



J.R. SILVER WRITES HER WORLD

Publisher: Christy Ottaviano Books
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Reading age: 9-12 years
Grade level: 3-7

About the book:

Josephine Rose Silver faces challenges in sixth grade: her best friend Violet has a new friend, her parents limit her freedom, and her teacher, Ms. Kline, is secretive. Assigned to write stories inspired by old magazine covers, J.R. discovers her stories magically come true, bringing both benefits and problems. As she tries to fix her friendship with Violet through her writing, J.R. learns about the complexities of life, the power of words, and personal growth in this magical and insightful debut story.

About the Author – Melissa Dassori:

Melissa Dassori lives in New York City with her husband and three daughters, with whom she especially likes to enjoy books, travel, time outside and ice cream. Melissa’s middle grade debut, J.R. SILVER WRITES HER WORLD, is available from Christy Ottaviano Books/Little, Brown BYR. An assignment from her own fourth grade teacher inspired the story, although Melissa couldn’t conjure the same magical results that J.R. Silver can. To learn more about Melissa and her fascinating projects access melissadassori.com.



Pre-reading Discussion:

Consider the the illustration depicted on the book jacket and discuss the following statements:

- Describe the setting depicted in the background. Are any of the buildings identifiable? Predict the location in which this story will take place.
- The term *foreshadowing* references a literary technique where early hints or indications are given about future events in a story Consider the girl holding a notebook featured in the foreground. Note the use of contrasting colors used in her likeness and that reflected on the notebook cover. Explain how this artistic representation might serve as a visual foreshadowing the events to take place in the story?
- On the back flap is a question that reads, “What if you could write your dreams into reality with the stroke of a pen?” Determine how this statement relates to the illustration on the book cover.

Post-reading Discussion:

J. R. wasn't writing particularly fast, but she felt like the story was tumbling out as Tess got braver, like her pen was moving her hand rather than the other way around (pg. 31).

- The term *endowed object* defines a literary device in which an object is empowered with supernatural abilities. Explore reasons why J. R.’s notebook serves as the endowed object of the story.
- Authors use endowed objects to enhance character development. Identify moments in the story in which the consequences of the scenarios written in her notebook brought about awareness and growth in J. R.’s character.
- Endowed objects are often used to drive the plot of a story. Examine how her notebook entries caused events to take place and the effect those mysterious events had upon the characters and the story line.



Post-reading Discussion continued:

This is it, J. R. thought as she watched Ms. Kline walk through the room. If what appeared to be happening really was – if she could make things happen just by writing them – now was the time to find out (pg. 72).

“You cannot, I’m afraid, simply do anything. There are limits” (pg. 139).

“But you can fix this,” she said. “You don’t need magic to do it. Look inside yourself. That’s what the magazines are for. They’re about what you want to make happen, not what’s happening to you” (pg. 233).

- Consider J. R.’s notebook entry ‘Wish Come True’, a story that she felt was “...particularly clever” (pg. 66). Explain why she was pleased with the story.
- J. R. states that “It would be funny in a not funny way, if Ava got sick” (pg. 69). How would J. R. benefit if Ava were absent from school?
- Explore J. R.’s magical connection with the Ms. Kline’s *Gothamite* magazine covers regarding her abilities to predict the future with her writing. Could the magazine covers also be considered to be endowed objects in the story? How so? Explain your answer.

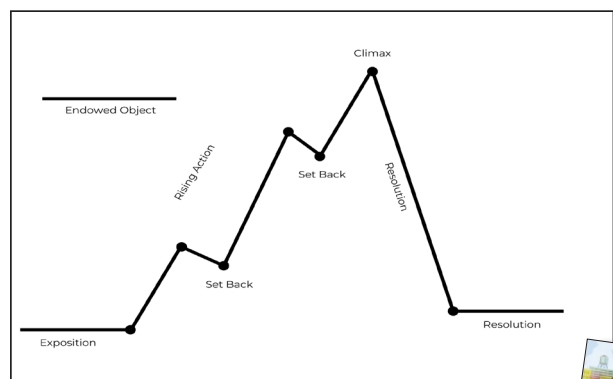
- To *admonish* means to caution, warn or to reprimand someone. Determine why Ms. Kline admonished J.R. to exercise extreme caution with her newly realized magical ability.
- Ms. Kline encouraged J. R. to “...try everything and use them as a magic wand. But this isn’t a game. It’s work. And you need to be thoughtful” (pg. 139). Explain why Ms. Kline trusts that J. R. will learn to use her magical gift of writing with thoughtful care. Why has J. R. been chosen as the student with magical capabilities instead of any of the other students in the class?
- Ms. Kline counsels J. R. by stating “...with the good comes the bad” (pgs. 139-40). Are there lessons to be learned in the setbacks? Explain your answer.

- The word *accountable* means responsible, owning up, and responsible. Make a connection between these definitions and the phrase “They’re about what you want to make happen, not what’s happening to you.”
- In what ways did J. R. need to become accountable for her actions? How did she make things happen in support of others rather than to benefit herself?
- At the end of the story, when celebrating the book store’s twenty-fifth birthday, J. R. told Alex “The magazines changed me” (pg. 249). Explain what she meant by that statement. Identify moments in the story in which J. R.’s character was changed.
- How about you? Have the magazines changed you? How so? Explain your answer.

Story Plot Line Analysis

Use the template on the following page as a guide to write or illustrate a story much like *J.R. SILVER WRITES HER WORLD*. Refer to the definitions of story elements like exposition, rising action, and more, as your guide. This template, along with the story elements, is your creative toolkit to write your own world bringing your imaginative story to life, too!

What if you could write your dreams into reality with the stroke of a pen?



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Endowed Object: Not just any object featured in a story, an endowed object is one that makes the character feel strong emotions and helps them learn more about who they are.

Exposition: The story's beginning during which the reader learns about the characters, the setting, and a problem that will be explored throughout the story.

Rising Action: Events leading up to the main problem or conflict of the story.

Setbacks: Challenges or problems that characters face, making their journey more difficult, but these setbacks cause important events to happen that lead to the climax of the story.

Climax: When the problem reaches a high point in the story.

Falling Action: When characters work to solve the problem or conflict.

Resolution: Where everything gets sorted out, the problems are solved, and we find out how it all ends for the characters.

