

# THE 39 CLUES *UNSTOPPABLE*

## TEACHING GUIDE TO BOOK ONE: NOWHERE TO RUN BY JUDE WATSON

**CCSS  
READY!**

**The 39 Clues™ is unstoppable! The bestselling series returns with a new adventure spanning four explosive books and a website that places readers right in the action.**



### ABOUT THE BOOK

The Cahill family has a secret. For five hundred years, they have guarded the 39 Clues—thirty-nine ingredients in a serum that transforms whoever takes it into the most powerful person on earth. If the serum got into the wrong hands, the disaster would rock the world. So certain Cahills have always made it their mission to keep the serum safe, buried, locked away. Until now . . .

Thirteen-year-old Dan Cahill and his older sister, Amy, are the latest guardians of the Clues. They think they've done everything right, but a tiny mistake leads to catastrophe. The serum is missing and Dan and Amy have to get it back and stop who stole it . . . before it's game over. For everyone.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jude Watson is the author of four The 39 Clues books, *Beyond the Grave*, *In Too Deep*, *Vespers Rising*, and *A King's Ransom*, along with the bestselling *Star Wars: Last of the Jedi* and the Jedi Quest series. As Judy Blundell, she wrote *What I Saw and How I Lied*, the 2008 winner of the National Book Award for Young People's Literature. She lives in Katonah, New York, with her husband and daughter.

## Developing Common Core Thinking Skills with The 39 Clues

### BIG IDEA: PROBLEM SOLVING

The Common Core State Standards require students to engage in high-level thinking while providing evidence from the text to support their conclusions. Reasoning, justification, and analysis are all used in **problem solving**.

In *Unstoppable: Nowhere to Run*, Dan and Amy are charged with protecting a serum that unlocks superhuman problem-solving skills. But in real life, there are other ways to develop these abilities. Teach students to attack problems using the following steps:

1. Identify the goal
2. Identify and analyze the obstacles
3. Choose an alternative solution
4. Make predictions
5. Evaluate results and report

Practice and training allowed Amy and Dan to stand up to their enemies and protect their family's secrets. Students can use these activities to hone their problem-solving skills . . . to think like a Cahill!

## ACTIVITY #1 - HELP WANTED: CAHILL LEADER

This activity will help students achieve the following **Common Core State Standards**:

Reading Literature  
*Key Ideas and Details* RL.3-5.1, RL.3-5.3

Speaking and Listening  
*Comprehension and Collaboration* SL.3-5.1  
*Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas* SL.3-5.4

As the leader of the Cahill family, it's Amy's duty to keep the serum out of enemy hands. She often wonders how her leadership decisions have impacted others. Is Amy the best person in the family for the job or is another member better suited to lead the most powerful family in the world? How would things be different if Dan Cahill, Natalie Kabra, Sinead Starling, Hamilton Holt, or Jonah Wizard were in charge?

### LEARNING GOAL

Using examples and evidence from the text, compare and contrast leadership qualities of characters to predict how the story might change if a different character were the leader of the Cahills.

### IDENTIFY AND ANALYZE THE OBSTACLES

Place students in small groups for discussion. Use the **Graphic Organizer: Traits of Good and Bad Leaders** in this guide to focus on the word: leader. What is a leader? What qualities or traits make a leader good or bad?

### EVALUATE AN ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION

After students have developed their collective understanding of what makes a good or bad leader, assign each group a character from the book to analyze their strengths and weaknesses as a potential leader of the Cahill clan.

Using the **Cahill Leader Evaluation Chart** in this guide, student groups should refer to the text to find evidence that reveals the qualities and personalities of their character. Students should make inferences based upon the characters' thoughts, feelings, and actions as described in the text.

### MAKE A PREDICTION

Using the evidence, predict the type of leader each character would be and forecast how the story would change.

### REPORT AND EVALUATE

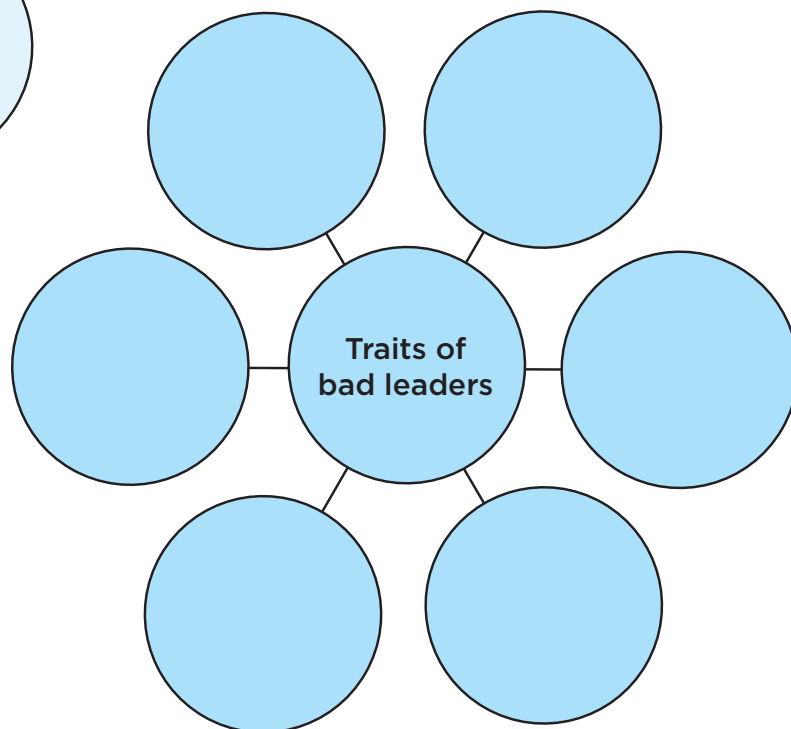
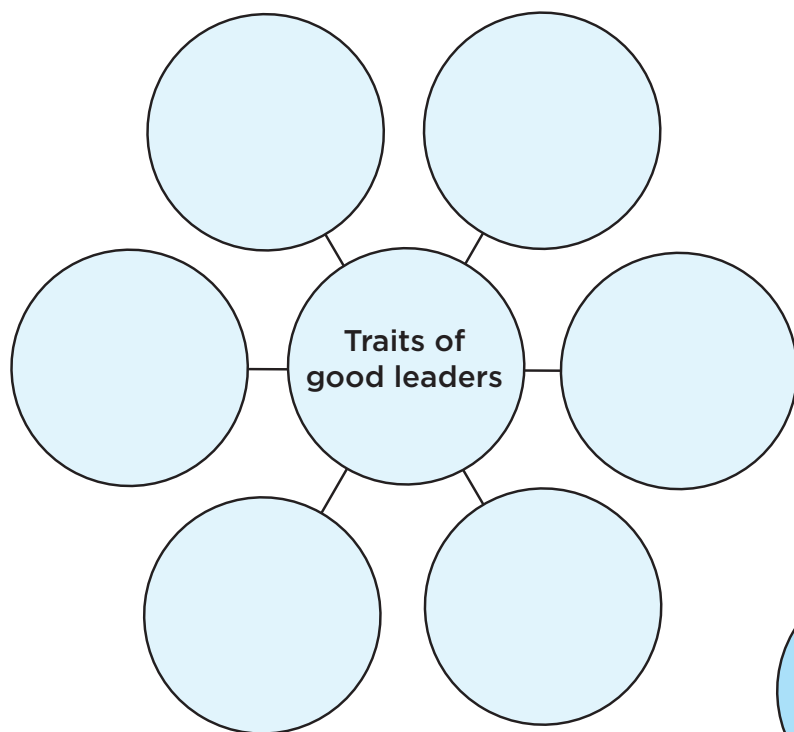
Allow each group to report their findings for their Cahill candidate using evidence from the text. Each group should explain how the outcome of the story would change if this character were in charge. After each group has presented their findings, allow all the participants to evaluate and decide who they think is the best candidate for Cahill leader. Finally, decide if Amy is the best person to be in charge of the Cahill family or if another character would do a better job?



Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## Graphic Organizer: Identify the Traits of Good and Bad Leaders

*Discuss what qualities, both good and bad, you might find in a leader. When you have brainstormed enough ideas, use this graphic organizer to write the top six traits that you might find in a good or a bad leader in the appropriate text bubbles below.*







Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## Cahill Leader Evaluation Chart

*Using the text, find evidence that shows how the character thinks, feels, or acts as a leader. Use this evidence to make inferences about how this character would act if they were the Cahill leader.*

Sample

Evidence from text	Page #	Inference
"Guess I didn't do so well with you, Mac," Amy said to the marble urn, her eyes filled with tears. "Murdered in a hotel room in Rome."	p.9	Amy has doubts about the decisions she has made and how it has caused loved ones to die because of those decisions. She is filled with self-doubt and lacks confidence in her abilities.

Character: \_\_\_\_\_

Evidence from text	Page #	Inference

## ACTIVITY #2 - BAD PRESS: CAHILL IMAGE TARNISHED?

This activity will help students achieve the following **Common Core State Standards**:

Reading Literature  
*Key Ideas and Details* RL.3-5.1, RL.3-5.3

Speaking and Listening  
*Comprehension and Collaboration* SL.3-5.1, SL.3-5.3

Writing  
*Text Types and Purposes* W.3-5.1

### LEARNING GOAL

Amy and Dan are victims of media gossip that tarnishes their reputations. Using evidence from the text, evaluate whether these statements are completely slanderous, or whether there is an element of truth to them. Then determine whether Amy and Dan's public image can be repaired.

### IDENTIFY AND ANALYZE THE OBSTACLES

Examine each gossip attack by Founders Media. Using the ***Gossip Evaluation Chart***, identify evidence from the text to analyze each slanderous headline and determine if the statement has any truth to it.

### EVALUATE AN ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION

Letters to the Editor are written by readers to support or oppose a stance taken by the publication, to respond to another writer's Letter to the Editor, or to correct a perceived error or misrepresentation. Students will write a persuasive Letter to the Editor to support or oppose one or more of these stories from Founders Media, using evidence from the text to support their views.

### MAKE A PREDICTION

Group students by the attack they picked to support or defend their viewpoint. Have them discuss their letters and the evidence that was used for or against Amy and Dan. Which Letters to the Editor do they think are most convincing and will change readers' minds? Which Letters to the Editor do they think are less convincing, and why?

### REPORT AND EVALUATE

Have the groups share the results of their discussions with the whole class. Evaluate if the best letters from each group provided sufficient evidence to support their claim, and were convincingly argued. Did they change the view of the whole class? Would these letters effectively repair the Cahills' public image? Consider other courses of action Dan and Amy could take to improve their public image.



Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## Gossip Evaluation Chart

Read each "gossip attack" in the chart below. Then, write in the appropriate box the supporting evidence from the book that points to whether the gossip attack is true or false. Looking at what you've written, determine whether or not the statement by Founders Media has any truth to it.

Gossip attack by Founders Media	Evidence that supports that the statement is true	Evidence that supports that the statement is false
CAHILL BRATS STEAL ART FOR KICKS!		
CAHILL KIDS SKATE AWAY ON THEFT CHARGES.		
THE TRAGIC DEATH THAT HAUNTS AMY. <i>Did she cause her first love's death?</i>		
CAHILL CUTUPS ENDANGER BOSTON PEDESTRIANS FOR KICKS.		

## ACTIVITY #3 - CLOSE READING EXERCISE: IS DAN TO BLAME?

This activity will help students achieve the following **Common Core State Standards**:

**Reading Literature**  
*Key Ideas and Details* RL.3-5.2, *Craft and Structure* RL.3-5.6  
**Writing**  
*Text Types and Purposes* W.3-5.1

**Speaking and Listening**  
*Comprehension and Collaboration* SL.3-5.1,  
*Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas* SL.3-5.4

### LEARNING GOAL

Chapter 9 opens with Dan wondering if he is to blame for the serum being released in the world. The goal of this exercise is to find out if he really is responsible.

### IDENTIFY AND ANALYZE THE OBSTACLES

Explain to the students that they can only effectively do this if they provide convincing evidence from the text and justification for their answers, just as a criminal lawyer might do to build a case and persuade a jury.

### EVALUATE AN ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION

Lead students on a close reading of this chapter to ascertain who is really to blame.

### MAKE A PREDICTION

During this close read, students should pay attention to the words, ideas, structure, and flow and purpose of the text to help them determine what the author really said, and compare that with what Dan believes and thinks and what others may believe or think.

### REPORT AND EVALUATE

Based upon their conclusions, students will write an argument to support their viewpoint, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence to help Dan solve his biggest problem: determining who is to blame for the loss of the serum.

## KEY TO THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS MENTIONED IN THIS GUIDE

### Reading Literature

#### *Key Ideas and Details*

**RL.3-5.1** Ask and answer questions, basing answers on details and examples in a text; draw inferences from a text; quote accurately from a text.

**RL.3-5.2** Determine the theme of a story from details in the text; summarize a text.

**RL.3-5.3** Describe characters in a story and explain how their actions contribute to events; compare and contrast two or more characters.

#### *Craft and Structure*

**RL.3-5.6** Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.

### Writing

#### *Text Types and Purposes*

**W.3-5.1** Write opinion piece on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

### Speaking and Listening

#### *Comprehension and Collaboration*

**SL.3-5.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

**SL.3-5.3** Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points; summarize the points a speaker makes and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence.

#### *Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas*

**SL.3-5.4** Report on a topic or text, recount an experience, or present an opinion, using appropriate facts and relevant details to support main ideas or themes.