

LEMONY SNICKET

"When Did You See Her Last?"

Curriculum connections

- ❖ Detective Stories
- ❖ Character Development
- ❖ Friendship

Ages: 9 & Up

Written by
Lemony Snicket

Art by Seth



PRE-READING ACTIVITY:

As a pre-reading activity, have students complete an anticipation guide structured in the following manner:

Before Reading	After Reading	Statements
		Asking the wrong questions is a worthless endeavor.
		All mysteries are worth solving.
		Being right is the most important thing.
		Adults always know the right way to approach a problem.

Instruct students to complete the guide by placing a “+” sign in the box next to the statements for which they agree, and a “0” next to those for which they disagree. They must commit to agreement or disagreement—there are no conditional responses. Students should be assured that there are no correct or incorrect positions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. At the beginning of Chapter One of “*When Did You See Her Last?*”, Lemony Snicket states, “There was a town, and there was a statue, and there was a person who had been kidnapped.” In your opinion, how does this opening set the stage for the events to come? Based on this introduction, what do you predict will be the most challenging obstacles Lemony Snicket will have to face in this installment of *All The Wrong Questions*?
2. Given what you’ve learned about him, describe Lemony Snicket. In your opinion, what makes him a dynamic character?

3. Consider the novel’s cover art. In what ways are the images represented symbolic for the events that transpire throughout the course of the book?
4. What does Zada and Zora’s concern for the whereabouts of Miss Knight indicate about the relationship between the servants of the Knight family and their charge? Compare their reaction to disappearance of Cleo to that of Cleo’s parents.
5. What was your earliest impression of Dr. Flamarion? Using examples from the text, support your position.
6. Consider the town of Stain’d-by-the-Sea. How does this installment of *All the Wrong Questions* help shape your vision of this community and its residents?
7. Do you find S. Theodora Markson to be a positive role model to Lemony Snicket? Why or why not? How do you perceive her chaperoning skills?
8. What do you think of Lemony’s clandestine relationship with his sister? Why do you believe the two of them must be secretive about their activities?
9. In your opinion, what type of villain is Hangfire? What do you believe motivates him?
10. What role does Moxie play in Lemony’s life? Do you think their relationship has changed any over the course of the two novels?
11. Consider the unusual cast of secondary characters; who did you like the most? The least? For what reason? Of all of the characters, who did you feel was most similar to you due to his/her personality or experiences?
12. Explain the significance of the title, “*When Did You See Her Last?*”. In your opinion, does it accurately describe the events and relationships portrayed in the novel?
13. The book is told in first person by Lemony Snicket; if you could have a different character telling the story, who would it be and why?

- Using the phrase, “This is a story about...” supply five words to describe this book. Explain your choices.
- As the novel closes, Lemony Snicket has solved a number of important mysteries, yet he states, “I didn’t know where I fit in, but I had an occupation. I wasn’t certain of anything, but I had a job to do.” Do you feel it is important that Lemony understands the work he needs to do? Why or why not?
- Based on the events of “*When Did You See Her Last?*”, predict what mystery Lemony Snicket will attempt to solve in the next installment of *All the Wrong Questions*.

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS:

Exploring “*When Did You See Her Last?*” through Writing

The story focuses on Lemony Snicket and his relationships with his associates. Lemony considers individuals he trusts as his associates. Think about the qualities Lemony values in an associate. Who would you consider an associate? Compose a personal journal entry where you share your thoughts, and be sure to answer the following questions:

- Who are the individuals you trust?
- What makes these individuals so exceptional?
- What’s the greatest sacrifice you’ve made for the people you love?
- In what ways have the changes you’ve experienced in your life affected those to whom you are closest.

To culminate, ask for volunteers to share their writing with the class.

Throughout the course of the novels, readers are offered great insight about Lemony’s experiences based on the events of “*When Did You See Her Last?*”. Assume the role of Lemony Snicket. Draft a diary entry as Lemony detailing a mystery. It can be made up or it can be something you experienced and witnessed. To prepare, create an outline using the five W’s (who, what, when, where, and why).

Remember to write in first person and give special attention to sensory imagery (what you saw, smelled, heard, etc.)

Making Meaning by Exploring the Story’s Settings

Consider the variety of settings for “*When Did You See Her Last?*” and why is each of these places important? Using the descriptions provided in the book, illustrate the four places you believe to be most important to the story. In addition to the illustrations, include a short explanation of the significance of each, and why you believe it is important.

Considering Character

The purpose of this strategy is to help students demonstrate knowledge of a character in “*When Did You See Her Last?*” by following written prompts to complete a poem about the individual. Students can be given the prompts to follow on a worksheet or alternatively, students may create an original slideshow using PowerPoint, Prezi, or Movie Maker.

“I AM” POEM

FIRST STANZA:

I am (name the character)
I wonder (something the character is actually curious about)
I hear (an imaginary sound the character might hear) I see (an imaginary sight the character might see) I want (something the character truly desires)

SECOND STANZA:

I pretend (something the character actually pretends to do)
I feel (a feeling about something imaginary)
I touch (an imaginary touch)
I worry (something that really bothers the character)
I cry (something that makes the character very sad)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

THIRD STANZA:

I understand (something the character knows is true)
I say (something that the character believes in)
I dream (something the character might actually dream about)



“When Did You See Her Last?”

I try (something the character really make an effort about)

I hope (something the character actually hopes for)

I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

BIOPOEM

Line 1: First name _____

Line 2: Three traits that describe yourself

Line 3: Relative of _____

Line 4: Lover of _____
_____ (three things)

Line 5: Who feels _____
_____ (three things)

Line 6: Who needs _____
_____ (three things)

Line 7: Who fears _____
_____ (three things)

Line 8: Who gives _____
_____ (three things)

Line 9: Who would like to see _____
_____ (three things)

Line 10: Resident of _____

Line 11: Last name _____

Ask students to describe one of the problems faced by a character in the book and write advice to him/her. Students may choose to be serious or humorous. Use the letter format common to newspaper advice columns, where the person with the problem writes for advice and the advisor writes back. Often the person seeking advice “disguises” his or her name with a descriptive name associated with the problem.

Have students select five or more gifts that would be perfect to give to one of the characters; while these gifts can be tangible or intangible, they should be things that he/she would really want or need. Be sure for each gift, an explanation for the gift and why it is appropriate is attached.

Ask students to examine the ethical nature of a character’s actions and choices. Have them set up a “report card” using a chart and include the following categories: respect, responsibility, cooperation, caring, integrity, self-control, honesty, and effort. In addition, include a teacher’s comments section. In each category, give the character a letter grade that you believe he/she deserves based on actions and choices made in the book. In “comments”, use two specific pieces of evidence from the novel to explain/support the grade.

The Importance of Language

The language that an author uses in his work is essential to getting across the intended meaning. Select four quotes from “*When Did You See Her Last?*” that signify key ideas the author hopes readers take from the text. These might be quotes spoken by characters or might be from the narration, and page numbers should be included with the quotes. Have students develop a chart with the following four columns:

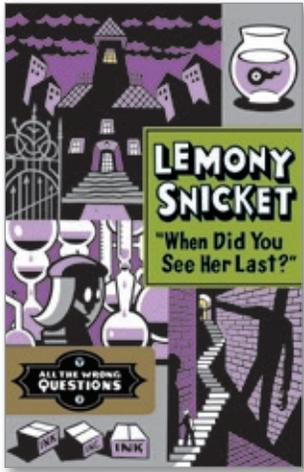
- Quote
- Page Number
- Relevance to the Novel
- Intended Meaning for Readers

The intended meaning should have relevance not only to the characters in the text, but to the lives of anyone who reads the book.



“When Did You See Her Last?”

about the book



“WHEN DID YOU SEE HER LAST?”

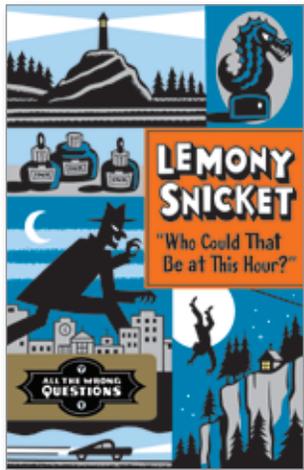
by Lemony Snicket

HC 978-0-316-12305-1 • PB 978-0-316-33684-0

Also available in e-book and audio formats

In the fading town of Stain’d-by-the-Sea, young apprentice Lemony Snicket has a new case to solve when he and his chaperone are hired to find a missing girl. Is the girl a runaway? Or was she kidnapped? Was she seen last at the grocery store? Or could she have stopped at the diner? Is it really any of your business? These are All The Wrong Questions.

also by Lemony Snicket

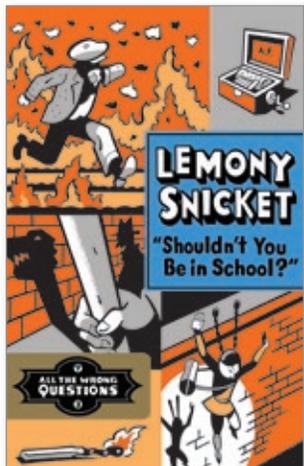


“WHO COULD IT BE AT THIS HOUR?”

by Lemony Snicket

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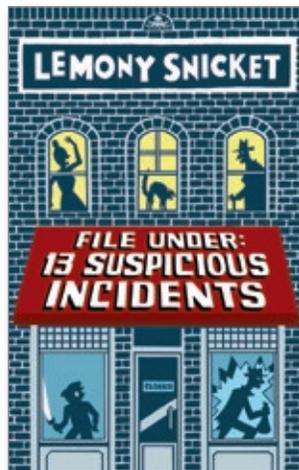


“SHOULDN'T YOU BE IN SCHOOL?”

by Lemony Snicket

HC 978-0-316-12306-8

Also available as a downloadable audio and eBook formats



FILE UNDER:

13 SUSPICIOUS INCIDENTS

by Lemony Snicket

HC 978-0-316-28403-5

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about the author



Photo © Meredith Heuer

Lemony Snicket was once referred to as a missing person by someone who knew where he was all along. He is also referred to as the author of the 13 volumes in A Series of Unfortunate Events, and “Who Could That Be at This Hour?” the first in a four book series collectively known as *All The Wrong Questions*. Visit him at LemonySnicketLibrary.com

about the illustrator



Photo © David Briggs

Seth has undergone and portrayed many dire circumstances. His multi-award-winning talents are evident in cartoons, graphic novels, and a barbershop located in the city of Guelph, Canada, where he resides. His two-color illustrations will appear throughout the *All the Wrong Questions* series.



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This guide was created by Dr. Rose Brock, a teacher and school librarian in Coppell, Texas. Dr. Brock holds a Ph.D. in Library Science, specializing in children's and young adult literature.