

NEWBERY MEDALIST

Jerry Spinelli

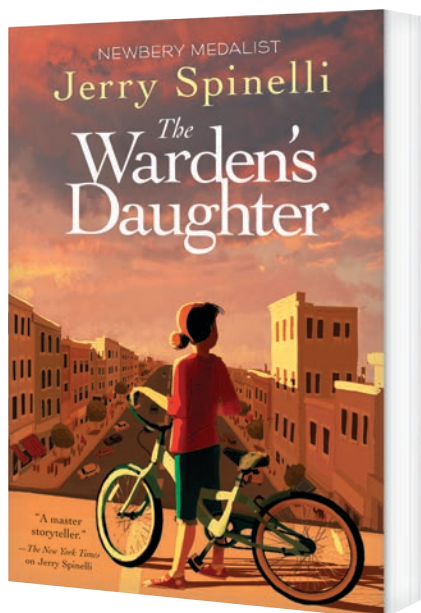
The
Warden's
Daughter



EDUCATORS' GUIDE

Includes Common Core Standards Correlations





Grades 4–7

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ABOUT THE BOOK

Cammie O'Reilly is the warden's daughter, living in an apartment above the entrance to the Hancock County Prison. But she's also living in a prison of grief for the mother who died saving her from harm when she was just a baby. And prison has made her mad. This girl's nickname is Cannonball.

In the summer of 1959, as twelve turns to thirteen, everything is in flux. Cammie's best friend is discovering lipstick and *American Bandstand*. A child killer is caught and brought to her prison. And the mother figures in her life include a flamboyant shoplifter named Boo Boo and a sullen reformed arsonist of a housekeeper. All will play a role in Cammie's coming of age. But one in particular will make a staggering sacrifice to ensure that Cammie breaks free from her past.

Master storyteller Jerry Spinelli spins a tale of loss and redemption like no other. *The Warden's Daughter* shows that kindness and compassion can often be found where we least expect it.

PRAISE FOR THE WARDEN'S DAUGHTER


★ "A tapestry of grief and redemption, woven by a master storyteller . . . Moving and memorable ." —*Kirkus Review*, Starred

★ "The prison community is a powerful backdrop for Cammie's turbulent coming of age, populated with messy lives that brighten in Cammie's presence but that have their own demons to tame." —*Bulletin*, Starred

★ "Spinelli again shows his mastery at evoking a particular time and place while delving into the heart of a troubled adolescent . . ." —*Publishers Weekly*, Starred

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Engage the class in a discussion of books they have read in which the main character is dealing with issues related to growing up. Perhaps it's a changing relationship with parents and friends. Maybe it's physical. Have them write a two-page paper about one or more of the main characters in their chosen book and how they respond to these changes. Allow time in class for students to share their writing. How many novels were named? Discuss how some changes apply to the lives of most adolescents.

 *Correlates with Common Core Standard Writing: Text Types and Purposes W5-8.1, 6.5-8.2; Production and Distribution of Writing 5-8.4; Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration SL 5-8.1, 5-8.2; Language: Conventions of Standard English L 5-8.1, L 5-8.2, Knowledge of Language L 5-8.5.*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Trace the various emotions that Cammie experiences over the course of the novel. Debate whether these emotions are the result of growing into adolescence or her search for a mother.

Cammie is well known in Two Mills as the warden's daughter. Why are Cammie's friends fascinated with the prison? Reggie, Cammie's best friend, wants to meet Marvin Edward Baker, the most famous prisoner, because he murdered a sixteen-year-old girl. Explain why Cammie introduces Reggie to the murdered girl's mother.

Describe Cammie's relationship with Reggie and the other jailbirds. The jailbirds seem to be embracing adolescence. How does Cammie reject it? Explain why Cammie kicks them out of her birthday party. Reggie doesn't seem to carry a grudge. How long does it take for the others to move past the incident at the birthday party?

Cammie's mother was hit and killed by a milk truck when Cammie was a baby. How does she grieve for the mother she never knew? She picks Eloda Pupko, a prison trustee, to be her surrogate mother. "I needed her to want me as I wanted her." (p. 134) Think about Cammie's behavior and her plan to accomplish this feat. Why is Eloda outwardly reluctant? Describe the scenes when Eloda finally acts maternally toward Cammie.

Cammie gives five-year-old Andrew Strong a ride on the crossbar of her bicycle. Explain what she means when she says, "I was surprised. That a little kid could turn a Tuesday into such a beautiful day." (p. 162) Debate the Strong's' reaction to Cammie. Andrew comes to see Cammie at the prison, but Eloda says, "He goes . . . out." (p. 188) Discuss what Cammie means when she says, "The hurt both startled and thrilled me." (p. 190)

Discuss why Cammie is so taken by Boo Boo, a prisoner who she believes is incarcerated for shoplifting. Boo Boo commits suicide. Explain why Cammie goes to the funeral. Why is she so surprised to learn that Boo Boo was lying to her?

Debate what Cammie means when she says, "You don't ever see [your story]. You simply *feel*." (p. 207) Why do we require distance from a situation to really see it? Discuss how long it takes Cammie to see what is happening to her. How does returning to Two Mills at the end of the novel bring Cammie's struggle full circle?

Toward the end of the novel, Cammie buries her baseball glove and throws her bicycle into the river. What do these actions symbolize?

Explain the following metaphor: "I'm picking lint from the sleeve of memory." (p. 281) What is the lint? What is the memory?

Why does Eloda send Cammie to the corner where her mother was killed? Debate the meaning of the following: “No mother is finally buried until her child climbs out of the grave.” (p. 283) At what point does Cammie climb out of the grave and bury her mother?

Cammie’s father says of Eloda, “Fixing you was her way of fixing herself.” (p. 311) Explain how Eloda fixed herself by helping Cammie. Discuss why the warden waited to tell Cammie that Eloda had extended her sentence to take care of her. Why do you think Eloda and her family leave town after she is released?

The climax is the turning point in the story. What is the climax of Cammie’s story? The falling action leads toward the conclusion.

🕒 *Discussion questions correlate to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Key Ideas & Details RL. 5-8.1, RL. 5-8.5; Craft & Structure RL. 5-8.4, RL. 5-8.5, RL. 5-8.6; Integration of Knowledge & Ideas RL. 5-8.9; Speaking & Listening: Comprehension & Collaboration SL. 5-8.1, SL. 5-8.5; Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas SL. 5-8.6; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 5-8.1; Knowledge of Language L. 5-8.5.*

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Simile is a type of figurative language that compares things using “like” or “as.” For example, “Fringed shawls draped the furniture like peacock tails.” (p. 151) Ask students to find other examples of simile in the novel. Then have them write a simile that describes the prison at the end of the novel when Cammie returns with her granddaughter.

🕒 *Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Language: Vocabulary & Use of Language L. 5-8.5.*

Turning thirteen is a difficult time for both parent and child. Most psychologists advise parents to remain patient as their “new” teen makes the journey. Write an essay that discusses how Cammie’s father is patient with her. Cite specific passages from the book to support your argument.

Identify scenes in the falling action. Debate whether Cammie is satisfied with the conclusion.

The novel is written as a retrospective narrative. At what point does the reader realize that Cammie is an adult looking back on her life? Why is this an effective way to present Cammie’s story?

What makes Cammie’s father realize that it’s time to give her Eloda’s diary? Discuss why Eloda wanted Cammie to have the diary. Explain the inclusion of the diary entries at the end of the book. What does Eloda’s diary reveal?

Explain the line “*Be still and mind the butterflies.*” (p. 340) Debate whether Cammie has learned to mind the butterflies in her life.

🕒 *Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-8.1; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 5-8.1, L. 5-8.2; Knowledge of Language L. 5-8.5.*

The accident that killed Cammie’s mother was the most famous accident in Two Mills. Write a front-page newspaper article the day after the accident. Interview the milk truck driver and witnesses. Remember to include who, what, when, where, why, and how.

🕒 *Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-8.2; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 5-8.1, L. 5-8.2; Knowledge of Language L. 5-8.5.*

Cammie loves baseball, but she couldn’t play Little League because girls weren’t allowed. Ellie, her granddaughter, plays shortstop for the Blue Sox Little League team. Ask students to read about the

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS (CONTINUED)

landmark case that allowed girls to play Little League on the following website: momsteam.com/sports/baseball/general/landmark-decision-allowed-girls-to-play-little-league. Then have them write a letter that Cammie might write to Sylvia Pressler, the plaintiff in the case, that congratulates her on winning. Consider including Cammie's Little League disappointment and her granddaughter's success.

🕒 *Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-7.3; Research to Build and Present Knowledge W. 5-7.8; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 5-8.1, L. 5-8.2; Knowledge of Language L. 5-8.5.*

Cammie says, "When you're *inside* your own story, you don't see things like a reader." (p. 208) Write a letter to Cammie that lets her know how you as a reader see her story. Relate your own feelings about growing up.

🕒 *Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-8.5; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 5-8.1, L. 5-8.2; Knowledge of Language L. 5-8.5.*

At the end of the novel, Cammie says, "I discovered Chester T. O'Reilly." (p. 301) Write a personal essay called "My Father" that she might have written at the beginning of seventh grade.

🕒 *Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-8.5; Language:*

Conventions of Standard English L. 5-8.1, L. 5-8.2; Knowledge of Language L. 5-8.5.

Ask students to jot down some of the changes Cammie's father made at the prison. Then have them research prison conditions today: hrw.org/legacy/advocacy/prisons/u-s.htm. Ask them to write an article for *Corrections*, a monthly journal for prison administrators, that Cammie's father might write about prison conditions today and what he would do to change them.

🕒 *Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-8.2, Research to Build & Present Knowledge W. 5-8.7, W. 5-8.8; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 5-8.1, L. 5-8.2; Knowledge of Language L. 5-8.5.*

Read *Hokey Pokey* by Jerry Spinelli, and stage a dialogue between Jack and Cammie about their journeys toward adolescence. Compare and contrast Jack's relationship with Jubilee and Cammie's with Danny Lapella. How are their journeys similar? How are they different? What advice might they give to those dealing with identical issues related to growing up?

🕒 *Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Integration of Knowledge & Ideas RL. 5-8.9; Speaking & Listening: Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas SL. 5-8.4, SL. 5-8.6; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 5-8.1; Knowledge of Language L. 5-8.5*

VOCABULARY/USE OF LANGUAGE

Students should be encouraged to jot down unfamiliar words and try to define them, taking clues from the context. Such words may include: *audible* (p. 10), *calculation* (p. 13), *unprecedented* (p. 19), *colossal* (p. 22), *pallid* (p. 27), *sanctuary* (p. 39), *potentate* (p. 45), *perp* (p. 73), *stalemate* (p. 93), *arraignment* (p. 93), *condescension* (p. 102), *nexus* (p. 115), *retinue* (p. 122), *dissipated* (p. 140), *combust* (p. 143), *obstinate* (p. 161), *emissary* (p. 167), *delirium* (p. 170), *cordite* (p. 178), *rebuking* (p. 181), *prattle* (p. 184), *emboldened* (p. 197), *infatuation* (p. 214), *balustrade* (p. 224), *ethereal* (p. 235), *peripheral* (p. 241), *demonic* (p. 273), *calibrated* (p. 278), and *levity* (p. 315).

🕒 *Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Language: Vocabulary & Use of Language L. 5-8.4.*

INTERNET RESOURCES

museum.tv/eotv/americanband.htm

This site relates the history and success of *American Bandstand*.

littleleague.org/learn/newsletters/LittleLeaguer/2015/11february1/girls-who-made-llbws-history.htm

This site celebrates the girls who have made Little League World Series history.

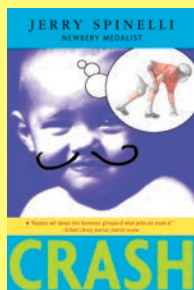
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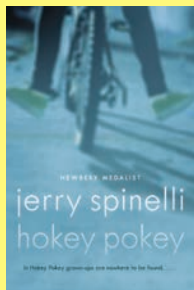
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JERRY SPINELLI is the author of many books for young readers, including *Stargirl*; *Love, Stargirl*; *Milkweed*; *Crash*; *Hokey Pokey*; *Wringer*; and *Maniac Magee*, winner of the Newbery Medal; along with *Knots in My Yo-yo String*, his autobiography. A graduate of Gettysburg College, he lives in Pennsylvania with his wife, poet and author Eileen Spinelli.

ALSO BY JERRY SPINELLI



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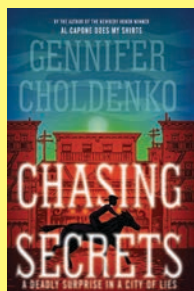


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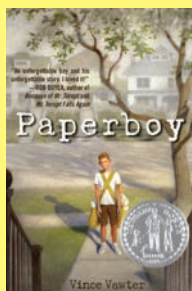
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Prepared by Pat Scales, Children's Literature Consultant, Greenville, SC

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