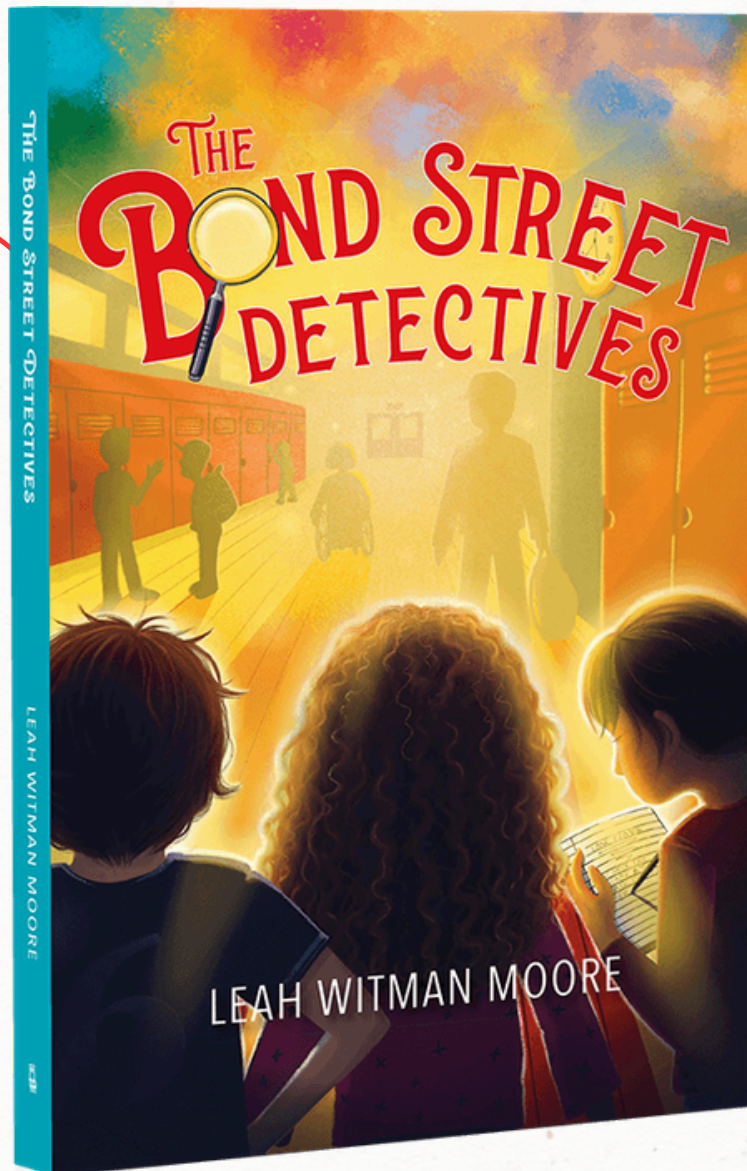


THE BOND STREET BOOK CLUB

Resources for the
Entire Family



Resources created by author **Leah Witman Moore**
NYC Teacher of the Year & Author of *Loving You Big*

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CONTACT LOVING YOU BIG

NICE TO MEET YOU!



My name is Leah Witman Moore, and I'm so excited to share stories with you. I'm the author of *Loving You Big* and *The Bond Street Detectives*. I am a high school teacher of English and Theater and have spent over twenty years helping students to use their imagination and voice to tell their stories.

I studied at the University of Wisconsin and earned graduate degrees in Educational Theater from New York University and Educational Leadership from Bank Street College. One of the proudest moments in my teaching life was receiving the Teacher of the Year award in New York City.

I started sharing my writing on a parenting blog called LovingYouBig.com, which has been read in over 57 countries. I write a lot about real life, family, and the funny, beautiful moments that make stories feel true. The stories of my family inspired me to write *The Bond Street Detectives*.

My family has also shared our experiences through a documentary about cri du chat, a rare chromosomal disability, and I've spoken to places like ESPN and Forbes to help make sure more stories include people with disabilities in meaningful ways. You can see that video on my website www.lovingyoubig.com.

Most importantly, I live in New York with my husband, our three children, my daughter's amazing collection of rainbow wigs, and our new (very loud) bird, Kiwi.

Say Hello!

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We can help the world to
love bigger, one story at a time!

Leah



BEFORE READING



How would you answer these questions?

What makes
a good
detective?

What do
you think it
means to
“belong”
somewhere?

What
qualities make
a strong
friendship?

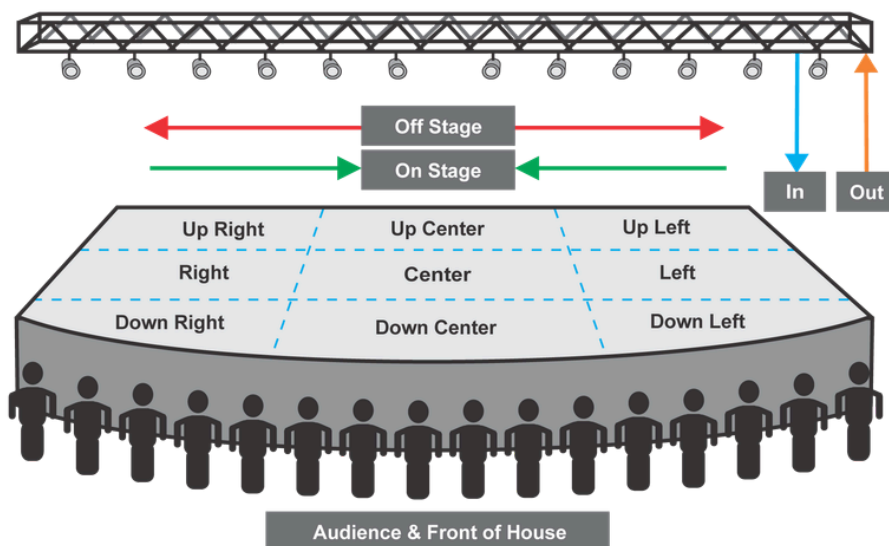
Have you ever
solved a mystery
or helped figure
something out?

Why might
theater, clubs, or
extracurricular
activities matter
to kids?

VOCABULARY

The kids at Bond Street School have the opportunity to learn more about themselves when they are on stage with Madame Eleanor. Here are some theater terms they mention throughout the book.

Word	Meaning
stage manager	Person who organizes a play backstage
props	objects actors use onstage
auditorium	large room for performances
rehearsal	practice for a performance
cue	signal for action or lighting
sight lines	what audience members can see from seats
production	a staged performance
crew	students working backstage
spotlight	focused stage light





VOCABULARY



Lucy loves to write down new words. Here is a list of some of her favorites.

Word	Part of Speech	Meaning
incorrigible	adjective	not to be corrected or improved
nuanced	adjective	subtle differences or understandings
mortified	adjective	extremely embarrassed
triumphantly	adverb	in a proud, successful way
furiously	adverb	with great energy or intensity
dysregulation	noun	difficult managing emotions or reactions
empathy	noun	understanding another person's feelings
inclusive	adjective	making sure everyone feels welcomed
reassure	verb	to help someone feel less worried

Use this strategy to summarize the book & learn more about the characters

READING STRATEGY

Somebody wanted...but... so

Somebody

What is the name of the character?

Wanted

What does the character want?

BUT

What is the problem?

So

How is it resolved?



Try this chart for several characters and see how their answers change!

READING STRATEGY

Character Body

Choose a character & use the graphic to learn more about them

HEAD
What is the character thinking?

HELLO
MY NAME IS

EARS
What do other characters say about them?

MOUTH
What does the character say?

ARMS
What is moving them forward?

HEART
What does the character want?

LEGS
What is holding them back?

Use the questions to dig deeper into the messages of the book.

READING STRATEGY

Discussion Questions

Friendship & Teamwork

Maddie, Lucy, and Max are called the “buddy cousins.” What makes their friendship special?

How do the three friends balance each other’s strengths?

Which character are you most like: organized Lucy, curious Max, or joyful Maddie? Why?

Why is it important that the friends stand up for Maddie when rumors begin?

What are ways friends can support each other during difficult times?

Inclusion & Understanding Others

What does the book teach readers about understanding people with disabilities?

How does Maddie communicate her feelings when words are difficult?

Why do you think Mr. Andre reminds Coco to speak directly to Maddie instead of through him?

What can readers learn from the way Max and Lucy understand Maddie so naturally?

Why is perspective such an important theme in the story?

Mystery & Clues

Who did you first suspect took the music box? What clues did you find?

Why does Lucy start keeping a detective notebook?

Which character would make the best detective? Why?

If you were solving the mystery, what would you investigate first?

What makes a good detective team?

Feelings & Empathy

How did you feel when students blamed Maddie?

Why can rumors spread so quickly at school?

Have you ever seen someone judged unfairly?

What should students do when they hear gossip or accusations?

Why do you think Lucy feels so responsible for protecting Maddie?

What moments in the book made you laugh? Made you feel worried or sad?

Theater & Creativity

Would you want to join Madame Eleanor’s Drama Club? Why or why not?

What makes Madame Eleanor such a memorable teacher?

Which backstage job would you want: costumes, props, stage manager, acting, or lighting?

Why is the drama program so important to the students?

How can creative activities help kids build confidence and friendships?

Use this chart to connect yourself to the characters. Use details to explain your answers.

CONNECTIONS

Characters

Maddie	Lucy	Max	Coco
What are Maddie's greatest strengths?	Why does Lucy like lists, plans, and organization?	Why does Max use humor so often?	Why do you think Coco struggles during the partner activity with Maddie?
How does Maddie bring joy to others?	How does Lucy grow as a leader?	What makes Max a good friend?	Does Coco change throughout the story?
What does "It's a party!" come to mean throughout the story?	What fears or worries does Lucy hide from others?	How does Max help balance the group during stressful moments?	Why is it important to get to know people before making assumptions?

FAMILY CONNECTIONS

- Which character would you most enjoy having dinner with?
- What family traditions in the book stood out to you?
- Why do celebrations matter so much to Maddie's family?
- What does this story teach about community?
- How can schools help every student feel included and valued?

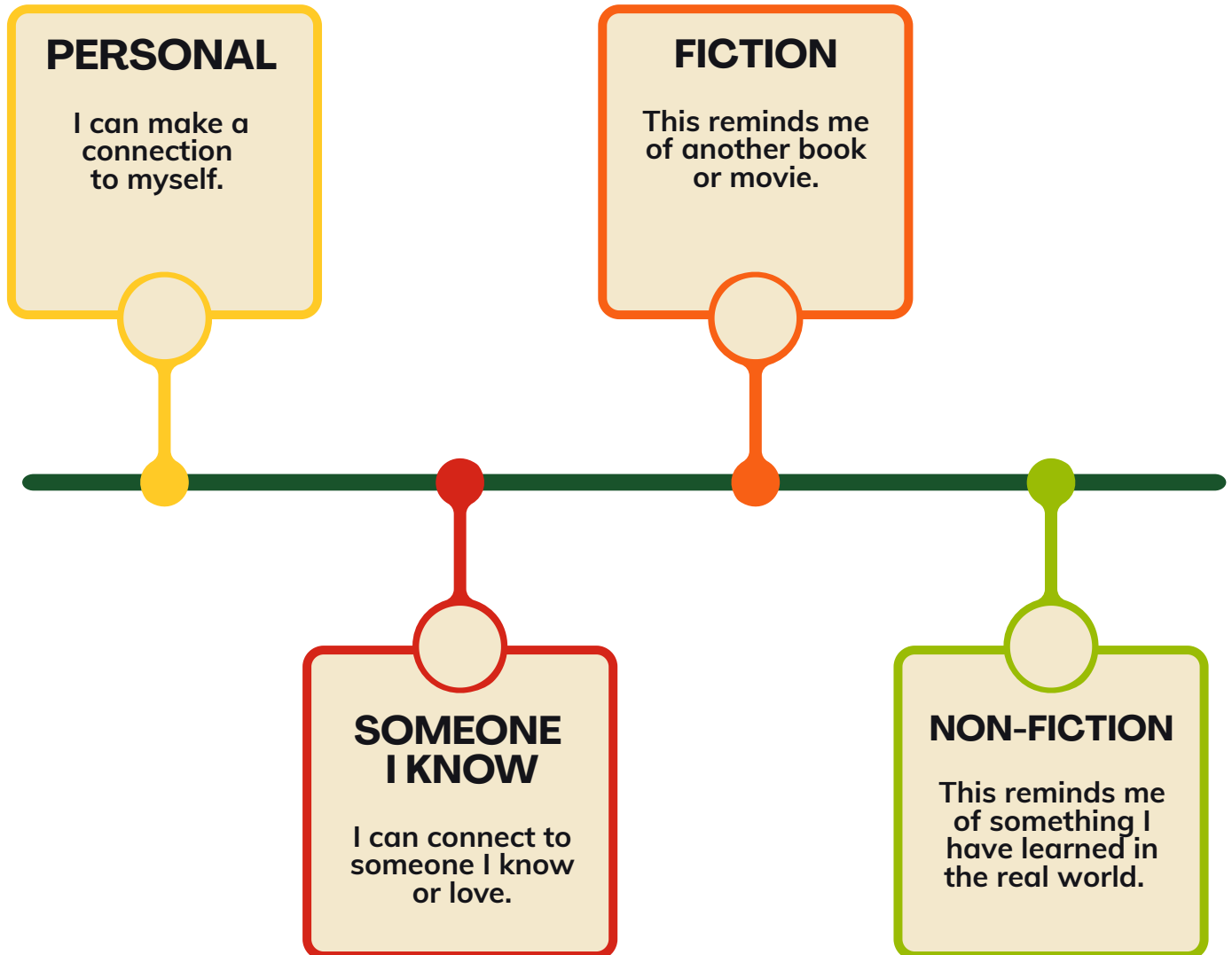


After rereading the descriptions of each character in the book, see if you can try to draw them.

Use the graph to make connections to yourself, other texts, and the world!

CONNECTIONS

Plot, Message, & Characters



Use evidence to explain your connection further!

Use these questions to connect yourself to the characters. Use details to explain your answers.

CONNECTIONS

Characters

- 1 Which character did you connect with the most at the beginning of the story? Why?
- 2 If you could step into the world of Bond Street, what would you notice first?
- 3 How did the characters change from the beginning to the end?
- 4 When did you first start to figure out the mystery?
- 5 Did you guess the ending correctly? What clues helped you—or tricked you?
- 6 If you were a detective in the story, what would you have done differently?
- 7 Design a new case for the Bond Street Detectives—what would they investigate next?
- 8 If this book became a movie, who would you cast as the main characters?
- 9 What was the most surprising clue in the story?



After rereading the descriptions of each character in the book, see if you can try to draw them.

Choose an option to connect and challenge yourself and your book club members!

CONNECTIONS

“IT’S A PARTY”

Share a moment in your life that felt like Maddie’s idea of a perfect party—simple, joyful, and filled with friendship.

CHARACTER THEME SONGS

Pick a song that matches each main character’s personality and explain why.

FAMILY MYSTERY GAME

Hide a small object in the house and create clues together for family members to solve.

INSPIRED ILLUSTRATION

Can you recreate Maddie’s favorite wig, Max’s mismatched socks, or Madame Eleanor’s outfits?

RETELL A STORY

Share a story everyone knows from your own perspective. Then discuss how you all experienced the same situation differently.

SEE THE SPARK

Identify a unique spark everyone in the book club has--just as Madame Eleanor sees strengths in everyone

ACTIVITIES

Use this activity to learn more about communication

PARTNER DRAWING

In this activity, you'll work with a partner to examine the different methods people use to communicate. Notice what details you need to include and what is challenging about this exercise!

- 1 Decide who will be Partner A and who will be Partner B.
- 2 Sit back-to-back so you cannot see each other's papers.
- 3 Each partner should have a piece of paper. Do not look at your partner's paper.
- 4 Partner A will draw anything they choose for 2 minutes while Partner B keeps time.
- 5 When the time is up, Partner A describes the drawing to Partner B.
- 6 Partner B will try to recreate the drawing based only on Partner A's description.
- 7 Do not turn around or look at each other's papers during the activity. Partner B may ask as many questions as needed.
- 8 When both drawings are finished, turn around at the same time and compare the original and recreated pictures.

DISCUSS

- What was successful about your drawings? Where do they look the same?
 - Where could you have added more details to make the drawings match?
- 9 Repeat the activity with Partner B as the artist and Partner A as the listener.

For more information: Boal, A. (2005). Games for Actors and Non-Actors. Routledge

ACTIVITIES

Learn more about
creativity and imagination
with every day objects

IMAGINATION GAME

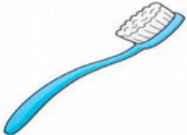








In this activity, you get to use your imagination by recreating everyday items into something new.

- 1 Choose an object around you (for example: a pen, chair, or toothbrush).
- 2 Work with a partner. Decide who will go first.
- 3 Without speaking, use the object in a new and creative way. Pretend it is something else. Act it out so your partner can guess what the object has become.
- 4 Your partner tries to guess what you are pretending the object is.
- 5 Switch roles and take turns.
- 6 Keep going and see how many different transformations you can create!



This chart can give you ideas to create or point to the object that your partner is acting out.

IMAGINATION GAME

ACTIVITIES

Use this game to learn more about paying attention to close details

CHANGE THREE THINGS

In this activity, you'll work with a partner to notice small changes and guess what has been changed. It helps you become a better observer and pays attention to details in a fun, playful way.

What You'll Practice

- Looking closely and noticing details
- Using memory and focus
- Sharing ideas and communicating with a partner
- Building confidence when working with others

Or as Maddie calls it
"The Glasses Game"
(Chapter 9)

How to Play

- 1 Find a partner (Partner A and Partner B)
- 2 Partner A turns around or closes their eyes
- 3 Partner B makes three small changes to their appearance or body position
For example:
 - Move your hands, arms, or feet
 - Change your hairstyle or head position
 - Add or remove something like a hat, scarf, or jacket
- 4 Student A turns back and tries to guess the three changes
- 5 Switch roles and play again so everyone gets a turn

READ THIS EXCERPT FROM
LOVING YOU BIG
By Leah Witman Moore

Yes, My Hands Are Full

My turning point occurred the day a man yelled at me from his car. They are words I will never forget.

He must have seen us inside the grocery store. It was the first time we were going in without a stroller. We create the cutest chain of handholding I have ever been associated with. I am holding the hand of my oldest, Jordan, a six-year-old with a rare genetic disorder, Cri Du Chat. She is holding hands with the twin tornadoes, her baby brothers.

We are here for a mission. We have not only graduated from the possibility of my daughter, Jordan, never speaking, we are moving towards functional life skills. My daughter has proudly remembered the four things we need to buy. She has spent all week working on identifying them and is here to generalize the skill in the grocery store. Today's haul includes: Strawberries, Milk, Popsicles, Chocolate Chip Muffins.

Aisle #1: "Looks like you have your hands full" greets us in the produce aisle.

"Yes, it's our first time without the stroller," I hear my chipper voice respond.

"Strawberries!" My daughter spots item number one. Off they go.

They have each put five cartons of blueberries into the shopping cart, but they are not tall enough to drop them gently, so there is now an avalanche of tiny spherical berries surrounding the cart. Twin B sits on the floor to start eating them. "Yum berries." Twin A can't stop giggling, and our fearless leader is shouting, "Not on the list. Only Strawberries."

Aisle #2: I have bribed Twin A to sit in the front of the shopping cart with the stolen remnants of the berries I couldn't return into the package. This is a gentle reminder for consumers to wash your fruit before you eat it. Of course, I left the wipes in the car.

I have now bribed Twin B with a lollipop to sit in the grocery cart while Twin A insists on pushing the cart while I carry him. My daughter is leading us towards the milk aisle. We walk past a maintenance worker as he bends over the lobster tank.

"Look, Mommy, tushie."

Yes, honey, I see it — let's move ahead. I grab the milk with my other arm, throw it in the cart, and we head towards item number three.

Aisle #4: Everyone is now sitting inside the cart, with squished blueberries on their pants, devouring the box of popsicles we just located. I go back to get a second box.

As we approach the final aisle, I compliment my daughter on her strong shopping skills. This is a big deal for her and we have to finish the entire task to make the lesson stick. She is the most excited for item number four. The chocolate chip muffins. I, too, have never been more excited to purchase an item, because it means we can go home.

We turn the corner and I can see, like a glaring spotlight, they are sold out.

“What about blueberry muffins? They are delicious.”

“No! The list says chocolate chip!”

If you have ever been around a child, let alone one with a disability, the space between the expectation and the reality is frankly — painful. I was ready to handle the breakdown. I had my contingency plan in place. I mean I wasn't too far from the beer aisle.

“Mommy.” She takes a deep inhale. “No muffins. Let's go home. My list done.”

This momentous occasion practically makes me float out of the grocery store. And for the record, not only did we not float, we disrupted an entire display of candy bars, Twin B signed the credit card receipt, and my daughter sang an inappropriate song.

We piled into the car. A full 50 minutes after we had arrived. Four items in our bag. As I buckled the last car seat, I hear a man's voice shout from behind his steering wheel.

“Hey Lady —”

“Yes.”

“Hey. I saw you in there.”

“Oh, I'm so sorry. It was our first time —”

“You are a terrific mother. Have a great day.”

Thank you, kind stranger. I will have a great day. You have no idea how much of a success this was for us. I'm also going to figure out how to turn strawberries, milk, and popsicles into a meal — because while we were at the grocery store, I didn't have any time to get dinner.



DISCUSSION

- 1 The children in this story inspired the characters of Maddie and Cal. In what ways do you see connections between them and the children in this story?
- 2 What clues in the story show that this grocery trip was important to the family?
- 3 How does the story show that success can look different for different families?
- 4 How did the kind stranger at the end change Leah's perspective about the day?

CONNECTIONS

- 1 Have you ever worked really hard on something that seemed small to other people but was huge to you?
- 2 When have you seen someone show kindness to a stranger?
- 3 Draw or describe what the grocery cart probably looked like by the end of the trip.
- 4 Write a short diary entry from Jordan's point of view after the grocery shopping trip.
- 5 What would you put on your own "important four-item shopping list"?

This is Jordan.

She is the real-life inspiration for the character of Maddie.

[Click here to visit lovingyoubig.com](http://lovingyoubig.com) and learn more about her adventures with her younger brothers, Austin and Oliver.





Say Hello!

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lovingyoubig@gmail.com



Are you interested in having Leah join your conversation? Invite her to a Zoom meeting by filling out this [form](#)



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Sign up today for our FREE monthly newsletter to learn...
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A portion of the proceeds are donated to **Inclusion Matters by Shane's Inspiration**, building adaptive playgrounds for children all over the world.