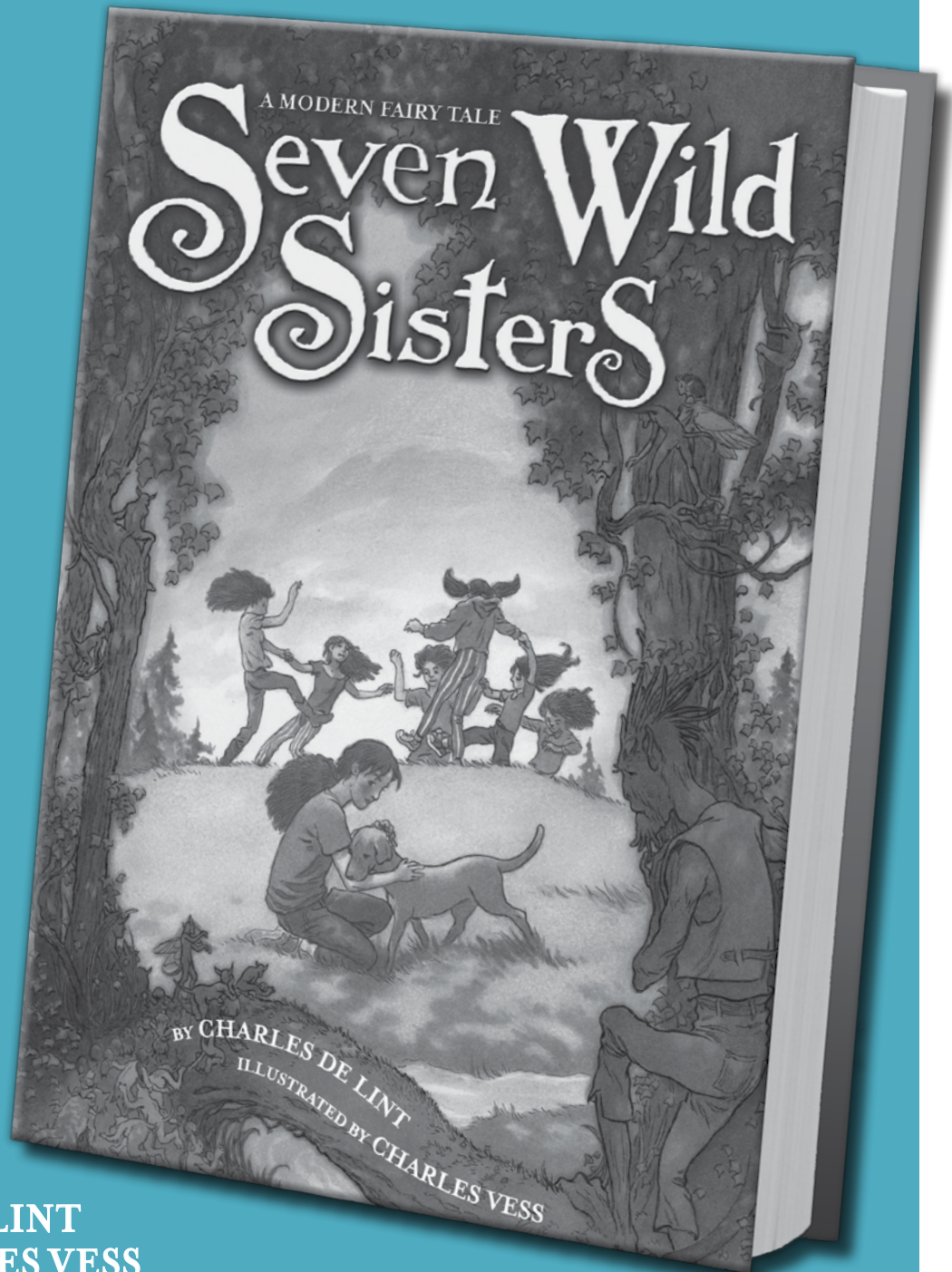


Seven Wild Sisters

Curriculum connections

❖ Fairy Tales

Ages: 8 to 12



BY CHARLES DE LINT
ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES VESS

Seven Wild Sisters

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Look up information about the ginseng plant, apple trees, and the bumblebee. Draw pictures of each of these so you can picture them as you read the story.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Key Details and Ideas

1. Who is the speaker in the first few pages before Chapter 1? What do you know about this person from reading these pages? CCSS.RL.4-6.1
2. Describe the relationship between Sarah Jane and Aunt Lillian. Why won't Aunt Lillian call her by name? How does Sarah Jane know that she can trust her? What does she learn from Aunt Lillian? CCSS.RL.4-6.1
3. What does Aunt Lillian mean when she says, "There's no real good or bad when it comes to fairies" (39)? How does this statement foreshadow events that happen later in the book? CCSS.RL.4-6.2
4. What is unique about each of the Dillard sisters? What does the author mean when she says that they "gave a whole new meaning to independent thinking (13)"? Describe a way in which each of the sisters acts independently. What have they learned about each other by the end of the story that they didn't know before? CCSS.RL.4-6.3

Craft and Structure

5. Why does Aunt Lillian talk about 'sang instead of ginseng? What is the importance of ginseng to her? Look up pictures of other plants that Sarah Jane calls "'sang's companion plants" on page 48. CCSS.RL.4-6.4
6. Make a list of words that are unfamiliar to you as you read the story. Do any of the words have more than one meaning? List phrases that are unfamiliar and discuss how they help set the tone of the story. CCSS.RL.4-6.4
7. Why does the Apple Tree Man appear when Aunt Lillian and Sarah Jane sit in the orchard, even though

he says, "[I]t's dangerous for humans to be with fairies" (70). How does this scene contribute to the development of the plot and theme? CCSS.RL.4-6.5

8. Discuss Sarah Jane's comment about a feud in the hill country: "It starts with something small and then goes on until hardly anybody remembers the whyfor" (77). How did the feud start between the 'sang people and the bees? Why does it continue? What similarities does Sarah Jane notice between the fairy world and her own world back home? CCSS.RL.4-6.5
9. Why does the author switch from third-person to first-person narration in different chapters? How do the different points of view help you understand the action? Why does Sarah Jane start telling her own story in Chapter 3? CCSS.RL.4-6.6

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

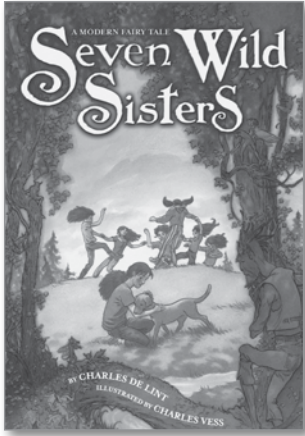
10. Describe the settings in this story: the Tanglewood Forest, the Dillards' home, and the remoteness of Aunt Lillian's cottage. How do the illustrations in the book help you to visualize the settings? What parts of the story can you visualize from descriptions in the text? CCSS.RL.4-6.7
11. What is the importance of the song sung by the Apple Tree Man on page 76. Look up versions of the tune "Shady Grove" that Sarah Jane mentions and compare different versions of the song. Does hearing the tune help you understand the story better? CSS.RL.4-6.9
12. Make a list of other stories mentioned in *Seven Wild Sisters*, such as "Rapunzel." Read these old folktales and compare the characters and plots to those in *Seven Wild Sisters*. Which character in folklore reminds you of L'il Pater? How are they similar and how are they different? CCSS.RL.4-6.9

POST-READING ACTIVITY:

Write your version of what the seven sisters told their mother when they returned home after their adventures with the fairies. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4-6.3

Seven Wild Sisters

about the book



SEVEN WILD SISTERS
by Charles De Lint
illustrated by Charles Vess

HC 978-0-316-05356-3

Also available in downloadable
eBook and audio formats

Sarah Jane has always wanted to meet a fairy. However, she has no idea that the tiny wounded man she discovers in the Tanglewood Forest is about to ensnare her in a longtime war between rival magical clans. When her six sisters are kidnapped and split up by the opposing sides, she'll need the help of several friends—from the reclusive Aunt Lillian to the mysterious Apple Tree Man—to bring them home. But if they don't untangle themselves from the feud quickly, they could all be trapped in the fairy world forever.

about the author



Charles De Lint is the much beloved author of more than 70 adult, young adult, and children's books, including *Seven Wild Sisters*, *The Cats of Tanglewood Forest*, *The Blue Girl*, *The Painted Boy*, and *Under My Skin*. Well known throughout fantasy and science-fiction circles as one of the trailblazers of the modern fantasy genre, he is the recipient of the World Fantasy, White Pine, Crawford, and Aurora Awards. De Lint is a poet, songwriter, performer, and folklorist, and he writes a monthly book-review column for the *Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*. He shares his home in Ottawa, Canada, with his wife, MaryAnn Harris.

Praise for *Seven Wild Sisters*

★ “Beautiful bookmaking, lovely storytelling, and wondrous illustrations...readers will be enchanted.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

★ “The lyrical narrative blends a contemporary setting with a fairy tale that might have been plucked from a distinctly different time and place.”

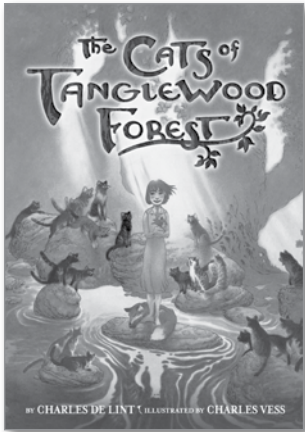
—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

★ “[A] delicious companion novel.”

—*School Library Journal*, starred review



Also by Charles De Lint and Charles Vess



**THE CATS OF
TANGLEWOOD FOREST**
by Charles De Lint
illustrated by Charles Vess

HC 978-0-316-05357-0

Also available in downloadable
eBook and audio formats

Lillian Kindred spends her days exploring the Tanglewood Forest, a magical, rolling wilderness that she imagines to be full of fairies. The trouble is, Lillian has never seen a wisp of magic in her hills—until the day the cats of the forest save her life by transforming her into a kitten. Now she must set out on a perilous adventure that will lead her through untamed lands of fabled creatures—from Old Mother Possum to the fearsome Bear People—to find a way to make things right.

about the illustrator



Photo © Paul Vernon

Charles Vess is a world-renowned artist and a three-time winner of the World Fantasy Award, among several other awards. His work has appeared in magazines, comic books, and novels, including *Seven Wild Sisters*, *The Cats of Tanglewood Forest*, *The Coyote Road: Trickster Tales*, *Peter Pan*, *The Book of Ballads*, and *Stardust*, written by Neil Gaiman and made into an acclaimed film by Paramount Pictures in 2007. Vess has also illustrated two picture books with Gaiman, *Instructions* and *Blueberry Girl*, that were *New York Times* bestsellers. His art has been featured in several gallery and museum exhibitions across the United States as well as in Spain, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and Italy. He lives on a small farm and works from his studio, Green Man Press, in southwest Virginia.

Praise for *The Cats of Tanglewood Forest*

★ “De Lint zestfully combines the traditional and the original, the light and the dark, while Vess’s luminous full-color illustrations, simultaneously fluid and precise, capture Lillian’s effervescent blend of determination and curiosity.”

—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

“The story’s lyrical, folkloric style is well suited to a tale of magic and mystery.”

—*Booklist*

“Sweetly magical...A satisfyingly folkloric, old-fashioned-feeling fable.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*

“Well suited as a charming read-aloud...The pencil and colored-ink illustrations are lush and evocative.”

—*School Library Journal*

