

# The BOY PROBLEM

*(Notes and Predictions of Tabitha Reddy)*

Scholastic 2014

*by Kami Kinard*

## Curriculum Guide

by Debra Rook and Molli Rose  
of Educators R&R

This guide meets Common Core Anchor Standards in reading, writing, speaking, and listening; and the National Council of the Teachers of English and the International Reading Association Standards for English Language Arts.



**Kami Kinard, Author**

Kami Kinard's latest novel, *The Boy Problem: Notes and Predictions of Tabitha Reddy*, was published by Scholastic in April 2014. Her first novel, *The Boy Project: Notes and Observations of Kara McAllister*, published by Scholastic in January 2012, was chosen for the 2013 Children's Choices Reading List. Kinard's poetry, fiction, and nonfiction pieces have appeared in many children's magazines, including *Ladybug*, *Babybug*, *Highlights*, and *Jack And Jill*. A co-founder of Kidlit Summer School, an online program that focuses on the craft of writing for children, Kinard is also a teaching artist on the South Carolina Arts Commission's Roster of Approved Artists. She lives with her family in Beaufort, South Carolina. You can find out more about her by visiting her website [www.kamikinard.com](http://www.kamikinard.com).



**Educator's R&R  
Curriculum Guide Creators**

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Book Trailer Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing is an important literary device authors use to hint at future events in the plot. Foreshadowing builds suspense because a reader understands something BIG will happen, but the character often does not know what is coming. Foreshadowing can occur through a character's speech or actions, actions of other characters, descriptions of the setting, symbols, or objects that appear frequently.

Foreshadowing occurs in books, but creators use foreshadowing in video and music, too. Think about how movies, television shows, and commercials use foreshadowing to create tension or build suspense with scary music or dim lighting.

Imagine this scene: a character creeps down a dark hallway testing each step as she walks. The camera cuts to a closed door at the end of the hallway, then back to the character. Her flashlight blinks off and back on and the music swells eerily. A low, steady beat gets faster and faster until...the character's little brother jumps from behind a door!

The music, sound effects, lighting, and the shots of the closed door all created suspense, foreshadowing that something unexpected is about to happen, yet both the character and the viewer experience surprise when something does happen.

You can see another example of foreshadowing by watching the online book trailer for **The Boy Problem** by Kami Kinard (see the link). Watch the trailer several times, then complete the chart. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tMJtlq93WNk>

<i>What images do you see?</i>	<i>How are these objects used in everyday life?</i>	<i>Predict how the objects might be used in this story.</i>

How do the music, visuals, and words combine to foreshadow the plot?

Music	Visuals	Words

\*\*\*Revisit your predictions after reading the book to see how well you predicted what would happen!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Let's Talk About It! - Discussion Questions

Group Discussion Questions for *The Boy Problem* by Kami Kinard

### Section 1 (pages 1-66)



1. Identify some examples of signs that Tabitha thinks she sees. How does Tabbi's belief in signs impact the plot?
2. Kara is Tabitha's BFF. What advice does she give Tabbi? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
3. What qualities do you admire in Tabitha, Kara, and Priyanka? List why you admire the qualities in each of the three main characters.
4. In one word describe the relationship between Tabitha and her mom. Justify your answer.

### Section 2 (pages 66-136)

1. What role does the mustache play in the plot? What could the mustache symbolize?
2. What are some natural disasters that you know about? How do natural disasters impact people in real life? How do people in real life help others who have been affected by natural disasters? Do you have any personal connections that you can share?
3. What does the title have to do with the story?
4. How does Priyanka's clothing reflect her personality? Is this true for most people you know? Explain by giving examples.

### Section 3 (pages 137-194)

1. What is the big betrayal in this section? What is your impression of Alex Brantley? Would you be his friend? Why? Why not?
2. Is it fair for Colleen to raise money for new uniforms by selling cupcakes? Why? Why not?
4. Kara observes what Andre eats for lunch for three days. How do you feel about this method of data collection?
5. Colleen threatens to use cyber bullying when she tells Tabitha she is going to release the "pizza face" video. What are the possible impacts on both girls with the release of that video?



### Section 4 (pages 194-256)

1. Mr. Gheary saves the day by grabbing Tabitha's hand before the cupcake is thrown. Has anyone ever stopped you from making a mistake? How? Was it effective in solving the problem?
2. How does the release of the "pizza face" video impact both girls? Use specific examples from the text.
3. Is Tabitha's boy project a success? Did her data collection help her find a boyfriend? Use specific examples from the text to defend your answer.
4. Brainstorm some possible themes for this novel and justify them with textual examples.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## I “Mustache” a Question Research Project

Research Extension Project for *The Boy Problem* by Kami Kinard

### Research Project:

1. Using an aspect of the novel that grabs your interest, write a research question that will extend your knowledge of a topic addressed in the story.
2. Research your question using credible print sources, digital media, and/or interviews.
3. Develop a thesis statement incorporating new knowledge to support your research.
4. Apply what you learn to create a product (video, poster, model, or other approved media) which teaches your audience more about a topic addressed in the novel.
5. Create a tool which your audience can use to assess what they have learned.

**Here is an example of how you might pose a research question, search for resources, craft a thesis statement, create a product, and make an assessment:**

**Research Topic:** Hurricanes

**Research Question:** How does a hurricane form?

**Credible Source List:** Websites and videos from NASA, National Geographic, Ted-Ed, and the National Hurricane Center at NOAA

**Fact Finding Mission:** What causes hurricanes to form? Where do hurricanes start? Why do hurricanes only form over oceans? Why do hurricanes swirl around an “eye” in the middle?

**Thesis Statement:** Hurricanes begin off the west coast of Africa where warm sea temperatures, light winds, moist air, and thunderstorms combine to create a strong, swirling storms with high winds and heavy rain.

**Product:** Create a slide presentation describing how a hurricane starts, the stages of hurricane formation, and the forces that cause a hurricane’s shape.

**Assessment:** Create a short quiz based on the presentation.

**Learning Extension:** Go to the National Hurricane Center’s “Create-a-Cane” website to play the game and create a hurricane!

<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/outreach/games/canelab.htm>

### **Other possible topics to research:**

1. Cyber Bullying - *How does social media affect real life?*
2. Divorce/Remarriage - *How do families cope and thrive?*
3. Natural Disasters - *What are they? How do they affect different regions of the world?*
4. Humanitarian Organizations - *How can you help at a local or international level?*
5. Financial Literacy - *What do people need to know (and do) about money?*
6. Cupcake Science - *What makes cupcakes so delicious? (Hint: It’s in the recipe!)*
7. Prediction Power - *Can people really predict the future?*
8. Meaning of the Mustache - *What is the history behind the famous facial hair?*
9. Fun and Games - *Who invented games like bingo and the cootie catcher?*
10. Math Masters - *Which women and men do you think make the math “Hall of Fame” and why?*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Roll On! Probability of Lucky 7 – Teacher-led STEM Activity

Math Curriculum Connection for *The Boy Problem* by Kami Kinard

Life is full of things which happen by chance. Is there a way to predict what is going to happen? There is no method for knowing exactly what the future holds, but the math of probability can help provide an estimate of probable outcomes. This activity will examine probability through comparing mathematical predictions, also called *theoretical probability*, to experimental results, also called *experimental probability*.

**Overview:** Students will calculate the theoretical probability for rolling a 7 with a pair of dice, roll and record results several times, then compare the experimental data collected with predicted probability. Calculators are optional, depending on the learning objective.

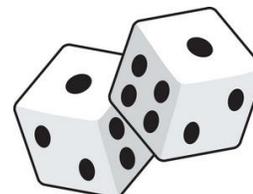
### Activity:

1. Give a *Lucky 7* handout to each student and have them individually complete the top table to determine the total number of possible combinations for rolling a 7 with a pair of dice. Once this is complete, students move into groups. In groups, students compare charts to determine if they calculated the same theoretical probability.
2. Go over the formula and process for finding the theoretical probability of rolling a 7 with a pair of dice, and expressing it in several forms (calculator use optional).
3. Go over the process for finding the experimental probability of rolling a 7 with a pair of dice. Have students roll the dice 36 times and record the outcome. Groups then calculate the experimental probability.

### Reflection questions for students:

Have each group share the number of 7s rolled and total all groups' experimental results. Use the following reflection questions to compare calculated **theoretical probability** to **experimental probability**. Questions can be used for classroom discussion or journal writing.

1. How did your calculated theoretical probability compare to your experimental probability? Did this surprise you? Why or why not?
2. What do you think would happen if you tried it again, but this time doubled your number of trials from 36 to 72?
3. How could this kind of work be valuable in your everyday life? Who would use a process like this and why? Be specific.
4. What are you wondering now about probability? Write a question that will extend your learning.



## Roll On! - Probability of Lucky 7 STEM Handout

The **theoretical probability** of rolling a 7 with a pair of dice is found by mathematical calculation. The number of possible combinations which total 7 is divided by the total number of possible combinations. Complete the table by writing the total rolled by Die 1 and Die 2 for each possible combination. Circle each total of 7.

	Die 2, rolls 1	Die 2, rolls 2	Die 2, rolls 3	Die 2, rolls 4	Die 2, rolls 5	Die 2, rolls 6
Die 1, rolls 1	2					
Die 1, rolls 2						
Die 1, rolls 3						
Die 1, rolls 4						
Die 1, rolls 5						
Die 1, rolls 6						

How many possible combinations are there? \_\_\_\_ How many combinations total 7? \_\_\_\_

Express the **theoretical probability** of rolling a 7:

as a simplified fraction \_\_\_\_\_ as a percent \_\_\_\_\_ as a decimal \_\_\_\_\_

The **experimental probability** of rolling a 7 with a pair of dice is found by observing experimental results. The number of rolls which total 7 is divided by the total number of rolls. Complete the table by rolling a pair of dice 36 times and recording the total of each roll. Circle each total of 7.

Roll	Total	Roll	Total	Roll	Total	Roll	Total
1		11		21		31	
2		12		22		32	
3		13		23		33	
4		14		24		34	
5		15		25		35	
6		16		26		36	
7		17		27			
8		18		28			
9		19		29			
10		20		30			

How many rolls totaled 7? \_\_\_\_

Express the **experimental probability** of rolling a 7:

as a simplified fraction \_\_\_\_\_ as a percent \_\_\_\_\_ as a decimal \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Learning Extension Projects

Literature and Writing Extension Project for *The Boy Problem* by Kami Kinard

### 1. What's On Your Playlist?

Create a character playlist for 4 different characters (2 major characters and 2 minor characters). Each character's playlist must include 4 songs, listed by title and artist. You will need a total of 16 songs for your playlists. Record your information in a grid.

Select 2 songs from a major character's playlist and 2 songs from a minor character's playlist. Record these 4 selections on a separate piece of paper, then explain why each song fits the character. Use details from the book and a portion of the song's lyrics to support your answer. For example, if you choose a song for Tabbi, explain why Tabbi would connect with that song, using lyrics and quotes from the book to support your song choice.

### 2. Signs and Symbols

Tabbi believes in signs that can predict her future. She believes that chance occurrences can "signify" that something is about to happen. While this may or may not turn out to be true, the author is also using these same occurrences to "signify" something about Tabbi.

When a writer uses an object, action, idea, color, event, or other story detail to stand for something else, it is usually not called a sign, it is called a **symbol**. The literary term **symbol** means a detail of the writing that points to something else, something beneath the surface of the words.

Some symbols in poems, stories and novels are used often and are easy to find. For example, if the writer mentions a heart, the reader thinks of love. A broken heart means sorrow.

Sometimes symbols are specific to the story. For example, Tabbi believes certain objects or occurrences can be a sign of her future, such as fortune cookies or the "pizza face" incident. But these things also act as **symbols** for Tabbi's need to believe in a happy future. These symbols pull the reader deeper into the story, leading to more questions: Why do you think believing in a happy future is important to Tabbi? What has happened in her life that might make her afraid of an unknown future? What other things in *The Boy Problem* might be **symbols**? What do you think the cupcakes represent? What about mustaches? Are there other objects, actions, ideas, colors, or details that might be symbols in the novel? Record your answers on separate paper.

### 3. Making It Personal with Narrative Writing

Do you connect with a character or topic in this book? Have you ever had a best friend who helped you out when you needed it? Have you experienced a natural disaster? Do you like to cook or bake? Your personal experiences are excellent sources for narrative essays! Plan and write a personal narrative on a topic that relates to the novel.

### 4. How Can YOU Help?

There are lots of ways to get involved in your community like Tabbi, Kara, and Pri did. Could you help care for animals at the local shelter? Can you hold a silent auction to raise money for your library? What about tutoring a fellow student or starting a "book buddy" club at your school? Is there an open space where a garden could grow? Brainstorm for ways you can volunteer in your area. Choose one idea and write a plan. Present your plan to a family member or teacher so they can help put your community development idea into action!



### **About This Guide:**

The activities included in this guide are designed to be used with *The Boy Problem (Notes and Predictions of Tabitha Reddy)*, Kami Kinard's companion novel to *The Boy Project (Notes and Observations of Kara McAllister)*. Kinard's second middle grade novel follows Tabbi Reddy's hilarious search for the perfect boyfriend. She tries cootie catchers, fortune tellers, bingo cards and, of course, math class! But not even a couple hundred cupcakes can help Tabbi predict her future.

As middle school Language Arts teachers, we created our guide to meet Common Core Anchor Standards in reading, writing, speaking, and listening and the National Council of the Teachers of English and the International Reading Association Standards for English Language Arts. Our lessons are classroom tested by real students and real teachers.

We are teachers who understand shrinking budgets, diverse classrooms, and the rigorous demands of the curriculum. We create user friendly and differentiated materials through collaboration, research, and reflection. We founded Educators R&R to bring our materials to you.

Debra Rook and Molli Rose