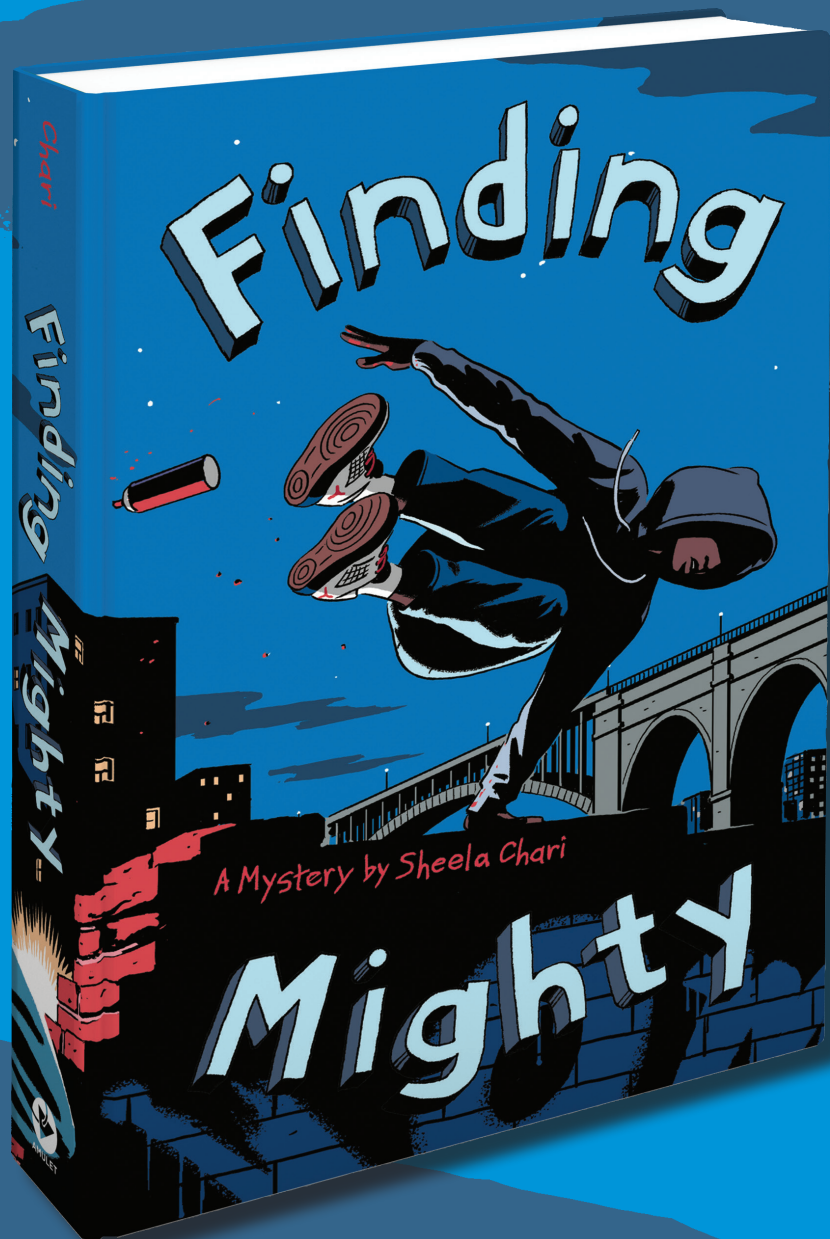


PARKOUR, CREATIVITY, AND DIVERSITY



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ABOUT FINDING MIGHTY

Along the train lines north of New York City, twelve-year-old neighbors Myla and Peter search for the link between Myla's necklace and the disappearance of Peter's brother, Randall.

Thrown into a world of parkour, graffiti, and diamond-smuggling, Myla and Peter encounter a band of thugs who are after the same thing as Randall. Can Myla and Peter find Randall before it's too late, and their shared family secrets threaten to destroy them all?

Drawing on urban art forms and local history, *Finding Mighty* is a mystery that explores the nature of art and the unbreakable bonds of family.

About the Author

Sheela Chari is the author of *Finding Mighty*, a Junior Library Guild Selection, and *Vanished*, which was an APALA Children's Literature Honor Book, an Edgar Award Nominee, and an AL's Book Club Pick on Today. She has an MFA in Fiction from New York University and teaches creative writing at Mercy College. Sheela lives in New York with her family. Visit her online: sheelachari.com and [@wordsbysheela](https://twitter.com/wordsbysheela).

DISCUSSION

Before You Begin

Finding Mighty is a mystery about finding a missing brother. But it's also a story about finding family. Pay attention to the ways Myla and Peter learn to value their siblings and assume responsibility for one another. Myla and Peter also come from different backgrounds, which shape the ways they respond to friendship, family life, and even detective work. Understanding how they relate to the world and to their families will help you understand the mystery behind Peter's missing brother.



FINDING MIGHTY QUESTIONS

1. As you read *Finding Mighty*, use the Mystery Organizer to track clues and suspects. Will you discover where the diamonds are hidden before the characters do?
2. Setting plays a major role in this mystery. Identify the important locations, buildings, and landmarks in the text, and explain why they are significant to the story.
3. *Finding Mighty* is told through alternating points of view. How does switching between narrators affect the telling of the mystery? Do you appreciate hearing different voices? Why or why not?
4. What personality traits does Chari use to develop the central characters? Which characteristics and motivations stand out to you? Provide text evidence to support your ideas.
5. Discuss how the relationship between the two main characters and their siblings evolve throughout the story. Identify the events that change their relationships. Compare and contrast the two sets of relationships, using the Character Chart to support your thinking.
6. Chari skillfully embeds clues in the novel. Were you able to identify them before finishing the story? Go back and locate those hidden clues. Use the Mystery Organizer to record your thoughts and ideas.
7. The author teases readers with false clues (red herrings) to lead them astray. In what ways did the author distract you from solving the mystery?
8. Suspense is an element writers use to make readers feel uncertain about the outcome of a story. Recall when you began quickly turning pages to discover what would happen next. Explain how Chari creates suspense in *Finding Mighty*.
9. Select passages in the story that were funny, interesting, revealing, or striking in some way. Share your choices with a partner and discuss why the passages made you stop and think.



This middle grade reading group guide can be downloaded from amulet.com

FINDING MIGHTY WORKSHEET
MYSTERY ORGANIZER

Title:	
Detectives	Suspects
Other Characters	
Where does the story takes place?	
What is the mystery that needs to be solved?	
Clues ★ Put a star next to the clue that solves the mystery!	Who found it?
CASE CLOSED! How the mystery was solved?	
Red Herrings are false clues to throw you off track. Name some that the author used.	

FINDING MIGHTY WORKSHEET

CHARACTER CHART

Describe the relationship between the siblings at the beginning of the story.

Peter & Randall:

Myla & Cheetah:

Describe the relationship between the siblings at the end of the story.

Peter & Randall:

Myla & Cheetah:

Identify three events from the text that resulted in changes to the sibling relationships.

Peter & Randall:

1.

2.

3.

Myla & Cheetah:

1.

2.

3.

Compare and Contrast

Peter & Randall:

Myla & Cheetah:

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES IN THE CLASSROOM

Background Information: Parkour

What is parkour? Have students watch Charles Moreland's Ted Talk to learn more about this growing discipline of physical expression: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3x-vqr3ZnZE>.

The Big Debate: High Art or High Crime?

Myla and her mother have different ideas on the role of graffiti in city life. Myla thinks graffiti is a type of art but her mother, an urban planner, views graffiti as vandalism. Where does one draw the line? Ask groups of students to research and debate two views on graffiti: Graffiti as Art, or Graffiti as Vandalism. At the end of the debate, have students review whose arguments and evidence were more convincing and explain why.

The Writing on the Wall

Graffiti writers pride themselves on their “hand style” or way of writing letters to communicate with the world. Ask students to design a “tag” (a special name or symbol) that reflects their own identity and personality. Create a wall mural made of student tags using markers, paint, or spray chalk to reflect the diversity of your classroom.

Social Emotional Learning

In *Finding Mighty*, Myla and Peter express feelings of inadequacy and doubt. Ask students to recall a time when they felt excluded or made someone feel this way. Have them write about their experiences and share in large or small groups. Allow students to discuss strategies they can use to support friends who are excluded, or look within themselves to change unkind behavior. Then invite students to write a letter of advice to Myla or Peter, using the knowledge gained in discussion.

Field Trip to Ossining, NY

An important landmark in *Finding Mighty* is the Old Croton Aqueduct, a waterworks system that includes High Bridge and underground tunnels, which was used to bring freshwater to New York City from 1842 until 1900. This system is no longer in use, but you can still visit the Aqueduct in Ossining, where you can step inside the actual 1842 brick water tunnel and learn about its history. To plan a trip, visit the Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct website at www.aqueduct.org.



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This discussion guide was developed by Jenice Mateo-Toledo, M.Ed, an English as a New Language educator in the Hastings-on-Hudson School District in Westchester, NY. She holds masters' degrees in Literacy Education, Educational Leadership, and English as a New Language. She is currently a doctoral student in the Curriculum and Teaching Department at Teachers College, Columbia University