

Curriculum Guide

Kate Warne, Pinkerton Detective by Marissa Moss, illustrated by April Chu

isbn 9781939547330, non fiction, picture book biography

Lexile level: 740L, Guided Reading Level O, Grade Level Equivalent 3, Interest Level: K-5

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.3,4,4a,5,5a,5b,5c,6

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3.1,2,3,4,7,9,10

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.1,3,4,7,10

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.1,1a,1c,1d,2,3,4,6

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.2,2a,2b,2c,2d,4,7,8,10

Plot and character development:

The Adams Express case presented Kate with a complicated problem. Make a list of what the crime was, how it could have happened, and who were possible suspects. Make a list of all the clues. Why did the company think it was an inside job? What kind of protections did they use to secure valuables?

How did Kate decide to get the information she needed? What did she do to make Belle want to be her friend? How would you have handled this case?

Kate considered a lot of her job to be like acting, taking on a certain personality and using that character to get close to the suspect. What made Kate think she would be a good detective? What traits did she need to have to be successful at her job?

Why do you think Pinkerton decided to hire Kate? Was he taking a chance by giving her a job? What did Kate do or say that made him think she would be a good detective? Do you think women can be good detectives? Why or why not? What traits do you think a detective needs? Explain why you would be a good detective, how you would solve crimes.

Who had the most at stake when Kate first walked into the Pinkerton Agency? Was she taking a big risk by asking for the job? Was he taking a big risk by giving it to her? Who do you think was braver, Pinkerton or Kate? Why?

When Pinkerton started his agency, detectives were considered sleazy characters, almost as bad as criminals themselves, since they spied on people and sometimes skirted the law to get information. Was it unfair to trick Maroney the way John White did? Was it wrong for Kate to pretend to be Belle's friend to get information from her? What lines do you think detectives shouldn't cross to solve a crime? Did Kate cross those lines?

In some ways, this is the story of how Kate solved a mystery. What was the mystery and what clues did she use to solve it? Write your own mystery story, starting with a crime, a list of suspects, clues, and then put together a solution. Sometimes a mystery is easier to write backwards. You, the writer, know how the crime was committed and who did it. Now tell the story in a way that the reader has suspicions, but doesn't get all the information needed to solve the crime until the end of the story. Write a chart for how you'll describe the mystery and which clues you'll give where. Then fill in the rest with the story that connects it all, usually through the person of the detective.

Informational text:

This book conveys a lot of complicated information in a simple picture book format. Does the art help clarify the story? How? What do you learn about transporting valuables in the 1800s? About how the

crime could have been committed? About being a detective? About trying to get a job as a woman at that time? What do the pictures add to the words in terms of explaining clearly what's happening? What details helped you solve the crime?

Write a paragraph about the information you learned about this time period in the mid 1800s. How have things changed now? If you had to move a lot of money, how would you do it the safest way possible?

Thieves used to rob trains and stage coaches. They used to steal money from armored cars. Nowadays, thieves often use more modern methods. How do you think most money is stolen now? If you wanted to find out that information, how would you look for it?

What information does the author put into the author's note at the end? Why do you think that information wasn't included in the story itself? What can an author use a note like this for?

Write your own author's note for this book. Include things that you think the reader might want to know or should know that weren't included in the main story. Do you want to know more about Kate? About Pinkerton? About detective agencies in the 1800s?