

Eliza Bing Is (Not) A Star

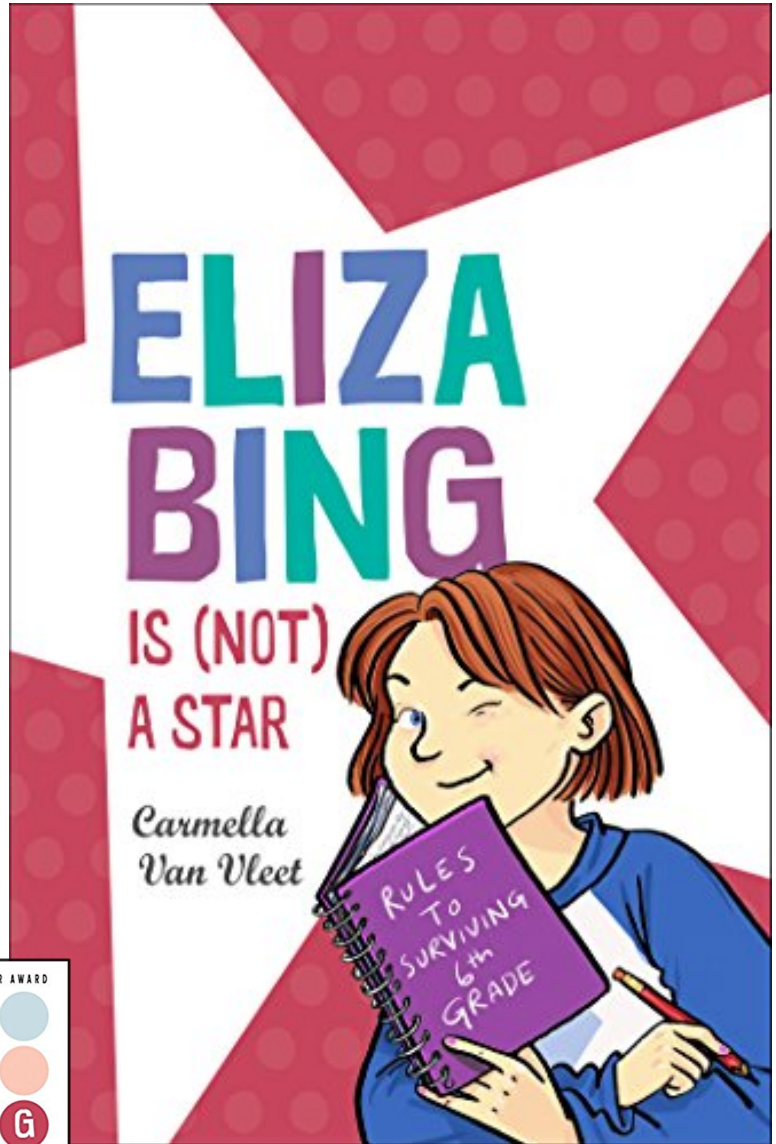
Educator's Guide

A Common Core Aligned Comprehension and Activities Guide for
Grades 2 – 6

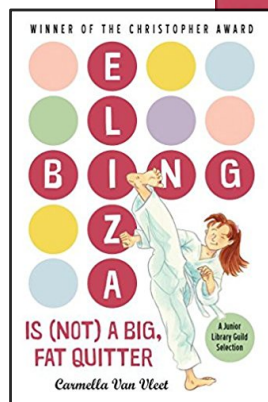
About the Book

Eleven-year-old Eliza has stuck with taekwondo and earned her yellow belt even though her family expected her to quit. She's tough enough to break boards with her bare hands! Next up: middle school and hopefully a best friend. The school play turns out to be the perfect opportunity to stay close to confident and stage-obsessed Annie. But can their friendship survive the spotlight?

The joys and sorrows of middle school hit the stage in this funny and heartfelt sequel to *Eliza Bing Is (Not) A Big, Fat Quitter*, recipient of the Christopher Award and four state award nominations.



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About the Author

Carmella Van Vleet is a former kindergarten teacher and the author of numerous hands-on science and history books for children including *Aviation: Cool Women Who Fly, Explore Electricity!* and *Great Ancient Egypt Projects You Can Build Yourself*. Her picture book, *To The Stars! The First American Woman to Walk in Space* (co-authored with astronaut Kathy Sullivan), was on the 2017 Amelia Bloomer list. And her debut middle grade, *Eliza Bing Is (Not) A Big, Fat Quitter*, was a Junior Library Guild title and Christopher Award winner. She lives in Ohio with her husband and has three grown kids, and a dog who thinks he's a cat.

Visit her online at www.carmellavanvleet.com.



Pre-Reading Questions

Introducing *Eliza Bing Is (Not) A Star*

After showing students the cover of the book, ask them the following questions:

- Based on the cover, what do you think this book is about?
- Read the first page. Who's telling the story?
- Can you tell anything about the tone of the book based on the title?
- Why do you think the word "not" is in parenthesis on the cover?
- Browse through the book. Do you notice any foreign words in italics? Make a prediction about how these words have to do with the story.

Grades 2- 6 Reading: Literature: 2.1, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 5.6, 6.1

Grades 2-6 Language: 2.1, 2.3, 3, 3.3, 4.1, 4.3, 5.1, 5.3, 6.1

Grades 2-6 Speaking & Listening: 2.1, 2.3, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1

Discussion Questions

Pages 1-50

Whose point of view is *Eliza Bing Is (Not) A Star* told from?

What kind of person is Eliza? What does she do that gives us clues?

What kind of person is Annie?

After Eliza accidentally causes the water pipe to burst, a classmate calls her “Nimbus.” Why does the nickname bother Eliza so much?

How does Eliza feel about her family not being together very often? How does Mom, Dad, and Sam being so busy affect Eliza?

What taekwondo belt color will Eliza be testing for next? Do you think she likes doing martial arts? What clues does she give us?

Annie and Eliza are working on a list called Rules to Surviving Sixth Grade. Why do you think this project is so important to their friendship?

What is Operation BBF? Why is having a best friend so important to Eliza?

How does Eliza feel about her brother Sam having a girlfriend?

Why does Eliza agree to audition for the school play even though she’s nervous about being on stage?

Madison, a girl from *Eliza Bing Is (Not) A Big, Fat Quitter*, shows up and wishes Eliza good luck. Are you surprised to see her?

Eliza loves improv and seems to be pretty good at it. Why do you think this is?

Pages 51-100

On their way to see the cast list, Annie and Eliza run into a student who calls Eliza “Nimbus.” How does Annie defend Eliza? What strategy does Annie use to get people to stop using the nickname?

What part does Eliza get in the play? What about Annie? Who gets the lead?

One chapter is titled “Re-breakable.” What two things does it refer to?

What are Mrs. Delany’s rules for scripts? Do you think Eliza will be able to follow them? Why or why not?

How does Annie feel about Paige (the lead actor)? Provide details that support your answer.

Eliza is home alone when a stranger knocks on the front door. What lesson from taekwondo does Eliza use to handle the situation?

Why do you think Eliza shoves the theater book her mom bought her under her bed?

Why does Annie help Paige find glass slippers for the play?

Eliza bakes a marble cake for her dad. What happens to it? Do you think Eliza handled the situation well?

Eliza notices that both taekwondo and theater have “blocking.” In what other ways can you think of that taekwondo and theater are similar?



Pages 101-150

What does Annie draw on Eliza's arm in permanent marker? How does Eliza handle the problem?

Why does Eliza vow not to talk to Megan when she comes for dinner one Wednesday night?

Eliza decides Opening Night will be the perfect opportunity for what?

What obstacles does Operation BBF run into as rehearsals continue? What clues do we have that Eliza is jealous of Annie's attention to Paige?

What is the surprise Mom gives to Eliza? Why do you think it means so much to Eliza?

How does Annie help Eliza study for her taekwondo belt test?

What are cue lines and why are they important in a play?

During class one night, Master Kim says, "Always show confidence in a test, even if you may not feel it. If you make a mistake, keep going. Do not stop." Do you think this is good advice? Why or why not?

What do Eliza and Annie find in an old suitcase when they are searching in the costume closet?

What surprise does Eliza make for part of Annie's costume? Is it a success?

Mom tells Eliza that she should "cut Annie some slack." Do you agree?



Pages 151-200

When Eliza doesn't have a ride home from rehearsal, who steps up? What does Eliza find out at the end of that ride?

After she forgets her script, Mrs. Delany has Eliza take part in an activity called what?

What does Annie do at the end of Diabolical Director that upsets Eliza?

How does Sam try to make it up to Eliza for missing her play?

How does Eliza feel when she accidentally tells a white belt the wrong move in her form (or *poomsae*)?

Eliza comes up with a plan to get her ears pierced with Annie even though she wasn't invited to the mall. What was this plan? Was it successful?

What is the ad-libbed line Eliza comes up with that Mrs. Delany wants to add to the play?

Why do you think Annie takes Paige's side about trying to get Eliza to drop her new line?

At her gold belt test, the judge asks Eliza to take what she knows and figure out how to do something. What is it?

How does Eliza feel about her mom and her brother missing her gold belt test?

What is Annie's reaction when Mrs. Delany tells Eliza she used to take karate?

Pages 201-250

Eliza tries to fix things with Annie by making cupcakes. What was special about the decorations on top of the cupcakes?

How did Eliza feel when Annie didn't eat her cupcake?

Annie and Eliza get into a big fight at lunch. At the end of the fight, Annie calls Eliza a name. What was it?

Why do you think Eliza tried to retrieve the Rules to Surviving 6th Grade notebook from the trash?

After the fight, Eliza describes herself as "Yin, no yang." What does this mean?

Why does Eliza decide to keep doing the play even though she and Annie aren't friends anymore?

What gesture does Sam make to show Eliza that he feels bad about missing her play?

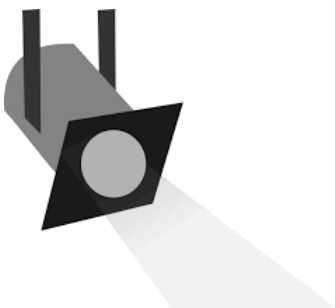
How does Eliza feel about being on stage in front of an audience?

Paige does something unexpected and mean to Eliza in the middle of the play. What is it?

After Paige skips ahead and throws a key scene into confusion, Eliza decides to save the day. Why do you think she does this? How does she do this?

Eliza has an opportunity to help Annie even though Annie hurt her. What reason does Eliza give for helping Annie make her big entrance?

JJ gives Eliza a present after the play. What was it? Why did JJ choose to give Eliza this particular gift?



Pages 201-250 cont.

A group of boys call Eliza "Nimbus" as she's on her way to meet her parents. How does she respond? Do you think her new strategy to take away a bully's power will be effective in the future?

What does Eliza learn about Paige while at the cast get-together at the ice cream shop? Does it change her opinion about Paige? Does it change your opinion about Paige?

What special thing does Eliza finally get to do at the end of the book? What is the name of Annie and Eliza's new notebook?

What does Eliza decide is the "only rule" to being a good friend?

Grades 2-6 Reading: Literature 2.1, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 5.6, 6.1

Grades 2-6 Language 2.1, 2.3, 3, 3.3, 4.1, 4.3, 5.1, 5.3, 6.1

Grades 2-6 Speaking & Listening 2.1, 2.3, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1

Writing Activities

Fractured Fairy Tale

Eliza and her castmates are doing a play that is a fractured fairy tale. A fractured fairy tale is a well-known fairy tale that's been altered in an unexpected way, usually with humorous results. Read and discuss a variety of fractured fairy tales. For example: *Little Red Gliding Hood* by Tara Lazar, *Dusty Locks and the Three Bears* by Susan Lowell, *Chicken Big* by Keith Graves, *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* by Jon Scieszka. Then write your own fractured fairy tale.

Grades 2-6 Reading Literature: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.7, 2.9, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6, 4.7, 4.9, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6

Grades 2-6 Writing: 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6

Grades 2-6 Speaking & Listening: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.1, 4.4, 4.6, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.5, 6.6

Writing cont.

“Rules to Surviving” List

At the beginning of the book, Eliza and Annie are working together to create a list of tips called Rules to Surviving 6th Grade. Working individually or in pairs, create your own tips or rules to surviving a situation. For example, Rules to Surviving the Lunchroom, or Rules to Surviving a New Sibling. Try to include both practical and humorous tips. Share your lists with the class.

Another variation: reread the scene where Eliza and Annie find the note inside the suitcase. Write your own letter to a future student.

Grades 2-6 Reading Literature: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.7, 2.9, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6, 4.7, 4.9, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6
Grades 2- 6 Writing: 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6
Grades 2-6 Speaking & Listening: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.1, 4.4, 4.6, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.5, 6.6

Different versions of Cinderella (worksheet)

There are many versions of the Cinderella story. Read a variety of these stories (or variations from around the world) and discuss their similarities and differences. Use the worksheet to record these observations.

For suggestions, check out this great list from We Are Teachers:
<https://www.weareteachers.com/the-best-fractured-fairy-tales-cinderella-2/>

Grades 2-6 Reading Literature: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.7, 2.9, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6, 4.7, 4.9, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6
Grades 2- 6 Writing: 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6
Grades 2-6 Speaking & Listening: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.1, 4.4, 4.6, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.5, 6.6

Idioms

One of the chapters is called “Between a Rock and a Megan Place.” This is a twist on the idiom “between a rock and a hard place.” Idioms are familiar phrases that mean something very different than what the words say. They are phrases that have a figurative (rather than literal) meaning. For example:

Down to the wire – at the last minute
Piece of cake – something is easy
Get cold feet – be nervous
Let the cat of the bag – spill a secret

After discussing what they are, collect idioms you come across in the book or elsewhere. Display them on a bulletin board or on a master list. Or illustrate idioms and publish them in a class book.

Grades 2-6 Reading Literature: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.7, 2.9, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6, 4.7, 4.9, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6
Grades 2- 6 Writing: 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6
Grades 2-6 Speaking & Listening: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.1, 4.4, 4.6, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.5, 6.6

Fearless Essay

When Eliza and her dad go to the mall, the two of them talk about the play. Dad tells Eliza that he always thought she belonged on stage. When Eliza wonders if he really did, Dad replies, “Of course! You’ve just got this thing about you. A fearlessness.” Discuss whether or not there is evidence that supports Dad’s observation. Next, write about a time you were fearless or overcame fear.

Grades 2-6 Writing: 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 6.2, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8, 6.9
Grades 2-6 Language: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3

Name:

Fractured Fairy Tales: *Cinderella*

Title / Author	Twist from original 



Social Studies

Superstitions

Mrs. Delany, the play's director, has several theater superstitions. For example, a bad dress rehearsal means a good opening night, and not bowing unless there is an audience. As a class, discuss common superstitions such as not walking under a ladder or tossing salt over your shoulder. Next, explore various superstitions from around the world. Collect these superstitions into a class book or write a poem about a superstition.

Some resources to get you started:

<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2017-01-13/13-superstitions-from-around-the-world>

Knock on Wood: Poems About Superstitions by Janet S. Wong

Grades 2-6 Writing: 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 6.2, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8, 6.9
Grades 2-6 Language: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3
Grades 2-6 Reading Informational Text: 2.1, 2.2, 2.7, 2.9, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.9, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.9, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 5.7, 5.9, 6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 6.9
Grade 6 Literacy in History/Social Studies: 6-8.1, 6-8.2, 6-8.4, 6-8.7, 6-8.9

Find South Korea

Taekwondo is a martial art that originates from South Korea. Locate and mark South Korea on a world map. Research taekwondo and other martial arts (for example: karate, jiu jitsu, and krav maga) and locate the countries these arts originated in as well. Mark each country with its flag.

Social Studies cont.

To integrate this activity into writing, create a travel brochure that highlights each country's land features, population, major resources, tourist sights and so forth.

Grades 2-6 Writing: 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 6.2, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8, 6.9
Grades 2-6 Language: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3
Grades 2-6 Reading Informational Text: 2.1, 2.2, 2.7, 2.9, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.9, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.9, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 5.7, 5.9, 6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 6.9
Grade 6 Literacy in History/Social Studies: 6-8.1, 6-8.2, 6-8.4, 6-8.7, 6-8.9

Math & Science

Taco Graph

In the chapter "Walking Taco Wednesdays," Eliza hears about Walking Tacos and decides she wants to try them. Find a recipe and make them. (Here's a simple one: <https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/walking-tacos/>) Afterwards, make a class graph showing how many students Love Them, Like Them, Don't Like Them.

To extend this activity to writing, write persuasive letters asking the school kitchen staff to include Walking Tacos (or another entrée) on the lunch menu.

Grades 2-6 Writing: 2.1, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 6.1, 6.4, 6.5
Grades 2-6 Language: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3
Grade 6 Literacy /Science & Technical Subjects: 6-8.2, 6-8.3, 6-8.4, 6-8.7, 6-8.8, 6-8

Math & Science cont.

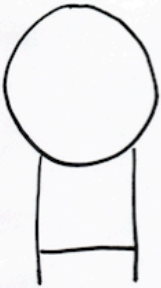
Nimbus Clouds

Early in the book, Eliza gets the nickname Nimbus. Learn about nimbus clouds and other types of clouds. Go outside and observe the clouds in the sky. Record or draw what you observe and see if you can accurately predict the weather based only on the clouds. For example, nimbostratus clouds (dark gray clouds) usually mean persistent rain or snow, and cirrus clouds (clouds that resemble horse's tails) usually indicate fair weather.

Grade 6 Literacy /Science & Technical Subjects: 6-8.2, 6-8.3, 6-8.4, 6-8.7, 6-8.8, 6-8.9

How to draw a cartoon ninja

1. Draw the head and body.



2. Add feet and sleeves.



3. Add hands and a face.



4. Add eyes, belts, and legs.



More Activities

Read *Eliza Bing Is (Not) A Big, Fat Quitter*

Play an improv game from the book or find another improv exercise to try.

Create a props or costume box.

Launch your own plan. For example, Operation Kindness or Operation Talk-Mom-Into-Letting-Me-Get-a-Dog.

Brainstorm all the mnemonic devices you can think of (for example, ROY G. BIV for the colors of the rainbow) or create your own mnemonic device.

Recreate the Broken Board cake or the “Break a Leg” cupcakes Eliza made.

Brainstorm ways to deal with name-calling or bullying. Create and hang anti-bullying posters around school.

Learn to count in different languages.

Invite a black belt to speak or do a demonstration.

Arrange a Skype visit with the author (<http://carmellavanvleet.com/contact.html>).

KEEP CALM

and

READ ON