

Common
Core
Standards
Aligned for
Grades 4-7

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION GUIDE



about the book

Hannah Jordan lives in a museum . . . well, sort of. She is the daughter of the caretaker for mansion-turned-museum The Elms in Newport, Rhode Island. Hannah is captivated by stories of The Elms's original occupants, especially Maggie Dunlap, the tween heiress subject of a painting that went missing during a legendary art heist in 1905.

But when a mysterious mirror allows Hannah and Maggie to switch places in time, suddenly Hannah is racing to stop the heist from happening, while Maggie gets an introduction to iPhones, soccer (which girls can play!), and freedoms like exploring without supervision. Not to mention the best invention of all: sweatpants (so long, corsets!).

As the hours tick off to the art heist, something's not adding up. Can the girls work together against time—and across it—to set things right? Or will their temporary swap become a permanent trade?

Kristine Asselin is the author of several works of children's nonfiction as well as the YA novel *Any Way You Slice It*. She is a sucker for a good love song (preferably from the '80s), and can't resist an invitation for Chinese food or ice cream (but not at the same time). She lives in Central Massachusetts with her teen daughter and husband, and spends part of every day looking for a TARDIS to borrow.

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about kristine

Jen Malone is the author of more than a dozen middle grade and young adult titles and an author in residence at a middle school near Boston. She once circumnavigated the world solo, met her husband on the highway (literally), and went into labor with her twins while on a rock star's bus. Jen is available for school visits in person or via Skype and you can visit her online at
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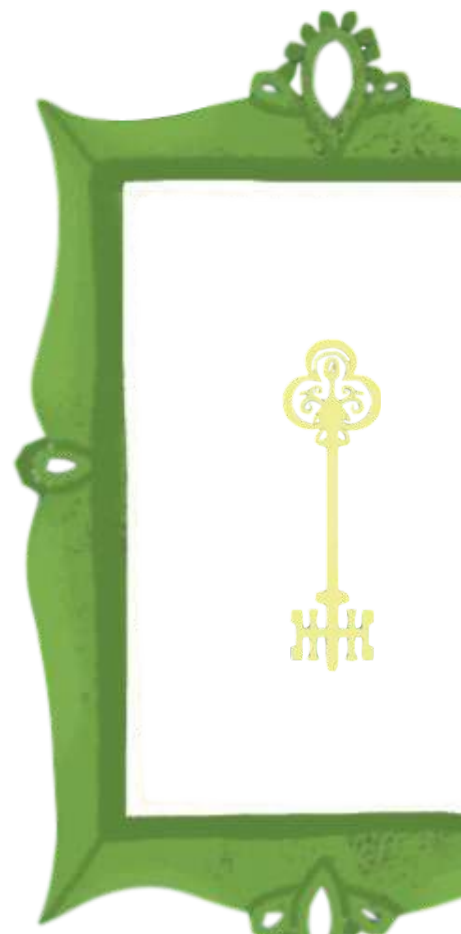
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Comprehension Questions and Activities

Comprehension Questions

The questions below correlate to the following Common Core Standards: (RL.4.1, 5.1, 6.1, 7.1; RL 4.2, 5.2.,6.2, 7.2; RL 4.3, 5.3. 6.3, 7.3; RL 4.4, 5.4, 6.4, 7.4; RL 4.6, 5.6, 6.6, 7.6)

1. Prior to reading, what are some predictions you have about the technology and amenities people did or didn't have at the turn of the twentieth century? Revisit this question after reading. Did anything surprise you about what did or didn't exist then?
2. What is Hannah's big "want" at the beginning of the story? Why can't she have it? What is Maggie's big "want" and why can't she have it? Compare and contrast these desires. Does each girl have what she wants by the end of the story?
3. Why do you think Hannah is so intrigued by the Gilded Age at the beginning of the story? How do you think her perception of the time period changes when she's actually there? Give specific examples of instances where her previous assumptions about the past are challenged.
4. How do you think this story would have been different if both main characters had been boys? What might be different about the observations a boy version of Maggie would make about life in the future? What aspects of modern life do you think would stand out to him as being the starkest contrast from his own life in 1905?





Comprehension Questions (cont.)

5. Maggie alternates between relishing the freedoms she finds in the future and wishing for the comfort and security of a time period she understands. Do you think this is realistic? In what ways do Maggie's visit to the future change who she is and what she wants to do with her life?

6. Hannah observes things in 1905 through the lens of her modern perspective. For example, she doesn't understand why fifteen year-old Colette would be giving serious consideration to her marriage prospects, which was normal practice then but not typical now. Give other examples of times Hannah makes judgments in Maggie's time period about something being right or wrong based on how it would be perceived in her own time period. Who are some historical figures whose actions/behaviors would not be celebrated now, but who were considered perfectly acceptable in their own time? Do you find it easy or difficult to view those figures without applying today's value system to their actions back then?

7. Compare and contrast the roles the adults play in each girl's storyline.

8. What are some specific ways that language (from slang words to formal versus casual manners of speaking) from each girl's time period plays a role in the story? How do the authors use language to differentiate each girl's narration? Compare and contrast Hannah's voice with Maggie's.

Comprehension Questions (cont.)

9. Often Hannah tries to make her point to someone in the past using a pop culture or historical reference, not remembering that the person to whom she's speaking won't understand. (For example, Hannah nicknames Jonah "Einstein," but in 1905 Einstein is still a college student who has not yet risen to fame.)

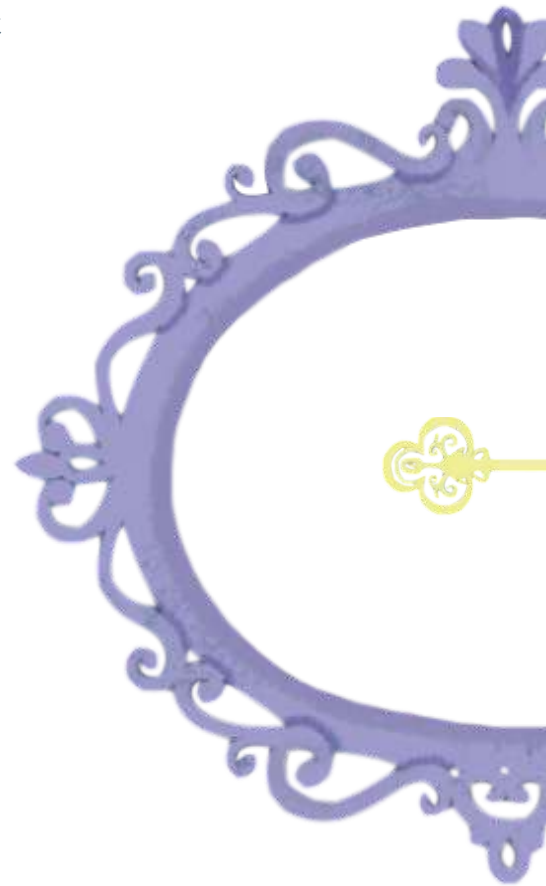
What are some other examples of this? Examine ways you communicate with others using this kind of shorthand that comes from sharing the same moment in time.

10. What are some ways Maggie and Hannah are similar, despite living in different centuries? What do you think you might have in common with someone who lived a hundred years ago? What about someone who lived a thousand years ago?


11. Hannah never leaves The Elms over the course of the story, yet Maggie does on several occasions. Why do you think the authors made this decision, and why might it be more important for Maggie to leave than for Hannah to do so?

12. Compare and contrast the roles of Jonah and Tara. What does each offer to Maggie or Hannah?

13. Each character has a strong sentimental connection to The Elms. What role does the setting play, and what details about it stand out to you?



Comprehension Questions (cont.)



14. In current times The Elms is filled with plaques and materials with information about the home's history between when the house was in use as a private residence and now. Why do you think Maggie shows very little interest in reading any of those and avoids Googling herself when she has access to the Internet? Do you think Hannah is right to neglect mentioning World War I to Maggie when they talk about Daylight Saving Time? If you could travel forward a hundred years in time, would you want to learn about the life you'd lived or about important events that had happened during your lifetime? Why or why not?

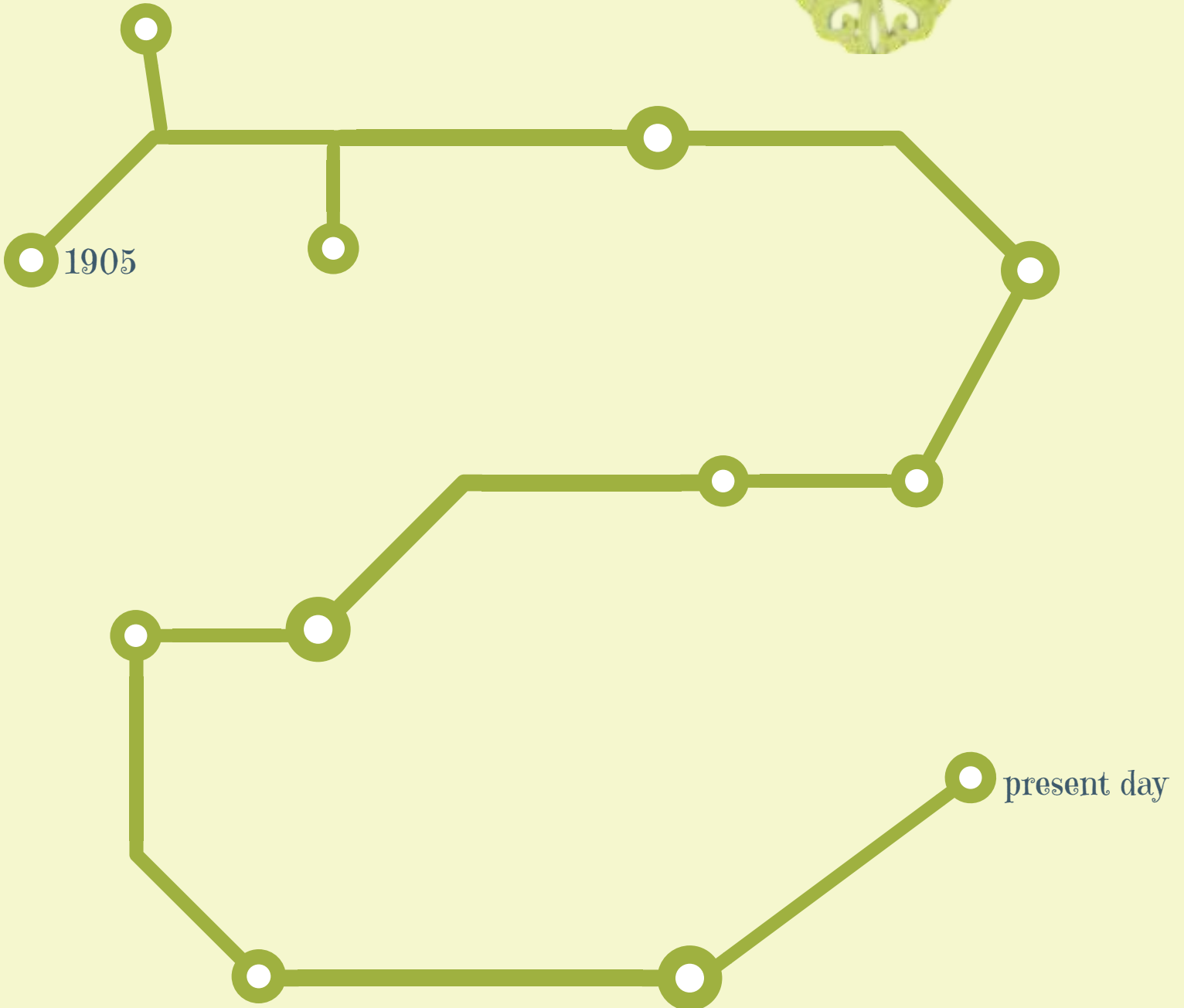
15. Why do you think the authors chose to end the story with the newspaper article, rather than having one of the characters tell the wrap-up of what happens upon their return? Does anything in the article surprise you? What questions are left unanswered for the reader?

16. The authors mention in their Authors' Note that some of the characters (including Maggie Dunlap) are based on actual historical figures. Why do you think they made this choice? What kind of liberties do they take in fictionalizing those real people, and do you think the actual people portrayed would like or dislike their portrayal? Why or why not?

Timeline Activity

What takes place between Maggie's time and Hannah's? Fill in this timeline with major events in history. (Alternative: use examples specific to the Women's Rights Movement.)

RL 7.9, W4.7-7.7, W4.8-7.8



Decade	What Was Worn	What Was Said	Attitude Toward Children

Decade Chart Activity: Examining How Culture Evolves

Fashion, language, and social norms are constantly evolving to reflect the prevailing values and interests of each time period. In *The Art of the Swap*, both characters give many examples to illustrate the sharp differences between the time periods. For example, Maggie is shocked to be sharing a casual dinner by the TV with Hannah's father and comments about how strange it feels to wear shorts. Hannah describes how little time parents in 1905 spent with their children. Differences in language (formal versus informal, slang words) are illustrated by both characters throughout the story.

Beginning with 1900 - 1910 (Maggie's time period) and selecting other decades of interest, create a chart by decade with examples from each of what people wore, what slang or expressions were common, and what the attitudes toward children were.

RL 7.9, W4.7-7.7, W4.8-7.8

Further Activities

What Comes Next for Jonah (Narrative)

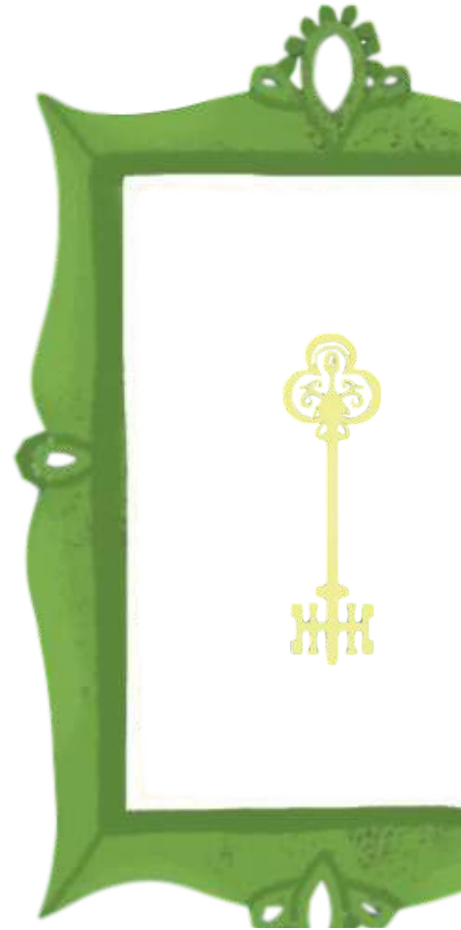
Have students imagine that Jonah is able to pass a letter through time. Writing from Jonah's perspective, have students update Hannah on his life following his departure from Newport.

W4.3, 5.3, 6.3, 7.3

What Comes Next for Jonah Alternative (News Article)

Students can use the same premise as above, but present Jonah's update in the form of a news article, similar to the one that ends *The Art of the Swap*. Discuss the central elements and purposes of a news article: to address who, what, when, where, and why. Using the example in *The Art of the Swap*, have students identify key elements such as a hook introduction, body paragraphs, quotations from sources, and a conclusion. Using a graphic organizer to compile these components, have students then write their own articles. Next, students can peer edit, revise, and share them with the class.

W 4.1, 5.1, 6.1, 7.1; W 4.2, 5.2, 6.2, 7.2; W 4.3, 5.3, 6.3, 7.3; W 4.4, 5.4, 6.4, 7.4; W 4.5, 5.5, 6.5, 7.5; W 4.7, 5.7, 6.7, 7.7; W 4.10, 5.10, 6.10, 7.10





Further Activities (cont.)

Evolution of Language (Research and Presentation)

In the discussion above, students examined ways they communicate with others using a shorthand that comes from sharing the same moment in time. Group students to research the new words added to the Merriam-Webster dictionary last year, creating a multimedia presentation to share with the class that pairs the words with the source material linked to its origin. Have students denote whether their examples derived from a pop culture reference or were connected to a new technology or social movement. Students can also make predictions about what words they might expect to see added next year.

SL 4.1, 5.1, 6.1, 7.1; SL 4.4; SL 4.5; SL 4.6; RI 4.4, 5.4, 6.4, 7.4; L 4.4, 5.4, 6.4, 6.5; L 4.5, 5.5, 6.5, 7.5

Collaborative Writing (Narrative)

The Art of the Swap was written by two authors. Pair or group students to write a story with two or more characters, with each student writing from a different character's point of view. Have students work together to conceive of and plot the story idea before working independently on their own portion of it.

Students will then combine the individual sections to form one complete narrative. Afterward, have students reflect on the experience. What were the pros and cons of collaborative storytelling? What were the challenges?

W 4.3, 5.3, 6.3, 7.3; W 4.4, 5.4, 6.4, 7.4

Resources

The Gilded Age

Books:

- Behrens, Rebecca. *When Audrey Met Alice*. New York: Sourcebooks, 2014.
- Greenwood, Janette Thomas. *The Gilded Age: A History in Documents (Pages from History)*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Morrow, Ann. *The Gilded Age (Cornerstones of Freedom. Second Series)*. New York: Children's Press, 2007.
- Tierney, Tom. *Newport Fashions of the Gilded Age Paper Dolls*. New York: Dover Publications, 2005.

Digital:

<http://besthistorysites.net/american-history/the-gilded-age/>

Films:

- The Gilded Age*. PBS, 2018.
- The Richest Man in the World: Andrew Carnegie*. PBS, 1997.

Women's Rights Movement

Books:

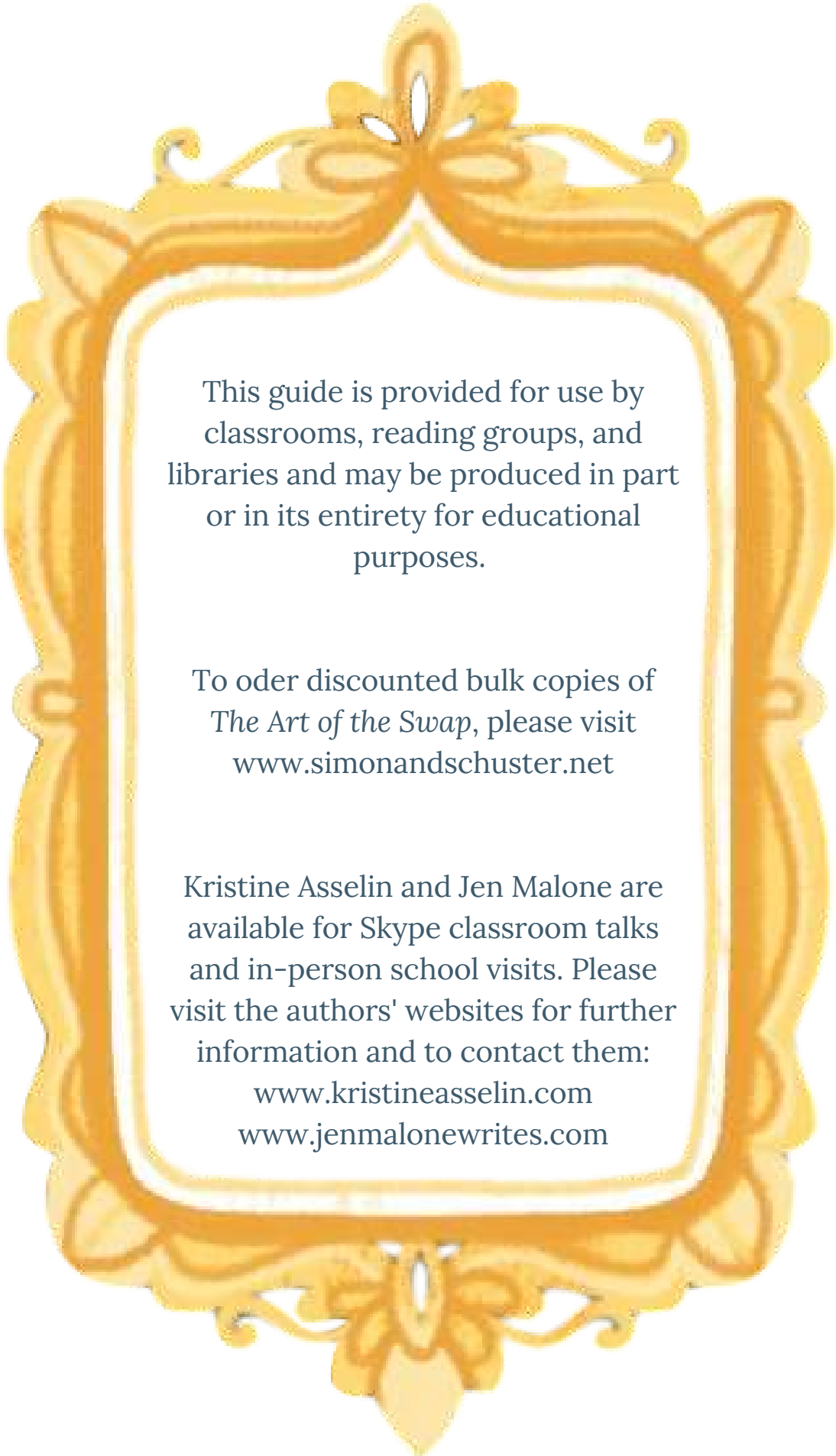
- Clinton, Chelsea. *She Persisted: 13 American Women Who Changed the World*. New York: Philomel, 2017.
- Cavallo, Francesa, and Elena Favilli. *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls: 100 Tales of Extraordinary Women*. Los Angeles: Timbuktu Labs, 2016.
- Gelletly, LeeAnne. *Origins of the Women's Rights Movement*. Broomall, PA: Mason Crest, 2014.
- Kamma, Anne. *If You Lived When Women Won Their Rights*. New York: Scholastic, 2014.
- Kendall, Martha. *Failure Is Impossible! The History of American Women's Rights*. Minneapolis: Lerner, 2001.
- Kops, Deborah. *Alice Paul and the Fight for Women's Rights: From the Vote to the Equal Rights Amendment*. Honesdale, PA: Calkins Creek, 2017.

Digital:

- "The Women's Movement." <https://mass.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/the-womens-movement/#.Wg8mL7bMxD0>
- "Votes for Women's Suffrage, Pictures, 1850-1920." http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/076_vfw.html
- "National Women's History Museum." <http://www.crusadeforthevote.org>

Films:

- Not for Ourselves Alone*, Ken Burns and Paul Barnes. PBS, 1999.
- Women's History Minutes*. <http://www.crusadeforthevote.org/educational-resources/>



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Kristine Asselin and Jen Malone are available for Skype classroom talks and in-person school visits. Please visit the authors' websites for further information and to contact them:
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