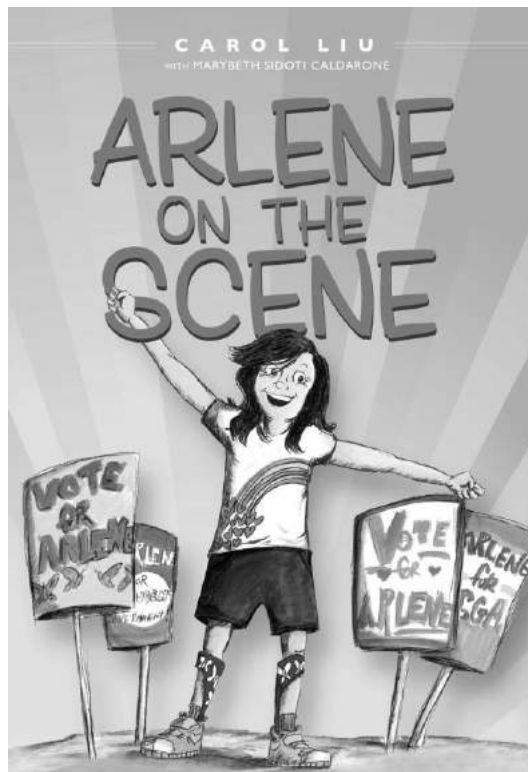


# Arlene On the Scene

## Teacher's Guide

Revised May 2013



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## **Table of Contents**

<b>OVERVIEW</b> .....	3
<b>COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS AND SUGGESTED LESSON PLAN</b> .....	5
<b>Introduction</b> .....	7
<b>Chapters 1-3</b> .....	8
<b>Chapters 4-7</b> .....	10
<b>Chapters 8-11</b> .....	<a href="#">14</a>
<b>Chapters 12-14</b> .....	<a href="#">17</a>
<b>Chapters 15-18</b> .....	<a href="#">21</a>
<b>Chapters 19-23</b> .....	<a href="#">25</a>
<b>Post-Reading</b> .....	<a href="#">28</a>
<b>ADDITIONAL LINKS</b> .....	<a href="#">29</a>
<b>GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS</b> .....	<a href="#">30</a>

## OVERVIEW

Arlene has plans – big plans—to become the youngest student government officer in Greenwood Elementary history. She’ll be the biggest thing to hit Rhode Island since the invention of coffee milk. Sure she wears purple leg braces and has a weird-sounding disease called Charcot-Marie-Tooth, but that won’t stop her. Onward she marches, bending rules and blasting stereotypes in an effort to win no matter what.

Arlene’s wild ride through elementary school politics is an adventure packed with friendships, fierce competition, and slippery situations. But it’s a most unexpected hurdle – her own unfair judgments of others – that helps Arlene realize the value in embracing differences.

**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

**Educational Applications:** Aligns with a range of CCSS ELA standards for grades 3-5. Also offers extensions for Social Studies and Counseling curriculums (Diversity, Disability Awareness).

**Themes:**

- 1) There is value in embracing differences, diversity.
- 2) No single characteristic, such as a disability or challenge, should define a person.

**Conflict:** Arlene runs for class secretary in order to prove that her disability doesn’t make her different from her classmates. The election fragments the class into groups defined by a single characteristic, such as the “Glamour Girls” and the “Tough Guys.” Against her better judgment, Arlene gets caught up in a “boy-girl war” that develops from the election competition.

**Conflict Resolution:** Arlene realizes that while her disability does not define her nor does it mean she’s less able, it is still a big part of her life. With this new understanding, she begins to see her peers for all that they are, rather than labeling them based on one particular characteristic. The boys and girls declare a “truce,” and the election ends in a surprising twist.

## **Characters:**

### Arlene and her family

- *Arlene* – has CMT disease, newly diagnosed and wearing new leg braces, desperately trying to prove she’s the “same old Arlene.” She’s spunky yet vulnerable.
- *Arlene’s mother* – also has CMT disease, can no longer walk or move her fingers and hands. She’s understanding, yet firm.
- *Arlene’s father* – protective of Arlene, responsible for her daily care such as making lunches and combing her hair.
- *Chris, Arlene’s brother* – teenager, slacker, treats Arlene like a “little kid.”

### Arlene’s classmates

- *Joey Dangerfield* – Arlene refers to him as a “Tough Guy.” He’s bossy, proud, but has a vulnerable side.
- *Byron* – Arlene’s good friend, talks a lot, not yet “one of the guys” but hopes to be someday.
- *Lauren* – Arlene’s best friend. She’s a peacemaker and a worrier.
- *Carlos* – very smart and Arlene’s main competition for secretary of the SGA.
- *Sheila McFadden* – a great athlete, competitive, supportive of Arlene.
- *Jessie Fontaine* – a so-called “Glamour Girl,” not a big fan of Arlene and can be outwardly critical.
- *Maddie* – Jessie’s best friend and follower.

### School staff

- *Mr. Musgrove* – principal of Greenwood Elementary School.
- *Ms. Merrily* – Arlene’s very merry teacher.

**Setting:** The story takes place in a small town in Rhode Island, which provides an additional example of the theme of the book, that there is value in embracing differences. The book gives several examples of Rhode Island culture that make the state “different,” such as different words used by native Rhode Islanders or the fact that many residents drink a unique beverage: coffee-flavored milk. A bit of Rhode Island history is introduced near the end of the book in order to further illustrate the book’s positive message of tolerance and acceptance.

# **Common Core State Standards and Suggested Lesson Plan**

This guide provides detailed lesson plans and worksheets for using *Arlene On the Scene* as part of a language arts curriculum, grades 3-5, with optional extensions into social studies and character development or counseling curricula. This guide is aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), English Language Arts as listed below, including standards in Reading, Language, Writing, and Speaking/Listening.

The book is divided into six smaller sections of several chapters each, for which a range of activities is provided. Teachers can plan for 45 - 60 minutes of class time for each section along with optional homework assignments.

## 1. **Worksheet(s): Reading Comprehension**

These reading comprehension worksheets focus on understanding text, making inferences and tracing character development. Suggested answers are provided. These can be used for individual work or assigned to small groups and literature circles.

### Common Core State Standards:

RL.3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6

RL.4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6

RL.5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5, 5.6

## 2. **Discussion Starters: Predict and Connect**

Use before and following the reading comprehension and language work as discussion starters, either teacher-led or within small groups/literature circles.

### Common Core State Standards:

SL.3.1a-d, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6

SL.4.1a-d, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6

SL.5.1a-d, 5.2, 5.3, 5.6

## 3. **Worksheet(s): Vocabulary and Figurative Language**

These include vocabulary worksheets and figurative language graphic organizers.

### Common Core State Standards:

L.3.4a-d, 3.5a-c

L.4.4a-c, 4.5a-c

L.5.3a, 5.4a-c, 5.5a-c

#### 4. **Thinking Big**

These are meant to inspire longer writing projects, group discussions or research assignments. While these are provided for each section, teachers may want to choose the best timing for these activities.

##### Common Core State Standards:

These activities align with a variety of CCSS.ELA, including those in the Reading, Speaking & Listening, Writing, and Language areas. Specific standards are noted within the Guide for these activities.

#### 5. **Enrichment Activities**

These are fun, multi-sensory activities that get kids moving and exploring. Additional materials and resources may be needed. While they are provided for each section, teachers may want to choose the best timing for these activities.

##### Common Core State Standards:

Some of these activities will align with art, music and other curriculum standards. They are meant to utilize multi-modal instructional methods and enrich the reading experience with a variety of applications.

### **Suggested Lesson Plan**

Over the course of 6-8 weeks, the following activities can be done for each section.

1. Class time (15 min): Use “Discussion Starters—Predictions” to prepare for independent reading of current section.
2. Homework: Students read the chapters independently and complete Vocabulary and Figurative Language Worksheets (alternating each section for lower grades).
3. Class time (45 min): Use “Discussion Starters—Connections” to review section content. Complete Comprehension Worksheets in small groups/literature circles, or independently with group review.
4. Homework: Thinking Big assignments when time permits independently or in groups.
5. Class time (15 – 45 min): Complete Enrichment Activities in class when time permits.

## **Introductory Lesson**

**Goal:** Improve reading comprehension skills by employing pre-reading techniques.  
Addresses RL.3.1, 4.1, 5.1 and L.3.4a, 4.4a, 5.4a.

**Objective:** Students will use the following strategies to prepare to read *Arlene On the Scene*.

- Review prior knowledge
- Brainstorm
- Pre-questions
- Predictions

**Time:** 30 minutes

1. Direct students to look over the front cover. Read the summary on the back together.
2. Discussion:
  - a. Has anyone ever heard of this disease? How do you think it affects someone?
  - b. What does the cover illustration tell you about Arlene's character?
  - c. What does the title mean to you?
  - d. How would you define "disability?"
3. Make predictions!
  - a. What do you think Arlene is running for?
  - b. Do you think she'll win?
  - c. Why do you think her braces are purple with butterflies?
  - d. Based on the cover image, identify character traits that you think Arlene may have.
4. Complete first two columns of KWL chart (in Graphic Organizers section). Collect and reserve for later.
5. Create a T-chart with Disability as title, "Before" on left and "After" on right. Have students write on sticky notes their definition of disability and place them in the before column. Save for later. Have students repeat after finishing the book, using evidence from the text relating to disability.

## Chapters 1-3

### Vocabulary/Figurative Language

Use the graphic organizers at the end of the Guide to help students learn the meanings of new vocabulary words and figurative language.

### Reading Comprehension Worksheets

#### A. Character Trait Worksheet—Suggested Answers

- *Arlene: Driven, persistent, funny, worried, has CMT, wears leg braces*
- *Mr. Musgrove: Sympathetic; worries about Arlene; follows rules*
- *Arlene's mother: Has CMT; uses wheelchair; helps Arlene (how do we know when she's angry?)*
- *Ms. Merrily: Cheerful; doesn't get angry but is easily frazzled*
- *Joey Dangerfield: Likes to be in charge; may tease others; messy*
- *Carlos: Neat; smart; may want to run for SGA as well*
- *(Don't forget Ketchup and Mustard, the class gerbils!)*

#### B. Chapters 1-3 Worksheet—Suggested Answers

1. What is Arlene worried about upon returning to school? Why? What does she do about it?
  - *Arlene is worried about what other students will think of her because of her new leg braces. She considers different ideas about how to impress her classmates, including playing soccer, being a great dancer, or getting good grades. She settles on becoming a student government officer.*
2. How does Arlene try to convince Mr. Musgrove to let her run for office?
  - *Arguing that three kinds of offices require three years*
  - *Emphasizing how important this is to her*
  - *Pointing out that she doesn't need to win; she just wants to try*
  - *Letting Mr. Musgrove feel sorry for her*
3. What is CMT? How does it affect Arlene and her mother?
  - *A disease that affects nerves and muscles, making it hard for a person to move his/her arms, legs and fingers.*
  - *It gets worse as a person gets older.*
  - *Walking is hard; Arlene can climb hills but needs to hold onto railing when using stairs; Arlene's mother can't walk at all*
  - *Arlene can't hold a lot of playing cards*
  - *Arlene's mother needs to hold markers with two hands*
  - *Arlene falls a lot*



4. Does Arlene want other kids to run for SGA? Why/why not?
  - *Arlene does not want other kids to run for SGA*
  - *The more students who run, the greater the competition.*
  - *Arlene is already worried about her abilities. If she loses the election, she will feel worse about herself.*

C. KWL sheet: Complete final column.

### **Discussion Starters--Connections**

- On the first page, Arlene asks the reader to imagine wearing a sign on your back telling everyone of something that makes you different. What would your sign say? How would that make you feel?
- Think back to a first day of school. Were you worried about anything? If so, what? If not, explain how you did feel.
- In Chapter 2, Arlene lists some things that are hard for her living with CMT. Can you think of other things you do that might be hard for someone living with CMT?
- Arlene didn't seem to want a lot of competition in this election. Have you ever run for office or entered a contest? How did you feel about competition? How did you feel about winning/losing?

### **Thinking Big**

Use one or more of these questions for longer writing assignments. Addresses RL.3.1, 4.1, 5.1; W.3.1a-d, 4.1a-d, 5.1a-d.

- In your opinion, is Arlene taking the right steps to achieve her "big plans?" Why or why not? Provide evidence from the text to support your opinion.
- Do you think that having a disability changes a person? Why or why not? Provide evidence from the text to support your opinion.
- Does Arlene seem to care what people think of her? How do you know? Provide evidence from the text to support your answer.

### **Enrichment Activities**

- On page 11, Arlene refers to several other childhood diseases and disabilities. Can you find out what they are? Can you name some others and describe how they affect kids as they grow up? (Addresses W.3.2, 4.2, 5.2 if used as writing assignment.)
- Find samples of campaign posters to show to students. Have students make their own posters, individually or in groups, and present them to the class with campaign slogans.

## Chapters 4-7

### Vocabulary/Figurative Language

Use the graphic organizers at the end of this Guide to help students learn the meanings of new vocabulary words and figurative language.

### Discussion Starters--Predictions

- Will Arlene meet the requirements in order to run for office?
- What other characters will run?
- What challenges do you think Arlene will face when running for office?
- Why do you think Arlene chose bright purple leg braces with butterfly decorations?

### Reading Comprehension Worksheets

#### A. Character Trait Sheet

Use the character trait worksheet to review new characters introduced in this section. (Addresses RL.3.3, 4.3, 5.2)

- *Byron: Arlene's good friend; talks a lot; not athletic*
- *Lauren: Arlene's best friend; worries a lot*
- *Sheila McFadden: an athlete; energetic and confident*
- *Jessie Fontaine: very popular, beautiful, aloof*
- *Maddie: a follower; Jessie's friend and supporter*
- *Arlene's father: a college professor; worries about Arlene*
- *Christopher: Arlene's teenage brother; treats her like a little kid; messy*
- *Mrs. Landers: PTA member; seems to be concerned about Arlene's abilities because of her leg braces*
- *Spencer: interested in science; takes rocks from the girls*

#### B. Chapters 4-7 Worksheet—Suggested Answers

1. Why doesn't Joey run for office? How is he going to be involved in the election?
  - *Joey does not run for office because he doesn't want to write the essay.*
  - *He is going to be Carlos' campaign manager.*
2. Does Jessie think Arlene can do a good job as SGA secretary? Why or why not?
  - *Jessie does not think Arlene can do a good job as SGA secretary because the job requires a lot of writing. Jessie apparently has noticed that Arlene is a slow writer because she has CMT.*
3. Why is Mrs. Landers worried when she sees Arlene's leg braces? Why does she look "embarrassed" after Arlene says she can do the job?

- *When Mrs. Landers sees Arlene’s leg braces, she assumes that Arlene may have difficulty performing the duties of PTA Membership Drive Spokesperson.*
  - *Mrs. Landers is embarrassed because she realizes that she made this assumption solely because of Arlene’s disability. People generally try not to make assumptions based on someone’s disability, race, or culture, and when they realize that they may have done so, they sometimes feel embarrassed about it.*
4. Do you think Arlene’s rap song was a good substitution for Mrs. Landers’ speech? Why or why not?
    - *Answers will vary.*
  5. How does Arlene feel when she can’t fit on the rug during the Classroom Meeting? What does she do about it? What do you think about her solution to this problem?
    - *Arlene feels frustrated when she can’t fit on the rug.*
    - *She does not sit down with the other students on the floor. She stands near the back of the classroom.*
    - *Educators: If appropriate, facilitate an understanding that while Arlene “solves” the problem, the solution creates separation between Arlene and her peers. Help students think of ways the problem could be solved without creating this separation.*

### **Discussion Starters—Connections**

- In Chapter 4, Jessie points out that Arlene can’t write well. Was there ever a time when another child pointed out something that you can’t do well? How did that make you feel? What did you do about it?
- In Chapter 5, Arlene’s father seems uncomfortable with the idea of Arlene entering the student election. Have you ever taken a risk or done something that made your parents/caretakers uncomfortable? What happened?
- Have you ever made assumptions about a person’s abilities based on how they looked? Has anyone made those kinds of assumptions about you? How do you think it feels?
- Arlene describes Rhode Island on page 56 as “big patches of the same thing” but at the same time, “a pretty cool place.” How would you describe your home state?

### **Thinking Big**

- On page 29 and again on page 48 when Arlene meets Mrs. Landers, Arlene talks about how people often feel sorry for her when they see her leg braces. Why do you think people feel that way when they see a person with a disability? What other feelings could a person have when he/she sees someone with a disability? (Addresses SL.3.1a-d, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, 4.1a-d, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6, 5.1a-d, 5.2, 5.3, 5.6)
  - *We envision this activity as one that could be a small group discussion, followed by a full class conversation. Encourage students to “turn and talk” to each*

*other about their initial reactions to disability, and then as a whole class the teacher could facilitate the discussion toward the underlying ideas below.*

- *We suggest that teachers begin to facilitate an understanding of the difference between pity/sympathy/empathy. Also, there may be other reactions, such as curiosity, surprise, discomfort.*
- *We would encourage the acceptance of all answers here. The idea is to develop insight into our own emotional reactions to disability. We can shape them later, but without knowing what really happens for us inside when encountering disability and difference, we can't begin to change our attitudes.*

The next three activities, if used as a writing assignment, address W.3.1a-d, 4.1a-d, 5.1a-d.

- Jessie seems to have doubts that Arlene can do the job as SGA secretary because it requires a lot of writing. We know that although Arlene can write, she admits that she is a slow writer. Should Arlene take the job if her disability alone prevents her from doing it?
  - *We encourage teachers to help students realize that disabilities can and should be accommodated. In fact, the Americans With Disabilities Act requires accommodations in government facilities, public transportation, places of employment, and even private business like hotels, restaurants, museums, etc.*
  - *The authors believe that we need to shift our perception of disability from the individual person to the aspects of our environment that fail to accommodate the wide range of abilities and needs which exists among us. If appropriate, introduce the concept of disability existing within the environment rather than within an individual.*
- Pretend you're Arlene. Write a persuasive essay to Mr. Musgrove, 250 words or less, explaining why you should be allowed to run in the election.
- Do you think that Spencer is right when he argues that no one "owns all of nature" and therefore, he can take any rock that he finds on the playground? Pretend you're the judge in the argument between Spencer and Arlene/Lauren, and state your decision regarding who gets the rock. Back up your decision with specific reasons.

### **Enrichment Activities**

- On page 40, we learn what Arlene wrote in her essay. Arlene says that if fourth graders are not allowed to run in the election, this could result in other groups being denied the chance to run. Arlene seems to be saying that it isn't right for leaders such as school principals to deny whole groups of people the chance to do something, just because they're a part of a certain group. In this chapter, Arlene gives examples of groups that might be subject to exclusion, such as fourth graders, people who are short, or people with disabilities. Do you think Arlene is right, that once leaders start to deny a whole group of people access to things, it could lead to the denial of access to a lot of groups of people? Check out websites that tell about the civil rights movement, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and other examples of this lesson in history. (Addresses RI.3.6, 4.6, 5.6. We suggest a T-chart comparing different social movements and Arlene's situation from the text.)

- Time for Kids has an article from July 2, 2004 about the anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It is entitled “Making a Civil Rights Milestone” and is available on their website,  
<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/kids/news/story/0,28277,660464,00.html>
  - The Anti-Discrimination League offers a number of different curriculums/lesson plans to teach children about diversity. Many are for older students, but this is a good resource:  
[http://www.adl.org/education/curriculum\\_connections/](http://www.adl.org/education/curriculum_connections/)
  - Kids Together Inc. provides a fact sheet on the Americans With Disabilities Act:  
[http://www.kidstogether.org/leg\\_ada.htm](http://www.kidstogether.org/leg_ada.htm)
  
- On page 56, Arlene tells us that Rhode Island has the longest state name. She dares us to “look it up.” Check it out at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhode\\_Island](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhode_Island)  
 Roger Williams, a theologian who was one of the first to advocate freedom of religion, separation of church and state, abolition of slavery, and equal treatment to Native Americans, was forced out of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Seeking religious and political tolerance, he and others founded “Providence Plantations” as a free proprietary colony. “Providence” referred to the divine providence and “plantations” referred to a British term for a colony (people leave one place and are “planted” in another). Thus, this name bore no relation to the later Southern and Caribbean Islands slave plantations. Later on, Providence Plantations and Rhode Island were merged to form the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.  
 “Rhode Island and Providence Plantations” is the longest official name of any state in the Union. On June 25, 2009, the General Assembly voted to allow the people to decide whether to keep the name or drop “Providence Plantations” due to the misperception that the name relates to slavery. A referendum election is to be held on this subject in the near future.
  
- Read aloud to a partner Arlene’s “rap” on pages 57-58. Does it flow? (Addresses RF.3.4, 4.4, 5.4.)
  
- Arlene mentions that Rhode Islanders love coffee-flavored milk. Taste it for yourself! The syrup can be purchased here: <http://www.famousfoods.com/eccosy616ozb.html>  
 OR  
<http://www.autocrat.com/cart/index.cfm?ac=ShowProducts&CatID=550&SetCat=1>.  
 Just mix with milk and enjoy!

## Chapters 8-11

### Vocabulary/Figurative Language

Use the graphic organizers at the end of this Guide to help students learn the meanings of new vocabulary words and figurative language.

### Discussion Starters—Predictions

- Do you think it was a good strategy for Arlene and Lauren to turn the election into a boys-versus-girls contest?
- Do you think winning the election will really prove to everyone that Arlene can do anything she wants to do, as she says on page 37?
- What do you think Arlene meant by the last line of Chapter 7: “it was actually just about to wake up, and with a fierce roar?” Make a prediction about what is going to happen next.

### Reading Comprehension Worksheets

#### Chapters 8-11 Worksheet—Suggested Answers

1. How does Arlene feel after being “attacked” by the boys on the playground? Why does she feel this way?
  - *Arlene feels excited and pleased after having leaves thrown at her by the boys.*
  - *Having leaves thrown on her makes Arlene feel “just like everyone else,” which is what she has been trying to do throughout the story.*
2. What is the mood like at the beginning of Chapter 10? How do you know?
  - *The mood is tense at the beginning of Chapter 10. It is just after the Leaf Attack, and the boy-girl war is on. Kids pass notes and watch each other carefully.*
3. In Chapter 10, Byron seems to be having a hard time choosing sides in the boy-girl war. Why? Who does he choose?
  - *Byron has a close friendship with Arlene.*
  - *Byron wants to become “one of the guys,” but he doesn’t want to betray Arlene.*
  - *He tells Carlos and the boys that he is on their side, but he also tells Arlene that he will vote for her.*
4. Was it surprising to you that Carlos practices martial arts? Does this fit in with his character traits that we know about so far? Are other characters surprised to learn this about Carlos?
  - *Thus far, we know that Carlos is very smart. We don’t see him doing any kind of athletic activity, so the martial arts is new for his character at this point in the story.*
  - *Joey and Spencer were surprised to learn about Carlos practicing martial arts.*

5. At the end of Chapter 10, the girls discuss Arlene’s “image.” What do you think Arlene’s image is at this point?
  - *Answers will vary.*
6. On page 89, Arlene describes feeling several very different feelings all at the same time. What are those feelings? What does she do about this?
  - *Arlene describes feeling comforted by her mother’s understanding look as Chris teases Arlene. She also describes feeling worried and isolated because she knows she is not following her mother’s direction to end her participation in the boy-girl war. Finally, Arlene feels very excited to be a part of a “thrilling” boy-girl war.*
  - *Arlene tries to ignore her worry and focus on the excitement of the “war.”*

### **Discussion Starters—Connections**

- In Chapter 8, we read about how Arlene has difficulty playing basketball with Sheila. Arlene comments that she isn’t very athletic. Are you good at sports?
  - If yes, have you ever tried to include kids who are not that good in your game? How did it go?
  - If no, have you ever tried to play anyway, like Arlene did? What happened? How did you feel?
- If Arlene’s mom tells Ms. Merrily what happened at recess, does this make Arlene a tattletale? Do you think someone should tell Ms. Merrily about the “leaf attack?” State reasons for your answers.
- Have you ever felt caught in the middle of friendships like Byron does in Chapter 10? What did you do about it? Do you think Byron did the right thing by telling both Arlene and the boys that he was on their side?

### **Thinking Big**

- On page 68, Arlene admits that she hadn’t told Lauren about her Big Plans. Why do you think she didn’t? Arlene notes that Lauren probably didn’t “look at her differently” after Arlene started wearing leg braces. Why does Arlene think everyone else will look at her differently, except for Lauren? Do you think Arlene is right about Lauren? (Addresses RL3.3, 4.3, 5.3.)
  - *We encourage teachers to explore the idea that a lack of understanding about a disability can lead to sympathy, even pity, whereas getting to know someone with a disability results in a more empathetic response, which is preferable in terms of disability awareness.*
- Arlene’s mother is very clear that she does not want Arlene participating in the “boy-girl war,” yet Arlene seems to be as involved as ever. In fact, Arlene says the war is “thrilling” and “exciting.” (Addresses RL3.3, 4.3, 5.3.)

- Do you think Arlene is doing the right thing by continuing to participate in this “war?”
  - How is Arlene’s participation in the war connected to her Big Plans for this school year?
  - Would you take part in this “war” if you were Arlene?
- On pages 84-85 and again on page 90, Arlene talks about the idea of her “image.” What is a person’s “image?” How does an image form? Can a person change his/her image? Why does Arlene care so much about her image? (Addresses RL.3.4, 4.4, 5.4.)
    - *We encourage teachers to explore the idea of “image,” particularly as it relates to disability, culture, ethnicity, etc. Introduce the idea of “stereotype” as an “image” based on lack of information, inappropriate assumptions, etc. Relate “image” to Martin Luther King’s idea of judging others based on the content of their character.*

### **Enrichment Activities**

- On pages 69 and 77, Arlene describes particular words that are unique to Rhode Island. Can you think of any words that are unique to your area of the country?
  - *There is a short video available that gives several examples, such as “gumband” for rubber band (Pittsburgh), or “schlep” for carry (New York). This video can be found at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qXGuCaApR7U>*
- Show students images of paintings by Claude Monet online, including the one that Arlene has in her room? Have students try to create a painting like Monet, with lots of small brush strokes.
- Sing Arlene’s song to the tune of Three Blind Mice out loud. Try it in “rounds” with different groups chiming in at different times.
- Listen to some cello music by Mozart and Bach. You can listen for free at <http://www.music-scores.com/cello/composer.php>. You can click on the musical piece and then click “midi” to play the song. Another good site for learning about the cello, classical music, and the symphony in general is <http://www.sfskids.org/templates/home.asp?pageid=1>.



## Chapters 12-14

### Vocabulary/Figurative Language

Use the graphic organizers at the end of this Guide to help students learn the meanings of new vocabulary words and figurative language.

### Discussion Starters—Predictions

- Who do you think Byron will vote for in the end? Why?
- Jessie makes a comment at the end of Chapter 10 about Arlene’s “image” but she never gets to explain what she meant. Based on what you know about Jessie and Arlene at this point, what do you think Jessie would have said about Arlene’s image?
- Use your imagination: what do you think will happen at the pumpkin patch? What is the next step in the “boy-girl war?”

### Reading Comprehension Worksheets

#### A. Chapters 12-14 Worksheet—Suggested Answers

1. Compare Carlos’ appearance and mood on the bus ride TO the pumpkin patch and BACK FROM the pumpkin patch. Use details from the text.
  - *TO the pumpkin patch: Carlos stands tall in between the seats, lounging, wind blowing in his hair, casual, confident, outgoing and social.*
  - *FROM the pumpkin patch: Carlos slumps in his seat, tired, defeated, hair flattened, face muddy, dazed, yet still engaged in the boy-girl war.*
2. How does Arlene feel about getting into the wagons at the pumpkin patch? Why does she feel this way? Why does she get in? What happens during the ride out to the pumpkin patch?
  - *Arlene is worried that she won’t be able to hang on in the wagons because of her disability.*
  - *She climbs onto the wagon anyway because she does not want to admit that she is different, that she isn’t able to hang on like all the rest of the kids.*
  - *Arlene almost falls out of the wagon on the way to the pumpkin vines.*
3. When Arlene almost falls out of the wagon, Lauren laughs. Why does Arlene pretend that she thinks it is funny too?
  - *Arlene pretends it is funny because she doesn’t want anyone, even Lauren, to know that she can’t hang on in the wagons like the rest of the students.*
4. If Arlene is so uncomfortable with the idea of untying Plumpy, why does she try to go along?

- *Arlene is afraid that if she doesn't go along with the plan to untie Plumpy, she will lose the support of her friends in the election, particularly Jessie.*
5. Why is Arlene angry when Jessie asks why she wasn't at the top of the hill with the rest of the girls, on page 122? What does Arlene think Jessie meant by this question? Why do you think Jessie asked the question?
- *Arlene is angry because she feels that Jessie is trying to point out how incapable Arlene is given her disability. Arlene may also feel frustrated by her disability and by the fact that she couldn't make it up the hill. Jessie pointing this out makes Arlene even more upset.*
6. Why does Jessie say, "You, of all people!" when she accuses Arlene of unfairly judging her?
- *Jessie seems to be saying that since Arlene is constantly trying to be accepted by those around her, it is surprising for Jessie to hear that Arlene does not accept Jessie but instead thinks she's a "glamour girl."*

#### B. Character Trait Chart – After the Precious Things Presentations

- *Carlos*
  - *Before: neat; smart; may want to run for SGA as well*
  - *After: confident, strong*
- *Jessie*
  - *Before: very popular, beautiful, aloof*
  - *After: athletic*
- *Sheila*
  - *Before: athletic, energetic, confident*
  - *After: musical*
- *Joey*
  - *Before: likes to be in charge; may tease others; messy*
  - *After: caring, grieving for his grandfather*

#### Discussion Starters—Connections

- Read again Arlene's description of the mood on the bus, page 95-96. Have you ever been in a situation that involved this kind of mood? Describe the situation, and then use your own metaphors to describe the mood.
- Describe a field trip to a pumpkin patch or some other location. Explain what you saw, who went with you, whether you had fun, etc.
- Do you think Arlene was unfairly judging Jessie? Why or why not?

## **Thinking Big**

- On page 103, Arlene says, “It just means that I have to bend the rules sometimes to make things work for me.” Is this okay to do? Can you think of circumstances or situations that make it okay to break rules? (If used as a writing assignment, addresses W.3.1a-d, 4.1a-d, 5.1a-d.)
  - What if you need to break a rule in order to keep **safe**? For example, what if the rule is “no going outside in winter without your coat, hat and gloves,” but the fire alarm rings in school on a cold January day. You would have to break the rule about dressing warmly in order to keep safe during a potential fire. Can you think of other examples?
  - What about breaking rules to prevent **hurtful behavior** or **discrimination**? For example, during the Civil Rights Movement, many people broke the rules to stop hurtful and discriminatory behavior. One famous rule-breaker was Rosa Parks (see [http://www.educationworld.com/a\\_lesson/03/lp297-02.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/03/lp297-02.shtml)).
  
- So far in the book, Arlene talks about how much she wants to be the *same* as her classmates, to be just like everybody else; however, her disability seems to force her to be separate, to be different. For example, because of her inability to hang on in the wagons, Arlene sits up in the front of the tractor with Farmer Paw Sox. What do you think her classmates will think of her after she sits up front while they’re in back? Has she ruined her Big Plans? Should people with disabilities be given special help and *accommodations*, such as parking spaces closer to buildings, or does this just make them more separate? (If used as a writing assignment, addresses W.3.1a-d, 4.1a-d, 5.1a-d. Exploring the meaning of the word *accommodation* also aligns with RL.3.4, 4.4, 5.4.)
  - *We encourage teachers to explore the idea that accommodations are not only desired, they are required in many circumstances. You could expand on this discussion to include the idea that different ability levels would not be considered a “disability” but for certain environmental conditions (e.g., stairs).*
  - *The key is for all of us to think of accommodations as something necessary and welcome, even if it sometimes results in special treatment/separateness. Discuss examples, such as special parking spaces, Braille books, vending machines with voice narration, special classes at school, elevators/chair lifts, etc.*
  
- Read the last line of Chapter 13. Why does Arlene want to be like everyone else? Do you? Can you think of situations in which it is good to be just like everyone else? Can you think of situations in which it is better to be different? When are you most comfortable? (Aligns with RL.3.6, 4.6, 5.6.)

## **Enrichment Activities**

- On page 96, Arlene mentions the “Thinker” when talking about Carlos. Find out what the “Thinker” is at [http://www.artinthepicture.com/paintings/Auguste\\_Rodin/The-Thinker/](http://www.artinthepicture.com/paintings/Auguste_Rodin/The-Thinker/). Why did Arlene compare Carlos to this sculpture? How is Carlos different now? Play the Statue Game in which one group of students stand in a pose, and the second group of students taps their shoulders to “turn on the moving statues.” The statues act like famous people, such as the president, a television star, or your school’s principal! The second group has to correctly name the famous person.

- Read aloud to a partner Arlene’s latest rap song on pages 116-117. (Aligns with RF.3.4, 4.4, 5.4.)
- We’ve now read three different songs/poems/raps created by Arlene. It’s your turn! Make up your own rhyme or song, asking kids to join you in something: a sport, hobby, event, etc. Read aloud to a partner or the class. (Aligns with RF.3.4, 4.4, 5.4.)
- On page 123-124, Arlene imagines that she is painting her life in colorful splashes. Create your own “Big Picture of YOU!” (Materials needed: large art paper, colorful tissue paper cut into small squares about 2 inch per side, glue)
  - Teachers draw the outline of each student’s facial profile using an overhead projector or smartboard. You could also just draw a general outline of person’s head. There are samples at the end of the Guide.
  - Each student creates a “Key” or “Color Code” matching one color of tissue paper with one of their character traits. For example, blue could symbolize a student’s swimming talent, red could mean the student loves dogs, or orange could stand for the student’s job as safety patrol at school. This color code can be written outside of the facial outline on the large art paper.
  - Students then crumple/twist/bunch the squares and glue them within the facial outline, in any pattern or design they desire. When they fill the outline, they have a mosaic Big Picture of themselves, reminiscent of a Monet painting, and showcasing different parts of themselves as designated in the Color Code.

## Chapters 15-18

### Vocabulary/Figurative Language

Use the graphic organizers at the end of this Guide to help students learn the meanings of new vocabulary words and figurative language.

### Discussion Starters—Predictions

- After reading about Carlos' growing popularity and Arlene's fight with Jessie, what do you think Arlene's chances are of winning the election? Explain the reasons for your opinion.
- Do you think Arlene and the girls will get in trouble for what they did at the pumpkin patch? Why or why not?
- Do you think Jessie will continue to support Arlene in the election after their fight?

### Reading Comprehension Worksheets

#### Chapters 15-18 Worksheet—Suggested Answers

1. At the end of Chapter 15, Arlene compares her mood at that moment to how she felt when she spoke to Ms. Landers. Describe these two contrasting moods, pages 123-126 versus page 141. Use text examples to provide detail.
  - *Page 126: Confident, Proud*
    - *"I smiled"; "My plan was working"; "this lady was pleased with me, and that was good"; "this made me feel like I could control the universe"*
  - *Page 141: Worried, Anxious*
    - *"Now something horrible and embarrassing might happen to me"; "Everything could be totally ruined!"; "Someone might get hurt. And that someone could be me!"*
2. We find out about the boys plan for revenge after it all happened. Can you re-create what the boys did during lunch and recess?
  - *During lunch, the boys gather taco grease into a container. When Maddie tries to spy on them, Carlos and Byron form a wall in front of the other boys.*
  - *During recess, Spencer takes the container into the classroom and pours the taco grease onto the floor where Arlene will be standing for her Precious Things presentation. The other boys wait outside for a report from Spencer that he accomplished his mission.*
3. What is the girls' plan to keep Arlene safe from the boys' revenge?

- *The girls plan to let Ketchup and Mustard out of their cage. Sheila does this as the class was coming back in from recess. This provides a distraction that keeps Arlene from having to do her Precious Things presentation. It also helps to reveal the boys' plan, because Mr. Musgrove slips in the taco grease on the floor.*
4. What does Jessie mean when she asks, "Which way do you want it, Arlene?" on page 146?
- *Jessie has been pointing out all along that Arlene seems less capable than the other children, that she is different. Arlene has been trying to prove that she is as capable as everyone else, not different at all. When Arlene suggests that her braces make her more vulnerable to the boys' attack, Jessie is angry that now Arlene seems to be saying her disability does make her different, that she should be more protected from the boys because she wears leg braces. So Jessie asks: does Arlene want to be the same and a full participant in this war (which means taking the full risk of being "attacked") or does she want to be different and protected from it?*
5. Why doesn't Arlene want to do "something totally disruptive" at the end of Chapter 16? What does she use as an excuse?
- *Arlene is feeling increasingly worried about her participation in the boy-girl war, given her mother's firm direction to stay out of it. She is also worried about her class presentation.*
  - *To avoid participation in "something totally disruptive," Arlene points out that if she is the one doing the presentation, she cannot at the same time be doing something "totally disruptive."*
6. How does Arlene react to Jessie's criticisms and accusations? What do you think of Arlene's reaction? Can you think of a different way Arlene could have responded?
- *Arlene calls Jessie names and tells her to "get lost."*
  - *Hopefully students will see that Arlene's reaction doesn't help the situation. She is so upset by Jessie that she reacts emotionally.*
  - *A better response may have been to leave without calling Jessie names, so Arlene could get control of her feelings before responding.*

### **Discussion Starters—Connections**

- On page 136, Arlene talks about "training" her dad to include her favorite things in her lunch. Who makes your lunch? Who decides what to include? Make a list of your favorite things to have for lunch, and then make another list of things you think are the healthiest things to have for lunch. Are there any matches?
- On page 141, Arlene says, "Oh, man! Mom might be right!" Have you ever had that kind of realization, that your parents were right about something, when you were so sure they were wrong?

- On page 155, Arlene says, “I felt downright sick” when she sees Mr. Musgrove slip on the taco grease. Have you ever seen something bad happen and felt responsible? What did you do?
- Have you ever had “a big glob of guilt sitting in the pit of your stomach?” Why was it there? What did you do about it?

### **Thinking Big**

- On page 141, Arlene asks the question, “How do you stop a war without surrendering?” What do you think? Check out some resources below. (Aligns with RL.3.1, 4.1, 5.1; RI.3.1, 4.1, 5.1.)
  - <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/classroom-discipline/resource/3038.html?detoured=1> (conflict resolution on a large scale)
  - <http://www.pbs.org/americaresponds/worldatpeace.html> (imagining world peace)
  - <http://www.tolerance.org/activity/kids-rescue> (conflict management on the playground)
- On pages 147-148 and on page 158, Arlene talks about the “Aww” look. She seems upset that Sheila and Mr. Musgrove are using this “look.” What do you think the “Aww” look means to Arlene? Why does it bother her? What did she mean by “sympathy card” on page 158? What is the difference between empathy, sympathy, and pity?
  - *We encourage teachers to define these emotions/reactions to the extent possible, given the age group. One of the underlying messages of this book is that while it is not uncommon to feel sympathy and even pity when encountering disability, we should strive for understanding and empathy instead.*
- Did Arlene do the right thing by not confessing about her full participation in the boy-girl war to Mr. Musgrove? State your opinion and give reasons. (If used as a writing assignment, this aligns with W.3.1a-d, 4.1a-d, 5.1a-d.)
- At the end of Chapter 18, Arlene and Jessie have their biggest argument yet. Draw a line lengthwise down your paper and list Jessie’s arguments/points on one side, Arlene’s on the other. Then you be the judge. Who is right/wrong? Is there a clear winner? What do you think? (Aligns with RL.3.3, 4.3, 5.3.)

### **Enrichment Activities**

- On page 144, Arlene says “I’ll never understand boy language” after observing the boys slapping and shoving each other. Is there such a thing as “boy language?” Work with a partner or small group and create your own language, using nonsense words, signals, gestures, etc. Say something simple in your new language, such as “Being different is great!” or “Peace to one and all!” Then demonstrate and explain your language to the class.

- In this section we are waiting to see what Arlene's Precious Things presentation would have involved. What would yours be if you had this assignment? Share with the class. (Aligns with SL.3.4, 4.4, 5.4.)
- How *would* you get gerbils back into their cage? Research this and think about what the class could have done to bring Ketchup and Mustard back home!



## Chapters 19-23

### Vocabulary/Figurative Language

Use the graphic organizers at the end of this Guide to help students learn the meanings of new vocabulary words and figurative language.

### Discussion Starters—Predictions

- When you read Sheila’s statement, “Disruption is my specialty,” what did you think she was going to do? Be creative. What *could* she have done to disrupt Arlene’s Precious Things presentation?
- On page 152, what do you think Mr. Musgrove said to Ms. Merrily after she picked up the intercom phone? Given what you know about the characters of Mr. Musgrove and Ms. Merrily, use your imagination and write that conversation.
- How do you think the boy-girl war will end? Will anyone win?
- What do you think Arlene’s Precious Things presentation would have been if she had the chance to do it?

### Reading Comprehension Worksheets

#### Chapters 19-23 Worksheet—Suggested Answers

1. Why do you think Arlene got up at 7 am on a Saturday morning? What does this tell us about the mood of the story at this point?
  - *Arlene is feeling nervous, unsure of herself, unsettled.*
  - *This is the peak of the story arc, when things get very unsettled before they begin to be pulled together for the resolution. Arlene and her classmates just got into a lot of trouble for the things they did during the boy-girl war. Arlene just had a big argument with Jessie. The election is uncertain.*
2. What does Arlene’s mother mean by “live it?”
  - *Arlene’s mother means that Arlene should do her best, given the challenges she faces with CMT. She should not sit back and feel sorry for herself; she should accomplish all she can. She does need to accept the limitations that CMT presents, however, because this cannot be changed.*
3. How do we know the boy-girl war is over? Use examples from the text.
  - *Boys and girls go into the cubby room together.*
  - *Boys and girls share the same water fountain.*
  - *Sheila and Joey shake hands.*
4. On page 179, Arlene says that she is “not like everyone else. Just like me.” What does this mean? How is this a change for Arlene’s character?

- *Arlene means that she is no longer comparing herself to her classmates. She is setting her own goals and working to achieve them, given her own set of talents and challenges.*
  - *This is a change because all along in the story, Arlene is working to be the same as her classmates. For the first time, she is no longer comparing herself to her peers, but instead, she's measuring her progress toward her own personal goals.*
5. Re-read the conversation between Arlene and Jessie on 188-190. What do we learn about the reasons behind Jessie's attitude toward Arlene throughout the book?
- *Jessie is jealous of Arlene and the attention and sympathy Arlene receives because of her leg braces.*
- Why do you think Arlene goes back to see Mr. Musgrove at the end of the school year?
    - *She may have wanted to see if his attitude toward her and her abilities had changed.*

### **Discussion Starters—Connections**

- On page 168, Arlene says that she doesn't mind losing TV privileges because of her behavior at school. She says that the punishment makes her feel less guilty. Why do you think that is? Has this ever happened to you? Do you feel more guilty when you do something wrong and don't get in trouble?
- In Chapter 19, Arlene and her mother discuss the idea that everyone has something they cannot do. What don't you do well? Does it bother you? How do you deal with it?
- Describe how Arlene feels just before making her campaign speech. Have you ever had to make a class presentation or speech? How did you feel? How did you handle it?

### **Thinking Big**

- Describe what "live it" means in your own words. Can you think of examples of people embracing difference? (Aligns with RL.3.1, 4.1, 5.1.)
  - *Arlene choosing bright purple leg braces.*
  - *Choosing a stylish cane, or fashion eyeglasses.*
  - *Proudly sharing one's religion or culture with others.*
  - *Wearing clothes not in style, just because you like them.*
  - *Using your natural talents, such as art/writing/music, when given the option.*
- On page 180, Mr. Musgrove says that Arlene has "overcome great odds to participate in this election." Why does this bother Arlene? Does Arlene really overcome great odds to participate in the election? Think about the difference between congratulating someone for something they worked really hard for, and congratulating someone for

something that was just ordinary, nothing special. (If used as a writing assignment, this aligns with W.3.1a-d, 4.1a-d, 5.1a-d.)

- *It would be useful to help students realize that the fact that Arlene has CMT really didn't have anything to do with whether she ran in the election. Mr. Musgrove's concerns that she might be "too tired" to run in the election were not grounded in fact, but rather grew out of his sympathy for Arlene. This is perhaps what bothered Arlene.*
- What does it mean to "judge" a person? Don't we do this all the time, make conclusions based on information we receive and perceive? Otherwise, how would we know who to trust, or who we should develop friendships with, if we avoid "judging" people? (Aligns with RL.3.4, 4.4, 5.4.)
  - *The difference would be to avoid judging people based on appearances.*
  - *Discuss the concept of "stereotypes."*
  - *In addition, one should strive to keep an open mind, and be willing to adjust one's prior conclusions/judgments if new, different information comes to light.*

### **Enrichment Activities**

- On page 168-169, Arlene describes in great detail the process of her mother putting on mascara. Using a thick marker or similarly shaped object, pretend to do this (but be careful – keep the marker a good distance from your eyes!). Or try coloring with markers held between your wrists, like Arlene describes in Chapter 2. What do you think is the author's purpose in telling the reader about the challenges of CMT?
  - *Educators: To build on the discussion of empathy/sympathy/pity, we would suggest that you emphasize that the author's purpose is to help us understand/empathize with people living with CMT rather than to generate pity. The desired reaction from the reader would be to admire the way Arlene's mother developed unique strategies and methods for accomplishing things, rather than to feel sorry for Arlene's mother.*
- Learn about Roger Williams and explore Rhode Island history at the websites below. (Aligns with RI.3.3, 4.3, 5.3.)
  - <http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/studteaguide/RhodeIslandHistory/chapt2.html>
  - <http://www.rogerwilliams.org/biography.htm>
  - <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0108266.html - axzz0xr8NV7qo>
  - <http://www.ipl.org/div/stateknow/ri1.html>
- Write a campaign speech as Arlene, Carlos, or yourself. (Aligns with W.3.4, 4.4, 5.4.)
- Using the worksheet with an outline of a person (provided at end of Guide), write one obvious character trait for yourself. Decorate the person – add hair, facial features, clothes, etc. On the back of the paper, list things that people don't generally know about you. Share with a partner, small group, or the whole class by showing the picture on the front first. See if your audience can guess your lesser-known character traits. Then reveal the "hidden side" of you.

## Post-Reading

- Make some more predictions!
  - Do you think Mr. Musgrove will feel less sympathy for Arlene in the future, given what happened this year?
  - Do you think Arlene and Jessie will become friends? Why or why not?
  - Use your imagination. What do you think Arlene has in store for next year?
- What literary genre does this book belong to? How do you know?
- Write a book review about *Arlene on the Scene* for a major newspaper. Summarize the story arc, the themes, the characters, and how the characters changed by the end of the book. Include whether you liked the book or not, whether you would recommend it to others, and why. With one star being the worst book you ever read and five stars being the ultimate great read, how many stars would you give *Arlene on the Scene*? (Aligns with RL.3.2, 4.2, 5.2.)
- Do you have unanswered questions after finishing the book? What are they?
- What could you do to spread awareness of CMT?
- How would you define disability? Does it have more to do with the person, or the environment? Explain your opinion. Did your concept of disability change after reading this book? (Aligns to both opinion writing and informative/explanatory text, W.3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 3.2, 4.2, 5.2.)
- Split into groups, and each group should pretend they have a particular challenge, such as not being able to walk, not being able to see, hear, talk, etc. Then perform a typical student routine, such as checking out a book from the library or buying your lunch in the cafeteria. After trying to perform the routine, each group should report back to the class what they discovered, NOT about the difficulty of the challenge, but about any lack of accommodations in the environment for the particular challenge. (Aligns with SL.3.2, 4.4, 5.4.)
  - *What we're trying to foster here is not pity or sympathy for the child with a disability, but a realization that when the environment accommodates disabilities, the disability is less of a challenge for people. Ask the class, for example, what if there were no stairs or steps anywhere? Using a wheelchair would be a lot easier!*

## **ADDITIONAL LINKS**

The Hereditary Neuropathy Foundation

<http://www.hnf-cure.org/>

<http://www.abilityawareness.com/>

<http://www.disabilityisnatural.com/>

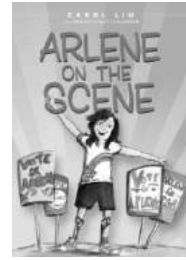
<http://www.tolerance.org/>

<http://www.kidskonnnect.com/subject-index/33-states/203-rhode-island.html>

<http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/articles/ushistory/13rhodeisland.htm>

## **GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



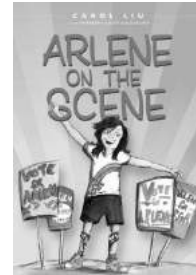
## **Chapters 1-3 Vocabulary**

Fill in the blanks below with one of the following words:

auditorium (p. 2)	sympathy (p. 7)	Muscular Dystrophy (p. 11)	fluke (p. 12)	campaign (p. 12)
suggestion (p. 16)	crumpled (p. 18)	intercom (p. 22)	procedure (p. 23)	essay (p. 23)

1. The president had to run a good \_\_\_\_\_ in order to get elected.
2. After getting folded, stepped on and shoved into my backpack, my homework paper was dirty and \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The crowd filled the \_\_\_\_\_ and sat quietly, ready to hear the guest speaker.
4. My friend has \_\_\_\_\_ and her muscles become weaker as she gets older.
5. The teacher explained, "Your \_\_\_\_\_ should be three paragraphs long and should answer the question completely."
6. Arlene and her mother have the same birthday. What a \_\_\_\_\_!
7. The doctor's \_\_\_\_\_ was to drink lots of fluid and get some rest.
8. Larry's boss explained the \_\_\_\_\_ for filing the company's reports.
9. I can find out who's ringing the doorbell by talking through the \_\_\_\_\_.
10. We felt a lot of \_\_\_\_\_ for the people who lost their homes in the earthquake.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Chapters 1-3 Figurative Language

**Imagery**  
**Alliteration**

**Simile**  
**Personification**

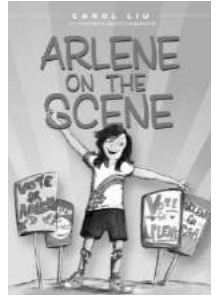
**Metaphor**  
**Onomatopoeia**

**Hyperbole**

<u>Language from Text</u>	<u>Type of Figurative Language</u>	<u>What author really means</u>
...when the <i>ocean tosses a little of itself into the sky, and then the wind sprinkles this salty coolness all over my neighborhood</i> . (p. 9)		
...my knees look <i>like they've been pecked by an army of ducks!</i> (p. 17)		
I bumped and bounced <i>like one of those wild Super Balls you get in goody bags at birthday parties</i> . (p. 18)		
Instead, whispers crackled throughout the classroom <i>like static electricity</i> . (p.21-22)		



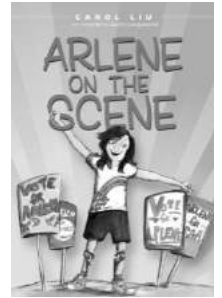
Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Character Traits

(Grades 3,4)

<u>Character Name</u>	<u>Trait</u>	<u>Text Examples</u>



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Character Traits

(Grades 5)

<u>Character Name</u>	<u>How does the character react to Arlene's leg braces?</u>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Chapters 1-3 Reading Comprehension

1. What is Arlene worried about upon returning to school? Why? What does she do about it?

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2. How does Arlene try to convince Mr. Musgrove to let her run for office?

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3. What is CMT? How does it affect Arlene and her mother?

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4. Does Arlene want other kids to run for the SGA? Why or why not?

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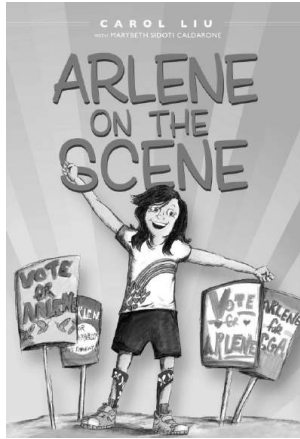
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Learning about... Charcot-Marie-Tooth Disease

K  What I <b><u>know</u></b>	W  What I <b><u>want</u></b> to learn	L  What I have <b><u>learned</u></b>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Chapters 4-7 Vocabulary

Match the word in the left column with its definition in the right column.

\_\_\_\_\_ **glamour (p.31)**

A. something given special attention

\_\_\_\_\_ **politics (p.32)**

B. word to describe very valuable

\_\_\_\_\_ **democracy (p. 40)**

C. the way you remember something or a person

\_\_\_\_\_ **therapy (p. 42)**

D. bad or evil

\_\_\_\_\_ **priority (p. 42)**

E. science of government

\_\_\_\_\_ **precious (p. 62)**

F. form of government in which people have equal rights and power

\_\_\_\_\_ **impression (p. 62)**

G. beauty, attractiveness, charm

\_\_\_\_\_ **wickedly (p. 63)**

H. way to treat disease

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Chapters 4-7 Figurative Language

Imagery

Simile

Metaphor

Hyperbole

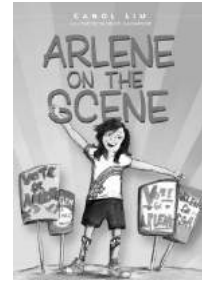
Alliteration

Personification

Onomatopoeia

<u>Language from Text</u>	<u>Type of Figurative Language</u>	<u>What author really means</u>
He had changed in a lot of ways...including <i>turning into a giant overnight</i> . (p. 39)		
He reads as quickly as a <i>Labrador Retriever in front of a bowl of dog biscuits</i> . (p. 41)		
<i>Silent messages flew in many directions...</i> (p.49)		
<i>Like a basketball superstar swiping the ball on a fast break</i> , she snatched the rock from him (p.53)		
The <i>teacher's smile broke her frozen face...</i> (p.58)		

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Chapters 4-7 Reading Comprehension**

1. Why doesn't Joey run for office? How is he going to be involved in the election?

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2. Does Jessie think Arlene can do a good job as SGA secretary? Why or why not?

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3. Why is Mrs. Landers worried when she sees Arlene's leg braces? Why does she look "embarrassed" after Arlene says she can do the job?

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4. Do you think Arlene's rap song was a good substitution for Mrs. Landers' speech? Why or why not?

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5. How does Arlene feel when she can't fit on the rug during the Classroom Meeting? What does she do about it? What do you think about her solution to this problem?

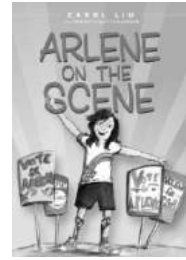
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Chapters 8-11 Vocabulary

Fill in the blanks below with one of the following words:

ferocious (p.70)	strategy (p. 73)	crusade (p. 77)	sensitive (p. 80)
intrigue (p. 81)	image (p. 84)	advantage (p. 85)	eavesdropping (p. 81)

1. Jacob had an \_\_\_\_\_ in the basketball game because he was so tall.
2. In order to win the chess game, Mary needed to use a good \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The lake was so still that we could see the \_\_\_\_\_ of our faces in the water.
4. It was hard to stop reading the suspense novel because it was full of mystery and \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The roaring lion showed his sharp teeth and looked \_\_\_\_\_!
6. The rebel captain led his army on a \_\_\_\_\_ against the enemy.
7. I was teased once about the way I read aloud, and I felt very \_\_\_\_\_ about my reading after that.
8. The spy looked like he was just reading his newspaper next to the suspects, but he was \_\_\_\_\_ on them.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Chapters 8-11 Figurative Language

Imagery

Alliteration

Simile

Personification

Metaphor

Onomatopoeia

Hyperbole

<u>Language from Text</u>	<u>Type of Figurative Language</u>	<u>What author really means</u>
I slid off my bed and saluted Mom, with <i>a serious soldier frown on my face</i> p.73		
They watched us <i>like they were security guards in a diamond shop.</i> (p. 78)		
...stood stiff and tall <i>like a bronze statue.</i> (p.83)		
<i>Crumbs flew</i> off desks, little plastic <i>bags floated</i> gently to the floor... <i>juice boxes dripped red, spotty trails down the aisles</i> (p.91)		

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Chapters 8-11 Reading Comprehension**

1. How does Arlene feel after being “attacked” by the boys on the playground? Why does she feel this way?

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2. What is the mood like at the beginning of Chapter 10? How do you know?

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3. In Chapter 10, Byron seems to be having a hard time choosing sides in the boy-girl war. Why? Who does he choose?

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4. Was it surprising to you that Carlos practices martial arts? Does this fit in with his character traits that we know about so far? Are other characters surprised to learn this about Carlos?

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5. At the end of Chapter 10, the girls discuss Arlene's "image." What do you think Arlene's image is at this point?

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6. On page 89, Arlene describes feeling several very different feelings all at the same time. What are those feelings? What does she do about this?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Chapters 12-14 Vocabulary

Match vocabulary in the left column with the definition in the right column.

\_\_\_\_\_ **chaperon (p.98)**

A. climb with effort or difficulty

\_\_\_\_\_ **rickety (p.98)**

B. felt strong fear

\_\_\_\_\_ **clamber (p. 99)**

C. an adult who supervises an activity for young people

\_\_\_\_\_ **tampering (p. 105)**

D. wild with excitement or fear

\_\_\_\_\_ **panicked (p. 109)**

E. suddenly ran or escaped

\_\_\_\_\_ **publicity (p. 116)**

F. making changes in something to misuse or cause damage

\_\_\_\_\_ **frantic (p. 122)**

G. likely to fall or collapse; shaky

\_\_\_\_\_ **bolted (p. 130)**

H. mention in the media or public

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Chapters 12-14 Figurative Language

Imagery  
Alliteration

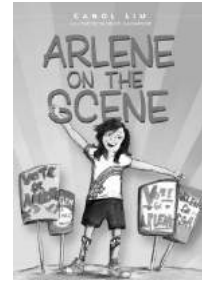
Simile  
Personification

Metaphor  
Onomatopoeia

Hyperbole

<u>Language from Text</u>	<u>Type of Figurative Language</u>	<u>What author really means</u>
...I just sort of rode the surf of this wave... (p.97)		
...enormous orange bomb soared through the air... (p.111)		
I swayed down the corridor toward my classroom, beaming bright enough to light the whole hallway. (p.118)		
It felt like a time bomb was ticking in our class. (p.126)		
My cheeks heated up and my stomach flipped. (p.132)		

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Chapters 12-14 Reading Comprehension**

1. Compare Carlos' appearance and mood on the bus ride TO the pumpkin patch and BACK FROM the pumpkin patch. Use details from the text.

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2. How does Arlene feel about getting into the wagons at the pumpkin patch? Why does she feel this way? Why does she get in? What happens during the ride out to the pumpkin patch?

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3. When Arlene almost falls out of the wagon, Lauren laughs. Why does Arlene pretend that she thinks it is funny too?

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4. If Arlene is so uncomfortable with the idea of untying Plumpy, why does she try to go along?

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5. Why is Arlene angry when Jessie asks why she wasn't at the top of the hill with the rest of the girls, on page 122? What does Arlene think Jessie meant by this question? Why do you think Jessie asked the question?

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6. Why does Jessie say, "You, of all people!" when she accuses Arlene of unfairly judging her?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapters 15-18: Character Traits After the Precious Things Presentations



<u>Character Name</u>	<u>Known Traits before presentation</u>	<u>New Trait(s) after presentation</u>
Carlos		
Jessie		
Sheila		
Joey		

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Chapters 15-18 Vocabulary**

Fill in the blanks below with one of the following words:

potential (p.136)	pronounced (p. 144)	decode (p. 145)	urgently (p. 152)
collided (p. 154)	victim (p. 157)	treaty (p. 159)	truce (p. 162)

1. More firefighters were \_\_\_\_\_ needed to help with the spreading forest fire.
2. My toy racecar slid suddenly to the left and \_\_\_\_\_ with the wall, causing it to spin around.
3. Many countries have signed a \_\_\_\_\_, promising to treat all people fairly.
4. After the pitch bounced off his elbow, he had a - \_\_\_\_\_ bump where the baseball hit him.
5. The court has money to help anyone who has been a \_\_\_\_\_ of a crime.
6. The military captains called for a \_\_\_\_\_ so that the intense fighting could end.
7. My art teacher said that I have great \_\_\_\_\_ to be an artist when I grow up because my paintings are so good.
8. We could not \_\_\_\_\_ the message that was made up of a series of symbols and backwards letters.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Chapters 15-18 Figurative Language

**Imagery**  
**Alliteration**

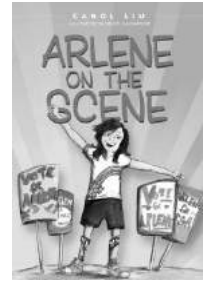
**Simile**  
**Personification**

**Metaphor**  
**Onomatopoeia**

**Hyperbole**

<u>Language from Text</u>	<u>Type of Figurative Language</u>	<u>What author really means</u>
Ketchup made a grand appearance... <i>as if to say, "Ta-Da!"</i> (p.155)		
...the whole story came out...and then <i>spread like the flu throughout our classroom.</i> (p.157)		
I just wondered what to do about this <i>big glob of guilt that was still sitting in the pit of my stomach.</i> (p.159)		
She spat out the word <i>you the same way I spit out the crunchy black seeds that are not supposed to be in my seedless watermelon.</i> (p.164)		
<i>The quiet was crushing me...</i> (p.164)		

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Chapters 15-18 Reading Comprehension**

1. At the end of Chapter 15, Arlene compares her mood at that moment to how she felt when she spoke to Ms. Landers. Describe these two contrasting moods, pages 123-126 versus page 141. Use text examples to provide detail.

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2. We find out about the boys plan for revenge after it all happened. Can you re-create what the boys did during lunch and recess?

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3. What is the girls' plan to keep Arlene safe from the boys' revenge?

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4. What does Jessie mean when she asks, “Which way do you want it, Arlene?” on page 146?

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5. Why doesn't Arlene want to do “something totally disruptive” at the end of Chapter 16? What does she use as an excuse?

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6. How does Arlene react to Jessie's criticisms and accusations? What do you think of Arlene's reaction? Can you think of a different way Arlene could have responded?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Chapters 19-23 Vocabulary

Match vocabulary in the left column with the definition in the right column.

\_\_\_\_\_ **privilege (p.168)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **upcoming (p.173)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **proportion (p. 175)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **paradise (p. 178)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **announcement (p. 192)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **congratulated (p. 194)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **sabotage (p. 194)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **accessible (p. 197)**

A. state or place of extreme happiness or beauty

B. a relationship of size or amount

C. an interference with a project or work

D. showed happiness to a person at a particular event

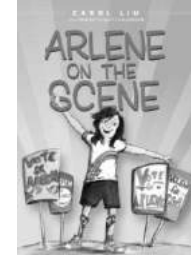
E. suddenly ran or escaped

F. easy to enter, reach, or use

G. a special right or benefit enjoyed by only certain people

H. public notice of something

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Chapters 19-23 Figurative Language

Imagery

Simile

Metaphor

Hyperbole

Alliteration

Personification

Onomatopoeia

<u>Language from Text</u>	<u>Type of Figurative Language</u>	<u>What author really means</u>
<i>...it was like all of my classmates busted their fists right through those boxes that I had shut them in. (p.175)</i>		
<i>...like those commercials where the lady sprays an air freshener around a room, then takes a big whiff...(p. 178)</i>		
<i>A big smile blasted its way onto my face. (p.180)</i>		
<i>Just then, a flash of a good idea popped into my brain. (p.189)</i>		
<i>...the whole class erupted together like a big volcano. (p. 193)</i>		





Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Chapters 19-23 Reading Comprehension**

1. Why do you think Arlene got up at 7 am on a Saturday morning? What does this tell us about the mood of the story at this point?

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2. What does Arlene's mother mean by "live it?"

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3. How do we know the boy-girl war is over? Use examples from the text.

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4. On page 179, Arlene says that she is “not like everyone else. Just like me.” What does this mean? How is this a change for Arlene’s character?

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5. Re-read the conversation between Arlene and Jessie on 188-190. What do we learn about the reasons behind Jessie’s attitude toward Arlene throughout the book?

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6. Why do you think Arlene goes back to see Mr. Musgrove at the end of the school year?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# **BIG Picture of YOU!**

(Enrichment Activity, Chpts 12-14)

## **Color Key**

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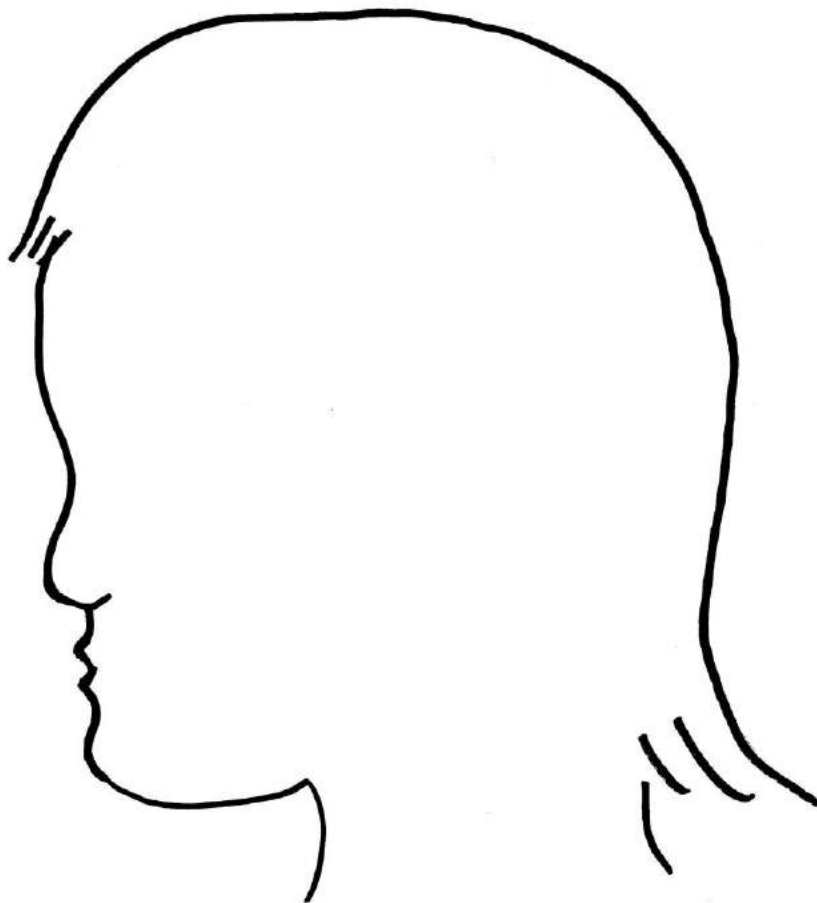
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# **BIG Picture of YOU!**

(Enrichment Activity, Chpts 12-14)

## **Color Key**

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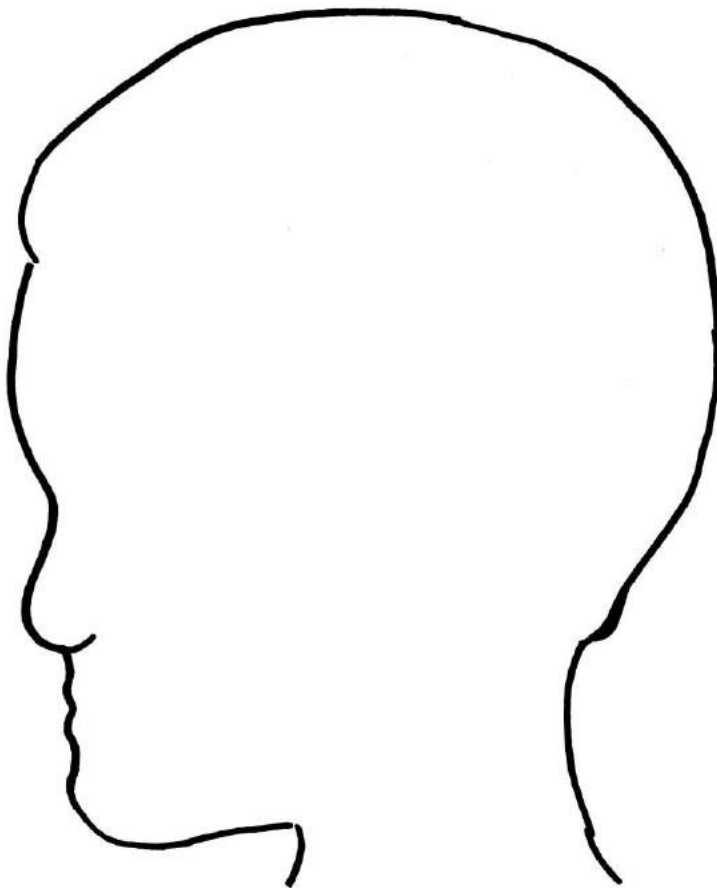
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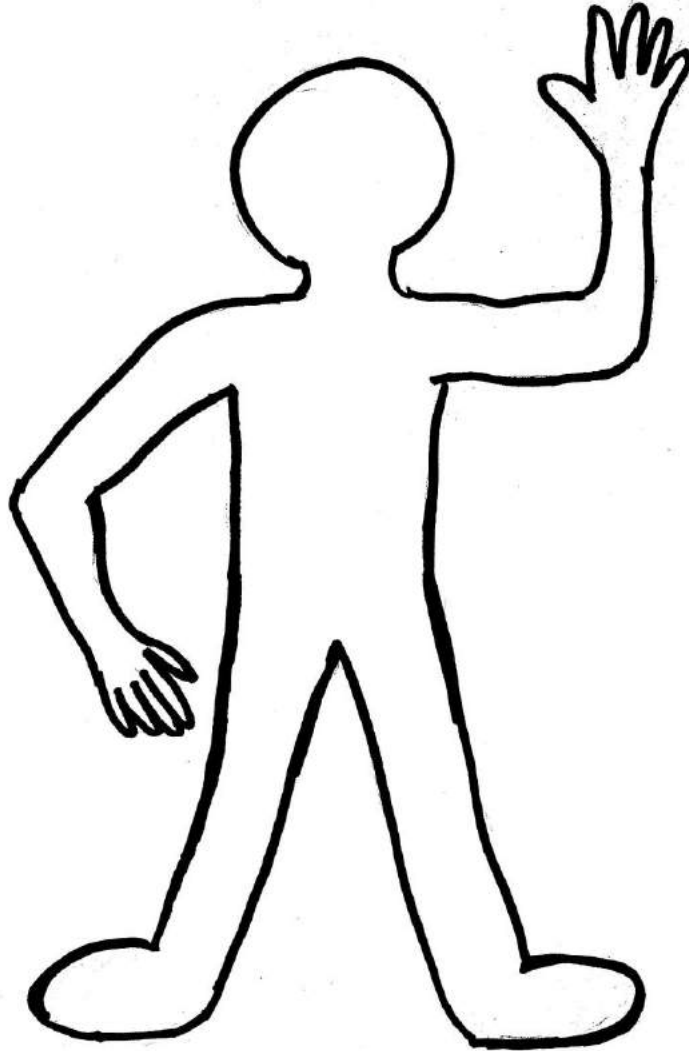


Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **THE HIDDEN SIDE OF ME**

(Enrichment Activity, Chpts 19-23)



### **My best-known character trait**

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Write 1-3 character traits or things that people don't know about you  
on the back of this page.