



# TeachersFirst **READING TREKS**

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## Harriet the Spy

[TeachersFirst Reading Treks Link](#)

### **Synopsis of Book**

Louise Fitzhugh's book turned the children's literary world on 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 a few others that she spies upon 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. Harriet must learn some painful life lessons.

### **Using a TeachersFirst Reading Trek to Explore This Book**

TeachersFirst Reading Treks are a way of creating a virtual field trip of resources about a piece of literature or 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 a book.

TeachersFirst has done the hard work for you! Use the activities in this Instructional Guide and the accompanying Reading Trek 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!

### **Grade Level & Content Areas**

Grades 4-7, Ages 9-12. Guided Reading Level: T Lexile: 760L. DRA Level 50.  
Reading, literature, social studies, geography.

### **Common Core State Standards for K-6**

#### **Reading**

- **Literature** (key ideas and details and craft and structure)

## Writing

- **Text Types and Purposes** (to support claims with evidence and to write narratives)
- **Research** (to build and present knowledge)
- **Range of Writing** (to write routinely over time in reflection)

## ISTE: Student Standards

- (1) Empowered Learner: Students leverage technology to take an active role in choosing, achieving and demonstrating competency in their learning goals, informed by the learning sciences.
- (3) Knowledge Constructor: Students critically curate a variety of resources using digital tools to construct knowledge, produce creative artifacts and make meaningful learning experiences for themselves and others.
- (6) Creative Communicator: Students communicate clearly and express themselves creatively for a variety of purposes using the platforms, tools, styles, formats and digital media appropriate to their goals.

## National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

- **Theme: CULTURE**
- **Theme: TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE**
- **Theme: PEOPLE, PLACES, AND ENVIRONMENT**

## National Core Arts Standards for Visual Arts

- **CREATING**
- **RESPONDING**

## Using the Reading Trek in Class

This title has connections to culture, people, places, and environment; additionally, this text has history connections in the realm of time, continuity, and change.

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 upon the author's own experiences and may have been razed, or are similar to areas shown.
2. Introduce the concept of "spying" on others and discuss the moral and ethical consequences for such behavior as well as the dangers of prejudices formed from such observations.
3. Play a game of either listening to or reading a dialog between two people and describe how the two characters may have looked. This could be done in small groups with the class voting on the accuracy of the descriptions.

4. Use [Printing Press \(TeachersFirst review\)](#) from ReadWriteThink to create a classroom newspaper with fictitious and gossip-filled articles, being certain to include a disclaimer about its nature.
5. Construct a virtual timeline using [Timeline \(TeachersFirst review\)](#) by ReadWriteThink of your students' lives as Harriet did. (If you'd like to learn more about using timelines with your students watch TeachersFirst's 90 minute OK2Ask free webinars [Tech Integration Made Easy with Sutori](#) or [3 Cool Tools for Timelines.](#))
6. Make Chocolate Egg Creams. In a large glass, combine ½ cup milk with 2-3 Tablespoons thick chocolate syrup (as used on ice cream sundaes), stirring well, and then stir in 1 cup cold seltzer water or club soda.

## Additional Activities

1. Use the Reading Trek to stimulate discussion and ask questions or for writing prompts about traveling by subway, living in large cities as compared to the suburbs or rural areas, etc.
2. Discuss the illustrations from the text of:  
Mrs. Golly (page 17), Ole Golly (page 23), Agatha Plumber (page 44), Little Joe Curry (page 59), Mr. and Mrs. Robinson (page 67), Harrison Withers (page 72), Janie (page 77), Mr. Waldenstein (page 110), Mr. and Mrs. Welsch (page 124), Miss Berry (page 153), the stunned classmates (pages 180-181), and Sport (page 241), as compared to those of Harriet (pages 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 [Bitable \(TeachersFirst review\)](#).
5. Draw a picture of the Robinson's "Baby" sculpture.
6. Compare and contrast the Welsch family's previous and current neighborhoods. Consider using this interactive digital [Venn Diagram \(TeachersFirst review\)](#) for the comparison.

## Helpful Resources

- [Spying on Louise Fitzhugh.](#)
- Book trailer examples found at [Kid Lit TV's Book Trailer Archives](#) or [Slime Kids](#).
- [TeachersFirst CurriConnects Book List - Maps](#)
- [TeachersFirst Review of Google My Maps](#)
- [OK2Ask: Google MANIA - Google Maps: Make Learning a Journey with Reading Treks](#)