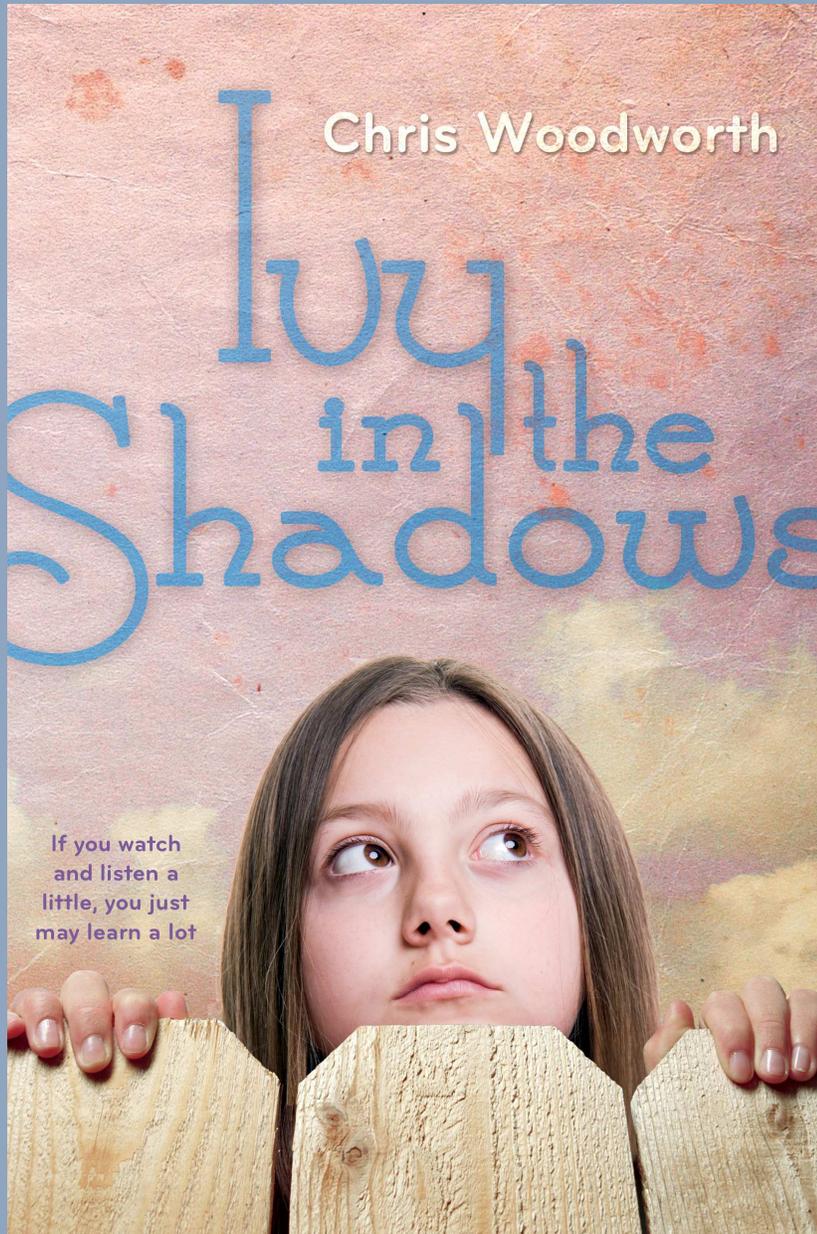


A Teacher's Guide for

Farrar Straus Giroux/Macmillan Children's Publishing Group ISBN: 9780374335663 Age Range 8—12



About the book

After Ivy's stepfather disappears, Ivy's mama begins waitressing at Dining Divinely to make ends meet. She also takes in a boarder—twelve-year-old Caleb, who's the same age as Ivy and is the weirdest guy she's ever met. With Mama working full-time, Ivy has to babysit her little brother, JJ. She also has to fend off the nosy Pastor Harold; stop Caleb from filling JJ's head with lies; and keep her best friend, Ellen, from knowing anything about her embarrassing situation at home.

A book about divorce and money hardships, as well as learning to accept some people for who they are and learning to let others go.

Chris Woodworth is the author of *Double-Click for Trouble*, *Georgie's Moon*, and *When Ratboy Lived Next Door*. *Georgie's Moon* received the award for the Best Book of Indiana for Children's Literature. Her other books have also been chosen for several state reading lists. An Indiana native, she now lives in Mooresville, NC. Like Ivy, Chris learned at an early age not to repeat anything she wasn't supposed to hear.

Visit her at chriswoodworth.com

- ◆ A coming-of-age tale with sufficient heart, an appealing narrator and an unusual conflict combine for a fine read
— *Kirkus Reviews*
- ◆ Woodworth's characters, adults and children alike, are well drawn and vivid, and her prose has a storyteller's lilt.
— *Horn Book Guide Reviews*
- ◆ Observant and sensitive readers will appreciate finding bright, witty, and genuinely good-hearted Ivy a credible character who is brave enough to admit when she's been wrong.
— *Booklist*

Ivy in the Shadows

by Chris Woodworth

Note: the Standards used in this guide are examples from the fifth grade. If teaching another grade, you may want to visit the Common Core State Standards website (www.corestandards.org) to locate the equivalent standards for your grade.

Speaking and Listening Standards

Comprehension and Collaboration

1a. Come to discussions prepared having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.

1c. Pose and respond to specific questions by making comments that contribute to the discussion and elaborate on the remarks of others.

Reading Standards for Literature

Key Ideas and Details

RL 1. Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

RL 2. Determine a theme of a story, drama or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.

RL 3. Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.

Craft and Structure

RL 6. Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.

Pre-reading Activity:

Have students mark their opinion of the following statements below. Then, place posters around the four corners of your room that correspond with the rankings

Statement:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	WHY I think this:
It's OK to eavesdrop.					
Real friends always agree.					
It's brave to stand up for what's right.					
Sometimes adults are wrong, too.					
Even kids can make a difference.					

Discussion guide:

1. Make a list of everything you learn about Ivy after reading chapter one. What do you think are the three most important facts on this list? Why?
2. Ivy says: "It's just that our lives felt like a box that had been picked up and turned upside down." (Woodworth 16). Why does Ivy feel like this? Have you ever felt this way before?
3. How did Ivy's friendship with Ellen suddenly change? How hard is it to keep friendships over time? Why do you think so?
4. How does Caleb end up staying with them even earlier than planned? How does Caleb coming to stay help Ivy's mom, Cass, take care of them? Would you be embarrassed at the way Ivy's mom finds them help?
5. What surprises Ivy when she eavesdrops on her mom and Aunt Maureen? Do you think parents ever tell their children what they truly think? Why or why not?
6. Describe Ellen and Ivy's meeting at McDonald's. List the three most important things that happen when they're together. Why do they not seem to connect anymore?
7. Describe Caleb as Ivy sees him. How strange would it be to share your home with another kid that you're unrelated to?
8. How does Ellen react toward Caleb at lunch? What does Ivy figure out about her mistake? What does Ivy suspect about all of Caleb's stories? Why? Do you think she's right?
9. Explain why it is such a difficult transition for Ivy when her mom gets a job. Do you have to help out for your parents while they work?
10. What does Pastor Harold want with Ivy's mom? Do you think she owes the church some time with the Women's Guild?
11. List all the things that go wrong for Ivy as she spends her second night trying to supervise the boys? Who does she call for help?
12. Who arrives to help out with the kids? Do you think it will make things better or not? Why? Is Ellen being a friend to Ivy at all at this point in the story? Why does Ivy not tell her friend what is really going on in her life?
13. Describe what happened at the party. Does it sound like a party you'd like to attend? Explain why.
14. Do you think Pastor Harold is more interested in Ivy's mom than just "knowing his flock?" What makes you think so? What does Ivy think of the pastor?
15. Where do Cass and Aunt Maureen go? How does the evening with Pastor Harold in charge work out? What is the idea behind "the greater good" that he teaches Ivy? Do you ever do anything for the greater good?
16. What does Ellen want? How does Ivy handle it? How would you? Are fights inevitable in friendships? Why do some fights tear apart the whole friendships while other make them stronger?
17. What does Ivy learn by eavesdropping? Is a good idea or not? Why? How do you keep from doing it? What does she learn, finally, that Caleb really wants?
18. How does Ivy get rid of the babysitter? Why? Why do you think Pastor Harold refused to babysit the kids again? Is Aunt Maureen trying to take advantage of him?

19. How do things go completely wrong the Saturday night that Ivy got rid of the babysitter? How does Ivy realize she's holding Caleb to a higher standard than she does herself? What does she come to realize? What happens when Ivy tells the truth?
20. Explain Caleb's background. How could it end up a happy ending for both him and Aunt Maureen? What about Ivy's friendship with Ellen?

Point of View: The view from a story

RL 6. Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.

In reading partners, discuss how the story would be different if told through the eyes of each of the characters in the chart below.

Caleb	JJ	Ivy's mom, Cass	Pastor Harold

Discuss: How does point of view influence what a reader thinks or understands about events and other characters in the story?

Common Core Connections (RL 5.2):

Theme Discovery:

Theme is the statement about life or human nature that an author shows in a story, and is usually not stated directly.

What a theme is:	What a theme is not:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A statement that seems true after reading a story.• It's what a reader often remember years after forgetting the details of a story• Can be positive or negative in focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not a single word (like friendship, hope or courage)• A topic or moral• a cliché or worn out set of words

How to come up with a thematic statement:

1st: Brainstorm a list of the important ideas in the story:

For example: In *Ivy and the Shadows* these important topics are explored: friendship, family, responsibility, honesty, homelessness, and being yourself.

2nd: Look at the two examples below and then in small groups or reading pairs brainstorm a thematic statement based on the other important topics.

Important topics:	Thematic Statements:
friendship	Some people are your friends for a lifetime, others just for a while.
family	Family can be made of people you're related to and others you include because you care for them.
responsibility	
honesty	
Homelessness	
Being yourself	

3rd: Thematic statements are well-written and often poetic. You may need to revise your statements several times to get them to say exactly what you want in an interesting way.

Share and compare your thematic statements with another pair or group.

Summarize (RL 5.2): Good readers know how to summarize text, or tell only the most important events in a story. Write a one-sentence summary for each chapter of the novel to practice this important skill.

Chapter:	Summary of the chapter in a sentence:
1.	Ivy's mom makes plans to take in a strange boy named Caleb to earn extra money now that she's going through her second divorce.
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[Tracie Vaughn Zimmer](#), author and reading specialist, created this guide.