

Regarding the Fountain

Recommended for Grades 4-8

Book Summary: Regarding the Fountain

When the drinking fountain at Dry Creek Middle School needs replacing, principle Walter Russ contacts a fountain company with the intention of having a simple water fountain installed. Florence Waters, an enterprising designer, has a broader vision and enlists one of the fifth grade classes in brainstorming ideas to give them the fountain they want. As the ideas come in, it is clear that the students and principle have very different ideas for what the middle school really needs.

The class presents the story in a file composed of letters, newspaper articles, photos, memos and more. An assignment interviewing long-time residents of the town starts them on an investigation as to the real reason why the town of Dry Creek, formerly known as Spring Creek, is missing so much of its once-plentiful water supply.

Author Biography: Kate Klise

Kate Klise was born April 13, 1963 in Peoria, Illinois. She graduated Marquette University with a degree in English and then worked as a corresponder for *People* magazine for fifteen years. She also worked as a columnist for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. She has written a number of books with her sister, M. Sarah Klise, illustrating. She is perhaps best known for her Regarding book series and its epistolary writing style.

She currently lives in Norwood, Missouri.



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Discussion Questions: Regarding the Fountain

1. The story is made up of a range of styles including letters, newspaper articles and pictures. Does this story format work for the book? Why or why not?
2. Principal Russ insists all the school needs is an ordinary drinking fountain but Florence Waters insists on creating something extraordinary. Do you think it is better to meet expectations or to go beyond them? How does this work in a school? In a business?
3. In order to create the perfect fountain, Florence has to talk to the people who will use the finished product. How might this be a good business practice? How would you have chosen to go about the project if you were Florence and why?
4. The fifth grade class sends Florence ideas for the water fountain which include a fish tank, an area to splash in and other drinks beside water. What kind of things would you choose to include in the fountain?
5. How did the fifth grade's investigation lead them into solving the mystery of Dry Creek? Why was this so significant?
6. How did Dee Eel and Sally Mander take control of the entire town's water supply? Was their plan effective? Why or why not? How did controlling the water supply ruin the town?
7. How did Florence change the town of Dry Creek for the better?
8. Do you think that Geysers Creek will become popular again now that the water has returned? How? What do you think the town will be like in five years? Ten years?
9. What do you think Florence would build if she came to your town? Would it attract more attention to the town? Why or why not?
10. Would the mystery of the town have been solved if Florence had put in a simple water fountain? Why or why not?



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