



**Carly Keene Literary Detective: Braving the Brontës**  
By Katherine Rue

**CHAPTER 1**

**Vocabulary Words:** tone, sedate, cursory, devolved, bout, skiff, mature, remorse, sidling, tribulation, ferry

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What is Carly and Francesca’s favorite phrase? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the origin of the phrase, and what does it mean? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. When Carly and Francesca leave the tent to investigate, they pretend that they are Nancy Drew and Sherlock Holmes.

Who is Nancy Drew? \_\_\_\_\_

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Who is Sherlock Holmes? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. “Adventures in real life were harder to come by than books always made it seem.”  
What does this phrase mean, and do you agree, or disagree? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Francesca’s mom has a lot of “Nutritional Rules.” Do you have any “Nutritional Rules” in your household? If so, what are they? \_\_\_\_\_

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What are some benefits of having “Nutritional Rules”? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Carly and Francesca consider that the mysterious voice and movement may be an enchanted wizard otter or alien. What, or who, do you think it is? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Activities:**

Create a character journal that includes three columns: Character Name, Facts and Characteristics, and Portrait. Each time you meet a new character, add their name to the journal. As you read and get to know each of them, list details about their lives, their families, their physical characteristics, and their personality traits. Then draw a portrait of each character.

Carly would have preferred an older brother like Rilla had in *Rilla of Ingleside* by L. M. Montgomery. Add the *Anne of Green Gables* series by L. M. Montgomery to your reading list and discover who Rilla’s brother is and why Carly would want him as an older brother.

Draw a picture of a skiff, and identify the gunwale, stern, and bow.

**Science Connection:** Carly’s campsite was near a dense forest comprised of spruce, alder, and hemlock trees that formed a barrier to the interior of the island. Research one of these tree types. Include a photo, its Genus and Family name, its physical characteristics, its uses, and regions where it can be found.

## CHAPTER 2

**Vocabulary Words:** idly, immersion, confident, stubborn, exasperation, beckoning, protocol, patron, bemoaned, indignantly, stupefied, pinafore

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Why is Carly so hesitant to go to the French Immersion Camp? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever been hesitant to participate in something because of your insecurities? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What did the girls discover on their walk back to Carly's house? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Carly and Francesca knew that they had to explore the mysterious alleyway because they had read "all of the right books." What does this mean? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever read a book by C. S. Lewis, E. Nesbit, or J. K. Rowling? If so, which one(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What is the name of the book that is presented to Carly by the old man in the mysterious bookstore? \_\_\_\_\_

What is so special about the copy that the man presents to Carly? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What is a pen name? \_\_\_\_\_

What pen names did Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë use? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **CHAPTER 3**

**Vocabulary List:** punctuality, virtue, slouched, incautious, dolt, bitter, clamoring, competent, peril, reformed, mirthless, wuthering, resolutely

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Where is Carly? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the moor? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Carly has finally found herself immersed in a mysterious adventure, with a name suitable for a heroine, and yet it's not at all what she expected and she is having a difficult time enjoying it. Have you ever found yourself possessing something or in a situation that you always wanted, but found it to be less desirable than you thought it would be? Explain.

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#### **Activities:**

Create a list of all the clues in this chapter that inform you that Carly has found herself in a very different time period.

## CHAPTER 4

**Vocabulary List:** surreptitiously, defiantly, dubious, yoke, glowering, resolved, imposter, tedious, dismayed, render, melancholy, appalling, taper, indisposition, chided

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What year is it in the book? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why do you think Carly's favorite part of Queen Elizabeth the First's speech at Tilbury is when she says she "has the heart and stomach of a king"? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. When Charlotte told Carly that her French pronunciation was dreadful, Carly felt a "surge of shame that she couldn't do it as easily as she did the rest of her schoolwork". Can you relate to how Carly must have felt? Explain.

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### **Activities:**

While Carly ate breakfast in silence, she studied the various Brontës who were seated at the table. Create a drawing of the breakfast table using the description in this chapter, and place each person in attendance in their correct position.

Look up Queen Elizabeth the First's speech to the troops at Tilbury when she thought the Spanish Armada was coming, copy or print it, and recite it in front of an audience.

Copy the poem *Lines Composed in a Wood on a Windy Day* by Anne Brontë on the left side of a large piece of white construction paper. On the right side of the paper, create an illustration that depicts the meaning of the poem.

In a group, discuss and decipher the meaning of the poem *Stanzas* by Emily Brontë.

## **CHAPTER 5**

**Vocabulary List:** parsonage, acerbic, oblige, diligent, meander, exuberance, foliage, abominably, querulous, proficient, deficiency, impenetrable, thicket, drudgery, penury, balderdash, chastened

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. How do you think Charlotte feels about Jane Austen, and why do you think she feels that way? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Carly wondered if Charlotte and her sisters felt trapped by their duties. What do you think? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_

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3. In the books that Carly's grandmother gave to her, the heroines were always prim and proper, and very charming. However, in the books that Carly's mother gave her, the heroines were not proper at all. Why do you think there was such a difference in the depiction of the heroines? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What is laudanum, and from what does Branwell suffer? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What did Carly discover as she eavesdropped on the sisters? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Carly finally met the voice and presence she had been feeling. Who was it, and what did she say? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Activities:**

Carly watched the movie *Pride and Prejudice* whenever her grandmother would visit. Rent and watch the movie *Pride and Prejudice*, then write a one-page review of the film.

### **OR**

Read the book, *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen, and then watch the movie. Compare and contrast the storylines, and explain which one you enjoyed more, and why.

Extension: How did the effect of reading this story in a book compare or contrast to the effect of how the film conveyed the story using techniques such as lighting, sound, color, or specific camera work.

Carly is very much enjoying reading the poems that the Brontë sisters have written. Read some of their poems yourself and decide which sister's poetry you prefer.

Social Studies Connection: On a map, measure the distance between Juneau, Alaska and Yorkshire, England.

Math Connection: How many years are between 2013 and 1846?

Carly believes that she has seen a ghost. Formulate an argument that either supports the existence of ghosts, or one that maintains that ghosts are solely fictional characters. Present your argument to the class.

**\*Don't forget to keep track of the different characters in your character journal!**



## CHAPTER 6

**Vocabulary List:** hefted, vulgarity, refrain, infirm, privy, heathen, gallivanting, subdued, impertinent, unobtrusive, imprudence, vexing, indignation, thwarted, absconded, berth

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. The conditions that Carly encounters while visiting the ill or the poor are less than desirable: the sewer out in the open, and the “grave water.” After reading about the conditions in 1846, what modern conveniences are you grateful to have? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. When Charlotte overheard the comments made about her brother by the two women passing by, how do you think it made her feel? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Carly is shocked by the death of Bridget Martin, but the others do not seem to be. In 1846, why do you think the death of children and adults would be a common occurrence?

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4. “When grown-ups didn’t want to let kids see what was wrong, Carly thought, it usually meant the trouble lay with their hearts.” What does this sentence mean?

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5. Carly believes that the Brontës are acting very childish, and wants to confront them about it. Have you ever witnessed adults acting childish? If so, did you confront them about their behavior? Why, or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Charlotte receives a letter and becomes distraught. Who do you think the letter is from and what do you think it says? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. Why is this time period called the Victorian Era? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. Carly is so upset by everyone's behavior, and is growing increasingly homesick. If you could talk to Carly, what advice would you give her? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Activities:**

Consider how Carly must be feeling after everything that has happened. Write a journal entry as if you were Carly, from her point of view, expressing your thoughts and feelings about the events that have occurred.

Carly and Charlotte visit many people who are sick or poor, and deliver baskets full of food or items that will help them. Lead a philanthropic effort among your peers: organize a canned food drive and collect non-perishable foods to donate to a local food bank, make rainbow loom bracelets or get well cards to donate to a local children's hospital, or collect old blankets and towels to donate to a local animal shelter. Follow Carly and Charlotte's example and give to those in need!

Science Connection: Charlotte told Carly not to touch her dress after visiting the Martins because "Bridget Martin has typhoid", a disease that we don't face today. Do some research and find out what typhoid is, and what other diseases and illnesses were common in 1846. Do those illnesses still exist today? Why, or why not?

## CHAPTER 7

**Vocabulary List:** ominous, brandished, prattle, dote, feigning, haggard, scrutiny, reconciled, obliged

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. When the ghost appears again, she says, “There is no hope if you do not free them.” Who do you think Carly is supposed to free, or save?

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2. What makes Carly thankful for her brother, James? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. What did Carly do that made her feel guilty? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you think what she did was right or wrong? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Have you read *The Pilgrim’s Progress* by John Bunyan, or *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott? If so, what did you think? If not, put them on your reading list.

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5. When Charlotte says, “It is the way of the world. While that ought not to affect us, I am afraid our courage was not equal to risking society’s scorn for disappointed hopes.” what does she mean? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Activities:**

In this chapter, Carly tries desperately to time travel back home. Make a list of other literary characters that have traveled in time.

## **CHAPTER 8**

**Vocabulary List:** equanimity, quelled, specter, catharsis, consternation, impudent, askance, decorous, benevolence, demur

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Carly's favorite book is *Swallows and Amazons* by Arthur Ransome. What is your favorite book? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What are the three problems that Carly has?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Who is the ghost, and what does she tell Carly to do? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What character trait does Mr. Nicholls possess that Carly describes as "indispensable in a husband"? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What do you predict will happen next? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Activities:**

Carly makes many references to books that she has read, and characters in those books. Create a list comprised of the references she makes, and sort them into two columns: Already Read, and Haven't Read Yet. Spend your summer vacation experiencing some of the journeys and adventures that Carly has by reading some of the same books.

## CHAPTER 9

**Vocabulary List:** enquire, amiss, censure, savage, transgressions, admonished, solicitor

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Why were the Brontës so “horrified” by Carly’s line of questioning at the dinner table? \_\_\_\_\_

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How did their reactions make Carly feel? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is Carly’s motivation for wanting to learn how to knit? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Carly has formulated a plan that will help her complete the tasks that Maria has charged her with. What is her plan, and do you think it will work? Why, or why not?

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### **Activities:**

Complete a Venn diagram listing the similarities and differences of life in 1846 and the present, using examples from Carly’s experiences with the Brontës.

Life in 1846 is very different from life today. Research something that you find to be particularly strange, or interesting, about life back then? Share your findings with your class.

## CHAPTER 10 and CHAPTER 11

**Vocabulary List:** contrition, decorum, deplored, persevered, premonition, outlandish, hypocrisy, bewilderment, bland, inept, grisly, endowed, repentant, tartly, pious, intrigue, compelling

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. When Carly visits the bookstore, she is surprised to find that the shop only has a few novels and stories. Why do you think the shop has such a limited selection?

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2. Why doesn't the shopkeeper have a copy of *Jane Eyre*? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Why is Carly so upset at the end of chapter 10? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Why is it so difficult for the Brontë sisters to express themselves? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Why does Emily call Carly "Miss Impertinence"? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. What are "domestic arts"? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. How did you feel when Carly stood up to Branwell? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. Describe how Carly's point of view and words to the Brontë sisters influenced their actions, and events that are unfolding. \_\_\_\_\_

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## CHAPTER 12

**Vocabulary List:** chastened, pathos, keen, shirk, malicious, overindulged, convention, agitation

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. When Carly gets back home, why will she have no excuse but to apply to the French Immersion camp? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Carly feels insecure that the whole family laughs behind her back for how hard she has to work at French and German. Have you ever felt insecure about a subject or skill? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_

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3. How does Carly know that Charlotte has begun writing *Jane Eyre*? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Why does Maria fear that the way Charlotte is writing *Jane Eyre* is not good enough?

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5. Why do you think Maria is holding back her true feelings as she writes? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. What does Maria tell Carly that she must do? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Activities:**

Reflection: Do you think it is better to “play it safe” and not have people judge, or talk about you? Or, do you think it is better to stay true to yourself, no matter what the consequence may be?



## **CHAPTER 13 and CHAPTER 14**

**Vocabulary List:** fetid, scarcely, doggedly, rotund, tumultuous, tincture, pestilential, beseechingly

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What does Carly mean when she says, “Nineteenth-century England was way better on paper than in real life”? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Who arrives on horseback to rescue Carly? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is the medical procedure “bleeding”, and why doesn’t Carly want Dr. Bruening to bleed her? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. While Charlotte watches over Carly, as she lay in bed ill, who is she reminded of? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What does Carly ask Charlotte to promise her? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Activities:**

Science Connection: Research the weather in Juneau, Alaska. Find out why a whole week of school is devoted to learning survival skills, and make a list of what those skills are.

**CHAPTER 15 and CHAPTER 16**

**Vocabulary List:** uncanny, efficacious, compulsion, scalding, tremulously, cosseting, lucid, querulous, prevalent, rueful, gruel, deciphering, irksome, convalescence, haltingly, amended

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What is the only thing that calms Carly while she is ill? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What is the name of the book that Emily is writing? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Who is Elizabeth? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What caused the death of Maria and Elizabeth? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. When Carly finished reading the final pages of *Jane Eyre*, Maria appeared and said, "Thank you Carly- you have freed us, and so you have freed yourself." Explain how Carly freed the Brontë sisters. \_\_\_\_\_

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6. When Carly returned to the bookstore, and was explaining to Francesca that she had gone "into a book", she could hardly contain her excitement when sharing the details of the adventure she'd been on. Have you ever had a book affect you in that way? Explain.

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7. How did Carly inspire, or help, the Brontë sisters? \_\_\_\_\_

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How did the Brontë sisters inspire, or help, Carly? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever had a literary character, or author, inspire, or help, you in your life? If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. Which Brontë sister's book do you most want to read: *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë, or *Agnes Grey* by Anne Brontë?

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**Activities:**

The Brontë sisters were very intelligent and forward thinking for their time, to consider opening their own school, traveling abroad to Brussels, becoming authors, and doing such things as revolutionizing the female character and expressing true feelings and tragedy in their writings. Research what life was like for women in 1846: what their roles were, what opportunities existed or did not exist for them, what rights they did or did not have. Then, write an essay on the extraordinary lives and accomplishments of the Brontë sisters.

For more educational and character-building activities, visit [beanoblekid.org](http://beanoblekid.org)