

Grade 4

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# **Hello, Universe**

by Erin Entrada Kelly

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## **Novel Guide**

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# *Hello, Universe*

by Erin Entrada Kelly

*Hello, Universe* follows the story of four middle schoolers on their first day of summer break. Though not all of them have met, their individual lives come together on one fateful day.

Virgil is a shy boy whose closest friend is his guinea pig, Gulliver. His grandmother is raising him with stories and myths from the Philippines. But he doesn't have time to think about their meanings; he's preoccupied with the last day of school and what it means for him: he's a Grand Failure.

Valencia, who has grown up mostly deaf, is ready for a summer of solitude. She has a zoological diary full of notes on wildlife and is looking forward to what she can learn. There's only one problem: a recurring nightmare that she can't quite shake and whose meaning she can't figure out.

Chet is the neighborhood bully, stronger and louder than the other kids at school. His favorite prey, other than Valencia, is Virgil. When he comes across Virgil in the woods, he plays a prank on him that puts all of them in jeopardy.

Kaori is convinced she has the power of second sight, and she owns a business, with her sister at her side, of telling fortunes and reading star charts. She has the power to help Virgil and Valencia, but when Chet strikes, she has much more to worry about than star signs.

As the novel progresses, the four characters weave in and out of each other's lives, proving to each other and the reader the truth behind Kaori's biggest piece of wisdom: *There are no coincidences*.

## Additional Resources

- If you like this book, you might also like...
  - *The First Rule of Punk* by Celia C. Pérez
  - *The Season of Styx Malone* by Kekla Magoon
  - *Holes* by Louis Sachar
  - *The Girl Who Drank the Moon* by Kelly Barnhill
- To learn more, you might look at these resources. Remember to get permission from an adult before using the Internet.
  - Bullying can take many forms, and it's not always easy to deal with. If you want to learn more facts about bullying, or if you need help on what to do when you are being bullied, check out [StopBullying.org](https://www.stopbullying.org).
  - Are you interested in learning more about sign language and maybe signing a bit yourself? ASL Kids has a few videos to show you how to do the alphabet and some words. You can also download the app with an adult's permission.
  - If you want to learn more about the stars, Crash Course Kids is the YouTube channel for you! You can learn about constellations, constellation locations, and the zodiac constellations, all of which are important in *Hello, Universe*.

# Reading: Chapters 1-3

## Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) What is Virgil's parents' nickname for him? Why do they call him this name?
- 2) What happens to the Stone Boy in Lola's dream?
- 3) Who is Ruby San Salvador? What happens to her in the story Lola tells Virgil?
- 4) What happens in Valencia's nightmare? What could it mean?
- 5) Why doesn't Valencia want to tell her mother about her nightmare?

## Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Some of the words Virgil's family uses are Tagalog, a language spoken in the Philippines. Search for those italicized words and phrases and use their context to guess their meanings. Then use a translating dictionary to find out what the words mean.
- 2) Research what the alphabet looks like in sign language and practice signing your name or the first five letters of the alphabet.
- 3) Lola thinks that Virgil would be such a good piano player, he could play at Madison Square Garden. What is Madison Square Garden, and why would it be so impressive for him to play piano there?

## Imagine

- 1) Virgil's parents have nicknamed him Turtle, but he does not like that name. If you were to give Virgil a different nickname, what would it be and why?
- 2) Valencia names a few books that would describe Roberta, since Roberta had given her a book called *Famous Deaf People in History*. Brainstorm book titles that would describe you if you were included in a "famous people" book. Who else would be included?

## Observe

- 1) At the end of Chapter 2, Valencia says there are plenty of things for her to do that summer. List the sentences that come after her statement. What do they all have in common? Why do you think Valencia repeats this thought?
- 2) Review the scene in Chapter 3 where Virgil comes downstairs for breakfast. What are his family members doing and saying? Compare and contrast their actions.

## Understand

- 1) Valencia says she doesn't think her father "knows how to be a dad to an eleven-year-old girl." Why does she think this? Why might her father find it difficult to talk to her?
- 2) At the end of Chapter 2, Valencia says that she doesn't need anyone to have fun with, because it is less trouble to be by herself. What are some things you prefer to do by yourself? What activities would you want to do with other people?
- 3) Virgil's father says that "boys need to play sports, not fool around on a silly piano." How would you respond to that statement?

# Reading: Chapters 4-6

## Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) What does Kaori tell people about her family's history? What is their actual story?
- 2) How are Kaori's and Gen's bedrooms different? What do their bedrooms say about them?
- 3) What did the pet shop employee forget to tell Virgil about guinea pigs?
- 4) What does Virgil say to his mother instead of asking her not to call him Turtle? Why?
- 5) Why does Virgil avoid 1417 Elm Street?

## Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Kaori keeps a zodiac rug in her room and refers to its signs as she works. Look up the zodiac signs; which sign does your birthday fall under?
- 2) When Virgil leaves his house, he tells his mother "I love you" in Tagalog. Pick one other language you do not already speak and look up how to say "I love you" in that language.

## **Imagine**

- 1) Kaori mentions that she has the power of “second sight,” which she believes must have come from someplace magical. Compose a short scene in which Kaori finds out she has her new ability.
- 2) Virgil imagines what he’d say to Chet if he was braver. If you were in his position, how would you respond to Chet?

## **Observe**

- 1) Virgil thinks Gulliver is suffering from “debilitating depression.” Based on what you have observed of Gulliver, is Virgil correct? Use textual evidence to support your answer.
- 2) Virgil thinks his mother is trying to prove a point by using up all of the mangoes and clementines that Lola says are wasteful. What point might she be trying to prove?

## **Understand**

- 1) Virgil doesn’t like it when his family calls him Turtle. Why do you think he hasn’t told them? How could he talk to them about it?
- 2) Chet calls Virgil some hurtful names. How is this similar to Virgil’s parents’ nickname for him, and how is it different?



# Reading: Chapters 7-9

## Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) What kind of house does Kaori live in? Why does Virgil excuse it?
- 2) How do Kaori and Gen react to Gulliver's presence, and what does this reveal about their personalities?
- 3) What is Virgil afraid of, other than Chet?
- 4) Which of Lola's stories does Valencia remind Virgil of and why?
- 5) Which two characters does Virgil see in the grocery store, and how does he react to them?

## Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Virgil sees Valencia reading a book about Jane Goodall. Research Jane Goodall and write down three interesting facts you learn about her.
- 2) Kaori studies her stones "like an archaeologist." What does an archaeologist do? What kinds of materials do they study?

## Imagine

- 1) Imagine you are one of Kaori's clients. What would you ask her? What do you think her answer might be?
- 2) Valencia says her name could lead people into battle. What does your name say about you?

## Observe

- 1) Virgil said Chet's laughter "followed Virgil like a buzzing housefly." Why would he compare laughter to a housefly? Think about the different kinds of laughter you have heard, then decide what kind of laughter Chet's might be. If time allows, compose another simile for a different kind of laughter.
- 2) Look at Kaori's business card at the end of Chapter 7. What does this business card reveal about Kaori?

## Understand

- 1) Virgil feels humiliated when Kaori calls him shy. How could she rephrase what she said?
- 2) When Valencia is at the grocery store with her mother, she grows frustrated and annoyed. When you find yourself feeling this way, what do you do about your frustration?
- 3) Kaori says that in life, there are no coincidences. Do you think this is true? Why or why not?

# Reading: Chapters 10-12

## Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Chapter 10 is titled “The Bullens Boys.” Think about Mr. Bullens—how he behaves, how he speaks, and how he thinks. Do you think the title is accurate in describing him as a boy? Use details from the chapter to support your answer.
- 2) How does Chet react when Mr. Bullens asks him about basketball? What does it tell you about how he feels in that situation?
- 3) What are Lola’s rules when walking into a room? Why might they be important?
- 4) Why does Valencia think the pamphlet the strangers give her is funny?

## Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Research to learn more about snakes. List as many interesting or positive things as you can about them.
- 2) Virgil has learned a lot about Gulliver by reading about guinea pigs online. Research guinea pigs yourself and write down three new facts you learn about them.

## Imagine

- 1) Lola tells Virgil that good and bad things go together. Without one, you cannot recognize the other. Think about what it would be like to live in a world without good or bad things. What might you enjoy about it, and what might you miss? Would you choose to live in this kind of world if you could? Why or why not?
- 2) Valencia says that Kaori should put a sign in her yard to advertise her business. Draw what you think her sign or poster should look like.

## Observe

- 1) What happens in Lola's dream, and what does she say is the most important moral of the story?
- 2) Valencia says, "I know the woods like the back of my hand." Based on the rest of her comments, what do you think the expression *like the back of my hand* means?

## Understand

- 1) Why might Chet spend his time bullying Virgil and Valencia? Do you think his behavior is excusable based on how his father treats him?
- 2) Whenever Chet thinks about Valencia, he describes her as weird or wrong. If Chet had a conversation with Valencia, do you think his views would change? What words would you use to describe her?
- 3) Virgil describes how much he enjoys the peaceful, quiet morning. What is your ideal environment? You might consider whether it is quiet or loud, full of people or more solitary, at home or somewhere else, or other factors.

# Reading: Chapters 13-15

## Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Why does Chet say the boa constrictor won't hurt him? What is his body language when he says this, and what does it say about how he's acting?
- 2) Why was Chet upset that no one noticed Valencia spent more time with the boa constrictor?
- 3) What do the dots and lines represent in Kaori's star chart?
- 4) How does Kaori describe Pisces? Based on what you've read so far, does this description match Virgil?
- 5) How does Kaori describe Scorpio? Based on what you've read so far, does this description match Valencia?

## Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) When their class meets the boa constrictor, Chet and Valencia learn that snakes can "hear" through vibrations in their skin. Research boa constrictors or another type of snake and find out more interesting facts about them.
- 2) Kaori mentions three constellations to her sister: Orion, Andromeda, and Pegasus. Look up the story behind one of these constellations and record at least three interesting facts you learn about it.

## **Imagine**

- 1) Think of the myths and fairy tales you know. If you were to choose one to become a constellation, which would you choose?
- 2) Write a scene describing the day Valencia met Sacred.

## **Observe**

- 1) Chet calls people who are afraid of snakes cowards. Based on what you've read so far, compose a list of what Chet might fear.
- 2) Chet says that Valencia doesn't hide her hearing aids because she wants attention. Does this sound like Valencia from the descriptions you've read of her?
- 3) Kaori thinks it will be difficult to help Valencia and Virgil become friends because their star signs are so different. Based on what you've read so far, is Kaori right?

## **Understand**

- 1) How does David stand up for Valencia in class? Is he approaching the situation the right way?
- 2) Valencia is frustrated because her parents don't think she's responsible enough to take care of a dog. What are some ways she could prove she is responsible?

# Reading: Chapters 16-18

## Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) What warning did Lola give Virgil that he remembers when he sees Chet?
- 2) What element does Pah control? What does that have to do with Virgil?
- 3) Which nursery rhyme does Virgil quote when he realizes his cell phone is broken? How might it apply to his situation?
- 4) When Chet goes to bed at night, who does he imagine himself to be? What do these people have in common, and why might Chet want to be like them?

## Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) There are over seven thousand islands in the Philippines, but people do not live on all of them. Research one island in the Philippines where people live and record what animals live there, what foods people eat, and how many people live on the island.
- 2) Chet believes he is “snake hunting” when he pokes around in the bushes. Research how to behave around snakes and decide if he’s handling them the right way.

## **Imagine**

- 1) When Virgil looks into the well, he's reminded of the story of Pah. Reread the passage in Chapter 17 where Virgil describes Pah, then draw a picture of what you think Pah would look like.
- 2) Most of the characters in the book are in the woods during these chapters. If you could choose to follow one of the characters, who would you choose and what would you say to them?

## **Observe**

- 1) In these chapters, both Virgil and Chet encounter situations they're not ready for and begin to imagine all sorts of stories to explain what might be happening. Use a T-chart to show what Virgil thinks of the well versus what Chet thinks Valencia is up to.
- 2) Chapter 18 is called "Animal," but no animals appear in the chapter. Why might it have this title?

## **Understand**

- 1) When he gets stuck in the well, Virgil compares himself with his brothers, stating that they would never have gotten themselves into that situation. Have you ever started comparing yourself to other people? What are some strengths that you have that no one else does?
- 2) Chet says there's "something strange about a girl who couldn't hear." If you were to talk to Chet about this observation, what would you say to him?



# Reading: Chapters 19-21

## Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) How long have turtles survived on the earth? What might that tell us about Virgil and his nickname?
- 2) When did Valencia break her rule about interfering with nature? Why did she do this?
- 3) What does Valencia observe about the well? What do we know about the well that Valencia doesn't?
- 4) Which two things does Valencia pray to Saint Rene about?

## Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Valencia says dogs can learn sign language faster than humans. Can dogs really learn sign language? Look into the topic to find out more.
- 2) When she writes in her zoological diary, Valencia reminds herself to research where chimps live and why rats don't live in the woods. Research one of these questions yourself. If time permits, write Valencia a letter with the answer.
- 3) Virgil is scared of being squashed by a *carabao* or a *jeepney*, even though he doesn't know what they are. Research to learn about each of these things.

## **Imagine**

- 1) If you had a secret pet, what would it be? What would you need to do in order to take care of it?
- 2) What are some changes that Roberta and the others could have made in order to find games to play with Valencia?

## **Observe**

- 1) How has Roberta changed after her friendship with Valencia? Draw a T-chart and compare how she was when they were friends versus how she acts now.
- 2) Using a Venn diagram, compare and contrast Valencia's ideas about snakes with Chet's ideas about snakes.

## **Understand**

- 1) Valencia's "how-to's" help her communicate better with her friends and family. What are some "how-to's" that help you have a good conversation with others?
- 2) Valencia says she was not really ready to stop being friends with Roberta. Is it possible to prepare yourself for changes in a friendship?
- 3) Virgil is surprised by the sound of his voice when he yells. Describe a time when you have surprised yourself by something you have said or done.

# Reading: Chapters 22-24

## Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) What three places does Virgil imagine when he is trying to calm down?
- 2) What was Kaori's first word? Is this a normal word for a baby to use? What does that word say about Kaori?
- 3) How does Kaori know something is wrong with Virgil?
- 4) How is Roberta's treatment of Valencia's "how-to's" different from Kaori's?

## Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Virgil imagines a colony of bats coming down to attack him. Research to learn if that is normal bat behavior.
- 2) The password to get into Kaori's house is "Venus rises in the west." Look up the statement to find out whether or not this statement is accurate and what it could mean.

## Imagine

- 1) If you were to imagine "someplace else" in a stressful situation like Virgil's mother tells him to do, where would you imagine? Describe it in detail.
- 2) Virgil tries several different ways of getting out of the well. If you were in his situation, how would you attempt to escape?

## Observe

- 1) Virgil says he “never realized how noisy the world was until there was nothing to hear.” Listen quietly to the room around you. What sounds do you hear when no one is speaking?
- 2) What does Virgil imagine is happening when the rocks fall down the well and the lid is shut? What do we know about the situation that Virgil doesn't?

## Understand

- 1) Virgil says he's protecting Gulliver, but he knows it's the other way around. Why do you think Virgil finds comfort with Gulliver there?
- 2) When Virgil thinks he is having a heart attack, he tries several ways of calming down. What are some techniques you can use to calm yourself down when you're panicking?

# Reading: Chapters 25-27

## Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Each chapter begins with a certain picture for each character's point of view. What is each character's picture? What does that picture say about them?
- 2) Which two characters does Virgil encounter in the well? How are they similar to or different from Lola's stories about them?
- 3) What are Kaori's two interpretations of Valencia's dream?
- 4) Kaori notices that Valencia is "stubborn, but with a quick-fizzling temper," and wonders what star sign she has. What do we know that Kaori doesn't, and why is it significant?

## Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Look up a constellation chart. What time of year are certain stars in the sky where you live? Are there any stars that stay in one place?
- 2) Valencia has begun to teach herself sign language, but there are many different kinds of sign language to learn. Look up the differences in some of the biggest sign languages, such as American Sign Language, British/Australian/New Zealand Sign Language, and Japanese Sign Language.

## **Imagine**

- 1) Ms. Murray says, “Sometimes life calls on you even when you don’t raise your hand.” When have you seen or experienced this?
- 2) If you were a character in this book, what would your picture be at the beginning of each of your chapters? Why would you choose this picture?

## **Observe**

- 1) What name does Ruby San Salvador call Virgil? What do you think it means?
- 2) When Kaori tells Valencia what her dream means, Valencia gets angry. What does that say about Valencia? Do you think Kaori’s interpretation was right?

## **Understand**

- 1) Ruby tells Virgil that nothing is ever hopeless. Do you think this is true? How do you stay hopeful?
- 2) Would you like being by yourself all the time like Valencia? What can you do when you notice that someone is feeling lonely?

# Reading: Chapters 28-30

## Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Virgil is reminded of the Stone Boy when he tries and fails to get out of the well. Review the story of the Stone Boy in Chapter 1. Why is it relevant to Virgil's situation?
- 2) What does *Bayani* mean? Why do you think Ruby calls Virgil by that name?
- 3) Ruby says, "Being a warrior has nothing to do with size." Which other character in the book has thought about being a warrior? How would that character respond to Ruby?
- 4) From which book did Valencia get the name Lilliput for her guinea pig? Why is the title of the book significant?

## Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) The novel *Gulliver's Travels* is important to multiple characters in the story. Research what the book is about and name some of the characters you would want to meet from this book.
- 2) Chet decides that when he catches a snake, he's going to name it Smaug. Look up the name and find out where it comes from. Why might Chet pick this particular name for his snake?
- 3) Lola says the Valencia Cathedral is a very important cathedral in Spain. Research the Valencia Cathedral and write down at least three interesting facts you learn about it.

## **Imagine**

- 1) Virgil imagines Bali as a magical place. Compose your own description or draw a picture of what you think Bali might be like.
- 2) If you were to name your pet after a character from a book, who would you choose and why?

## **Observe**

- 1) How does Valencia feel about walking up to a boy's house in a fancy neighborhood? Based on what we know about how Virgil feels about Valencia, what is interesting about Valencia's feelings?
- 2) Why are Lola and Virgil the only two people not smiling in their family picture? Use textual evidence to support your ideas.

## **Understand**

- 1) Ruby says that some people don't want to listen to their thoughts, so they make the world louder with noise. What are some times when you didn't want to listen to your thoughts?
- 2) Virgil struggles with math, but when he goes to get more help, he ends up meeting Valencia. When did something go wrong for you and then turn out to be a good thing?
- 3) One of Chet's father's favorite expressions is "You might as well be nothing if you don't excel at something." Is it okay not to excel at something? When it would be worth doing something you don't excel at?



# Reading: Chapters 31-33

## Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) What does Kaori want to do to find Virgil? What's the problem with her plan?
- 2) Why does Kaori want her sister to stop asking Valencia questions?
- 3) What does Ruby say makes Pah grow?
- 4) Why does Ruby say crying is good for the soul?

## Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Gen says she's heard somewhere that it is possible to cook an egg on a car or sidewalk if it's hot enough outside. Research to find out if his statement is true.
- 2) Look up snakeskin agate and what it looks like. Is Valencia right about where snakeskin agates can be found?

## Imagine

- 1) Imagine you are one of the people in the search party looking for Virgil. Where would you direct the others to start first?
- 2) If you were to join the business that Kaori is imagining for herself and Valencia, what would your job be? What would you rename the business?

## Observe

- 1) How does Kaori feel about the woods? Create a Venn diagram to compare and contrast Kaori's feelings about the woods with Valencia's.
- 2) Read the section in Chapter 30 where Chet describes the snake, then read the section in Chapter 33 where he tells the search party about the snake. What are the differences between the two descriptions? Why does Chet change the story?

## Understand

- 1) Kaori doesn't want to admit she's frustrated that Valencia seems like a more natural leader. What advice would you give to help her become a better leader?
- 2) Virgil makes a list of things he should have done before getting stuck in the well: talk to Valencia, tell Lola he loves her, understand his family, and thank Kaori. What's something you've been meaning to do but haven't done yet?

# Reading: Chapters 34-36

## Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Why does Valencia keep the pillowcase Chet was using for his wound?
- 2) What reasons does Kaori have for wanting to go into business with Valencia?
- 3) Whenever Kaori talks about her parents, she calls them “Mr. and Mrs. Tanaka.” What is she trying to portray when she does so?
- 4) What does Ruby say is the worst question in the world?

## Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) What does *déjà vu* mean? Look up the definition of *déjà vu* and find out more about the science behind the phenomenon.
- 2) Research what Kaori references when she talks about white flags of surrender. When were they used?

## Imagine

- 1) What might the search party have done if the snake had been venomous?
- 2) If you were giving Virgil advice instead of Ruby, what would you tell him? Write a short paragraph with your advice.

## **Observe**

- 1) Valencia wonders if it is possible to feel different just by being called one word. What are some words, good and bad, that characters in this book use that make others feel different?
- 2) List the three goals that Virgil sets for his life if he is rescued. Which do you think is the most important to him?

## **Understand**

- 1) Have you ever had to keep an important secret for a friend? Was it difficult? Why or why not?
- 2) Virgil plans either to fight Chet or simply stand up to him once he gets out of the well. What is the best way to deal with a bully, and what advice would you give Virgil?

# Reading: Chapters 37-39

## Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) What event helps Valencia figure out where Virgil is?
- 2) How does Valencia know the messages she's receiving are from Lola?
- 3) How does the search party get Virgil out of the well?
- 4) Who does Virgil talk to when he gets out of the well?

## Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Why shouldn't you light candles in the dry woods? Research some fire safety rules for camping or other activities.
- 2) Valencia calls the end of their adventure "anticlimactic." What does that word mean? Look it up in a dictionary to find out, then determine if Valencia's description fits the situation.

## Imagine

- 1) What are some other ways in which the search party could have rescued Virgil? Write a short scene in which you describe one of your ideas.
- 2) If you were in Virgil's shoes, what would you say to Valencia rather than staying quiet?

## **Observe**

- 1) When Valencia begins to remember the events of the day, she realizes the events lead up to one another. Draw a web of the events of the day and arrows pointing from events that led to one another.
- 2) Valencia says, “Sometimes things don’t end the way you expect them to.” What were some ways you expected this section to end? What happened instead?

## **Understand**

- 1) Kaori seems frustrated that after everything they’ve been through, Virgil still can’t talk to Valencia. Have you ever felt frustrated with a friend? How did you work through your feelings?
- 2) Have you ever found it difficult to speak to someone? What are some ways Virgil could get over his fear?

# Reading: Chapters 40-42

## Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) What does Virgil do when he sees Chet? What do his actions reveal about the kind of person he is?
- 2) Why does Chet hesitate to bully Virgil when he sees Sacred?
- 3) What does Virgil say to his mother when he gets back home? How does she react?
- 4) How many text messages does Valencia have on her phone? Why is this out of the ordinary?

## Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Virgil's family decides to keep Sacred, but he's been out on his own for a while. Research what the family should do to prepare for and take care of Sacred at their house.
- 2) Valencia wonders if all cathedrals look alike. Look up images of cathedrals to see if you can answer her question. What similarities and differences do you notice?

## **Imagine**

- 1) Rewrite the scene where Virgil comes home from either Lola's perspective or his mother's.
- 2) Valencia imagines a kid a hundred years in the future finding the jump rope. Put yourself in that kid's shoes and write a short scene where you discover the jump rope. How do you think it got there? What do you do with it?
- 3) If Kaori were to predict the future for her friends and Chet, what do you think she would see?

## **Observe**

- 1) Do you agree with Kaori that there's no hope for Virgil? Why or why not? Use textual evidence to support your answer.
- 2) Virgil is out of the well. Why does he still hear Ruby's voice?
- 3) How have certain characters changed since the beginning of the novel? Choose between Virgil, Valencia, and Kaori.

## **Understand**

- 1) Virgil's goal was to talk to Valencia, but he wasn't able to do it at first. Have you ever set a goal that you weren't able to reach on the first try? Did you try again?
- 2) Have you ever been nervous, like "a hundred butterflies have taken flight" in your belly? What did you do to relax?



Dear Family Member,

Along with each Amplify CKLA unit, your child will be assigned a Fluency Performance Passage. This passage will be introduced in class, and students will spend several lessons practicing reading this passage aloud. On the fifth day, students will perform a reading of this passage. We follow this routine because repeated readings of text help build reading fluency, which includes automatic word recognition, expression, accuracy, and speed. Additionally, over one hundred studies have shown that deep reading, in which students spend time reading and rereading a single text, has a dramatic impact on reading comprehension. In fact, it is such an important impact that it helps students better comprehend the passage they have practiced as well as passages they will read in the future.

As part of our in-class practice, students study and discuss this passage. I will demonstrate different ways of reading it aloud, and students will analyze what makes a good reading. They will also practice reading this passage aloud in various ways.

You can assist your child by asking him or her to read the passage aloud at home. Even if your child remembers some or all of the words, remind him or her to read the passage rather than recite it from memory. Children may practice by reading to family members, babysitters, or even the family pet. Please log each reading your child completes in the Happy Hearers Log, which accompanies this letter.

Thank you for your help!

# Happy Hearers Log

An important way to prepare for your Fluency Passage Performance is to practice reading the passage to others. They may be your parents, your siblings, another family member or friend, or even the family pet. Whoever they are, they're sure to be a Happy Hearer when they get to listen to you read your passage!

Each time you practice reading your Fluency Passage to a listener at home, record it in the Happy Hearers Log.

Day of the reading	Name of the Happy Hearer	Notes

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