



## A Reader's Guide for

# *Fairy Keeper*

by Amy Bearce

### **About the book:**

Forget cute fairies in pretty dresses. In the world of Aluvia, most fairies are more like irritable, moody insects. Almost everyone views the fairy keeper mark as gift, but not fourteen-year-old Sierra. She hates being a fairy keeper, but the birthmark is right there on the back of her neck. It shows everyone she was born with the natural ability to communicate, attract, and even control the tiny fairies whose nectar is amazingly powerful. Fairy nectar used properly can heal people, but it is also a key ingredient in synthesizing Flight, an illegal elixir that produces dreaminess, apathy and hallucinations. She's forced to care for a whole hive of the bee-like beasts by her Flight-dealing, dark alchemist father.

Then one day, Sierra discovers the fairies of her hatch are mysteriously dead. The fairy queen is missing. Her father's Flight operation is halted, and he plans to make up for the lost income by trading her little sister to be an elixir runner for another dark alchemist, a dangerous thug. Desperate to protect her sister, Sierra convinces her father she can retrieve the lost queen and get his operation up and running.

The problem? Sierra's queen wasn't the only queen to disappear. They're all gone, every one, and getting them back will be deadly dangerous.

Sierra journeys with her best friend and her worst enemy -- assigned by her father to dog her every step -- to find the missing queens. Along the way, they learn that more than just her sister's life is at stake if they fail. There are secrets in the Skyclad Mountains where the last wild fairies were seen. The magic Sierra finds there has the power to transform their world, but only if she can first embrace her calling as a fairy keeper.

### **Two Options:**

- *Book Discussion Questions*--These are big, broad questions that work best after the complete book has been read. Can be adapted for book clubs, reading journals, reading workshop class, library groups or more.
- *Chapter Comprehension Questions*—For those reading the book chapter by chapter with a class.

Also included: vocabulary possibilities, essay suggestions, project ideas



## **Book Discussion Questions**

1. Describe Sierra at the beginning of the novel. Does she remind you of anyone? Would you want to be her friend? Why or why not?
2. How does Sierra's relationship with Phoebe affect the story? What would happen in this story if they weren't as close as they are?
3. Compare/contrast Sierra and Nell. How does their relationship change throughout the course of the book?
4. What does Corbin contribute to the story? What would the book be like without him?
5. How does the language of the text evoke a sparse, damaged setting?
6. Provide an objective summary of the story in your own words, no longer than two paragraphs.
7. What is a theme of this novel and what in the story supports this theme?
8. In a fantasy novel, sometimes people think nothing in it applies to their life. But how does this book parallel reality in some ways?
9. Can you think of other fantasy or fairy tale stories that involve fairies or fauns? How is this story the same and different?
10. How would this book be different if it were written in first person point of view?
11. Think of an alternative title for the book. What made you choose that?



<b>GRADE 6</b> (used as example—can be adapted to fit other grades’ standards) Common Core State Standards – Reading Standards for Literature	Book Discussion Questions 1-11
<b>Key Ideas and Details</b>	
RL.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	1, 11
RL.6.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.	6, 7
RL.6.3 Describe how a particular story’s or drama’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.	2, 3
<b>Craft and Structure</b>	
RL.6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.	5
RL.6.5 Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.	4, 7
RL.6.6 Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.	10
<b>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</b>	
RL.6.7 Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch	Audio and video of Fairy Keeper is not currently available.
RL6.8 Not applicable to literature.	n/a
RL.6.9 Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.	9
<b>Range and Level of Text Complexity</b>	
RL.6.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	Applicable through reading this novel. Estimated Lexile score is 850L.
*Question 8 is an application question not covered by CC, but I believe still valuable.	



## Chapter Comprehension Questions

\*Individual questions are not broken into CC standards in this section, due to space limitations.

### Chapter One:

1. Describe Sierra. Why does she hate being a fairy keeper so much?
2. What does it mean that, “Their father called fairy nectar his goldmine for more than its color”?
3. What word best describes Sierra’s relationship with Phoebe? Explain why you chose that word.
4. What event triggers the rest of the story?
5. What do we know about the setting and this world so far?

### Chapter 2:

1. Describe Bentwood.
2. What is Bentwood doing there in the first place?
3. What happens that leads Jack to discovering the death of the fairies?
4. What is Flight and what does it do?
5. Describe what it would be like to have Jack as a father.

### Chapter 3:

1. Why has Sierra never run away with Phoebe before?
2. What “further business” do the men have to conduct?
3. Why does Bentwood want Phoebe to work for him, even though she’s weak?
4. What do you think happened to the fairy queens? What makes you think that?
5. What is the main problem of the story so far?



#### Chapter 4 and 5:

1. Why is Phoebe's journey to Bentwood's port so dangerous?
2. Has there ever been a time when you've had to say goodbye to someone you love or have been sad about something? Describe how you think Sierra must be feeling as she leaves Phoebe.
3. What is the relationship like between Nell and Sierra?
4. What does this text mean? "He wouldn't likely kill her on purpose, not with the hopes of getting a keeper in his city one day, and his desire to stay a partner with Jack. But there were other kinds of death."
5. Why does Sierra tell "Kick Jack for me if he gives you any grief" when saying goodbye?

#### Chapter 6

1. What's Sierra's big plan?
2. What do we learn about Corbin in this chapter?
3. How did Sierra and Corbin spend much of their time together?
4. Why do you think Nell is nervous at Corbin's fairy glade?
5. What do they find at Corbin's?

#### Chapter 7:

1. Where do the three decide to go first and why?
2. What is the significance of Sierra calling her fairy by the name of, "Queen"?
3. The text says of Sierra: "She thought bonding to her queen would somehow make her life better. She didn't know why—she just did. Maybe she could be as happy as Corbin always was. She allowed herself to hope. But instead, things got worse." How did things get worse?



4. What does Sierra realize about Corbin and Nell?
5. What happens when they eat lunch that upsets Sierra?

#### Chapter 8 and 9:

1. How does the setting continue to influence the story?
2. Describe the keeper mark. What does it symbolize when someone has it?
3. How do Sierra and Nell reach some sort of basic understanding that first night?
4. This simile contribute to the dark, dangerous mood of the story by using an image of violence and pain. “Here, the lane was solid, packed red earth. The rain made the road look like it was bleeding.” Create a simile to describe a red dirt road that would create a different mood.
5. Where do they find Keeper Hannon?

#### Chapter 10:

1. What can you conclude about Keeper Hannon when he says, ““I told your father I would not help him!””
2. How does Sierra remind herself of Jack while at The Spiderweb?
3. What important information do they learn about fairies from Keeper Hannon? Which parts are exciting for Sierra and which are unsettling?
4. Sierra is confronted with the idea that using her fairies to produce nectar for her father’s business was slavery. How does she feel? What do you think about it?
5. Why does the Keeper say the fairies have left?



### Chapter 11:

1. What is Sierra's big fear? Do you have a fear of something like that?
2. Corbin and Sierra share an awkward "lip bump" after the earthquake. What do we learn about Nell from her reaction?
3. What does Sierra begin to fear regarding Corbin and Nell? Why?
4. Describe the land they travel through as they leave Keeper Hannon's. Where is their destination?
5. Why does Sierra feel like she keeps forgetting something?

### Chapter 12:

1. What is Corbin able to contribute to the group as they travel?
2. What happens while Sierra sleeps? What do you think is causing that?
3. What is the most likely reason Corbin is acting so weird around Sierra?
4. What does this simile mean? "Her shoulders dropped a bit, and some hurt place in her heart that had felt like an icicle finally began to thaw."
5. Describe the relationship between the girls now. Is it better or worse than before?

### Chapter 13:

1. What breaks the tension between Corbin and Sierra?
2. How does Nell offering to teach Corbin to shoot affect the plot?
3. What do we learn about Corbin from Sierra's memories?
4. How do you think Sierra feels as she falls asleep listening to Nell laugh with Corbin? Have you ever felt like that?
5. What does it mean that Sierra thinks "Nell carried death with her wherever she went"?



#### Chapter 14:

1. Why does Sierra think she might be getting dosed with Flight?
2. They finally reach the forest. Which words in the description of the forest contribute to a mood of dread and fear?
3. What happens to Sierra when they cross into the forest?
4. Summarize the story up to this point, in no more than two paragraphs.
5. Do you think Nell is dosing Sierra? Why or why not?

#### Chapter 15:

1. What happens to Nell when the earthquake hits?
2. Why can't Sierra bring herself to shoot Nell?
3. How does Sierra's view of Nell change in this chapter? Sierra thinks this about Nell, "They were more alike than Sierra had realized." How are Sierra and Nell alike?
4. Why do you think Nell was so mean to Sierra all those years?
5. Sierra also thinks to herself, "Understanding Nell made hating her much harder." What does that mean?

#### Chapter 16:

1. Sierra tells Nell, "I promise we'll come back to you. Do you hear me, Nell? We won't leave you." Why is this comment significant for the girls?
2. Describe Corbin's role in this scene.
3. How does Sierra's perspective about Nell and Corbin's relationship change?
4. What shows Sierra has learned a lot from Nell?
5. Describe what you know about what Sierra shoots at the end of the chapter. Do you have a guess about what it is?



### Chapter 17:

1. Describe the faun, both his physical and emotional states.
2. Why does Sierra try to help him?
3. Nell doesn't tell Corbin about the fight she and Sierra had. What does that suggest?
4. What do we learn about Sierra based on her reaction to removing the arrow?
5. What is the irony Nell and Corbin see about the arrival of the faun?

### Chapter 18:

1. Explain why Nell and Sierra have different opinions about the faun coming with them. Explain each point of view.
2. What is the significance of the name Sierra chooses for the faun?
3. How does Micah respond to the realization that Sierra is a fairy keeper?
4. How is Sierra able to lead them through the forest?
5. Considering the tension between Corbin and Sierra, what does his question, "Why?" mean? What is he really asking?

### Chapter 19:

1. What makes Sierra decide to enter the cave?
2. How does the description of the fairy queens in the cave contribute to the world-building and setting of the story?
3. What is the effect of these sentences on the storyline? "Sierra had always heard a sting was deadly. She almost hoped it was true because all she wanted now was relief from this agony."
4. How does the change in Sierra's relationship with Queenie relate to the theme of the story?
5. What evidence is shown that Sierra really has grown to care for Nell?



### Chapter 20:

1. How does Micah's change complicate the plot?
2. How has Sierra's mark changed and what does it symbolize?
3. Summarize Nell's strange message to them.
4. In chapter 20, the text states, "Sierra froze. To suspect Queen could somehow mentally communicate with her was one thing, but his casual confirmation of it frightened her." What can readers conclude might happen next between Queen and Sierra?
5. What do we learn about Aluvia's history through Micah's story?

### Chapter 21:

1. Why does Micah insist on accompanying them back to Sierra's home?
2. How does Micah's statement contribute to the theme when he says, "keepers who hoard the nectar of their hatches contributed to this dilemma"?
3. Why does Sierra decide she cannot tell anyone that she can hear Queen in her mind?
4. Sierra reaches a turning point in her relationship with Queen in this chapter. Describe how she changes and how this scene fits in with the rest of her character growth.
5. What does it mean that Sierra refuses to call Micah by name, saying only, "the faun"?

### Chapter 22:

1. This chapter describes the fairies like this: "The fairies in question had found the group again and darted around the camp as if playing a child's game of 'Come Catch Me.'" How does this comparison alter the image of fairies the reader has been given previously?
2. How does the arrival of the dragon affect the story?
3. When Micah grabs Sierra's hand, what can readers conclude from what happens?
4. How do Sierra's thoughts about humans and magic relate to one of the themes?
5. What is Nell's prophetic message to them this time?



### Chapter 23 and 24:

1. What does Corbin believe the message from Nell-not-Nell means?
2. What does this paragraph mean?

Maybe the word ‘keeper’ was the wrong word to use. Sierra wasn’t keeping anything; she was guarding the fairies, perhaps? She wasn’t sure, but certainly if the word keeper was used, it had to go both ways. Her fairy was Sierra’s keeper, too. They were each other’s keeper.

3. What is the significance of Sierra calling her queen by the nickname, “Queenie?”
4. How has Nell and Corbin’s relationship progressed?
5. Summarize the plan to rescue Phoebe and keep the fairies from being enslaved again.

### Chapter 25 and 26:

1. How does Sierra’s time with Micah in the forest affect the story?
2. What words are used to describe the setting? How has the setting changed?
3. What is Sierra’s reaction upon seeing her house and her father?
4. What unexpected event has occurred?
5. How does Nell show she has changed?

### Chapter 27 and 28:

1. How does Corbin help redeem their plan to save Phoebe?
2. How has Corbin changed, as evidenced by his response to the need to defeat Bentwood?
3. What occurrence reveals that Sierra’s been keeping secrets about her relationship with Queenie.
4. Why does Sierra regret the way Corbin finds out about her connection to Queen?
5. Summarize their next steps in the plan.



### Chapter 29:

1. Describe Sierra's reaction when she is pulled to the bottom of the ocean?
2. How does the sea wee's comments highlight one of the central problems of the story?
3. Why is Sierra thankful for Micah in this scene?
4. Describe the underwater setting and note which words help build the underwater world for readers.
5. What is the sea wee's motivation for helping Sierra?

### Chapter 30:

1. What is Micah's realization about Corbin's possible fate?
2. What is Sierra's intention with regards to calling the fairy queens to her, if need be?
3. How do readers know that Micah truly cares for Sierra?
4. How does the scene with the guard build the plot? What part of the plot is this? Climax? Rising action? Falling action? Inciting event?
5. How does the guard's death foreshadow a possible outcome?

### Chapter 31 and 32:

1. Describe Sierra's reaction after Queenie stab the second guard. Is it the reaction you thought she'd have?
2. When Sierra opens the door to the prison, the text states, "... Sierra wanted to run to her, but she couldn't move. Her feet were glued to the stone floor." What does this selection of text tell us about Sierra's emotional state at that moment?
3. What happens between Phoebe and the merfolk child?
4. What has happened to Micah and how does Sierra respond?
5. When Nell begins to prophesy, what are the immediate effects of her speech?



### Chapter 33:

1. Describe how Sierra's relationship with Jack has changed throughout the book.
2. Why does Queenie fly in front of the arrow?
3. What is the effect of Queenie's collapse on Sierra?
4. How does Sierra save Queenie, and, by extension, Micah?
5. How does this chapter relate to one of the main themes of this story?

### Chapter 34:

1. What triggers the earth quakes? What does that teach about increases in earthquakes in recent years?
2. How does Sierra use the earthquakes to her advantage?
3. How does Sierra overcome her oldest fear?
4. What is the resolution to Sierra's main interior problem in the story?
5. What does Sierra realize belatedly about Micah?

### Chapter 35:

1. Sierra's willingness to die for her fairies and for her friends teaches what lesson?
2. What is the irony of how Sierra was saved?
3. How can readers conclude Phoebe is safe now?
4. Summarize the conclusion of the story.
5. How did Sierra grow as a character from the beginning to the end of the story?



## Suggested Vocabulary

RL.6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

Ambitions—chapter 2

Covert—chapter 3

Miniscule—chapter 6

Replenish—chapter 10

Unfounded—chapter 14

Mortification—chapter 20

Ominous— chapter 23

Magnanimous—chapter 26

Surreal—chapter 29

Depleted—chapter 34

### Pick 1 or 2

**1. Find each vocabulary word above in the sentence in the listed chapter. Write your own definition based on the context of the word. Then look up the word and see how close you came to figuring out the correct definition.**

**2. Use these ten words in sentences of your own.**

**3. Find two more words you were uncertain of in the story, from any point in the book. Write what you think they mean. Then look them up and confirm.**



## Essays and activities:

1. Imagine you are making a movie of FAIRY KEEPER. Who would you cast for each of the characters and why? What would be the hardest part of making the movie?
2. If you were to create a map of the world, what are three locations that would need to be on the map and what symbol would you use for them on your map?
3. Write a character sketch of the one the characters in the book. Bonus for drawing an image.
4. If you had to pick one character to go on a long adventure with, who would you pick and why? Make a class graph to see which character wins the “Best Journey Companion” award.
5. You are a reporter of a newspaper and you are there during the last scene of the book. Write your article about what happens.
6. As a craft, make a fairy garden (see Pinterest for many ideas) and then compare it to the fairy hatch described in the book.
7. Consider Nell, Corbin, Phoebe and Sierra. Decide who changed the most in this story and use the text to defend your opinion.
8. Do a research project on the history of fairies in tales, from ancient fairy tales to modern retellings and new fantasy worlds involving fairies.
9. Using a Web 2.0 tool such as Bubbl.us, Popplet, Padlet, or Spiderscribe, make a plot diagram, showing the main plot points in the story. Be sure to include the inciting incident, rising action, climax and falling action.
10. Make a book trailer for the book and publish it online. Then please make sure you share your link with Amy Bearce on her Facebook page or author website, so she can show off your talented work!



## Resources:

### Websites:

[www.amybearce.com](http://www.amybearce.com) (includes book reviews for teens, tweens and kids)

[www.curiosityquills.com](http://www.curiosityquills.com)

### Fantasy Reading List – other MG and upper MG fantasy novels for your students to enjoy

*Cinder*, by Marissa Meyer (The Lunar Chronicles)

*Scorpio Races*, Maggie Stiefvader

*Rump*, by Liesl Shurtliff

*Tuesdays at the Castle*, by Jessica Day George

*Artemis Fowl*, by Eoin Colfer (series)

*Inkheart*, by Cornelia Funke (series)

*The Graveyard Book*, by Neil Gaiman

*A Wrinkle in Time*, by Madeline L'Engle (series)

*Gregor the Overlander*, Suzanne Collins (series)

*Where the Mountain Meets the Moon*, by Grace Lin

*The False Prince*, by Jennifer A. Nielson (series)

*Lightning Thief*, by Rick Riordan (series)

*The Giver*, by Lois Lowry

### Upper Middle Grade Book List, a variety of genres, with similar intensity to *Fairy Keeper*

*One Came Home*, by Amy Timberlake

*Deadly Pink*, by Vivian Vande Velde

*Sure Signs of Crazy*, by Karen Harrington

*All Alone in the Universe*, by Lynne Rae Perkins

*Tangerine*, by Edward Bloor

*Doll Bones*, Holly Black

*The Demon Notebook*, by Erika McGann