

HARPERCOLLINS PRESENTS

# CLASS ACTS

FICTION IN THE CLASSROOM

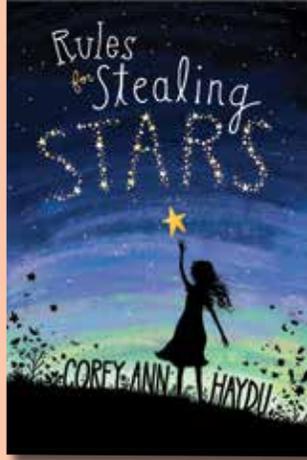
## Rules for Stealing Stars

by Corey Ann Haydu

Silly is used to feeling left out. Her three older sisters think she's too little for most things—especially when it comes to dealing with their mother's unpredictable moods and outbursts. But for Silly, that's normal. She hardly remembers a time when Mom wasn't sick.

This summer, Silly is more alone than ever, and it feels like everyone around her is keeping secrets. Mom is sick all the time, Dad acts like everything's fine when clearly it isn't, and Silly's sisters keep whispering and sneaking away to their rooms together, returning with signs that something mysterious is afoot, and giggling about jokes that Silly doesn't understand.

When Silly is brought into her sisters' world, the truth is more exciting than she ever imagined. The sisters have discovered a magical place that gives them what they truly need: an escape from the complications of their home life. But there are dark truths there, too. Silly hopes the magic will be the secret to saving their family, but she's soon forced to wonder if it just might tear them apart.



### MEET THE AUTHOR

Corey Ann Haydu is the author of three acclaimed novels for teens. This is her first book for younger readers. She lives in Brooklyn, New York, and is a graduate of the New School MFA program. Find out more at [www.coreyannhaydu.com](http://www.coreyannhaydu.com).

#### Common Core State Standards

In this activity, students work on Common Core reading standards related to the theme and characters in this novel. They also practice Common Core writing skills related to explanatory writing. Specific standards are listed in parentheses at the end of each part of the activity.

**SETTING THE STAGE:** In advance, gather enough picture books of well-known fairy tales so that you have one for each group of four students. Give each group a book and a chart labeled as shown. Then write the word *theme* on the board. Explain that the theme is the lesson, moral, or message about life or human nature that a reader can gather from a story. Challenge each group to read its fairy tale and fill in the chart to identify the tale's theme. Explain that the last section of the chart should tell what the characters do or say that demonstrate the lesson they learned. Provide time for groups to share their completed charts with the class. (RL.4.1, 2; RL.5.1, 2; RL.6.1, 2; SL.4.1; SL.5.1; SL.6.1)

Title:

Theme/Message:

Text Details that Support the Theme:

**ACTIVITY:** After reading chapters 1–4, have small groups of students list the problems Silly and her family are facing (for example, the family has had to move, the mother is ill, Silly feels left out by her older sisters, etc.). Point out that authors use problems, or conflict, to move a plot forward and get across the story's theme. After discussing their lists, give each student several copies of the graphic organizer and a folder in which to store them. Explain that students will use the organizer to help them identify how the main characters—Silly, Marla, Eleanor, and Astrid—think about and deal with the conflicts they are facing. They will then use that information to identify a theme from the book. At the end of the book, have students look back over their completed organizers to identify the major theme of the book. Provide time for students to share their opinions about the theme and the supporting text evidence. If desired, have each student label a large index card with the theme she identified and an illustration. Post the cards on a closet door or wall in your classroom so students can compare their ideas. (RL.4.1-3; RL.5.1-3; RL.6.1-3)

**WRITING ABOUT THE TEXT:** Have each student draw a large Venn diagram on a sheet of art paper. Then have the student fill in the diagram with information about two of the four sisters in the story, using the graphic organizers from the previous activity. Once the diagram is complete, have the student use it to write an explanatory paragraph or essay that compares and contrasts the two sisters. (RL.4.3; RL.5.3; RL.6.3; W.4.2; W.5.2; W.6.2)

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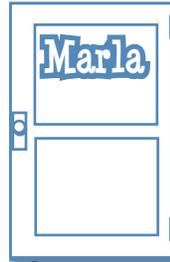
## Escape to the Closets

As you read, fill in each part of the organizer with information from the text. Then complete the box at the bottom of the page.

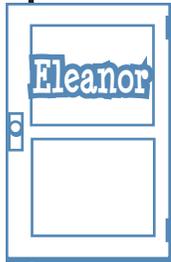
Reading assignment: \_\_\_\_\_



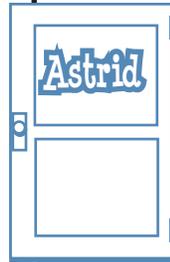
What does she do, think, or say?



What does she do, think, or say?



What does she do, think, or say?



What does she do, think, or say?

What lesson did one or more of the sisters learn in this section of the book?