

# **AN EDUCATOR'S GUIDE**

## **ALIGNED TO THE COMMON CORE**

Designed by Nicole L. Mancini

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Sally J. Pla is the award-winning author of The Someday Birds and Stanley Will Probably Be Fine. She has English degrees from Colgate and Penn State and has worked as a business journalist and in public education. She lives with her family near lots of lemon trees in Southern California.

You can visit her online at [www.sallyjpla.com](http://www.sallyjpla.com).

## THIS GUIDE

The purpose of this guide is to help educators bring the world of Stanley to life in their classrooms. Inside, you'll find discussion questions, research projects, and extension activities to promote learning (along with a bit of fun comic book trivia!). This guide is not meant to be followed page-by-page; instead, select what works best for you and your students. Make reading a worthwhile experience for all involved and create a community of readers.

*"I think that if certain stories are meant to be written, you will not forget them. Stories that come from what really matters to your heart — that have an importance to you as a person — will stay with you until it's the right time for you write them down...and somehow you will know when that time is..." - Sally J. Pla, on writing.*

## PRAISE FOR STANLEY WILL PROBABLY BE FINE

A Junior Library Guild Selection for 2018

STARRED REVIEW, Kirkus Reviews — "Add to the growing list of intelligent books about kids whose brains operate outside the norm." (Fiction. 8-12)

"The story encourages students to see the best in others and to understand that sometimes people are going through difficulties that cannot be seen. VERDICT An excellent addition to promote social-emotional learning." — School Library Journal

"A fun, vibrant story full of humanity and heart!" — Booki Vivat, New York Times Bestselling Author of Frazzled

"Stanley is an eminently loveable underdog!" — Leslie Connor

"Stanley's anxiety and sensory processing disorder are portrayed in a sensitive and relatable way... Refreshing." — Booklist



# BOOK SUMMARY

That shy, worried-looking kid in the red shirt on the book cover? That's Stanley Fortinbras.

He's got issues.

His big brother Cal bullies him. His best friend Joon is drifting away. And his new middle school has these super-scary pop-up safety drills that leave him a nervous wreck.

But one thing Stanley loves is comics. In fact, he's a comics fanatic. So one day at school, to calm himself, he invents a comic called 'John Lockdown, School Safety Superhero,' just for fun.

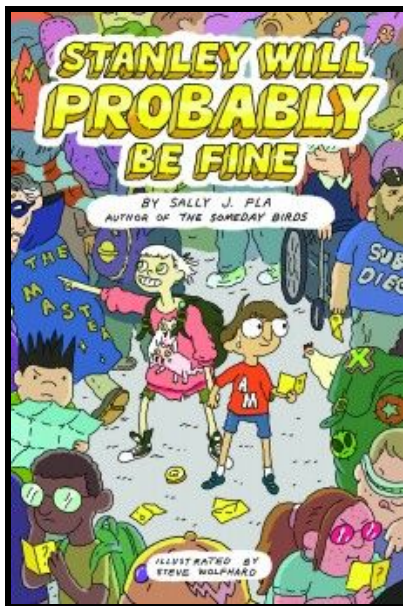
What's weird is that this John Lockdown character starts to write him back.

Meanwhile, his new neighbor Liberty wants them to enter a giant comic trivia treasure hunt in downtown San Diego. After all, he's the comic trivia king. If they win, they score tickets to Comic Fest!

A trillion things could go wrong. It's an epic day that means facing all his fears at once.

Can Stanley handle it?

Um.... Probably?



## Stanley Will Probably Be Fine

by Sally J. Pla @ 2018

Artwork by Steve Wolfhard

ISBN-13: 978-0062445797

Publisher: HarperCollins

Hardcover: 288 pages

Ages: 8-12 years

Grades: 3-7

 HarperCollins Publishers

# COMMON CORE ALIGNMENT

Although readers of many ages will enjoy Stanley, this guide has been aligned to the Common Core for Grades 3-7:

**Grade 3:** RL.3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.10; W.3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.10; SL.3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6

**Grade 4:** RL.4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7, 4.10; W.4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10; SL.4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.6

**Grade 5:** RL.5.1, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 5.7, 5.9, 5.10; W.5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, 5.10; SL. 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6

**Grade 6:** RL.6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6.10; W.6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8, 6.9, 6.10; SL.6.1, 6.2, 6.5, 6.6

**Grade 7:** RL.7.1, 7.3, 7.4, 7.6, 7.10; W.7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 7.8, 7.9, 7.10; SL.7.1, 7.5, 7.6

# BEFORE READING

1. Look carefully at the front cover and title of the book:

- What do you see? What jumps out at you?
- How do the images, shapes, and colors make you feel?
- What type of a book do you think this will be based on what you see?

2. Read the inside flap of the book jacket:

- What are you wondering about?
- What predictions do you have for the story? Why?
- What questions do you have for the author?



3. This book focuses on an adventure involving comic book trivia. What do you know about comics? What characters are you familiar with? What movies involving superheroes have you seen? What was your favorite? Why?

4. Complete the anticipation guide. Share your thoughts with a partner before reading the novel.

5. Practice using vocabulary words from the story using the "Vocab Preview" sheet. See additional activities for other options or further review.

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

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

## ANTICIPATION GUIDE

**DIRECTIONS:** Read each of the following statements listed below. Respond in the LEFT column whether you agree (A) or disagree (D) with each statement.

<b>Before Reading Agree (A) or Disagree (D)?</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>After Reading Agree (A) or Disagree (D)?</b>
	1. Siblings should be each other's best friends.	
	2. When your feelings are hurt by a friend, you should ignore the person until the situation is solved.	
	3. Having a parent who works far away is always difficult for a family.	
	4. Friends should never compete against one another.	
	5. All kids have the same hopes and dreams when it comes to school.	
	6. It is okay for a friend to call you names.	
	7. Every students should be required to attend each assembly at school.	
	8. Comic books are more popular with boys than they are with girls.	
	9. There is only one type of family.	
	10. You should never do things that scare you.	
	11. Doing the same thing every day can be harmful.	
	12. A parent is the only one who should make a decision in a household.	

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

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

## VOCAB PREVIEW

DIRECTIONS: Read each sentence from Stanley Will Probably Be Fine. Write what you think the **bolded** word means based on the context clues.

1. **Smudged (Page 3)**: “My glasses are **smudged** with chocolate, but I can’t risk taking them off to polish them.”

I think this word *probably* means \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

2. **Flails (Page 35)**: “The whole top of the tree is bending and swaying now. One purple-sneaked foot **flails** off a branch then scrambles back on.”

I think this word *probably* means \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.



3. **Clutching (Page 71)**: “Gramps is **clutching** his coffee mug and muttering about the stock market, and Mom’s scrolling through her phone screen.”

I think this word *probably* means \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

4. **Wafting (Page 76)**: “I don’t emerge from my room until almost dinnertime, when I can’t ignore the fact that unusual smells are **wafting** under my door.”

I think this word *probably* means \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

5. **Conspicuous (Page 124):** “You don’t want to tip off the other contestants, or accidentally reveal anything to them. This means certain ones among you may want to consider removing your somewhat **conspicuous** Yoda heads.”

I think this word *probably* means \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

6. **Lurking (Page 144):** “Some other shoppers --- or maybe fellow Questers --- are starting to stroll and linger...Two guys in Batman T-shirts are **lurking** by the front doors of Macy’s.”

I think this word *probably* means \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

7. **Grimy (Page 153):** “Don’t make contact with the dirty surfaces,’ I whisper. ‘Don’t touch that **grimy** metal pole with your hand then touch your phone. You’ll transfer germs!”

I think this word *probably* means \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.



8. **Silhouetted (Page 232):** “A man’s shape **silhouetted** against the bright sun.”

I think this word *probably* means \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

9. **Muffled (Page 246):** “So I get to spend Monday in bed, surrounded by glorious silence --- only broken by the **muffled** sounds of Gramps’s TV.”

I think this word *probably* means \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.



# ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY ACTIVITIES

To Be Used While Reading Stanley

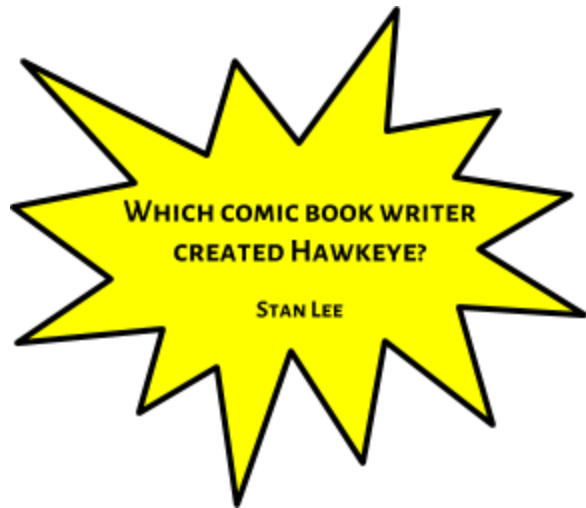
- **Vocabulary Journals:** Have students keep a running list of words they encounter while reading the novel. These should be words that interest them, so that they can use the terms in their own writing.
- **Word Wizards:** Selected students act as “word wizards” while reading a predetermined amount of chapters or pages. The wizards choose three words to learn, illustrate, and teach to the class.
- **Vocabulary Jenga:** Students are given a pile of cards with vocabulary words from the novel. They then divide into groups and place the cards face down. Each player takes a turn picking a card and defining or using the word in a sentence. If done so correctly, that person has a chance to pull a piece from the Jenga tower...without causing it to fall!
- **Vocabulary Charades:** Students divide into two teams and are given words from the book to act out. Classmates take turns guessing each correct word. The team with the most points at the end wins!
- **Basketball Shots:** Students divide into teams. Each person is given a vocabulary word to define or use in a sentence. If she answers correctly, she has a chance to make a basketball shot into the trashcan from a predetermined area in the classroom. Those who make it in earn five points for their team. The most amount of points at the end of the game wins!
- **Whatchamacallit:** Students use the eraser end of their pencil to “draw” a picture of something from the book. They then write vocabulary words (and their definitions or sentences, etc.) on the eraser dust. After they have finished writing, they wipe the dust away to see a fully formed picture! Color can be added using crayons, colored pencils, or markers.



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## Chapters 1-10:

- What is the name of Stanley's dog? Why do you think it has this name?
- How would you describe Stanley? What is Stanley's relationship like with other members of his family?
- Compare and contrast Stanley with his brother, Calvin.
- What does it mean when Stanley has "Red Alerts"? What are some red alerts in your life?
- What advice would you give Stanley about overcoming his fears?
- Joon's favorite comic superhero is the Green Lama. Name a superhero, book, or movie character that you like the best and explain what it is about that character that is fascinating to you.
- What is your impression of Mrs. Ngozo? What happens in the text to make you feel that way?
- What is the self-calming technique that Mrs. Ngozo teaches Stanley? How do you think it could help someone like him?
- Based on what you read in these chapters, why do you think the author chose to name Stanley's principal as she did? What, if any, significance does her last name have in connection to her personality and actions? Explain using evidence from the text to support your answer.
- What is the code phrase that Principal Coffin uses during the intruder drill? Do you think it is a good signal to use in the event of a drill or emergency? Why or why not?



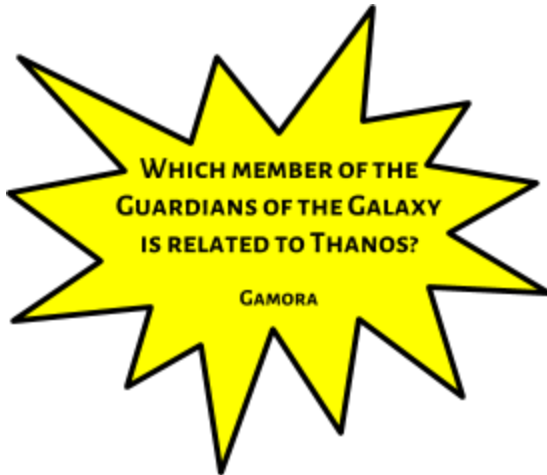
## Chapters 11-21:

- How is Stanley feeling in the beginning of Chapter 11? How does this change by the end of the chapter? What caused this change?
- Read the following excerpt from Page 72:

*I sit on the edge of a lounge chair under a tree and grab a Silver Surfer at random from my pack. It's the one about the Ultimate Nullifier --- an*

*artifact the Human Torch brought back from Galactus's world-ship, Taa II. The Ultimate Nullifier doesn't just destroy, it un-exists things.*

What is the significance of this scene at this point in the plot? How does it relate to what has been happening in Stanley's life both at school and with his friends? Explain.



- Liberty and Dr. Silverberg are invited to Stanley's house for dinner in Chapter 13. Compare and contrast Liberty's feelings about eating dinner with Stanley and his family from the beginning of the chapter until the end.

- Why do you think there is an awkward pause during dinner? Why does Dr. Silverberg's face "flush red" at the end of Chapter 13?

- What type of character is Dylan? Would you enjoy being friends with him if

he went to your school? Explain using evidence from the text.

- The Sketchpad of Mystery seems to be changing every time Stanley visits his "Ready Room" at school. Who do you think is responsible? Why?
- Do you think it was right for Joon to tell Stanley he no longer wanted to be partners with him during Trivia Quest? Did Stanley's reaction surprise you or was it what you expected? How would you respond? Why?
- What does Stanley mean when he says, "When the waves of outrage finally stop crashing, a super-heavy sadness drifts down and settles over me"?
- On Page 91, it says:

*After dinner I hang out in my room and try not to think about Joon. Every time I do, a little whirlwind of anger and sadness spins around in my chest. The feelings are so mixed up, I don't know the mad from the sad. All I know is that I've got to prove that I'm cool. And capable. And don't need anyone.*



How would you react if you were in Stanley's situation at this point in the story? What advice would you give to him? Why?

- In Chapter 18, Stanley’s father tells his family that he will be away much longer than originally anticipated. Do you think this is a good idea? Why or why not? What are the pros and cons of his doing so? Explain.
- Re-read Pages 105-107. What is your impression of Liberty at this point in text? What traits describe her as a person? Why? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

## Chapters 22-32:

- What are “cosplayers” as described in Chapter 22? What are some examples from the Trivia Quest? If you could be a cosplayer, who would you imitate? Why?
- How does Stanley react to the beginning of Trivia Quest (Chapter 23)? How does this change by the end of the chapter? What causes this change?



- What is the identity of the woman in the wheelchair? Why does she tell Stanley and Liberty to be “inconspicuous”?
- What is Stanley’s motive for not telling the Questers from Chapter 28 about their clues? Was it fair of them to ask Stanley and Liberty about their clues? Why or why not? How would you have handled the situation? Explain.

- Why does Liberty text her mother the message, “Not dead yet,” over and over?
- What do we learn about Stanley’s father in Chapter 30? How does this relate to the type of work he is doing currently? Explain.
- Stanley has many fears that affect what he does each and every day. What is the fear Liberty displays in Chapter 30? How does Stanley help her overcome it?
- On Page 164, Liberty raises an interesting thought:



*I don't get why they call the male superheroes men, like Superman, Batman, Aquaman. But the female superheroes are all called girls. Batgirl, Supergirl, Aquagirl...A lot of stuff in history hasn't been fair to girls.*

Do you agree or disagree with Liberty? What is one solution to this problem? How could various people learn about this issue and a possible solution? What other events in history have not been fair to girls? Why do you think that this is such a problem? Explain.

- Why does Stanley say he “really, really” hates Electric Blue Oblivion at the end of Chapter 32? How does this relate to what happened to his phone? Explain.

### Chapters 33-43:

- Why do you think Joon and Dylan do not believe Stanley when he explains his progress in Trivia Quest? How would you have reacted?
- As time goes on, Trivia Quest becomes more than a comic book trivia competition. Why has it become so important to Stanley? How is it a metaphor for his life?
- In Chapter 37, Stanley and Liberty find themselves in the “Spineless Marvels” exhibit at the zoo. What are some of the creatures they see there? What do you think an entomologist is and how do you know? Use context clues to support your answer.
- What is Liberty’s shocking news in Chapter 38? Do you agree with her mother’s reaction? Why or why not?
- Joon makes a surprising gesture once he realizes that Stanley is in trouble. What does he do? What emotions do you think Joon is feeling at this point in the story? Do you think he is acting in a genuine way or does he have an ulterior motive? Why?

### Chapters 44-54:

- What does Dr. Silverberg reveal about Liberty in Chapter 44? How does Stanley react?
- On Page 223, Dr. Silverberg says:

*People deal with stress and worry and love and concern in very different ways, Stanley...But keeping Liberty holed away in her room isn't going to keep her safe. I'm not sure that's the right answer for Liberty.*

How does this relate to Stanley and his life? What lessons can we as readers take away from this?

- Why do you think Liberty chose to keep her secret from Stanley? Would you have done so if you were in her position? Why or why not?
- Would you have invited Joon to Comic Fest if you were Stanley?
- Why is Stanley surprised to see Doc at Comic Fest? How does he plan to help him?
- Is it fair of Cal to be angry at his mother? What does he blame her for?
- What lesson does Stanley teach Principal Coffin and how does he teach her this? What is her reaction?

### Chapters 55-60:

- Why is it ironic that the EMT tells Stanley's Mom that he is brave?
- Do you think that Stanley, Dylan, and Joon will form a stronger friendship?
- How has Stanley changed from the beginning of the story to the end? What do you think caused these changes?

# AFTER READING



1. Return to the anticipation guide completed before reading the novel. Re-read the statements and mark off your opinions using the right column. Discuss how your views changed or stayed the same with a partner.

2. Using at least three of the questions you wrote when previewing the book, write a letter to the author about the story's plot and characters.

3. Participate in a whole class discussion about the ending of the novel. Was it satisfying? Were there any loose ends not tied up? What character would you like to learn more about?

4. Name some ways Liberty's and Stanley's personalities differ. Why do you think they become such good friends?



5. Do you think there should be a sequel to Stanley Will Probably Be Fine? In a small group, discuss possible storylines and the direction the characters will take.

6. Create a list of questions regarding the novel to discuss with the class.

7. Have you ever felt very anxious or worried about something the way that Stanley sometimes feels? What were those feelings like for you? Describe your experience.

8. Visit the following link and watch the video about Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD): <https://youtu.be/D1G5ssZIVUw>. What do you think life would be like living with SPD? What would be challenging? What are some ways that you could help someone who struggles with SPD?

# EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Create a comic strip, illustrating some part of the story. Use pictures and text. Get creative! Share your final product with a younger student or sibling.



- Design a book trailer for Stanley Will Probably Be Fine. Use iMovie or Animoto. Include the title and author of the book as well as a combination of text and pictures to “hook” the viewers of the trailer so that they will want to read the book. These can be shared in class or posted on a school webpage.

- Choose a scene to dramatize. Work with classmates to present your final product for the class (Ex. Re-read Pages 123-125 and write a skit based on the events in this scene).
- Write a book review for the novel. Include the major characters, setting, and conflict, but do not give away the ending. Explain your opinion of the book, who you would recommend it to, and why. Consider sharing the review online after getting permission.

- Liberty is known for wearing t-shirts with unusual sayings or designs. Using construction paper, create a new shirt for her to wear. Underneath, explain why Liberty would enjoy this shirt. Take this a step further by using craft supplies to design a shirt that YOU can wear!



- Design a travel brochure for San Diego using information gathered from the library and Internet. Be sure to include key locations from the novel such as: San Diego Public



Library, Westfield Horton Plaza (and Jessop's Street Clock), Maritime Museum of San Diego, Waterfront Park, San Diego Zoo, Balboa Park, and San Diego Convention Center.



- Select a chapter from the book to rewrite from a different character's point of view. Think about how it would change, what information would be given or left out, etc. Share your writing with a peer.
- Design a newspaper ad for Trivia Quest using information from the book.
- Create "Character Wanted" posters featuring Stanley, Liberty, John Lockdown, The Master, etc. Include a reason as to why they are "wanted" based on events in the book.
- Do some comic book research! Use resources from the library and Internet to learn more about characters such as The Clock (1936), Dick Tracy (1941), Archie, Spider-Man, etc. Share your findings in a written report, video, poster, or presentation.
- Create a skit depicting a local news reporter interviewing Stanley and Liberty while they are working on the clues for Trivia Quest. Present this as a group.
- Write a diary entry from the point of view of Liberty as she struggles with whether or not to tell Stanley about her health issues.
- Work with a group to design a board game based on Stanley's journey around San Diego during Trivia Quest. Include key landmarks and scenes from the novel.



- Pretend Stanley created postcards for each landmark he visited during Trivia Quest. Design the front of the card and include a short message from his point of view.
- Write a new ending for the novel paying close attention to how it would fit in with the existing storyline.
- Pretend Stanley and Liberty were going on vacation. What items would each character pack in a suitcase? Why? Share your ideas on a video response site such as Flipgrid.com or LetsRecap.com.
- If Stanley and the other characters in the novel were given awards, what would they be? Think BIG! Create an award for a character and explain why he or she earned it.
- A scrapbook is a great way to honor memories in one's life. Use craft supplies to design one for Stanley commemorating the events of the novel. Draw or use magazine clippings to add to each page. Include a few captions or notes from Stanley about each event.
- Create a timeline of the major plot events in the novel using pieces of paper taped together. This can be done after reading or even while reading and added to over time. Use color and text.
- Work in a small group to record a podcast about the book. Be sure to include the title, author, opinions, etc. Post a link on a teacher or librarian webpage.
- Read another book about a character with a similar personality to Stanley. Compare and contrast how they go through their daily lives and deal with challenges.



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- STAR Institute for Sensory Processing Disorder
  - <https://www.spdstar.org>
- Child Mind Institute - Sensory Processing FAQs
  - <https://childmind.org/article/sensory-processing-faq/>
- Child Mind Institute - Resources for Educators
  - <https://childmind.org/audience/for-educators/>
- Understood - For Learning & Attention Issues
  - <https://www.understood.org/en>

*SPD and anxiety are two commonly-found components in autism. For further information on autism, refer to these resources:*

- Autistic Self Advocacy Network
  - <https://www.understood.org/en>
- The National Autistic Society
  - <http://www.autism.org.uk>
- Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA)
  - <https://adaa.org>