



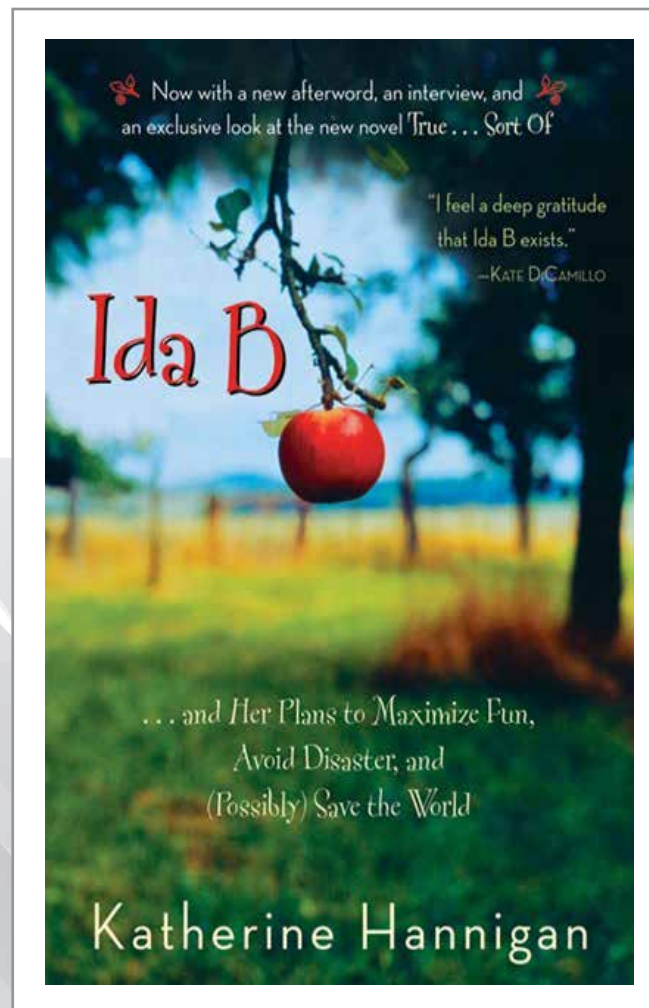
**TEACHER GUIDE**

**GRADES 3-5**

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

# Ida B

Katherine Hannigan



**READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT**

# Ida B

Katherine Hannigan

## TEACHER GUIDE

**NOTE:**

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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## Skills and Strategies

### Critical Thinking

Brainstorming, rephrasing,  
evaluating, research,  
analysis, cause/effect,  
compare/contrast

### Vocabulary

Synonyms/antonyms,  
definitions, context clues,  
parts of speech

### Writing

Letter, description,  
persuasion

### Listening/Speaking

Discussions, reading aloud,  
oral presentation

### Comprehension

Prediction, inference,  
supporting opinions,  
identifying attributes

### Literary Elements

Foreshadowing, similes,  
metaphors, personification,  
alliteration, imagery,  
description, character  
analysis, story mapping,  
figurative language

### Across the Curriculum

Math—multiplication;  
Art—illustration, collage;  
Science—ecology;  
Health—cancer, mental  
health; Drama

## Summary

Ida B describes life on the family farm and apple orchard as “righter than right” until her mom’s illness brings about some difficult changes. As a result of her changed environment, Ida B grows angry and resentful toward everyone and everything. But new experiences with a caring teacher and friendly classmates teach her some valuable lessons.

## About the Author

*Ida B* is Katherine Hannigan’s first novel. Ms. Hannigan grew up in western New York with her parents and two brothers. She had many pets, including dogs, cats, and rodents. In college, she studied education and art and went on to become an assistant professor of art and design. Today, she lives in a small town in Iowa surrounded by open spaces, nature, and friendly people. She has many cats, including Lulu, after whom the character in *Ida B* is named. *Ida B* has won many awards, including the 2004 Josette Frank Award, and was named as both a *Publishers Weekly* Best Book and a *School Library Journal* Best Book in 2004. The Pacific Northwest Library Association has nominated *Ida B* for a Young Reader’s Choice award for 2007.

## Background Information

### What is Cancer?

The entire body is made of tiny building blocks called cells. The body creates cells and replaces those that die with new ones. Cells group together to form pieces of your eyes, brain, muscles, heart, blood, etc. Usually, these cells do what they are supposed to do in the body. Sometimes, though, a cell changes into a harmful, unhealthy cell. It might begin to divide too quickly and make millions of copies of itself. These unhealthy cells can group together and form a tumor. When these harmful cells will not stop growing, a person may develop cancer.

### What are Introverts and Extroverts?

Extroverts enjoy human interaction. They are enthusiastic, talkative, assertive, enjoy large social gatherings, and like group work. Introverts are interested in their own thoughts. They are quiet, deliberate, and disinterested in large social gatherings. They enjoy reading, writing, inventing, designing, and spending time alone.

### What is Arbor Day?

Arbor Day is a special holiday that is set aside for planting trees. The holiday began in Nebraska City, Nebraska, in 1872. Julius Sterling Morton, the editor of one of the first newspapers in Nebraska, founded Arbor Day. The United States celebrates this unique holiday on April 10, but countries all over the world participate in their own versions of Arbor Day.

## Characters

**Ida B:** fourth-grade girl who lives with her parents on a Wisconsin farm and apple orchard and loves being home-schooled

**Mama:** Ida B's mother; diagnosed with cancer

**Daddy:** Ida B's father; must sell part of the family's farm and apple orchard to pay for Mama's medical bills

**Ms. Myers:** Ida B's kindergarten teacher

**Ms. Washington:** Ida B's fourth-grade teacher

**Claire:** Ida B's classmate whose family buys part of the Applewood farm and apple orchard

**Ronnie:** Ida B's classmate; needs help with his multiplication tables

**Rufus:** the family dog; slobbers constantly

**Lulu:** the family cat

## Initiating Activities

1. Have students read the information at the back of the book about how the book was printed to predict important themes in *Ida B*. Have students complete the Prediction Chart on page 19 of this guide. Ask students to predict whether the book will be hard or easy to read and provide reasons for their answers.
2. Gather books about the solar system. Have students find facts about Earth that make it the only known planet suitable for human life. Have each student choose one quality to illustrate in poster form. Display the posters on a bulletin board or in the hallway outside your classroom.
3. Hold a class discussion about major changes that have occurred in students' lives. Topics for discussion may include moving into a new house, the birth of a sibling, transferring to a new school, coping with a parent or family member's illness, new job, divorce, etc. Note: Please be sensitive to students' feelings about participating in this activity. Some students may not wish to discuss changes they found particularly difficult or upsetting.
4. Display an enlarged picture of the earth or solar system on a poster board. Above the picture, add the caption "We are the earth's caretakers." Below the picture, add the caption "The earth cares for us." Instruct students to draw or list ways they serve as the earth's caretakers as well as ways that they think the earth cares for humanity. Post students' ideas in the appropriate place on the poster board.

## Vocabulary Activities

1. Before each section, have students complete a Word Map (see p. 20 of this guide) for at least five vocabulary words.
2. Have students choose three words from each section's vocabulary list. Instruct each student to create a small dictionary entitled "My Words," composed of the three words he/she chooses from each section. Have students include the word, its definition, part of speech, synonyms/antonyms for the word, and a sentence that uses the word in the correct context.
3. Divide the class into pairs. Have students play "Hangman" with various vocabulary words from each section. A student can win a game only if he or she defines the vocabulary word.

## Chapters 1–4

Ida B is anxious to start all the plans she has made for the day. She plans to visit her friends, the trees and the brook, on the farm where she and her parents live. One day, her nature friends give her a message that trouble is headed her way. The wise old tree confirms the message. During their evening walk through the apple orchard, Ida B and her father agree that they are the caretakers of the earth and that the earth cares for them too.

### Vocabulary

exports  
orchard  
pointers  
peevd  
ruckus  
perpetual  
ultimate  
antibacterial  
potent  
groundbreaking  
abiding  
caretakers  
nugget  
ponder

### Discussion Questions

1. How does the author show that Ida B is impatient? Use specific examples from the novel in your answer. (*“My insides started itching and my feet started hopping, one then the other, because they were ten minutes past being ready to go” [p. 2]; “I’d sprint to the cupboard and put it away, race back again, and put my hand out for the next one, with my right foot tap, tap, tapping the seconds that were ticking by” [p. 2].*)
2. Describe Ida B’s relationship with the trees and the brook. (*They are her friends. She gives them names and talks and listens to them. They warn her that bad things are in store for the future.*)
3. Describe the brook. (*restless, playful, avoids serious talk*)
4. What advice does the brook give Ida B? (*“Better talk to the old tree” [p. 12].*)
5. Describe the old tree. (*bare, white, no leaves, hardly any bark, “older than old,” hardly ever speaks, “wiser than wise,” always tells the truth*)
6. What does the old tree tell Ida B? (*“Hard times are coming” [p. 14].*)
7. Describe Ida B’s invention. Why did she invent it? What were the results? How was the situation resolved? (*Ida B was tired of washing her face over and over again, so she made a mask out of dish soap to keep her face clean all the time. She left on “The Soap Mask” all night, and in the morning her face was red, burning, and itchy. Mama and Daddy took her to the doctor, who washed off the dish soap and gave Ida B some lotion to put on her face.*)
8. What “deep and abiding” truth does Daddy share with Ida B? (*“We don’t own the earth. We are the earth’s caretakers.... We take care of it and all of the things on it. And when we’re done with it, it should be left better than we found it” [pp. 29–30].*)
9. What “Golden and Supremely Important Nugget of Wisdom” does Ida B share with Daddy (p. 30)? (*“...the earth takes care of us, too” [p. 32].*)
10. **Prediction:** Will Ida B’s life continue to be so perfect?

### Supplementary Activities

1. Art: Read the author’s description of the old tree, and illustrate the scene as it might appear in a play or a movie.
2. Character Analysis: Begin the Character Attribute Web for Ida B on page 21 of this guide. Add to it as you read.
3. Research: Ida B says, “Now, you probably know that for every world-famous, history-changing invention ever created, first there was a problem that needed to be solved”

(pp. 20–21). Research the inventions listed in the Needs That Caused Inventions chart on page 22 of this guide to discover what led to each invention.

- Literary Elements: Foreshadowing is a literary device that authors use to subtly suggest future events in the story before they happen. Look for examples of foreshadowing in the first section of the novel, and begin the Foreshadowing Chart on page 23 of this guide. Add to it as you read.
- Brainstorming: Think of five questions you would like to ask the trees. Be prepared to discuss the questions and possible answers in class.

## Chapters 5–8

Ida B describes her first and only experiences at school as a kindergartner. Things did not work out there, and Mama and Daddy decided to home-school her. She enjoys her parents’ teaching methods and the time she spends outdoors. Ida B grows nervous that something is wrong when she overhears Mama and Daddy discussing a doctor’s appointment and looking worried over breakfast.

### Vocabulary

variety  
maximize  
avoid  
occurred  
longing  
schedule  
ornery  
dismissal  
snickering  
forlorn  
brewing  
ether  
commotion  
somber

### Discussion Questions

- What does Ida B have for breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day? (*breakfast: hot rolled oats, raisins, and milk; lunch: peanut butter on one slice of bread, milk, and an apple; dinner: “whatever Mama and Daddy are fixing, and lots of it. Unless it’s lima beans or brussels sprouts” [p. 36].*)
- Why does Ida B have the same breakfast and lunch every day? What does this suggest about Ida B’s personality? (*breakfast: It’s too early, and she is too tired for deep thoughts or surprises. lunch: She is too busy, and there are too many other things to think about. Answers will vary. Suggestions: She is not a morning person, likes structure, enjoys routine, and does not like change.*)
- Why does Ida B like being home-schooled? (*She doesn’t have to ride a crowded bus or sit in a classroom all day. She can stay home where she likes to be best.*)
- Why didn’t Ida B like school? (*Answers will vary. Suggestion: Her teacher called her “Ida” instead of “Ida B.” She felt trapped indoors and heard the brook calling her to come home and play. The classroom was filled with things that she could not touch or play with until it was time. She could not make a schedule.*)
- Which words from this section suggest that Mama was concerned about how Ida B would behave at school? (*“I’d promised Mama nine times just that morning I’d be good and follow directions” [p. 46]; “I had also promised Mama seven times while we drove to school that I would be polite” [p. 48].*)
- What did Mama and Daddy decide about Ida B’s education? (*Mama and Daddy decided that Ida B should be home-schooled.*)
- What conditions did Mama and Daddy place on Ida B before they agreed to home-school her? (*She would have to learn math and reading just like she would in a regular school. There*