

**Classroom/Book Club Resource Guide for FAIRVIEW FELINES: A Newspaper
Mystery**

Title: FAIRVIEW FELINES: A Newspaper Mystery

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This reader guide may be duplicated for the classroom, book club discussion groups, or related purposes.

Author biography: Michele Corriel has been a journalist for almost 20 years, writing about the rock n' roll and art scene in New York City to the political doings in county government in Montana. This is her first novel for middle grade readers. Visit her website www.michelecorriel.com to read her blog, follow her on Twitter or contact her via Facebook. She is always happy to be contacted for school or library visits.

Vocabulary and comprehension questions by chapter:

Chapter One:

Mayhem – random or deliberate violence or damage.

Labor – a job or task done or to be done.

Topple – to tumble down.

Question: What does Thomas want that steers the plot and what stands in his way?

Chapter Two:

Mummified – to dry or shrivel up.

Lingo – slang.

Instinct – a natural or innate impulse, inclination, or tendency.

Question: What does Thomas want to do when he discovers Web is missing?

Chapter Three:

Unison – the performance of musical parts at the same pitch or at the octave.

Petition – a formally drawn request, often bearing the names of a number of those making the request, addressed to a person or group of persons in authority or power.

Reaction – a reverse movement or tendency; an action in a reverse direction or manner.

Question: What does Mr. Klim want?

Chapter Four:

Bonnet – any hat worn by women.

Stray – a domestic animal found wandering at large or without an owner.

Molten – liquefied by heat; in a state of fusion; melted.

Question: Who is Leland looking for when Thomas and Quinn run into him on the way to school?

Chapter Five:

Stench – a bad smell or stink.

Underdog – a person who is expected to lose in a contest or conflict.

Damped – stifled or suffocated; extinguished.

Question: How does the Principal react to Thomas' suggestion of a school newspaper? Describe.

Chapter Six:

Crooked – not straightforward; dishonest.

Conclusion – a reasoned deduction or inference; an answer.

Devour – to swallow or eat up hungrily.

Question: What does Thomas ask Ms. Penny to do?

Chapter Seven:

Decomposition – to break down (organic matter) or (of organic matter) to be broken down physically and chemically by bacterial or fungal action; rot.

Encrusted – formed or cause to form a crust or hard coating.

Swarm – a great number of things or persons, especially in motion.

Question: What smelled so bad in Ms. Adams' classroom?

Chapter Eight:

Diagram – a chart, plan, or scheme.

Bait – food, or some substitute, used as a lure in fishing or trapping.

Teetered – moved unsteadily.

Question: What is Leland's job when they go into Ms. Adams' lab?

Chapter Nine:

Granules – small particles, or grain.

Hostile – not friendly, warm, or generous.

Nonchalant – coolly unconcerned, indifferent, or unexcited; casual.

Question: What did Thomas find on Oops?

Chapter Ten:

Borscht – soup with red beets as ingredient.

Jitters – to behave nervously.

Baffle – to confuse, bewilder, or perplex.

Question: What was Miss Poe doing on her porch?

Chapter Eleven:

Detrimental – harmful.

Glance – a fleeting look at something or someone.

Quantum – a large quantity; bulk.

Question: Name one of the things they found in the lab.

Chapter Twelve:

Refrain – to abstain from an impulse to say or do something

Refrain – a phrase or verse recurring at intervals in a song or poem, esp. at the end of each stanza; chorus.

Careen – to lean, sway, or tip to one side while in motion.

Question: What did the note that Quinn found say?

Chapter Thirteen:

Coincidence – a striking occurrence of two or more events at one time apparently by mere chance.

Diversion – a distraction.

Perspective – a point of view.

Question: What is Thomas having a hard time understanding?

Chapter Fourteen:

Gnarly – distasteful; distressing; offensive; gross.

Synthesizer – an electronic keyboard with modifying sounds.

Consent – to permit, approve, or agree.

Question: What does Thomas bring to Ms. Adams' house?

Chapter Fifteen:

Palm – the part of the inner surface of the hand that extends from the wrist to the bases of the fingers; also a type of tree.

Attic – the part of a building, esp. of a house, directly under a roof.

Kilter – good condition; order. (out of kilter, would mean out of order or something not right.)

Question: What made Thomas go to Miss Poe's house?

Chapter Sixteen:

Sensor – anything, such as a photoelectric cell, that receives a signal or stimulus and responds to it.

Entice – to lead on by exciting hope or desire.

Thoroughbred – having good breeding or education.

Question: Who is Crazy Richard?

Chapter Seventeen:

Belfry – a bell tower, either attached to a church or other building or standing apart. (The saying goes: To have bats in your belfry, which means to be a little nuts.)

Miniature – very small.

Anxious – worried.

Question: Who rang the doorbell?

Chapter Eighteen:

Humane – characterized by tenderness, compassion, and sympathy for people and animals, especially for the suffering or distressed: humane treatment of horses.

Deficiency – a lacking.

Submit – to present for the approval, consideration, or decision of another or others.

Question: What did Ms. Penny and Mr. Schyler do?

Discussion Questions:

1. Thomas believes that local newspapers are a very important to Fairview. Why do you think newspapers are important to a community? What's the difference between a local newspaper and a national newspaper like the New York Times or USA Today?
2. Thomas presents the Classified Ads to his class as a part of the newspaper that should not be overlooked. What can the Classified Ads tell you about people?
3. If your school had/has a newspaper, what do you think would be important enough to put on the front page?

How to Write a newspaper article in five steps:

1. Decide what you want to write about.
2. What is the important point you want to get across in your story?
3. Decide who you want to interview (a good story usually has at least two different sources or people quoted).
4. Gather all your information and figure out what you want to use and what isn't as important to the story and think about who is going to read your story.
5. Start writing!

Projects:

1. Thomas tells his class that by looking at the Classified Advertisements in his local newspaper he can tell a lot about the town. Look at your local classified ads and come up with a story about your town.
2. Thomas thinks in headlines. Think about your day. What kind of headline would be on the newspaper story about your day?
3. Think about something going on in your school that you would like to change. Write an editorial about it.