

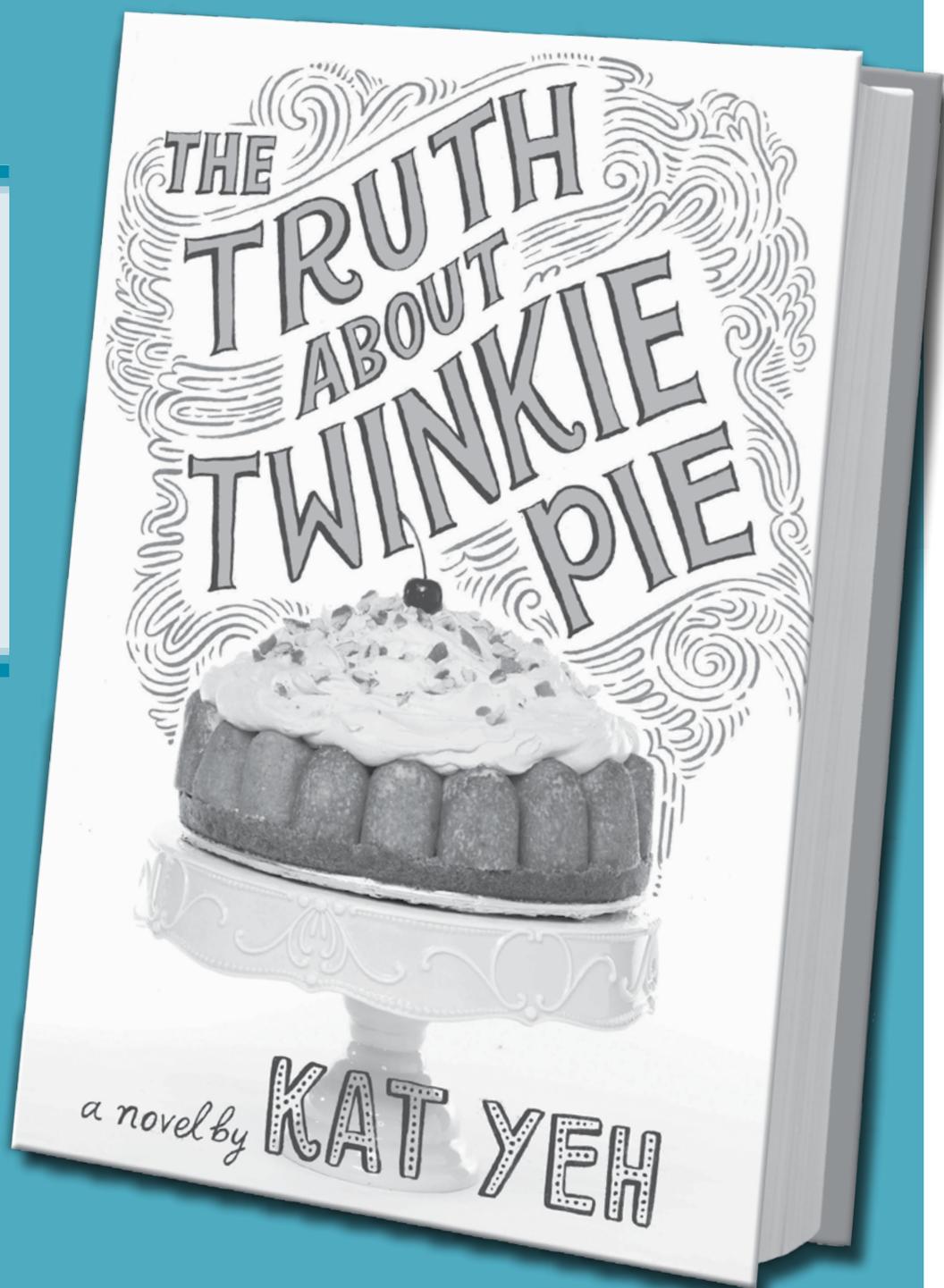
# THE TRUTH ABOUT TWINKIE PIE

## Curriculum connections

- ❖ First-Person Perspective
- ❖ Creative Writing
- ❖ Family Life
- ❖ Self-Discovery

Ages: 8 to 12

by  
KAT YEH



## PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Discuss the difficulty of moving and changing schools. What are the problems you would face in a new community? What would you need to help you acclimate to a new school and a new life?

CCSS.SL.4-7.1

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### Key Details and Ideas

1. Why does GiGi want to change her name when she starts her new school? What is most important to her about her life in Long Island? What is most important to her sister DiDi?

CCSS.RL.4-7.1

2. Why does Trip act so friendly when he first meets GiGi? How does her encounter with Trip differ from the other friends she makes in the school? Why is Mr. McGuire so interested in her name?

CCSS.RL.4-7.1

3. GiGi plays a game with herself that she calls What If. How does this game reflect her thoughts about her Mama? How does it affect her relationship with her sister? How does it affect her when she discovers that “What If” is something she could not even imagine?

CCSS.RL.4-7.2

4. Discuss the theme of friendship in this story. How do friendships begin? Which of the friends that GiGi meets on Long Island becomes a true friend? How many different ways can a friendship develop?

CCSS.RL.4-7.2

5. Compare the characters of GiGi and Mace. How are they similar and how are they different? How does their relationship with each other change throughout the course of the story? Discuss the different ways that GiGi and Mace interact with DiDi and Trip.

CCSS.RL.4-7.3

### Craft and Structure

6. How do the recipes in the book act as metaphors for what is happening in GiGi’s life? Which of the recipes was most meaningful for you as a metaphor or simile? Why is DiDi “super-sensitive about people messing with Mama’s recipes”? (p.13) Why does DiDi call her plans for GiGi a “Recipe for Success”?

CCSS.RL.4-7.4

7. Discuss the assignment Mr. McGuire gives the class: “What is your Truth ... written in the form of poetry.” (p.100) Why does GiGi find poetry and fiction hard to read and write? How do these forms of literature conflict with her need to “Say It Like It Is”? Discuss the meaning of the title, *The Truth About Twinkie Pie*. Why does GiGi choose it as the title of her poem in the Epilogue?

CCSS.RL.4-7.4

8. Describe the events that lead to GiGi making the trip south to discover the truth about her mother. How do each of the events and people who help her fit into the “recipe” for this trip? What are her feelings when she learns the truth about her parentage?

CCSS.RL.4-7.5

9. GiGi’s relationship to DiDi is a central part of the story. Trace the change in their relationship throughout the story as the secrets of their family slowly unfold. Why does GiGi react the way she does when she finds “Mama” and when she finally learns the truth? How are your feelings as a reader affected by GiGi’s first person narration of the story?

CCSS.RL.4-7.6



### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

10. How does the inclusion of the recipes in the book affect your understanding of the action? Which of the recipes would you like to try to create yourself? Which of the recipes would be easiest for you to create together with a group?  
CCSS.RL.4-7.7

11. Locate South Carolina and Long Island, NY, on a map of the United States. Trace the route between these two places on a road map and on a national train schedule. Use an online schedule to calculate how long the train ride would be. How does this affect your understanding of the trip that GiGi and Mace took together?  
CCSS.RL.4-7.7

12. Compare *The Truth About Twinkie Pie* to other realistic novels you have read. What similar themes (friendship, leaving home, family secrets, etc.) have you encountered in other novels and short stories? Compare the treatment of the themes in character, setting, and plot development in each of these books.  
CCSS.RL.4-7.9

### POST-READING ACTIVITY

Write your own Truth poem, based on Mr. McGuire’s assignment. What are the ingredients of your life? Who are the people who have made a difference in your life? What is in your “recipe for success”?  
CCSS.W.4-7.3

## MAMA’S FAMOUS TWINKIE PIE



(Serves 8–10)

**SUPPLIES:** 9-inch springform pan

### INGREDIENTS:

**3 cups vanilla wafer cookies**, crushed to make 2 cups of coarse crumbs, plus 6 cookies crushed and set aside for garnish

**6 tablespoons butter, melted**

**1/4 teaspoon salt**

**1/4 cup instant vanilla pudding mix** (about half a box)

**1 cup cold milk**

**2 cups heavy cream** (divided into 1/2 cup & 1 1/2 cups)

**7 Twinkies**

**2 bananas**, sliced

**10 oz. jar of red maraschino cherries**, drained & stemmed (save 2 tablespoons of juice and set one cherry aside for garnish)

### INSTRUCTIONS:

#### Make the crust

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F.
2. Mix 2 cups of cookie crumbs with melted butter and salt.
3. Press it into the bottom of your springform pan.
4. Put it in the oven for 12 minutes, or until it’s golden brown.
5. Take out the pan and let it cool.

#### Make the filling

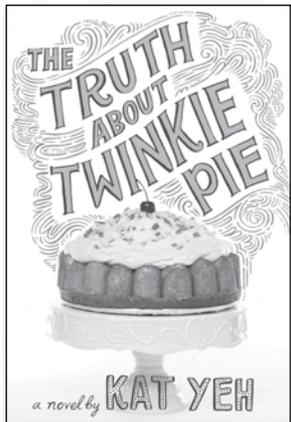
1. Whisk the pudding mix with cold milk for 2 minutes, or until it thickens.
2. In a separate bowl, beat 1/2 cup of heavy cream until stiff peaks form (about 2 minutes on an electric hand mixer).
3. Fold the whipped cream into the pudding mixture, and put it in the fridge.

#### Make the pie

1. Slice the Twinkies in half crosswise so they look like little thumbs.
2. Line them, thumbs up, all around your pan in a circle on top of the crust.
3. Arrange the banana slices in a nice layer.
4. Pour the pudding mixture over everything.
5. Put the cherries you set aside in the blender.
6. Add the 2 tablespoons of cherry juice, and just zap them up into cherry purée.
7. In a fresh bowl, whip the remaining 1 1/2 cups of heavy cream into stiff peaks.
8. Fold in your cherry purée until it’s the perfect shade of pinky-red.
9. Pour your pinky-red topping over the pie and smooth it out.
10. Garnish with the remaining crushed cookies.
11. Top with one cherry.
12. Refrigerate until firm.



## about the book



**THE TRUTH ABOUT  
TWINKIE PIE**

by Kat Yeh

HC 978-0-316-23662-1

Also available in downloadable  
ebook and audio formats

Take two sisters making it on their own: brainy twelve-year-old GiGi (short for Galileo Galilei, a name she never says out loud) and junior-high-dropout-turned-hairstylist DiDi (short for Delta Dawn). Add a million dollars in prize money from a national cooking contest and a move from the trailer parks of South Carolina to the Gold Coast of New York. Mix in a fancy new school, new friends and enemies, a first crush, and a generous sprinkling of family secrets.

That's the recipe for *The Truth About Twinkie Pie*, a voice-driven middle grade debut about the true meaning of family and friendship.

## about the authors



Photo © Patricia McDuffee

Kat Yeh grew up reading, writing, and dreaming in Westtown, PA. She currently lives with her family on Long Island, where she can see water every day. *The Truth About Twinkie Pie* is her debut novel. You can visit her at [katyeh.com](http://katyeh.com).



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*This guide was prepared by Connie Rockman, Youth Literature Consultant, adjunct professor of children's and young adult literature, and Editor of the 8th, 9th, and 10 Books of Junior Book of Authors and Illustrators (H. W. Wilson/Salem Press).*