

ANNE
MICHAELS

with illustrations by
EMMA BLOCK



EDUCATOR'S
GUIDE

*Aligns with Common
Core State Standards*

THE
ADVENTURES OF




TUNDRA BOOKS

Penguin
Random
House

Miss Petitfour

ABOUT *the* BOOK

Miss Petitfour is an expert at baking and eating little cakes. She also has the most marvelous, everyday adventures. Her favorite mode of travel is by tablecloth, and on windy days she always takes her sixteen cats out for an airing. Join Miss Petitfour and her feline companions as they embark on five magical outings, including a quest for “birthday cheddar” and a visit to the village’s annual Festooning Festival. If you prefer books in which nothing ever happens, books in which people (and cats) sit by the fire with buttery shortbread biscuits and steaming mugs of cocoa, books full of interesting facts that will never come in useful, and books with digressions and meanwhiles and long words and lists, then you will find plenty of that here too. So fetch a tablecloth and turn to the first page of this book. “Sometimes, all you must do is reach out your hand for something wonderful to happen...”

The Adventures of Miss Petitfour can be used in a number of ways, including

- Exploring concepts such as adventure, friendship, community, imagination, responsibility and language
- Studying narrative structure and adventure stories
- Introducing new vocabulary and exploring the impact of language on the reader
- As an entertaining read aloud or independent reading experience

Each section of this guide has a list of suggested vocabulary that can be reviewed and/or introduced to students before, during or after reading. Discussion prompts and activities have been aligned with Common Core State Standards where applicable and can be adapted to suit whole class, small group or individual instructional needs.



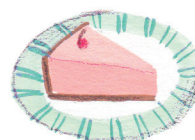
ABOUT *the* AUTHOR

Anne Michaels is the internationally award-winning author of *Fugitive Pieces*, which was made into a feature film, and *The Winter Vault*, as well as several volumes of poetry. Her work has appeared in translation in over forty countries around the world. *The Adventures of Miss Petitfour* is her first book for children.



ABOUT *the* ILLUSTRATOR

Emma Block is the illustrator of *Tea and Cake* and several books for children. She has worked with clients including Anthropologie, Uniqlo and Hallmark. Emma likes thrift stores, tea and very sharp pencils. Visit her online at emmablock.co.uk.



Pre-reading
DISCUSSION
/ ACTIVITIES

- What is your definition of an adventure?
- What are some different adventures you have experienced?
- There are a number of characters that enter and exit each of the stories. Keep a running list of characters as each new one is introduced and make a note or two about what you learn about them as you read.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.1
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LEARNING
ACTIVITIES



I. INTRODUCING MISS PETITFOUR... *and* HER CATS

- Vocabulary to introduce and/or review: **mischievous, descended**
- “Pretty soon you will be meeting Miss Petitfour, and so, just to be sure you will recognize her, this is what she looks like.” Using the illustration as a guide, write a description of Miss Petitfour’s physical appearance. Are you able to guess anything about her personality from the picture?
- If you had to choose one of Miss Petitfour’s cats as your favorite, which one would you choose? Why? Which cat do you think is the most adventurous? Mischievous? Funny? Athletic? Snooty? Explain your thinking aloud or in writing.
- A simile is a figure of speech that compares two things using connecting words such as “like” and “as.” Locate an example of a simile in one of the descriptions of the cats.
- A metaphor is a figure of speech used to compare two unlike things. Locate an example of a metaphor in one of the descriptions of the cats. Why do writers use similes and metaphors?
- Write out the names of Miss Petitfour’s cats. First alphabetize the cats’ names. Then sort the cats’ names by number of syllables, vowel sounds and number of letters.

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2. MISS PETITFOUR *and* THE RATTLING SPOON

- Vocabulary to introduce and/or review: **petit fours, prim, proud, spindly, billowy, misty wisps, flounced, zig-zagging scallops, rickrack, hover, paisley, gargoyles, obstacles, elaborate, knubbly wool, quavered, jaunt**
- In your own words, write or explain aloud how Miss Petitfour and her cats travel about town. What do you think are some of the advantages and disadvantages of traveling by tablecloth?
- Draw a simple compass on a large piece of paper. Based on the description given in the story, draw the shops and town landmarks that can be found in each direction.
- What is special about the store signs in the town? Why are they that way? What does that say about the town? What do you think stores with signs in the following shapes would sell: a musical note, a tire, a birdcage, a suitcase, a chair? Think of a popular store in your own town or city. Design a sign in a shape that will indicate what is being sold there. Ask a classmate or friend to guess what is sold in that store.
- What is the difference between the two sides of Mrs. Collarwaller's store? What does Mrs. Collarwaller like to read the most? Do you think the ice cream machine book would be in the hum or ho-hum section? Which type of book do you prefer: ho-hum or hum? Think of the last five books that you read either as a class or individually. Would you expect to find each of these books in the ho-hum or hum side of the store? Think of one book that you've read that in your opinion would most definitely be considered a ho-hum book and a book that would without a doubt be considered a hum book. Write a brief book report about each of the books and clearly explain why you consider it to be hum or ho-hum.
- "In her vast experience, children loved books that contained words such as *propitious*, *perambulator* and *gesticulate*, especially if they all ended up in the same sentence." Do you agree or disagree with this idea?
- What game do Miss Petitfour and Mrs. Collarwaller enjoy playing together? In partners or small groups, brainstorm a list of ten titles for books that are too silly to be written. Out of your list of ten, choose one of the titles. Draw and/or write an overview of what the story would be about. Design a silly and eye-catching cover for the book.
- Explain what a digression is in your own words. What role do digressions play in a story? Explain your thinking aloud or in writing.
- Create an illustration of the different types of tablecloths described in the story and label the type of weather they are best suited for.

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3. MISS PETITFOUR *and* THE JUMBLE

- Vocabulary to introduce and/or review: **tendrils, expedition, crucial, ricocheting, rummage, coriander, galoshes, furbelows, catastrophe, jamboree, gibberish, cavorting, gnarly, exhilarating, cacophony, menace, wallop, caterwauled, tangy**
- If you had to describe Miss Petitfour's closet in one word, what would it be? Explain your thinking.
- Who does Miss Petitfour ask to help her with the closet? Why?
- *Miss Petitfour and the Jumble* begins with two different settings. Divide a paper into two sections; on one side draw one of the settings, on the other show what is happening at the same time in the other setting. What word is used to "keep the story from spilling out too quickly" but shows that there is action happening in two different places?
- How is the jumble sale organized? If Miss Petitfour organized her closet the same way, what order would everything be in?
- What is an "eccentricity?" What is Mrs. Bois-Brioche des Fontana Harridale Quesloe-Brisbane's eccentricity? What is your eccentricity?
- "...a twisty, jangly jamboree of metal gibberish, twanged its way out of the closet." The verb "twanged" is an example of onomatopoeia. Onomatopoeia are words that sound like their meaning. Make a list of five other words that are examples of onomatopoeia.
- "They ran in and out of the clothes— loose, drab, flouncy, silky, frilly dresses; jackets with zippers, clasps, snaps and toggles; trousers that were old-fashioned, new-fangled, shiny, teensy, plain, plaid, too long and too short; hats with feathers, buckles, ribbons and flowers. Cat costume heaven!" Create a "look book" of cat costumes based on the above description of the clothes.
- How and why does it become a jumble of a jumble sale? What are some of the noises that you would have been able to hear while everything was becoming jumbled? What is Pleasant's idea to fix the mess?
- "Sometimes things work out differently than you expect, and sometimes that's when the best things happen. And sometimes a jumble straightens everything out in the end." What does this mean?

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4. MISS PETITFOUR *and* THE PENNY BLACK

- Vocabulary to introduce and/or review: **serrated, slumber, wavered, lilted, pursuit, ascended, descended, shuddered, hovered, berserk, bellows, caterwauling, mayhem, commotion, deftly**
- Why do people collect things? Do you have any special collections? Why does Miss Petitfour enjoy collecting stamps? What is so special about the Penny Black? Draw a picture of the Penny Black based on the description.
- “She liked to spread the collection across her lap and dream of traveling to all the places the stamps were from: Tonga and Tunisia, Gibraltar and Jersey, Belgium and Burma, the Pitcairn and Paracel Islands.” Locate these places on a globe or map. Learn a little bit about one of these destinations and write a postcard (with a custom stamp!) to Miss Petitfour or one of her cats from this location.
- “Miss Petitfour always left the windows open a little on wintry days, as she loved the smell of snow.” What does snow smell like? Write a description of snow using all of your senses for somebody who has never experienced snow before.
- “Sometimes stamp makers make mistakes, and stamps with mistakes are the rarest of all.” Design a stamp that could be considered “the rarest of the rare.” Include a mistake on the stamp and challenge a classmate to identify the error.

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5. MISS PETITFOUR *and* THE BIRTHDAY CHEDDAR

- Vocabulary to introduce and/or review: **crevice, crater, snippets, smidgens, embossing, cavorting, gargantuan, boisterous, perilous, dousing, velocity, deduced, nimbly, bashful, spumoni**
- Minky’s cheese calendar has pictures of cheese in distinctly human poses. Design another page in Minky’s calendar with one of the types of cheese mentioned in the story (Swiss cheese, Edam cheese, Gruyère, Roquefort, Brie cheese, blue cheese, mozzarella, Parmesan, hard cheese, crumbly cheese, creamy cheese, lumpy cheese).
- Select one of the dances from the list in the book to learn more about. If possible, watch a video of somebody performing a dance in that style. What are some words you could use to describe that type of dance?
- Mrs. Collarwaller and Miss Petitfour like to learn songs full of impossible tasks — what were some examples of these songs? Compose a song of your own to a familiar tune about an impossible task.
- What types of clouds are mentioned in the story? Draw a picture of each of these types of clouds. Look out the window — can you identify the type of clouds in the sky (if any)?

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6. MISS PETITFOUR *and* THE OOM

- Vocabulary to introduce and/or review: **buccaneers, skeins, pell-mell, trellises, amiss, sentries, trice, dumbfounded, totter, devoured**
- What's the secret to catching a leaf?
- Fancy occasions can always use some *festooning* and everyone *festoons*. If you were to festoon your classroom, what would you use? What kind of an occasion might your class festoon for?
- Miss Petitfour thinks ordinary things should be made grand. Think about something that you have to do every day that you don't necessarily enjoy doing but have to anyways. How might you be able to make it enjoyable?
- "You know the game of cat's cradle, when you wrap string around your hands and pass the cradle from one person to the next?" Find a piece of string and either learn or practice playing cat's cradle. What are the cats' ideas for how to festoon themselves using the cat's cradle?
- Brainstorm a list of all of the possible uses for confetti. What kind of special confetti could you invent?
- Describe a situation in your life where a coincidence has come into play. When describing your coincidental experience, use one of the words described in the book.
- "As soon as Mr. Coneybeare took Miss Petitfour's hand, his feet began to lift off the ground. And exactly then, he understood: sometimes, all you must do is reach out your hand for something wonderful to happen." How might this idea apply to your own life?
- Recreate some of the sounds Miss Petitfour and Mr. Coneybeare hear as they float home at the end of the story.

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7. AFTER *Reading*

- In what season does each story take place? Which season is Miss Petitfour's favorite? Why?
- Identify the main problem and solution in each adventure through words and/or pictures.
- How many digressions are there throughout the different stories? Remember not all are identified as such!
- Which adventure did you like the best? Create and conduct a class survey about each student's favorite adventure. Plot the results of the survey on a graph and write a conclusion about which adventure the class preferred. Has your understanding of adventure stories changed at all? If so, how? If not, why not?
- Divide the class into five groups and assign a different adventure to each group. Give each group five minutes to brainstorm a list of reasons their adventure is the most adventuresome! Ask each group to present their case for their assigned story.
- Refer to the running list of characters you created as you read through the different stories. Select three of the characters (but not Miss Petitfour or her cats) and write a character sketch of each. Include evidence from the text to support your description. What role did each of these characters play in the adventure(s) in which they appeared?



- The author uses different words and phrases in the stories for different purposes. Write and illustrate an adventure story of your own, and include one of the words or phrases from each of the categories below.
- Words that open a story like a key (*then one day, meanwhile, just then*)
- Words that stop a story from spilling out too quickly (*meanwhile, by the way, it is interesting to note, that reminds me of*)
- Words that save the day (*fortunately, thank goodness*)
- Words that stop a story and send it in a new direction (*but, however, unfortunately, sadly, if only*)
- Words that fix a story in an instant (*unbelievably, by great good fortune, by chance*)
- Words that show coincidences (*coincidentally, it just so happened, impossibly, incredibly*)

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READING: *Literature*

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.2 Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.3 Describe characters, settings and major events in a story, using key details.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.7 Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting or events.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.1 Ask and answer such questions as *who, what, where, when, why* and *how* to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.7 Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting or plot.



- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.7 Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.3 Describe in depth a character, setting or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words or actions).

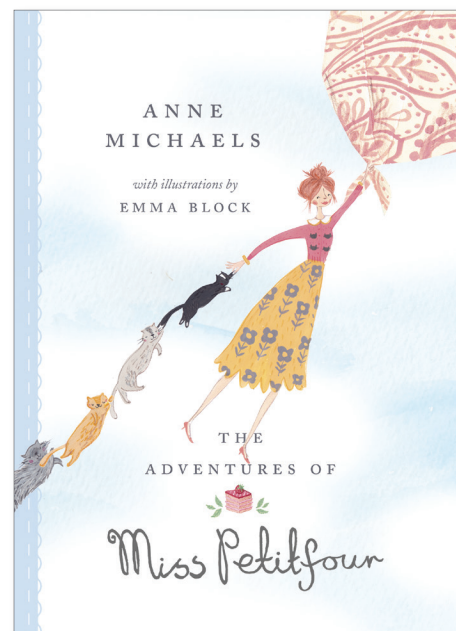
Writing

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.1 Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion and provide some sense of closure.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order and provide some sense of closure.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.1 Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g. *because, and, also*) to connect opinion and reasons and provide a concluding statement or section.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points and provide a concluding statement or section.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.3 Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order and provide a sense of closure.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details and clear event sequences.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details and clear event sequences.



Speaking and Listening

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about *grade 1 topics and texts* with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.2 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.5 Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts and feelings.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about *grade 2 topics and texts* with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.2 Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 3 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.



ISBN: 978-1-77049-500-5



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