

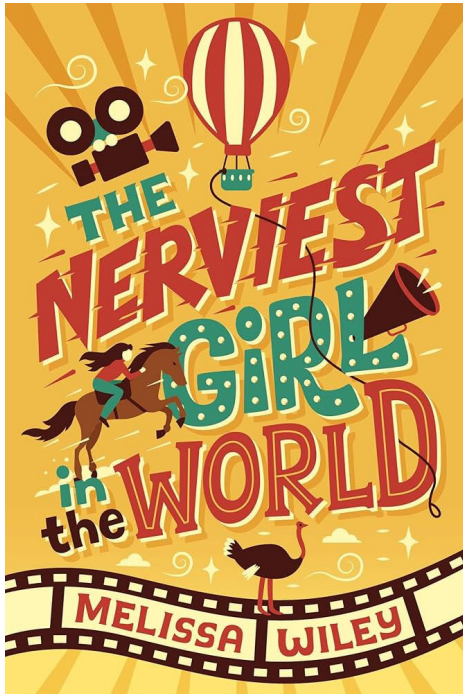


The Book Planter



Ag in the Classroom

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April 2026 Chapter Book *The Nerviest Girl in the World* Written by: Melissa Wiley

Pearl lives on a ranch where her chores include collecting eggs and feeding ornery ostriches. She has three older brothers, who don't coddle her at all. And she knows a thing or two about horses, too. One day, Pearl's brothers get jobs doing stunts for this new form of entertainment called "moving pictures." They're the Daredevil Donnelly Brothers, a Death-Defying Cowboy Trio. Before she knows it, Pearl has stumbled into being a stunt girl herself—and dreams of becoming a star. The only problem is, her mother has no idea what she's up to. And let's just say she wouldn't be too happy to find out that Pearl's been jumping out of burning buildings in her spare time!

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean to be the "nerviest" girl in the world, and how does the main character demonstrate this throughout the story?
2. In what ways does Pearl's ability to act or "perform" help her in real-life situations? Is her acting deceptive, or is it a survival tool.
3. How does the book challenge the traditional roles of women and young girls during this time period?
4. Is Pearl truly fearless, or is she navigating her fears to move forward? Explain your answer.
5. How do the adults in Pearl's life help, or hinder, her personal growth?
6. Were you satisfied with the ending? Why or why not?
7. What is the main message of bravery and identity that the author wanted to convey in this book?
8. Why did the director choose that location to shoot his silent pictures?
9. Why were silent pictures interesting to people of this time?
10. Why did this family keep ostriches? What did they provide for the family?
11. Do Pearl's chores differ from your chores? How?

Agriculture Silent Pictures

Materials

- NC Careers Ag Mag
- Story Board Template

Procedure

1. Divide the students into groups of 3-4.
2. Tell each group to choose an Agricultural Career from the NC Careers Ag Mag. (Teacher can decide to assign each group so there are no repeat careers).
3. Each group will research the agricultural career to gain the following information:
 - What does this career do? What would a day-to-day look like for this career?
 - What groups of people does this career work with? Farmers? The general public? Etc.
 - Does this career help solve problems in agriculture? Explain.
4. Once the groups have adequately researched their careers, give each group a copy of the Story Board Template, and scrap paper for planning.
5. Tell the groups they are going to become movie producers. They will use the career they selected and create a silent movie based around that career.
 - The groups should create a story, not just tell what the career does. Example, a large animal veterinarian might get a call to examine a sick animal. What are some of the things the vet would have to do to get a solution? Are there surprises along the way? Challenge the students to make the story interesting.
 - Students will use the silent picture template to draw each scene, focusing on the elements that explain to the “audience” what is happening in the story. They can create simple captions for each scene, like in real silent movies.
 - The groups should choose a name for their production company, and their silent movie.
6. Ask the students to present their silent movies to the class, or if the technology is available, they can use Canva or some other design software to design slide shows and present them to the class.

3-8 Subject Areas: English Language Arts, and Social Studies

English Language Arts

- RL.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- RL.3.2 Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
- RL.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- RL.4.2 Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
- RL.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- RL.5.2 Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
- RL.6.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- 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.
- RL.6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
- 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.
- RL.7.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RL.7.2 Determine a theme of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

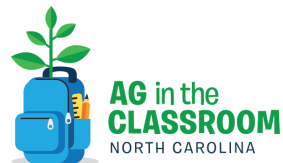
- RL.7.3 Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact.
- RL.7.7 Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium.
- RL.7.9 Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.
- RL.8.1 Cite textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RL.8.2 Determine a theme of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RL.8.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

Social Studies

- 3.G.1 Understand how geography impacts the development of regions and communities
- 3.H.1 Understand how various people and historical events have shaped local communities.
- 3.E.1 Understand how economic decisions and resources affect the local community.
- 5.G.1 Understand the ways in which geographic factors and features have influenced development of the United States.
- 5.H.1 Understand the role of various people, events, and ideas in shaping the United States.
- 7.B.1 Understand how individual and group values and beliefs have influenced various cultures.
- 7.E.1 Understand the economic activities of modern societies and regions.
- 7.G.1 Understand ways in which geographical factors influence societies.

Production Company: _____

Group Members:



Movie Title: _____
