

# UPSIDE \* DOWN MAGIC

**FUN  
ACTIVITIES  
INSIDE!**



# **Educator's Guide**

**For**

## ***Upside-Down Magic***

**By Sarah Mlynowski, Lauren Myracle and Emily Jenkins**

**Created by Tara Bardeen  
[www.TaraBardeen.com](http://www.TaraBardeen.com)**

## **About *Upside-Down Magic***

From *New York Times* bestselling authors Sarah Mlynowski, Lauren Myracle, and Emily Jenkins comes the hilarious and heartfelt story of a group of magical misfits.

Nory Horace is nine years old. She's resourceful, she's brave, she likes peanut butter cookies. Also, she's able to transform into many different animals. Unfortunately, Nory's shape-shifting talent is a bit wonky. And when she flunks out of her own father's magic academy, Nory's forced to enter public school, where she meets a group of kids whose magic is, well, different.

Source: *Goodreads.com*

### **The Five Types of Magic:**

Flare – Can make heat and fire

Flicker – Can make things invisible

Fluxer – Can change into different animals

Flyer – Can fly

Fuzzy – Can easily tame animals

## **About the Authors**

SARAH MLYNOWSKI is the author of many books for tweens, teens and adults, including the *New York Times* bestselling *Whatever After* series, the *Magic in Manhattan* series and *Gimme a Call*. She would like to be a flicker so she could make the mess in her room invisible. Visit her online at [www.sarahm.com](http://www.sarahm.com).

Source: *Scholastic.com*

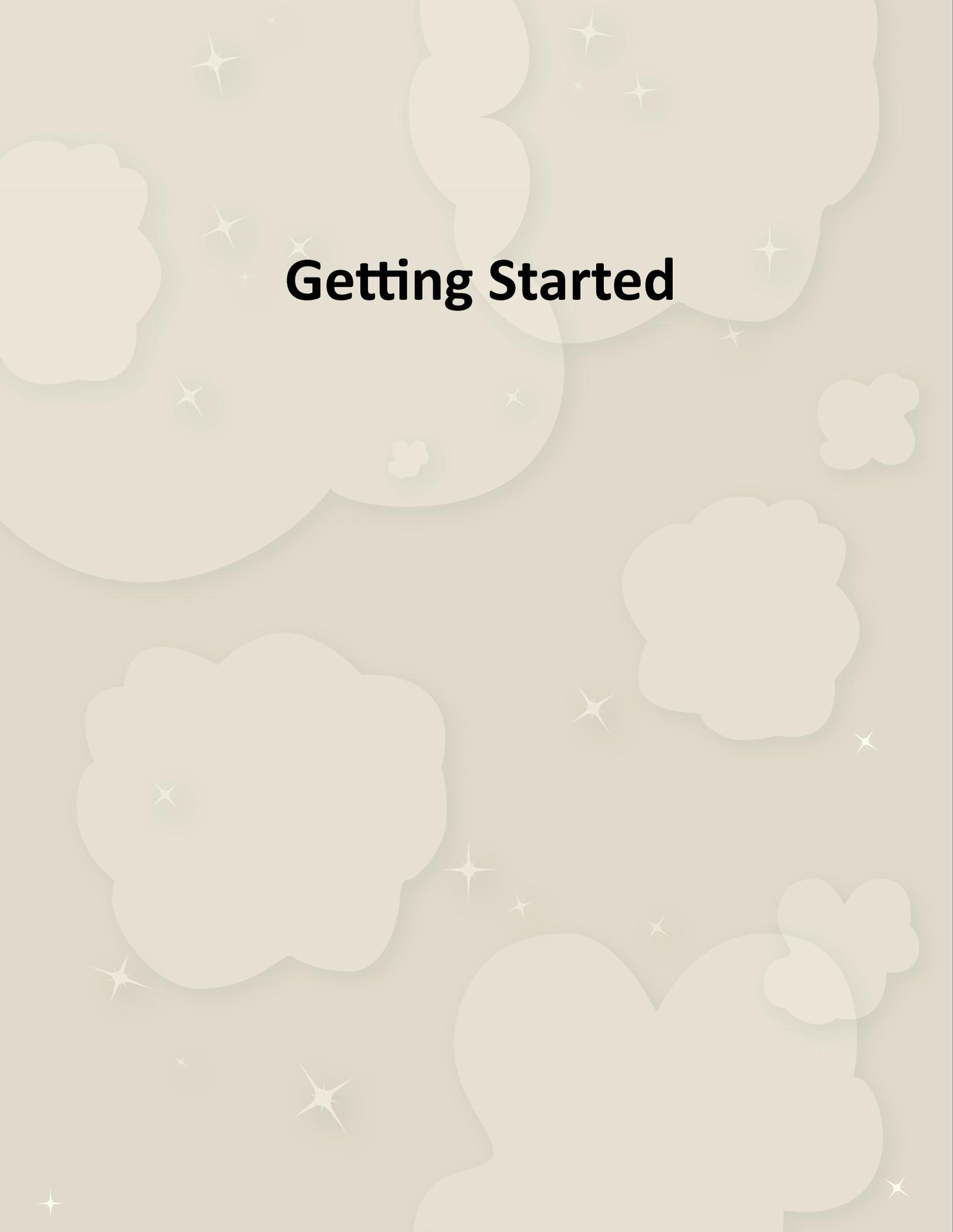
LAUREN MYRACLE is the *New York Times* bestselling author of many books for young readers, including *The Winnie Years* (which begins with *Ten*), the *Flower Power* series (which begins with *Love Ya Bunches*) and the *Life of Ty* series. She would like to be a fuzzy so she could talk to unicorns and feed them berries. You can find Lauren online at [www.laurenmyracle.com](http://www.laurenmyracle.com).

Source: *Scholastic.com*

EMILY JENKINS is the author of many chapter books, including the *Toys Trilogy* (which begins with *Toys Go Out*) and the *Invisible Inkling* series. Her picture books include *Lemonade in Winter*, *Toys Meet Snow* and *The Fun Book of Scary Stuff*. She would like to be a flare and work as a pastry chef. Visit Emily at [www.emilyjenkins.com](http://www.emilyjenkins.com).

Source: *Scholastic.com*

# Getting Started



## Seven Reading Skills Every Kid Needs: Grades 3 - 5

You can help students practice the skills they've learned during the school year and help them prepare for the next school year by keeping these essential reading skill targets in mind.

Colorado public schools align their curriculum with the Common Core State Standards. The following seven reading skill targets are based on the Common Core College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading for grades K-12.

**ONE:** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text and reference examples and details from the text to support one's answer.

**TWO:** Summarize a text and identify themes in a story.

**THREE:** Describe characters, settings and events in a story using specific details from the text.

**FOUR:** Determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases in a text.

**FIVE:** Describe how a story is composed of chapters and how each successive part builds on earlier sections.

**SIX:** Describe how a narrator's or a speaker's point of view changes the way events are described in a text.

**SEVEN:** Compare and contrast stories.

Note: These targets are based on the following Common Core English Language Arts College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading, as applied to grades 3-5: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.3, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.4, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.5, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9.

## Suggested Timeline for a Six-Week Program

<i>Week</i>	<i>Chapters</i>	<i>Pages of Reading</i>
1	1, 2, 3, 4	34
2	5, 6, 7	32
3	8, 9, 10	27
4	11, 12	33
5	13, 14, 15	36
6	16, 17, 18	29

## Enrolling Students in Beanstack

New this year! Beanstack allows students and their families to track their progress, find activities to complete at home and receive weekly customized book suggestions via email. Enroll your whole class by following these steps:

**What You'll Need:** Class list, parent email addresses and Internet access

### What to Do:

1. Go to [yobod.beanstack.org](http://yobod.beanstack.org).
2. Click on REGISTER A CLASS OR GROUP.
3. When asked, "Do you want to log reading and activities for this group all at the same time?", select INDIVIDUALLY.
4. Fill out the information on the page below with *your* information. Be sure to use an email that is NOT already connected to Beanstack.
5. Click on REGISTER GROUP.
6. In the top left hand corner, you will see "Reader 1", "Switch Readers" and "Personalize." Select PERSONALIZE.
7. Under Personalize, select BASIC INFORMATION.
8. Fill in the information for Reader 1 and click on SAVE.
9. At the bottom of the Personalize page, you will see "Share This Reader." Enter the parent email address for this reader here.
10. Next, click on SWITCH READERS (top left corner of the page) and select a new reader profile to edit.
11. Follow steps 6-10 for each additional reader.

## Logging Reading Minutes and Completed Activities in Beanstack

Your group's Beanstack account allows you to quickly and easily log reading minutes and completed activities for your class. If you have shared a reader's profile with his or her parents, they will also be able to see the minutes and activities you have logged. Once you have successfully registered your group and created reader profiles for each student, follow these steps to log reading minutes and activities:

1. On the top right of the screen, click on LOG READING AND ACTIVITIES.
2. Select a specific reader's profile or choose "All Readers" to add the same entry to every student's account.
3. Select "Book" to log a specific book title. Select "Activity" to log completion of one of the activities from the YOBOD Educator Guide or YOBOD Family Activity Booklet. Select "Minutes" to log reading minutes.
4. Follow the prompts to complete your entry.

## Setting the Stage for a Reading Adventure

Creating a culture of literacy in your classroom goes beyond just reading, it's about inviting the whole group to dive into a journey filled with fun characters, interesting discussions and activities that bring the book to life. Here are some suggestions for incorporating your Youth One Book, One Denver reading adventure into your classroom space and keeping track of the story as you read:

1. **YOBOD Bulletin Board Collage** – Make a dedicated space for student drawings and summaries created for each chapter of book. Add photos of YOBOD events too!
2. **Story String Timeline** – Run a string or a long piece of blue painter's tape along a wall in the classroom to create a timeline. Divide the timeline into 18 segments, one for each chapter in *Upside-Down Magic*. As you read, invite students to add drawings showing the action in each chapter and short summaries to the timeline.
3. **Our YOBOD Summer Scrapbook** – For each chapter in the book and for each YOBOD event students attend, create a scrapbook page (or multiple pages) that combine words and images to record what happened. Scrapbook pages could be made individually by each student in order to create a personal scrapbook to take home at the end of the summer, or the class can work together to create a single book, with students working in small groups to create each entry.
4. **Adventure Journals** – Provide students with notebooks, or invite them to create their own simple paper journals using notebook paper, construction paper and staples. Have students draw pictures and write a few sentences about the important events of each chapter as they read. Students can also use their journals when responding to writing prompts in this guide or to write about YOBOD events they attend.
5. **YOBOD Gallery** – Create a gallery space with 18 empty frames (paper frames cut out of construction paper or ones made from decorative bulletin board borders work well). For each chapter in the book, assign a small group of students to be the “gallerists” in charge of creating an image to go in the frame that captures the important parts of the chapter. The gallerists will also select a title for their artwork that connects to the text and write a short “plaque” describing the events and characters depicted in the artwork.

## Five Ways to Mix Things Up at Reading Time

Giving students regular opportunities for quiet reading is essential for helping them develop fluency as a reader, but if regular reading time is starting to feel too repetitive, give one of these alternatives a try:

1. **Listen Along** – Gather the class to listen to the story as you read it aloud or listen to it on audio CD.
2. **I Read, You Read** – Divide students into small groups to take turns reading to each other. Invite students to switch readers after each page of text.
3. **Story Sketchers** – Divide students into pairs and give each pair two sheets of paper and drawing supplies. While one student reads, the other draws what’s happening in the story, paying close attention to any details mentioned in the text. Halfway through the reading period, have students swap roles.
4. **Reading Radio** – Using a smartphone or other recording device, invite students to take turns reading a few lines of the text they have practiced ahead of time as you record it. Encourage students to read with enthusiasm and experiment with pacing and even voices. When time allows, playback the recording to hear everyone’s voice!
5. **Seating Switcheroo** – Reading can happen anywhere! Could you read outside? Or under the desks? Or swap classrooms with another group? Invite students to brainstorm fun new places to read and then hold a vote to select the seating switcheroo venue.

## Five Ways to Use the Discussion Questions

Discussing a text with students allows them to check their understanding of what they read, make connections between the text and themselves and practice important literacy skills. The discussion questions provided in this guide offer a selection of chapter-by-chapter questions to get you started, but you should feel free to add your own questions and invite students to offer their questions to the group too. If desired, questions can be given to students ahead of time so they can look for answers in the text as they read.

For comprehension questions, answers are provided with a corresponding page number listed in parentheses. Model referencing passages in the text to support one’s answer or opinion. Answers are not provided for discussion questions that are broader in scope or invite students to share personal experiences and opinions.

**Educator Tip:** Encourage students to have their books with them during the discussion so they can refer to specific passages in support of their answers.

1. **Educator-Led Class Discussion** – The group works as a whole and the educator poses questions for students to answer.
2. **Small Groups** – Students work in small groups to discuss the questions while the educator circulates from group to group listening in on the discussion and asking follow-up questions.
3. **Task Groups** – Each group of students is given a question (or questions) to answer and then reports back to the entire class with their answer(s).
4. **Written Response** – The discussion questions can also be used as writing prompts and students can answer all or just selected questions as part of a journal assignment.
5. **Discussion Cards** – Invite students to chat about the book as they eat lunch, ride the bus or wait for programming to begin by writing discussion questions on index cards which can be passed around the group for pairs of students to discuss.

## How to Use the Writing Prompts

Just like reading, writing is a skill that improves with practice. Three writing prompts are given for each chapter in order to allow students some choice regarding what they write. Encourage students to choose the prompt that interests them most. Educators may also ask students to write a summary of the chapter as part of their writing time.

If constrained by time, space or materials, many of the writing prompts could also be competed as an oral storytelling activity in pairs.

Celebrate your students' writing by allowing time for them to share what they wrote with a classmate, a small group, or the whole class.

## How to Use the Activities

Fun activities in art, movement, language and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) bring books to life and enhance learning. For each chapter of *Upside-Down Magic*, you'll find a suggested activity that connects to themes in the chapter or the book as a whole. Complete these activities with the suggested chapter or as fits best with your group's schedule and interests. Complete activity instructions and materials lists can be found in the Activity Instructions section. Don't forget to log your group's success in Beanstack!

Educators are also encouraged to incorporate additional activities throughout the summer that connect with the themes found in *Upside-Down Magic*.

## **Possible Programming Themes for *Upside-Down Magic***

Invite students to explore themes from *Upside-Down Magic* throughout the summer. Here are some possible programming themes from the book.

- Animal traits (Nory creates blended animals like a beaver-kitten)
- Strategies for preparing for a test (Nory uses self-talk, visualization and practicing ahead of her magic test)
- Siblings and family dynamics (Nory's siblings cover for her; Nory's dad is disappointed in her; Nory's aunt Margo takes her in)
- Word blending and inventing new words (a beaver-kitten becomes a "bitten")
- Cooking (Flares use magic to roast marshmallows and cook eggs; Nory enjoys pepperoni pizza, cinnamon rolls and cinnamon toast; Elliott uses magic to make frozen lemonade slushies)
- Viewing the world from a different perspective (Nory sees the world through the minds of the animals she becomes; Ms. Starr has the students do headstands to change their perspective)
- Making new friends (Nory has to fit in at a new school)
- Science of sound waves (Sebastian can see sound waves)
- Science of fire and ice (Elliott can freeze things; Flares can produce heat/flame)
- Science of gravity and flight (Andres floats; Aunt Margo and Flyers can fly)
- Seeing opportunity in difference (students in the Upside-Down Magic class learn to embrace their different magic)
- Dealing with bullies (Nory roleplays approaches to handling mean kids; the Upside-Down Magic class students look out for each other and confront bullies)
- The value of tolerance and forgiveness (Ms. Starr asks the Upside-Down Magic class to forgive Nory after she turns into a skunkephant and sprays the cafeteria)
- Strategies for dealing with a bad day and difficult emotions (Nory experiments with controlling versus understanding her emotions; various characters cheer up Nory)

- Interpretive dance (Ms. Starr has the class dance to an ocean theme as a way to explore their emotions)
- Team building activities/trust activities (Ms. Starr emphasizes the importance of supporting each other and working together as a team)
- Respecting an individual's uniqueness and realizing there is no "normal" (Ms. Starr challenges Elliott and Nory to embrace their unique skills instead of trying to become "normal")
- Self-acceptance (Nory struggles to feel good about her unique magic)
- Using one's talents to help others (the students in the Upside-Down Magic class work together to save a classmate in trouble)
- Exploring one's fears (the students in the Upside-Down Magic class take turns sharing their fears)
- Yoga, meditation and visualization (Ms. Starr has the students in the Upside-Down Magic class use yoga to center themselves)
- The power of complimenting others (Nory compliments Elliott on his magic as a way to cheer him up)
- No place for hate, racism, bigotry or treating others differently (Principal Gonzalez confronts mean students and reviews the school's policy)
- The five types of magical talents:
  - Flare – can manipulate fire and heat
  - Fuzzy – can tame animals
  - Flicker – can make things invisible
  - Flyer – can fly
  - Fluxer – can change physical form
- Nory's unique creatures:
  - Bitten – beaver + kitten
  - Dritten – dragon + kitten
  - Snitten – snake + kitten
  - Koat – kitten + goat
  - Skunkephant – skunk + elephant
  - Enormous-Bluebird-Nory-with-Nory's-Actual-Face – bluebird + Nory face



**Chapter-by-Chapter  
Lesson Plans**

## Chapter 1

**Summary:** Nory is a 4<sup>th</sup> grader with special magical talents that often go “wonky.” She hopes to get into Sage Academy, a prestigious magic school where her father is the headmaster and her two siblings, Hawthorn and Dalia, already attend. Tomorrow is the day of the Big Test to see if Nory will be admitted to the school. While practicing transforming herself into a black kitten, her magic goes wonky and her kitten form takes on attributes of a beaver as well. Before she can regain control, Beaver-Kitten-Nory destroys her father’s office by gnawing on furniture and chewing up books. It is her brother Hawthorn who discovers her and the mess she has made.

### Discuss!

- 1. The *setting* in a story is when and where it takes place. What do you know about the setting of this story?**  
Place: Nory’s home in the garage and in her father’s office; time: the middle of summer (1, 5).
- 2. Why does Nory want to attend Sage Academy?**  
It’s a very important and fancy magic school where her father is the headmaster and her two siblings already attend (2).
- 3. How does Nory feel about taking the Big Test? How do you know?**  
Nory is anxious about taking the test. She knows that her magic is strong, but she worries about keeping it under control. The text says, “Thinking about the Big Test made Nory queasy” (3).
- 4. What about the text tells us that we’re reading Nory’s thoughts?**  
The authors use italicized text to show that we’re reading Nory’s thoughts.
- 5. What do you think the word “zamboozle” found on page 4 might mean? What are your strategies for figuring out the meaning of this word?**  
Possible answers could include: “oh no,” “yikes” or “ack.” When figuring out the meaning of the word, ask students to consider how Nory might be feeling when her magic goes wonky.
- 6. What happened when Beaver-Kitten-Nory entered her father’s office?**  
She chewed up furniture including an antique bookshelf, her father’s desk, his armchair and four of his books (5-6).
- 7. At the end of the chapter, it says “She, Beaver-Kitten-Nory felt better than she had in weeks!” Why do you think she might feel so good?**  
As students share their ideas, remind them that one of the neat parts of reading a book is bringing our own experiences and perspectives to a story. That means everyone might have different opinions on different parts of the text and that’s okay!
- 8. What do you think Hawthorn might do after finding the mess that Nory made in their father’s office? What do you think might happen when Nory’s father sees his office?**

9. In the story, Nory is preparing for an important test by practicing her skills.  
How do you get ready for a big test?
10. Has there ever been a time in your life when things didn't quite go to plan?  
How did you feel?

### **Write!**

1. Write about a time when things didn't go as you had planned.
2. Make a short comic strip that includes the word "zamboozle."
3. Describe the room as if you were an animal (you choose which kind!).

### **Do!**

#### **Animal Mashup**

Students create unique mixed-up creatures using images of animals, scissors and glue.  
Find complete instructions in the activities section.

### **Share!**

Share your students' projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 2

**Summary:** Nory's 16-year-old brother, Hawthorn, discovers the mess Beaver-Kitten-Nory has made in their father's office and bathroom. The two work together to clean up the beaver dam in the bathroom and the piles of wood chips and shredded books strewn about the office. Hawthorn calls a carpenter to fix the desk and orders new copies of the books that were destroyed. It's clear that Hawthorn is frustrated by Nory's lack of control over her magical powers and doesn't find her "wonky" magic at all charming. He suggests they blame the mess on one of their sister Dalia's rabbits. Nory has misgivings about this plan, but doesn't want to make her father even more angry the day before the Big Test. When Nory's father gets home, he is indeed upset about the damage and proceeds to use his powers as a Flicker to make his whole office disappear before telling his children that he'd like to be left alone for the evening and then disappearing himself. On the morning of the Big Test, Hawthorn and Dalia help Nory get ready and continually give her advice as she eats, dresses and walks to Sage Academy. As Hawthorn has a summer job and Dalia has an appointment with her math tutor, Nory must wait by herself for her turn to enter the Hall of Magic and Performance. While in line, she meets a girl named Lacey whose father is intensely going over the proper way to roast a marshmallow. The mood in the waiting area is tense. Just before it's Nory's turn, Lacey emerges from the building sobbing and wailing.

### Discuss!

**1. Who are the characters we learn about in this chapter? What do you know about each of them?**

Remind students that *characters* are people, beings or creatures in a story. Hawthorn: Nory's brother, age 16, Flare, and "like[s] sports and cooking and bossing people around" (7); Dalia: Nory's sister, age 13, Fuzzy, and "ha[s] a lot of pets including two bats, three toads, a ferret, a toucan, a pair of mice, and twelve rabbits" (10); Nory's father, a powerful Flicker who can make a whole room disappear and who "didn't talk about a lot of things" (14); Lacey: "a light-skinned girl with a sharp, short haircut" who is in front of Nory in the line to take the Big Test (18).

**2. What does Nory look like when she's not a kitten? How do you know?**

On page 8, it says: "big hair, small body, brown skin, purple shirt."

**3. Who cleans up the mess Nory made?**

Nory and Hawthorn clean up the mess in her father's office and bathroom together. Hawthorn calls a carpenter to fix the desk and orders copies of the books Beaver-Kitten-Nory destroyed (8-9).

**4. How does Hawthorn feel about Nory's unusual magic? What clues can you find in the text?**

Hawthorn doesn't approve of Nory's upside-down magic. He tells her, "And when you turn into an animal, turn into a normal animal...Stop mixing your parts up. You're getting really wonky and nobody likes it" (9).

**5. After Beaver-Kitten-Nory destroys her father's office, Hawthorn says, "We'll have to blame Dalia's rabbits, I guess." (10). What do you think of this solution? Do you think there might be another way to handle the problem?**

**6. Nory makes up a new word for a Beaver-Kitten by combining the two words. She calls it a "bitten" (10). Words that are created by combining the sounds and meanings of two words are called *portmanteaus*. For example, the word "brunch" comes from combining "breakfast" and "lunch" to describe a meal that's eaten between breakfast time and lunchtime. Can you think of other examples of a portmanteau?**

Some familiar portmanteaus include: cheese + hamburger = cheeseburger; motor + hotel = motel; spoon + fork = spork. Discover even more by searching for a portmanteau word list online.

**7. What are the 5 types of magic? Which one would you most want to have?**

Flare – can make heat and fire; Flicker – can make things invisible; Fluxer – can change into different animals; Flyer – can fly; Fuzzy – can easily tame animals (12).

**8. What happens when Nory's father comes home and sees the damage in his office?**

When Hawthorn tells their father about the damage to his office, he marches straight upstairs to inspect it. He gives Dalia a warning that she needs to keep better control over her rabbits and thanks Hawthorn for contacting the carpenter and reordering the books. He doesn't say anything to Nory. Clenching his fists, he causes the whole room to become invisible and then asks to be left alone for the rest of the evening before disappearing himself. (14-15).

**9. On the day of the Big Test, Nory's siblings give her lots of advice. Similarly, Lacey's dad gives her advice and warns her not to mess up. Does it seem like all this advice is helping? Why or why not?**

Through the text, we get the impression that Nory feels overwhelmed by the flood of advice and reminders she receives on the morning of the test. Hawthorn and Dalia emphasize being normal and keeping control of her magic (17). When Nory observes Lacey's dad talking to Lacey while waiting in line, she doesn't think that he is being particularly helpful. We read that Lacey's lip trembles and her hands shake as she listens to her dad's coaching (19).

**10. Making a *prediction* means taking a guess at what you think will happen sometime in the future. What is your prediction about what will happen when Nory has her turn in the Hall of Magic and Performance?**

## **Write!**

1. If you could have any one of the five magic types (Flyer, Flicker, Fluxer, Fuzzy or Flare), which would you choose? Why?
2. Make up 5 new portmanteau words (those are words created by combining the sound and meaning of two words) and use each one in a sentence.
3. Write a letter to Nory giving her advice on how to stay calm and do well on the Big Test.

## **Do!**

### **Animal Advocate**

Students research an endangered species and report back to the group about ways to protect this species. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

## **Share!**

Share your students' projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 3

**Summary:** Nory enters the grand Hall of Magic and Performance and walks onto the stage to face a panel of four teachers and her father, the headmaster of the school. Mr. Puthoor asks her to state her full name, Elinor Boxwood Horace, and then provides an overview of the testing process before asking her to attempt four distinct tasks to test her abilities. To determine whether she is a Flicker, she is asked to make a toad disappear; she cannot. To see if she has Flare magic, she is asked to light a match without striking it; she shakes her head and says she can't. To see if she is a Flyer, Mr. Puthoor asks her to lift herself exactly two feet off the floor; she remains firmly on the floor. In the fourth test, she is asked to coax a unicorn to eat mushrooms, a food they do not like. Despite Nory's pleading, the unicorn bolts off the stage and disappears into the lobby. It's clear that Nory is not a Fuzzy like her sister Dalia. Four tests failed. The Fluxer test is still ahead and Nory is optimistic that she can pass it.

### Discuss!

- 1. What is the setting in this chapter? What details about the setting can you find in the text?**

The setting for this chapter is the Hall of Magic and Performance. From the text: "The ceilings were painted with dragons and unicorns. The seats were covered in dark purple velvet. The curtains on the side of the stage were gold. A large chandelier hung from the ceiling, lit by candles" (21).

- 2. What is Nory's full name?**

Elinor Boxwood Horace (22).

- 3. What's the test to see if Nory is a Flicker?**

She is asked to make a toad disappear (23).

- 4. What's the Flare test?**

Nory is asked to light a match without striking it (24).

- 5. What's the Flyer test?**

Nory is asked to hover precisely two feet above the ground (24).

- 6. How is Nory tested to see if she is a Fuzzy?**

She is supposed to get a unicorn named Pokey to eat mushrooms even though unicorns do not like mushrooms and are normally skittish around people (25).

- 7. What does the word "skittish" mean (25)? If you don't know what a word in a text means, what strategies do you use to figure it out?**

Skittish means easily scared. Possible strategies could include: reading around a word to see if the text can help one understand a word; looking for familiar parts of a word that might give clues to its meaning like prefixes and suffixes; and using reference materials like a dictionary or the Internet.

- 8. After Nory fails four of the magic tests, the text says, "Nory wanted to hide." Can you relate to how she is feeling? What words would you use to describe this feeling?**

Responses could include: “embarrassed”, “ashamed”, “like a failure”, etc.

**9. Why do you think the authors decided to end the chapter before Nory takes the Fluxer test?**

Ask students to think about how they’re feeling at the end of the chapter. Are they curious to know what happens next? Are they anxious to read more? Perhaps the authors decided to end the chapter before the Fluxer test in order to create suspense, or perhaps they wanted to have a whole chapter to write about what we think will be Nory’s best magical talent. Invite students to notice how text is broken up into chapters as they continue reading the rest of the story.

**10. What do you think about tests? Do they seem like a good way for a teacher to know what skills you have? Why or why not?**

**Write!**

1. Continue the story by writing about what Pokey the unicorn does after she leaps off the stage, thunders down the aisle and disappears up the stairs.
2. Imagine you are taking one of the magic tests that Nory faces. In your story, do you pass the test or does something wonky happen?
3. Write up the notes you think the teachers watching Nory’s magic tests might have written on their clipboards.

**Do!**

**Suggest-A-Book Cootie Catcher**

Students think about their favorite books and then create a cootie catcher they can use to recommend books to friends. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

**Share!**

Share your students’ projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 4

**Summary:** Nory's Fluxer test begins well as she transforms herself into a perfect black kitten. When her father, the headmaster of the school, comes to check the details of Nory's kitten, things start to unravel when Kitten-Nory smells fish on his hands. An internal battle of wills rages inside Nory as Girl-Nory tries to maintain control over Kitten-Nory. Overcome by her excitement about the prospect of fish, Kitten-Nory opens her mouth to lick her father's hand only to find that her jaw has transformed into a snake's jaw. Snake-Kitten-Nory bites her father's hand. Eventually the snake part of Nory's kitten body disappears and she is once again just a black kitten. This state is fleeting as she feels enormous dragon wings sprout out of her shoulders and sharp claws emerge from her kitten paws. Flying around the auditorium, Dritten-Nory is pleased with the power of her magic and decides that perhaps the best way forward is to show how she could satisfy not just one, but *three* of the magical tests. Dritten-Nory flaps her wings and hovers exactly two feet from the floor (Flyer test) and then lights a whole box of matches on fire (Flare test). Initially exuberant, Girl-Nory suddenly realizes that perhaps she's not acing the test, but in fact really failing the Big Test. She transforms back into a girl and politely thanks the teachers for testing her. Mr. Puthoor informs Nory that the school can't admit students with such wonky, damaged magic. Her admission to Sage Academy is denied.

### Discuss!

- 1. What is the test to see if someone is a Fluxer?**  
Students are asked to turn in to a black kitten (28).
- 2. When Nory transforms into a black kitten, who climbs onstage to check the details?**  
Nory's father, Dr. Horace, is the one to examine Nory's work (29).
- 3. What causes Nory to lose control of her magic during the test?**  
The test is going well until Kitten-Nory smells fish on her father's hands (29).
- 4. What kind of animal is Nory when she bites her father's hand?**  
Nory is a "snitten," which is a combination of a kitten and a snake (30).
- 5. At the end of the test, Nory becomes a Dragon-Kitten, which she calls a "dritten." What does Girl-Nory think about this transformation? What does Dritten-Nory think? What do you think the teachers think of this? How do you know?**  
Girl-Nory is pleading with Dritten-Nory to change back into a regular kitten; she is telling herself that this is "not awesome" (32). Dritten-Nory, on the other hand, thinks that this creature is awesome and is having lots of fun flying around (32). The teachers look stern and are scribbling in their notebooks (33). It's a good guess that they don't approve of what they're seeing. Perhaps they're writing down all the ways that Nory's magic is unusual.

6. **What is Nory’s idea for still getting into Sage Academy even after her magic goes wonky? What do you think of her idea? What would you have tried?**  
Nory thinks that if she can show the teachers that she can pass three of the magic tests (Flyer, Flare and Fluxer) they will be so impressed by her talent they will offer her admission to the school (32-33).
7. **What does it mean when the text says, “Nory went cold” (34)? Does she actually feel cold or does this mean something else?**  
Possible responses: “Nory was very worried” or “Nory was scared” or “Nory was terrified.”
8. **Why is Nory denied admission to Sage Academy?**  
Mr. Puthoor says, “Miss Horace, I’m sorry. We can’t have such wonky magic here at Sage Academy. No matter how big your power, and no matter who your family is... Your magic is damaged somehow” (34).
9. **The chapter ends before we have the chance to find out how Nory is feeling after hearing that she didn’t get into Sage Academy. How do you think she might feel? Is there an event from your own life that helps you imagine Nory’s feelings?**
10. **How does what happened during Nory’s Fluxer test compare with the prediction you made earlier?**

## Write!

1. Choose one of the forms Nory takes in this chapter (a normal black kitten, a snake-kitten or a dragon-kitten) and create a mini-poster telling why this creature would make a great pet and what people should know about owning this type of pet.
2. Do over! Imagine that you are Nory and write a letter to Mr. Puthoor explaining why you deserve a second chance to pass the Big Test.
3. Write about your favorite part of this chapter. Be sure to include your reasons!

## Do!

### Double Talk Comic Strip

Students create a comic strip featuring panes that are divided into two halves: one to show a character’s external words and actions, and one to show the character’s internal dialogue and feelings. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

## Share!

Share your students’ projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 5

**Summary:** Dinner after the Big Test is awkward. Everyone in the family barely touches their food and no one says a word. After dinner, Nory's father turns himself invisible and retreats to his office for the rest of the night, while Hawthorn and Dalia attempt to comfort Nory. Days pass and no one discusses the test or what will happen to Nory in the coming school year as a result of failing the Big Test. Afraid to ask her father for details, Nory distracts herself with summertime activities. On a cool night in August, Nory's Aunt Margo arrives to take Nory away to live with her in the town of Dunwiddle where there's a special program for students who "struggle with magic." The trouble is, no one has told Nory about this plan. In fact, Hawthorn even packs her bag without her knowing. Surprised and upset, Nory feels like her family is getting rid of her because they are so ashamed of her wonky magic. In a fog, Nory says goodbye to her siblings and leaves with Aunt Margo, who has the rare talent of being a Flyer capable of taking passengers. Holding on to Aunt Margo's shoulders, the pair fly through the night to Aunt Margo's small wooden house where Nory will live during the school year as she attends Dunwiddle Magic School. Nory is disheartened to find out that she will be enrolled in a special program for kids with unusual talents called the Upside-Down Magic class.

### Discuss!

- 1. What do Nory's brother and sister do to make her feel better after dinner?**  
Hawthorn makes toasted marshmallows for Nory and Dalia coaxes a rabbit to cuddle her (36).
- 2. How would you describe Nory's relationship with her father? Are they close? What evidence can you find in the text?**  
Nory doesn't have a very close relationship with her father. In fact, it seems like he avoids talking to her and spending time with her. After she fails the Big Test, no one talks at all at dinner and her father turns invisible and heads to his office after he finishes eating (45).
- 3. What activities does Nory do during the summer?**  
Nory plays with friends, reads books, watches movies and kicks a soccer ball around the yard (36).
- 4. Who comes to pick up Nory on a cool evening in August? Why is she picking up Nory?**  
Aunt Margo comes to pick up Nory. It turns out that Nory's father has arranged for Nory to live with Aunt Margo and attend a special class for kids with "upside-down magic" at the local public school in the town where Margo lives (43-44).
- 5. What do you know about Aunt Margo?**  
Margo is a "sturdy-looking white woman" wearing jeans and sneakers who has short unruly hair (37). She hasn't seen Nory in six years (38). Aunt Margo is a Flyer who is able to take passengers (a very rare talent) and runs her own company called Double M Flying Taxi, which doesn't make her rich, but allows

her to live a simple life (39). Aunt Margo lives in a “very small, very old wooden house” in the town of Dunwiddle (42).

**6. What’s Nory’s reaction to the news that she’d going to live with Aunt Margo and leaving that very night?**

Nory is completely surprised by the news. No one had told her and in fact, Hawthorn even packed her bag without consulting her. Her disbelief turns to anger as she decides that her family must be sending her away because they are so ashamed of her. From the text: “The energy drained from Nory’s body. Father. Hawthorn. Dalia. The two bats, the three toads, the ferret, the toucan, the pair of mice, and the twelve rabbits. None of them wanted her” (40).

**7. How does Nory feel about being in a special class for kids who “struggle with magic”?**

Nory is worried about being in a class with the “worst of the wonky” and doesn’t want to be singled out as different (43). As the chapter ends, we read that “she had a bad feeling in her gut” (44).

**8. Imagine that you were holding onto Aunt Margo’s shoulders and flying high above the city. Would you be scared or excited? What do you think might be neat to see from above?**

**9. It seems like Nory’s family doesn’t communicate very well and that made things even harder for Nory. Thinking back through each part of the chapter, what do you think Nory’s father, her siblings and Nory herself could have done differently so that there weren’t so many hurt feelings?**

**10. One of the themes of this book is “being different.” As we read the book, we’ll look for examples that connect to this theme. We’ll talk about what the characters think about being different and what our own personal experience tells us too. Thinking about what we’ve read so far, what connections do you see between the story and the theme of “being different”?**

## **Write!**

1. Make a long, long, long list of everything you do (or want to do) in the summer.
2. Write an acrostic poem about SUMMER. An acrostic poem is the kind where you write each letter of a word on a separate line and then think of a word or phrase that begins with each letter. For example: NORY → **N**ot your average 4<sup>th</sup> grader; **O**ften turns into kittens; **R**eads books; **Y**earns to attend Sage Academy.
3. Create an advertisement for Aunt Margo’s DOUBLE M FLYING TAXI company. Include a description of her service, pricing and at least one quote from a happy customer.

## **Do!**

### **Super Solar Nachos**

The class builds a solar oven from a pizza box and cooks up some nachos to share. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

## **Share!**

Share your students' projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 6

**Summary:** Aunt Margo has fixed up a small guest room for Nory. In the morning, Aunt Margo gives Nory a tour of the house, posts a chore schedule and shows Nory how to work the TV before heading to the grocery store to buy cereal, apples and ice cream. For dinner, they eat takeout pizza and go over the schedule for the following day. Aunt Margo explains that she will have to leave the house early in the morning, so a neighbor boy named Elliott, who is also in the Upside-Down Magic class, will walk Nory to school on her first day. On the morning of her first day at her new school, Nory wakes up in an empty house, fixes her own cereal, puts on her lucky purple pants and leaves her hair big as there's no one there make her wear a dress or braid her hair as Hawthorn always did. Elliott arrives to take Nory to school and the two get to know each other as they walk. Elliott is a Flare who can also freezes things. He gives Nory a demonstration of his talent out of view from the other kids at school. Reaching the top of a hill, they spot the red brick building of Dunwiddle Magic School as well as a student named Andres who has a rope tied around his ankle to keep him from floating away. Elliott explains that the day before his 10<sup>th</sup> birthday, Andres just floated right up to the ceiling during math class and hasn't been able to come down since. As the time of the first bell approaches, Elliott gives Nory an overview of recess, lunch and school rules. He also warns her to watch out for a kid named Pepper who is an upside-down Fuzzy, known as a Fierce. Pepper's magic has a terrifying effect on animals. Nearly at the front steps of the school, Elliott peels off to see a group of friends, leaving Nory to enter the building on her own.

### Discuss!

- 1. What is Nory's favorite cereal? What's your favorite cereal?**  
Nory's favorite cereal is Fruity Doodles (46).
- 2. Who takes Nory to her first day of school at Dunwiddle Magic School? What do you know about this person from the text?**  
A boy named Elliott takes Nory to school on her first day. He lives nearby and is also in the Upside-Down Magic class (46-47). He is "pale and tall, with nice straight teeth and long legs.... [and] big hair" (28). He likes to talk and has a great laugh (49, 52). His Flare talent is unusual because he also freezes things (54).
- 3. On the morning of her first day of school, Nory wakes up to an empty house and initially feels sad. But then she decides to "look on the bright side." This is an example of an *idiom*. An idiom is an expression that can't be understood from the meanings of each individual word, but must be learned as a whole phrase. Some examples of idioms are "raining cats and dogs" meaning it's raining very hard; "a piece of cake" meaning something is easy; and "play it by ear" meaning to improvise. What does "look on the bright side" mean? Can you think of other idioms?**

“Look on the bright side” means to find good things in a bad situation. Nory “looked on the bright side. Hawthorn wasn’t there to make her wear a dress or braid her hair. That meant she could choose her own clothes” (47).

- 4. Re-read Nory’s thoughts about her first day of school on page 48. Can you relate to any of her worries? If you’ve ever started at a new school, what else was on your mind? Did you have worries or wonders about coming to this summer program?**

Nory’s thoughts before starting at her new school: “Would everyone else know one another from ordinary school? What if no one spoke to her? What if she didn’t make any friends? What if she *never* made any friends and she spent her lunches hiding in the girls bathroom trying not to turn into a bitten?” (48).

- 5. While Elliot and Nory walk to school, he asks her lots of questions. What was something interesting you learned about Nory in this chapter?**

- 6. Why is Andres on a leash?**

Andres is a Flyer who can’t stop floating. If he wasn’t on a leash, he would float away like a balloon (53).

- 7. What does it mean to be a “Fierce”?**

A Fierce is an upside-down Fuzzy, meaning a person whose magic scares animals instead of taming them (55).

- 8. Who is Pepper?**

Pepper is an upside-down Fuzzy, or Fierce. Animals are afraid to be near Pepper and will run away or act wildly whenever Pepper is nearby. Elliott is sure Pepper will be in their class (55).

- 9. What can you tell about Elliott’s opinion on upside-down magical talents? Does he think they’re cool? Scary? Strange? Do you think he likes his own unusual talent? What clues can you find in the text?**

Elliott doesn’t describe any of the students with upside-down magical talents in a positive way. When describing Andres’ situation, he mentions how no one hangs out with Andres because it’s too awkward (53). When he talks about Pepper, he says being in class with her is bad news because her wonky powers are so scary (55). When Elliott shows Nory his own powers, they hide behind a bush so no one else can see how his fire turns into ice (54).

- 10. Have you read any other stories that include a character on his or her first day of school? What do you notice is similar between that story and *Upside-Down Magic*? What is different?**

## Write!

1. Knock, knock! Know any good jokes? Make a mini joke book containing at least 10 knock, knock jokes or riddles. Share your joke book with a friend!
2. Write a list of 10 questions you would ask someone who is new to your class. Trade questions with a classmate and answer their questions.
3. Imagine you’re Andres and write a journal entry about an average day from when you wake up in the morning after sleeping on the ceiling, to getting

dressed and going to school, to eating meals and having fun after class. How would your daily routine be different if you were always floating?

## **Do!**

### **Magnet Magic**

Students use the power of magnets to create a mini floating Andres figure. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

## **Share!**

Share your students' projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 7

**Summary:** Nory arrives at Dunwiddle Magic School and discovers that it's nothing like her last school. There are fire extinguishers everywhere, kids with pet mice in their pockets, kids floating above the floor and black kittens running through the hallway. Nory feels lost in the commotion and overwhelmed by magical activities going on around every turn. She decides she needs a break and slips into a supply closet. As she takes some deep breaths and reassures herself, she hears a voice offering her a lemon drop. Hiding behind a mop is a small Asian-American girl who has just escaped a pack of bullies who had locked her in a locker that morning. It turns out that both girls are in the Upside-Down Magic class and as the bell is about to ring, they emerge from the closet and head to their new classroom together. Just before they enter the room, Nory tells the other girl that she must watch out for a kid named Pepper and that perhaps they should sit together so they can both be safe from him. Ms. Starr's classroom is bright and sunny. There are eight desks, a carpeted area, stacks of mats, a pile of umbrellas and a cabinet full of sweaters. As Ms. Starr introduces the lemon drop girl to the class, Nory realizes that the girl she has just met in the supply closet is Pepper the Fierce. Pepper isn't a boy, but a girl! Suddenly, Nory feels her vision start to blur and her body tingle as she is transformed into a bitten.

### Discuss!

- 1. In what ways is Dunwiddle Magic School similar to your school? In what ways is it different?**
- 2. What are some of the unique rules for hallway behavior at Nory's new school?**  
"No fires except in the Flare Lab. No flying except in the Flyer's Court or the yard. Visible human shapes to be used in the hallways at all times. And: Animal friends are not allowed" (58-59).
- 3. What words would you use to describe what it's like in the hallways of Dunwiddle Magic School?**  
Possible responses: overwhelming, busy, chaotic, maze-like, crazy, scary
- 4. Who does Nory meet in the supply closet?**  
Nory meets a "small Asian-American girl with a sweet round face" who offers her a lemon drop (61). At the end of the chapter, we find out this small girl is Pepper, the Fierce Elliott had warned Nory about.
- 5. Does Nory worry about being treated differently because she's in the Upside-Down Magic class? How do you know?**  
Nory worries that she will be teased by the other kids at the school because she's in the Upside-Down Magic class. She says, "The kids who are normal are going to make fun of us the whole year. I know it" (63).
- 6. What details do you remember from the text about Ms. Starr's classroom? Are there any items in her classroom that seem unusual to you?**

Ms. Starr’s classroom is a cheerful space with eight desks and a carpeted area. Some interesting items in her room include a stack of mats, a pile of umbrellas, a cabinet of sweaters and a wall full of fire extinguishers (64).

**7. On the wall in Ms. Starr’s room, there’s a poster that reads: “Remember the kid who gave up? Neither does anyone else.” Why do you think this might be a good poster for a classroom?**

**8. What do you know about Ms. Starr?**

She has darker skin than Nory, wears her hair up in a bun, has perfect posture and is wearing a bright yellow cardigan with a yellow polka dot shirt underneath (64-65).

**9. Think back to what Elliott tells Nory about Pepper. Does it remind you of the girl Nory meets in the supply closet? How would you describe Pepper based on what you have read? What do you think this tells us about rumors?**

Elliott makes Pepper sounds like a scary person who must be avoided. The small Asian-American girl who Nory meets in the supply closet is not scary at all, on the contrary, she’s generous in offering a lemon drop and is kind to Nory. In addition, she’s not bullying others, rather she’s a victim of bullying who has just been turned invisible and locked in a locker (62).

**10. Why do you think Nory turns into a bitten at the end of this chapter? Do you think there might be a pattern to when her magic goes wonky?**

As students continue to read the book, ask them to notice Nory’s emotional state and what’s going on around her each time her magic does something unexpected to see if they can determine a cause for her magical misfires.

## **Write!**

1. Write about a time when you wanted to give up but didn’t. What helped you keep going?
2. Imagine that you have the power to become invisible or to make objects invisible. Describe one way you would use your powers.
3. Think back to the first day of school last year. Was it a good day? Did you meet anyone new? What did you think about your teacher? Write down what you remember.

## **Do!**

### **Best Friends Mini Magazine**

Students consider what it means to be a good friend and create mini magazines containing tips for being a good friend, jokes to share with friends and friendship activity ideas. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

## **Share!**

Share your students’ projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 8

**Summary:** Bitten-Nory wreaks havoc on the classroom in a flurry of activity before transforming back to Girl-Nory while under the teacher's desk. As students make comments about Nory's magic, Ms. Starr interjects and explains that the students will not use the words "wrong" or "wonky" to describe themselves, rather they'll say "different" or "upside down." She also shares with the class that she herself has been called these words and now, after passing her Upside-Down Magic teacher training, she's looking forward to helping the students learn to make the most of their magic, understand their emotions, and manage their magic. She invites each student to show his or her magical talent to the class. Sebastian shares that his magic is seeing sound waves. A boy in a skull-and-crossbones T-shirt named Bax refuses to share his talent, so Ms. Starr offers to come back to him later. Elliott is a Flare and Freezer. He demonstrates his talents by freezing a cup of water in Ms. Starr's hand, but his magic gets out of control and the ice climbs up Ms. Starr's hand, sweater and almost to her neck. Unphazed, Ms. Starr changes into a replacement sweater and the class continues. The class's attention shifts to Andres, a student who is constantly floating near the ceiling. When he pushes off from the ceiling he descends a foot toward the floor only to float back up. He shares that his sister walks him to school on a leash so he won't float away. Next, Ms. Starr asks Pepper to show her magic, but as her magic only works on animals, she asks a couple of Fluxers from the 7<sup>th</sup> grade class to volunteer to change into their animal forms to help with the demonstration. The visiting students quickly transform into tiny kittens and Pepper kneels to offer the kittens her had to sniff. The kittens yowl, hiss and run away. Ms. Starr asks Pepper to let the kittens relax, but Pepper is unable to turn her magic on or off, so Ms. Starr has her head down the hall for a moment.

### Discuss!

- 1. How does Nory feel after the class sees Bitten-Nory mess up the classroom? What part of the text tells you how she feels?**  
Nory feels embarrassed. She thinks to herself, "Please let this be a bad dream" (68). When she emerges from under the desk, the text says, "She was hot with shame" (69).
- 2. What is Sebastian's magical talent?**  
Sebastian explains: "I'm a kind of a Flicker...Only I can't turn invisible. And I can't turn other things invisible...I see sound waves. They're invisible to most people" (72).
- 3. What is Elliott's magical talent?**  
Elliott is an Upside-Down Flare who can also freeze things (74).
- 4. What is Andres' magical talent?**  
Andres is constantly floating and must be kept on a leash so he doesn't float away (75-76).

**5. What is Pepper’s magical talent?**

Pepper’s magic causes animals to feel terrified. She can’t turn her magic off, so animals near her cower, become defensive or flee (78).

**6. Nory thinks one of the boys in her class wore a skull and crossbones shirt “so that other people would know right away what kind of boy he was. The kind to wear a skull-and-crossbones T-shirt” (73). What do you think this means? What do you think we can tell from someone’s clothing? What might we not be able to tell?**

**7. Do you think it was easy for the students in Ms. Starr’s class to demonstrate their magic in front of the group? Why or why not?**

**8. Ms. Starr explains that the class will not use the words “wrong” or “wonky” to describe themselves. What words does she say are okay? How do you feel about these words? Why do you think it’s important to be careful about which words we use to describe people?**

Ms. Starr tells the class that they will say “different or upside down” (69). As students discuss this question, invite them to identify other words that aren’t okay to use in class and encourage them to consider how words can have the power to hurt or the power to lift up those around us. To end the discussion on a positive note, brainstorm a list of words and phrases that students can use to encourage and affirm each other, like “you’re awesome” or “you’re a really kind friend.”

**9. What do you think of Ms. Starr as a teacher? What makes her a good choice for leading this class?**

A possible response: Ms. Starr seems like a cheerful teacher who is supportive, encouraging and positive. She’s a good choice for leading the class because she has training in Upside-Down Magic and has even “been called wonky and different, too!” (71).

**10. What makes someone a good teacher? When you think about your favorite teacher, what made him or her stand out from other teachers you’ve had?**

**Write!**

1. Word power! Some words are meant to hurt and some words are meant to help. Divide your paper in half. On one side, write a list of words or phrases that might make someone feel sad, hurt or upset. On the other side of the paper, write a list of words or phrases that might make someone feel stronger, happier or more powerful. What words can you use with your classmates today to encourage them?
2. Ms. Starr says thinking about opposites is a great way to understand upside-down magic. Write a short description of a made-up character who is the opposite of you.
3. Is there anything you wish your teacher knew about you? Write a short letter to your summer program teacher.

## **Do!**

### **Sounds of the City**

Students head to a nearby park or other outdoor space to create a visual representation of the sounds they hear. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

## **Share!**

Share your students' projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 9

**Summary:** Ms. Starr manages to return the classroom to normal after Pepper's magic demonstration terrorized two kittens. Pepper returns to the classroom and the students continue staring their unusual magical talents. Marigold, who lives with her grandparents while attending school, can shrink things until they are so small they become invisible. She shrinks her chair as her demonstration and then must sit on the floor. Next up, Willa is an Upside-Down Flare who can make it rain, but only indoors. Ms. Starr hands out umbrellas to the students and moments later rain is pouring from the ceiling. Everything in the classroom is soaked. Ms. Starr calls the janitor to come help with the mess and then turns to the last student who has yet to show his magical talent, Bax. Bax is reluctant to show his unusual Fluxer talent, but eventually acquiesces. With a whoosh, Bax turns into a tremendous piece of rock and rolls out of his seat onto the floor. Unable to transform back into a human form, Bax is rolled down the hall to the medical office. Feeling less than positive about being in a class full of students with upside-down magical talents, Nory follows her classmate to the cafeteria.

### Discuss!

**1. Who does Marigold live with during the school year? How does she feel about this arrangement?**

Marigold lives with her grandparents as her family's home is three hours from the school. Her grandparents let her watch as much TV as she wants, which Marigold enjoys, but she misses her family (81).

**2. What is Marigold's magical talent?**

Marigold makes things shrink. In class, she makes a chair shrink until it's so tiny no one can see it (81).

**3. What is Willa's magical talent?**

Willa can make it rain indoors (82).

**4. What is Bax's magical talent?**

His magic turns him into a rock, which is a very rare talent for Fluxers, who usually transform into animals, not inanimate objects (86).

**5. What happens after Bax becomes stuck in the form of a rock?**

Four people have to roll him down the hallway to the medical office where Nurse Riley promises to have him fixed up before lunch is over (87).

**6. How does Nory feel about her new classmates? What clues can you find in the text?**

Nory feels like she's in a class of wonky kids and is discouraged. We read: "Nory took her hundredth deep breath of the day. She wanted to look on the bright side ... but from where she was standing, she didn't see much of one at all (87).

**7. At this point in the story, how does Nory feel about being different? How do other students in the Upside-Down Magic class feel?**

Nory and her classmates don't see their unusual magic talents as a positive. At this point in the story, it seems like it's only Ms. Starr who is excited about the diversity of the class and their unique magical abilities.

- 8. When Nory hears that Willa can make it rain, she starts to wonder if some unusual talents could be useful. Thinking about the characters we've met so far, when might be a time when each of their talents would be helpful?**

Possible ideas: Andres could use his floating magic to reach a kite stuck in a tree; Elliot could freeze a pool of water to make an ice skating rink; Marigold could use her shrinking power to help get rid of garbage without needing landfills, etc.

- 9. Ms. Starr tells the class, "Things worth doing are usually hard" (80). What do you think she means? What are the "hard things" your class is working on?**
- 10. When Bax doesn't want to share his magical talent, Ms. Starr says "we will all support you, and we will help you become your best self. The spirit of the UDM classroom is trust" (85). Do you think you might be more willing to try something new when you can trust your classmates? Why or why not? What are ways you can support your classmates this summer?**

## **Write!**

1. Write about a time when you wanted to give up because something seemed really hard, but later felt really proud because you accomplished your goal.
2. Imagine a magical cafeteria where all kinds of foods were available at lunch. Write about how the cafeteria would look and what foods, drinks and desserts would be on the menu.
3. As the class heads to lunch, Nory struggles to see the bright side of the unusual talents her classmates have. Have you ever judged someone the first time you met them and later discovered he or she was really cool? Write a letter to Nory sharing your personal story.

## **Do!**

### **Shrunken Scene**

Students create mini scenes inside small boxes or mint tins. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

## **Share!**

Share your students' projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 10

**Summary:** In the cafeteria, Nory and Elliott fill their plates and sit with a group of Elliott's Flare friends from ordinary school. Lacey, Zinnia and Rune call their group the Sparkies, a name originally selected by Elliott. Nory recognizes one of the girls in the group named Lacey who was in line in front of her at the Sage Academy test. Nory recalls how Lacey's father coaxed her on roasting marshmallows and how ultimately Lacey emerged from the performance hall sobbing. When Nory reveals to the group that Lacey failed the test at Sage Academy, Lacey becomes angry and defensive. As the students continue talking, Lacey makes it clear that Elliott is no longer welcome in the Sparkies group because of his upside-down magic. In fact, the group has been trying to ditch him all summer and even melted his bike tires to keep him away. As the Sparkies continue to be mean to Elliott, Nory feels a tingle up her spine and transforms into a skunk. Angry at the Sparkies, Skunk-Nory feels the urge to spray them. Girl-Nory tries to regain control, but loses the battle as the Skunk-Nory begins to swell into a skunkephant. Now the size of an elephant with the body of a skunk and the trunk of an elephant, Elliott tries desperately to talk Nory back into her human form and stop her from spraying the Sparkies. Suddenly, Pepper enters that cafeteria and her Fierce magic causes Skunkephant-Nory to be overcome with fear. Sensing danger, Skunkephant-Nory lifts her tail and sprays.

### Discuss!

- 1. In addition to upside-down magic, what are two things Nory and Elliott have in common?**

"Single veggies and big hair" (88).

- 2. Who are the Sparkies?**

The Sparkies are a group of Flares who attended ordinary school together. The group originally included Elliott, Lacey, Zinnia and Rune (89). Now that Elliott is in the Upside-Down Magic class, Lacey declares him not a member of the group anymore (91).

- 3. How does Nory know Lacey?**

Lacey was the girl in front of Nory at the Sage Academy test who Nory saw running from the hall in a burst of sobs (90).

- 4. How does Lacey feel when Nory reveals to the table of students that Lacey didn't get in a Sage Academy? What clues can you find in the text?**

Lacey feels angry and defensive. Clues: The authors use word choice to tell the reader about how a character is feeling. They could have written "Lacey ate some broccoli," but instead, they chose to write that she "stabbed a piece of broccoli" (90). Later, the authors write, "She chewed it so aggressively that it seemed a small act of war" (90).

- 5. What effect has Elliott's upside-down magic had on his relationship with the Sparkies?**

Since Elliott's Flare-Freeze magic emerged, the Sparkies haven't wanted him to hang out with them. In fact, they have been trying to ditch him all summer and even melted his bike tires in an attempt to keep him out of the group (92). Lacey, Zinnia and Rune say that only true Flares belong in the Sparkies (91).

**6. What kind of creature does Nory become?**

A skunkephant, which has the body of a skunk and the trunk and size of an elephant (94).

**7. What do you think causes Nory to turn into a skunkephant?**

It seems like Nory loses control of her magic when she is upset. The text says, "she was mad. So mad" (94).

**8. Who is the "tiny hairless thing in a baggy denim dress and two ponytails" (95)? What role did this character play in what happened in the lunchroom?**

This turns out to be Pepper. When Skunkephant-Nory sees her, she is completely taken over by feelings of terror due to Pepper's *Fiercing* magic. Sensing danger, Skunkephant-Nory sprays the Sparkies (95).

**9. When Nory turns into a Skunkephant, Elliott tries to talk her out of spraying the Sparkies (94). Have you ever tried to talk a friend out a bad idea? Did it work? Why or why not?**

**10. Can you think of another book you've read that has characters like the Sparkies who want to be in their own group and exclude other people? Why do you think this might come up in other books?**

## Write!

1. Imagine you're one of the Sparkies. Write a short journal entry about what happened in the lunchroom during this chapter. How might the Sparkies tell the story differently?
2. Write an acrostic poem about a SKUNKEPHANT. An acrostic poem is the kind where you write each letter of a word on a separate line and then think of a word or phrase that begins with each letter. For example: NORY → **N**ot your average 4<sup>th</sup> grader; **O**ften turns into kittens; **R**eads books; **Y**earns to attend Sage Academy.
3. Create a guide to caring for a skunkephant. What should you feed it? Do you need to take it for regular walks or give it baths? What does someone need to watch out for when caring for a skunkephant?

## Do!

### Escape from the Lunchroom

A trust-building activity, students take turns guiding a blindfolded partner through and obstacle course. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

## Share!

Share your students' projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 11

**Summary:** The cafeteria is closed for cleaning and the Sparkies are at the medical office. Meanwhile, Nory has taken refuge in the supply closet. Knowing she can't hide forever, she reemerges and makes her way to the playground where she finds the students from the Upside-Down Magic class all together in a group. The ordinary kids are staring at them and shouting mean comments. When Nory approaches, Elliott blames her for making all the UDM kids look like wonkos and the group proceeds to ignore her for the rest of the day. After school, Nory calls home, but no one answers. She and Aunt Margo order pizza for dinner and Nory eventually tells Aunt Margo all about her super rotten first day at school. In order to cheer her up, Aunt Margo takes Nory for a fly over the town of Dunwiddle. At school the next day, Nory discovers that UDM class includes more than just the standard school subjects as Ms. Starr leads the class in interpretive dance to help them connect with their emotions; headstands to help them see things from a new perspective; and group trust exercises. Ms. Starr shares with the students that they must learn to understand their emotions in order to control their magical powers. After school each day, Nory calls home, desperate to reconnect with her siblings and father. No one calls her back. Aunt Margo calls on her behalf and leaves a message too, but again, Nory's father doesn't call back. Aunt Margo's boyfriend, Figs (short for Figaro Russo) takes Nory and Margo out for lunch at a bakeshop. Figs is a Fluxer who can turn into four different dog shapes. On the way home from the bakeshop, Aunt Margot gets a call on her cell phone and it's Hawthorn and Dalia secretly calling Nory, who is thrilled to hear from her siblings. Hawthorn and Dalia have a plan for getting Nory back home: first, learn to be normal, next, test out of the UDM class and then practice in a normal class before reapplying to Sage Academy. Heartened, Nory is determined to become normal so her father will let her come home.

### Discuss!

- 1. Does it seem like the other students in the UDM class understand that what happened in the cafeteria was an accident? What evidence can you find in the text to support your opinion?**

Possible evidence from the text for students to consider as they discuss this question: When Nory approaches the other UDM students, Elliott hisses "I can't believe you did that to us...You made us look like wonkos" (98). For the rest of the day, no one talked to Nory or even looked at her; everyone pretended she didn't exist (99).

- 2. How do the ordinary kids at Dunwiddle School treat the students in the UDM class?**

The other students stare at the UDM students and call them names like "wonkos" (98).

- 3. What do Aunt Margo and Nory have for dinner?**

A small double-pepperoni pizza and some apples (101).

4. **How does Aunt Margo help Nory feel better about her rough day at school? When you have a hard day, what do you do to take care of yourself?**  
Aunt Margo takes Nory for a “fly” over the town of Dunwiddle. After that they take hot showers and put their pajamas on. By the time Nory settles into her bed, she feels okay (105-107).
5. **What are some of the special activities the students in the Upside-Down Magic class do in order to learn to better control their feelings and their magic?**  
The dance do interpretive dance (108-109), headstands (111) and trust exercises (113).
6. **Who is Figs?**  
Figs is Aunt Margo’s boyfriend. He’s a Fluxer who is licensed to turn into four different types of dogs (116). His proper name is Figaro Russo and he runs the pharmacy in town (116).
7. **How do Hawthorn and Dalia think Nory might be able to return home?**  
They tell Nory to work on becoming normal so she can test out of the Upside-Down Magic class and return home to reapply to Sage Academy (118-119).
8. **Nory’s father “always told his children they had to help themselves. He couldn’t do things for them or make things easier. Helping themselves was the way they would learn” (105). What do you think of this advice? What do you notice helps you learn new skills?**
9. **Compare and contrast Nory’s father and her Aunt Margo. Think about their homes, their magical talents, their personalities and the way they relate to Nory.**
10. **Part of developing Upside-Down Magic is learning to understand, not control, feelings. How could this advice be helpful to people without magic?**

### **Write!**

1. Cheer up, Nory! After the scene in the cafeteria, Nory feels like everyone hates her. Write 10 text messages you would send Nory to help her feel better.
2. Create a comic strip showing the main events of Nory’s first day at school. Add text to tell what is happening in each scene. Find a helpful summary of the day on pages 104-105.
3. Re-read the description of Aunt Margo’s home on page 101 and then write a description of your living room or bedroom.

### **Do!**

#### **City View**

Students use Google Maps satellite view to look at Denver from above and locate neighborhood landmarks. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

### **Share!**

Share your students' projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 12

**Summary:** On this particular Monday, it's Nory's turn to take Bax to the nurse's office when he once again turns into a rock. As she walks down the hallway, she looks into the other fifth grade classrooms. The Flare students are roasting marshmallows; the Fuzzies are feeding and grooming a unicorn; the Flyers are hovering above the floor. Nory leaves Bax with Nurse Riley who denies her request to stay and watch Bax's treatment. Taking a different route back to the class, she passes a classroom of Flickers attempting to turn toads invisible and a class of Fluxers working on transforming into kittens. Nory desperately wants to join the normal Fluxers class. Once back in class, Nory rejoins the group for headstand practice and whispers to Elliott about her plan to get out of the Upside-Down Magic class. At first Elliott doesn't want to hear what Nory has to say, but eventually listens as Nory explains that they could practice just using their normal skills and once they were good enough, test out of UDM. Elliott is intrigued by the idea and wonders if the Sparkies would become his friends again if he was a normal Flare. After class, Nory and Elliott speak with Ms. Starr about the possibility of testing out of UDM. Ms. Starr seems disappointed by their request and reminds them that the UDM class is a place where they will learn to make the most of their unique talents. Ms. Starr shares with Nory and Elliott that in the olden days, unusual magical powers were highly valued and in fact, magical talents weren't even divided into five groups until a century ago. Nory and Elliott insist they want to be normal. While Ms. Starr feels this desire is a mistake, she agrees to arrange with Principal Gonzalez for the two students to be tested. Nory is confident that this time things will be different.

### Discuss!

- 1. What happens when Bax turns into a rock while practicing his headstand?**  
A student takes him to the nurse's office in a wheelbarrow. On this particular day, it's Nory's turn to take him (121).
- 2. What are the fifth-grade Flares doing in their classroom?**  
They're roasting marshmallows (121).
- 3. What are the Fuzzies doing in their class?**  
The Fuzzies are gathered around a unicorn feeding it carrots and grooming it (121).
- 4. What does Nory see the fifth-grade Flyers doing in their class?**  
They're levitating two feet off of the floor and going around in a circle (122).
- 5. What are the Flickers practicing in their classroom?**  
The Flickers are attempting to turn toads invisible (122-123).
- 6. What are the fifth-grade Fluxers working on? How does Nory feel when she passes this classroom?**  
The Fluxers are working on adding colors to their kittens. The text says, "Nory wanted more than anything to join them" (123).

**7. What is Nory’s plan for getting out of the Upside-Down Magic class? Why does she think Elliott should work with her on this plan?**

Nory explains to Elliott that unlike the other UDM students they are both capable of doing magic like normal people, so she figures that if they practice more and can get rid of their “wonky” magic, then they can test out of the UDM class (124-125).

**8. What is Ms. Starr’s reaction to Nory’s plan to test out of her class?**

Ms. Starr seems disappointed and saddened by Nory’s request to test out of her class. She explains to Nory and Elliott that her job isn’t to help them become “normal,” but to help them learn how to make the most of their special talents (127). She tries to help them see the beauty in their own magic just the way it is, but eventually agrees to arrange for the school principal to test them (128-129).

**9. Ms. Starr says that unusual magic was valued in the past (127). Why do you think people’s opinions changed? Might their opinions change again? Explain.**

**10. Do you think there is such a thing as “normal”? Why or why not?**

**Write!**

1. Continue the story from the point when Nory leaves Bax at the nurse’s office. How does Nurse Riley change him back into human form? How does Bax feel after this transformation?
2. Marigold complains that the daily headstand practice in the UDM class is boring. Write a list of your top ten ideas for making headstands more fun.
3. Imagine what Elliott would write in his journal about the events of the day and Nory’s plan to test out of the UDM class.

**Do!**

**Animal Charades**

Students act out different animals in a game of charades. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

**Share!**

Share your students’ projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://www.ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 13

**Summary:** Elliott and Nory meet to practice their magical talents that very afternoon at Aunt Margo's house. Aunt Margo isn't happy about Nory's plan to test out of UDM and implores Nory and Elliott to embrace who they are and not try to become someone they think they should be. Undeterred, Nory and Elliott head to the yard to practice. They chat about how nice it will be to take regular classes that don't involve headstands, interpretive dance or trust exercises. Nory shares how her father had always said that magic was like a house pet that had to be disciplined, trained and controlled. Elliott points out how Ms. Starr encourages students to feel their feelings and understand their magic instead of trying to control it. The two students debate these different approaches to magic before finally settling on a plan to practice controlling the part of their magic that's not normal. Nory encourages Elliott to think of his freezing magic as a bad puppy that needs to stay in a crate. On his first attempt, he manages to create a small fire on the tip of a pencil without it freezing afterward. When it's Nory's turn to practice, she turns herself into a lovely kitten that quickly becomes a Kitten-Goat or koat. Losing control of her animal mind, Koat-Nory eats the vegetable plants and some socks from the clothesline before heading toward the flowers. Nory is transformed back into a girl when she eats a mouthful of flowers that Elliott has frozen. While he only means to freeze a single flower, Elliott turns all the flowers in Aunt Margo's yard into icicles. Elliott and Nory agree they need a lot more practice.

### Discuss!

- 1. What is the setting of this chapter? What details are mentioned in the text?**  
The word setting means the time and place of the action. This chapter takes place after school in Aunt Margo's yard. The text says, "Aunt Margo's yard was full of vegetable plants and flowers. There was a line of laundry hanging out to dry in the September sun, and a small metal table with some chairs" (131).
- 2. What are some of the differences between the Upside-Down Magic class and the regular magic classes?**  
In the UDM class, students do headstands, interpretive dance and trust exercises. In the regular magic classes, the teachers teach magic in the same way they teach math and then the students practice (131).
- 3. How does Nory's father think students should train their magic? What clues do you find in the text?**  
Nory explains: "My father always said that good magic is like a well-trained house pet...You have to discipline it. The key is to never get emotional. Stay in control. Like a dog trainer" (132).
- 4. How does Ms. Starr think students should train their magic? How does Elliot explain her style?**

Ms. Starr encourages her students to feel their feelings and understand their magic, not control it (132). As Elliott notes, “If magic is a puppy... Ms. Starr wants us to *love* the puppy instead of being its master” (133).

5. **How does Nory plan to train her magic?**  
Nory plans to control her wonky magic by treating it like it’s a bad puppy that must stay in its crate (134).
6. **What makes Nory think that their plan to squash down their “not-normal” magic is working?**  
Elliott makes a pencil flare briefly without causing it to freeze afterward (134).
7. **What happens when Nory practices her magic?**  
Nory’s kitten shape starts out normal, but quickly turns into a Kitten-Goat, or koat, that eats Aunt Margo’s vegetable plants and some socks off the clothesline before starting to eat the flowers (135).
8. **What do you think about Ms. Starr’s way of understanding magic and Nory’s father’s way of controlling magic? If you were training a puppy, which method would you choose? Why?**
9. **Aunt Margo doesn’t think Nory and Elliott should try to move out of the UDM class. She says, “Just be who you are, not who you think you should be” (130). What do you think of this advice?**
10. **At this point in the story, what is your prediction about what will happen to Nory and Elliott? Do you think they will be able to test out of UDM? Why or why not?**

## **Write!**

1. Write a description of the room where you are right now. Try to include as many details as you can.
2. Compose a shape poem inspired by a word from this chapter. Maybe a poem about flowers in the shape of a flower or a poem about socks in the shape of a sock?
3. What do you think Nory and Elliott said to Aunt Margo after their magical accidents destroyed the plants and laundry in her yard? Write a letter from Elliott and Nory explaining what happened and what they plan to do to fix it. Make sure to include an apology too!

## **Do!**

### **Fun with Freezing Points**

Students learn about freezing points and melting points while creating ice cream in zip-top sandwich bags. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

## **Share!**

Share your students’ projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 14

**Summary:** The students in UDM have their usual schedule of activities including geography, math, poetry, group trust exercises, gym, music and headstands. The students' headstands are slowly improving and Bax even manages to remain human for most of the session. When Marigold burns her leg on a radiator, Elliott freezes an eraser to make an ice pack. At the end of the day, Ms. Starr hands Elliott and Nory a letter confirming their magic test for a week from Friday. The pair decide to practice at Elliott's home that afternoon. Elliott's father, Mr. Cohen, a guitar teacher who works from home, greets them warmly and gives Nory a high-five for spraying the Sparkies. He eagerly wishes to show her his album of photos of Elliott's "ices," which embarrasses Elliott. Up in Elliott's room, their practice doesn't go well as Elliott freezes candles instead of lighting them and Nory transforms into a dritten (dragon-kitten) and sets Elliott's bedspread on fire. The next day at school, Nory discovers a copy of *The Book of Normal* by Eugenia Throckmorton in her desk. It is unclear who put it there. Reading the book, Nory learns about a technique for controlling unusual magical talents by envisioning a "box of normal" in one's mind. Inside of the box of normal, one should put only normal magical talents and leave all other wild and unusual talents outside of the box. At lunchtime, Nory pulls Elliott aside to tell him about the box of normal technique and give him a demonstration. Hiding in the supply closet, Nory imagines her small, safe box of normal and flawlessly transforms herself into a kitten for ten minutes before turning back into a girl. Nory is proud of how she retained control over her mind the whole time. At the end of the day, Nory meets Pepper in the hallway who asks about her progress in preparing for her upcoming magic test. Surprised by her question, but then putting together the pieces of the puzzle, Nory asks Pepper if she'd be the one who left the book in her desk. Pepper confirms that she is the one who left the book in Nory's desk and she hopes Nory finds it helpful.

### Discuss!

- 1. Does it seem like the students in the Upside-Down Magic class are making progress in their skills? What clues do you see in the text?**  
Yes. There is evidence that the UDM students are making progress. Bax is able to participate in headstand time while remaining human for most of the session and Pepper can do a headstand without needing the wall (138).
- 2. How does Elliott help Marigold when she burns her leg on the radiator?**  
Elliott freezes an eraser for her to use as an ice pack (138).
- 3. How does Elliott's dad, Mr. Cohen, feel about Elliott's magical talents?**  
He is enthusiastic about Elliott's talents and even takes photos of all the things Elliott ices. As Elliott heads up to his room, his dad calls out, "I adore you, kiddo!" (140).
- 4. What does Nory find in her desk?**

Nory finds a copy of a book called *The Box of Normal* by Eugenia Throckmorton (141).

5. **To *paraphrase* means to use different words than the person who originally said or wrote something, while keeping the same meaning. It's what we do when we "put something into our own words." How would you paraphrase the "box of normal" technique?**

The "box of normal" technique involves imagining a tiny box and putting only your normal, non-wonky, magic skills inside, while leaving everything else that is wild or unusual outside of the box. This box of normal becomes a safe place inside your brain where only normal magic can happen (143).

6. **What does Nory put into her tiny box of normal? Are there more magical skills inside the box or outside of it?**

Nory puts only ordinary animals with human minds inside her box of normal (145). Outside of her box of normal, Nory imagines a wild expanse of jungle that is much larger than the tiny box of normal (146).

7. **Who put the book in Nory's desk? Why do you think she decided to help Nory and Elliott?**

Pepper put the book in Nory's desk after hearing Nory and Elliott discuss their plan to test out of UDM. While Pepper doesn't think the book can help her and that she will probably never find a way to fit in, she wants to give Nory and Elliott the chance to try (147).

8. **So far, does it seem like the box of normal technique is working? What can you find in the text to support your opinion?**

It does seem like the box of normal technique is working as Nory manages to transform into a kitten for a full ten minutes without losing control or allowing her kitten shape to take on any unusual features (146-147).

9. **Compare and contrast Nory's father and Elliott's father. What adjectives would you use to describe each character? What kind of relationship do they have with their children?**

10. **The letter Nory receives from Principal Gonzales confirming her testing time also contains the message "—and remember: Luck comes in many different forms" (139). What do you think this might mean to Nory and Elliott? What could it mean to you in your own life?**

## **Write!**

1. Write a dialogue between any two characters about their day in UDM. What do you think they love about the class? What do you imagine annoys them about class? What do you think they look forward to each day? Use clues from the text and your imagination!
2. When Nory builds her "box of normal" in her mind, she imagines putting her best normal magic into the box, like her black kitten shape. What can you do well? Write a list of your best skills and talents.

3. Draw a mini gallery of 5 items you imagine that Elliott has frozen. For each item, write a few sentences about how the item became frozen. Was Elliott upset? Was it for an art project?

## **Do!**

### **Shake, Shake Groove**

Students try interpretive dance with a themed dance party. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

## **Share!**

Share your students' projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 15

**Summary:** Elliott also finds success with the box of normal technique also as he is able to light candles without freezing them and perfectly roast a marshmallow. Elliott and Nory practice as often possible. Nory turns into a puppy and a skunk without losing control or sprouting any extra animal features, while Elliott cooks eggs and marshmallows without freezing them. One morning, Ms. Starr has the class do a trust activity that involves extracting cherries from bowls of whipped cream using only their mouths. When Elliott asks how this is a trust activity, Ms. Starr explains that it will be hilarious to see whipped cream on everyone's face and the group will come together by laughing with each other. As students begin dipping their faces into the cream, silly faces and funny messes start to happen and everyone begins laughing. Initially caught up in the fun of the activity, Nory suddenly realizes that this time could be used to practice for the magic test. She fishes out cherries from the cream and asks Elliott to light the stems on fire. Andres calls out Nory and Elliott for not following the activity directions. Soon the whole class in looking at them and noticing Elliott's normal magic. After Ms. Starr reminds them that she expects her students to complete her activities while in her class, Nory quickly makes up a lie about being afraid of germs to explain her behavior. Ms. Starr invites all the students to share their fears. As the students share their fears, Nory feels an unexpected connection to her classmates, but quickly reassures herself that she wants to test out of UDM. On the day of the test, Elliott goes first. He reemerges triumphantly and it's Nory's turn. In the empty gym, Principal Gonzalez shares with Nory that he went to school with her father, although he doesn't share the same perspective on unusual magic. Before the test begins, Principal Gonzalez asks Nory to consider the special opportunity that the UDM class represents and how talented Ms. Starr is as a teacher. Determined, Nory insists that she still wishes to change classes. She concentrates her box of normal and perfectly completes the test. Principal Gonzalez congratulates her on her fine work and says he will have an answer about her class placement at the end of the day. Elliott and Nory are elated about their performances during the test and their normal magic.

### Discuss!

- 1. What makes Elliott think the box of normal technique is working?**  
He is able to light three candles without freezing them and he roasts a marshmallow perfectly too (149).
- 2. What does Ms. Starr hide in bowls of whipped cream? What is this activity supposed to do? Would you want to try it?**  
Ms. Starr hides cherries in the whipped cream and asks the students to retrieve them using only their mouths as a trust-building activity (151-152). Ms. Starr thinks that once everyone has cream on their face it will be so funny that the group will grow close by laughing together (153).
- 3. How does Nory get the cherries out of the whipped cream?**

Nory uses her hand (155).

- 4. Why do you think Nory chooses to lie to the class about why Elliott is lighting the cherry stems on fire? Do you think she could have made a different choice?**

Nory doesn't want her classmates to know that she and Elliott plan to test out of UDM.

- 5. What are some of the fears the UDM students share with the class? Have you ever shared your fears with a friend?**

Pepper is afraid of snakes and Willa is afraid of worms (157). Andres fears wide-open spaces; Elliott is scared of clowns; Sebastian is afraid of thunderstorms and rock concerts (158). Marigold is scared of having foods touch each other on her plate and particularly hates gravy (158). Bax is afraid of sledgehammers (159).

- 6. How does Nory deal with her pre-test anxiety? What do you do to calm down before or during a test?**

Nory paces, cracks her knuckles and does jumping jacks (161).

- 7. Why do you think Nory feels a bit sad when Elliott points out that if he keeps using his box of normal, he won't freeze anything ever again?**
- 8. Do you think Elliott and Nory's decision to "boxed themselves in" and get rid of their unique magical powers in order to become normal? Does it seem like a good trade to you? Why or why not?**
- 9. After the test, Nory exclaims, "And no more skunkephants for me," but suddenly feels a pang of loss (166). Why do you think she feels a sense of loss?**
- 10. When students have different talents, skills or needs, do you think it's best to have special classes, like UDM, or do you think all students should be together in the same class? What examples, from the book or your own life, can you use to support your opinion?**

## **Write!**

1. What's your favorite food? What do you like about it? When was the first time you tried it? How often do you eat it? Write all about your favorite food.
2. Choose a character from the UDM class and imagine how he or she would describe the whipped cream activity.
3. Write about something you think is icky, scary or creepy without using the item's name. Challenge a classmate to read what you wrote and guess what the item is.

## **Do!**

### **Read Weird Words**

Students explore the world of made-up words by reading Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky" poem and works by Roald Dahl and Dr. Seuss. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

## **Share!**

Share your students' projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 16

**Summary:** The day in UDM begins with the usual lineup of activities. That morning the students do yoga to “center” themselves and Bax helps Elliott improve his balance by suggesting he pinch his earlobe. Elliott gives Bax a fist bump of friendship after completing his airplane pose. Nory begins to think about the things she might miss about UDM and wonders if there are things Elliott will miss too. At recess, Elliott dashes off to tell the Sparkies about his successful magic test in hopes of becoming part of the group again. Andres alerts Nory and the group of UDM students gathered by the swing set that Elliott is in trouble. There, in the wooded area just beyond view of the lunch ladies, they find Elliott backed against a tree while Lacey taunts and threatens him with a stick that’s on fire. The UDM students confront the Sparkies and soon the Sparkies are verbally demeaning them as well. Andres spits on Lacey’s head and Lacey flings her hand in Andres’ direction causing a spark to land on his leash. Andres’ leash catches fire. The UDM students scramble to help him and Elliott freezes the leash to put out the fire. As Nory pulls the frozen leash toward her to secure Andres, it cracks and breaks. Andres floats upward. There are no advanced Flyers on the playground to help. Even though she has never attempted a bird shape before, Nory knows she must try to transform herself to help Andres. She imagines her box of normal exploding in her mind and becomes a bluebird. Flying up toward Andres, Nory retains control of her mind and manages to dismiss distracting bird thoughts. Realizing how small a bird she is compared to Andres, Nory focuses on growing her bird form. She recalls lessons from Ms. Starr and nurtures her inner magic while also identifying and releasing her emotions. It works. Nory grows into an enormous bluebird with a girl face. She grabs hold of Andres with her claw feet and brings him safely back to the ground. Andres begins to float back up. As Willa calls for a rope, Bax transforms himself into a rope, which Nory ties to Andres’ belt. Everyone is safe and Sebastian arrives with Principal Gonzalez.

### Discuss!

- 1. Several chapters begin with a description of the daily routine of the UDM class.**

**Why do you think the authors decided to include this again and again?**

One possible answer: The authors may wish to emphasize the routine of school by mentioning it again and again. Instead of telling their readers “every day at school was the same,” they are showing their readers. Encourage students to contribute their own ideas and comment on the sometimes repetitive nature of school. Does that part seem familiar to them?

- 2. How does Bax help Elliott with his yoga? Does it seem like Bax has changed over the course of the story? In what ways?**

When Elliott is struggling to find his balance during the class’ yoga time, Bax suggests he pinch his earlobe (169). At the beginning of the book, Bax seems standoff-ish and unwilling to share with the class or connect with the other

students. In chapter 8, he refuses to share his magical talent when asked to do so by Ms. Starr (74). At this point in the story, the students in UDM have grown closer to each other and Bax more readily contributes. He and Elliott even give each other first bumps everyday (169).

**3. How do the Sparkies treat Elliott when he meets up with them on the playground?**

Lacey threatens him with a lighted stick while teasing him and taunting him (171-172).

**4. What happens to Andres' leash?**

When Lacey flings her hand in Andres' direction, a spark emerges and the leash catches fire (174).

**5. How does Nory get her bluebird self to grow larger?**

Nory thinks back to Ms. Starr's advice that "we should nurture what's inside us" and she starts imagine herself nurturing her inner skunkphant (179). When this doesn't work, she hears Ms. Starr's voice in her head reminding her that UDM isn't about controlling one's feelings, but understanding them, so she identifies all the feelings she is experiencing at this moment. It works and she becomes Enormous-Bluebird-Nory (180).

**6. How does Bax help save Andres?**

Once Nory brings Andres back down to the ground, he starts floating up again. Bax transforms himself into a rope that Nory ties to Andres' belt (182).

**7. Were you surprised when Elliott ran to tell the Sparkies about passing his magic test? Why or why not?**

**8. Lacey says, "Changing the label doesn't change the facts... You guys are as wonky as, oh, as wonky as a skunk with an elephant trunk" (173). How do you think Nory and the UDM students could have gotten out of this icky situation before things got even worse? What can you do when someone is being mean?**

**9. How would you describe the connection between the characters' feelings and their magic? What happens when characters are scared? What examples can you find in the text?**

Strong emotions seem to make the students' magic less predictable and more extreme. In this chapter, Nory is only able to grow her bluebird shape after she acknowledges her feelings. Also in this chapter, we read that Andres floats upward with an even stronger pull when he feels anxious.

**10. What do you notice about the impact of your feelings on your schoolwork? Do you feel like you do better on a test when you're relaxed or anxious? What are some ways you calm your feelings and understand them?**

## **Write!**

1. Write about a time when someone needed help and you sprang into action.
2. Make a list of your top 10 tips for dealing with bullies.
3. Divide your paper into 3 sections and write a different emotion of your choice in each section (happy, sad, scared, angry, excited, disappointed, etc.). Next, make

a list of times when you feel that emotion. For example: ANGRY – when my sister takes something from my room; when I miss a free throw in a basketball game; when I can't find my shoes and it's time to leave for school.

## **Do!**

### **You Might Like Yoga**

Students try basic yoga poses while relaxing and re-centering. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

## **Share!**

Share your students' projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 17

**Summary:** Principal Gonzalez attaches a leash to Andres and Willa takes Rope-Bax to the nurse's office. As Lacey tries to sneak away from the scene, Principal Gonzalez confronts her about setting Andres' leash on fire. Lacey attempts to convince him that it was an accidental Flaring. Principal Gonzalez bluntly points out that Andres could have died as a result of her actions and then continues to reprimand her for mocking others, making it clear that even if what she did was an accident, her words were certainly intentional. Principal Gonzalez explains that he will not tolerate bigotry or any unkindness toward other students due to race, gender, orientation, religion, magical abilities, family background, weight or anything else that might distinguish one student from another. He sends Lacey to the principal's office to join the two other Sparkies, Zinnia and Rune. Next, he sends the UDM students back to their classroom, but asks Nory and Elliott to stay. Sensing Principal Gonzalez is about to tell them that he won't switch them to regular classes due to the wonky magic they used to save Andres, Elliott and Nory promise to work harder on controlling their magic so that something like this won't happen again. Principal Gonzalez explains to Elliott and Nory that he's keeping them in Ms. Starr's class because that is where they will get the proper training for their unique abilities. He then disappears. Sitting on the lawn, Elliott and Nory come to terms with their disappointment and even realize how good it felt to use their special talents. Their classmate Marigold runs over to inform them that Ms. Starr has ice cream cups for everyone and that Bax is back in human shape. Elliott and Nory walk back to class.

### Discuss!

- 1. Do you think it was really an accident when Andres' leash caught fire? What clues in the text support your opinion?**  
Optional: Encourage students to consider both sides of the question by asking some students to make a case that it was an accident, while others make the case that it wasn't.
- 2. Bigotry is a word you may not have heard before. It means being unkind to anyone who has different ideas or opinions than oneself. Principal Gonzales says, "I will not tolerate bigotry" (186). What prompted him say this to Lacey?**  
Lacey was making fun of the UDM students because of their different magical abilities (173).
- 3. It seems like Nory should just feel proud of how she saved Andres, but she also feels a sense of shame. Why do you think this is?**  
One possible response: It seems that she still thinks her upside-down magic is something to be ashamed of and she worries about how the other students will treat her after seeing her become a giant Nory-faced bluebird (187).
- 4. Nory agrees that Ms. Starr's teaching made a difference in how she was able to help Andres. What examples can you find of Ms. Starr's lessons helping Nory make the most of her magic?**

In the previous chapter, Ms. Starr's lessons help Nory grow into an enormous bluebird (180).

**5. How did Nory feel when she became the enormous bird-girl?**

Nory tells Elliott that she felt "powerful" (190).

**6. How has Nory and Elliott's friendship changed from the beginning of the story until this point? What have been some of the highs and lows of their friendship?**

Elliott is Nory's first friend in the town of Dunwiddle, but after the cafeteria incident when she sprayed the Sparkies, Elliott refuses to talk to her or hang out with her. Their friendship improves when they decide to practice their normal magic together in hopes of testing out of UDM. By this chapter, their friendship seems strong as they comfort and encourage each other after finding out they won't be moved to the ordinary magic classes.

**7. Why does Nory have mixed feelings about the UDM class?**

Being in the UDM class means not testing for Sage Academy again and not going home. At the same time, Nory realizes that using her unique magic feels pretty amazing. She has also grown fond of Ms. Starr as a teacher and of her classmates too.

**8. It seems like Elliott still wishes the Sparkies would accept him. Have you ever tried to change yourself in order to fit in? Did it work? How did it make you feel?**

**9. Principal Gonzalez says that he "will not tolerate unkindness about race, gender, orientation, family background, religion, weight, magical abilities, favorite candy, or anything else that distinguishes one person from another" (186). Is there anything you would add to or change about this statement? Do you have a similar policy at your school? Is it always easy to treat everyone the same or is it sometimes harder than we might like? What can you share from your own experiences?**

**10. Principal Gonzalez feels the best class for Nory and Elliott is the Upside-Down Magic class. Do you agree with his decision? Why or why not?**

## **Write!**

1. Dear Teacher.... Write a letter to a favorite teacher telling him or her how he or she has helped you learn new skills and grow as a person. If possible, mail your letter or hand deliver it when school starts!
2. Compliments feel good. Write a note to compliment someone in your class. Try to be specific about exactly what he or she did well.
3. Greetings from summertime! Write yourself a letter to open on the first day of school. In your letter, write about your goals and hopes for the new year. Do you hope to do better in science class? Or maybe climb all the way to the top of the rope in gym class? Or find ways to include kids who feel left out?

## **Do!**

### **I Can Help**

Students consider their talents and skills and then brainstorm ways to serve the community. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

## **Share!**

Share your students' projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

## Chapter 18 and Wrap-Up

**Summary:** A week later, the UDM students gather for a picnic in Aunt Margo's backyard. Elliott turns lemonade into slushies and everyone enjoys the frozen treat. Dalia and Hawthorn call Nory to ask about the outcome of her magic test and if she'll be coming home soon. Disappointed that it had taken her siblings a week to call her to ask about the test, Nory keeps the call short and simply says that she failed the test. Dalia says she's sorry to hear this and Hawthorn tells Nory she must try harder and practice more. When Hawthorn asks her if she wants to come home, Nory weighs the things she misses about home with the things she loves about living with Aunt Margo and attending the UDM class. She tells Hawthorn that she has to go because she has friends over. Hawthorn is surprised and asks if they're upside-down friends. Nory replies that they are and that everyone is enjoying slushies together. Returning to the group, Nory sips her drink and watches her friends play Frisbee. She isn't sure she wants to be normal anymore or go home to live with her Father again. In fact, she thinks she might just like being upside-down.

### Discuss!

- 1. What is the setting of this chapter?**  
The *setting* means the time and place of the action. This chapter takes place in Aunt Margo's backyard a week after the incident with Andres' leash (192).
- 2. How does Elliott use his freezing powers to make a special treat?**  
Elliott flicks his finger at the lemonade to create lemon slushies (193).
- 3. What does Nory like about Aunt Margo?**  
Nory likes how Aunt Margo likes her just the way she is. She also likes how Margo takes her flying, brings her library books and lets her eat junk food (195).
- 4. What does Nory like about Ms. Starr?**  
Nory likes how Ms. Starr is never afraid to look silly and believes in talking about one's feelings (195).
- 5. What do you think Nory has learned about herself over the course of the school year?**
- 6. Does Nory seem happy in this chapter? What might be the source of her happiness?**
- 7. How would you describe Nory's feelings about her UDM classmates on the first day of school? How would you describe them at the end of the book? Why do you think there was a change?**
- 8. How does Nory feel about her upside-down magic at the beginning of the book? How about at the end of the book? What clues do you see in the text?**
- 9. What lessons from the book do you think could apply to people in the real world?**
- 10. What was one of your favorite parts of the story? Why?**

## **Write!**

1. Write a review of *Upside-Down Magic*. Be sure to include a short summary of what happens in the story without giving away too many surprises, plus the reasons why you did or didn't like the book. If possible, have your teacher or parent post your review at an online bookseller or at a local bookstore.
2. The authors of *Upside-Down Magic* have already written a couple more books about Nory and her friends. Write about which character(s) you'd like to read more about and why.
3. What did you love about Youth One Book, One Denver? Write about your favorite YOBOD experiences this summer. What made them great? Would you recommend YOBOD to a friend?

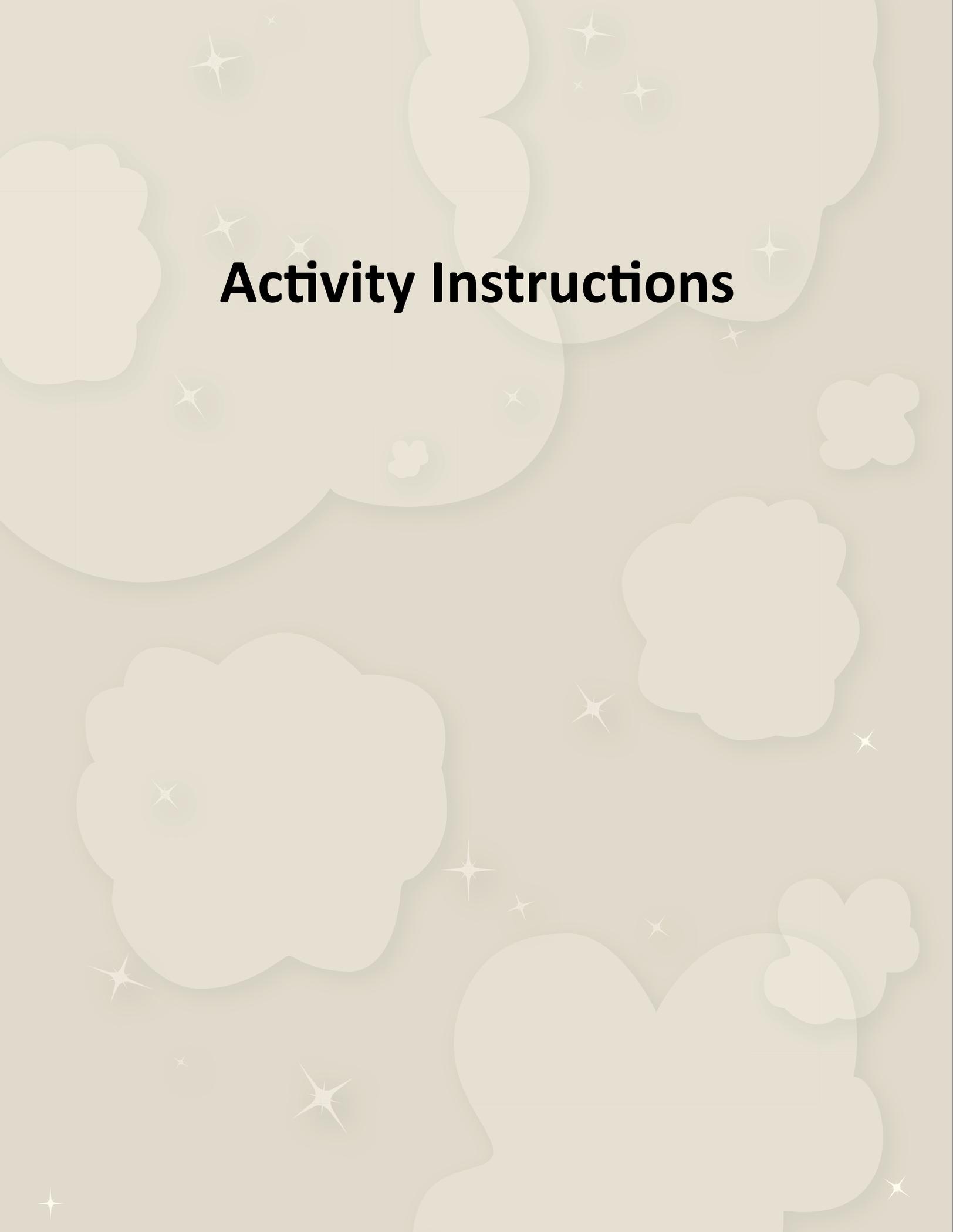
## **Do!**

### **Positivity Portrait**

Students create a portrait celebrating their unique talents, skills and qualities. Find complete instructions in the activities section.

## **Share!**

Share your students' projects at [ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare](https://ArtsandVenues.com/YOBODShare).

The background is a light beige color with several stylized, layered clouds of various shapes and sizes. Scattered throughout the background are numerous small, white, four-pointed starburst shapes, some of which are larger and more prominent than others. The overall aesthetic is soft and whimsical.

# **Activity Instructions**

## Animal Advocate

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 2**

**Beanstack Activity Section: Book Nomad**

**Materials:** Access to the Internet or reference materials about endangered animals, paper and pencils

**Background:** Nory's sister Dalia is a Fuzzy, which means she can easily tame animals. She has lots of pets including bats, ferrets, toads, mice, rabbits and even a toucan (10). When Nory considers blaming Dalia's pets for a mess she made, Dalia speaks up on behalf of her pets as their *advocate*.

**Instructions:** Share with students that an "advocate" is someone who stands up for someone else or argues on behalf of a cause. Ask students to consider how they could become advocates for animals that are in trouble. Working in pairs or small groups, have students research an endangered animal to find out where the animal lives, what it eats, why it is threatened and what might be done to help. Invite students to present their findings to the group.

## Animal Charades

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 12**

**Beanstack Activity Section: Movement Magic**

**Materials:** Whiteboard and markers

**Background:** Fluxers like Nory can change into animal forms.

**Instructions:** Invite students to think about animals that have distinct movements and features, like the way a fish swims, an elephant swings its trunk and a snake slithers. Brainstorm 12 distinct animals and write them on the board. As a class or in small groups, have students select an animal from the list without telling anyone and then act it out while everyone else tries to guess the answer.

## Animal Mashup

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 1**

**Beanstack Activity Section: Inspired Artist**

**Materials:** Images of animals, paper, scissors, markers and glue

**Background:** Nory’s magic always goes a bit “wonky,” causing her to turn into mixed-up animal creatures like a “bitten” (a combination of a beaver and a kitten) or a “skunkephant” (a combination of a skunk and an elephant).

**Instructions:** Invite students to create their own mixed-up animal creature from printed images of animals or by drawing their own animal parts to paste together. Ask: *Why did you choose each part for your creature? What do you call your creature?*

## Best Friends Magazine

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 7**

**Beanstack Activity Section: Word Wanderer**

**Materials:** Paper, colored pencils and a stapler

**Background:** The students in the Upside-Down Magic class at Dunwiddle School are often teased because of their differences, but just like any kid at any school, they want to feel included and find friends.

**Instructions:** Working in pairs or small groups, have students discuss what it takes to be a good friend and what activities they like to do with their friends. Next, have each student create a page for a class magazine about friendship that includes both text and an image. Possible page themes could include, but aren’t limited to: tips for being a good friend; advice for cheering someone up on a hard day; games to play with friends; a list of books to read with a friend; a poem about friendship or a short story about a time when a friend made your day. Encourage students to include a drawing on their page. Once the pages are complete, staple them together to create a magazine. Invite everyone to take turns reading the class magazine.

## City View

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 11**

**Beanstack Activity Section: City Scout**

**Materials:** A computer and internet access

**Background:** Nory’s Aunt Margo is a Flyer who can even take passengers with her as she flies high above the town of Dunwiddle (106).

**Instructions:** Take students on a virtual aerial tour of Denver using [www.GoogleMaps.com](http://www.GoogleMaps.com). Using Google maps in the satellite view mode, invite students to imagine they’re flying high over the city. *Can you find the building where you are right now? What about the nearest school, library and park? Can you find the Colorado State*

*Capitol Building? Can you find a house with a swimming pool in the backyard? What else do you notice?* Invite students to contribute ideas for places to find on the map.

## Double Talk Comic Strip

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 4**

**Beanstack Activity Section: Word Wanderer**

**Materials:** Paper, pencils and markers

**Background:** Throughout the book, the authors not only write about what characters are doing and saying, but also include Nory's *internal dialogue* (what she is thinking to herself).

**Instructions:** Discuss the difference between internal dialogue and external dialogue using examples from the book, like those found in chapter four. Ask students to consider why the author chose to include Nory's internal dialogue. How does it change the reader's understanding of a character? Would it be helpful if we could read people's thoughts in real life? Next, using paper, pencils and markers, invite students to create a comic strip with two halves for each frame: one showing what their character is doing or saying, and another that shows what their character is thinking at that moment.

## Escape from the Lunchroom

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 10**

**Beanstack Activity Section: This activity is not listed on Beanstack**

**Materials:** Bandanas (or blindfolds), assorted objects such as chairs, books, cones or desks to use in creating an obstacle course

**Background:** In chapter 10, Nory turns into a skunkephant and sprays a group of students known as the Sparkies. She sprayed the Sparkies so thoroughly that "an actual fog surrounded them" (96).

**Instructions:** In an open space (classroom, gym or level sports field), lay out a variety of objects to create obstacles that must be avoided as students cross from one side of the space to the other. Ask students to form a line on one side the space. Blindfold the first student in the line. This student will play the part of one of the Sparkies who was sprayed by Nory's skunkephant and temporarily can't see. The next student in line will act as a guide and use verbal commands (go forward, step to your right two times, stop, etc.) to help the blindfolded student avoid the obstacles and get to the other side of the space. Once everyone has had a turn to cross the space, rearrange the obstacles and invite students to switch roles as they go back to the other side of the space. After the

activity, ask students: *How did it feel to be the guide? How did it feel to walk through a space without being able to see? Did it feel like your guide cared about keeping you safe? This kind of activity is called a “trust activity,” why do you think that is? How does it feel to trust your classmates? If you did this activity again, is there anything you would do differently?*

## Fun with Freezing Points

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 13**

**Beanstack Activity Section: STEM Explorer**

**Materials:** For each student: 1 gallon-size zip-top bag; 1 sandwich-size zip-top bag; ½ cup milk or half and half; 1 tablespoon sugar; ¼ vanilla extract; ½ cup kosher salt (or table salt); 4 cups ice; a towel or gloves

**Background:** Even though Elliot is a Flare, he also has the power to freeze things (74).

**Instructions:** Share with students that all substances have a “freezing point”, which is the temperature at which they turn from a liquid into a solid. If possible, show a short online science video about freezing points and ice cream. Next have students combine these ingredients in their small zip-top bags: ½ cup milk or half and half, 1 tablespoon sugar and ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract. Seal the bag well. Have students place their small bag into a gallon-sized zip-top bag and add 4 cups of ice cubes. Explain that if students were to shake the milk mixture as it is now, they’d notice that the mixture wouldn’t get cold enough to freeze. How can we make things colder? By adding salt! Add ½ cup of kosher salt (or plain table salt) over the ice cubes and seal the larger bag. The salt lowers the temperature at which water freezes (its “freezing point”), so with salt, ice will melt even when the temperature is below the normal freezing point of water, which is 32 degrees Fahrenheit. The bag will get quite cold now, so have students wrap it in a towel or wear gloves as they shake the bag for about 5 minutes. Once the ice cream has hardened, open the bags and enjoy your treat!

## I Can Help

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 17**

**Beanstack Activity Section: City Scout**

**Materials:** Paper and pencils; Internet access

**Background:** When Elliot and Nory ask to test out of the Upside-Down Magic class, Ms. Starr reminds them that their unusual powers mean they have something unique to offer (127). Later, the students use their talents to help a classmate in trouble.

**Instructions:** Working as a class or in small groups, invite students to create a list of their unique skills and talents. Ask: *Are you good at writing? Do you speak a second language? Are you good at caring for pets? Can you play an instrument?* Next, brainstorm ways to use these talents to help others in Denver. Ask: *Could you write letters to people who might feel lonely? Could you translate for someone who doesn't speak English? Could you play your instrument for residents of a nursing home?* If time allows, complete this activity by researching volunteer opportunities and performing a small service project.

## Magnet Magic

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 6**

**Beanstack Activity Section: STEM Explorer**

**Materials:** Paper, markers, paperclips, tape, scissors, thread and a strong magnet

**Background:** Andres' is an unusual Flyer in that he can't stop floating. It all started on the day before his 10<sup>th</sup> birthday when he unexpectedly just flew up to the ceiling during math class. He hasn't been able to come down to the ground since so his family keeps him on a leash so he won't float away like a helium balloon (53).

**Instructions:** Invite students to create their own mini floating Andres by cutting out a small person shape from a sheet of paper. Using markers, have students add details and then tape a paperclip on the back. Have students tie a 6-inch piece of thread to the paperclip and then tape the other end to the table. Use a strong magnet to attract the paperclip and make the mini figures seem to float above the table. Learn more about magnets by researching online or checking out books at the library.

## Positivity Portrait

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 18**

**Beanstack Activity Section: Inspired Artist**

**Materials:** a photo of each student, colored pencils, scissors and paper

**Background:** Ms. Starr wants the students in her Upside-Down Magic class to appreciate their differences and realize that they each have valuable skills to share with the world (127).

**Instructions:** Begin with a brainstorming session. Ask: *What are your unique talents? Can you make people laugh? Are you good at solving math problems? Do you speak a second language? What are your best qualities?* Have students paste a self-portrait photo in the middle of a piece of paper. If using student photos isn't possible, students

can draw a self-portrait. Next, challenge students to write down as many unique talents and best qualities as they can around their photo.

## Read Weird Words

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 15**

**Beanstack Activity Section: Book Nomad**

**Materials:** Internet access and/or a copy of Lewis Carroll’s “Jabberwocky” poem or other books containing made-up words, such as those by Roald Dahl or Dr. Seuss

**Background:** Sometimes there just isn’t the right word to describe something. When this happens, authors will sometimes make up new words. In *Upside-Down Magic*, the authors created new words to describe Nory’s mixed-up creatures including “bitten” and “dritten,” as well as words for the five types of magic.

**Instructions:** Invite students to share the made-up words they’ve found in *Upside-Down Magic*, as well as other made-up words they read during the school year. Share Lewis Carroll’s famous “Jabberwocky” poem (available online) or read from a book by Roald Dahl or Dr. Seuss. Write down some of the most interesting made-up words from the text and have students work in pairs to come up with definitions. Ask students to consider the following questions: *Is this made-up word a combination of two or more words? What can the text around the word tell me about its meaning? Are there any illustrations that might provide clues?* Have students share their definitions and work together as a class to combine these definitions into a single definition for each made-up word.

## Shake, Shake Groove

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 14**

**Beanstack Activity Section: Movement Magic**

**Materials:** Music, speakers

**Background:** Ms. Starr challenges her students to explore their feelings as they move like sea creatures to ocean-themed music (108).

**Instructions:** As a class, brainstorm five different themes for a class dance break. Themes could include ocean life, robots, the zoo, insects, weather, etc. Next, select five pieces of music to play during the dance break (they do not have to go with the themes!). Create a dance floor by moving desks, tables and chairs toward the walls of the room or take your dance break to the gym. Announce the theme at the start of each piece of music and challenge students to find a way to move their body to the music

while also connecting with the theme. Remind students that hilariously awkward and odd movements might result!

## Shrunken Scene

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 9**

**Beanstack Activity Section: Inspired Artist**

**Materials:** small boxes or mint tins, paper, markers, tape and scissors

**Background:** Marigold’s upside-down magic makes things shrink. She even made her bed so tiny that she now must sleep on an air mattress (82).

**Instructions:** Using paper, markers, tape and scissors, invite students to create a tiny room complete with tiny furniture inside a mint tin or small box.

## Sounds of the City

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 8**

**Beanstack Activity Section: City Scout**

**Materials:** Paper and markers

**Background:** Whether beautiful music or awful noises, Sebastian sees all sound waves (72).

**Instructions:** Take a trip to a nearby park or other outdoor space to create a picture of the sounds you hear there. Sitting quietly in the grass or on a bench, have students listen for sounds and use markers to draw each sound they hear on a sheet of paper. *Ask: Would the tweet of a bird be yellow or blue? Would it be tight scribbles or long waves? What about the rumble of a garbage truck?* As students layer on each new sound they hear, a “sound picture” of the park will emerge!

## Suggest-A-Book Cootie Catcher

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 3**

**Beanstack Activity Section: Book Nomad**

**Materials:** Copies of the Cootie Catcher Template (see resources section), colored pencils and scissors

**Background:** What would a Fuzzy, Flare, Flicker, Flyer or Fluxer like to read? If you were recommending a book to characters in *Upside-Down Magic*, what would you say? Perhaps you'd recommend your favorite animal book to Dalia or your favorite adventure story to Elliot.

**Instructions:** Guide students in brainstorming which books they would recommend to the characters they have met so far in *Upside-Down Magic*. Encourage students to provide reasons for their choices. Next, give each student a cootie catcher template, scissors and colored pencils. After filling in the cootie catcher with eight of their favorite books, have students follow the instructions on the template to cut out and fold their cootie catcher. If possible, play a short online cootie catcher (also called a paper fortune teller or origami fortune teller) video tutorial to help students see how to make all the right folds and how to play with their cootie catcher once it is ready.

## Super Solar Nachos

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 5**

**Beanstack Activity Section: STEM Explorer**

**Materials:** A copy of the Solar Oven Diagram from the resource section, a pizza box for each oven, aluminum foil, plastic wrap, tape, a stick for each oven, chips and shredded cheese

**Background:** Students with Flare magical talents can warm foods with their bare hands (16).

**Instructions:** Depending on group size and time constraints, teachers may choose to build a solar oven outside of class time or work with small groups to build several ovens. Use the Solar Oven Diagram in the resources section as a guide to building a solar oven. Have an adult cut a large flap in the lid of the pizza box leaving one side connected and about 1 inch of cardboard between the sides of the flap and the edges of the cardboard. Next, have students complete the solar oven by following these steps: 1. Cover the flap with aluminum foil to create a panel that reflects rays from the sun into the box. Try to keep the foil as smooth as possible. 2. Cover the hole in the box lid with plastic wrap and tape it in place to create a window. 3. Open the box and cover the inside with foil. The solar oven is now ready to use! Set up the solar oven outside in a sunny spot while the sun is high in the sky (11 a.m – 3 p.m.). Put some corn chips on a pie plate inside the oven. Sprinkle on some shredded cheese and then close the lid. Use a stick to prop up the flap so that sunlight is reflected into the window in the box lid. And now wait. Solar ovens can take a little while to warm up and cook the food. When the cheese is melted, the snack is ready! Be careful when taking hot food out of the solar oven and use oven mitts to handle cooking dishes. Extend the activity by making other snacks in the solar oven.

## You Might Like Yoga

**Suggested Chapter Pairing: 16**

**Beanstack Activity Section: Movement Magic**

**Materials:** Yoga pose cards or a beginning kids' yoga video

**Background:** Kids in the Upside-Down Magic class do math and geography, but they also do interpretive dance and yoga (168).

**Instructions:** Begin the activity by making room for students to stand with arms outstretched and lay down without touching each other or classroom furniture. Share with students that yoga can be a great way to relax and “center” yourself when you’re feeling stressed. Invite students to share about their experiences with yoga. Using the beginning yoga poses cards in the resource section, lead the group in breathing in and out calmly as they hold each pose for three breaths or as long as it’s comfortable. Remind students to stop what they’re doing if something doesn’t feel comfortable and to try a different pose instead. As an alternative, show a beginning kids yoga video and follow along as a class.

The background of the page is a light beige color. It features several stylized, layered cloud shapes in a slightly darker shade of beige. Scattered throughout the background are numerous small, white, four-pointed starburst or sparkles of varying sizes. The overall aesthetic is soft and whimsical.

# Resources

## Check Out These Great Reads

If your students enjoyed reading *Upside-Down Magic*, the children's librarians at the central branch of Denver Public Library think they'll enjoy reading these books too.

*A Dragon's Guide to the Care and Feeding of Humans* by Laurence Yep & Joanne Ryder

*Igraine the Brave* by Cornelia Funke

*The Sasquatch Escape* by Suzanne Selfors

*A Snicker of Magic* by Natalie Lloyd

*Unusual Chickens for the Exceptional Poultry Farmer* by Kelly Jones

*Pip Bartlett's Guide to Magical Creatures* by Jackson Pearce & Maggie Stiefvater

*Operation Bunny* by Sally Gardner

*Spaceheadz* by Jon Scieszka

*Life of Zarf: The Trouble with Weasels* by Rob Harrell

*Clover's Luck* (Magical Animal Adoption Agency series) by Kallie George

*Dragons and Marshmallows* (Zoey and Sassafras series) by Asia Citro

*Zapato Power: Freddie Ramos Takes Off* by Jacqueline Jules

*Archie Takes Flight* (Space Taxi series) by Wendy Mass

*Oddly Normal* by Otis Frampton

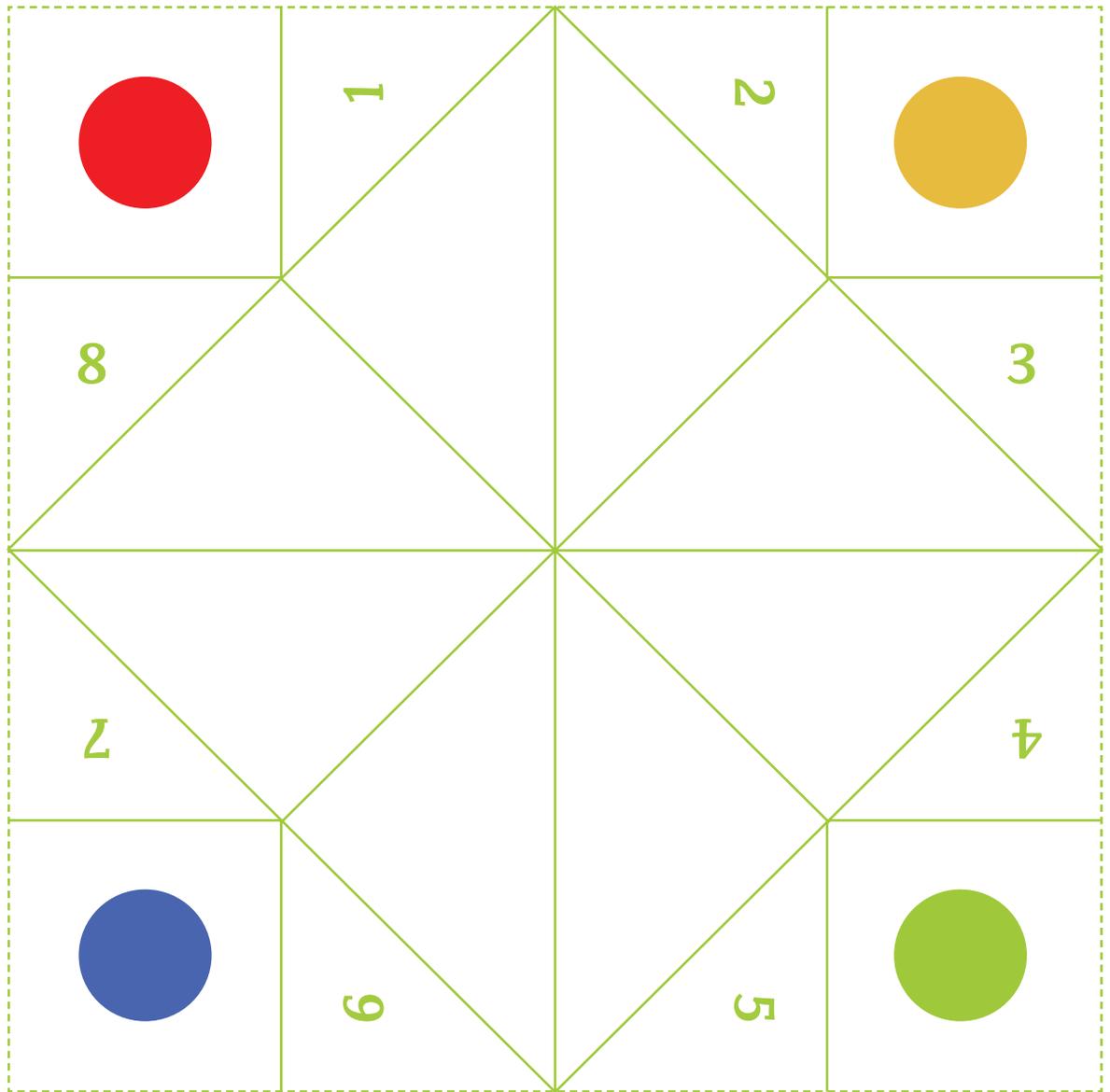
*Secret Coders* by Gene Luen Yang

*Mighty Jack: Book 1* by Ben Hatke

*Cici: A Fairy's Tale. 1, Believe Your Eyes* by Cori Doerrfeld

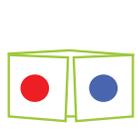
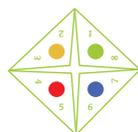
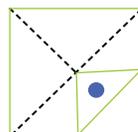
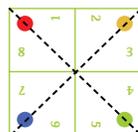
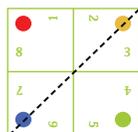
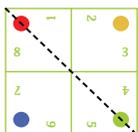
*Behold the Bold Umbrellaphant: And Other Poems* by Jack Prelutsky

# Suggest-a-Book Cootie Catcher ✨



## How to Make the Suggest-a-Book Cootie Catcher

1. Write in 8 of your book recommendations in the inside triangles.
2. Cut out the cootie catcher on the dotted lines.
3. Fold two opposite diagonal corners together, then open back up.
4. Fold the other two opposite corners together, then open back up.
5. You should have folded lines that cross diagonally in the center of the paper.
6. Turn paper printed side down. Fold all 4 corners to center of the paper.
7. When all four corners are folded, your catcher will have all four colored dots facing up (see diagram below).
8. Flip your paper over and again, fold all four corners to the center of the paper.
9. When all four corners are folded, your catcher will look like step 9 below.
10. Fold any two sides together. Make sure the numbers are on the inside, dots on the outside.
11. Slide your thumbs and fingers under the four flaps. Now you're all ready to play!

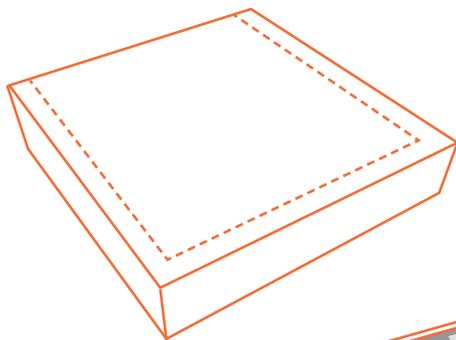




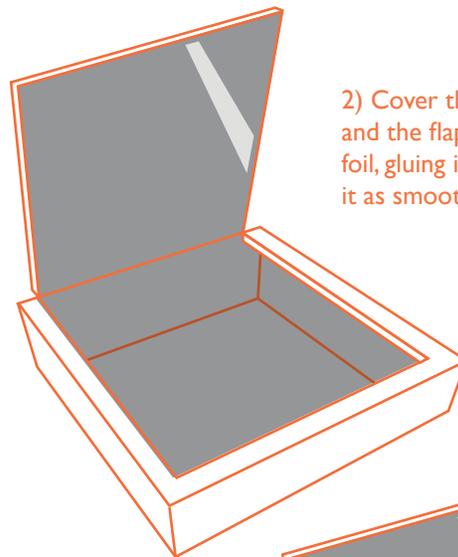
## Super Solar Nachos

Students with Flare magical talents can warm foods with their bare hands (page 16). For the rest of us, let's use the power of science to make nachos using energy from the sun. *You'll need a pizza box, aluminum foil, plastic wrap, tape, a stick, shredded cheese, tortilla chips, and an adult helper.* Ask an adult to cut a 3-sided flap out of the top of the box, leaving at least a 1-inch border around the three sides. Cover the flap and the inside of the box with aluminum foil to create a panel that reflects rays from the sun into the box. Try to keep the foil as smooth as possible to create a mirror. Set up your solar oven outside in a sunny spot while the sun is high in the sky (11 a.m – 3 p.m.). Put some corn chips on a plate inside your oven. Sprinkle on some shredded cheese, then cover the hole in the box lid with plastic wrap and tape it in place to create a window. Use a stick to prop up the flap so that sunlight is reflected into the window in the box lid. And now wait. Solar ovens can take a little while to warm up and cook your food. When the cheese is melted, your snack is ready! Be careful when taking hot food out of your solar oven and use oven mitts to handle cooking dishes. What else can you make in your new oven?

1) Cut here, 1 inch from the edge of the box top



2) Cover the inside of the box and the flap with aluminum foil, gluing it down to make it as smooth as possible



3) Place your nachos in the box



4) Tape plastic over the opening, which will help keep heat in, while allowing all the light to shine through. Then place a stick at an angle to prop the box up, helping reflect sunlight into the box.



# Word Search ✨

Can you find these words hidden in the grid? Words may be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, and even backwards.

K	Y	R	O	N	R	N	T	S	A	O	T	K	P
R	R	R	R	D	K	E	E	D	D	K	K	F	I
A	A	A	N	A	E	E	K	T	A	E	X	L	Z
N	O	R	M	A	L	N	D	C	T	N	F	U	Z
R	M	A	G	I	C	K	V	F	I	I	C	X	A
S	Z	E	B	Y	T	R	B	E	U	L	K	E	E
P	E	G	E	E	E	O	V	O	R	Z	F	R	D
A	R	I	S	R	L	W	R	R	O	R	Z	D	R
R	O	L	A	F	E	M	T	E	E	K	T	Y	L
K	F	L	A	T	I	A	M	Y	X	L	S	D	F
I	F	S	U	M	M	E	R	L	E	N	A	A	R
E	W	O	N	K	Y	T	U	F	R	F	Y	E	R
S	T	F	R	I	E	N	D	S	H	I	P	R	K
K	T	Y	A	Y	A	Y	R	E	Y	N	E	K	B

Flare

Denver

Friendship

Wonky

Fuzzy

Magic

Read

Toast

Fluxer

Sparkies

Dance

Summer

Flicker

Pizza

Teamwork

Nory

Flyer

Kitten

Normal

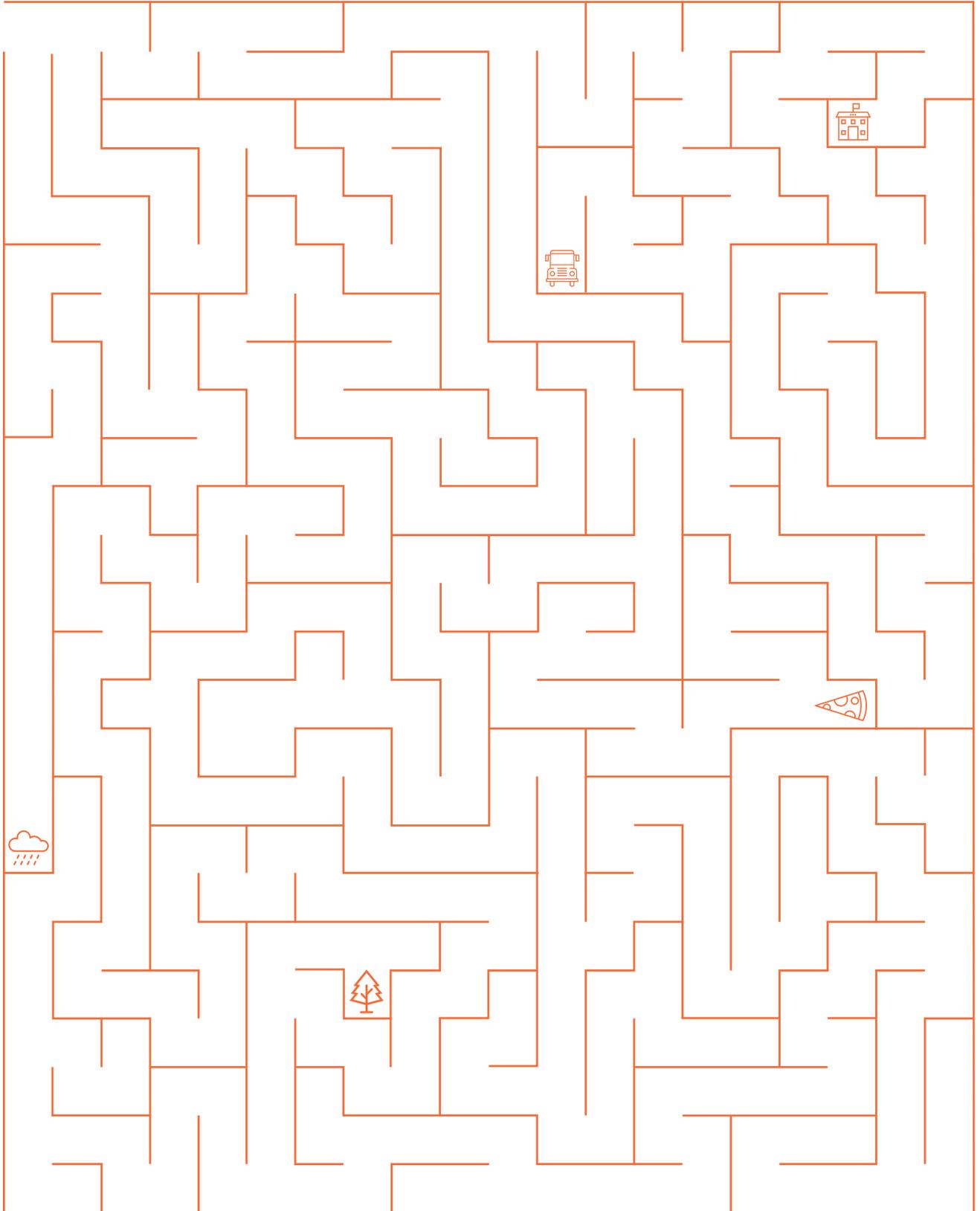
Book

# Maze ✨

Help Aunt Margo fly through the maze to her destination.



START  
at Nory's  
House



END at Aunt  
Margo's House



# Mindfulness Coloring ✨

At the end of a busy day, sitting quietly and carefully coloring a detailed design can help you feel calm. As you color, try to notice each shape as you fill it in. Pay attention to the colors you use. Give your mind a break from thinking of anything except coloring.

