

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

Includes Science and Common Core Connections



The First Last Day

By Dorian Cirrone

What if summer could last forever?

About the Book

Haleigh is saying good-bye to the best summer of her life. The adventure and excitement she has experienced with her new friend, Kevin, and his family is nothing like Haleigh has ever experienced, and she doesn't want it to be over. After finding a mysterious set of paints in her backpack, Haleigh captures her last day at the New Jersey shore on canvas. When she wakes up the next morning, Haleigh finds that her wish for an endless summer with Kevin has come true. At first, she's thrilled, but Haleigh soon learns that living in one place — and time — comes with a price. Even as Haleigh learns that her parents are keeping a secret, Haleigh guards a secret of her own about Kevin's grandmother. In the end, Haleigh decides she doesn't want to miss out on the good experiences that come with growing up, and she faces the inevitable realities of moving on. Attempting to find the secret of the time loop she's trapped in, Haleigh, in desperation, asks Kevin to help her solve the mystery. Only then will they be able to resume their lives.

Awards and Recognition

Gold Medal: Florida Book Awards 2017

Bank Street College's Best Children's Books 2017

Praise for *The First Last Day*

"The first-person narrative is engaging. The practical problems Haleigh encounters keep the story grounded in reality, despite the central element of fantasy. In addition, a philosophical quandary that worries her offers opportunities for reflection and discussion."—*Booklist*

"A heartfelt novel loaded with wonderful character development."—*School Library Journal*

"Dorian Cirrone is master of the middle-grade mystery. You will not be able to stop turning pages until you come to the satisfying conclusion of this compelling, funny, and heartfelt novel."

—Donna Gephart, award-winning author of *Death by Toilet Paper* and *Lily and Dunkin*

"It made my brain buzz with time warp complications and my heart warm with lessons learned about family, friendship, and growing up."—Nora Raleigh Baskin, award-winning author of *Anything But Typical* and *Nine, Ten: A September 11 Story*

Prereading Activity

Ask students to investigate the term “time loop” and to take notes on what they discover. Then have a class discussion on the possible existence of continuously repeating short periods of time and the implications that would have on individuals and society. Ask students to suggest movies and/or television shows they have seen or other novels they have read that are based on the concept of time loops.

The above questions correlate to CCSS (Speaking & Listening): SL.4.1, SL.5.1, SL.6.1; CCSS (Language): L.4.1, L.5.1, L.6.1 and L.4.3, L.5.3, L.6.3.

Thematic Connections

Questions for Group Discussion

Family Relationships

What is Haleigh's relationship with her parents? How does Kevin's relationship with his parents differ from Haleigh's relationship with her parents? How does Haleigh feel about Kevin's parents? What secret do Haleigh's parents keep from her?

Intergenerational Relationships

Why does Haleigh have such an attachment to Kevin's grandmother, G-Mags? What characteristics does G-Mags possess that others find comforting? Describe the relationship between Kevin's parents and his grandmother. How do Haleigh's parents react to G-Mags? Why doesn't Haleigh have a relationship with her grandparents?

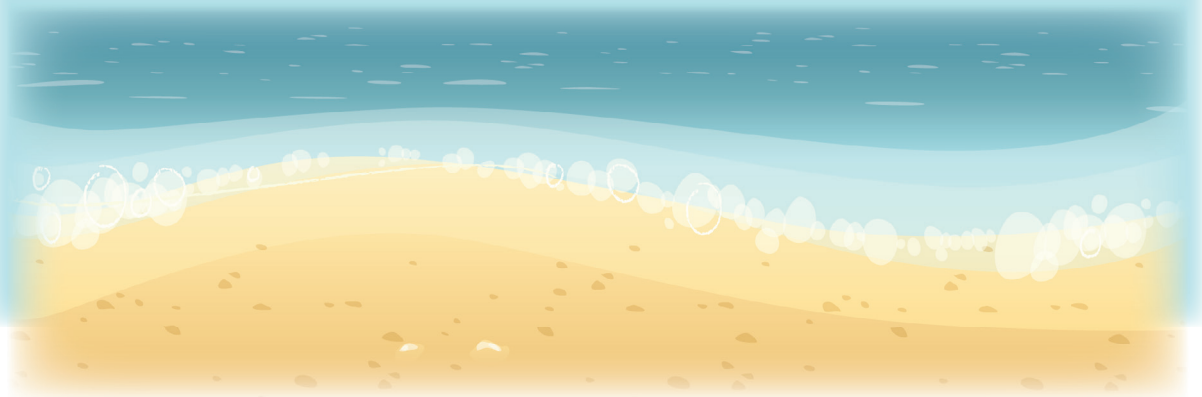
Friendship

How does Haleigh's track record with friends affect her relationship with Kevin? What is Haleigh's fear about the summer ending and the two of them going their separate ways? What characteristics do Kevin and Haleigh possess that connect them as friends? How does their friendship help each of them?

Overcoming Challenges

How does Haleigh overcome the pain of moving and changing schools so often? What skills has she learned as a result of moving so often? What challenges does Kevin learn to overcome? Why does being in the time loop present a problem for Haleigh? Why does she finally decide to ask Kevin for help?

All the above questions correlate to CCSS (Speaking & Listening): SL.4.1, SL.5.1, SL.6.1; CCSS (Reading Literature): RL.4.1, RL.5.1, RL.6.1; CCSS (Language): L.4.1, L.5.1, L.6.1 and L.4.3, L.5.3, L.6.3.



Curriculum Connections

Science

Haleigh's father reads extensively about Einstein and constantly tells Haleigh facts about Einstein's life and discoveries. In groups of three, ask students to research Albert Einstein. Assign roles as follows: one student writes a short biography of interesting facts about his personal life, one student writes about an important discovery, and one writes about the enduring impact of one or more of his discoveries. Each student in every group creates a PowerPoint slide to convey the information he/she has discovered. Ask for a student volunteer to put the individual slides in a presentation to show the class.

The above activity correlates to CCSS (Writing): W.4.2, W.5.2, W.6.2; and W.4.4, W.5.4, W.6.4; and W.4.7, W.5.7, W.6.7; CCSS (Language): L.4.1, L.5.1, L.6.1 and L.4.2, L.5.2, L.6.1; CCSS (Reading Literature): RL.4.1, RL.5.1, RL.6.1.

English/Language Arts

Ask students to think about a day that they would want to relive if they could. Then ask them to write a personal narrative of the day and to include why they would choose that day to live again. Have students share their writing with others in the classroom or in small groups.

The author uses figurative language to convey thoughts, actions, and descriptions of ideas and things. Ask students to scan through the book and to find three examples of figurative language. On each of three 4 x 6 index cards, have students write the sentence and identify the figurative language as a simile, metaphor, personification, alliteration, pun, oxymoron, onomatopoeia, etc. Then have students write an explanation of why the author chose to use each example of figurative language and how it impacts the meaning of the text. Post the figurative language examples in the classroom by type of figurative language or passage selected.

The above activities correlates to CCSS (Writing): W.4.3, W.5.3, W.6.3 and W.4.4, W.5.4, W.6.4; CCSS (Language): L.4.1, L.5.1, L.6.1 and L.4.2, L.5.2, L.6.1; CCSS (Reading Literature): RL.4.1, RL.5.1, RL.6.1 and RL.4.4, RL.5.4, RL.6.4.

Art

The author writes using imagery to paint pictures. Ask students to read the description of the picture Haleigh creates in her mind on page 4. Then ask students to draw that scene or to select another descriptive passage to illustrate. Have students write a one-sentence caption that conveys the essence of the depicted scene and then display the scenes in the classroom.

The above activity correlates to CCSS (Language): L.4.1, L.5.1, L.6.1 and L.4.2, L.5.2, L.6.1; CCSS (Reading Literature): RL.4.4, RL.5.4, RL.6.4.

Vocabulary / Use of Language

Have students locate the following words and determine their meaning from context clues. Then have students work with a partner to select one of the words and to generate a list of synonyms for that word. Using the list of synonyms, have students create an illustrated visual that displays the differences and relationships among the synonyms. Post vocabulary visuals in the classroom.

Mulligan

Page 29

Savored

Page 34

Trivial

Page 34

Penetrated

Page 41

Coiled

Page 44

Cringing

Page 51

Queasy

Page 52

Riffling

Page 79

The above activity correlates to CCSS (Language): L.4.3, L.5.3, L.6.3 and L.4.4, L.5.4, L.6.4; CCSS (Reading Literature): RL.4.4, RL.5.4, RL.6.4.

Internet Resources

Albert Einstein

<http://easyscienceforkids.com/all-about-albert-einstein/>

Vincent van Gogh

http://mykidsart.com.au/Vincent_van_Gogh_Famous_Artists_My_Kids_Art.html

Starry Night Printable Coloring Page

<http://azcoloring.com/coloring-page/1680205?album=starry-night-coloring-page#>

Book Talk

Have you ever thought about what it would be like to relive your favorite day over and over? Haleigh hasn't ever consciously thought about it, but she knows that she never wants summer to end, that she never wants to leave behind the Jersey shore and that she doesn't want to lose her new best friend. When she finds an old paint set with instructions that say, "Paint your heart's desire," she has no hesitation about what to paint. However, when Haleigh paints that last day at the shore, she has no idea that she will relive that day over and over—and over again. Now Haleigh is trapped in a time loop and has no idea how to restart time. Hopefully, she can retrace her steps and discover where she found that paint box. One way or the other, she no longer wants to relive that last day!

About the Author



Dorian Cirrone

Dorian Cirrone worked as a door-to-door survey taker, a dance teacher, a choreographer, a journalist, and a college writing instructor before writing books for young readers. She has never been trapped in a time loop, but because she has lived in south Florida most of her life, sometimes she feels caught in an endless summer.



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