Ferris

Author: Kate DiCamillo

NC Kids Level Up ebook & audiobook available

DiCamillo, Kate. *Ferris.* Somerville, MA : Candlewick Press, 2024.

During the summer before fifth grade, Ferris Wilkey has her hands full with her little sister terrorizing the town, her Aunt Shirley moving into their basement and her grandmother seeing a ghost--one who has wild, impractical and illuminating plans.

Related Books:

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Caterpillar Summer by Gillian McDunn (ebook and audiobook)

Website:

https://www.katedicamillo.com/novels/ferris/

Book Trailer:

Kate DiCamillo discusses FERRIS
Book Talk: Ferris by Kate DiCamillo
Children's Book Trailer - Ferris

Book Talk:

StoryMakers with Kate DiCamillo FERRIS

Discussion Questions:

- Ferris reads the Bible and Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* to Charisse. Ferris's father reads the encyclopedia, and he even read it to Ferris when she was a baby. What is your favorite book to have read to you? Why?
- Kate DiCamillo writes, 'Ten seemed like the age when Ferris might start to understand some things" (page 8). Why do you think Ferris believes ten is the turning point in understanding the world? At what age do you think one starts to understand the world better? Why?
- Shirley and Twilla want Ferris to have her hair cut "like a proper young lady" (page 22). Who defines what is proper and right? Is there any one way that a person should look or be?

- Billy Jackson is pursuing his passion for music. What is your current passion? What do you hope to do with it in the future?
- Ferris's father's saying, "the dogs bark but the caravan passes by" (page 42) doesn't have a clear meaning, but he loves to say it. What do you think it means? Do any adults in your life have a saying that they use all the time? What is it, and what does it mean?
- How did the mood in the dining room change (chapters 27-29) once the chandelier was lit? How would you describe the mood before? After?
- Mrs. Mielk believes that "vocabulary is the key to the kingdom (page 20), and many different vocabulary words and definitions appear in the book. Which words were your favorite? Why?
- Pinky and Ferris are very different. Charisse points this out when she calls Ferris a rule follower and advises her to tell the world who she is, noting, "Pinky understands this. She takes it to an extreme of course." We can see the problems with Pinky's choices throughout the book, but Ferris's mom says that "being a rule follower carries its own set of problems" (page 77). What do you think that means?
    - Follow-up: On page 78, Ferris's mother starts a sentence but doesn't finish it. What do you think she was going to say?
- What do Ferris's interactions with the bees and the raccoon show you about facing adversity in the world?
- How do you think Ferris knew where to find Pinky?
- Using all the clues from within the book, what time period do you believe the story takes place in?
- There are six characters on the front cover. Who do you think they are? Which characters were left off? Do you agree with the illustrator's choice of who to represent on the cover?
- Source / Additional Questions: https://www.katedicamillo.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Ferris_DiscussionGuide.pdf

Activities:

- Create a book in a bag. Decorate one side of the bag with a scene from the book, and add five items to the bag that represent something from the book. (Students can print / draw pictures in lieu of purchasing items.) This could be a pair or group project.
- Ferris and Billy Jackson learn lots of vocabulary words and their definitions from Mrs. Mielk. Create a journal with at least 10 of your favorite words and their definitions. Add illustrations to the cover of your journal to make it unique.
- Using the details from the book, draw the ghost Charisse sees in her bedroom.
- Pinky gets a library card with the help of her Mom in this book. Do you have a library card at your local public library? If not, get your adult to take you to your local public library so you can sign up for a library card.
- STEM / Craft: Work in pairs or small groups to build a ferris wheel.
    - Paper and straws https://carlyandadam.com/thecarlyandadam/mr-ferris-and-his-wheel-stem-challenge-for-kids
    - Craft Sticks https://teachersareterrific.com/2016/07/stem-activity-ferris-wheels.html