

Book 3: Letters from the Heart Activity Guide



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Letters From the Heart

Intermediate Reader, 224 pages

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Maeve is under a lot of pressure: her parents are separating, she's receiving a big community service award for her blanket project, and she gets into a real bind by lying to her parents and friends. Both Maeve and Avery learn through letters from the heart that being true to your family and friends is the most important thing.

Themes

- divorce
- consequences of lying
- punishment
- family history
- mistakes
- apologies

Beacon Street Girls - Book 3 Activity Guide

Discussion:

1. Reunion Predictions
2. The Snowball Effect!

Writing:

1. Award Acceptance Speech
2. More Resilient than You Know
3. Letters from the Heart

Research:

1. Wild for Colors
2. Irish Potato Famine

Art:

1. Heritage Museum

These activities may be used in your classroom and/or after-school program. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please feel free to email us at: info@beaconstreetgirls.com.

Get FREE Bonus Materials for your class: Go to the books section of our site:

<http://www.beaconstreetgirls.com/Books/tabid/62/Default.aspx> to download posters for your classroom. You will also find: Book Club questions for each book, quizzes, and activities.

Discussion Activity 1: Reunion Predictions



“Avery, I haven’t seen these old friends of mine for years. It’s so nice catching up with them and finding out what they’ve been up to.”

~Letters from the Heart p. 59

Imagine the BSG are 25 years old and getting together for a reunion ...

Based on the girls’ personalities, where do you think they will be in the future?

Now imagine you are getting together with your classmates when you are all 25. What do you think you will be up to?

Where do you see yourself? Goals?

Discussion Activity 2: **The Snowball Effect!**



“Maeve just couldn’t see how to make them understand. She hadn’t intended it to be this way. She’d made one mistake, and then tried to fix it by covering it up, and the next thing she knew, everything had snowballed. Everyone she cared about was mad and disappointed. And now she was going to have to fake her way through the rest of the evening. Either that, or she was going to have to tell Dillon the truth.”

~*Letters from the Heart* p. 178-179

The thing about lying is once you start, it can be pretty hard to find your way back to the truth. In Book 3: *Letters from the Heart*, Maeve’s little white lie snowballs out of control pretty quickly.

Have you ever stretched the truth? If so, why?

Did it snowball out of control like Maeve’s in Book 3?

What did you have to do to get everything back on track?



Writing Activity 1: Award Acceptance Speech



“I want to thank all of my friends who made tonight possible. Katani Summers, Goddess of the Sewing Machine and Designer Extraordinaire. If it weren’t for Katani, the blankets would have come out looking like starfish. And thanks to Isabel Martinez, who dove right into this project even though she was brand new to our school. And gave it her all. And loaned her artistic vision and made the blankets absolutely beautiful!”

~Letters from the Heart p. 94

What award would you most like to receive? For what accomplishment would this award be given? Write a short acceptance speech thanking those who made it possible for you to win this award. Practice in front of a mirror, family, friends, or your very own adoring fan club.

Suggestions: Fastest Breakfast Eater, First at the Bus Stop, Heaviest Backpack, Zaniest Hair-do, Craziest Dancer ...

Example: Thank you, teachers, for assigning the thickest math books in the history of the world. Without your help, my award for Heaviest Backpack would have never been possible.



Writing Activity 2: More Resilient Than You Know



“Well—it means being strong, even in hard times. Being able to roll with the punches. Maeve, I know that you have this quality. So does Sam, but he doesn’t know it yet. You’re going to find out that you’re more resilient than you knew.”

~Letters from the Heart p. 68

When Maeve's parents separate in *Letters from the Heart*, it is hard for her. She feels understandably sad and doesn't quite know where to put those feelings. Ultimately, Maeve devises her own ways to get through these difficult times and become a stronger person.

- Describe something challenging that you went through and how you persevered.
- Do you believe that the experience made you a stronger person?
- What lessons have you learned and what advice would you give to someone faced with that situation?

I think I can, I think I can ...



Writing Activity 3: Letters from the Heart



“Maeve traced the letters with her fingers, mouthing the words as she read. She could almost feel her grandmother writing these words to her, through her father, as if her grandmother had reached across the generations to hold her hand and offer her guidance.”

~Letters from the Heart p. 185

Write your own letter from the heart. What is an important lesson or piece of wisdom that you'd like to pass on? Who would you write to?

From my heart to yours ...

Research Activity 1: **Wild for Colors**



“Well, you know me. It’s gotta be the ‘look at me’ look. And it’s gotta be pink!”

~*Letters from the Heart* p. 92

Pink is the color that Maeve is passionate about. Choose a color that you love and become a color expert.

Where does your color fall on the color wheel?

Is it a primary, a secondary, or a tertiary color? How is your color made?

Where is your color found in nature?

Where is your color found in art?

Where is your color found in culture?

Is it associated with any holidays?

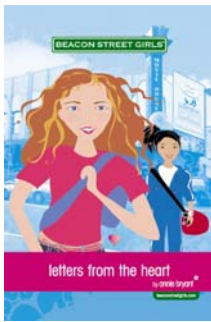
Is it the color of a country or flag?

What about a sports team?

Any other fun facts?

Resource List: (organizations, helpful adults, websites, etc.)

☀ Art Activity 1: Heritage Museum



“History is NOT just about presidents and wars, but also about individuals. About their experiences, their challenges and struggles, and their stories. For the next three weeks, our class is going to be learning about history from a special perspective. By way of introducing our unit on immigration in the twentieth century, we’re going to be creating a classroom museum based upon our collective experiences. We’ll call it the Heritage Museum, and it will remain on display for the rest of the grading period.”

~Letters from the Heart p. 7-8

Every family has their own journey that has brought them to where they are today. Why do your parents live where they do? What about your grandparents and great grandparents? Do a little research at home. Find old photographs or family souvenirs from the past. Map out a family tree and share the results with your group. Whether or not your family has always lived in America or immigrated, whether or not you were adopted, every family has its own special structure and story. Learn about the history of your family.

Supplies

- Poster Board
- Glue or Rubber Cement
- Scissors
- Old Family Photos and Souvenirs (that you have permission to use)

Directions

- Map out your family tree on a scrap piece of paper. You are the base, and your siblings are on the same level as you. The two people stemming from your generation are your parents, and their siblings fall on the same level. Then your grandparents stem from them and so on. See how many relatives you can map on your family tree.
- Sketch a tree (or whatever creative structure you want) to put your family on, and draw the appropriate branches.
- Glue on photos or drawings for each person and write their names beneath their pictures.
- Add on little stories or facts in the background to enrich your unique family history!