

Classroom resources for

The Flourishing of Floralie Laurel



by Fiadhnaít Moser



little bee books



YELLOW JACKET

Reproducible Activity

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Project ideas

1. “Symbolism of Flowers” Prose Writing Exercise:

In the Victorian era, flowers were more than simply pretty decorations. They were deeply symbolic and could be used to communicate emotions too shy for words. All flowers had meanings that were listed in “floriographies,” or flower meaning dictionaries. For this activity, hand out a list of flowers and their meanings from the Victorian era. Ask students to pick 3-5 flowers that they would include in a box to someone important to them, or alternatively, what flowers they would like to receive from someone important to them. Have students research the flowers and illustrate a bouquet, then write a short essay on why they chose their flowers and what it would mean to give/receive those flowers to/from someone they care for. To find a list of Victorian Language of Flowers meanings, please click here: <http://www.avictorian.com/flowers/flowernames.html>.

2. “Simile Postcards” Reading/Prose Writing Exercise:

FLORALIE is full of similes and metaphors. Have students search the first few chapters of FLORALIE for similes and metaphors. Then, have students write a postcard to Floralie, or another character in the novel, using their own made-up similes and metaphors to describe both their own world, and the world of their character. Let students decorate the front of the postcard and hang them by yarn to display in the classroom.

3. “Flower Poetry” Poetry Writing Project:

In the Victorian era, flowers were more than simply pretty decorations. They were deeply symbolic and could be used to communicate emotions too shy for words. All flowers had meanings that were listed in “floriographies,” or flower meaning dictionaries. For this activity, hand out a list of flowers and their meanings from the Victorian era. Ask students to pick 5 flowers to write poems about, and create a short book of poems. Illustrations may be added. Use poems from FLORALIE as models, as well as vocabulary from FLORALIE. To find vocabulary from FLORALIE, check out the “Vocabulary” page

on this website, or click the button below to be transported there. To find a list of Victorian Language of Flowers meanings, please click here: <http://www.avictorian.com/flowers/flowernames.html>.

4. "Painting Inspiration" Short Story Project:

In FLORALIE, Floralie's mother found inspiration in Monet's paintings, particularly, Young Girl in the Garden at Giverny. In this project, students will research impressionist paintings and create a short story using inspiration from the setting or characters from the painting. Students may put together 3-4 paintings to inspire a multitude of scenes.

Discussion questions

1. Floralie's greatest desire is to find her long-lost mother. On both a practical and an emotional level, why do you think this is so important to her? What does Mama represent to Floralie?
2. Why is Tom so hard on Floralie? We only get a view of how Floralie is feeling when her wallpaper is being torn down, but how do you think Tom is feeling, and why?
3. At the beginning of the story, Grandmama and Tom are worried that Floralie is going down the same path as her artistic, yet unstable mother, Viscaria. Why did Viscaria go mad, and how does Floralie prevent herself from following the same path while still maintaining her creativity?
4. Nino loves Greek poetry, especially Sappho's, because her poems are broken up into fragments with ellipses. What do you think the ellipses in the Sappho poems represent, and why? Why does Nino find them beautiful?
5. Mr. Tullier refused to share the world of sight with Miss Clairoux. Why do you think he did that? Would you have shared the world with Miss Clairoux?
6. Why did Floralie leave her mother in the asylum? How did seeing Mama let Floralie let go of her past trauma and allow her to move forward? Would you have done the same or different?
7. Many characters in this story fear being vulnerable. Why is it important to let yourself be vulnerable with the ones you love?
8. Philomenos is Nino's mouse-friend, who follows Floralie and Nino to France. After he passes away, Floralie finds Mr. Tullier's flower dictionary in scraps in Philomenos' den back home. In your opinion, what does Philomenos represent, and why?
9. Floralie experiences huge amounts of grief. However, she learns that it is important to create attachments, even if those attachments must some day disappear. Why do you think it is important to care for things that disappear?
10. How does Mr. Tullier's definition of the eglantine flower represent Floralie's journey?
11. In the story, we discover that Mr. Tullier had an infant daughter, Eglantine, who endured a tragic accidental death. At multiple points in the story, Floralie is mistaken for, or confused with, Eglantine. Why

do you think this is? What does Eglantine represent?

12. How do Floralie and Tom's relationship evolve throughout the course of the book? What about Floralie and Nino's relationship? What about Mr. Tullier and Miss Clairoux's?
13. In what ways do Floralie, Nino, Tom, and Mr. Tullier change as individuals throughout the story? What made these changes come about?
14. What is your favorite part of the story and why? Which character do you relate to the most and why?
15. Discuss your thoughts on the ending of the book. Did you feel satisfied with the ending? Why or why not? Do you think it was a happy ending, a sad ending, or a bittersweet ending?

Grades 4-6 vocabulary

*All definitions from Dictionary.com and Google Dictionary

Disheveled (adj)

1. hanging loosely or in disorder; unkept; untidy; disarranged

Ramshackle (adj)

1. loosely made or held together; rickety; shaky

Unnerve (v)

1. to deprive of courage, strength, determination, or confidence; upset

Pauper (n)

1. a very poor person

Unrefined (adj)

1. coarse or crude; lacking in refinement of taste, feelings, manners, language, etc.

Gallantry (n)

1. dashing courage; heroic bravery; noble-minded behavior
2. gallant or courtly attention to women
3. a gallant act, action, or speech

Fathom (v)

1. to penetrate to the truth of; comprehend; understand

Etiquette (n)

1. conventional requirements as to social behavior; proprieties of conduct as established in any class or community for any occasion
2. a prescribed or accepted code of usage in matters of ceremony, as at a court or in official or other formal observances
3. the code of ethical behavior regarding professional practice or action among the members of a profession in their dealings with each other

Corrupt (adj, v)

1. guilty of dishonest practices, as bribery; lacking integrity; crooked (adj)
2. debased in character; depraved; perverted; wicked; evil (adj)
3. to destroy the integrity of; cause to be dishonest, disloyal, etc., especially by bribery (v)
4. to lower morally; pervert (v)
5. to alter (a language, text, etc.) for the worse; debase (v)
6. to become corrupt (v)

Notorious (adj)

1. widely and unfavorably known
2. publicly or generally known, as for a particular trait

Melancholy (n, adj)

1. a gloomy stage of mind, especially when habitual or prolonged; depression (n)
2. sober thoughtfulness; pensiveness (n, adj)
3. affected with, characterized by, or showing melancholy; mournful; depressed (adj)

Ragamuffin (n)

1. a ragged, disreputable person; tatterdemalion
2. a child in ragged, ill-fitting, dirty clothes

Succumb (v)

1. to give way to superior force; yield
2. to yield to disease, wounds, old age, etc.; die

Nauseate (v)

1. to affect with nausea; sicken
2. to cause to feel extreme disgust

Solemn (adj)

1. grave, sober, or mirthless, as a person, the face, speech, tone, or mood
2. serious or earnest

Translucent (adj)

1. permitting light to pass through but diffusing it so that persons, objects, etc., on the opposite side are not clearly visible
2. easily understandable; lucid

Ravenous (adj)

1. extremely hungry; famished; voracious
2. intensely eager for gratification or satisfaction

Barren (adj)

1. unproductive; unfruitful

Entwine (v)

1. to twine with, about, around, or together

Brittle (adj)

1. having hardness and rigidity but little tensile strength; breaking readily with a comparatively smooth fracture, as glass
2. easily damaged or destroyed; fragile; frail
3. lacking warmth, sensitivity, or compassion; aloof; self-centered
4. having a sharp, tense quality

Wizened (adj)

1. withered; shriveled

Nostalgia (n)

1. a wistful desire to return in thought or in fact to a former time in one's life, to one's home or homeland, or to one's family and friends; a sentimental yearning for the happiness of a former place or time
2. something that elicits or displays nostalgia

Agile (adj)

1. quick and well-coordinated in movement; lithe
2. active; lively
3. marked by an ability to think quickly; mentally acute or aware

Aurora Borealis (n)

1. the aurora of the Northern Hemisphere

Vulnerable (adj)

1. capable of or susceptible to being wounded or hurt, as by a weapon
2. open to moral attack, criticism, temptation, etc.
3. (of a place) open to assault; difficult to defend

Wrath (n)

1. strong, stern, or fierce anger; deeply resentful indignation; ire
2. vengeance or punishment as the consequence of anger

Fleeting (adj)

1. passing swiftly; vanishing quickly; transient; transitory

Disintegrate (v)

1. to separate into parts or lose intactness or solidness; break up; deteriorate

Whimsy (n)

1. capricious humor or disposition; extravagant, fanciful, or excessively playful expression
2. an odd or fanciful notion
3. anything odd or fanciful; a product of playful or capricious fancy

Desolate (adj, v)

1. barren or laid waste; devastated; deserted; uninhabited (adj)
2. solitary; lonely (adj)
3. having the feeling of being abandoned by friends or by hope; forlorn (adj)
4. to lay waste; devastate (v)

Feeble (adj)

1. physically weak, as from age or sickness; frail
2. weak intellectually or morally
3. lacking in volume, loudness, brightness, distinctness, etc.
4. lacking in force, strength, or effectiveness

Naïve (adj)

1. having or showing unaffected simplicity of nature or absence of artificiality; unsophisticated; ingenuous
2. having or showing a lack of experience, judgment, or information; credulous

Wretched (adj)

1. very unfortunate in condition or circumstances; miserable; pitiable; poor, sorry, or pitiful; worthless
2. characterized by or attended with misery and sorrow
3. despicable, contemptible, or mean

Entrance (v)

1. to fill with delight or wonder; enrapture
2. to put into a trance

Curate (v)

1. to take charge of (a museum) or organize (an art exhibit)
2. to pull together, sift through, and select for presentation, as music or website content

Windswept (adj)

1. open or exposed to the wind

Decrepit (adj)

1. weakened by old age; feeble; infirm
2. worn out by long use; dilapidated

Clamber (v)

1. to climb, using both feet and hands; climb with effort or difficulty

Willowy (adj)

1. pliant; lithe
2. (of a person) tall, slender, and moving gracefully

Hallowed (adj)

1. regarded as holy; venerated; sacred

Grades 4-6 vocabulary

*All definitions from Dictionary.com and Google Dictionary

Callous (adj):

1. made hard; hardened
2. insensitive; indifferent; unsympathetic

Dwindle (v):

1. to become smaller and smaller; shrink; waste away
2. to fall away, as in quality; degenerate

Dulcet (adj)

1. pleasant to the ear; melodious (adj)
2. pleasant or agreeable to the eye or the feelings; soothing (adj)

Lilt (n, v)

1. rhythmic swing or cadence (n)
2. a lilting song or tune (n)
3. to sing or play in a light, tripping, or rhythmic manner (v)

Flamboyant (adj)

1. strikingly bold or brilliant; showy

Unscathed (adj)

1. not scathed; unharmed; uninjured

Stylus (n)

1. any of various pointed wedges used to punch holes in paper or other material, as in writing Braille
2. any of various kinds of pointed, pen-shaped instruments used in drawing, artwork, etc.

Gusto (n)

1. hearty or keen enjoyment, as in eating or drinking, or in action or speech in general
2. individual taste or liking

Reverie (n)

1. a state of dreamy meditation or fanciful musing
2. a daydream
3. a fantastic, visionary, or impractical idea

Papyrus (n)

1. a material on which to write, prepared from thin strips of the pith of this plant laid together, soaked, pressed, and dried, used by ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans

Inkling (n)

1. a slight suggestion or indication; hint; intimation
2. a vague idea or notion; slight understanding

Residual (adj)

1. pertaining to or constituting a residue or remainder; remaining; leftover

Facilitate (v)

1. to make easier or less difficult; help forward (an action, a process, etc.)
2. to assist the progress of (a person)

Nostalgia (n)

1. a wistful desire to return in thought or in fact to a former time in one's life, to one's home or homeland, or to one's family and friends; a sentimental yearning for the happiness of a former place or time
2. something that elicits or displays nostalgia

Unkempt (adj)

1. not combed
2. uncared-for or neglected disheveled; messy
3. unpolished; rough; crude

Vivacious

1. lively; animated; spirited

Flabbergast (v)

1. to overcome with surprise and bewilderment; astound

Threadbare (adj)

1. having the nap worn off so as to lay bare the threads of the warp and woof, as a fabric, garment, etc
2. wearing threadbare clothes; shabby or poor
3. meager, scanty, or poor

Intangible (adj)

1. not tangible; incapable of being perceived by the sense of touch, as incorporeal or immaterial things; impalpable

Grimace (n, v)

1. a facial expression, often ugly or contorted, that indicates disapproval, pain, etc. (n)
2. to make grimaces (v)

Euphoria (n)

1. a state of intense happiness and self-confidence

Lament (v, n)

1. to feel or express sorrow or regret (v)
2. to mourn for or over (v)
3. an expression of grief or sorrow (n)

Ethereal (adj)

1. light, airy, or tenuous
2. extremely delicate or refined
3. heavenly or celestial

Stoic (adj, n)

1. of or relating to the school of philosophy founded by Zeno, who taught that people should be free from passion, unmoved by joy or grief, and submit without complaint to unavoidable necessity (adj)
2. a person who maintains or affects the mental attitude advocated by the stoics (n)

Blanch (v)

1. to whiten by removing color
2. to make pale, as with sickness or fear

Precarious (adj)

1. dependent on circumstances beyond one's control
2. exposed to or involving danger; dangerous; perilous; risky
3. having insufficient, little, or no foundation

Oblivious (adj)

1. unmindful; unconscious; unaware (usually followed by of or to)
2. forgetful; without remembrance or memory

Fervor (n)

1. great warmth and earnestness of feeling

Copious (adj)

1. large in quantity or number; abundant; plentiful
2. having or yielding an abundant supply
3. exhibiting abundance or fullness, as of thoughts or words

Amble (v)

1. to go at a slow, easy pace; stroll; saunter

Relinquish (v)

1. to renounce or surrender (a possession, right, etc.)
2. to give up; put aside or desist from
3. to let go; release

Sacrificial (adj)

1. pertaining to or concerned with sacrifice

Reading Quiz #1 (Chapters 1-7)

1. When does this novel take place?
 - a. 1755
 - b. 1887
 - c. 1927
 - d. Today

2. Where does this novel take place?
 - a. England
 - b. Sweden
 - c. Russia
 - d. Germany

3. In what point of view is this novel told?
 - a. First Person
 - b. Third Person Limited
 - c. Third Person Omniscient
 - d. Second Person

4. How would you describe Floralie?
 - a. Creative
 - b. Kind
 - c. Clever
 - d. All of the above

5. Where did Floralie grow up?
 - a. Germany
 - b. France
 - c. USA
 - d. Ireland

6. Is Floralie wealthy?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

7. Why is Floralie living with her brother?
 - a. She was expelled from Mrs. Coffrey's School for Young Girls.
 - b. Her father died.
 - c. She likes him better than her parents.
 - d. Both A and B

8. What does Floralie sell?
 - a. Chocolate
 - b. Shoes
 - c. Ice Cream
 - d. Flowers

9. What is unique about Nino?
 - a. He is very wealthy.
 - b. He doesn't speak.
 - c. He is from France.
 - d. He is a genius.

10. Who is Tom?
 - a. Floralie's father
 - b. Floralie's brother
 - c. Floralie's best friend
 - d. Floralie's uncle

11. Why is Grandmama coming over?
 - a. To bring lunch to Tom and Floralie
 - b. To celebrate Floralie's birthday
 - c. To inspect Floralie
 - d. To buy Floralie new paints.

12. How would you describe Grandmama?
 - a. Loving
 - b. Mean
 - c. Nervous
 - d. Happy

13. Why does Tom destroy Floralie's wallpaper?
 - a. To get her to grow up
 - b. To get her to become the type of lady Grandmama would like her to be
 - c. To stop her from being creative like her mother
 - d. All of the above

14. What is inside the wallpaper?
 - a. A key
 - b. A flower
 - c. A necklace
 - d. A box

15. What did Floralie promise Nino?
 - a. That she would bring him bread.
 - b. That she would write him a poem.
 - c. That she would bring him a flower.
 - d. That she would repaint her wallpaper.

Reading Quiz #2 (Chapters 8-17)

1. Who is Philomenos?
 - a. Nino's mouse
 - b. The librarian
 - c. A flower dictionary writer
 - d. A gardener
2. What is Floralie's first real poem about?
 - a. The beauty of flowers
 - b. Her dislike of Grandmama
 - c. How she misses Mama
 - d. Meeting someone for the first time
3. How does Floralie open the box?
 - a. She picks the lock.
 - b. She smashes it open.
 - c. Nino surprises her by opening it.
 - d. Philomenos opens it.
4. What is in the box?
 - a. Dried flowers
 - b. A necklace
 - c. A book
 - d. Perfume
5. Who is the box from?
 - a. Claude Monet
 - b. Papa
 - c. A stranger
 - d. Mama (Viscaria)
6. What does Viscaria say Floralie must do in the letter?
 - a. Go to Claude Monet's house
 - b. Find the flower dictionary
 - c. Be creative
 - d. Rescue her
7. What is unique about Miss Clairoux?
 - a. She is very old.
 - b. She is good at the violin.
 - c. She is blind.
 - d. She is royal.

8. In which subject is Nino very interested?
 - a. Art history
 - b. Astronomy
 - c. Chemistry
 - d. Greek poetry

9. What is so special about Sappho's poems?
 - a. They are broken up with ellipses.
 - b. They were written on special stones.
 - c. They were written next to beautiful paintings.
 - d. They are all about the flowers.

10. What is Miss Clairoux's dream?
 - a. To open a pastry shop.
 - b. To open a braille library
 - c. To see her grandson again
 - d. To visit France again

11. Where do Nino and Floralie plan to go?
 - a. Paris, France
 - b. Giverny, France
 - c. Athens, Greece
 - d. Whitterly End, England

12. What was Sylvestre Tullier's job?
 - a. Mama's ballet master
 - b. Claude Monet's gardener
 - c. Papa's boss
 - d. An art curator

13. Who finds Nino hiding in the attic?
 - a. Grandmama
 - b. Miss Clairoux
 - c. Tom
 - d. Philomenos

14. Who does Miss Clairoux pretend to be?
 - a. Nino's grandmother
 - b. Floralie's aunt
 - c. Floralie's grandmother
 - d. Nino's mother

15. Why does Miss Clairoux want to with Floralie?
 - a. To find her brother
 - b. To find her lost book
 - c. To meet her favorite author
 - d. For one last adventure

Reading Quiz #3 (Chapters 18-32)

1. What does Mr. Tullier tell Floralie to do when she arrives at his doorstep?
 - a. Get out
 - b. Have some tea
 - c. Give him her flower box
 - d. Write him a poem
2. Why does Miss Clairoux think people are like roses?
 - a. They have both thorns and soft petals.
 - b. They both live and die.
 - c. They have many layers like roses have many petals.
 - d. They both wilt when they are not nurtured properly.
3. What does Miss Clairoux find from her childhood in Giverny?
 - a. Her best friend
 - b. Her father's library
 - c. Her favorite tea shop
 - d. Her favorite garden
4. What is happening to the library in Giverny?
 - a. It is renovating
 - b. It is turning into a mall
 - c. It is closing down
 - d. It is adding a children's library
5. Who is Miss Clairoux in relation to Viscaria?
 - a. Her aunt
 - b. Her nanny
 - c. Her teacher
 - d. Her mother
6. Why does Mr. Tullier finally let Floralie into his house?
 - a. Floralie begs him.
 - b. Floralie tells him she is trying to find Viscaria.
 - c. Miss Clairoux persuades him to let them in.
 - d. He doesn't—Floralie breaks in.
7. Based on Floralie's memories of her, how would you describe Viscaria/Mama?
 - a. Kind
 - b. Eccentric
 - c. Artistic
 - d. All of the above

8. What does Floralie find in the closet in her room at Mr. Tullier's?
 - a. Mama's pointe shoes and ballet costumes
 - b. The floriography
 - c. Oil paints and canvases
 - d. Newspaper clippings

9. What is inside the mysterious room at Mr. Tullier's?
 - a. An art studio
 - b. A dance studio
 - c. A garden
 - d. A baby nursery

10. What will Nino not do inside the room in Question 9?
 - a. Write poems
 - b. Speak
 - c. Help Floralie find Mama
 - d. Paint

11. What strange thing does Mr. Tullier do in the room in Question 9?
 - a. Talks to the willow tree
 - b. Talks to Philomenos
 - c. Burns his floriography
 - d. Writes a letter to Grandmama

12. What name does Mr. Tullier mistakenly call Floralie?
 - a. Viscaria
 - b. Violet
 - c. Poppy
 - d. Eglantine

13. What job does Floralie do in exchange for Mr. Tullier's help?
 - a. Takes care of the garden
 - b. Cooks for him
 - c. Paints his flowers
 - d. Does his laundry

14. Which character disappears?
 - a. Floralie
 - b. Mr. Tullier
 - c. Miss Clairoux
 - d. Nino

15. What does Floralie find in her old house?
 - a. Mama's floriography
 - b. Pictures from Nino
 - c. A threat from Grandmama
 - d. A pearl necklace

Reading Quiz #4 (Chapters 33-45)

1. What is the meaning of the flower eglantine?
 - a. Love
 - b. Poetry
 - c. I wound to heal
 - d. B and C
2. What does Floralie find in the newspaper?
 - a. A missing person alert
 - b. An advertisement for the ballet
 - c. A job listing
 - d. An article about Claude Monet
3. Who took the last floriography?
 - a. Eglantine
 - b. Viscaria
 - c. Grandmama
 - d. Nino
4. To which city does Floralie travel?
 - a. London
 - b. Boston
 - c. Paris
 - d. Moscow
5. What does Floralie do in the city in Question 4?
 - a. Goes to a ballet
 - b. Visits a museum
 - c. Both A and B
 - d. None of the above
6. What does Floralie begin to realize while traveling to Paris?
 - a. The importance of love
 - b. The importance of caring about things that disappear
 - c. The importance of creativity
 - d. The importance of always staying true to your friends
7. What does Nino do when Floralie finds him in Paris?
 - a. Hides
 - b. Speaks
 - c. Finds the floriography
 - d. Kicks Grandmama

8. What painting does Floralie visit?
 - a. Water Lilies
 - b. Starry Night
 - c. Le Chat Noir
 - d. Young Girl in the Garden at Giverny

9. How does Mama act when Floralie visits her?
 - a. She doesn't make sense.
 - b. She kisses Floralie.
 - c. She is angry with Floralie.
 - d. She is angry with Mr. Tullier.

10. Who passes away?
 - a. Mama
 - b. Grandmama
 - c. Nino
 - d. Philomenos

11. What does Mr. Tullier decide to do at the end?
 - a. Care for Floralie
 - b. Pay for Tom's university
 - c. A and B
 - d. None of the above

12. What does Mr. Tullier reveal happened to Eglantine?
 - a. She died after he left out poison.
 - b. She ran away after he was mean to her.
 - c. She was stillborn.
 - d. She grew up and moved away.

13. Why did Mr. Tullier write the floriographies?
 - a. To convey his feelings to Eglantine
 - b. To let Viscaria know how sorry he was
 - c. Because flowers are beautiful
 - d. To memorialize Eglantine

14. What does Floralie find in Philomenos's den?
 - a. Shredded floriography papers
 - b. A letter from Viscaria
 - c. More dried flowers
 - d. Claude Monet's original paintings

15. Who does Floralie see in her wonderland at the end?
 - a. Claude Monet
 - b. Mr. Tullier
 - c. Mama
 - d. Philomenos

Answer Keys

QUIZ #1: 1:C, 2:A, 3:B, 4:D, 5:B, 6:B, 7:D, 8:D, 9:B, 10:B, 11:C, 12:B, 13:D, 14:D, 15:B

QUIZ #2: 1:A, 2:D, 3:D, 4:A, 5:D, 6:B, 7:C, 8:D, 9:A, 10:B, 11:B, 12:B, 13:C, 14:A, 15:D

QUIZ #3: 1:A, 2:C, 3:B, 4:C, 5:D, 6:B, 7:D, 8:A, 9:C, 10:B, 11:A, 12:D, 13:C, 14:D, 15:B

QUIZ #4: 1:D, 2:A, 3:B, 4:C, 5:C, 6:B, 7:B, 8:D, 9:A, 10:D, 11:C, 12:A, 13:C, 14:A, 15:C