



TeachersFirst READING TREKS

Harriet the Spy

Teacher Guide

Access Reading
Trek Map

Grade Level & Content Areas

Ages: 9–12

Grades: 4–7

Reading Level: 5th grade

Lexile Measure: 760L

Guided Reading Level: T

Developmental Reading

Assessment (DRA): 50

Content Areas: Reading, literature, social studies, geography.

Synopsis of Book

Louise Fitzhugh's novel turned the children's literary world on its end by breaking gender stereotypes and touching on the topics of bullying, family dynamics, and just being different. Harriet records her thoughts about the people in her world and others that she spies on in her notebook. She is blatantly honest, even to the point of being cruel. When her friends and classmates read her notebook, her whole world changes, and Harriet must learn some painful life lessons.

Standards

Common Core State Standards for K–5

Reading: Literature

- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure

Writing

- Text Types and Purposes
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge
- Range of Writing

Common Core State Standards for 6–12

Reading: Literature

- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure

Writing

- Text Types and Purposes
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge
- Range of Writing

National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

- Theme 1: CULTURE
- Theme 2: TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE
- Theme 3: PEOPLE, PLACES, AND ENVIRONMENTS

National Core Arts Standards for Visual Arts

- CREATING
- RESPONDING

Using a TeachersFirst® Reading Trek to Explore This Book

TeachersFirst Reading Treks create a virtual field trip of resources about a piece of literature or a text using the My Maps feature of Google Maps. To motivate and enrich student reading, teachers and students can reference this visual collection of web resources and images as they relate to the contents of a book.

TeachersFirst has done the hard work for you! Use the activities in this teacher guide and the accompanying [Reading Trek map](#) as you and your students explore this book. And, if you feel inspired, you (or your students) can create your own Reading Trek about this or another book!

Using This Reading Trek in Class

Below is a list of ideas for how to use this Reading Trek in your educational setting.

Working with the Map:

1. Introduce the book to the whole class on an interactive whiteboard using the Reading Trek map and highlighting the layer for Harriet's important places, noting that many of the places named in the text actually exist today. Some places, such as Harriet's school, are based on the author's own experiences and may no longer exist but are similar to areas shown.
2. Introduce the concept of "spying" on others and discuss the moral and ethical consequences for such behavior and the dangers of prejudices formed from distant observations.
3. Play a game where students either listen to or read a dialog between two people and describe how the two characters look. This could be done in small groups with the class voting on the accuracy of the descriptions.

4. Use Smore ([TeachersFirst review](#)) to create a classroom newsletter with fictitious and gossip-filled articles, being certain to include a disclaimer about its nature.
5. Use Sutori ([TeachersFirst review](#)) to construct a virtual timeline of your students' lives as Harriet did. Check out the review for more ideas for using the tool.
6. Make a chocolate egg cream like the one Harriet orders in the story. In a large glass, combine $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk with 2–3 tablespoons of thick chocolate syrup (as used on ice cream sundaes), stirring well, then stir in 1 cup of cold seltzer water or club soda.

Extension Activities:

1. Use the Reading Trek to stimulate discussion, ask questions, or inspire writing prompts about traveling by subway, living in large cities compared to the suburbs or rural areas, or other topics.
2. Discuss the book's illustrations of: Mrs. Golly (17), Ole Golly (23), Agatha Plumber (44), Little Joe Curry (59), Mr. and Mrs. Robinson (67), Harrison Withers (72), Janie (77), Mr. Waldenstein (110), Mr. and Mrs. Welsch (124), Miss Berry (153), the stunned classmates (180-181), and Sport (241), as compared to those of Harriet (40, 55, 71, 133, 167, 173, 204, and 220).
3. Write a letter of encouragement to someone in another geographical area who is dealing with a stressful situation.
4. Create a book trailer about the book using Typito ([TeachersFirst review](#)).
5. Draw a picture of the Robinson's "Baby" sculpture (157).
6. Compare and contrast the Welsch family's previous and current neighborhoods. Consider using an interactive digital Venn Diagram ([TeachersFirst review](#)) for the comparison.

Helpful Resources

From TeachersFirst:

- [TeachersFirst CurriConnects Book List - Maps](#)
- [TeachersFirst Review of Google My Maps](#)
- [OK2Ask: Engage & Inspire with Reading Treks](#)

Other Resources:

- [Spying on Louise Fitzhugh](#).
- Book trailer examples found at [Kid Lit TV's Book Trailer Archives](#) or [Slime Kids](#).