

A TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR FINDING SERENDIPITY

FOR
USE WITH
COMMON CORE
STATE
STANDARDS



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Ages 8 to 12 • Grades 3 to 7

ABOUT THE BOOK:

When Tuesday McGillicuddy and her beloved dog, Baxterr, discover that Tuesday's mother—the famous author Serendipity Smith—has gone missing, they set off to find her in the place where stories come from. There, Tuesday meets the pint-size heroine Vivienne Small, duels with the hideous pirate Carsten Mothwood, and learns the truth about her remarkable dog. To save the lives of those she loves, Tuesday must summon all her wit, courage, and imagination. But how will she ever find her way home?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

ANGELICA BANKS is not one writer but two. Heather Rose and Danielle Wood are both award-winning authors of adult literary fiction and have been friends for years. They had much more fun writing this book than you can imagine and spent a lot of time eating chocolate custard and strawberries.

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!



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PRE-READING ACTIVITY: WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Have students individually mark the opinion that most closely matches how they feel about the statements below. Then, discuss the answers and ranking as a class.

Statement:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	WHY I think this:
A loyal dog is one of the best things you can have in your life.					
Being brave means never being afraid.					
It's harder to finish a story than to start one.					
We can learn to be like the heroes and heroines we read about.					
It's hard for parents to let kids find their own way through problems.					

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU READ

- (CHAPTER 1) Describe Tuesday's life and home. What's the most interesting thing about her family?
- (CHAPTERS 1 AND 2) What are the strange details around Serendipity's disappearance?
- (CHAPTER 2) Explain what happens when Tuesday begins typing at her mother's typewriter.
- (CHAPTER 3) Compare the place where Tuesday and Baxterr land to her home. Who else do they meet after their arrival?
- (CHAPTER 4) Why is Serendipity Smith home so late? What does she find? Why is she so worried?
- (CHAPTER 5) Describe the library and the librarian. List everything Tuesday learns from the librarian, and then put a star next to the item that you think will be most important to the story.

7. (CHAPTER 6) Why does the librarian become stern with Tuesday? What does she expect her to do? Describe the food offered in the library? Which type would you sample? Why?
8. (CHAPTER 7) Serendipity tells her husband, Denis, “I think that this is her story, and she’s going to have to find her way through it alone.” What does she mean by this?
9. (CHAPTER 8) Describe what happened to Vivienne Small’s home. What was the cause of this terrible act?
10. (CHAPTER 9) Evaluate the hypothesis that Tuesday creates about Vivienne. What clues did she use to make this educated guess about what had happened to her?
11. (CHAPTER 10) How are things going back home with Tuesday’s parents? What are they imagining for her? How would your parents handle this same situation?
12. (CHAPTER 11) List all the different skills Tuesday tries to learn in order to sail Vivienne’s ship, the *Vivacious*. What difficulties does she face? How does she try to tackle them?
13. (CHAPTER 12) Explain how Baxterr was revived. What rule must Tuesday now remember about his name? What else does she discover about her beloved pet?
14. (CHAPTER 13) Why doesn’t Vivienne know about Tuesday’s mother, Serendipity, her creator? Why does she seem familiar? What do the girls learn about each other? What plan do they create?
15. (CHAPTER 14) Why do they go aboard Vivienne’s enemy’s ship, the *Silverfish*? What do they hope to find?
16. (CHAPTER 15) Describe and discuss the series of events that makes things worse for Tuesday that her mother, Serendipity, begins on her typewriter.
17. (CHAPTER 16) What does the evil pirate, Mothwood, plan to do with Vivienne and Baxterr? What options does Tuesday have?
18. (CHAPTER 17) After Tuesday finds herself adrift on the *Vivacious*, what does she decide to do to help her new friend, Vivienne, and Baxterr? What tool must she use?
19. (CHAPTERS 18 AND 19) Summarize what Tuesday learns about herself and her story when she visits the library once more. What comparison does the librarian use to explain the process of writing? Do you agree with it?
20. (CHAPTERS 20, 21, AND 22) Evaluate the choices Tuesday makes to save Vivienne and Baxterr. What was surprising? brave? foolish? memorable? What would you have done in her position? In the end, why does Vivienne decide to stay in her own world?

CCSS: SL.5.1.A, SL.5.1.C



POINT OF VIEW: THE SEAT A STORY IS TOLD FROM

Authors decide the way readers experience parts of the story by choosing a point of view. For example, the beginning of *Finding Serendipity* is told through Tuesday's eyes. But later, Serendipity and the heroine of her stories, Vivienne, get to tell parts of the story, too.

In chapter 17, readers are told the story through Tuesday's point of view as she sails off on the *Vivacious* hoping to get help for Vivienne and Baxterr. As a class, discuss how this part of the story would be different if it was told through these other characters' eyes. Have students use the chart below to record their thoughts.

Vivienne or Baxterr	Serendipity or Denis	Carsten Mothwood

Follow-Up Question: Why, do you think, did the author tell the story through Tuesday's eyes?
Does telling the story from Tuesday's point of view build suspense? How?

CCSS: RL.5.6

KEY QUOTES: BE AN EVIDENCE DETECTIVE!

Good readers can find specific evidence and clues directly in a story that proves a fact or detail. Ask students to work in pairs to examine each of the statements below and find a key quote from the text that backs up each statement. Have students use the chart below to record their thoughts. Expand this activity by selecting other statements about the story for the class to examine.

A statement about the story	A key quote that proves it is true
Tuesday McGillycuddy's mother is a famous author.	
Tuesday's mother is often very busy.	
Baxterr is a very good dog.	
Denis McGillycuddy does not work outside the home on Brown Street.	
Serendipity Smith writes on the top floor of her home.	

CCSS: RL.5.1



COMPARE AND CONTRAST: LOOKING FOR SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Have students work in pairs and compare the details of the following elements (or parts) of Tuesday's story. Ask: the question: How are things different in the land where stories happen? Instruct the students to use the chart below to record their thoughts.

	Setting	Characters	Conflict (problems)
Tuesday's home			
Land of story			

CCSS: RL.5.3

VOCABULARY: WORDS IN CONTEXT

Good readers can often figure out the meaning of words by carefully looking at the clues in the surrounding sentences. Ask students to study the following words from chapters 1 and 2 of the book and place them in the sentence where it makes the most sense.

deliberated disguise ascended descending remark
imminent despondently squall peculiar sojourn

1. "I must _____ upon the mark from Miss Mistlethwaite in mathematics," he'd once said mildly.
2. I can report that when I _____ the staircase at lunchtime, the stack of pages on the finished side of the desk was this thick.
3. One of Baxterr's ears pricked up in the direction of the staircase, waiting for the sound of _____ footsteps.
4. Tuesday wondered what her mother and father had planned for this holiday, *A summer* _____ her dad had said.
5. While they _____ over 11 down and 23 across (in a crossword), Baxterr snored.
6. "Your mother's return, I assure you, is _____, though probably not immediate."

