



Maybe Later

Ingrid Lee

illustrated by Gabrielle Grimard

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About the Book

In his grandfather's bedroom, a young boy (Johnny) discovers an old bottle, the cork cemented shut with sand. He can see a shadow inside, and he wants to break the bottle open. His grandfather tells Johnny the story of how he found the bottle and why it is still intact. He hands the responsibility of the bottle to his grandson. During the story, Johnny speculates on the bottle's mysterious contents. These musings become a source of inspiration for various activities. As well, the bottle provides a connection between grandson and grandfather. There is always the idea that it might be a bottle-breaking day. At the end of the story, Johnny discovers that he is not sure if he wants to discover the secret inside the green glass.

About the Author

Ingrid Lee was born in 1948 in East York, a suburb of Toronto, Canada, the daughter of a Canadian soldier and a Dutch war bride. She graduated from the University of Toronto and became a teacher of lots of things, but mostly of art and English. She has taught steadily since then, most of the time to intermediate students that are twelve and thirteen. She has probably taught close to ten thousand of Toronto's great kids.

About the Writing

Maybe Later is based on a true story. My son found a bottle just like the one in this story in a tidal pool in Bermuda. The bottle had been in the sea for a long, long time. No one was able to pull the cork out of the top.

Eventually we broke the bottle to discover the innards. A newspaper in Bermuda put the story and a picture of the event on the front page. Later, I decided to make up a story based on what may have happened if we had not broken our treasure.

Teaching Ideas—Curriculum Connections**Prereading Idea**

Have you ever walked along a beach? What kinds of things do you see around you? What are things you might experience with your other senses? On the beach in this story, someone finds a treasure. What might this be?

In the book *Maybe Later*, Johnny finds a bottle in his grandpa's drawer. There is a dark shape inside the bottle, but the cork at the top will not come loose. Johnny wants to find out what is hiding inside. At the end of the book, we will all decide an answer to this question: What is a good bottle-breaking day?

Classroom Discussion Questions

Watch a movie about a salt-water tropical beach and reef. What are some of the things that Johnny saw on the beach?

Everybody on the beach had their own idea about the insides of the bottle in chapter two. What is a genie? What would you ask of a genie? What is a pet peeve? What is your pet peeve? What is an attention grabber? What is something that you use as an attention grabber? Suggest something else that might be in the bottle.

Johnny and his grandpa have a job jar in chapter four. What are some good chores that you do? What are some bad ones?

Read the fable 'The Golden Goose.' What is the moral or lesson of this story? How is this story similar to the sad story of Farmer Henry in chapter six?

What is a Poor Lost Soul? Pretend you did not see the illustrator's view. What do you think the Poor Lost Soul in the bottle should look like? What were all the things the Poor Lost Soul had in his little home in chapter ten? Why was he still bored? How do you think the Poor Lost Soul liked Johnny's wish?

Answer the question: What is a good bottle-breaking day?

What is a simple toy at home that has given you a lot of fun? Read *The True Story of George* with your teacher. How are Mackenzie and Katie able to have fun like Johnny?

Suggested Activities

Jars Jars Jars! (Art)

Look up the Cook Islands to find out where the children were shipwrecked in chapter three. Find a bottle and bring it to school. Invent a strange place where you have washed up on the beach. Write a note to ask for help just like Johnny and Tommy. Draw a picture on your note to illustrate the problem. Put your note in the bottle and stuff in a cork or other stopper. If you want, splash a little white glue thinned with water on the outside of your bottle and sprinkle sand on it. Put on a little gold glitter for sparkle and let your bottle dry.

And/Or

Draw a giant class jar on chart paper and cut it out. Give the jar a name. Everyone now can design a classroom job for the job jar. Stick all the jobs on the job jar. Every day someone should put on a blindfold. Someone else should switch around the jobs. The blindfolded person picks a job (a reverse Tail on the Donkey game). They must then do the job.

Mapping for Treasure (Geography)

Read about Susan's treasure map in chapter seven. Draw what you think her treasure map looks like. Label all the parts and make a dotted line (or a finger print trail) to the *T*. Give your map a title. On the back of your map, make a secret pouch. Put in a penny for a treasure!

Presentation (Drama)

Memorize the Hoopsi Chant of chapter five or the Pirate Limerick of chapter seven. Perform it for your class with actions. (You can change a word or two to make it more fun.)

Lists (Language)

There are many creatures mentioned in *Maybe Later*. Make a list of at least ten animals from the story. Give your list a title and arrange all the animals in your list into alphabetical order.

Kaleidoscopes! (Mathematics, Patterns)

Teach the principle of symmetry. Use math pattern blocks to create a kaleidoscope pattern on the desk using two right-angled intersecting lines as a starting point. If you do not have pattern blocks, ask the children to trace some little shapes four times each, and stick the cut-outs on paper along the lines of symmetry.

Other Titles and Websites of Interest

Dragon Tide (Orca picturebook)—This is a good story to introduce the power of imaginative play on the beach.

The Golden Goose retold by Uri Shulevitz—An internet version is readily available.

The True Story of George (Orca Echoes)

Other Books by the Author from Orca Book Publishers

Dragon Tide

George Most Wanted

George, the Best of All!

The True Story of George