

Study Guide for *Little Miss Gingerbread*
By Charlie Lovett

- 1) The relationship between Antberg and Grasshopperville comes from an old story. Can you discover the source of this story? What kind of story is it? How does it differ from the story of the two towns in *Little Miss Gingerbread*? How is it the same?
- 2) Some of the lines in *Little Miss Gingerbread* refer to lines in other plays or movies, or to other things in the world outside of the play. These are called allusions. Can you discover the source of the following allusions:
 - p. 1.35 “. . . until it shines like the top of the Wychwood building.”
 - p. 7.17 “Is the sum of the squares of the two shorter sides of a right triangle equal to the square of the third side?”
 - p. 15.12 “Recommended by four out of five dentists.”
 - p. 17.16 “Miss Medium Green Riding Hood.”
- 3) Do you think the Mayor of Grasshopperville is a good mayor? Is he honest about the conditions in his town, or do you think he is in denial? Why do you think this? Can you describe the relationship between Mayor Cricket and Mr. Düsselorder? If you were mayor of Grasshopperville, what would you do differently?
- 4) What would you consider to be the primary character trait of Dunstan? What about Moldavia? Do you share any traits in common with these two characters? If you knew them, do you think you would be friends with them? Why or why not?
- 5) Cuthbert is an optimist. What is an optimist? Do you think that you are an optimist? Is this a good kind of person to be? Are there any dangers in being as optimistic as Cuthbert is all the time?
- 6) At the beginning of the play do you think Old Man Sassafras is crazy? Do you think the audience will believe that he is crazy? Why or why not? Does your opinion of him change by the end of the play? Why or why not?
- 7) Where did the playwright come up with the names Beowulf and Grendel? Why do you think he chose these names for these particular characters? How are Beowulf and Grendel in this play similar to the original Beowulf and Grendel? How are they different?
- 8) Hansel and Gretel had their own fairy tale long before *Little Miss Gingerbread*. Can you discover the origins of the tale of Hansel and Gretel? Why are Hansel and Gretel in the play portrayed as German? Read a version of the Hansel and Gretel tale. What similarities does it have to the Hansel and Gretel part of *Little Miss Gingerbread*? What differences?
- 9) Do you think Mr. Düsselorder is a good father? Why or why not? Would you like to have him for a parent? Why or why not? If you had Hansel and Gretel as children, would you behave differently from Mr Düsselorder?



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10) Do you think Queen Hilda is right to refuse Mayor Cricket's request for food? Why or why not?

11) Why is Cinnamon unhappy in scene 7? Have you ever had any of the problems that she has? What do you think the best way for her to overcome her problems would be? What advice would you give her if you were a character in scene 7?

12) On p. 12.20, Beowulf says "Please don't drop food on the forest floor. It attracts ants." What are the two possible meanings of this line? Do you think Beowulf knows that what he says has two meanings? Why or why not? What do you think Hansel and Gretel think Beowulf means when he says this? Which of the meanings turns out to be prophetic (look up that word if you don't know what it means)?

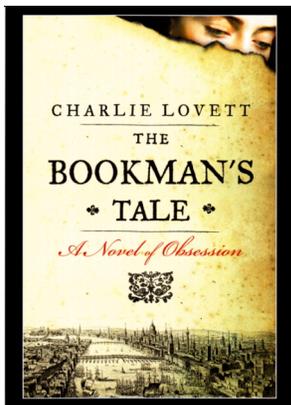
13) What sets Katy Did apart from the other people in Grasshopperville? Do you think she is breaking the laws of the town in which she lives? If so, is she following an even more important law?

14) The city motto of Grasshopperville is "We're Too Lazy to Have a Motto." What is a motto? Does your city or state have a motto? What does it mean? What do you think would be a good motto for your classroom? What would be a good motto for Antberg?

15) What is different about the prophecy that Fortuna makes on p. 17.25? Do you think Fortuna really has the power to predict the future? Why or why not? Does she remind you of any other character in books or movies?

16) Why is it funny when Osric says he likes to play with plastic bags on p. 18.28?

17) In scene 23, the audience gets to help free Ginger from the statue. Do you think they will like being a part of this moment? Have you ever been to a play where you got to participate as a member of the audience? How was it different from a movie or from a play where you only watched? Which do you like better? Why?



Charlie Lovett's newest book is *The Bookman's Tale: A Novel of Obsession*. Published by Viking Pres, June 3, 2013.

A mysterious portrait ignites an antiquarian bookseller's search through time and the works of Shakespeare for his lost love. Guaranteed to capture the hearts of everyone who truly loves books, *The Bookman's Tale* is a former bookseller's sparkling novel and a delightful exploration of one of literature's most tantalizing mysteries with echoes of *Shadow of the Wind* and A.S. Byatt's *Possession*.