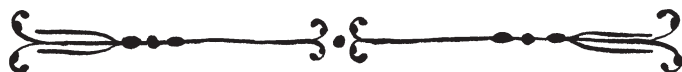


# THE BOOKS OF CANDACE FLEMING

## AN EDUCATORS GUIDE



### ABOUT THE BOOKS OF CANDACE FLEMING

Candace Fleming's love of words and storytelling enables her to successfully write for a wide range of readers. For the younger ones, her picture books offer the perfect balance of silliness and facts. Her middle-grade contemporary fables present morals with a healthy dose of humor. And for older readers, Candace's biographies bring a fresh and approachable perspective to the lives of the famous.

### HOST A CANDACE FLEMING AUTHOR STUDY

Create a special connection with Candace by using this guide to conduct an author study with your students. As Candace writes both fiction and nonfiction at several reading and interest levels, use the titles and activities that best match your curriculum needs.

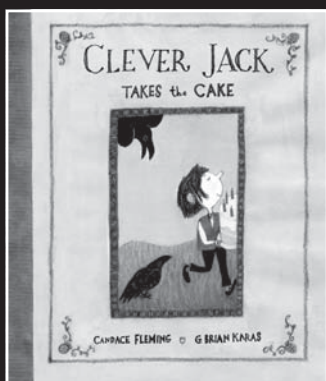


### TO PREPARE FOR YOUR AUTHOR STUDY:

- Keep Candace's books on display in the classroom so that students can read or browse them during quiet times.
- Have your class learn more about Candace and what motivates her through the interview she did with Reading Rockets ([www.readingrockets.org/books/interviews/flemingc](http://www.readingrockets.org/books/interviews/flemingc)). There is additional information at [www.teachingbooks.net](http://www.teachingbooks.net).
- To create excitement, students can use a video camera to record short book reviews that encourage other students to read a specific Candace Fleming book. In pairs or individually, ask students to write the review first so it can be reviewed by you or the school librarian prior to the recording. Remind students to show the cover of the reviewed book during their presentation. Encourage them to be creative. Why not dress like Abraham or Mary Todd Lincoln to promote *The Lincolns* or use a birthday cake prop for *Clever Jack Takes the Cake*? The recordings can either be played in your classroom or the school library.
- Create a classroom bulletin board display with book covers, photos of the author, and biographical information. Use the biography included here as well as additional information that can be found at [CandaceFleming.com](http://CandaceFleming.com). Students can add facts throughout the unit as they learn more about the author and her books.
- Ask students to keep a list of questions that they would like to ask Candace. At the end of the author study, the class may want to send one e-mail to Candace ([cf@candacefleming.com](mailto:cf@candacefleming.com)) after voting on their five favorite questions to ask the author.

**“I READ TO [MY CHILDREN] A LOT, AND THAT’S WHEN I DISCOVERED THE JOY AND MUSIC OF CHILDREN’S BOOKS.”—CANDACE FLEMING**

## PICTURE BOOKS



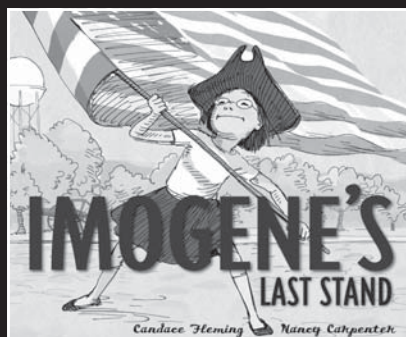
**Clever Jack Takes the Cake**  
Grades PreK–3  
HC: 978-0-375-84979-4  
GLB: 978-0-375-95697-3

### **ABOUT THE BOOK**

What does poor Jack do when he is invited to the Princess’s tenth birthday party, but doesn’t have money to buy a gift? He uses his wits to create the most beautiful birthday cake! But what happens if on the way to the palace he encounters blackbirds that eat the topping, a troll that eats the cake, and ends up with only a strawberry left . . . only to find out the princess is allergic to strawberries? Why, Jack tells the princess the delicious story of how it all happened!

### **IN THE CLASSROOM**

- *Clever Jack Takes the Cake* is an original fairy tale, starring a princess with a sense of humor and a determined boy; it is a story that will appeal to both girls and boys. Have your students compare and contrast this story to a traditional fairy tale. With your class, compile a list of traditional fairy tales they are familiar with. Discuss with them the characteristics of these fairy tales in terms of characters, setting, and typical plot elements. Do these characteristics appear in *Clever Jack Takes the Cake*? How is this original tale different from the traditional ones on the class list?
- Have students write their own original fairy tale following Candace Fleming’s C-L-A-P-S method. A transcript and video of Candace’s guidelines are available at [www.readingrockets.org/books/interviews/fleming/transcript#claps](http://www.readingrockets.org/books/interviews/fleming/transcript#claps). Prior to beginning the assignment, decide if you want to set parameters: Does the story have to take place in a certain country or time period? Or perhaps they modernize a classic tale (e.g., Goldilocks eats too much pizza and falls asleep listening to her iPod)? The “I’m an author!” activity sheet in this guide will help them organize their ideas.



**Imogene’s Last Stand**  
Grades PreK–3  
HC: 978-0-375-83607-7  
GLB: 978-0-375-93607-4

### **ABOUT THE BOOK**

Imogene has a passion for history. So when the mayor wants to tear down the long-neglected Liddleville Historical Society, Imogene is desperate to convince the town how important its history is. But even though she rides through the streets in her Paul Revere costume shouting, “The bulldozers are coming. The bulldozers are coming!” the townspeople won’t budge. What’s a history-loving kid to do?

### **IN THE CLASSROOM**

- Imogene uses historical quotes in her modern-day observations. Have your students research other quotes by historical figures. As is done with the endpapers of *Imogene’s Last Stand*, have students write a brief note explaining the origin and significance of the quote. The students’ notes and relevant illustrations or artwork are then featured on a classroom timeline.
- There are many role models in history. Imogene seems to have quite a few! Have each student pick a historical figure they admire and respect (depending on your curriculum, you may want to specify a time period or geographic region). Each student then writes a letter to their hero/role model, highlighting the attributes and actions they feel warrant this distinction.



Illustration © 2009 by Nancy Carpenter.



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

# I'M AN AUTHOR!

Use Candace Fleming's C-L-A-P-S method to write your own original story. Use this sheet as your outline.

## C = CHARACTER

What is his/her name? What does he/she look like?  
How does he/she act?

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## P = PROBLEM

What is the problem your character faces?

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## L = LOCATION

Where does your story take place?

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## S = SOLUTION

How does your character solve his/her problem?

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## A = ACTION

What is your character doing at the beginning of the story?

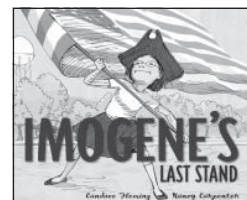
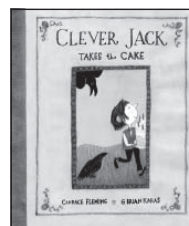
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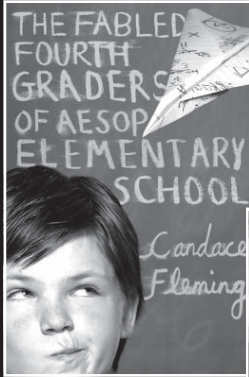
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EDUCATORS:  
Reproduce this activity sheet for students



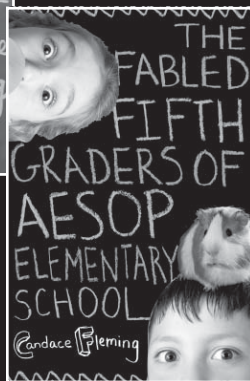
**“I ADORE FOURTH AND FIFTH GRADERS.  
THEY ARE WACKY AND WONDERFUL PEOPLE AND THEY ARE ALWAYS  
SHARING IDEAS FOR STORIES.”—CANDACE FLEMING**

## FABLES



**The Fabled Fourth Graders of  
Aesop Elementary School**  
Grades 2–6  
PB: 978-0-440-42229-7  
HC: 978-0-375-83672-5  
GLB: 978-0-375-93672-2

**The Fabled Fifth Grades of  
Aesop Elementary School**  
Grades 2–6  
HC: 978-0-375-86334-9  
GLB: 978-0-375-96334-6



In *The Fabled Fifth Graders of Aesop Elementary School*, the rambunctious class of unconventional characters is back for another year of antics and morals. It's a school year filled with extraordinary events, singing guinea pigs, and eccentric teachers, all led by the inimitable Mr. Jupiter.

### **IN THE CLASSROOM**

- Compare and contrast one of Candace Fleming's contemporary fables with one of Aesop's. What are the similarities? What are the differences? Be certain that your discussion includes characters, setting, and plot references.
- Have the class perform a reader's theater based on one chapter in an Aesop Elementary School book. One version is available at [www.candacefleming.com/pdf/RTfabled.pdf](http://www.candacefleming.com/pdf/RTfabled.pdf), or you may prefer to have your class create their own version for classroom use.
- Have students create a cartoon based on a moral. They may pick one that is featured on the “I'm an artist!” activity sheet on the following page or in Candace Fleming's books. First, divide the class in small groups, and have each group pick a moral. Next, ask them to brainstorm situations that might result in that moral. Finally, have each group pick one scenario to illustrate, with each student now working independently. Suggest that they follow these guidelines when creating their cartoon:

**Panel 1:** Introduce the characters and the setting

**Panel 2:** Introduce the problem

**Panel 3:** Have the character encounter the problem

**Panel 4:** Have the character search for a solution

**Panel 5:** The character finds a solution

**Panel 6:** Moral/lesson

### **PRE-READING ACTIVITY**

Candace Fleming writes contemporary stories built around Aesop's fables in her Aesop Elementary School series. Make sure your students are familiar with Aesop and know the characteristics of fables, and how they are intended to influence attitudes toward moral and ethical behaviors.

### **ABOUT THE BOOKS**

Aesop Elementary School may appear to be an ordinary school, but there's a certain group of students that is anything but ordinary. Since kindergarten, they've tormented one another, and every teacher assigned to them. Can anyone teach them and survive?

In *The Fabled Fourth Graders of Aesop Elementary School*, school is about to begin, and the principal has not found a teacher who will take on the unruly fourth grade. Luckily, Mr. Jupiter, a globetrotting, dinosaur-digging, Mayan-ceremonial-robe-wearing teacher, shows up to accept the challenge. Though the students may seem unique and unusual, they soon learn that Mr. Jupiter himself is unique and unusual as he shares his humor and morals with the class.



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

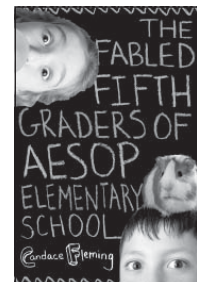
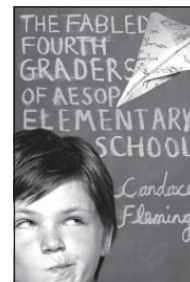
## I'M AN ARTIST!

Using the frames below, create a simple cartoon based on a moral. Choose a moral included on this activity sheet or check Candace Fleming's Aesop Elementary School books for more options.

1	2
3	4
5	6

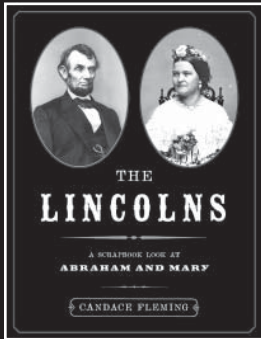
- You can't judge a book by its cover.
- Be careful what you wish for—it might come true.
- Slow and steady wins the race.
- Don't count your chickens before they're hatched.
- Birds of a feather flock together.
- Do boldly what you do at all.

EDUCATORS:  
Reproduce this activity sheet for students

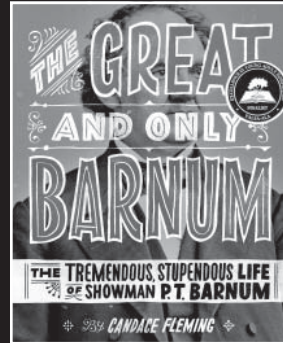


“THE BEST BIOGRAPHIES ARE THOSE THAT PEEK INTO THE HEART AND SOUL OF THEIR SUBJECT.”—CANDACE FLEMING

## BIOGRAPHIES



**The Lincolns:**  
A Scrapbook Look at  
Abraham and Mary  
Grades 5–9  
HC: 978-0-375-83618-3  
GLB: 978-0-375-93618-0



**The Great and Only Barnum:**  
The Tremendous Stupendous Life  
of Showman P. T. Barnum  
Grades 3–7  
HC: 978-0-375-84197-2  
GLB: 978-0-375-94597-7

### PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Share with students that the word *biography* literally means “life writing” and comes from the roots *bio* and *graphia*. Also discuss with them the importance of primary and secondary sources. To start the unit, give each student a copy of the “Getting to know you” activity sheet on the following page once they have selected a person they would like to learn more about.

### ABOUT THE BOOK

*The Lincolns* is a captivating joint biography of one of our country’s greatest presidents and his complex wife—a scrapbook history that uses photographs, letters, engravings, and even cartoons, along with a fascinating text, to form an enthralling museum on the page. Candace Fleming captures the extraordinary lives of Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln, from their disparate childhoods and tumultuous courtship, through the turmoil of the Civil War, to the loss of three of their children, and finally to their own tragic deaths. A portrait of a man, a woman, and a country.

### IN THE CLASSROOM

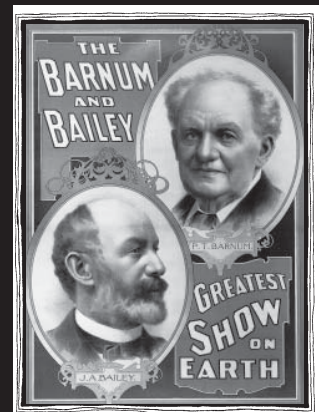
- Candace Fleming chose to write and format the Lincoln biography to mimic a scrapbook. Have students create their own scrapbook, based on the information they learned from *The Lincolns*. Compile and then assign a list of topics (e. g., family life, historical accomplishments, their deaths) to avoid duplication. Students can work independently, in pairs, or small groups to create a single page; the single pages are then bound together to create one complete scrapbook.
- Based on the facts presented in *The Lincolns*, have your class create a trivia contest in the style of the game show *Jeopardy* (e. g., Answer: Aesop’s Fables/Question: What was Abe Lincoln’s favorite book as a child?). Students can take turns compiling the questions and answers, playing the host, and acting as contestants, vying to provide the correct corresponding question.

### ABOUT THE BOOK

In this larger-than-life biography of P. T. Barnum, showman and founder of the Barnum & Bailey Circus, Candace Fleming perfectly captures the spirit of an era, the spirit of the circus, and the spirit of P. T. Barnum himself. Drawing on old circus posters, photographs, etchings, ticket stubs, and playbills, this biography “not only tells the story of P. T. Barnum, but also of the circus culture he helped create and his impact on modern entertainment.” (*Instructor*)

### IN THE CLASSROOM

- Have the class create a timeline of P. T. Barnum’s life, beginning and ending with his birth and death, respectively. Have them note his accomplishments and challenges. A circus-style poster can also be created, highlighting his many unique discoveries.
- Orchestrate a class circus; have students share their special talents or feats with the class. Be certain to set parameters: which specific animals or props are allowed, etc. Other routines can include an original comedy skit or a feat of magic or visual illusion.



Poster © Library of Congress



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## GETTING TO KNOW YOU!

Choose a person highlighted in one of Candace Fleming's biographies; add the name to the three column headers in the chart below. Before reading the biography, fill in the first two columns.

Fill in the third column after reading the biography.

WHAT I KNOW ABOUT _____	WHAT I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT _____	WHAT I KNOW ABOUT _____

EDUCATORS:  
Reproduce this activity sheet for students

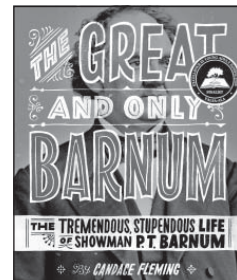
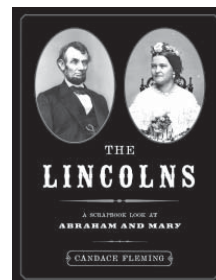




Photo © Scott Fleming.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Candace Fleming is the highly regarded author of more than twenty children’s books. She started storytelling at an early age. As a preschooler, she relayed creative stories about her family life—many weren’t true, but they were still good stories. Her parents encouraged her to put her stories down on paper. In second grade, she discovered a passion for language, of listening to words, “to the sounds they made, and the way they were used.” Candace continued to write stories throughout her teen years. In college, she became aware of a new passion, history, which complemented her love of storytelling.

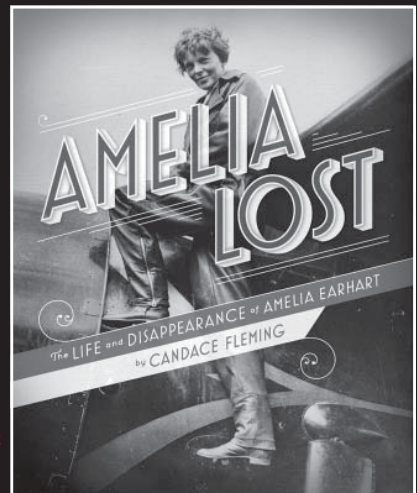
It wasn’t until Candace was reading to her own children that she “discovered the joy and music of children’s books.” She then realized she should write books for children: “It seemed the perfect way to combine all the things I loved: stories, musical language, history, and reading. I couldn’t wait to get started.”

For more information on the author, visit [CandaceFleming.com](http://CandaceFleming.com)

## COMING SOON!

“I first heard about Amelia Earhart—her exhilarating life and her mysterious disappearance—when I was a third grader. She has intrigued me ever since. So when I was given the opportunity to write her biography, of course I seized it. Now I could satisfy my lifelong curiosity! Eagerly, I dug into the historical record. I questioned the traditional facts of the Earhart case. And in the process, I not only uncovered the real Amelia behind the public persona, but I was able to piece together the exciting yet often untold story of the greatest rescue expedition in aviation history. Oh, it’s incredible stuff—a love story, an adventure story, and a mystery all rolled into one. Best of all? It’s all true!”—CANDACE FLEMING

**Amelia Lost:**  
The Life and Disappearance of Amelia Earhart  
Grades 3–7  
HC: 978-0-375-84198-9  
GLB: 978-0-375-94598-4



Art from *The Great and Only Barnum*, illustrated by Ray Fenwick.

## ON THE WEB

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[www.randomhouse.com/teachers](http://www.randomhouse.com/teachers)



Search over 100 themes and holidays  
for books for your classroom!