

EXPLORE MORE BOOK GUIDE

Activities, tools & resources for learning with this book!



MEET CYNTHIA

When Cynthia Lord sat down to write her first children's book, she knew it would be a middle-grade novel. As she recalls,

I grew up next to a lake in New Hampshire and I remember being ten years old, lying on our pier, listening to the seagulls calling, and daydreaming about Borrowers and Chocolate Factories and Secret Gardens.

She is the author of a host of award-winning books. These include *Rules*, *A Handful of Stars*, and *Half a Chance*, to name a few. She lives in Maine with her family which always includes a few pets.

Visit Cynthia's [WEBSITE](#).

Read the *Shelter Pet Squad* Series:



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LET'S BEGIN! BEFORE READING THE BOOK

Use the Visual Thinking Strategy (VTS) questions below to orient readers, and to help guide a group discussion. Begin by taking a quiet moment to look closely at the book jacket, allowing time for observation and contemplation of the images.

- *What is going on in this picture?*
- *What do you see that makes you say that? (provide evidence)*
- *What more can we find?*

Watch this [VIDEO](#) for a quick VTS demo

HAVE QUESTIONS?

Please contact Alison Johnson at Island Readers & Writers, 207-460-6828 or ajohnson@islandreadersandwriters.org.

STANDARDS

Covered throughout this Explore More Book Guide:

SL.1. Prepare for and participate in conversations across a range of topics, types, and forums, building on others' ideas and expressing their own.

SL.2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

SL.3 Present information and supporting evidence appropriate to task, purpose, and audience so listeners can follow the line of reasoning and incorporate multimedia when appropriate.

R.4. Read various texts closely to determine what each text explicitly says and to make logical inferences; cite specific textual evidence to support conclusions drawn from the texts.

R.5 Provide an accurate summary of various texts determine the central idea(s) or theme(s) and analyze its development throughout each text.

R.6. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

R.8 Analyze the structure of various texts, including how the features and components relate to each other and the whole.

R.9. Assess how perspective or purpose shapes the content and style of various texts.

R.10 Evaluate the argument and specific claims in various text

LET'S TALK! Discussion Questions

TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT THE BOOK

1. Why does Suzannah have so many stuffed animals? What would she love to have more than anything?
2. Suzannah hides Whiskers, her stuffed mouse, in her pocket before going to the pet shelter the first day. Why does she feel she needs to have Whiskers with her? Do you have a favorite thing that you carry at all times?
3. Why does Suzannah feel so responsible for Jelly Bean? Have you ever made a promise that was hard to keep?
4. Why does the pet shelter lady, Ms. Flores, tell the kids she feels sad when the pets get adopted. Do you remember a time when you had mixed emotions about something? What did you do?

LET'S CREATE! Book-Inspired Art

1. Interview a pet shelter employee or, better yet, see if you can interview an animal up for adoption! Find out about the animal's personality and make an enticing poster about that pet. Add details about size and color and provide a photo or drawing of the pet.
2. Grow [CATNIP](#) or wheat grass for your cat or for shelter animals.
3. Make a pet toy for shelter animals:
[SOME IDEAS](#): Decorate a toilet paper roll, add appropriate treats and fold in the ends. See how long it takes your dog or cat to get to their snack!
4. Check out the backmatter of the book for more ideas!

LET'S DIVE DEEPER! Explore More

1. Volunteer at a shelter! Here are some shelters in Downeast Maine:
 - [THE ARK](#), Cherryfield, Maine
 - [PAWS BRAVE HEARTS](#), Calais, Maine
 - [SPCA](#), Trenton, Maine
 - [COTTONTAIL COTTAGE FARM SANCTUARY](#), Cherryfield, Maine
2. [WAYS TO HELP](#), you can make a difference!

LET'S READ MORE! Text to Text Connections

