



the **KEY** to EXTRAORDINARY

NATALIE
LLOYD

BEYOND THE BOOK

Hi, friends!

Thank you for using *The Key to Extraordinary* in your classrooms and libraries! I know your time is valuable and limited, so the fact that you've brought Emma, Cody Belle and Earl into your school is such an honor. Class read-alouds were my favorite part of the school day when I was a young reader. Not only did that time help me fall in love with books, but it also helped me find my voice as a writer. I can't think of a higher compliment from an educator than knowing they thought the book was worth sharing with students.

Below, you'll find ideas for helping readers engage more closely with *The Key to Extraordinary*, most of which were created by other educators. Since you know your readers better than anyone, feel free to use these ideas to leapfrog into your own activities.

Have fun with the story! I'll save the last mug of Boneyard Brew for you!

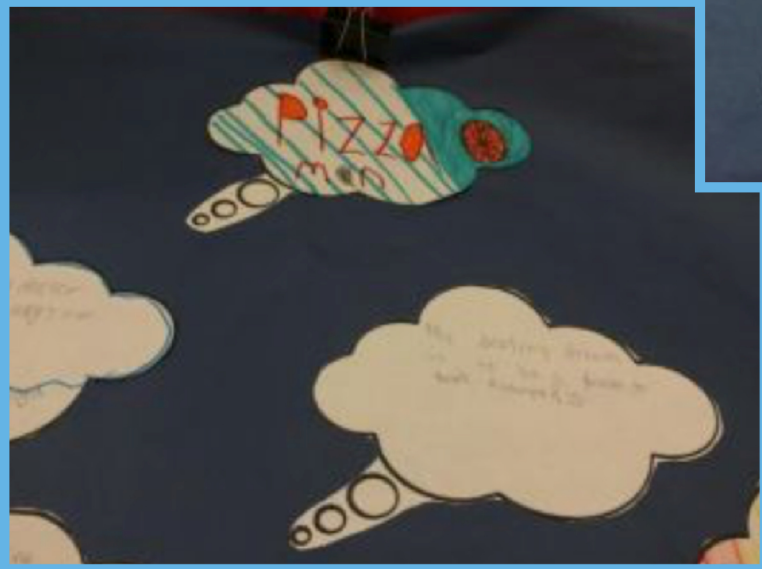
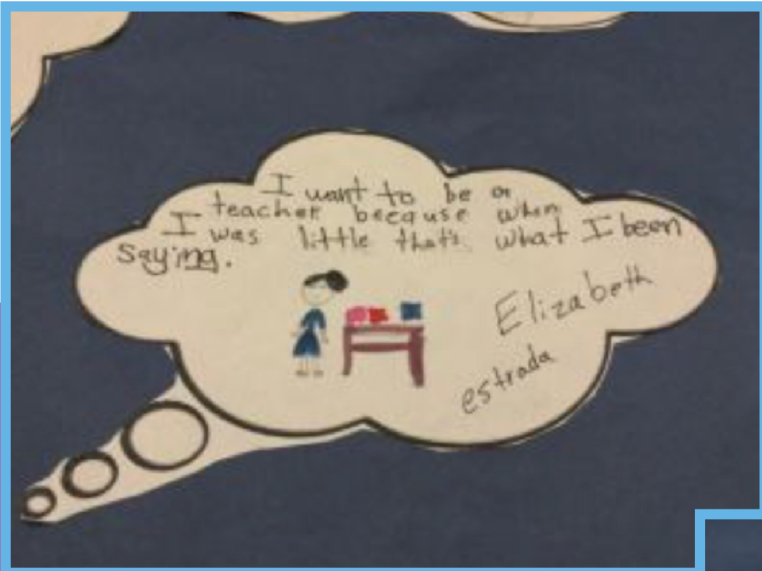


Natalie

Ideas for Classroom Engagement

What's your Destiny Dream?

Emma's family gets a clue about their mighty destinies, thanks to a strange dream. What do you dream of doing someday ... or even now? A librarian in Austin, Texas gave students a blank dream bubble to color and fill out with their own dream. She then displayed everyone's Destiny Dream in the cafeteria!



Know Your Wildflowers!

Research women in your family history. “For many years, anonymous was a woman.” (Virginia Woolf)

Though we’ve taken great strides to acknowledge women in history, sometimes our own histories can be obscure. Encourage students to find out about one of their wildflowers—the women in their family lineage. Feel free to gauge this idea for each student. In *KEY*, one of Emma’s ancestors was adopted. For some students, they may choose to profile a teacher instead of a family member.

Research a woman in history you know very little about. Check out nwhm.org (The National Women’s History Museum). Or chat with your school librarian about resources available in your school. Students could even pretend to interview a woman in history, and imagine what her response might be.

Encourage students to send a thank you note to an adult who has encouraged them, just like the adults in Emma’s world encourage her.

Create Your Own Book of Days!

Adam Randall, an educator from California, created a simple layout of his own Book of Days for students to use in interviewing family members. (Adam read *The Key to Extraordinary* in tandem with Women’s History Month!) Ideas for interview questions include:

Tell me about what you were like at my age.

What’s the most extraordinary moment in your life so far?

What’s your favorite food, and what’s a special memory you have of that food?

Flower Code!

The residents of Blackbird Hollow assign meanings to flowers – a practice that has existed for ages, and gained popularity around the Victorian era. Check out a book of flower meanings from your library and illustrate a “bouquet” showing how much you care for someone.

Create your own Power-Flower!

There are three kinds of magical flowers in Blackbird Hollow - Aunt Greta calls them “the oddities.” *Keeping Susans* preserve things for years. *Healing Blues* offered temporary relief from all sorts of ailments. And the *Telling Vines*, of course, had very special powers of their own.

What kind of flower might your students dream up?

What would it look like?

When does it bloom?

What kind of magic does it hold?

Create your own baked good for the Boneyard Cafe!

Create or bake your own treat for the Boneyard Cafe. And remember: any treat, even a purchased treat, could become a magical treat based on the name you give it.

(Important note: unless you are familiar with food allergies among your group of readers, it would be best to illustrate and write about a treat students might make, or encourage them this activity at home with a family member.)

Have your own Boneyard Jamboree!

Before each day's reading session, educator Scott Filner would play Bluegrass Music for his students, and let them dance together arm-in-arm around the room (similar to how the characters dance together during a Boneyard Jamboree). Not only was this a fun way to set the tone for the story, but it also gave students a chance to move - and to get to know each other better.

Form your own Club Pancake!

Granny Blue tells Emma that true friends make a bad day better faster than a pancake flip. Ultimately, Emma, Cody Belle, and Earl decide they're going to form a Club Pancake of their own. Could you form your own Club Pancake at your school—maybe making sure every student has a friend at lunch?

Listen to a snippet of the AudioBook!

If your school library has the audio version of *The Key to Extraordinary*, consider playing a chapter, or segment, for students to listen to as they read along. You can also hear an excerpt of the audiobook on Natalie's website: www.NatalieLloyd.com.

Personalized Copy of The Key to Extraordinary!

If you'd like to purchase a personalized copy of any of Natalie's novels for your classroom (or if you'd like to give students an opportunity to buy a personalized copy), you may do so through Natalie's hometown bookstore Star Line Books in Chattanooga. Simply email or call the store to place your order, and email them a list of names you'd like the books signed to. Natalie will zip over to the store to sign & personalize your copies, and then Star Line will ship your box of spindiddly books.

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