

# HATTIE EVER AFTER

educators guide



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INCLUDES COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS CORRELATIONS

# LOOKING AT LITERARY ELEMENTS

## FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Larson describes San Francisco in the following simile: “The two-and-three-story flats lining either side of Union Street looked like grand ships, with bay-window prows sailing out over the sidewalk.” (p. 51) Find other examples of simile in the novel and share in class. Write a simile that describes places like the “morgue,” the Fairmont Hotel, the Great Beach Highway, or the aerial view of San Francisco.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Craft and Structure RL.7.4; Writing: Text Types and Purposes W.7.1.

## VOCABULARY AND USE OF LANGUAGE

Encourage students to jot down unfamiliar words and try to define them taking clues from the context. Then have them use a dictionary to check their definition and a thesaurus to supply an appropriate synonym for each word.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Language: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use L.7.4a, 7.4c, and 7.4d.

## FORESHADOWING

Foreshadowing is a literary device of applying subtle hints about how the story may unfold. Explain what the old lady at Ruby’s apartment means when she says, “You can try her [Ruby], but not as much as she will try you.” How does this statement foreshadow Ruby (p. 53) as a troublemaker and criminal? Find other examples of foreshadowing in the book and discuss in class.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details RL.7.3; Craft and Structure RL.7.4; Speaking and Listening: Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas SL.7.4.

## CHARACTER ANALYSIS

The novel is set in 1919, but Hattie’s internal and external struggles are timeless. Write a diary entry where Hattie expresses her internal conflict after seeing Charlie in San Francisco. Then locate a contemporary work of fiction where the main character experiences a similar conflict. Write a brief essay that compares the conflict of both main characters.

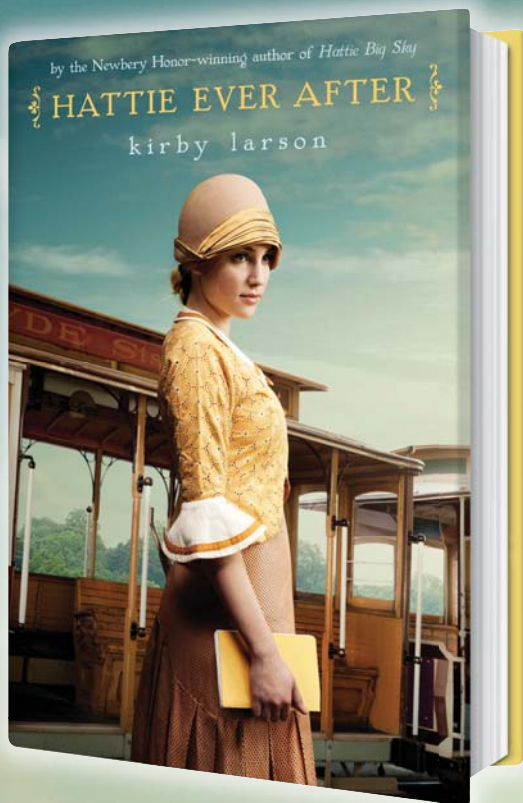
Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details RL.7.3; Integration of Knowledge and Ideas RL.7.7.

## THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

As a class discuss the prevalent themes in the novel. For example, the need to belong and achieve are central themes. Divide the class into small groups and ask each group to find quotes throughout the novel that illustrates one of the themes. Each group should report their work in class.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details RL.7.1, 7.2.

# ABOUT THE BOOK



It's 1919 and Hattie Brooks has finally paid off Uncle Chester's debt by working in Mrs. Brown's boarding house in Great Falls, Montana. Perilee, her friend from the homestead, wants Hattie to join her family in Seattle, but Hattie has a taste of independence and wants to discover more in life. Then "The Venturing Varietals," a traveling acting troupe, comes to town and offers Hattie a chance to accompany them to San Francisco as wardrobe mistress. She realizes this complicates her relationship with Charlie, her beau who is recently home from the war, but Hattie accepts the job in hopes that it will get her closer to her real dream of becoming a big-city newspaper reporter. She resigns from the troupe when she lands a cleaning job at the *Chronicle*. This ultimately leads to reporting opportunities, but not without personal disappointments and sacrifice.

Ages 12 up • Ω  
HC: 978-0-385-73746-3  
GLB: 978-0-385-90668-5  
EL: 978-0-307-97968-1

## PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Establish historical context for the novel by asking students to use books in the library or sites on the Internet to identify national and global events in 1919. Remind them to properly record their sources. As a class, construct and display a time line that highlights the most important events. Encourage students to refer to this time line as they read the novel.

Correlate to Common Core Standard Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge W. 7.7, 7.8, 7.9; History/Social Studies: Key Ideas and Details RH. 6-8.1, 6-8.2.

## QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

Hattie tells Charlie that her time on the homestead changed her just as the war changed him. What are the most significant changes in Hattie? How do these changes perplex Charlie? Explain how the war changed Charlie.

Discuss what Hattie means when she says that she sometimes wishes she were like other girls. How is she different from most girls of her generation? Explain the conflict between Hattie's head and heart.

Hattie says, "Six long lonely months here in Great Falls had provided ample time to piece together new hopes." (p. 5) What are Hattie's hopes? How does she prepare for her dreams? Why is it so important for her to find her place in the world?

Cite evidence from the novel that Hattie has "backbone," a trait that she inherited from her mother. Discuss whether "backbone" is the same as courage. What is Hattie's most courageous act?

Describe San Francisco through Hattie's eyes. How is she unprepared to deal with the city? Compare and contrast the skills it takes to survive the city and the homestead. Which is more difficult for Hattie?

What is Hattie's initial impression of Ruby Danvers? Debate whether she is blinded by the need to find a friend like Perilee. Discuss the conversation between Hattie and the old lady at Ruby's apartment house. How is the lady wise to Ruby's ways?

Hattie is naïve about relationships. How does this make her vulnerable to betrayal? What is the first clue that Ruby is betraying Hattie? Cite evidence that Charlie may have suspicions about Ruby. How does Ned betray Hattie? Explain how Hattie feels betrayed by Uncle Chester. Discuss how she copes with such betrayal.

Explain what Hattie means when she says, "I would close up Pandora's box." (p. 156) How does her discovery affect her pride? She wants to tell Charlie all about her discovery of Uncle Chester's guilt, but is afraid she has built a "fence" between them. What might she say to Charlie?

Why is Mr. Monson so interested in the "Female 49ers" stories? How does this series validate the women featured? Why is Hattie the appropriate writer of this series? Why are the stories less convincing under Ned's byline?

Discuss the following quote by Sir Walter Scott: "Oh, what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive." (p. 200) Debate whether Hattie will recognize deception in the future.

How does Miss Marjorie D'Lacorte help Hattie understand that she can follow her head and her heart and have a complete life?

## ❧ CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS ❧

Nellie Bly and Ida Tarbell are women journalists that Hattie admires and emulates. Read about one of these women on the following website:

[www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/world/peopleevents/pande01.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/world/peopleevents/pande01.html)

[www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/rockefellers/peopleevents/p\\_tarbell.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/rockefellers/peopleevents/p_tarbell.html)

Write a feature article that might have appeared in a national newspaper on the day Nellie or Ida was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame ([www.greatwomen.org](http://www.greatwomen.org)). Include a photograph. Remember to include who, what, when, where, and how. Encourage peer editing to strengthen writing.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading: Informational Text: Key Ideas and Details RL 7.1, 7.2; Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge W. 7.7; Production and Distribution of Writing W. 7.4, 7.5; History/Social Studies: Key Ideas and Details RH. 6-8.2.

Reporters compete for an interview with President Woodrow Wilson when he comes to San Francisco. Hattie, through a maid at the Fairmont Hotel, gains an audience with the president. Ask students to use books in the library or sites on the Internet to find out about Wilson's Fourteen Points. The following website is helpful: [history.state.gov/milestones/1914-1920/FourteenPoints](http://history.state.gov/milestones/1914-1920/FourteenPoints). Have them write a news story that Hattie might write for the *Chronicle* that explains his Fourteen Points.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Informational Text: RI. 7.1; Writing Research to Build and Present Knowledge W.7.7, W.7.4; History/Social Studies Key Ideas and Details RH.6-8.2.

The 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote was passed by Congress June 4, 1919, and ratified August 18, 1920. The 1920 presidential election between candidates Warren G. Harding and James Cox was the first election where women could vote. Use books in the library or sites on the Internet to read about the candidates. Think about the issues that may be important to Hattie. Then write a letter that Hattie might write to Perilee explaining which candidate she supports and why. Share letters in class.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas ELA. RL. 7.9; Informational Text: Key Ideas and Details RL. 7.1,7.2; Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge W. 7.7; Production and Distribution of Writing W. 7.4, 7.5; History/Social Studies: Key Ideas and Details RH. 6-8.2.

At the end of the novel, Hattie goes to Seattle and marries Charlie. Ask students to work as partners and role-play Hattie and Charlie's reunion. What might they say to one another? Express each characters' hopes and dreams for their future together. Allow class time to critique.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration SL. 7.3.

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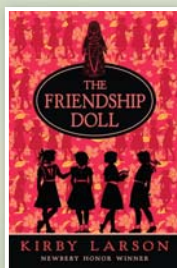
## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kirby Larson loves nothing better than rummaging in old archives, and rescuing old letters and postcards in her efforts to poke around in the past. She is the author of *Hattie Big Sky* and *The Friendship Doll*. Larson also partners with her friend Mary Nethery to write award-winning nonfiction picture books, including *Two Bobbies: A True Story of Hurricane Katrina, Friendship, and Survival*. When she is not digging around in history, she is walking on the beach with her husband, Neil, and Winston, the Wonder Dog. She loves looking for sea glass, wishing rocks, and pieces of history others pass right on by.

## ALSO BY kirby l arson



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