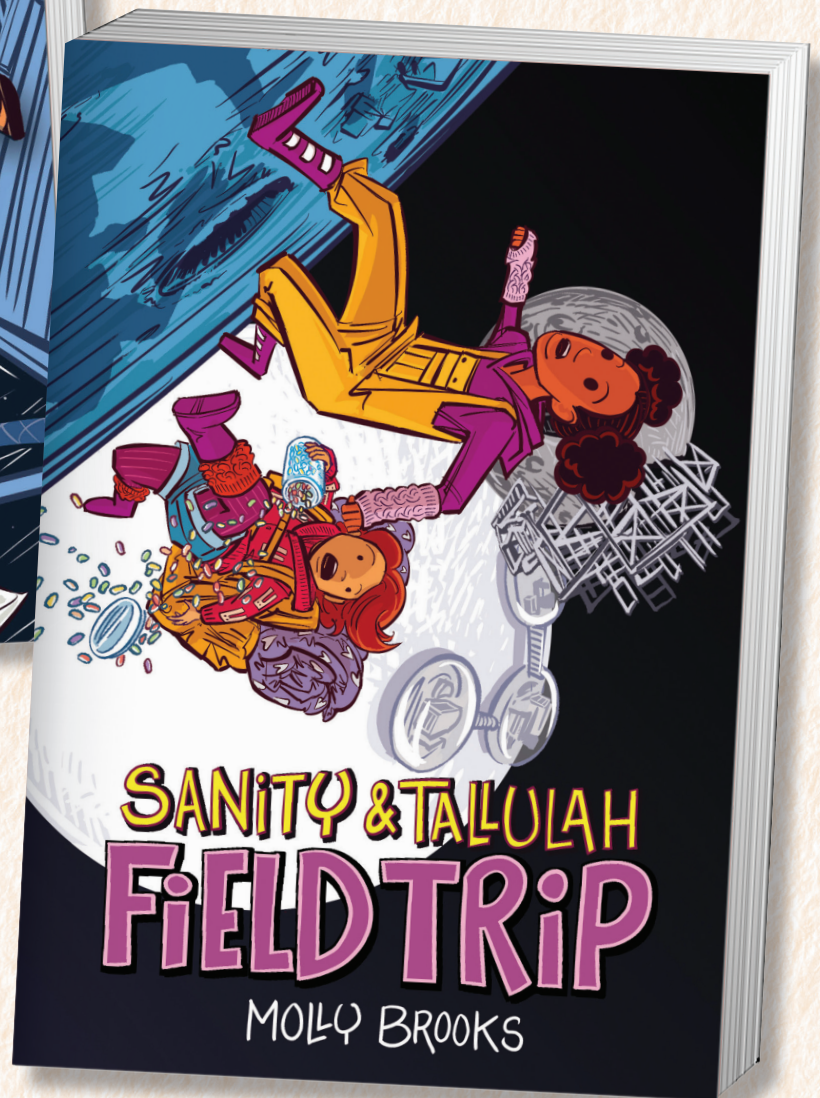


LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS

# Educator's Guide | Ages: 8 to 12



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## Discussion Questions

### PRE-READING

1. What makes a graphic novel unique compared to other types of books? Preview the book you are about to read and examine which features suggest that it is a graphic novel. How are headings used to organize the text and support readers' understanding of the sequence of events, setting, and time frame?
2. From your preview, what do you think will happen in this book? How many days, weeks, or years do you think it spans? Why? What are two questions you have about this novel, based on your preview?
3. Have you read any informational books about space travel? What did you learn? How might an informational text about space differ from a science fiction novel or movie about space travel? Would you want to live in space? Why or why not? Use textual evidence to support your response.
4. In groups of three, select four to five of the vocabulary words below and predict how the terms might be related to the novel. Then choose one way to expand upon each word you selected by creating (a) a definition, (b) a rhyming word, (c) a synonym, or (d) an antonym. As you read, confirm whether the words you reviewed were used as predicted.

SANITY & TALLULAH	
Experimental	Coolant
Biohazard	Kilos
Breech	Exemplary
Vermin	Supervised
Gravity	Engineer
Deliberately	Contaminant
Unstable	Restriction
Infestation	Destroyer

FIELD TRIP	
Microorganism	Particles
Blockade	Deposits
Astrophysics	Adaptation
Discontinued	Hollow
Refined	Asteroid
Investor	Orbital
Debris	Outpost
Satellite	Corporation

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## Sanity & Tallulah Series

Following the discussion, play a game of vocabulary bingo using the definitions, rhyming words, synonyms, and antonyms created by the participants. For example, instead of calling out the selected vocabulary word, give the clue (e.g., Demolisher is a synonym for INSERT WORD).

BINGO			

### ***Sanity and Tallulah Discussion Questions:***

1. When the author introduces Sanity and Tallulah, the reader immediately learns about their interests. Based upon pages 3 to 17, how do their interests differ? What do they each enjoy doing in their free time? How would you describe their friendship? Cite details from the book.
2. What does Sanity's Princess Sparkle, Destroyer of Worlds experiment suggest about her scientific skills and abilities? Is the name a good fit for the experiment? Why or why not? Use evidence to support your response.
3. Based upon the details in the novel, what is it like to live on the Wilnick Space Station? What are some of their daily routines? Challenges? Food sources? Travel methods? Use the graphic organizer to record important information about life on the space station. How do the details about Wilnick help develop the story and the reader's interest in the novel?

*continued on next page . . .*



## LIFE ON WILNICK STATION

<b>Daily Routines</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Food Sources</b>
<b>School Life</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Travel Methods</b>

- Should Sanity and Tallulah be worried that Princess Sparkle, Destroyer of Worlds escaped? Why or why not? What evidence suggests that the pet is dangerous? Where should they search for the kitten? How does the drawing in the advertisement on page 105 differ from the actual kitten? Why might the image cause issues? Use details to support your response.
- As you read, think about the different adventures taking place at the same time (i.e., “Halfway to Epsilon Station” and “Meanwhile on Wilnick”). How do the stories merge and/or overlap by the end? Why did the author choose to include different adventures? What does the reader learn about the characters through the varying story lines?
- In the section “Student Labs, End of Class” (pages 72 to 83), how do the kids solve the lab issue? Why is science an important area of focus for students living in space? Support your response with evidence from the text.
- Who are the adults in charge of running the Wilnick station? How do they respond to the problems that arise? What is the relationship of the adults to Sanity and Tallulah? Look at the family pictures on page 144. What does the reader learn about each girl’s family from the images? What do you wonder about each family? Cite textual details in your responses.
- What series of events leads Sanity and Tallulah to figure out the source of the problem on Wilnick? Describe at least two cause-and-effect connections within the novel. What is each character’s subsequent role in solving the problem(s)? How does each character change as the story unfolds?
- Why is coolant important to the space station? How is coolant used in other vehicles or aircraft? How is Sanity’s solution to save the ship from a coolant malfunction related to her initial “pet” experiment? Cite textual evidence in your response.
- How do the Janet Jupiter story lines that Tallulah enjoys overlap with her own adventures? Why might the author begin and end the novel with a Janet Jupiter reference? Provide details from the text to support your answer.

continued on next page . . .



### Field Trip Discussion Questions:

1. How do the students' perspectives on visiting a planet differ? Why might some students be excited about the field trip and others hesitant? Can you think of a time when you were excited or hesitant to visit a new place? Why?
  - A. When the students first arrive at the orbital relay station, what important information does Ms. Tufts provide about FootHold, Apis, Ethos, and Logos? Support your response with details from the novel.
2. Describe Sanity's sister, Prudence. How is she similar to Sanity? How is she different? In your opinion, is she a good person to chaperone the field trip? How does Prudence feel about her role as a chaperone? Cite evidence from the novel.
3. What series of events lead Sanity and Tallulah to land on Apis? Describe at least two cause-and-effect connections within the novel. What discoveries do they make during their flight to and arrival on Apis? How does this adventure build the excitement and plot of the story? Cite textual evidence.
4. Many characters in the story are interested in "heavypaste." Describe why it is "the most coveted chemical compound in United space" (p. 29). How does each character and/or company plan to use the chemical compound? Why is it suspicious that the compound is stored in the smuggler compartment of the space shuttle taken by Sanity and Tallulah? Provide details from the book.
5. How does Prudence respond to Sanity and Tallulah separating from the group? How does the pirate respond to her ship being taken? How do Prudence's actions help resolve the problems in the story?
6. In the section "A Bit Later" (p. 103–113), what does the reader learn about Apis? How are the bees helping the miners on the planet? What other ways do you think the bees could be useful?
  - A. Based upon the explanation provided in the next section, "Still in the Creepy Underground Base" (p.114–118), why is Apis in danger?
7. What issues has the FootHold Corporation overlooked during the mining process? Do you think the FootHold Corporation is a responsible company? Why or why not? Why don't all the people on Apis work for the FootHold Corporation? How does each group approach mining differently?
8. In the section titled "FootHold Outpost" (p. 146–169), how do the students work together to escape the pending destruction on Apis? What other ideas do characters present to solve the problem on Apis? In your opinion, which other ideas might work? Why? Support your response with evidence.
9. Compare and contrast life on Wilnick Station and Apis (e.g., lighting source, survival skills, etc.) by using the following graphic organizer. Where would you prefer to live? Why?



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## Sanity & Tallulah Series

PROMPT	Contrast: How is life on Wilnick different from life on Apis? Provide three text-based examples.	Compare: How is life on Wilnick similar to life on Apis? Provide three text-based examples.	Compare: What survival skills and/or knowledge do people living on Wilnick and Apis have in common? Provide three text-based examples.
1.			
2.			
3.			

10. Think about the final section of the novel, "Tallulah's Room" (p. 224–225). What does Sanity highlight in her essay about the field trip? What does Tallulah highlight? What does the choice of essay topic reveal about the differences between the characters? Use textual evidence to support your response. If you were a student on the planet field trip, based upon what you have read, what would you include in your personal essay? Why?

*continued on next page . . .*



## Post-Reading Questions

- What is the central idea or theme of each book? What events from the book support this central idea or theme? In your own words summarize the text. How can you apply this theme to your own life?
  - After reading *both* graphic novels, describe the theme or central idea of the series in your own words. What main events from both books support this overarching theme?
- Take a moment to compare these stories to other stories that you have read and enjoyed. Be sure to consider stories in the same and different genres.
  - Sanity and Tallulah:** Choose another story that features best friends. How is the story similar to and/or different from *Sanity & Tallulah*? Use evidence from both stories to support your response.
  - Field Trip:** Choose another story in which the characters travel to a new place. How is the story similar to and/or different from *Field Trip*? Use evidence from both stories to support your response.
- Locate your favorite sequence of illustrations in these graphic novels. Why is it your favorite? How do the illustrations and related text work together to tell the story? Why is the artwork important to the development of the story? Provide details in your answer.
- While reading the novel, you should think about each character's perspective.
  - Sanity and Tallulah:** Think about the events in the story; how does the author show Sanity's point of view about Princess Sparkle, Destroyer of Worlds? In comparison, how do other people view the kitten? Cite evidence from the book.
  - Field Trip:** How might Sanity and Tallulah's view of the field trip differ from Prudence's perspective? Which descriptions in the book highlight Sanity and Tallulah's perspective? Which descriptions highlight Prudence's? Provide examples.

## Post-Reading Questions

### SCIENCE

- Using online and print resources for research, create a timeline that explains the progression of space travel with major events noted in each row of the timeline. For instance, the first trip to the moon and/or creation of a spacecraft. The timeline should briefly highlight the importance of each event.

DATE	MAJOR SPACE EVENT	IMPORTANCE

continued on next page . . .



## Sanity & Tallulah Series

2. Research the question "What are the benefits and challenges of space travel?" Explore the following: (a) important features of spacecraft and space stations, (b) ways people are able to survive aboard spacecraft, (c) societal advances from space travel, and (d) the purpose of space stations. Create a report that clearly organizes the new information, using an introduction, headings, graphics, multimedia connections, and a conclusion to convey the important details. Share your findings through a brief five-minute presentation that incorporates multimedia tools (e.g., graphics, images, tables, sound, video).
3. Imagine you live on a space station like Sanity and Tallulah do. Design your own space station, using art materials (e.g., clay, boxes, diorama) or graphic design tools available electronically. Following the completion of your space station, explain to a partner the important locations, food sources, daily routines, challenges, and unique benefits of living aboard the spacecraft.
4. Imagine you are visiting a new planet, like Sanity and Tallulah do in Field Trip. What would you pack and why? Illustrate and label the items in your backpack. Your items should address nutritional needs, tools, experiments, etc. Be prepared to explain how each item would help you survive during the trip.
5. In the novels, Sanity loves science and applies her knowledge to many creative projects. Design an experiment using the five listed steps: (a) research your experiment, using online and print resources, (b) create a hypothesis about the outcome, (c) list all of the required materials, (d) describe each step for the experiment, and (e) record findings after the project is complete. Then design a multimedia presentation (e.g., graphics, images, tables, sound, video) that conveys the important aspects of your project.

### MY SCIENCE EXPERIMENT

**Question**

**Materials: I need...**

**Hypothesis: I think...**

**Steps:**

**Step 1**

**Step 2**

**Step 3**

**Step 4**

**Step 5**

**Outcome: I learned...**

*continued on next page . . .*



## ARTS AND WRITING

1. In *Sanity & Tallulah*, the reader learns that Tallulah's brother, Horace, is very interested in game design. Can you explain the rules to the game he created on page 175? Research a game from a culture that is different from your own and explain its significance. Then create your own game with a manual that outlines the steps for playing. Once your game and manual are complete, play the game with two to three other people. Afterward, participants should discuss what they enjoyed and ways to make the game better.
2. Create a graphic novel about Sanity and Tallulah's next adventure. Be sure your novel has a clear sequence of events and includes problem and solution, character development, related illustrations, a variety of settings, different time frames, and dialogue. After the novel is complete, share it with a partner for peer review. Each partner should use the "Peer Review Checklist" on the next page to provide revision and editing suggestions.

### PEER REVIEW CHECKLIST

**Compliment:** Something I like about the novel

**Question:** Something I wonder about the novel

#### Revision Suggestions

- Is there enough detail?
- Does the story make sense?
- Can sentences be combined?
- Is the story sequence in order?
- Should some details be removed?
- Are there transition words?
- Can we add more interesting word choices?
- Is dialogue included to match illustrations?
- Does every sentence begin differently?

**Explanation**

#### Editing Suggestions

- Punctuation
- Correct capitalization
- Correct spelling
- Grammar: Complete sentences
- Grammar: Subjects and verbs agree

**Explanation**

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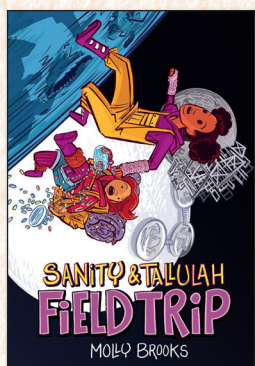


### About the Series

Best Friends Sanity Jones and Tallulah Vega live on a small, out-of-the-way space station, the Wilnick SS. These beautifully illustrated graphic novels tell the tales of troublemaking duo as they try to relieve the monotony of every day space life by adventuring, solving mysteries, and taking turns getting each other into and out of trouble. Like that time one of Sanity's science projects created an extremely-illegal-but-impossibly cute three-headed kitten. Or that time Tallulah piloted the pair directly into a border crisis and nearly escalated it into an all-out war!



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### About the Author and Illustrator



**Molly Brooks** wrote and illustrated *Sanity & Tallulah*, and is the illustrator of *Flying Machines: How the Wright Brothers Soared* by Alison Wilgus, as well as many short comics. Her work has appeared in the *Guardian*, the *Boston Globe*, the *Nashville Scene*, *BUST* magazine, *ESPN* social, *Sports Illustrated* online, and others. Molly lives and works in Brooklyn, where she spends her spare time watching vintage buddy-cop shows and documenting her cats. [mollybrooks.com](http://mollybrooks.com)

### Praise for Sanity & Tallulah series

- Sakura Medal Nominee, 2020

★ "Debut author Brooks's inclusive vision of strong and diverse women engaged in science...is both enjoyable and commendable." —*Publishers Weekly*

★ "Interlaced with spot-on dialogue that is full of humor, this page-turner delivers." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"A delightful read that showcases scientific problem-solving on a female-led space expedition."  
—*Kirkus Reviews*



This educator guide was prepared by Dr. Dawn Jacobs Martin.