was born in Mingora in the Swat Valley, in Pakistan, and often stayed in Shangla, high up in the mountains. What do you know about Pakistan itself? Can you locate it on a large map of the world, Peter’s Projection Map or similar? How far is it from where you were born? Malala says that the Swat Valley used to be very popular with tourists. Find and watch one of the videos used to promote the region so that you can begin to picture what life was like for the young Malala.

2. What do you know of Malala herself? Have you seen the film that was inspired by this book? Write down two or three of the most interesting things you know about her. Do you already agree with J.K. Rowling’s opinion that she is ‘an inspiration to girls and women all over the world’?

**AFTER YOU HAVE READ**

1. Chapter 1: Malala describes a culture where the lives of men and women are very different, with women ‘observing the code of purdah’, not allowed to be ‘lawyers, or engineers, fashion designers or artists’ or anything else they dreamed of. Women aren’t allowed to go outside their homes without a male relative to accompany them. Do you think any jobs are done better by women than by men? Or vice versa? Do you think that women are better at minding children and the home than men?

2. Chapter 2: Malala says that ‘life for the women in the mountains was not easy ... Even my own mother ... couldn’t read.’ What, if anything, does this tell us about the standard of living in Pakistan?

3. Chapter 16: When Malala met Richard Holbrooke, a special ambassador from the US, at a meeting of social activists in Islamabad she learned that he considered the education of girls to be far down the list of issues that Pakistan faced. Do you agree with the ambassador that pledging economic aid and providing electricity and gas should be addressed before girls’ education? What might the other, older social activists have been saying to the ambassador? Do you think they would have welcomed Malala’s petition, or might they have felt she was too young and lacking in knowledge to be involved in such matters?

4. Chapter 19: When Malala spoke at a conference on education in Lahore, she told how she and her friends in the girls’ high school had defied the Taliban edict and continued going to school secretly. She said, ‘The girls of Swat were, and are not, afraid of anyone.’ How do you think Fazlullah or any member of the Taliban might have felt on hearing these words? Can you imagine the conversation two or three members of the Taliban might have had as they considered her words? Try to imagine their response.

5. Chapter 21: Does it really take a generation to change a culture? Malala’s mother learned to read in a piecemeal fashion as an adult. Malala says that her mother ‘loved schoolwork even more than I did, if that was possible’. Her father said it was because she’d been deprived of learning for so long. But why did this not happen before? Her husband knew how to read and Malala herself could have taught her. Discuss how cultural norms affect our way of thinking and our expectations.

**Activities**

- On Malala’s first day back in school after receiving her award, a group of journalists was waiting to interview her. Malala worried about what her friends, and in particular her best friend Moniba, might think about the attention she was receiving.

  - How might you have felt if TV crews were forever waiting to interview your friend but not you, particularly if school were one of the few safe spaces in which you could relax and be yourself? What might her friends have said to each other if they’d had smartphones to communicate instantly and without much thought? Write the phone conversation.

  - Or write the conversation between Moniba and the friends she hung around with while Malala was ‘criss-crossing the country’ with her father – what do you think these friends really felt when Malala arrived back in school? Get in character and perform your dialogue with a group of friends.

- Malala proved that one voice can make a positive difference in the world. One voice can also effect change in your community. Have you ever been an activist for change? Did you ever sign a petition or start one? Are you a ‘keyboard warrior’ or do you actively go out and campaign/work to bring about change? Consider and discuss the issues that affect your community and the role of voluntary groups (e.g. Tidy Town groups, groups that bring food and tents to rough sleepers, etc.) What could you do to bring about change in your community?

- When Malala was eleven she was interviewed about the peace treaty she was already disappointed in (p. 94). Meghan Markle, too, was only eleven when she ‘unknowingly and somehow accidentally became a female advocate’. Watch the video where she appears on a children’s TV programme to talk about creating change, and later in the UN speech where she describes the ‘moment she realised the magnitude of her actions’. https://www.glamour.com/story/video-11-year-old-meghan-markle-nick-news-fighting-sexism. Discuss the similarities and differences between Malala’s and Markle’s activism – what issues are they each concerned with and how do they advocate for the rights of girls and women?
SUMMARY
An emotionally truthful and visually stunning graphic novel about solace and redemption. Hélène can’t hide from the taunts of her former friends in the corridors at school. She can’t be invisible in the playground or in the stairways leading to art class. Insults are even scribbled on the walls of the toilet cubicles. Hélène smells, Hélène’s fat, Hélène has no friends ... now. When Hélène’s heart hammers in her chest as Geneviève snickers at the back of the bus, inventing nasty things to say about her, Hélène dives into the pages of her book, *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë. And in the solace she finds there, Hélène’s own world becomes a little brighter. But how will the story end? Is there any hope for the wise, strange, plain Jane Eyre? How could Mr Rochester ever love her?

On nature camp, arranged by the school as a treat, Hélène finds herself in the outcasts’ tent. Again, her inner and outer worlds become entangled as she reads on – this time putting herself into Jane Eyre’s shoes. It would be impossible for Mr Rochester to marry a sausage in a swimsuit, even if he loved her. Wouldn’t it? But, while deeply lost in self-doubt, Hélène’s world is unexpectedly shaken up by a fresh new friendship. Geraldine snorts with laughter at her jokes. They love being together. Hélène begins to worry less about what the cruel girls think – and more about how happy she can be (and make others). Perhaps Jane Eyre’s story will end well, too.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Fanny Britt is a writer, playwright and translator. She has written a dozen plays and translated more than fifteen. She is the winner of the 2013 Governor General’s Literary Award in Drama for her play *Bienveillance. Jane, the Fox and Me*, her first graphic novel, was nominated for a Governor General’s Literary Award for Children’s Literature – Text; won a Libris Award and a Joe Shuster award; and was on the *New York Times* Best Illustrated Books list.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR
Isabelle Arsenault studied graphic design at the Université du Québec à Montréal. Her passion for illustrated books has led her more and more to continue pursuing this path. Isabelle has achieved international recognition for her work and won many awards and distinctions. She’s won the prestigious Governor General’s Award for Children’s Literature three times, and two of her picturebooks were named *New York Times* Best Illustrated Books of the Year. Isabelle’s style is infused with a sensitivity and finesse that appeals equally to children and adults. She lives and works in Montreal.
Questions

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. Have you read any graphic novels before? How do they tell stories in a different way to traditional novels?
2. What do you think of the title of this story? What could it be about?
3. What do you think of the cover of this book? Does it look appealing? Would you pick it up at the library or bookshop? Does it look like a story aimed at your age group?
4. This story has been translated from French. Can you think of any other stories you know that were originally written in a different language? What problems, if any, do you think might arise in translating a story into a different language?

AFTER YOU HAVE READ

General

1. The book *Jane, the Fox and Me* tells both Hélène’s and Jane Eyre’s story. What do you know about the book *Jane Eyre*? From reading this story, would you like to read it yourself?
2. Hélène appears to relate a lot to Jane Eyre and uses her world as a form of escape. What books have you read that you found relatable?
3. The illustrator uses colour and body language in different ways in this story. How do they help to tell the story? Did these techniques help you to understand Hélène’s feelings a bit better? Did you enjoy the illustrations?
4. This title *Jane, the Fox and Me* deals with Hélène’s experience of bullying. How do the author and the illustrator show in different ways how she is affected by her bullies? Do you have any experience with bullying?
5. Hélène struggles with her self-confidence and body image. What factors make her so aware of her appearance? Do you think this is a problem that a lot of young girls face today? Why?
6. Geraldine’s friendship transforms Hélène’s story. Why are friends so important in our everyday life?
7. What do you think makes Hélène a brave or a bold girl? How does she change or show her inner strength?

Pages 9–15

1. Hélène cannot hide from her bullies and their insults. Have you ever felt like you wanted to hide from people?
2. Hélène describes how she used to be friends with Geneviève, Sarah, Anne-Julie and Chloé, but she has been on her own for some time now. Why do you think her friends have turned on her? How do you think she feels about her former friends picking on her?
3. What do you think of the illustrations? Why do you think the illustrator chooses a black, white and grey colour palette? What does Hélène’s body language tell us about how she is feeling? Do you think the images of the bullies portray how Helene might feel about them?

Pages 16–19

1. Hélène is reading a book called *Jane Eyre*. What kind of life do you think Jane had? Do you think this seems like a good book?
2. Hélène describes her bus journey home. How do you think she uses reading to escape her bullies?
3. The colour palette changes on these pages. Why do you think the illustrator uses colour on the pages about Jane Eyre?

Pages 20–7

1. Hélène describes how her mother made her a crinoline dress. Why do you think the dress droops ever so slightly? Do you think Hélène has a hard time fitting into the world?
2. Hélène shows the many tasks her mother must complete before going to bed. What kind of person do you think her mother is?
3. From looking at the illustrations, do you think Hélène’s mother’s body language is similar to her daughter’s?

Pages 28–9

1. Jane Eyre mentioned that Jane Eyre grew up to be slender and wise and no one called her an ugly duckling again. How do you think Hélène relates to Jane’s story? Why does Hélène repeat that Jane grows up to be ‘clever, slender and wise’?
2. Do you think Hélène and her mother are looking forward to the shopping trip? Why?
3. Do you think Hélène is really walking home because the weather is nice?
4. Why do you think the illustrator uses colour on the pages about Jane Eyre?

Pages 30–41

1. Do you think Hélène is really walking home because the weather is nice?
2. Hélène describes some of the other students in her class. Do you get an idea of what the other students are like from the illustrations?
3. Hélène imagines herself in the middle of a lake. What does this image suggest about her feelings towards the trip?
4. Do you think Jane had a lot of friends? Do you think Hélène has many friends?

Pages 42–51

1. Do you think Hélène is really walking home because the weather is nice?
2. Why do you think Hélène stops herself from hugging her mother? From her actions in the shop, do you think that Hélène’s mother understands her well? What sort of relationship do they have?
3. In the illustrations Hélène imagines herself as a sausage in a swimsuit. Why do you think she feels like this? Do you think Hélène thinks about her appearance and weight a lot? Why do you think this is?
4. Look at the two images on page 51. How has the illustrator shown us how Hélène and her mother feel?

Pages 52–3

1. In this section Jane compares her appearance to Miss Ingram’s. Is this something Hélène also does? Do you think girls and women feel a lot of pressure to look pretty? Why do you think this is, and how might it affect young girls like Hélène?
Pages 54–9
1. Hélène imagines herself as ‘a gorgeous stubborn singer’ – why might she imagine herself this way? Do you ever have similar daydreams? How does her mother’s music influence Hélène?
2. Hélène mentions her brothers are allowed liquorice because they are skinny. Do you think this is fair?
3. Look at the illustration on page 57. How does the text differ from the image of Hélène? How do you think she is really feeling at this moment?
4. On pages 58–9 we see a full spread of Hélène sleeping in a jungle. What do you think the illustrator is trying to tell us here?

Pages 60–7
1. Hélène describes her strategy of reading on the bus and searching in her bag. Do you think this is a good or bad plan? Why might Hélène act this way?
2. We see some of the other groups of students. Which group looks the most and the least appealing? Did you guess which group Hélène would be assigned to?
3. What are your first impressions of Lucia Muniz and Suzanne Lipsky? Why do you think they are in the outcasts’ tent?
4. None of the girls speak to each other in the tent; they distract themselves with solo activities. Why do you think this is? Do you think these girls also have a strategy?
5. On pages 66–7 we see full-page spreads of the camp. How do you think the camp looks? Is it somewhere you would like to visit? How does this image differ from the forest Hélène imagined herself in?

Pages 68–75
1. How does the illustrator show the difference in attitude between Hélène and her bullies? Why do you think Hélène doesn’t ask for help or confront the bullies?
2. The illustrator shows us Hélène’s internal reaction by showing us an explosion. What other images could you use to show emotions?
3. Why do you think the dark-haired girl does not try to help?
4. Hélène reveals the students used spoons and not forks, but she is still worried Geneviève is telling the truth. Do you think this reflects Hélène’s body image of herself?
5. Pages 74–5 show Hélène kneeling in a dark hole. Do you think this image is a good representation of how it feels to be bullied?

Pages 76–81
1. When Hélène hears the cracking noise she instantly thinks it is her bullies. What do you think the long-term effects of bullying are on someone’s mental health or confidence?
2. Hélène meets a fox with eyes so kind she feels she will burst. Why do you think Hélène bonds so quickly with the fox? Why is she so unafraid of it?
3. The illustrator has used colour on the fox within Hélène’s usually black and white world. Why do you think this is? What do you think the fox might represent?
4. Do you think Suzanne was trying to be nasty or helpful by scaring away the fox?
5. In the final two illustrations Hélène is shown to be doubled over and very upset. Why do you think Suzanne’s interruption is the final straw? Why does it remind Hélène of all of the bad things the bullies have said to her?

Pages 82–3
1. Why do you think Hélène believes it is impossible for Mr Rochester to love Jane ‘plain brown dress and all’? Do you think this reflects Hélène’s own sense of self-worth?
2. Jane transforms into a sailboat-patterned, swim-suitied sausage. Where have we seen this image before? Who is it really portraying? Why do you think this transformation occurs?
3. Hélène claims that the moral of Jane Eyre’s story is ‘never forget you’re nothing but a sad sausage’. Do you think this is really the message of Jane’s story? Why might Hélène have interpreted it this way?
4. In what way does Hélène relate to Jane Eyre’s story?

Pages 84–9
1. Geraldine arrives in the outcasts’ camp because she was against serving up group justice. What do you think this means? We have seen Geraldine before; what kind of person do you think she is?
2. Why do you think Geraldine’s presence in the outcasts’ tent helps the girls to finally feel comfortable enough to talk to each other?
3. How does Hélène’s body language change in the next illustrations?
4. Hélène finds it easy to talk to Geraldine. How do you think opening up like this after so long alone would make her feel?
5. On pages 88–9 it looks as though a plant is growing from Geraldine’s mouth. What do you think the illustrator is trying to tell us in this image?

Pages 90–5
1. Hélène reveals her actual weight is 88, not 216. Why do you think she is so horrified, even though this is a smaller number?
2. Hélène needs a lot of reassurance that she is just growing at a normal rate. How do you think being bullied has affected her view of her weight? Do you think this is a worry that a lot of girls your age might have?
3. Hélène’s mother turns red because she has also said similar things to Hélène during ‘bikini season’. Why do you think she is so embarrassed? How has her mother’s opinion of her own body influenced Hélène’s opinion of hers?
4. Hélène thinks of all the ways she has been told she is bigger, but speaking them out loud makes them seem less true. Do you think talking about your problems can make them seem smaller?
5. Hélène reveals that Geraldine is now her best friend. On page 95 we see a small coloured plant. What do you think the illustrator might be hinting at here?
1. Here we see Hélène telling the correct ending of Jane Eyre; however, the pictures are of her own life. Why do you think the two stories have become one?

2. On page 97 we see Hélène and her bullies waving at each other. Why do you think this change has happened?

3. Hélène can’t believe that Jane could love Mr Rochester because he is maimed and blind. Do you think it is possible for someone to love you despite your flaws? Do you think Hélène believes this deep down?

4. Although there is still a lot of grey and black present, the illustrator uses more and more colour. What is the illustrator trying to tell us? Why has Hélène’s life become more colourful?

5. The story ends with full colour and a reappearance of the fox. What do you think the fox symbolises in this story?

Activities

• Create your own graphic novel using either the style of illustrations in Jane, the Fox and Me or your own style to tell a story about overcoming a difficult time in your life.

• Jane Eyre is a special story to Hélène. Write a report on a book that is very important to you and why this is.

• In this story, we see how Hélène suffers from the unkindness of her bullies. Host an anti-bullying week in your school with some of the following activities.
  • Random acts of kindness: make your own random act of kindness jar with suggestions of kind things you can do for others. Every day, each student can pick a slip from the jar and carry out a random kind act for someone in their class.
  • Anti-bullying buddies: partner up students from the youngest and oldest classrooms so that younger students will have an older friend to help them if they are being bullied.
  • Poster making: create anti-bullying posters to remind people to be kind and to always seek help. Hang them in your school corridors.
  • Friendship bracelets: have everyone in your class make friendship bracelets and swap with another person in the classroom. When you are wearing your bracelet, use it as a reminder to be kind to those around you.
  • 60-second friends: divide the class in two, with one group sitting at desks and the other group moving from desk to desk. Each person has sixty seconds to sit down with someone new, introduce themselves and find out a fun fact about their new friend. This is a fast way to get to know lots of different new people at once.
  • Brag bracelets: everyone writes a positive affirmation about their appearance on a paper bracelet. Everyone wears their bracelet until they feel confident enough about their appearance that they don’t need to be reminded by their bracelet.
  • Mirror, mirror on the wall: stick random compliments around mirrors in your school bathrooms to remind people that they are beautiful just the way they are.
  • Love your selfie: everyone takes a selfie while doing something that makes them proud of who they are.
  • Strength celebration: to remind your class that they are more than just their appearance, have a strength celebration. Each person must write down five non-physical things they like about themselves. They then must give an award-acceptance speech saying why they are so proud of each of these things.
  • Magazine of me: lots of magazines and websites have images of girls that are edited to look a certain way that is not representative of most girls. Cut up magazines to create an abstract collage of different things that represent your appearance and personality in a better way.
Lydia: The Wild Girl of Pride & Prejudice
Natasha Farrant
Suitable for age 12–14
Chicken House
ISBN 9781910002971

SUMMARY
Lydia tells the story of the youngest Bennet sister, the wild girl of Pride and Prejudice. Here we get Lydia’s side of the story in her own words through her diary. Spirited by nature and frustrated by the restrictions on girls and women of the time, she wants to swim in the river, ride horses and travel rather than be confined to needlework and looking for a rich husband.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Natasha Farrant writes books for young people and adults. Her books have been longlisted for the Carnegie Medal and the Guardian Children’s Fiction Prize and shortlisted for the Brandford Boase Award. She lives in London with her family and a tortoiseshell cat. She gets grumpy if she is not writing, is hungry or doesn’t have a good book to read!
Questions
BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. What do you notice about the title of this book? Do you recognise the name of another novel in it? Do you know who wrote it?
2. From the cover illustration, what kind of characters is this book about? Are you looking forward to reading it?
3. From looking at the cover, in what time period do you think the novel is set?
4. Have a quick look inside – how are the chapters named and laid out? Does this remind you of anything?

AFTER YOU HAVE READ

1. What are your first impressions of Lydia and her sisters? How does the writer convey their personalities? What characteristics are attributed to each of the girls, and does your opinion of them change throughout the book?
2. Lydia displays a great zest for life and fun – tearing her slippers to shreds, dancing every dance and eating with great relish. How do you think this was regarded at the time? Can you find other examples where she is in danger of breaking with what was considered good etiquette?
3. What do you think Lydia's mother and aunt mean by 'a salutary tale' when they are talking about the Atwood girl?
4. Does Lydia always think before she speaks? Think back on the scene at dinner with Mr Collins. How does Lydia feel when she sees she has upset Mary, and why is Mary so upset?
5. When Lydia is thought to be forward in asking Mr Bingley about holding the ball, what is her mother’s response? Do you think this is in keeping with her usual views on how girls should behave?
6. While her family think she is frivolous and lacks sense, can you think of examples throughout the book where Lydia displays tenacity and resourcefulness?
7. Why was it so important for young women to marry wealthy men at that time? Did Mrs Bennett have her daughters’ best interests at heart?
8. Would you describe Lydia as a heroine? Can you think of times where she overcomes fear in order to achieve something? How does she defy the conventions of the time?
9. Lydia has been using all of her powers of persuasion to get to Brighton, which she sees as full of possibility. She writes a letter to her family describing her surroundings. Read the letter again, followed by her diary entry. Do her expectations and her description in the letter match the reality?
10. Although young women expressing themselves was frowned upon, can you see ways in which Lydia pushed the boundaries through the means available to her?

11. What does Lydia learn from the Comtesse about the possibility of a woman having a profession? Does she see the same possibility for herself?
12. How does reading feature throughout the book? Does Lydia see it as an aid to her advancement? Does she feel her education would have been different if she were boy?
13. Do you think Lydia is a simple or complex character? Do you get a real sense of her voice through the style of writing and the diary structure of the novel?
14. What are Lydia’s final hopes for girls and women as she looks into the future?
Activities

• The act of keeping a diary has changed over time, from writing one’s innermost thoughts to simply listing things done or to be done. Here we see Lydia using it to record what she really feels and thinks. Look back at the entry for Saturday 6 June and the letter on the previous page and compare. Think about how people use social media to record their life – which version do they usually publish? Write a diary entry and a hypothetical Facebook post for the same date and compare the two.

• Lydia is very interested in fashion and is constantly altering and embellishing her clothes. Fashion is often thought to be frivolous but it is also a way of expressing yourself. Have a look at the fashions of the period and since then and see how women’s clothes and politics are linked, with hemlines going up and down according to world events. Create a timeline of women’s fashion from the late eighteenth century to the present day, indicating significant socio-political developments and featuring images of the typical outfits worn in each era.

• Jane Austen was famous for her use of irony in her exploration of late-eighteenth-century British society in relation to women’s dependency on marriage for social standing and economic security. Do you think female writers helped in furthering the rights of women to an education and to vote? Research female writers who are involved in political issues today (e.g. novelists, poets, journalists and bloggers) and give a presentation of your findings to the group.

• Diaries are tangible forms of social history, and those of famous people can often be seen in museums and libraries. Sometimes we learn more about what life was like for ordinary people from diaries than from history books. Take a quick poll amongst your friends and family and see how many of them keep a diary or journal as opposed to a social media profile. Which do you think will last longer? In the future will we have any handwritten examples of interior lives to look at and read? You could start by searching the catalogue of the National Library of Ireland: www.nli.ie

• Lydia felt trapped in the countryside and longed for the excitement of Brighton and London. Think of what pastimes were available to young women of the time and see if you and your friends or family can manage a day or two without technology or transport. Write down how you spend your time and see how much reading you get done.

• In Lydia, Natasha Farrant has explored and given a voice to a character from another novel, Pride and Prejudice. Think back to books you have read and enjoyed. Was there a character that intrigued you, that you wondered about after you had shut the book? Go back and tell their side of the story – write about their inner thoughts, hopes and dreams.

• Keep a diary. Most great writers through the ages have kept diaries. In fact, it was often how they began to write. Challenge yourself to write even a few lines every day by setting aside a few minutes and see what happens. Who knows, future generations may be writing about your diary some day!
Wing Jones
Katherine Webber
Suitable for 12+
Walker Books
ISBN 9781406369090

SUMMARY
Wing doesn’t fit in, she sticks out. She is tall and shy, with Ghanaian and Chinese heritage, living in Atlanta, Georgia, during the 1990s when racist attitudes were openly expressed. Her football-star brother Marcus charms all around him, while Wing finds herself friendless and the target of the school bully. A catastrophic accident puts her family under enormous strain as they face mounting medical bills and an uncertain future. To cope with stress, Wing starts running and discovers she has a natural talent and the determination to succeed. With the help of her running mate, Eliza, and coach (and love interest) Aaron, Wing makes the school track team and qualifies for the final of the Riveo Running Girl – a role that could save her family from losing their home. Running brings Wing out of her shell and, with the help of new friends and her own inner strength, Wing finally finds her own place in the world.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Katherine Webber lives in London, England, but is originally from California. Wing Jones is her first novel for young adults. Her second is due for publication in August 2018. Together with her husband, Kevin Tsang, Katherine also writes for younger readers under the name Katie Tsang. Katherine works in publishing.
Questions
BEFORE YOU BEGIN
1. Looking at the cover of the book, what would invite you to choose it from the shelves of a bookshop or library? The colour? The cover image? The author’s name? The title? The recommendation by Katherine Rundell?
2. Read the blurb on the back cover. Based on this, and the cover design, what type of story would you expect this book to be?
3. Do you think this book is aimed at any particular reading audience?

AFTER YOU HAVE READ
Chapters 1–3
1. The first sentence of the book is very short – ‘My first memory is of my brother’ – but it tells us quite a lot about the story and how it is told; for example, that it is a first-person narrative. Can you tell anything else about the story from this opening sentence?
2. What or whom do you think the Dragon and the Lioness remind Wing of?
3. At the start of Chapter 2 we learn that the story takes place in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1995. Is there anything about the story so far that would be different if it were set in 2018?
4. Wing says she ‘gets a little shiver’ while watching Aaron, her brother Marcus’s best friend. What might this indicate to the reader?
5. How does the writer indicate that money is tight in the Jones family?
6. Using an animal analogy or story, the writer describes how the two grannies behave towards Wing – what is it?
7. Wing compares herself unfavourably to her brother Marcus – what does she mean? How does Wing describe the difference between ‘standing out’ and ‘sticking out’?
8. Two new female characters are introduced in Chapter 3 – Heather Parker and Monica, Marcus’s girlfriend. What can you tell about Heather and how she might figure in Wing’s story? What can you tell about Monica, and how is she different from Heather?
9. A new male character is also introduced in Chapter 3 – Jasper. How is he introduced to us? What is the difference between how Marcus reacts to Jasper and how Aaron reacts?
10. Wing describes how she never sees a model or a beauty who looks anything like her – ‘all the models are white’. What effect does this have on Wing?

Chapters 4–6
1. Where do Marcus, Monica, Aaron and Wing go to celebrate the team winning the match? What is unusual about the restaurant?
2. Wing enjoys the trip and for once feels like she belongs – what type of food does she liken this feeling to?
3. Wing has a strong crush on Aaron – do you think those feelings are described well in this chapter?

Chapters 7–9
1. What tragic story from the family’s past is brought back by the arrival of Officer James Northrup at their door?
2. How do different members of the family react to the news brought by Officer James?
3. This is when the Lioness and the Dragon make a return visit to Wing’s life – why do you think this is? What does it tell us about the role of the Lioness and the Dragon?
4. How do the family react when the woman at the hospital tries to get them to go to the ‘quiet room’? Are you surprised that it is Wing who manages the situation? Why does she decide to use the room as requested?
5. When the police arrive at the hospital, what do they say Marcus may be charged with?

Chapters 10–12
1. We find out that the cost of hospital care for Marcus is very high. Why is this causing extra stress for the family?
2. Wing suggests having a bake sale to raise money for Marcus’s medical bills. How does her mother explain why this is unlikely to work?
3. On pages 86–7 we see the second example of Wing stepping in to smooth things out for her family in the hospital. What is this example and what does it tell us about Wing?
4. Wing often wakes at night in a sweat after vivid dreams – what is she dreaming of?
5. What happens at the school lockers? How does this make Wing feel? What does she do?
6. Where does Wing run to and who does she meet there?
7. Aaron and Wing have a difficult conversation about the accident. What does Aaron say about Marcus to try to make Wing feel better? Does it make her feel better?

8. That night, the Dragon and the Lioness visit Wing again – what do they encourage her to do?

Chapters 13–15

1. Next day, Wing stays at home – what does she decide will make her better? What is the thing that makes you feel better?

2. Another night of running for Wing – how does it make her feel?

3. ‘If I can run fast enough, Marcus will wake up,’ thinks Wing. This type of wishful or magical thinking is normal in children, but even teenagers and adults can think like this when undergoing a traumatic experience. It is often referred to as ‘bargaining’. Do you think this type of thinking serves a purpose?

4. At school, Wing overhears a conversation from the toilet stall – what was it? How is Monica doing?

5. Wing and Monica have a stressful confrontation in the school car-park. How does this develop into Wing inviting Monica to her home for dinner?

Chapters 16–18

1. Monica and Wing help LaoLao make pork dumplings for dinner. Does it help? Why?

2. Monica has an angry phone call with her father. What do we learn about Monica’s family and how they treat her and Marcus?

3. How does Aaron find out about Wing’s midnight running and how does he react?

4. Do you think Wing’s feelings for Aaron are real, or is it just a crush? What do you think Aaron feels about Wing?

Chapters 19–21

1. Monica is waiting for Wing when she returns from her night-time run. Wing tells Monica the truth – but she leaves out some parts of the story. Which parts, and why do you think she leaves these out?

2. Aaron and Wing are now spending a lot of time together. Wing is younger and less experienced than Aaron – what added difficulties does that bring for her?

3. What does Wing always do in the car now that she didn’t always do before the accident?

4. What very special item does Aaron give Wing?

5. Aaron tells Wing that his mother’s ‘issues’ are hereditary. Why do you think he told her this?

Chapters 22–24

1. At school, Wing now sits with Monica and her friend Tash – an example of a small improvement in someone’s life, ironically caused by a larger difficulty. Are there any other examples of this in the book?

2. Monica brings Wing and Aaron apple-picking – something she used to enjoy doing with Marcus. What effect does the trip have on Monica?

3. What is Granny Dee’s plan for the apple pies she bakes? Wing persuades her that it’s not a good idea. Is Wing right? Why?

4. What threats does Heather make to Wing? How does Wing react?

5. Aaron follows Wing home and they talk at the kitchen table. What aspects of their conversation were particularly painful?

Chapters 25–27

1. For the first time in ages, Wing didn’t run that night – how does she feel the next morning?

2. Why does Wing go running in the street and how does Granny Dee react? Why might Wing think it was a bad idea?

3. What happens when Wing shows up to join the track team. Who are her two supporters?

4. What does Coach Kerry suggest to Wing that makes her angry? Do you think it was a good/fair suggestion?

5. How is the question of the tests resolved?

6. What moral dilemma do the tests bring up? How does this show that Wing is more inexperienced and naïve than the other runners?

7. Wing now runs during the day and no longer at night. How does she feel about that?

8. Wing follows Lioness and Dragon on a run home one day – where do they lead her? Why do they do that?

9. Aaron is being enigmatic – what are your predictions about this character?

Chapters 28–30

1. It’s a week since Wing joined the track team and she still hasn’t told her Mom or LaoLao. Why do you think she hasn’t told them yet?

2. What do you think LaoLao was saying to Wing’s mom at the table when she spoke in Mandarin?

3. What does Granny Dee tell Wing about her own childhood? What surprises Wing?

4. What does Granny Dee regret? And what does she suggest?

5. Wing finally asks her family to see her running at night – how does they react? Why do they do that?

6. Feeling guilty about not visiting Marcus often, Wing goes to the hospital at night. What does Wing see and follow?

7. Quick-thinking Wing persuades the mean old man in the hospital not to hit the red call button – how?

8. What is the unexpected outcome?

9. Why does Wing go running in the street at night – how does she feel the next morning?

10. For the first time in ages, Wing didn’t run that night – how does she feel the next morning?

11. Quick-thinking Wing persuades the mean old man in the hospital not to hit the red call button – how?
### Chapters 31–33
1. Where do Wing and her family spend Christmas Eve?
2. On Christmas Day, Aaron calls to the house with a present for Wing – what is it? And why does Wing hope that Aaron doesn’t owe Jasper any favours?
3. It’s the New Year but LaoLao doesn’t recognise that – why?
4. How does Granny LaoLao feel about having to return to work in the restaurant?
5. LaoLao voices the unthinkable – what does she suggest?
6. Eliza invites Wing to a party in her house – who does she want Wing to meet?
7. How does Wing describe Eliza’s family apartment?
8. In what ways is Eliza’s party different from other student parties, particularly Trey’s party?
9. Eliza’s party is a whole new experience for Wing – what does she mean?

### Chapters 34–36
1. As Wing returns to school after Christmas break, what is different? Why?
2. What is the significance of Wing seeing Oakie give her a ‘thumbs-up’ sign?
3. ‘You’re still a freak,’ Heather says to Wing, but how is Wing’s reaction to Heather’s hateful words different this time?
4. Why does Aaron ask to come into Wing’s family home? Is it often difficult for people to clearly ask for what they need like this?
5. How do they all spend the evening?

### Chapters 37–39
1. Wing’s first official race day is also her sixteenth birthday. How do Wing and her family spend the day?
2. What birthday wishes does Wing make?
3. Who gets invited to Wing’s birthday dinner?
4. Wing doesn’t want the ‘dark cloud’ of Marcus’s illness around on her birthday – do you think this is selfish? Does Wing think she is being selfish?
5. Wing wins her race in style, shattering the school record. But what unsettling thing happens after the race?
6. How do Wing’s family react to Eliza and her girlfriend Anna?
7. Wing feels a little awkward with Aaron. When he gives her a birthday kiss, she can’t tell if it’s a ‘cheek kiss’ or a ‘lips kiss’. What’s your take on that?
8. Wing struggles with feeling happy while Marcus’s life still hangs in the balance. How does she describe these mixed feelings? Do you think the description works well?
9. Eliza takes Wing to the mall to shop for a prom dress. Are you surprised that Eliza would be going to the prom? How does she describe her own view of the night and how she will handle it?
10. The girls get distracted by the Riveo running-shoe store nearby. What catches Wing’s eye in the store?

### Chapters 40–42
1. Why do you think Granny LaoLao suddenly decides that Wing urgently needs to learn how to play Mah Jong?
2. What does Wing find out in the kitchen?
3. How does she react? What violent act does she imagine doing? Would she really do that?
4. Wing takes up night-running again – why? What does she hope it will achieve?
5. Where does Wing run to? What is the outcome?
6. The track-team weekend in Hilton Head arrives. What does Coach Kerry say to Wing’s mom to ensure she lets her go?
7. How does Aaron end up on the girls’ bus? As he and Wing talk through the journey, what do we learn about Aaron? What do we learn about Wing?
8. At this stage, do you think Aaron is a little too perfect? Or are we just seeing him through Wing’s besotted eyes?
9. What is your opinion of the way the electric ‘sizzle’ between Wing and Aaron is described? Is this a good description of strong attraction between two people?

### Chapters 43–45
1. Does Wing find Hilton Head as beautiful as Eliza described? What is the first thing the athletes do when they arrive?
2. Wing watches Aaron every chance she gets – what does she wonder about him?
3. Wing wakes in fright – there is something outside the tent! What/who does it turn out to be? Extra points for guessing right before you were told!
4. Wing and Aaron spend time alone on the beach. Again, Wing describes the electricity between them. Why do you think their first kiss is so momentous for Wing?
5. They walk back to Aaron’s tent. Wing tells us that she ‘never knew wanting something could feel so good’. What does she mean?
6. In Aaron’s tent, they have a heart-to-heart talk about their relationship and about Marcus. In what way does Marcus make an appearance in this scene?
7. Aaron and Wing are clearly very attracted to each other. What do you think about how they negotiate their growing physical relationship?

### Chapters 46–48
1. What trouble does Eliza get Wing and Aaron out of the following morning – and how?
2. Wing seems a bit overwhelmed by her feelings for Aaron – to what does she compare them? When she says, ‘Nobody tells you it’s like this,’ what do you think she means?
3. Wing returns home from Hilton Head and finds tensions rising between LaoLao and Granny Dee. What is LaoLao complaining about?
4. After the row, the air is somewhat cleared and there is a resolution of sorts. Was LaoLao being unreasonable? What about Granny Dee?
5. Wing decides she needs to focus on winning the Riveo Running Girl competition. What does this mean for her budding relationship with Aaron?
6. When Aaron calls around to Wing’s house after winning the scholarship, Wing hides away. Why does she do this?

7. How has the feeling of running changed for Wing now that it is vital she wins for the sake of her family?

Chapters 49–51

1. Wing’s status within the family is changing. How is this demonstrated in how Granny LaoLao treats her?

2. Another phone call – is it good news this time?

3. Marcus is awake – what changes does Wing notice in her brother?

4. When the woman from the Riveo Running Girl competition comes to the school, she notices Wing and calls her ‘distinct’. Do you think this is a good thing?

5. Marcus is now awake two weeks and the medical bills continue to mount. Wing keeps telling herself ‘it’s worth it’. Is she convinced? Are you convinced?

Chapters 52–54

1. One night Aaron phones Wing and asks, ‘Can you come get me?’ Where is Aaron ringing from?

2. What happens when Wing goes to pick Aaron up? Were you surprised by this turn of events?

3. How does Wing deal with Jasper? Were you surprised?

4. If for nothing else, the way Wing deals with Jasper makes her deserving of the title ‘bold girl’ – do you agree?

5. Wing is full of conflicting emotions – about Aaron, about running and about herself. Why can’t Wing talk to Aaron more freely?

6. Aaron is in no fit state to go home – where and how do they spend the rest of the night?

7. When they wake, what does Aaron do first?

8. Where does Aaron take Wing for breakfast? What does Wing find out about Aaron at the café?

9. What does Aaron offer Wing? How does Wing feel?

10. Do you think they understand each other yet? Why/why not?

Chapters 55–57

1. It’s the day of Marcus’s homecoming – how does he act?

2. Which of the women in Marcus’s life first tries to calm him?

3. What happens when Wing tries? Why are they both so angry? What change takes place as they row with each other?

4. The author could have ended this book ‘Hollywood style’ with Marcus having a triumphant homecoming – being met by an excited and loving family and girlfriend. She chose not to do that – why? Do you agree with her choice?

5. Although Marcus is home and things are slowly improving for him, the family is still facing enormous debt and may yet lose their home. What is the plan?

6. LaoLao is upset that the head chef sent her home – what reason did he give?

7. A stressed-out LaoLao has a serious knife accident. How do Granny Dee and Wing cope with this?

Chapters 58–59

1. What does the hospital do for Granny LaoLao?

2. The day of Wing’s big race for the Riveo Running Girl competition arrives at last! Why do both grannies stay at home?

3. Wing almost chickens out of taking part – who talks her around?

4. Is Wing confident at the start of the race? What helps her along the way?

5. Wing collapses – but not before winning the race! ‘I did it for you,’ Wing tells Marcus. What does Marcus say back?

6. When Wing kisses Aaron after the race, how does she describe it?

7. Finally, Wing realises that her Lioness and her Dragon are gone. Why?
Activities

• Wing talks about her Dragon and her Lioness who come to her aid when she falls. Only Wing can see or interact with the Dragon and the Lioness. The introduction of magical or fabulous elements into an otherwise realistic story is called magic realism. What do you think this adds to the story? Would the story have worked without them? Have you come across any other examples of magic realism in your reading? Or in a film? Compile a short list of books and films that use magic realism.

• Marcus, Monica, Aaron and Wing go to a restaurant to celebrate their team winning the match. The restaurant is called Gladys Knight’s Chicken and Waffle Restaurant. Find out who Gladys Knight was – use YouTube to view a short film clip. There are several references in this book to racist attitudes and actions and how they impact the lives of the characters. Do a research project on the history of race relations in Atlanta, Georgia, or in the southern states of America generally.

• Wing often compares feelings, especially feelings of happiness, to different types of food. Why do we often use food as a symbol of happiness and contentment? Do you have another description of happiness that is based around food? Compile a list of emotions and draw comparisons with different foods, then compare your food–emotion associations with the rest of the group.

• In this story, we see how an ordinary family are put under enormous stress and almost lose their home trying to pay hospital bills for Marcus after the accident. What does this tell us about how medical care is financed in the United States? How would the family’s situation have been different if they had been living in Ireland at the time? Do some research to compare access to medical care in Ireland, the UK, Europe, Canada and Australia. What are the main differences?

• A strong element of this novel is the slow-burning romance between Wing and Aaron. Do you think issues of consent were handled well in the story? Discuss.

• When Aaron takes Wing to Simone’s bakery (after she rescues him from his drunken night out), she says she feels more ‘grown-up’ than usual while sitting in the café, talking. Why do you think this is? Write a short piece describing the setting or situation that first made you feel ‘grown-up’.

• Wing describes how running makes her feel using very evocative language. Is there anything that makes you feel as intensely as this? Write about it.

• In Chapter 17, Wing says that sneaking out at night to run reminds her of one of her favourite children’s stories, the Twelve Dancing Princesses. Find a version of the Twelve Dancing Princesses and rewrite it as if it is set in today’s world.

• There are elements of this story that could justify it being called a ‘Cinderella story’ – do you agree? Examine the evidence, debate as a group and decide!

• In many ways, this book is an excellent study in grief – including anticipatory grief and complicated grief. Find out a bit more about the types of grief and how they may affect people. Do you agree that the book handles these issues well? Discuss.
**Star by Star**
Sheena Wilkinson
Suitable for age 12–14
Little Island Books
ISBN 9781910411537

**SUMMARY**
The year is 1918 and Stella, having lost her mother in the flu pandemic that is sweeping Europe, is travelling alone from Manchester to live with her aunt in Ireland. Although grieving the loss of her mother, Stella was raised to be independent and ambitious and is determined to challenge the prevailing view of womanhood. Amidst a complex political situation – woman’s suffrage, The Great War and the fight for Irish independence – Stella wants to change the world. Sometimes impatient and often afraid, Stella bravely keeps on trying but she knows she can’t do it alone. She takes inspiration and comfort from the night sky, feeling part of something bigger – ‘Just as stars come one by one to brighten the night sky, so history is made person by person, girl by girl, vote by vote.’

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**
Since the publication of her first multi-award-winning novel, *Taking Flight*, in 2010, Sheena Wilkinson has become established as one of Ireland’s most acclaimed writers of contemporary realistic fiction for children and young adults. Her book *Grounded* won the Children’s Books Ireland Book of the Year Award in 2013. She lives in County Down and travels extensively in Ireland and beyond, talking about books, mentoring emerging writers and writing. Every time she votes she remembers the women who fought, suffered and even died for this right.
Questions

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. What do you think of the cover of *Star by Star*? Do you think the chosen colours have any significance?
2. Do the typeface and the illustration on the back cover help you to identify the time the book is set, even without telling you the date?
3. Does the illustration on the cover make you feel a particular way (e.g. sad, happy, thoughtful, excited)?
4. Does the cover make the book inviting and make you want to read it?
5. Read the author’s historical note to help you imagine the time.

AFTER YOU HAVE READ

Chapter 1

1. What is your first impression of Stella when you meet her on the train?
2. How does she feel when she is left alone at the station?
3. What does she imagine has happened to her aunt?
4. She tries to take inspiration from two heroines – who are they?

Chapter 2

1. As Stella makes her way to her aunt’s house, she sees a group of young men sitting in a row under blankets – who do you think they are and why are they here at Sunny View?

Chapter 3

1. When Stella meets Helen again at her aunt’s house, why do you think she hopes they might be related?
2. What kind of impression is Stella trying to make? Think back to Chapter 1 and what they have in common with each other.

Chapter 4

1. Why does Stella find herself in Ireland?
2. Can you imagine what kind of woman her mother was from what Stella thinks and says?
3. What do you think about Stella’s imagination from the picture she invents about Sandy Reid? See if her attitude changes as she gets to know him through the book.

Chapter 5

1. What is Stella’s first impression of her mother’s family home? How does it compare with the ones she has lived in before?
2. What do you think this says about the lives of women and their ability to earn an income at the time?
3. What do Stella’s photographs convey about what she values?

Chapter 6

1. Stella is given a set of Jane Austen novels that once belonged to her mother. From this and past chapters, how do you know that Stella likes to read?
2. Would all girls of her age at that time have access to books or time to read them?

Chapter 7

1. In this chapter Stella thinks about the complex political situation. What does she say about the Irish War of Independence in 1916, and who does she name as one of her heroines?
2. Why does Nancy describe Stella as radical, and what does she say about her sister Peggy’s character and educational ambition?

Chapter 8

1. Land girls were part of a civilian organisation called the Land Army, which was set up during the war and allowed women and girls to take the place of men called up for service. How did Stella feel while working in the garden, and why was she so hurt by Nancy’s comments?

Chapter 9

1. What is your first impression of Captain Reid?
2. Why does Stella seem to have taken a dislike to him?

Chapter 10

1. Why is Stella excited at the prospect of the new lodger?
2. What thoughts come into Stella’s mind when there is talk of church around the breakfast table?

Chapter 11

1. This chapter starts off with a humorous incident – Stella is trapped in the bathroom – but quickly takes a turn when talk turns to the flu epidemic. What has happened to Minnie’s family?
2. What do you think is going to happen to Minnie now?

Chapter 12

1. What wakes Stella in the night?
2. What does she see when she goes to Captain Reid’s room?

Chapter 13

1. What piece of personal information does Stella tell Kit to make her stop treating her as a child?
2. What is Kit’s reaction?

Chapter 14

1. Stella is determined to work for a living but feels stuck. What is she hoping for out of life?
2. Why does she feel depressed by her visit to town, and how do we know her feelings have changed towards Sandy?
Chapter 15
1. Sandy opens up to Stella about the war. What kind of picture does he paint?
2. Why won’t he visit his family? What does he think they need him to be?
3. What is Nancy’s reaction to finding the two of them in Stella’s bedroom?

Chapter 16
1. News of Minnie’s mother’s death from flu reaches the house. What is the reaction of the group at dinner?
2. What age is Minnie’s sister, Sissy, who is being suggested as a replacement maid?
3. Why is Stella so excited by a political argument breaking out around the table? What topics are they discussing?

Chapter 17
1. What are Sandy’s views on Home Rule?
2. How do he and Stella differ on fighting for political outcomes?
3. What makes Stella draw back from the argument?

Chapter 18
1. What do you think is preventing Sandy from making the short journey to post the letter?
2. How does Stella resolve the situation?
3. Once she’s on the road, what plan comes into her mind?

Chapter 19
1. Stella describes herself as ‘not a turning back sort of girl’. Do you think she displays impulsive behaviour, and is it always the right course of action?

Chapter 20
1. What does Stella feel on her reunion with Rose?
2. As a political activist, Rose has been involved in more than one struggle. Which ones do you learn about here?
3. What does she say nearly came between her and her marriage to Charlie?

Chapter 21
1. What reception is awaiting Stella when she returns home with the bicycle?
2. Do you think her desire to help makes her think she knows what’s best for people? How does she feel when others do this to her?
3. What does she imagine for the future at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 22
1. The mood changes rapidly in this chapter from the emotional celebrations at the news of the end of the war to the delivery of the telegram for Sandy. What news do you think it may contain?
Chapter 31
1. How does Stella finally reveal her fears?
2. How does Sandy comfort her and try to allay them?

Chapter 32
1. What does Stella wake up to on election day?
2. With Nancy ill, how does Stella plan on getting Rose to the polling station?
3. Why is it so important for her to get one woman to vote?
4. How does she try to convince Sandy to drive her there? What helps him decide?

Chapter 33
1. Why do you think both Stella and Sandy overcome their fears to drive Rose and Charlie to vote?
2. What does Sandy say they have in common?
3. What thoughts cross Stella’s mind as she watches them go into the polling station?

Chapter 34
1. How does Stella describe Rose’s face after she has voted?
2. How does she describe the effect of all the women voting on this day?
3. What personal changes has the day brought about for both Stella and Sandy?
4. Do you think the book ends on an optimistic note, despite all the suffering still around?

Activities
• Can you imagine a world where women could not vote? Research the history of women being granted the right to vote. Which countries were the first to grant women’s suffrage? Are there still countries that exclude women or other people from the right to vote? Discuss as a group how that could be changed.
• The colours of the suffragette badge and banners symbolise particular values. What values do the colours stand for? Would you still use them if you were designing one today? Design your own badge, banner or poster for a women’s rights issue past or present, globally or locally.
• As we can see from Star by Star, not all people were in favour of women getting the vote. Organise a debate in your class or club. Divide the group in two, with one side arguing for women’s right to vote and the other arguing against. Remember, you don’t have to agree with what you’re proposing, just put forward a convincing argument. It may be hard to take the opposing side but it could also be great fun!
• What means did the suffragettes have to publicise their cause in their time? Create a plan of how would you organise a campaign today with all the resources available to you.
• Education and employment were not always a given for all girls and young women. What did Stella’s grandfather mean when he refused Peggy permission to go to Queen’s College and said he hadn’t raised them to be ‘blue stockings old maids’? Why was Winnie Carney such an inspiration to Stella? Research the history of women’s rights to education and employment in Ireland and create a timeline of progress from 1918 to the present day.
• Think about communications in 1918. Stella talks about sending a ‘wire’ or telegram and how an extra word costs more. Try not using your mobile phone to call or text or use social media for a day and see how you manage to communicate without it. Write down all the ways you used to contact people instead and how you had to think differently.
• The Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) and the Women’s Land Army (the Land Girls) were just two ways women and girls were involved in World War I. Look at other jobs typically done by men that women kept going through the war, and write a diary entry from a day in one of these women’s lives during the war.
• Stella mentions writers and characters from novels in Star by Star. Can you remember who they are? Pick one of the novels to read. When you have finished, write two reviews: one from your own point of view and one from the point of view of a girl your age in 1918.
**The Lie Tree**
Frances Hardinge  
Suitable for YA  
Macmillan  
ISBN 9781447264101

**SUMMARY**
Faith is the devoted daughter of Reverend Erasmus Sunderly, a stern clergyman and eminent natural scientist. When the reverend suddenly moves his family to a remote island, supposedly to participate in a palaeontological dig, Faith soon learns about the shocking scandal he is fleeing from. And when he dies shortly after their arrival, Faith – whose plain, obedient exterior has always hidden a brilliant mind and daring spirit – is the only one who suspects murder. In pursuit of justice and revenge, Faith turns to a secret plant her father has nurtured that feeds off lies propagated in the world and delivers to the liar a truth-bearing hallucinogenic fruit. Navigating the social and political complexities of her world, Faith unravels many terrible secrets and astonishing truths. This award-winning dark historical fantasy interweaves a well-crafted mystery with a thought-provoking examination of Victorian science, religion and society.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**
Frances Hardinge spent her childhood in a huge, isolated old house in a small, strange village in Kent, England. As a result, she was inspired to write strange, magical stories from an early age. She studied English at Oxford University, then got a job at a software company. However, a few years later a persistent friend finally convinced Frances to send a few chapters of *Fly by Night*, her first children's novel, to a publisher. Macmillan made her an immediate offer. The book went on to publish to huge critical acclaim and win the Branford Boase First Novel Award. She has since written many highly acclaimed children's novels, including *Fly by Night*’s sequel, *Twilight Robbery*, as well as the Carnegie shortlisted *Cuckoo Song* and the Costa Book of the Year winner *The Lie Tree*. She now lives in Oxford, England, and is often seen wearing a distinctive black hat.
Questions

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. Look at the front cover and back cover carefully. What sort of book do you think this will be? Consider the title, design, image, blurb, etc. What impression does each give you? Are they effective?

AFTER YOU HAVE READ

1. Do you think the exterior features reflect the interior content?
2. When do you think this story is set? Why do you think this?
3. How does Hardinge evoke the setting? What influence does it have on the plot? What sort of atmosphere does Hardinge create and how? Would you like to live in this setting? Why or why not?
4. How would you describe Faith’s character? What are her merits and/or flaws? Do you think she is a good role model? Does she change throughout the book? Do you think she is a realistic or believable character? Do you relate to her in any way?
5. Why is Faith so curious? Do you think this is a merit or a flaw?
6. Identify major turning points for Faith in the novel. How does her worldview alter throughout the book? How does her self-view alter throughout the book?
7. List some of the inner and outer conflicts that Faith faces throughout the book. Do you agree with her decisions?
8. Do you think Faith has much freedom or control over her life? Give evidence to support your answer.
9. Do you think Faith is a good daughter? Do you think she is a good sister?
10. What is the significance of Faith’s name? Do you think it suits her personality?
11. What does Faith consider to be the role of the scientist? (See Chapter 10.) Is Faith a scientist?
12. What is Faith’s ambition at the end of the novel? Do you think she will succeed?
13. How does Faith solve the murder? What are the key clues and insights that lead her to her conclusion? What oversights does she make? Why?
14. What do you think of Mrs Lambert’s motives? Do you empathise with her at all? Do you think Faith has anything in common with her? How does Faith feel towards her at the end of the book?
15. How does the lie tree work? What does it need to thrive? What hinders its growth? How do various characters try to make sense of the tree? What theories do they appeal to?
16. Detail each interaction with the lie tree, including those by both Faith and her father. What lies are offered to it? How are these lies spread? What insights are gained as a result? Do the visions/dreams reveal anything else about the characters’ own inner thoughts and feelings?
17. What is the symbolic significance of the lie tree? What famous tree does Hardinge draw on? Why? How does the lie tree differ?
18. What motivates each individual to seek and/or use the lie tree? Would you consider any of these reasons ethical? Would you make use of the lie tree? Do you think it would ultimately benefit or harm society? Why?
19. Identify the goals of each of the main characters. What methods do they use to achieve them? What are their motivations? Are any condonable? Are some more condonable than others?
20. What is the relationship between Faith and her father? How does Faith view him? Who, or what, does she most commonly compare him to? Do you think he ever reciprocates her feelings? How does her view of him change throughout the book?
21. How does each member of the Sunderly family cope with the death of the reverend?
22. Do you think Reverend Sunderly is a good father? What are his merits and what are his flaws? Who, or what, does he prioritise in life? Does your opinion of him change throughout the book?
23. Do you think Myrtle is a good mother? What are her merits and what are her flaws? Who, or what, does she prioritise in life? Does your opinion of her change throughout the book?
24. Do you think Faith’s assessment of Myrtle has been fair throughout the book? Do you think any of her suspicions have been unfounded? Does Faith always supply enough evidence to support her suspicions about Myrtle?
25. Does Faith have more in common with her mother or her father? List the similarities and differences between each pairing.
26. Compare the sibling relationship of Myrtle and Myles to that of Faith and Howard. What are the similarities and differences?
27. How would you describe the relationship between Faith and Paul Clay? Why do you think they have such a strong effect upon each other? Do they have anything in common?
28. How would you describe the relationship between Mr and Mrs Sunderly? Do you think their marriage is a good one?
29. What do you think the relationship is between Miss Hunter and Miss Vellet? How would you describe their characters? Do you think they are admirable?
30. What different expectations are placed on men and women in this society? Are they fair? Do you think any of these expectations prevail today?

31. How does the Reverend Sunderly view women? What are the duties of a wife and a daughter, in his opinion? (See his speeches in Chapter 8 and Chapter 9.) Do you agree with him? Do any other characters share his views?

32. What is the significance of clothing in the book? How does it affect the lives of characters? What demands and/or restrictions does it place on various characters? Does clothing ever bestowed power on any characters? How do various characters feel towards their clothing?

33. Outline how characters are treated differently based on gender, age and class. Consider aspects such as social interactions, speech, self-expression, clothing, ambitions, opportunities, access and mobility. Consider how today's society compares.

34. What do you think of the treatment of Jeanne by the Sunderly family? What do you think of her response to this treatment?

35. Servants are repeatedly accused of snooping and gossiping by various characters. Do you think these accusations are grounded? Do any other characters snoop or gossip? Do you think this is a natural urge?

36. How do the locals treat the Sunderlys throughout the book? Why? Do you think this treatment is just?

37. Why is the reverend not allowed to be buried in the local graveyard? What alternatives are suggested? Do you think this is fair?

38. Consider how each of the female characters might be considered heroic.

39. What is the symbolic significance of Howard's toy theatre? Can you identify themes of puppetry in the book?

40. Can you identify examples of religious symbolism, imagery and language in the book? Why do you think Hardinge draws on these?

41. How does the book present human nature?

42. Both Faith and her father believe that their deceptions are excusable on the grounds that they are striving to achieve a greater good. Do you agree?

43. Are lies ever permissible? Can lies ever be benevolent? If so, can you give examples from the book or from reality?

44. During the gathering in Lambert's trophy room (see Chapter 5), the men refer to important developments in geology and biology over the past ten years. What are these developments? What does this tell us about the historical context and setting?

45. Read over the men's heated discussion of science and religion and outline the conflict (Chapter 5). Why is there such 'rawness and tension'? Why is Reverend Sunderly's New Falton Nephilim so important to the debate?

46. Are all the scientific theories put forward by various male characters legitimate or sound? Do any of these scientists have biases and/or agendas? What does this tell us about knowledge and power?

47. Do you like the writing style? How would you describe it? What techniques does Hardinge make use of?

48. Consider some of the following themes: appearance vs. reality; truth and lies; curiosity and knowledge; reason and faith; intelligence and ignorance; suspicion and superstition; temptation; revenge; duty; freedom; performance. Identify them in the text. Can you identify any other themes?
Activities

• Write a review of the book.
• Design an alternative front and back cover for the book.
• Write a diary entry from Myrtle’s point of view, setting it at any point in the story.
• The characters repeatedly refer to an article in The Intelligencer newspaper covering the scandal surrounding Reverend Sunderly. However, readers are not given access to the actual content of the piece. Write this article, based on the information you receive about it in the book.
• Write a newspaper report covering Faith’s discovery of the New Falton Nephilim. Adopt the stance taken by the fictional reporters (see Chapter 4).
• During the heated discussion of religion and evolution in Lambert’s trophy room, Dr Jacklers claims that ‘everything has changed in the last ten years’. Write a newspaper article reporting on these recent discoveries and developments in science, especially geology and biology. You might also consider doing some further research into the actual discoveries and developments to enhance your piece.
• Write a story in which your own character(s) interact(s) with the lie tree. Describe their visions in detail.
• Imagine your own naturalist’s den or cabinet of curiosities. Describe and/or draw it. You might also consider making a scrapbook of fictional studies, incorporating sketches, labels and observations.
• Imagine you encountered the lie tree in reality. Make a list of all the questions you would seek answers to. What lies would you tell it in order to get those answers? How would you go about spreading those lies?
• The characters repeatedly refer to the evolutionary theories of Lamarck and Darwin. Research these theories in more detail. You should also research more recent developments in evolutionary theory. Make a poster to present your research.
• List some of the archaeological tools, objects and fossils mentioned in the book. Find out more about them and make a guide.
• Lambert mentions the following ‘great relics of ancient beasts’ – the mastodon, the great cave bear, the aurochs, the dinosaurian. Find out more about these relics. Make posters to display your findings.

To bring her story and setting to life, Frances Hardinge carried out research into the following areas:
• Victorian faith and religion
• Victorian customs surrounding death
• Victorian clothing
• Victorian food and cooking
• Victorian cave-hunting
• Nineteenth-century archaeology, geology and palaeontology
• Nineteenth-century photography

Choose one of these topics to research. Produce a report, poster or presentation to share your findings.

• Try to make your own trick photographs, without resorting to digital tools or effects.
• Argue for or against one of the following statements:
  • ‘Some lies are permissible.’
  • ‘The end justifies the means.’
  • ‘Humanity should strive to be as rational as possible.’

You can write a speech alone or organise a group debate.
Warcross
Marie Lu
Suitable for YA
Penguin
ISBN 9780241321423

SUMMARY
For the millions who log in every day, Warcross isn’t just a game – it’s a way of life. Struggling to make ends meet, teenage hacker Emika Chen works as a bounty hunter, tracking down Warcross players who bet on the game illegally. To make some quick cash, Emika risks hacking into the opening games of the Warcross Championships and accidentally glitches into the game, revealing herself to millions of fans throughout the world. Soon Emika is contacted by the game’s creator, Hideo Tanaka, and whisked off to Tokyo. Hideo needs a spy on the inside of the tournament to discover a security problem and Emika is the girl for the job. But soon her investigation uncovers a sinister plot, with major consequences for the entire Warcross empire.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Marie Lu is the author of the New York Times bestselling series the Young Elites, as well as the blockbuster bestselling Legend series. She graduated from the University of Southern California and jumped into the video-game industry as an artist. Now a full-time writer, she spends her spare time reading, drawing, playing games and getting stuck in traffic.
**Questions**

**BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

1. What does the cover art make you think of?
2. What do you know about computer programming? Discuss different programming languages and games that you are familiar with. Who do you think makes these games?

**AFTER YOU HAVE READ**

1. What is the role of the preface – what does it set up? Why do you think Marie Lu used this *New York Digest* quote?
2. Is Emika always a likeable character? If not, why do you think this might be?
3. What are some issues you could see coming up in a world where almost everyone wears NeuroLink lenses or glasses? Think about things like privacy and data protection.
4. What do you think life is like for people who don’t use Henka Games technology? Do you think this could be a disadvantage or a benefit in their lives?
5. Emika has a criminal record due to her actions when she saw a girl, Annie Pattridge, in her school being bullied. What do you think of how she reacted? Was it right to hack and publish the bullies’ and teacher’s private information and images? What would you do if given that power? Emika says she would do it all again – do you think she is right to feel this way?
6. Do you think that Marie Lu might have based Hideo Tanaka and his company Henka Games on any real-life company and founder?
7. Discuss Emika’s parents. Did they behave responsibly when she was a child?
8. Emika has rainbow-dyed hair and tattoos that connect her to her father. Why do you think she feels the need to have such visual reminders on her body?
9. Do you think this book could have featured illustrations? Or do you prefer to imagine the things described, such as the Warcross worlds, Emika’s tattoos and the Dark World?
10. Which do you think Emika is – Player, Hunter, Hacker or Pawn?
11. Why do you think Tremaine is so rude and aggressive towards Emika throughout the championship?
12. Hideo’s brother Sasuke plays a major role in his life – the trauma of his disappearance is a driving force in Hideo’s career. Do you think he would have become an acclaimed inventor without this childhood experience?
13. Throughout the book, messages appear in speech bubbles, and information on the Warcross game appears in different text to the story – do you think this is effective?
14. What do you think your local town would be like with NeuroLink glasses on? Emika sees virtual street names and icons such as hearts, thumbs up and stars over buildings. Imagine your town or village like this and discuss.
15. Why do you think people are drawn to the Dark World? Think about the level of information that people using NeuroLink risk exposing to other users.
16. Why do you think that girls are under-represented in STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) fields? What would you do to make things more equal between the genders?
17. What do you think will happen in book two – will Emika team up with Hideo or Zero?

**Activities**

- Warcross is set some time in the not-so-distant future. Emika rides an electric skateboard and has an old bashed-up pair of NeuroLink glasses – what other technology can you imagine for this world? Create illustrations and descriptions.
- Create your own Warcross world. What are the dangers? What tools would players have and what armour? What power-ups would you make available in this world?
- Write your own Warcross battle – who’s on your dream team, and what skills do they have?
- Write a chapter of the book from Zero’s perspective – what does he think of Emika and Hideo? What makes him do the things he does?
- The book is written in the first-person (from Emika’s perspective). Do you like books written this way? What are the benefits of this type of perspective? What are the drawbacks? Write a section from the third person – how might the story change?

**Useful links**

http://playwarcross.com/ – companion website to the book, featuring a trailer
https://www.raspberrypi.org/ – Raspberry Pi is a tiny computer (starting from c. €10) that anyone can learn to programme. Build your own computer/ TV/ robot – the possibilities are endless
https://www.arduino.cc/ – Arduino allows you to make interactive robots and toys, with lights, music, etc.
https://coderdojo.com/ – Coder Dojos are workshops for children and young people to learn to programme for free. Find your local group!
https://code.org/learn – online resources to help people learn to code
http://hello.processing.org/ – Processing is a computer programme made for designers and artists that allows you to draw and create images and games through code
https://girlswhocode.com/ – resources and information for girls who code
https://www.madewithcode.com/ – Google’s platform to encourage everyone to learn to code
http://www.blackgirlscode.com/ – empowering girls of colour to code
What do we do?

We publish Inis magazine online and in print to provide a focus for children’s books discussion and review.

We run the CBI Book of the Year Awards, along with the shadowing scheme for schools and groups of young readers, to recognise excellence in the work of Irish authors and illustrators.

We run an annual conference featuring some of the most exciting speakers in writing, illustration, publishing, reading promotion and critical discussion of books for children and young adults.

We coordinate an annual celebration of reading throughout the month of October. We strive for live literature events to be made available for children in every county on the island of Ireland. We commission an original illustration each year to showcase an Irish illustrator for use on posters and the Inis Reading Guide – a guide to the best books published in any given year, especially highlighting Irish-published books and books by Irish authors and illustrators.

We provide professional development for authors, illustrators and storytellers.

We partner with a wide variety of festivals, venues, libraries and organisations throughout the year to bring authors and illustrators together with young audiences, and we bring young readers together with great books through our Book Clinics.

We respond to general queries and requests and share information, with great books through our Book Clinics.

We publish Children’s Books Ireland, where the focus is on female characters in literature. This publication with partner organisations, such as this publication with the Regional Library of Veliko Tarnovo (Bulgaria).

We coordinate an annual celebration of reading throughout the month of October. We strive for live literature events to be made available for children in every county on the island of Ireland. We commission an original illustration each year to showcase an Irish illustrator for use on posters and the Inis Reading Guide – a guide to the best books published in any given year, especially highlighting Irish-published books and books by Irish authors and illustrators.

We provide professional development for authors, illustrators and storytellers.

We partner with a wide variety of festivals, venues, libraries and organisations throughout the year to bring authors and illustrators together with young audiences, and we bring young readers together with great books through our Book Clinics.

We respond to general queries and requests and share information, book-related activities and useful resources through our website, newsletter and other publications.

What do our members get?

- Three issues of Inis magazine every year
- A copy of the Inis Reading Guide
- Posters and bookmarks featuring an original illustration by an Irish artist each year
- Reduced entry fees to the annual CBI conference and any live literature or professional development events organised throughout the year
- Regular updates by post from Children’s Books Ireland

For CBI membership and resources, go online to www.childrensbooksireland.ie

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genderidentitybooks
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G-BOOK – ‘Gender Identity: Child Readers and Library Collections’ is a Creative Europe project with the aim of discovering, exploring and promoting literature that enables young readers (from the age of 3 to 10) to reflect on their identities and, in their own time, question stereotypes, bias and perceived norms around gender.

The project, which runs from June 2017 until December 2018, brings together specialists working in children’s literature, gender studies, translation studies, library science and education from six partner organisations: Dublin City University, University of Bologna, University of Paris 13, University of Vigo, City Library of Sarajevo, and Regional Library of Veliko Tarnovo (Bulgaria).

The project emerged from a belief that coming to an understanding of one’s gender identity is a complex process, which often involves the negotiation of delimitating cultural messages. While children’s literature has the potential to shape a reader’s understanding of his/her gender identity, readers of children’s books still encounter too few female protagonists that are active agents within narratives or male characters that challenge a hegemonic masculinity that can be reluctant to show emotion, fragility or dependency.

Nevertheless, there are, and always have been, children’s books that challenge the status quo: it is the goal of the G-BOOK project to make such literature more visible and accessible to readers, especially to children, parents and educators. To this end, the project partners will create a select, multilingual bibliography of children’s books concerned with gender identity that will be accessible through a purpose-built website. The website will be of interest not only to children, parents and educators but also to the general public.

To supplement the online bibliography, project partners will also create dedicated sections in a number of libraries throughout Europe to promote books in the bibliography. Running alongside the creation of the bibliography and dedicated library sections will be a range of educational activities to support the project, including lectures; public readings; workshops for children, parents and educators; the translation and publication of books (where possible); and events and initiatives in collaboration with national organisations, such as this publication with Children’s Books Ireland, where the focus is on female characters in children’s literature.

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#BOLDGIRLS