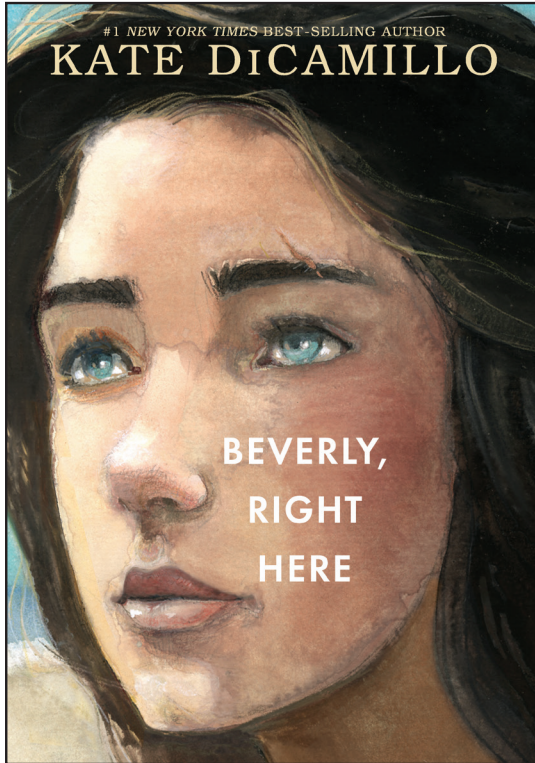
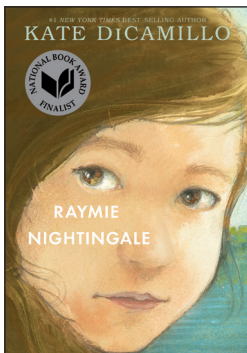


BEVERLY, RIGHT HERE



HC: 978-0-7636-9464-7
Also available as an e-book

DON'T MISS THE COMPANION NOVELS



ABOUT THE BOOK

Beverly Tapinski has run away from home plenty of times, but that was when she was just a kid. By now, she figures, it's not running away; it's leaving. Determined to make it on her own, Beverly finds a job and a place to live and tries to forget about her dog, Buddy, now buried under the orange trees back home; her friend Raymie, whom she left without a word; and her mom, Rhonda, who has never cared about anyone but herself. Beverly doesn't want to depend on anyone, and she definitely doesn't want anyone to depend on her. But despite her best efforts, she can't help forming connections with the people around her—and gradually she learns to see herself through their eyes. In a touching, funny, and fearless conclusion to her sequence of novels about the beloved Three Rancheros, Kate DiCamillo tells the story of a character who will break your heart and put it back together again.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kate DiCamillo is one of America's most beloved storytellers. She is a former National Ambassador for Young People's Literature and a two-time winner of the Newbery Medal, for *The Tale of Despereaux* and *Flora & Ulysses*. Born in Philadelphia, she grew up in Florida and now lives in Minneapolis.



Photo by Catherine Smith Photography

Common Core Connections

This discussion guide, which can be used with large or small groups, will help students meet several of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts. These include the reading literature standards for key ideas and details, craft and structure, and integration of knowledge and ideas (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL), as well as the speaking and listening standards for comprehension and collaboration and for presentation of knowledge and ideas (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL). Questions can also be used in writing prompts for independent work.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Beverly says that she had run away from home plenty of times, but this time was different, because she was leaving. What does she mean by this?
2. When Beverly goes into Mr. C's to apply for a job, Freddie says to Beverly, "This is the end of the road unless you have a dream" (page 16). How does this apply to the people who work there? Freddie calls not having a dream "dead-end, one-road thinking. You have to engage in open-ended, multi-road thinking," she says (page 46). What does this mean to you? Do you think Freddie will realize her dreams?
3. The only time we hear from Beverly's mother is on page 18, when Beverly calls her from a phone booth to tell her she is okay. What do you learn about her mother from that short conversation? About Beverly's relationship with her mother? When Beverly looks up in the phone booth, she sees the phrase "In a crooked little house by a crooked little sea." How does this become important to her? How does it apply to her situation?
4. "Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds" is a line from a poem that Beverly had to memorize in school. The poem, "High Flight," was written by John Gillespie Magee Jr., an airman who was killed at age nineteen in 1941 when the plane he was piloting collided with another over England. What do you think the phrase means to Beverly?
5. Iola and Beverly have different ideas about trust. What does each one think? Why? Do Beverly's ideas about trust change throughout the book?
6. The names of Iola's cats, past and present, are taken from the poem by Eugene Field "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod." Later in the book, Beverly's friend Elmer recites some of the lines. Find and read the entire poem, then discuss why you think the author used it.
7. Equity is very important to Doris, the cook at the seafood restaurant. What is equity? What does she do to try to attain it in the restaurant? How does each of the employees react to Doris's actions? Do things change for the employees? In what ways?
8. On page 67, Beverly thinks about how she does not want to be a comfort to anyone. Why do you think she feels that way?
9. Freddie's boyfriend, Jerome, reminds Beverly of her mother's boyfriends: "stupid and desperate and sometimes mean" (page 77). After meeting him in the restaurant, she steals his graduation tassel from his truck. Why do you think she did that? Later, when Beverly finds a Christmas photo of Mr. Denby and his family, she takes it. What is her motive for this? Is it the same reason that she took Jerome's tassel?
10. When Beverly first sees Elmer, he is sitting behind the counter at a convenience store reading a book that has an angel with glorious blue wings on the cover. How do that color and that angel become important to Beverly? What do you know about Elmer from the books he reads?
11. Many chapters in the novel end with someone going into or coming out of a house or building. What do you think the author is saying with this? Examples include pages 71, 85, 103, and 109.
12. On page 105, Mr. Larkson shows Beverly a photo of the painting *The Song of the Lark* by Jules Breton. The painting is remarkable because there is no bird or musical instrument in it, yet you can tell the girl is listening. Find a reproduction of the painting so you can see how the artist accomplished this. Using a similar technique, how would you paint something you cannot see, like the wind?
13. There are many kinds of truths, such as the ones the religious woman outside Zoom City imparts through her stick-figure cartoons, or the ones Iola lives by. How do you choose your truths? How do you decide what or whom to believe? In one instance of truth versus lies, Beverly thinks that the happiness shown in her boss's Christmas photo is a lie and that most photos are lies. What do you think?
14. To Beverly, the color pink, which is usually associated with happy, light things, is ominous because it reminds her of "princesses and beauty contests and her mother



and lies” (page 125). What do you know about that part of Beverly’s life? Are there any colors that affect you strongly? What are they, and why do they affect you the way they do?

15. Jerome’s behavior as described by Elmer is classic cruel bullying. Is there bullying in your school? What does it consist of? Elmer says, “There are Jeromes everywhere you go. You can never get away from the Jeromes of the world” (page 158). Do you believe this? Can bullying be stopped?
16. Often there is a seagull at the door of the restaurant kitchen, but Doris makes sure that he never enters. What do you think the presence of the seagull means? Why?

17. Beverly chooses to stay with the cooks in the restaurant kitchen when they are on strike. “Outside the open door, past the seagull and the dumpsters and the hotels, there was a small strip of ocean visible. It was a bright, sparkling blue. Not as bright as lapis lazuli. But bright enough. Beverly suddenly felt as if she were exactly where she was supposed to be” (page 185). What has made Beverly think this?
18. At the end of the book, Raymie is on her way to pick up Beverly and take her home. What do you think of this ending? Is it good that Beverly is going home? How do you think she will readjust? How has Beverly changed since she left home?



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These questions were prepared by Grace Worcester Greene, former Youth Services Consultant, Vermont Department of Libraries. She has served on the Newbery, Caldecott, *Boston Globe-Horn Book*, and National Book Award committees.

