

# Franklin Endicott and the Third Key

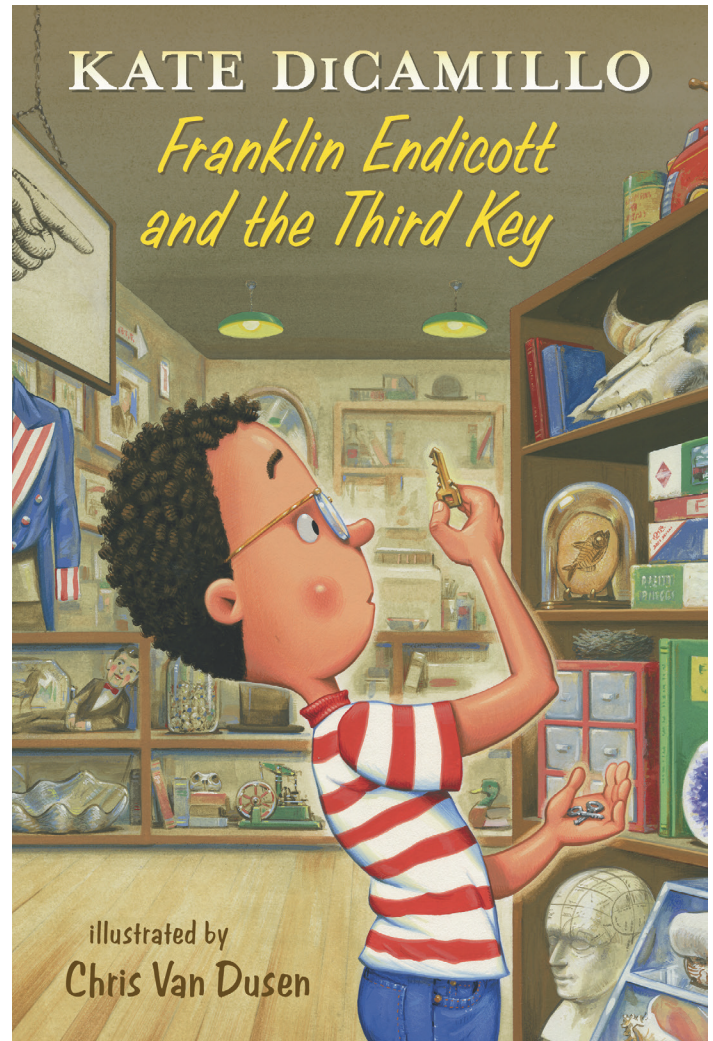
KATE DICAMILLO

illustrated by CHRIS VAN DUSEN



## ABOUT THE BOOK

Frank Endicott is a worrier. He worries about everything—from lions and armadillos to black holes and leprosy! When his worries wreak havoc on his dreams, Frank takes matters into his own hands. Upon seeking advice from Eugenia Lincoln, he tags along on an errand to get a key duplicated. Eugenia brings Frank to Buddy Lamp's Used Goods, but the scary and interesting items there only add to his worries. Buddy, the shop's owner, presents Frank with not only the original key and the copy, but a mysterious third key. While attempting to solve this mystery, Frank ultimately forges a friendship with Buddy. Buddy introduces Frank to classic authors, the joy of reading, and an entirely new perspective on turning mysteries into marvels.



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## Common Core Connections

Different characters from Kate DiCamillo's Mercy Watson series have been highlighted in her spin-off series Tales from Deckawoo Drive. *Franklin Endicott and the Third Key* is the sixth installment. It features Stella's older brother, Frank, as he becomes entwined in a tale of mystery and intrigue. This teachers' guide, with connections to the Common Core, includes an array of language arts activities, book discussions, vocabulary instruction, and more to accommodate the learning needs of most students in grades 1–3. It is best to allow students to read the entire story before engaging in a detailed study of the work.

Notes throughout the guide correlate the discussion and activities to specific Common Core Language Arts and Math Standards. For more information on specific standards for your grade level, visit the Common Core website at [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org).



## About the Tales from Deckawoo Drive series

For fans of the Mercy Watson books who are not quite ready to move on to Kate DiCamillo's middle-grade novels, the Tales from Deckawoo Drive series serves as a bridge between the two.



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## COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

### Reading: Key Ideas and Details

RL 1.1–3.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

RL 1.2: Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.

RL 1.3–3.3: Describe characters and major events in a story.

### Speaking & Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration

SL 1.1–3.1: Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade-specific topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe Frank? What examples from the story support your description? Do you think he changed at the end of the story? How?
2. What were some of the things that Frank worried about? How did Frank try to solve his worrying?
3. Why did Frank bring Mercy over and tell Stella, “It’s a scientific experiment” (page 15)? Did the experiment work? What happened?
4. Both Frank and Eugenia have trouble sleeping. Have you ever had trouble sleeping? Eugenia tells Frank, “When you can’t sleep, the best thing to do is to concentrate on life’s daily tasks” (page 23). Do you agree with this statement? What do you do to help you fall asleep?
5. When Frank woke in the middle of the night and saw Eugenia awake, he wrote a note to his family before leaving the house. Do you think that was a good idea? Why? What does this action say about Frank’s character?
6. Frank uses the Bingham Lincoln Encyclopedia set to research his nightmares. Have you ever used encyclopedias to research an answer to a question? How do you find answers to questions you have?
7. When Frank questions Buddy about the objects in his store, Buddy says, “Past tense, past tense. So much here involves the past tense” (page 43). What does Buddy mean by this?
8. Warm milk is used as a comfort throughout the story. Do you think there is something to warm milk? Do you ever drink warm milk if you need to sleep? How would you describe Frank and Eugenia’s relationship?
9. Frank isn’t convinced that Buddy provided a third key by mistake. Page 48 notes that he thought the key was a message, but he didn’t know what the message was. Did you think the key was a message? Do you think that it was in fact a mistake? Why or why not?
10. What do all the people in the story do to help Frank? Who helps him the most? What was the most powerful thing Buddy gave to Frank? Do you think that Buddy knew what he was doing all along?
11. On page 65, Buddy reads O. Henry’s story “The Last Leaf” aloud to Frank. How does Buddy compare the moral of the story to Frank’s predicament? Why do you think Buddy selected the story he did?
12. Before Mercy ate the key, Horace told Frank, “I think that this is the key that frees someone” (page 74). How does Horace’s simple statement predict what actually happens to Frank? How does the key free Frank?

## LANGUAGE ARTS ACTIVITIES

### COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

#### Reading: Craft and Structure

RL 3.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text.

#### Language: Conventions of Standard English

L 2.2e: Consult reference materials, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings.

#### Language: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L 2.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade-level reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.

- a. Use a sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

### Vocabulary

Kate DiCamillo infuses her stories with vocabulary-rich text. Review this vocabulary list from *Franklin Endicott and the Third Key*. There are thirty words on this list, and some are quite challenging. The fourteen words in the first column can be easily looked up in a children's dictionary. The second list consists of sixteen more difficult words. This activity can be customized to fit the children's skill level. Write all fourteen words so they are visible to the class. Have the students use a dictionary to locate and write the definition of each word. Review the results together and write a quick definition beside the words. Then go back and read each word in the context of the story to support the meaning. Challenge students to use each word in a sentence or alphabetize the words; consider sprinkling in a few of the advanced words. As an extension, write out the definitions of the sixteen harder words. Then see if students can match the correct word to the definition by listening to it read aloud in the content of the story. A modification of this exercise is simply to pick and choose the words that are most appropriate for your students.

#### List 1

beckoning (page 35)  
benign (page 78)  
blustery (page 64)  
comprehensive (page 9)  
confines (page 60)  
dismayed (page 6)  
eclecticism (page 43)  
insomnia (page 22)  
ludicrous (page 21)  
marvels (page 95)  
mundane (page 23)  
myriad (page 34)  
reluctant (page 35)  
reveling (page 34)

#### List 2

affixed (page 28)  
brusqueness (page 21)  
burgeoning (page 10)  
carte blanche (page 8)  
cavalier (page 21)  
defunct (page 30)  
disconcerting (page 52)  
efficacy (page 83)  
fabricated (page 61)  
impending (page 17)  
insubstantial (page 42)  
insufferable (page 87)  
peruse (page 33)  
piqued (page 34)  
suffused (page 17)  
unwavering (page 88)





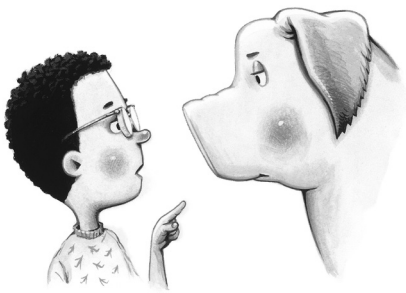
## COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

### Reading: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RL 1.7: Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.

RL 2.7: Use information gained from the illustrations and words in print to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

RL 3.3: Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.



## COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

### Speaking and Listening: Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

SL 2.4–3.4: Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.

### Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration

SL 1.1–3.1

- Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics under discussion).
- Build on others' talk in conversations by responding to comments of others through multiple exchanges.

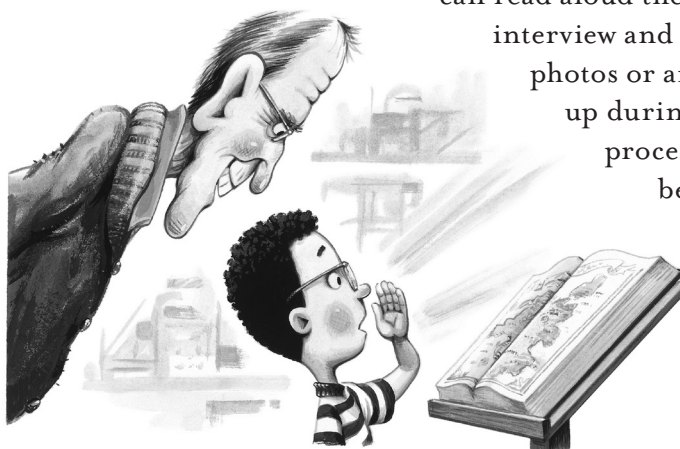
## A Character Inside and Out

This activity explores the concept of character traits. It allows students to use the text to formulate an internal and external image of each character. Begin by asking students, *Who are the main characters in the book?* (Frank, Eugenia, Buddy) *Who are the minor characters?* (Stella, Mercy) Hold a class discussion on the main characters' physical traits. (Frank: glasses, curly brown hair, etc.) Reference the pictures and descriptions from the story. Read aloud the following passage from pages 30–31: "A man slowly emerged from the gloom. He was very tall. His hair was gray. He looked like someone made from a piece of paper that had been folded over and over again until it was creased and worn." Discuss how Kate DiCamillo uses words to describe Buddy Lamp's physical appearance. After all the physical traits have been listed, move on to their internal traits. This is where students will need to use inference and examples from the story. (Frank: smart, worrier, resourceful; Eugenia: honest, no-nonsense, dependable; Buddy: helpful, clever, kind, etc.) Then have each student pick one of the three main characters and draw an outline of a person on a piece of plain white paper. The students will draw the physical traits on the character outline. Outside the outline, they will write the accompanying word (or words) that matches the physical trait (e.g., brown hair). Then they will list the internal traits within the drawn outline of the character (e.g., smart, loyal).

## What's in a Name

Buddy Lamp, the owner of Buddy Lamp's Used Goods, told Frank the story of his family name. Read aloud pages 62–63 to remind the class how Buddy Lamp came to be. Not only did Buddy Lamp reveal the origin of his name, but he also shared that his family came to America from Italy. Ask the students if they have been named after anyone or if they know the origin of their family name. Create a list of interview questions for each student to bring home. Have students interview their parents and/or grandparents. (Sample questions: Am I named after anyone? If so, who? If not, then how did I get my name? Did our family come to America from another country? When? How? Why?) Have each student create a presentation about their genealogy. They

can read aloud the results of their interview and share any family photos or anecdotes that turned up during the interview process. It would be best to inform the parents prior to this activity so they can be prepared.



## COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

### Writing: Range of Writing

W 3.10: Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

### Reading: Key Ideas and Details

R1.1–3.1: Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.



## COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

### Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge

W 1.7–2.7: Participate in shared research and writing projects.

W 3.7: Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

W 3.8: Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

### Speaking & Listening: Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

SL 1.1–3.1: Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade-specific topics and texts with peers and adults in small and large groups.

SL 3.4: Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.

## Worry Eater

Frank worries about a great deal of things. He even keeps his worries listed alphabetically in a notebook—which makes him worry all the more. Begin by discussing the definition of “worry.” Explain that to worry means you are anxious, nervous, or uneasy about something. Ask students if they think keeping a worry notebook, like Frank’s, is a good idea. Have them share some things that cause them to worry. Remind them that per Frank’s research, some ancient myths described monsters that consumed people’s nightmares. Ask the class what they think about that notion. What happens when Frank tries to get Mercy to eat his nightmares? Have the students create their own Worry Eater Notebook. Fold several 8½" x 11" pieces of paper in half and staple them into a piece of colored construction paper. Students can draw a monster on the front and entitle the notebook their Worry Eater Notebook. They can then fill it with things, ideas, or events that worry them. Create a class Worry Eater by drawing (or enlarging) a picture of Mercy. Glue it to a jar or shoebox. Whenever a student is worried about something, they can write it down and insert it in the Worry Eater to have Mercy consume the worry. This is also a good way to check in on student concerns and well-being. Share various solutions, yoga poses, and breathing techniques to alleviate stresses.

## Historical Biography

When Frank enters Buddy Lamp’s Used Goods, he encounters many items that evoke historical figures: a wax figure of Napoleon Bonaparte (page 30), a magic set referencing Harry Houdini (page 39), a stovepipe hat like the one worn by Abraham Lincoln (pages 41–42). Kate DiCamillo often cites actual authors or mentions real people when writing her books. In *Franklin Endicott and the Third Key*, not only are these historical folks mentioned, but she also includes classic works by O. Henry (page 65), H. G. Wells (page 87), and Langston Hughes (page 90). Challenge the students to write a short historical biography for any one of the above. Begin by discussing the meaning of biography (an account of someone’s life, written by someone else). Then quickly review each person referenced (Houdini was a magician, Lincoln was an American president, etc.). Have students select the person who interests them the most, or divide the class into six groups and assign a person to each group. Discuss the elements of a good biography. Students can include any or all of the following in the biography: name, date of birth, date of death, hometown or home country, aspects of childhood, path to fame, successes and failures, personal opinions, etc. They can share their biographies through a visual presentation (e.g., dressing up like the person with props), through technology, such as PowerPoint or Prezi, or through a traditional reading of the biography.



## COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

CCSS.Math.Content.1NBT.B.2A: Numbers and Operations in Base Ten

CCCS.Math.Content.1MD.c.4: Represent and Interpret Data

### Writing: Text Types and Purposes

W 3.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

- c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., also, another, and, more, but) to connect ideas within categories of information.



## *Eyeball Estimation*

Frank is completely horrified when he encounters a jar full of eyeballs on the shelf at Buddy Lamp's Used Goods. Buddy explains that it belonged to a taxidermist. Explain the definition and career of a taxidermist and ask why one might be in need of fake eyeballs. Use this as a springboard into a math activity about estimation. Find a clear jar. The size will depend upon the number of fake eyeballs you put in it (you could use googly eyes or small bouncy balls instead of fake eyeballs). Before asking students to estimate the number of items in the jar, review counting by tens with any counting objects of choice. Explain how to use the pile of ten to estimate the size of one section of the items in the jar. Compare the pile to the jar. Then allow students to examine and handle the jar in order to make an estimate. Keep the jar visible and have students submit daily estimates on pieces of paper.

At the end of the week, dump out the contents and distribute among the students. Have them count their distribution into piles of ten. Collectively count by tens and use tally marks to get to the final total. Prizes can be awarded as an optional incentive (closest to the number, farthest away, the greatest number of guesses, etc.). In order to incorporate language arts, ask the students to write word problems based on the theme of *Franklin Endicott and the Third Key*. For example, Buddy gave Frank a jar of ten marbles, but Mercy ate three. How many are left?

## COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

### Reading: Craft and Structure

R 1.6: Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text.

R 3.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.

## *Pen Names*

When Frank tries to return the mysterious extra key, Buddy introduces him to the famous author O. Henry. "O. Henry is a fabricated name, a pen name, a nom de plume. You can do that, you know: name yourself whatever you please, even if you're not a writer" (page 61). Share examples of other famous authors with pen names—such as Dr. Seuss (Theodor Geisel), Lemony Snicket (Daniel Handler), and J.K. Rowling (Joanne Rowling)—and discuss the various reasons why an author (or anyone) might want to adopt a pen name. Sometimes it's because a person doesn't want the audience to know their gender; other times it's because the person just wants the anonymity. Ask students, *What does Frank choose as his pen name? What does the H.D.D. stand for?* Have the students create a pen name for themselves. Brainstorm various scenarios. For example, one student could select their dog's name; another may wish to use initials plus a first name, like Frank did. The only rule is that there has to be a meaningful reason for the selection. Have students share their pen names with the rest of the class.





## COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

### Reading: Craft and Structure

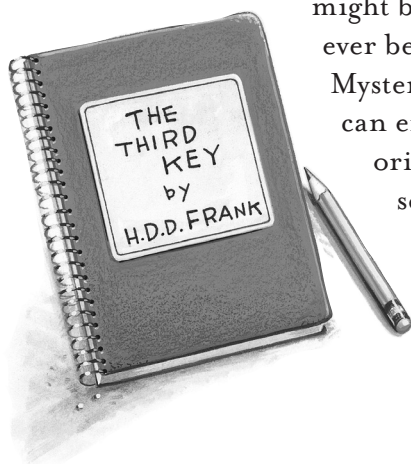
RI.3.6: Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.

### Writing: Text Types and Purposes

W.3.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

## *The Mystery of the Third Key*

Frank is very troubled by the third key he received, especially after Buddy has no clear explanation of its existence or purpose. Buddy explains to Frank that he should embrace this opportunity. “The key is a mystery. You have been given the gift of a mystery. Isn’t that wonderful? Who knows what doors it may unlock?” (page 59) Ask students whether they agree with Buddy’s sentiment. During Frank’s journey of solving this mystery, he finally finds a resolution through a dream, instead of a nightmare. Share Frank’s dream about the key with the class by reading aloud page 93. Ask the students what might be in the light that made Frank happier than he had ever been. Have students write a creative story entitled “The Mystery of the Third Key and What It Unlocks.” Students can either finish the end of Frank’s dream or write a totally original version of their own. The story must have a topic sentence, supporting details, and a conclusion. They can sign it with their pen name!



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Kate DiCamillo** is the beloved author of many books for young readers, including the *Mercy Watson* and *Tales from Deckawoo Drive* series. Her books *Flora & Ulysses* and *The Tale of Despereaux* both received Newbery Medals. In 2014, she was named the National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature. She lives in Minneapolis.

### ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

**Chris Van Dusen** is the author-illustrator of many books for young readers, including *The Circus Ship* and *Hattie & Hudson*, and the illustrator of the *Mercy Watson* and *Tales from Deckawoo Drive* series. He lives in Maine.



Visit [www.mercywatson.com](http://www.mercywatson.com) to learn more about the neighborhood of Deckawoo Drive, including its star, porcine wonder Mercy Watson, and the books all about her for younger readers. There is also a letter from Kate DiCamillo, information about her and illustrator Chris Van Dusen, teachers’ guides, and more!

This teachers’ guide was written by Karen Cardillo, freelance writer and educational consultant.



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