

A Curriculum Guide to

Ada Lace and the Suspicious Artist

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About the Book

Ada plans to help her best friend, Nina, revamp her artistic website before a famous artist, Guy Miroir, visits Ada's mom's art gallery. Ada asks Tycho, Mr. Peebles's nephew and coding-whiz web programmer, to help her with the coding. At the gallery reception, Nina is disappointed when Miroir is dismissive and rude. When both girls attend Miroir's show, Ada discovers an unsettling resemblance between Nina's art and one of Miroir's pictures. Using Tycho's expertise in analytics, Ada and Nina learn of Miroir's deceptions, but need more proof to convince Ada's mom and others that Miroir is stealing ideas. Will the girls find enough evidence to expose Miroir and bring attention to Nina's work?

Discussion Questions

The discussion questions below particularly address the following English Language Arts Common Core State Standards: (RL.1.1, 2, 3, 7) (RL.2.1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9) (RL.3.1, 3, 4, 9) (RL.4.1-4) (RL.5.1-5) (RI.1.1-4, 9) (RI.2.1, 3, 4, 6, 9) (RI.3.1-4, 9) (RI.4.1-4) (RI.5.1-4) (SL.1.1-5) (SL.2.1, 3, 4) (SL.3.1, 2, 4, 6) (SL.4.1, 2, 4) (SL.5.1, 2, 5)

The discussion questions and activities below address the following Next Generation Science Standards: (K-2-ETS1-1, 2) (3-5-ETS1-1, 2, 3) (ETS1.A, B, C for grades 1-5) (PS4.C)

1. Describe Ada and Nina's friendship, giving examples of situations in which you see how they support one another. What qualities do you admire in a friend? Do you think you're a good friend? Explain your answers.
2. Describe ways in which Ada and Nina are different. Do these differences ever get in the way of their friendship? Do you think there are things Ada and Nina can learn from each other?
3. How would you summarize the plot for a friend? What parts of the book do you think they'd be most interested in?
4. In the beginning of the book, Nina looks up to Guy Miroir as the type of successful artist she'd like to become. Is there someone famous whom you admire? Why do you admire that person? How did they begin their career?
5. How do Miroir's actions prove troublesome even before he is exposed as a fraud? How does he treat people? How do you think he feels about art?

6. Describe the elevator that Tycho uses. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this elevator? Explain what the author means when she writes that Tycho's elevator is using good green energy. Why is that important?

7. What does Ada mean when she says her arms feel like spaghetti? Can you come up with another way to describe it? Pick out another memorable description or simile from the book and discuss.

8. Why does Nina ask Ada if her breath smells funny before they attend the reception? What is Nina hoping will come out of her night at the gallery?

9. Why does Nina make so many different kinds of scarves before choosing one to give to Miroir? Have you ever received or given a homemade gift? How did it make you feel? What did it show you about the giver or the receiver?

10. Describe Miroir's personality. Is he a person you'd like to meet? Is he a good role model? Explain your answers.

11. How do you think Nina feels when Miroir ignores her and her gift? How does she react? How would you have reacted if you were in her place?

12. How does Ada cheer up Nina after Miroir dismisses her at the reception? What methods do you use to cheer up friends, family, or classmates? How do they cheer you up?

13. Why do the girls end up going to the art show? Compare their expectations to what actually takes place.

14. Why does Nina borrow Mr. Lace's phone during the art showing?

15. Why don't Ada's parents believe the girls at first? Have you ever been questioned or not believed? How did it make you feel? What does Ada's experience teach you about trust?

16. Describe Tycho's personality, and why his skillset is so important to Ada and Nina. Why do you think he's so willing to help them? Why do you think they work well together?

17. How do Ada, Nina, and Tycho prove Miroir is copying other people's art? Describe what they find, and what that might mean for Miroir's future.

18. How would you feel if someone stole your ideas? What would you do? Would it affect your willingness to share ideas?

19. How did Miroir try to explain the similarities between his art and other copied pieces? Does anyone believe him?

20. Describe Tycho's handcycle and how it works. Have you ever tried to invent something? If so, describe its design and use. If not, think about something you'd like to see made, and why it would be useful. Would you want to work with people like Ada, Nina, or Tycho to help make it?

21. How does Ada's brother, Elliott, change during the story? Describe his interactions with Ada and Nina.

22. Compare and contrast this book's themes, settings, or plots with those of previous books in An Ada Lace Adventure series. Which of Ada's adventures would you be most excited to join?

Extension Activities

1. Design plans for your own website. Develop a drawing of a home page to represent your areas of interest and scope. Have your parents help you practice coding by playing with the website suggested by the author: <https://scratch.mit.edu>

2. Investigate pulleys. Read about pulleys and watch this video: <https://mocomi.com/pulley/> Then draw and label a simple pulley. Write an explanation of how a pulley makes work easier. If you have access to a pulley and a rope, try lifting something heavy to see how a pulley works.

3. Read about and investigate the color wheel to learn about the different colors. Look here for more information: <https://www.enchantedlearning.com/art/Colormixing.shtml> Then create and draw a scarf for Ada or Nina. Provide a paragraph explanation for why you chose those colors, and how either girl might feel about receiving a homemade gift.

4. Tycho developed a handcycle to help him go off-road. Develop an idea for an invention that will help you do something more easily. Draw a picture of your invention, labeling each part, and explain how it will help you.

5. Read about how an elevator works. Read more about elevators here: <https://mocomi.com/how-do-elevators-work/>. Then compare them with the type of elevator Tycho uses in the story, describing how the two are alike and different. What are the benefits to Tycho's elevator? How is it useful?

6. Watch this explanation of SEO: <https://www.shopify.com/videos/ecommerce-seo-101/what-is-seo-marketing-tutorial> Then look back at the book to see how Ada and Tycho describe their improvements to Nina's website. How do they use SEO? How would you use SEO in the website you designed in the first extension activity?

7. Look up each of the different dinosaurs Elliott uses for his family seating chart. Make a poster or chart that shows the characteristics of these dinosaurs. Include information about their sizes, weights, foods, nicknames, locations, time period, characteristics, and any other interesting facts you may find. Alternatively, film a video with this information. Work with several classmates to

share information about one dinosaur on camera; consider an interview-style video, or a game show showcasing fun facts.

8. For dessert, Elliott serves crème brûlée, which is topped with sugar that turns brown when heated. Investigate the reason for this phenomenon by doing this experiment:

<https://www.education.com/science-fair/article/heating-sugar/> Have an adult help you safely execute the procedure. Follow the scientific method used in the experiment, and record your results.

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