

EXPLORE MORE BOOK GUIDE

Activities, tools & resources for learning with this book!

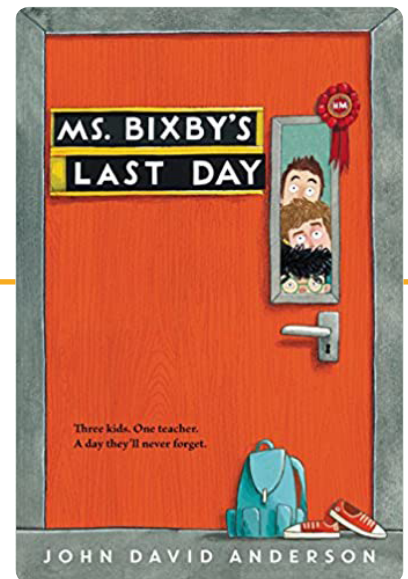
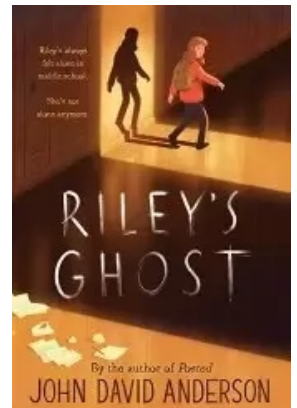
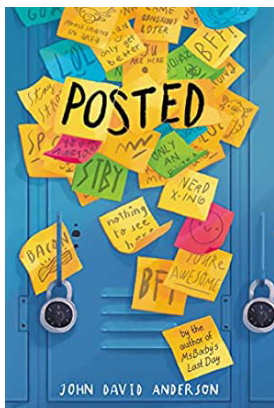
Meet the author



John David Anderson is the best-selling author of several critically-acclaimed novels for young people, including *Posted*, *Granted*, and *Ms. Bixby's Last Day*. His books have garnered several awards, been translated into multiple languages, and frequently appear on state reading lists. Before becoming a middle-grade novelist, Dave taught at the University of Illinois. Before that he longed to be Indiana Jones, but his parents wouldn't buy him a whip. He lives with his ever-patient wife and two ornery cats, MJ and Parker, in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Learn more about Dave [HERE](#)

Just a few of our favorites:



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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.

LET'S TALK!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What surprised you most about this book?

How did Brand, Steve, and Topher feel when Ms. Bixby announced she had cancer and couldn't finish out the school year? How would you feel if a favorite teacher made a similar announcement?

How would you spend your last day on earth? Where would you go? What would you eat? Who would you want to spend it with?

What was your reaction to the boys' plan to skip school, sneak into the hospital, and give Ms. Bixby a great last day? Would you do it if you were in their shoes?

What is your favorite 'Bixbyism' from the book? Try to come up with your own.

How does Ms. Bixby impact all 3 boys? (saving Topher's drawings in a folder, taking Brand grocery shopping, displaying Steve's honorable mention ribbon.)

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 texts.

L.3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style in writing and speaking, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

LET'S TALK! *Continued*

How do the boys impact Ms. Bixby?

How do the boys stand up to the guy that steals their money in the liquor store? How would you react?

How does Steve's relationship with his sister change over the course of the book?

Brand feels like he doesn't have a talent like Topher's drawing and Steve's intelligence. What do you think is Brand's talent?

When Brand steals Topher's notebook and sees his sketch of Ms. Bixby, they get into a fight. What was your reaction to this scene? What would you have done?

What do you think was the most significant challenge the boys faced during their adventure? What is your opinion on the way that they handled it?

LET'S CREATE! *Book-Inspired Art*

Create a collage (physically with magazines or virtually with digital images), to visually demonstrate your answers to some of the questions above. Think about how you would feel and what your choices would be if these questions were posed to you.



CARNATION DAYS: "The truth is-the whole truth is-that it's not the last day that matters most. It's the ones in between, the ones you get the chance to look back on. They're the carnation days. They may not stand out the most at first, but they stay with you the longest."

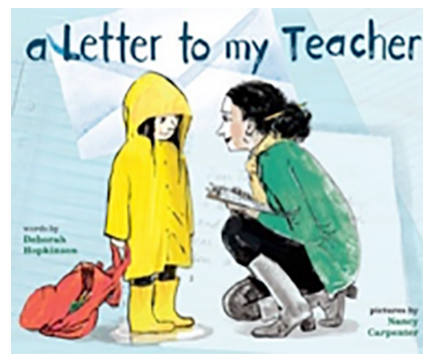
After reading this passage, think about what your own "carnation day" would include. Make a list and/or draw a picture of your day.

How many "Bixbyisms" can you find in the book? Make a post-it poster and add your own.

LET'S DIVE DEEPER! EXPLORE MORE

CHARACTER ANALYSIS: Choose one of the 3 boys in the story and use the template below to guide you. Draw and write how each body part relates to your character. Outside the drawing add how Ms. Bixby influenced and related to this character. (Drawing on the following page.)

LET'S READ MORE! Text to Text Connections



Chapter Books



Character Analysis

Background: What is the character's environment? Background? Struggles?

Head: What are the character's dreams and visions?

Eyes: What fears affect this character?

Ears: What do others say about this character?

Mouth: What arguments or debates does the character have with himself or others?

Spine: What motivates this character to act?

Heart: Whom or what does the character love?

Arms: How does this character change? **Left:** How is the character in the beginning of the story? **Right:** At the end?

Hands: What are the character's actions? How do they affect others?

Right Leg: What are the character's flaws?

Left Leg: What are the character's strengths?

Feet: What are the character's beliefs?

