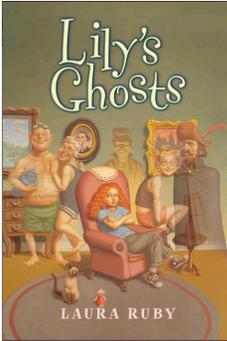


Lily's Ghost by Laura Ruby

Teacher Guide



From the Jacket:

A sinister old house, an intriguing new friend, a fifty-year-old mystery, and a tag-team of disgruntled ghosts force thirteen-year-old Lily to unearth her family's deepest secrets in this multilayered tale that's hilarious and harrowing, comic and creepy.

Discussion Guide

1. Describe Lily. Would you like to be her friend? What clues in the story make you think you would or not?
2. List the supernatural events that happen in the story. Which ones would scare you the most? What would you have done in Lily's place?
3. Do you believe in ghosts? If so, why do you think they hang around earth? In the reality of this novel why are ghosts present? How do they move on?
4. Which of the quirky characters (including ghosts!) in the story was your favorite? Why? What made this character memorable to you?
5. How does Vaz become a part of Lily's life? What kind of person is he? How is he different than most guys his age? What does he tell Lily about his own family that gives her courage to be herself?
6. Who is Lola? What does she think of Lily and her life? How is the appearance of Lily's life different on the inside than it appears on the out? Do you think this is true for most people's lives that things are not quite as perfect as they appear? What makes you think so or not?
7. Why do Lily and Vaz break into Bailey Burton's house? What do they find? Would you be willing to muscle your way just for information? How do these findings lead to others?
8. After Arden catches Vaz and Lily locking lips she freaks out! Why do you think Arden goes overboard in her response especially she seemed to be encouraging Lily's pursuit at first (all that hot taco stuff!)? What do you suppose she's afraid of? Do you think she was wise to react like she did? What would your parents have done?

9. Arden says, “Books aren’t life, they’re better. They distill life. Books are life with all the boring parts cut out.” (p. 53) Do you agree with Arden? What makes a book worth rereading or recommending?
10. Reread the short chapter “The Lily Song” what does it reveal about Lily that readers didn’t know before? Will this become a defining moment for Lily’s whole life or will she be able to move beyond it? What does this chapter make you feel?
11. What secrets does Lily unveil in the past of her family? How did the actions of her ancestors affect Lily’s life directly? How did it change once the truth was revealed? Do you think all families have secrets? Why?
12. Who has changed most by the end of the novel? Who doesn’t really change? Why? Must all main characters change by the end of their story? Why?

Author Interview

1. How did you create your fabulously kooky cast of characters for this book?
2. What was your favorite thing about writing this novel? What part was more difficult than you imagined?
3. So, if you were thirteen, would Vaz be your type of taco?
4. What’s the best part of being a children’s author?
5. As a kid, who were your favorite authors and books? How have they influenced your writing?

Plot and Character Projects

On the back of the character chart make a flow chart of major events in the story. Write small! Many things happen in the course of Lily's story.

Fill out this character chart as you read the novel Lily's Ghosts.

Characters:	Quote that best represents them:	Important to the story because:	In the end this character....
Lily			
Arden			
Vaz			
Uncle Wes			
Max Wood			
Ms. Reedy			
Bailey Burton			
Madame Durriken			
Lola			
Katherine Wood			

Projects:

Art:

Using magazines, newspapers and other print media create a collage that represents one of the settings for Lily's Ghosts. It can be a realistic piece of art or completely imaginative using the magazines as a jumping off point. Be creative!

Music:

Choose a theme song for Lily. Not for the movie version or the novel as a whole but for Lily, the character. What words and music best represent her struggle? What lyrics do you think she would want to listen to over and over again for encouragement or hope? Copy the lyrics and in a short journal explain your choice of songs.

Drama:

Write a scene of dialogue that occurs before the opening of the novel or after it has ended. Explain why you think this scene would've occurred and why you decided to include it.

Math:

Madame Durriken's Good Fortunes Shoppe vs. Trinket

Create a business plan for either the Good Fortunes Shoppe or Arden's new shop, Trinket. What does it cost for rent, utilities, and salaries? How much are supplies? At the end of the year which business do you think will be more successful? Why?

Curriculum Connections:

Lily's Ghost teacher's guide supports these Standards for the English Language Arts from IRA & NCTE:

2. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.
3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
5. Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.
6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and nonprint texts.
7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and nonprint texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.



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