

Where Are You Going, Baby Lincoln?

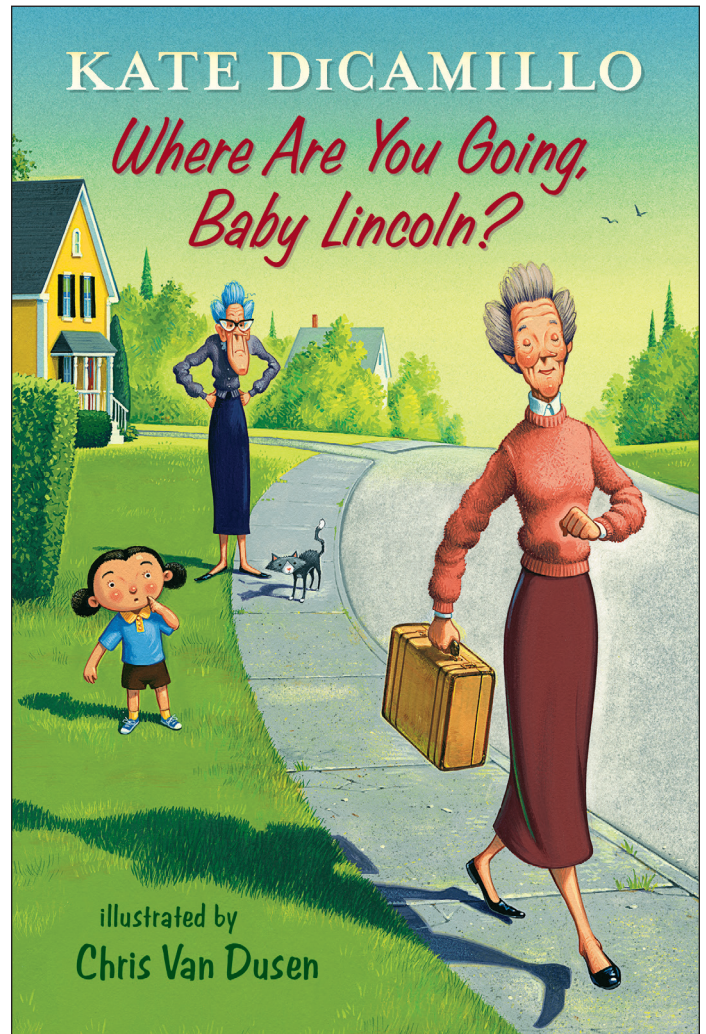
KATE DICAMILLO

illustrated by CHRIS VAN DUSEN



ABOUT THE BOOK

Baby Lincoln's older sister, Eugenia, is very fond of telling Baby what to do, and Baby usually responds by saying "Yes, Sister." But one day, Baby has had enough. She decides to depart on a necessary journey, even though she has never gone anywhere without Eugenia telling her what to take and where to go. Can Baby find the courage to strike out on her own and discover who she really is? And will her impulsive adventure take her away from Eugenia for good?



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Common Core Connections

Kate DiCamillo continues to deliver hilarity in *Where Are You Going, Baby Lincoln?*, the third installment in the Tales from Deckawoo Drive chapter-book series. This time the spotlight is on Baby Lincoln. This teachers' guide, with connections to the Common Core, includes an array of language arts activities, book discussions, vocabulary instruction, and more to accommodate the learning needs of most students in grades 1–3. Students are called upon to be careful readers without jeopardizing the pleasure they gain from reading. It is best to allow students to read the entire story before engaging in a detailed study of the work.

Notes throughout the guide correlate the discussion and activities to specific Common Core Language Arts Standards. For more information on specific standards for your grade level, visit the Common Core website at www.corestandards.org.

ABOUT THE TALES FROM DECKAWOO DRIVE SERIES

For fans of Mercy Watson books who are not quite ready to move on to Kate DiCamillo's middle grade novels, the Tales from Deckawoo Drive series serves as a bridge between the two.



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Baby Lincoln dreams of going on a “necessary journey,” then actually takes such a trip. Why do you think Baby Lincoln goes on this journey? What is so necessary about it? Do you think it’s odd that Baby doesn’t know where she is going?
2. Read aloud the last paragraph on page 16. What emotion is Baby experiencing when her “heart felt like a hummingbird in her chest”? Excitement? Nervousness? Fear? Make an argument for each of these feelings.
3. Why is Baby worried that Eugenia might be following her? Why is she also hopeful that Eugenia might be following her (page 18)?
4. Baby has only enough money to get to Fluxom. She says that “Fluxom did not sound like a shooting-star kind of place” (page 28). What kind of place do you think Baby is looking for? What might she mean by “a shooting-star kind of place”?
5. Who are the three people Baby meets on the train? How does each of them help Baby learn something about herself?
6. The man in the fur hat says that laughing “clears the sinuses and the soul in a very satisfying way” (page 34). What does he mean by that statement? Do you agree with him? What message does he want Baby to deliver to her sister?
7. Baby Lincoln’s real name is Lucille Abigail Eleanor Lincoln. Why does it feel strange for Baby to hear her own name? Why do you think Baby introduces herself to George as Lucille?
8. Why does Baby tell George she is reading the wrong story (page 69)? Does the story Baby pretends to read sound familiar? How? Do you think it works to calm George? In what way?
9. What makes Baby Lincoln want to go home? What happens when she gets off the train? How does Baby feel when she sees Eugenia? Do you think Eugenia is still protecting Baby? Explain.
10. Do you think that Baby and Eugenia’s relationship will change now that Baby has taken her necessary journey? How?

COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

Reading: Key Ideas and Details

RL.1.1–3.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

RL.1.2: Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.

RL.1.3–3.3: Describe characters and major events in a story.

Speaking & Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration

SL.1.1–3.1: Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade-specific topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.



LANGUAGE ARTS ACTIVITIES

A NECESSARY JOURNEY



Baby Lincoln discovers many things about herself on her necessary journey. Ask students if they have ever been on a family vacation. Did they experience new things and meet interesting people? Discuss how these life encounters help shape us as individuals. Then write the word *journey* on an overhead or chart paper. Discuss the fact that an author uses a multitude of vocabulary words to make his or her work more exciting. Have students call out other words (synonyms) for *journey* (e.g., *trip*, *adventure*, *excursion*, and so on) and write them down as well. Introduce students to a thesaurus if necessary to further

expand their word bank. Next ask students for words that describe (adjectives) a journey (e.g., *long*, *scary*, *interesting*, etc.) and create a separate list together.

Have the students write a story about their own necessary journey. The papers can be displayed on a bulletin board by stapling each story onto a sheet of construction paper. Turn the construction paper horizontally and staple the stories vertically so each piece of construction paper acts as a train car in a long boxcar train. Create the engine and tracks by using black and gray construction paper or markers. Another alternative is for students to decorate their papers with colorful drawings, pictures cut out of magazines, or even personal photos.

OH, THE PEOPLE YOU WILL MEET

Baby Lincoln meets three very different people on the train to Fluxom. Review who each one is and write the name of each character on a large piece of chart paper. Ask students how they would describe each person based on the character's role in the story (kind, scared, funny, and so on). Explain that these are character traits, or adjectives used to describe someone's personality.

COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

Writing: Text Types and Purposes

W.2.3: Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events; include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings; use temporal words to signal event order; and provide a sense of closure.



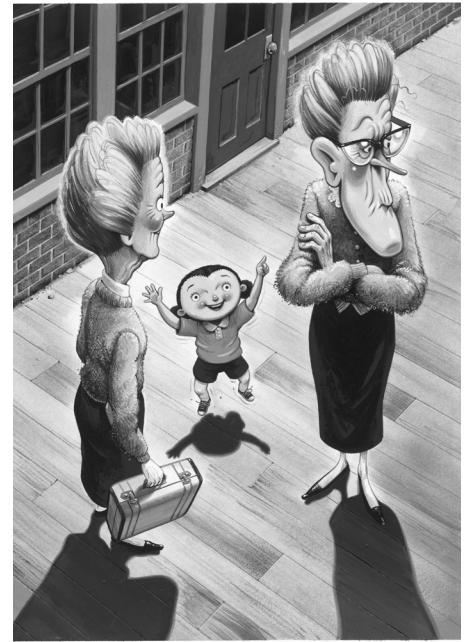
COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

Reading: Key Ideas and Details

RL.3.3: Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

Add Baby's, Eugenia's, and Stella's names to the chart paper. Have students brainstorm as many character traits as they can for each of these characters. Then have them pick their favorite character and draw an outline of the character's head and body. Ask students to illustrate their character's face in a way that reflects an appropriate character trait. Have them write the character's name in the body portion of the drawing, then write the character traits that apply to the character within the outlines of the arms and legs. Each drawing should have four character traits listed in the illustration.

As an extension activity or homework assignment, discuss how the character of Baby changes from the beginning of the story to the end. Have students draw two circles on a piece of paper and label one circle *Beginning* and the other *End*. Ask students to list the corresponding character traits for Baby inside the circles, grouping together traits from the start of the story and then from the end. Discuss how Baby transforms over the course of the story.



LUCILLE ABIGAIL ELEANOR LINCOLN

During the interaction between Sheila and Baby, we learn that Baby's real name is Lucille Abigail Eleanor Lincoln. Baby also explains how she got the name Baby. Ask students if any of them go by a nickname. Have them find out the history of their name. Were they named after anyone or anything? What is their middle name?

Sheila leaves Baby an assortment of jelly beans in a handkerchief monogrammed S.A.M. for Sheila Ann Marsden. If Baby had a monogrammed hankie, it would read L.A.E.L. As a class, create an acrostic poem using Baby's initials, L.A.E.L. (example: "Laughing Aloud Excursion Loving"). After this is done,

have students create an acrostic poem using their own initials. Ask them to be sure to use words that describe them and can also be illustrated. Display the acrostic poems around the room.



COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

Language: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L.2.5: Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- a. Identify real-life connections between words and their use.
- b. Distinguish shades of meaning among closely related verbs.

JELLY BEAN JOLLY, WHAT FOLLY!

Sheila Marsden shares her jelly beans with Baby. Even though Eugenia has always said they are bad for the teeth, Baby chooses a yellow one, and something remarkable happens. “She put the jelly bean in her mouth. It tasted like sunshine” (page 46). Ask the students if a yellow jelly bean can actually taste like sunshine. Can green taste like spring? Could white taste like snow? Why do you think the author makes these comparisons when talking about the taste of jelly beans? Baby also selects a purple jelly bean and a white one with yellow spots. What might these taste like?

Bring in a bag of jelly beans and divide them among the class (with the parents’ permission). Have students work in groups to think creatively about what each color could taste like. For example, purple could taste like lavender, and red might taste like a firecracker. Invite students to be as imaginative as possible and to have fun with their predictions. Instruct students to draw and color a picture of their jelly beans and record the various predicted tastes. Have each group select their favorite color and share their predicted flavor with the rest of the class. Allow students to enjoy eating their jelly beans once the activity is successfully concluded. Be sure to let students know that April 22 is National Jelly Bean Day!

GEORGE AND THE GREAT WIZARD

In an effort to calm George’s fear of wolves, Baby makes up a story for him. He disembarks the train before she gets to finish the tale. George writes to Lucille (Baby) asking for the rest of the story about the king and the great wizard Calaband Darsh.

Ask the students to finish Lucille’s story for George. Once complete, have them practice letter writing by writing to George. Instruct them to address a real envelope to him in care of Gertrude

Nissbaum in the city of Flatiron. Be creative about inventing the road that Aunt Gertrude lives on. The return address should read “Lucille Lincoln, 52 Deckawoo Drive, Gizzford (your own state and zip code).”



COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

Reading: Craft and Structure

RI.3.6: Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.



COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

Writing: Text Types and Purposes

W.3.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

- Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
- Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations.
- Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order.
- Provide a sense of closure.

THE INIMITABLE BABY LINCOLN

Baby Lincoln packs her library book, *The Inimitable Spigot*, in her suitcase for her necessary journey. As an introduction to teaching vocabulary, ask students to guess the definition of *inimitable*. Read them the true definition from a dictionary. Then ask the class why Baby doesn't think Henrik Spigot is very inimitable. Is Spigot similar to any other character from the story? Which one and how? Why did Baby select this library book to read? Do you think she will choose different types of books after her journey, and which kinds might those be? Discuss different genres of books: nonfiction, adventure, mystery, and so on. If Spigot isn't inimitable, who is? Is Baby inimitable? Have students write a paragraph entitled "The Inimitable Baby Lincoln" in which they describe all the qualities of Baby's that they admire most and think are worthy of copying.



COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

Reading: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RI.1.8: Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.

Language: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L.2.5: Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

VOCABULARY

Review the list of vocabulary words below. Ask students if they can guess each word's meaning by rereading it in context in the book. Then have them either use dictionaries to check the definition or define the word themselves. Have students use each word in a sentence of their own. You may wish to make this a homework assignment.



astounded (page 9)

dismay (page 63)

dispel (page 57)

infallible (page 21)

infestation (page 3)

lumbered (page 41)

resolute (page 4)

subdued (page 15)

vehement (page 57)

verge (page 3)

COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

Language: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L.2.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade-level reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.

a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.





ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kate DiCamillo, the author of six books about Mercy Watson, is the beloved and renowned author of many books for young readers, including *Flora & Ulysses* and *The Tale of Despereaux*, both of which won the Newbery Medal. She was the National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature for 2014–2015. She lives in Minneapolis.

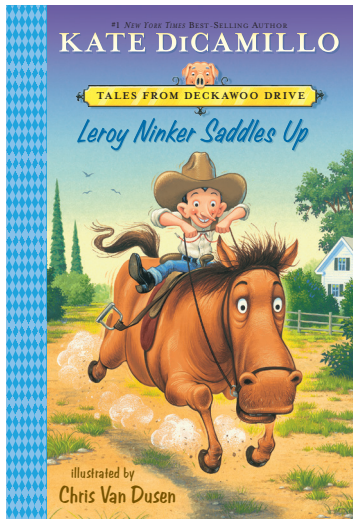


ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Chris Van Dusen is the author-illustrator of *Randy Riley’s Really Big Hit*, *The Circus Ship*, *King Hugo’s Huge Ego*, and *Hattie & Hudson*, and the illustrator of *President Taft Is Stuck in the Bath* and all six books about Mercy Watson. He lives in Maine.

Teachers’ guide written by Karen Cardillo,
freelance writer and educational consultant

Don't Miss the Rest of the Series!



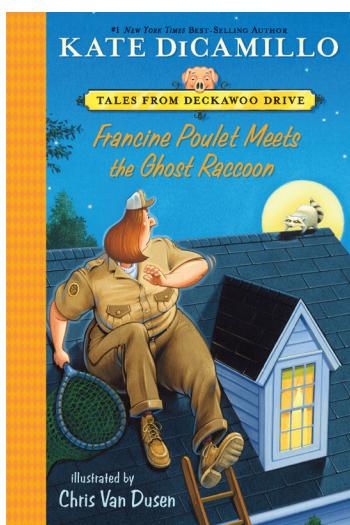
Leroy Ninker Saddles Up
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Visit www.mercywatson.com to learn more about the neighborhood of Deckawoo Drive, including its star, porcine wonder Mercy Watson, and the books all about her for younger readers. There is also a letter from Kate DiCamillo, information about her and illustrator Chris Van Dusen, teachers’ guides, and more!

Francine Poulet Meets the Ghost Raccoon

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