



A Teacher's Guide for THE GIRL WHO COULD FLY and THE BOY WHO KNEW EVERYTHING



FOR
USE WITH
COMMON CORE
STATE
STANDARDS



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

VICTORIA FORESTER is the author of the *New York Times* bestseller *The Girl Who Could Fly*, which was praised as “the oddest/sweetest mix of *Little House on the Prairie* and *X-Men*” by Stephenie Meyer and *The Boy Who Knew Everything*. Victoria lives in Pasadena, California, with her husband and their daughter.

ABOUT THE GUIDE

This teacher's guide incorporates *The Girl Who Could Fly* and *The Boy Who Knew Everything* into a standards-based curriculum. The activities are designed to support the four strands in the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy:

Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. The common core anchors listed in this guide correlate to specific grade levels, but activities can be adapted to apply to standards for grades 5-7. To attain specific common core grade-level standards for their classrooms and students, teachers are encouraged to adapt the activities listed in this guide to their classes' needs. You know your kids best!

ABOUT THE BOOK



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E-BOOK 9781429986366

Piper McCloud lives with her Ma and Pa on a small farm in fictional Lowland County. Her parents and the people in her community firmly believe in tradition—things should be done the way they've always been done or there will be consequences. When Piper's parents discover she is able to fly, they tell her to stop because it isn't normal. She is unable to resist, however, because of the joy she feels soaring above the earth. During a baseball game at the Fourth of July picnic, Piper flies up to catch a ball. Her parents and the townspeople are horrified and the next day, Dr. Letitia Hellion and government agents arrive at the McCloud farm. Dr. Hellion convinces Piper's parents to let her go to a special school for children with extraordinary powers. Piper is excited to go to the school because she feels she will be able to develop her talent, but she comes to realize that Dr. Hellion and the institute are not what they seem. She and Conrad, a schoolmate with exceptional intelligence, plot to escape from the underground fortress that houses the school. Conrad doesn't want to include the other students in the escape, but Piper teaches him that doing things the right way is always the smartest way.



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

After reading *The Girl Who Could Fly*, present students with the following questions for discussion. Be sure students cite evidence from the book to support their answers.

1. Why are Piper's parents upset by her ability to fly? Why does she keep flying even though they forbid it?
2. How do the events of the Fourth of July picnic change Piper's life?
3. What special abilities do the children at Dr. Hellion's institute possess? Do Dr. Hellion and her staff nurture these abilities?
4. How does Piper learn the truth about Dr. Hellion and the institute?
5. What part does teamwork play in the children's escape plans? Why does their first attempt fail?
6. How does the cricket's song give them the will to try again?
7. What does Piper teach Conrad about the importance of using his heart as well as his mind to find answers?
8. What does the ability to fly symbolize in this story? What words, names, and images does the author use that suggest flying?

CCSS.RL.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.RL.5.3 Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).

CCSS.RL.5.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

CCSS.SL.5.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

COMMON CORE ACTIVITIES

Author's Message

The Girl Who Could Fly explores many themes, including those dealing with acceptance and rejection, what it means to be normal or abnormal, the development of talents, and loyalty to friends. Ask students to determine what they feel is the central theme of the book and to write a summary that shows how this theme is conveyed through plot details and in how characters interact and respond to challenges.

CCSS.RL.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.RL.5.2 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.

CCSS.W.5.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

CCSS.W.5.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.



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TEACHER'S GUIDE
The Girl Who Could Fly
The Boy Who Knew Everything

✦ Main Characters

Piper and Conrad each have a remarkable ability, but are different in many ways. Have students write an opinion piece comparing and contrasting the characters of Piper and Conrad, including the factors in their lives that have made them who they are, their feelings toward their talents, and how they treat other people. Encourage them to provide specific details from the text to support their responses.

CCSS.RL.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.RL.5.3 Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).

CCSS.W.5.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

✦ Piper's Language

Piper uses a lot of colloquial expressions in the story such as “I’ve cooked my goose,” and “How do you like them apples?” Ask students to work with a partner to find these and other examples and to use the context to explain their meanings. Ask students to write a short piece about how Piper’s language helps the reader to understand her character.

CCSS.RL.5.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

CCSS.L.5.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.W.5.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.



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ABOUT THE BOOK

In this sequel to *The Girl Who Could Fly*, Piper McCloud and Conrad Harrington III are living with Piper’s parents on their farm after escaping from I.N.S.A.N.E., the secret school for children with special abilities. When Conrad’s father, the newly elected President of the United States, denies his son’s existence, Conrad falls into a depression. He renounces his special abilities and tries to be a normal kid. It is only when he must use his intelligence to save Piper’s father that he comes to appreciate his talents and accept Piper’s plea to lead their friends in doing good in the world. When a series of suspicious disasters begin happening all over the globe, Conrad and his team are caught in a deadly struggle between good and evil as they try to save themselves and the world. Along the way, Conrad learns about the true nature of love and friendship, and that people and places are not always what they seem.



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

After reading *The Boy Who Knew Everything*, present students with the following questions for discussion. Be sure students cite evidence from the book to support their answers.

1. How are Conrad, Piper, and their friends exceptional? How do they use their gifts to help others?
2. Why does Piper think their friends need Conrad to be their leader? What convinces him to take on this role?
3. How does Conrad coach his friends to develop their abilities and act as a team? When does he realize they are all in mortal danger?
4. What revelation does Conrad's father make during their struggle on the White House roof? How do his words affect Conrad?
5. How does Xanthia seem like paradise? What hints are there that it is not all that it seems?
6. What does Conrad think of Max when he first meets him? How is Max's true character revealed?
7. How do Conrad and Piper fulfill the prophecy the mother shared with her son in the prologue?

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CCSS.RL.5.2 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.

CCSS.RL.5.3 Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).

CCSS.SL.5.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

COMMON CORE ACTIVITIES

Fathers and Sons

Father-son relationships are at the heart of this novel (Conrad and his father, Peter and Max, even Conrad and his foster father, Joe McCloud). Ask students to write an opinion piece describing how these relationships contribute to the events in the story. Encourage them to cite specific details to support their claims. Have students meet in small groups to share what they've written. Encourage students to comment respectfully or ask questions about each piece.

CCSS.RL.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.RL.5.3 Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).

CCSS.SL.5.3 Summarize the points a speaker makes and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence.



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CCSS.W.5.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

CCSS.W.5.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Talents

Piper, Conrad, and their friends each have a unique talent or ability. Piper convinces her friends to use their special abilities for the good of the world. Conrad tells his friends that they need to develop their talents and work together as a team in order to accomplish great things. Ask students to write a brief description about a special talent they have, what they are doing to strengthen it, and how it could be used to help others now or when they are older. Have them share these with the class. Students work with a partner or in a small group to write narratives about how they could combine their abilities to accomplish an important goal.

CCSS.SL.5.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.W.5.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

Outsiders or Chosen Ones

In *The Girl Who Could Fly* and *The Boy Who Knew Everything*, Victoria Forester describes three very different communities: Lowland County, I.N.S.A.N.E., and Xanthia. Each community has very distinct ideas about what it means to be normal or abnormal and who should be accepted or rejected. Ask students to think about each community, including how its members treat those who are perceived as being different. They should use this evidence to write an opinion piece on Forester's message about what it means to be different.

CCSS.RL.5.3 Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).

CCSS.RL.5.9 Compare and contrast stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics.

CCSS.W.5.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

This guide was written by Barbara McLaughlin, Literacy Consultant and former Senior Program Director for Elementary ELA in the Boston Public Schools.



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