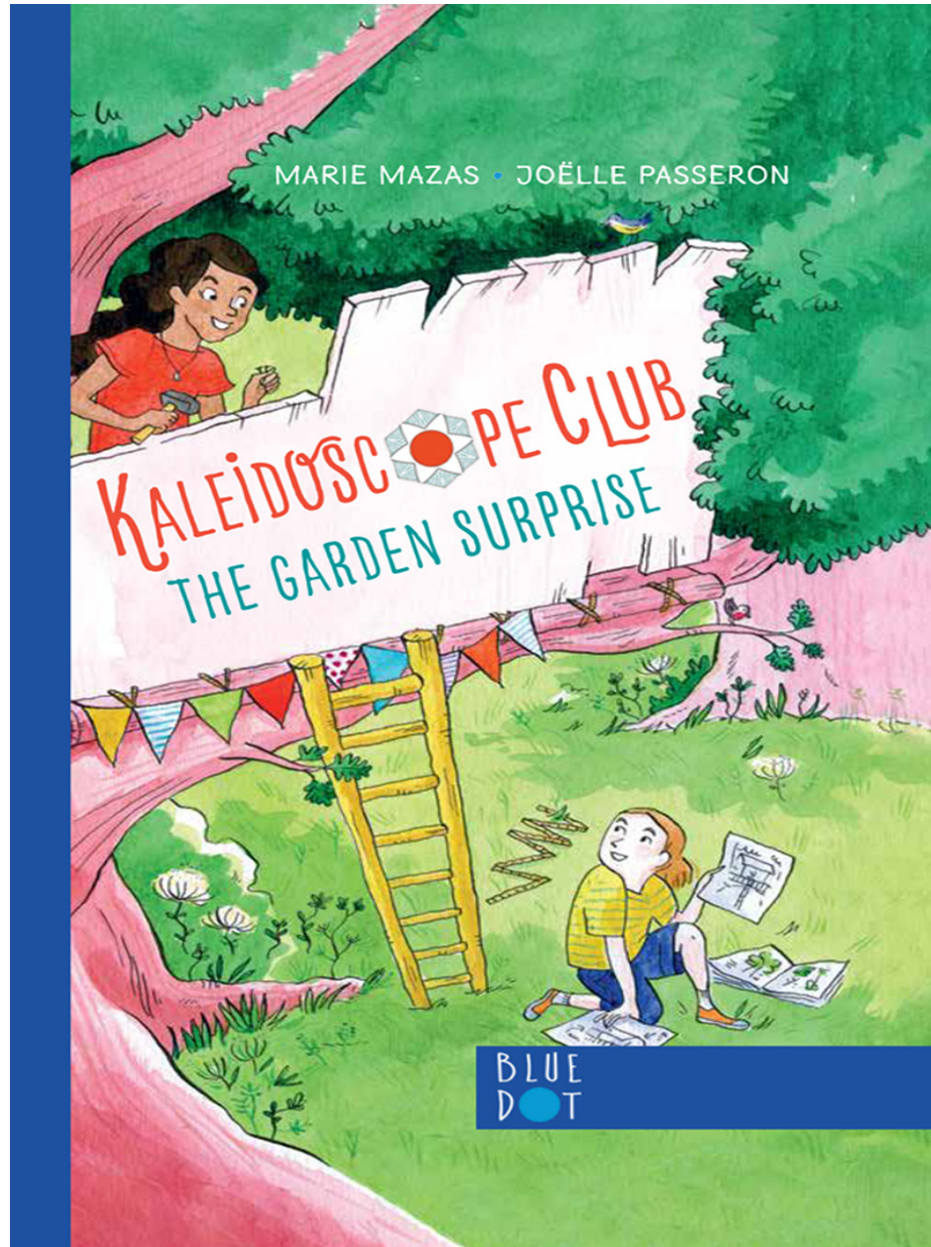


Grades 2-5



Your Teacher's Guide

from Blue Dot Kids Press



The Kaleidoscope Club: The Garden Surprise
Written by Marie Mazas and Illustrated by Joëlle Passeron
Published April 2, 2024 | ISBN 9798985849462 | Ages 7-10



We intentionally leave this page blank so our guides can be printed like a book.



Contents

Before Reading



During Reading



After Reading



Citizen Science Activities

Before Reading

Discussion

Before you book's summary on the back cover, look for clues about the story in the title and cover and interior illustrations.

- What do they tell you about the book?
- Where do you think the story takes place?
- Who will be in the story?
- What might happen in the story?

Word Work

These are some of the words in the book that might be new to students. Talk about their meaning before reading.

Biodiversity

Blueprint

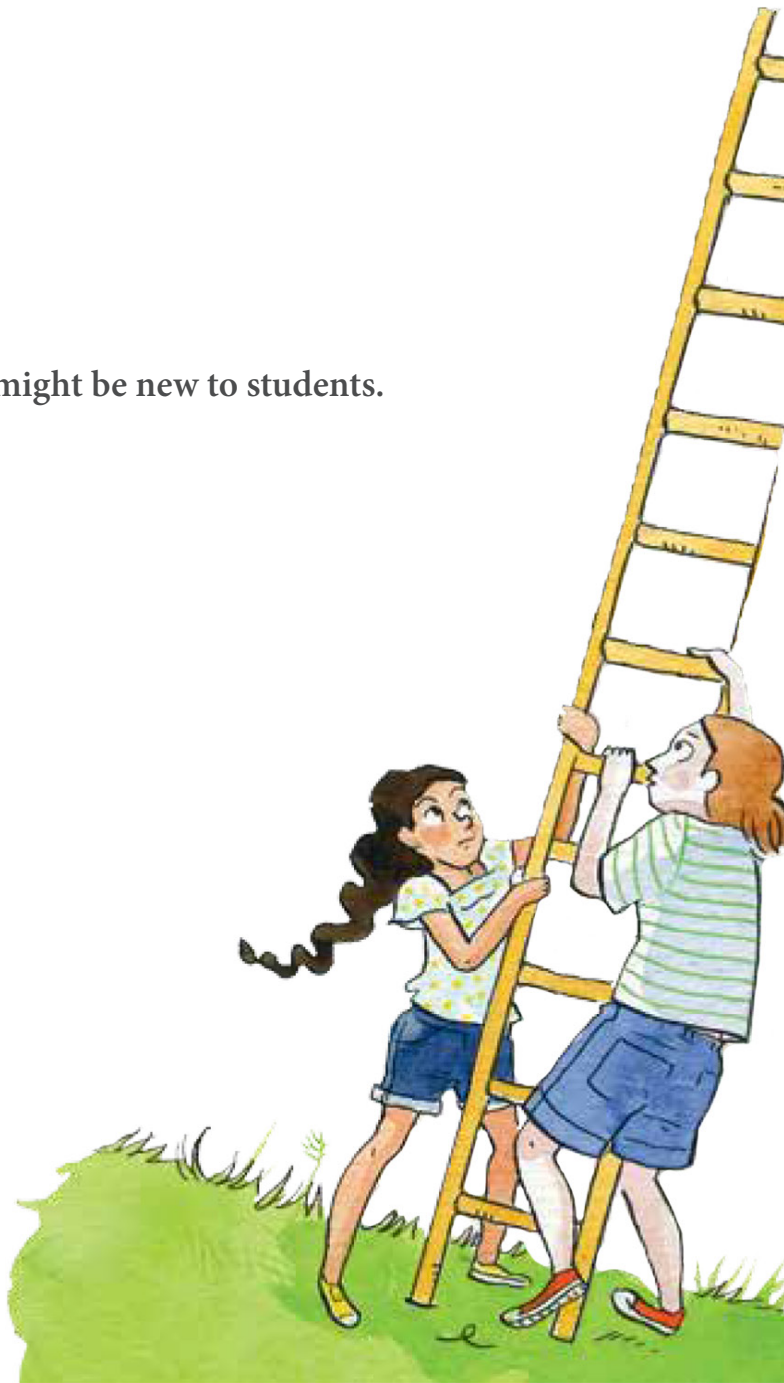
Bowline knot

Heirloom

Humanitarian

Seed bank

Upcycled



During Reading

Reading Methods

Have students read the book aloud as a class, in pairs or small groups, or independently. The book could also be used in teacher-led story time.

As they are reading, students should take notes on anything they wonder about, and, based on your plans for discussion and activities during and after reading, prompt them ahead of time about types of things to look for and make note of. Suggest they include page numbers with their notes for easy reference later.

You may want to discuss the book as you read, so build in pauses after every few chapters. Breaking a longer book into parts also helps all readers feel like they can reach the final page.

Discussion

General

Pause occasionally and wonder, *What will happen next?*

Reading and Writing

Point of View

- Who's telling this story? How do you know?
- What is this type of point of view called (first person), and what are the other types (second person, third person)?

Senses

How does the author use our senses—sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste—in descriptions?

Examples:

p. 23 “all I can smell are rotting vegetable peelings”

p. 28 “The water gurgles and cascades gently, accompanied by a chorus of croaking frogs.”



Figurative Language

What is a simile? What are some examples of similes in the book, and what is the author trying to express with each one?

Examples:

- p. 11 “it’s still like a pizza oven in here”
- p. 20 “pacing around like a caged lion”
- p. 23 “August looks like a seasick ghost in the green light”
- p. 33 “It was like a beautiful ballet set in a strange, magical landscape.”
- p. 37 “round as full moons”
- p. 43 “when I’m wound up like a cuckoo clock”
- p. 57 “feeling like we’ve just entered a lion’s den”
- p. 74 “It feels like I’ve got ants in my pants”



What is a metaphor? What are some examples of metaphors in the book, and what is the author trying to express with each one?

Examples:

- p. 29 “The lovebirds are blocking the path.”
- p. 56 As usual, that wasn’t coffee you served me—it was juice made from dirty socks!”
- p. 29 “reach a quiet path that snakes past a few big houses”
- p. 29 “The air turns electric”

What is personification? What are some examples of personification in the book, and what is the author trying to express with each one?

Examples:

- p. 37 “The brand-new leather saddle simply screams out, ‘Sit on me!’”
- p. 85 Nour noticing “nature’s music” for the first time

What is an idiom? What are some examples of idioms in the book, and what is the author trying to express with each one?

Example:

- p. 50 “In the name of a gazelle’s horn!”

Characterization

What are some ways the author tells you about the characters without saying something directly? What do these indirect descriptions tell you about the characters?

Examples:

p. 15 Nour's nail colors

pp. 18–19 the African masks on the wall

p. 22 “when I snuck a few strawberries in my mouth at the market”

pp. 24–25 “Wasn't it bad enough last time when you had to spend three days in the hospital after trying out his racing bike when the brakes weren't working?”

Parts of Speech

What are different parts of speech?

Discuss these, using Nour and August's adjective game as a jumping-off point: fantastic, fabulous, fantabulous (p. 31); amazing incredible unforgettable (p. 117).

Geography

Nour says her dad's family is from North Africa. August's parents are in Egypt for the summer. Aïda talks about Algeria and France.

- Where are these places?
- What do you know about them?



Connecting with Characters

Nour and her sister, Leila, share a room.

- Do you share or have you ever shared a room with a family member like a sibling?

Nour and August are both having a summer that is different than what they expected.

August moved in with his grandfather. Nour’s family couldn’t plan any vacations because “money is tight right now, and vacations are expensive.”

- Write about a time when you had a different summer than you expected. What happened and why?

Think about this description of August:

“He always has a million ideas buzzing around in his head. Like crossing the desert with the Tuaregs, packrafting down a river, learning Chinese, or studying zoology books. He often complains that we waste a lot of time at school. If it were up to him, he’d be outside exploring in all kinds of weather. He thinks animals have more important things to teach us than our math and grammar books” (p. 20).

- Do you have a friend like August—or are you like August?

Nour and August camp outside (p. 28).

- Have you ever camped outside?

Nour and August decide they need a password for their secret tree house (p. 42).

- How does Nour choose a password?
- How would you pick a password?



After Reading

Comprehension

- Why do Nour and August call their new project the Kaleidoscope Club (see p. 131)?
- What is the garden surprise from the book's title?
- Will there be another book about the Kaleidoscope Club? Why or why not, do you think?
- Why is Aïda angry with Henriette?
- Henriette hasn't visited her garden in a long time, so how does she know it is different than it was?

Futher Thinking

- What is something in the book that surprised you and why?
- What is one thing you learned?
- Which character did you relate to the most and why?
- What is something that made you laugh?



STEAM Activities

Make Your Own Botanical Atlas

Plants and gardening are important to this story. At one point, Nour and August identify trees using August's botanical atlas. Make your own guide to plants, or botanical atlas, for the plants you see around school or home.

Supplies

Paper

Magazines for cutting up and collaging (plant and seed catalogs and home and gardening magazines will work great for this project)

Pencils with erasers

Markers, crayons, and/or paints

Scissors

Items to bind pages into booklets: a hole punch and yarn or even just a stapler will work

Access to the internet will be a plus, for learning more about the plants.

If students have access to iPads or other electronic devices for drawing and/or digital cameras (in phones or separate), this activity can be adapted to use those as well.

Instructions

1. Choose an area you'd like to study. Does your school have a garden? Does your home or community? Is there a forest near you? Think of somewhere with both trees and smaller plants that you like to visit.
2. Visit that place and take notes. What do you see? If you can identify plants, write their names down; if you don't know what something is, draw it or describe it with words. Write down the color of each part of each plant. Describe the shape of the leaves and flower petals and what the stem or trunk looks like. Smell them—are they sweet or spicy, or do they have no scent? Do they grow in the sun or the shade? Remember to watch where you step so you don't accidentally crush any tiny plants, and never pull or cut a plant.
3. Working together in class or on your own, create your botanical atlas. Draw or collage each plant. You may want to let each one have its own page. Label each image with the plant's characteristics. Using the internet will help; if you can't do that, make up your own names for plants based on their characteristics.
4. You may choose to help August with his botanical atlas. Create a booklet of the plants in his and Nour's garden! Here are some that are mentioned in the book; did you notice any others?

cherry trees

chestnut trees

hazel trees

holm oak trees

maple trees

Montpellier apple trees

Asian bleeding-hearts

cornflowers

Queen Anne's Lace

Rose centifolia (cabbage rose)

lavender

verbena

marigolds

poppies

cosmos

fuschias

sage

Write

Complete activities based on the Reading and Writing discussions the class had in During Reading.

Examples:

1. To learn more about POV: Imagine if one of the other characters was telling this story. Look at the cast of characters on the page before chapter one. Can you rewrite a scene that was from Nour's perspective in August's, Grandpa Paulo's, or Aïda's (or her cat's!) perspective?
2. Write your own similes, metaphors, or idioms.

Practice Knots

Nour and her family make a raft for a fun day by the river. In order to hold the logs together, they use bowline knots. Can you make your own mini raft for World Knot Tying Day, which is every December 18 (or whenever you want to celebrate it!)?

Supplies

Rope, yarn, or string

Clean popsicle sticks, twigs gathered from outside, or pens and pencils

Instructions

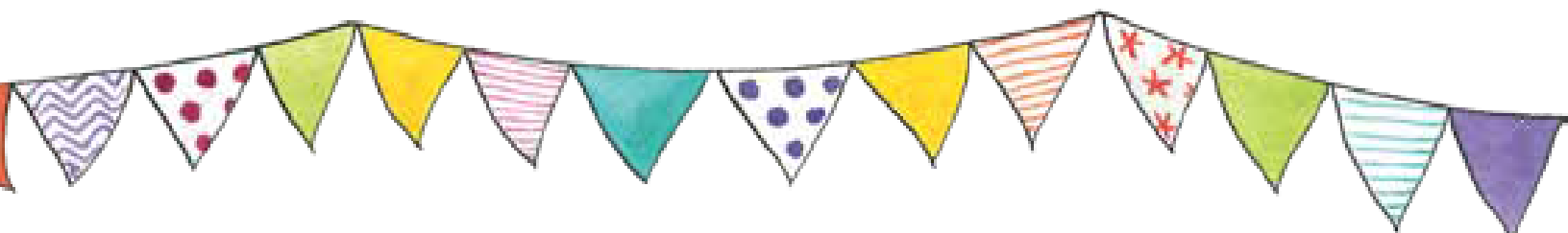
The *bowline*—which is pronounced like “bowlin”—is considered a great foundational knot for water crafts because they are easy to make and secure yet they untie easily when needed.

Nour uses a rhyme to help her remember how make the knot, or a mnemonic, a song or phrase that helps you remember how to do something or the name of something.

Nour sings, “*Up through the rabbit hole, round the big tree; down through the rabbit hole, and off goes he.*” This helps her form a bowline knot.

The guide at <https://www.wikihow.com/Tie-a-Bowline-Knot> offers three different ways to tie a bowline, including using a mnemonic like Nour's.

Practice tying this knot, and then make your own mini rafts with sticks or pencils!



Citizen Science Activities

Citizen science, also called community science, happens when people study the world around them and send the data they collect to scientists. Citizen scientists are people— young or old, who have attended a lot of school or very little, from cities and from small towns—who help collect data for research projects and help to answer real scientific questions.

A Savings Account for Your Garden

Read through *A Savings Account for Your Garden* (pp. 128–129). Work as a classroom to make seed savings accounts for each student or for the school garden, if you have one.

You can save many different seeds direct from their plants, for growing new plants or for eating. Though there are many plants that are good for beginning seed collectors, they each require their own collection process. The teacher can do some research ahead of time to see what makes sense for you and your students. This activity suggests saving sunflower seeds for replanting. It requires the teacher to provide sunflower heads ready for harvesting.

Supplies

- Sunflower heads (cut from the plant once the backs of the blooms are brown at the end of the season; leave about a foot of stem attached to the cut bloom)
- One clean bucket or large bowl for each sunflower head
- Colander
- Shallow cardboard boxes lined with newspaper and paper towels
- Airtight, watertight containers: clean glass or plastic containers with screw-on lids
- Labels and markers

Instructions

1. Working in small teams, hand rub each sunflower head over a bucket or bowl to release the seeds.
2. Rinse the seeds in the colander, picking out any petals, bits of dirt, or other items that aren't seeds.
3. Spread the seeds in single layers in the lined boxes so they can dry.
4. The next day, store them in airtight containers, labeling each container with what the seeds are and when they were harvested.
5. Store in a cool, dry, and dark place.
6. In the spring, students can plant at home or in the school garden.

Hungry for More?

Read *Hungry for More?* (p. 130). Break into small groups to research more from Seed Savers Exchange (<https://www.seedsavers.org/>) and the Millennium Seed Bank (<https://www.kew.org/wakehurst/whats-at-wakehurst/millennium-seed-bank>). Share what you learn in different ways.

Small Group Work

Break into groups. Each watches a different seed-saving video at <https://seedsavers.org/learn/seed-saving/#harvest-and-storage> and then shares what they learned.

As a Class

Have a party—and enjoy the benefits of growing plants—by cooking together. There are several plant-based recipes at <https://seedsavers.org/learn/recipes>; <https://seedsavers.org/learn/recipes-bruschetta> may be a great one to do together.

Either as a Small Group or as a Class

Go on a virtual tour of the Millennium Seed Bank, watch the short video of the bank's process, or read entries from the bank's news reel—all accessible from the seed bank's main website.





[Blue Dot Kids Press](#) inspires curiosity with beautifully crafted stories that connect us to each other and the planet we share. Written and illustrated by impassioned **storytellers and artists from around the world**, our books engage young readers' innate sense of **wonder and empathy**, connecting them to our global community and **the pale blue dot we call home**.

As an **independent, mission-driven**, children's publisher based in San Francisco, California, and Wellington, New Zealand, our **passion for nature and its stewardship** are evident in every book we publish—as well as in our business practices.

Proudly distributed by Consortium Book Sales and Distribution, an Ingram brand.

Visit us at bluedotkidspress.com for more information and resources.