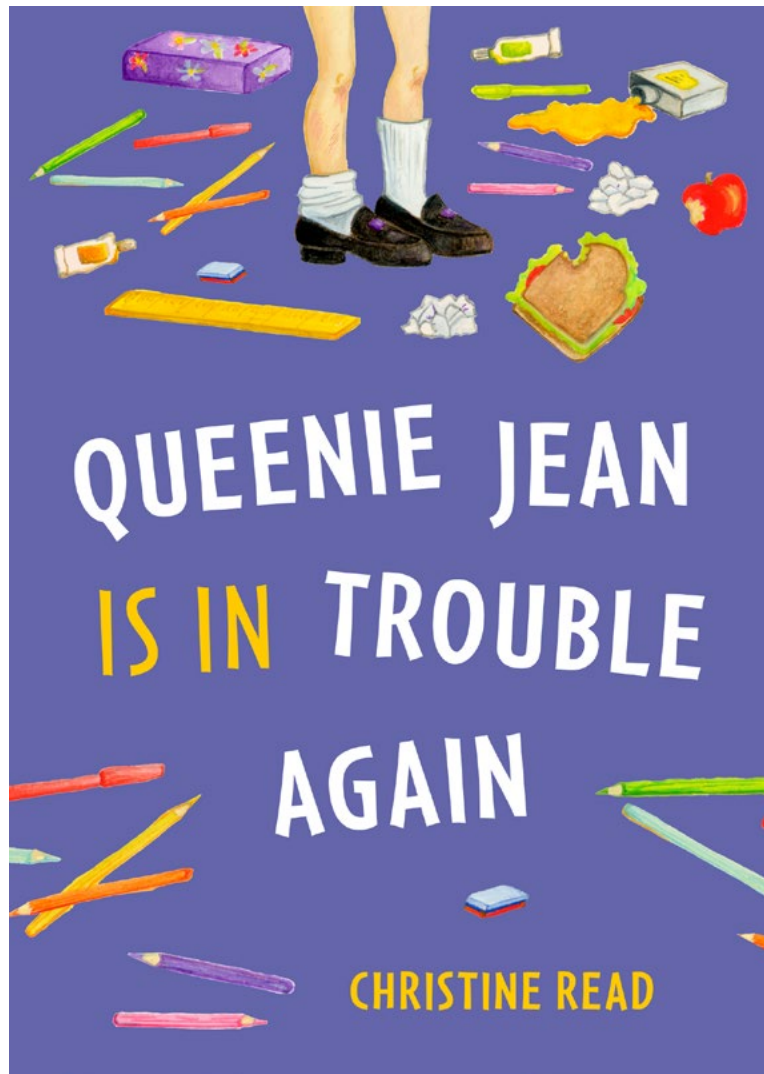


Teacher's Guide

Queenie Jean Is in Trouble Again by Christine Read



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Written and developed by Christine Read.
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ABOUT THE BOOK

The chaotic, confusing, funny, and inspiring story of ten-year-old Queenie and her mission to fit in and make friends at her new school while figuring out how to manage her ADHD.

When ten-year-old Queenie and her family move from small-town Ontario to a glitzy suburb of Vancouver, she is desperate to fit in and make a best friend for the first time in her life. With her creativity and bubbly personality, Queenie arrives at Western Canada Preparatory School ready to win over her classmates and conquer the world. But even before the first bell rings, she finds herself in trouble.

From always being late to talking out of turn to never being able to focus, Queenie stands out like a sore thumb, especially among the cool girls she wants to impress. Hardest of all, she has a secret. She's been diagnosed with ADHD, and she hates how different it makes her feel.

After struggling to navigate her new world, dreaming up ill-advised schemes to make the other kids like her, she must face her greatest fear of all: making a speech in front of the whole school that will show everyone her true self.



Photo credit: Carrie Marshall Photography

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hailing from small-town Ontario, **CHRIS READ** has worked as a piano teacher, camp counsellor, waitress, math tutor, chartered accountant, finance director, treasurer, and executive director. She is married and a mother to two grown children, one of whom has ADHD. After many years of working for and with not-for-profits and charities, Chris decided to return to her roots and wrote a humorous book for kids about a girl with ADHD.

Chris lives with her family and their Labrador retrievers in a rural seaside community outside Vancouver and travels far and wide, as often as she can. She is a member of CANSCAIP and SCWBI.

NOTE: Some of the content in this guide is also printed at the end of the book as supplementary material. References are provided as footnotes.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

AGE / GRADE SUITABILITY

- Ages 8–12
- Grades 3–6
- Themes of anxiety, friendship, family, self-discovery, big feelings, mental health, stigma, bullying, forgiveness, resilience.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

- Use a variety of comprehension strategies before, during, and after reading, listening, or viewing to deepen understanding of text.
- Exchange ideas and viewpoints to build shared understanding and extend thinking.
- Recognize the importance of story in personal, family, and community identity.

- Recognize the structure and elements of story.
- Apply a variety of thinking skills to gain meaning from texts.
- Construct meaningful personal connections between self, text, and world.

SOCIAL STUDIES

- Acknowledge different perspectives on people, places, issues, or events in their lives (perspective).
- Recognize the causes and consequences of events, decisions, or developments.
- Identify fair and unfair aspects of events, decisions, or actions in their lives and consider appropriate courses of action (ethical judgment).

WHAT IS ADHD?

ADHD, short for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, is a neurodevelopmental or brain-based condition. It is one of the most common mental health conditions diagnosed in children and impacts a child's thinking, feelings, and behaviour. About 5 percent of kids all over the world have it, regardless of ethnicity or nationality.

Studies show there is a strong hereditary component to ADHD. Children are almost as likely to develop ADHD from their parents as their height, eye colour, or hair. ADHD is not a behavioural problem caused by poor parenting, too much sugar, or playing too many video games. The brains of kids with ADHD really are wired differently. Due to the lag in their brain development, kids with ADHD often seem younger than their peers by up to three years.

Most people with ADHD have always felt different—they know they think differently and react differently than everyone else. They're often told they're lazy or unmotivated and that they just have to try harder. If only it were that easy! Experts estimate that kids with ADHD receive two to three times the amount of negative feedback on a daily basis as neurotypical kids.

WHAT DOES ADHD LOOK LIKE?

Sometimes ADHD is described as an orchestra without a conductor or a company without a CEO. ADHD looks different in each person, but generally includes:

- inattention, e.g., difficulty staying on task, daydreaming, disorganization, losing things;
- impulsiveness, e.g., blurting out answers, butting into conversations, making impulsive decisions; and
- hyperactivity, e.g., difficulty remaining seated, fidgeting and squirming, talking nonstop.

Researchers now define ADHD as a disorder of executive function rather than of attention. Executive function allows us to regulate our emotions and to manage, coordinate, and plan our lives to achieve goals. ADHD can be harder to diagnose in girls than in boys because girls usually present as inattentive rather than physically hyperactive—they daydream, procrastinate, and are easily distracted.

People with ADHD are often creative, energetic, caring, and fun to be around. Almost 70 percent of kids with ADHD also have a learning issue, like dyslexia, or a mental health challenge, like anxiety or depression.

WHAT CAN HELP?

Although ADHD is a serious medical condition, it's greatly improved with a variety of tools, big and small, such as:

- extra help with organization through the use of to-do lists, checklists, day planners, etc.;
- immediate positive reinforcement (rewards) and/or consequences (loss of favourite activity);
- location in the classroom which limits distractions;
- breaks to move around, fidget toys/tools;
- extra time for assignments and tests;
- mindfulness, yoga, and breathing exercises;
- proper nutrition and sleep;
- therapy and coaching; and
- medication.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Queenie is starting at a new school in a new place. Have you ever started at a new school or joined a new group (like Scouts or a sports club) where you didn't know anyone? How did that make you feel?
2. Do you have a sibling or family member that you find super annoying? If so, how do you handle that?
3. Do you find it difficult to make friends? If so, what helps? What qualities do you like about your friends (they are good at sharing, kind and caring, energetic, like the same things as you, etc.)?
4. Do you or someone you know have a pet? How does the pet make you feel?
5. Do you find it easy or hard to follow the rules at school? What happens if you forget the rules or break them? What helps you remember the rules?
6. In what ways are you similar or dissimilar to Queenie? Do you know anyone with ADHD? How are they like Queenie? How are they not like Queenie?
7. Queenie has to wear a uniform at her new school. Have you ever had to wear a uniform (at school or as part of a club or organization)? Did you like wearing a uniform? Why or why not?
8. Are you right-handed or left-handed? How different would your life be if the opposite hand was dominant? **TRY IT OUT:** Write or draw something with both your dominant hand (the hand you usually use) and your non-dominant hand (the opposite hand). What do you observe?

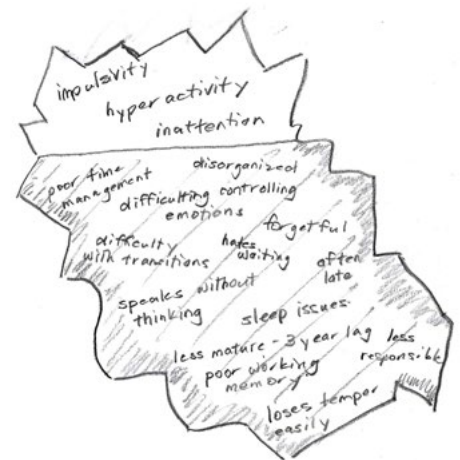


9. Queenie's superpowers are her creativity and big heart. What's your superpower? Think about your friends and family—what are their superpowers?
10. Have you ever gone on a play date that went terribly, horribly wrong? If so, what did you do about it?
11. Queenie's new school has a mandatory speech competition. Have you ever prepared a speech and delivered it in public? How did that make you feel? If not, what topic would you choose and why? What steps would you take to prepare yourself?
12. Queenie loses a race when Madison cheats. Have you ever had someone cheat you out of winning a competition? What happened? How did that make you feel? How do you think Queenie feels? Why do you think Madison cheated?
13. Have you ever forgotten your homework? How do you try and prevent that from happening?
14. Queenie has big feelings, can get upset a lot, and has meltdowns—like after her haircut, when her brother uses her favourite towel, and when Madison cheats during the race. Have you ever lost control and had an outburst? How did you get past it? How did you stop that from happening again?
15. Have you ever hurt a friend like Queenie hurts Kenny, even if it wasn't intentional? How did you make things better? What do you think of how Queenie handles this situation?
16. What is something you've accomplished that you were scared to do at first? How did you feel before compared to after? Think about a challenge you've overcome—at school, at home, during extracurricular activities—and try to identify what helped you tackle that challenge (e.g., practice, watching someone else do it, learning a new skill).
17. Identify the beginning, middle, and end of the story. What event was the climax? What rising action took place before this point?

ACTIVITY: ADHD

Draw an iceberg: the tip seen above the water is always smaller than the mass below the water.

Write as many obvious ADHD characteristics you can think of on the tip of the iceberg. Then see how many ADHD behaviours you can add that are hidden beneath the surface. You should have many more issues and conditions below the surface (at least 5 times more).



ADHD Iceberg illustration inspired by "Explaining ADHD to Teachers" infographic, created by Chris A. Zeigler Dendy, MS, and Alex Ziegler and shared via ADDitude magazine (<https://www.additudemag.com/download/explaining-adhd-to-teachers/>).

ACTIVITY: SAVING MONEY

Think about something you would like to buy—pens or markers, a computer game, Lego, a journal, a backpack—and find out what the cost of that item is. How would you save up for it? Make a list of ways you could earn money to buy this item. How could a bank account that earns interest help?

RESOURCES

TIPS FOR TEACHERS¹

- Establish expectations for behaviour that everyone in the class can agree on, such as “we respect each other.”
- Decide with your class what happens when those expectations are not met. What are the consequences?
- Hold children accountable.
- Set up rewards for positive behaviour and achievements, e.g., stickers, checkmarks, or points.
- Look for successes big and small, give verbal praise.
- Externalize time with large stopwatches or timers so everyone can see. This can take away the worry about how long it is until recess, lunch, gym, reading buddies, etc.
- Post daily schedules.
- Make transition plans as transitions, like changing classrooms or returning to learning mode after a break, are typically tough for kids with ADHD.²
- Help ADHDers self-organize with colour coding, labels, and frequent clean-outs.
- Be the model for calm behaviour. Breathe, don't overreact.
- Create language for feelings. Consider the Emotion Wheel.³
- Be prepared. Have back-up activities you can use at any time to keep ADHDers engaged.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Here are some helpful links to websites with more information and resources on ADHD:

- Centre for ADHD Awareness Canada — caddac.ca
- Canadian ADHD Resource Alliance — caddra.ca
- Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder — chadd.org
- *ADDitude magazine* — additudemag.com
- Understood — understood.org

1 Kathleen Phelan, “Teaching with a Tactful Touch: Tremendous Tips for Students With ADHD” (Power Point presentation, CADDAC 2023 ADHD Conference, Calgary, Alberta, October 29, 2023).

2 Britney Winn Lee, Jacob Souva (illustr.), “The Big Feelings Parent Guide,” <https://ms.beamingbooks.com/downloads/9781506454504%20Parent%20Guide.pdf>.

3 BC Teachers Federation, “The Emotion Wheel,” May 3, 2017, <https://www.bctf.ca/classroom-resources/details/the-emotion-wheel>.