



TEACHER'S GUIDE

The Secret Olivia Told Me

The Secret Olivia Told Me

Written by **N. Joy**

Illustrated by **Nancy Devard**

Published by **Just Us Books**

Target Ages: **4-8**

BOOK DESCRIPTION

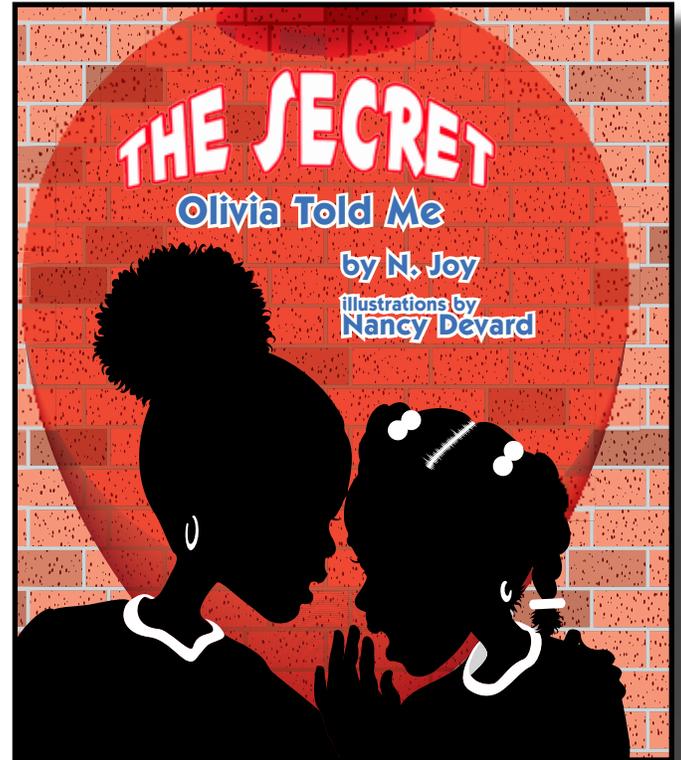
Olivia has a secret—a BIG secret. It's a secret that she tells only to Jade, her very best friend. Jade promises she won't say a word. But the secret is really big and really juicy. What happens when Jade slips and the secret gets out?

Themes

friendship, trust, promises

Pre-Reading Questions

- Look at the cover. What do you think the story is about?
- What is a secret?
- Who do you think the characters on the book cover are? What are they doing?
- What do you think Olivia's secret is?



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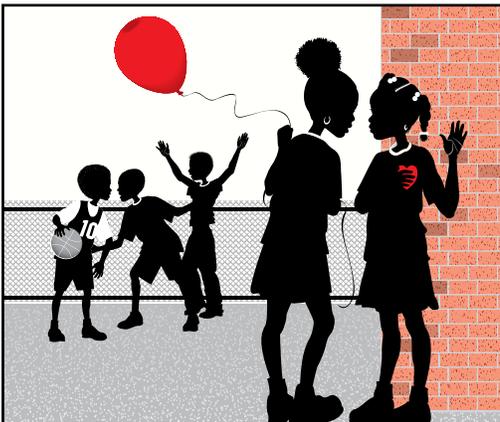


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Discussion Questions

- A balloon appears throughout the book. What do you think it represents?
- Was it difficult for Jade to keep her friend's secret? How do you know?
- What do you think the secret was?
- Do Olivia and Jade remain friends? How do you know?
- Is keeping a friend's secret important? Why or why not?
- Are there any times when you shouldn't keep a secret?
- What lessons did the characters learn?
- Do we ever find out what the secret was?
- Why do you think the author chose to keep the secret "a secret"?

Define the following words/phrases:

secret trust friend honesty promise rumor

WRITING/LANGUAGE ARTS

- What do you think would have happened in the story if Olivia's friend kept her secret? Write an alternate version of the story.
- This book uses rhyme. Using rhyme, write about a time you told a friend a secret, or a friend told you a secret.
- After Jade apologizes to Olivia for spilling the secret, we don't know what Olivia says in response. But we do know that the two girls stay friends. Pick up where the author left off, and create dialogue that the two friends may have shared. What might Olivia have said once Jade apologized? What could Jade have said in return?



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WRITING/LANGUAGE ARTS *con't*

- D.** Is there a difference between a secret and a mystery? Explain your answer using examples.
- E.** What is the opposite of something being secret? Write down as many antonyms as you can think of.

ART

In the book, you can't see the faces of the children. Do you wish you could see what the characters look like, or do you like the silhouettes? Discuss why the illustrator might have chosen this style. Imagine what the Olivia and her friends look like and draw them.

MATH

How many people did Jade tell Olivia's secret to? Count them. By the end of the book, how many people in total now know the secret?

OTHER ACTIVITIES

A. Play a game of "telephone," to see how secrets spread and rumors get started. With the class sitting in a circle, the teacher begins by whispering a "secret" to the first student next to him/her. (NOTE: secret can only be whispered once by each person in the circle. No repeats.) The second student in the circle then tells the third student. The relaying of the "secret" should continue until it makes its way around the entire circle. The last person then announces what he or she heard. Then the teacher announces what the original "secret" was. How is the original secret different from the final secret?



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B. Form a debate team in which one half of the class defends why it's good to keep a secret, and the other half defends why it's good to tell a secret. Each team should provide examples that support their position. Individual students can be selected to give the debate introduction, argument and conclusion for their respective sides.



About the Author

N. Joy writes children's and young adult books as well as urban Christian fiction for adults. The executive editor for a new Christian imprint as well as a magazine columnist, her writing is also featured in greeting card box sets. N. Joy lives in the Midwest with her husband and three children.



About the Illustrator

Nancy Devard is a former engineer-turned artist. She began her illustration career as a staff artist for Hallmark Cards, creating best-selling original designs primarily for the Mahogany and Kids divisions. She currently works as a freelance illustrator. *The Secret Olivia Told Me* is her first trade picture book.

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