



The Two-Wheeled Detective

Sample lesson plan

Tami is a free spirit. No full-time job is going to tie her down, and curiosity is central to Tami's life. Late one night, Tami and her bicycle Ruby suddenly hit a huge pothole on a darkened road. They fly into the hedges. The damage? A lump on the head, a bloody knee, and a broken wheel. Tami is skeptical when a young man appears from the dark to help her. But she has no way of knowing this is just the beginning of a mystery in the big house rising behind her. Her mishap drops her in the middle of a wealthy, unhappy, ambitious family...and a murder!

You will encounter some [vocabulary](#) that you can discuss ahead of time:

allergic	employment	lifestyle
ambitious	entitled	literature
autopsy	episode	mansion
bootlegger	evidence	miraculous
capable	exclusive	mortician
cater	frustrated	motivated
clarinet	funeral	observation
complimented	generous	paranoid
coroner	grateful	penicillin
criticized	impersonal	personality
curiosity	inherited	pesticides
depressed	insulin	poisonous
diabetes	investigate	portrait
disappointed	irritable	prohibition
elegance	juicy tidbits	recognize
embarrassed	laboratory	recreational

Read out loud!

The teacher can model by reading the first paragraph of a chapter. Then, students can read one at a time, in pairs, or in groups, a chapter at a time. This can take several classes or sessions. Assign characters to specific students for acting fun!

Here are a few videos to spark conversation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=atFDTLAQQt8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FnU3PyJqnA>

The main character in this novel is a “professional temp.” The top link is a 1-minute video talk highlighting the pros and cons of temp work, helping you decide if a temp job is good for you. It pairs well with the 2nd link to a 1.5-minute video covering 5 things to know about temp agencies.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bjn28JUajrl>

One character in The Two-Wheeled Detective dreams of doing gardening and landscape work. This 2-minute video covers the basics of the job and qualifications. Note that the subtitles use British English spelling.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PNOImo84oHI>

The main character’s nickname is Ms. Nosy. This 2-minute video shows what it’s really like to be a private detective. Being nosy is a virtue in this business!

Open-ended discussion questions:

1. Tami is learning to play a musical instrument. Have you learned something new recently? Is it easy or difficult to learn as an adult?
2. Why do you think this book is called The Two-Wheeled Detective?
3. Three of the characters in the book ride bicycles to work. Do you think it’s a good idea to ride a bike to work? Explain your answer.
4. Tami is the main character in this book. What kind of person is she? What are 3 words to describe Tami?
5. Characters talk about many different jobs in this book. List 5 jobs you remember. Select the job that is most interesting to you and give 3 reasons why you would like it.

Multiple Choice questions:

1. Julia has two allergies. Which of these is she allergic to?

- a) Cats
- b) Peanuts
- c) Strawberries
- d) Bees

2. How many characters live in Julia Jackson's house and on the property?

- a) 2
- c) 4
- d) 5
- e) 7

3. What instrument is Tami learning to play?

- a) Piano
- b) Guitar
- c) Violin
- d) Clarinet

4. What is special about Tami's clarinet?

- a) It's very old
- b) It's ruby red
- c) It was a gift
- d) It's self-tuning

5. In which of these businesses has Tami not worked?

- a) Computer company
- b) Restaurant
- c) Music Store
- d) Magazine

6. After her last day of work, how much time passed before Tami returned to the Jackson house?

- a) 1 year
- b) 2 weeks

- c) 1 month
- d) 6 months

Writing Extension Activity:

Character Diary Project

1. Pick one character from The Two-Wheeled Detective.
2. Think about what this character feels and thinks.
3. Write 5 short diary entries as if you are this character. Write about things that happen in the book and what the character might think about them.
4. You can also write about things that could happen to the character outside of the story.
5. Share your diary entries with the class.

Example:

Dear Diary,

Today was an interesting day! I took my red bike for a ride. It felt good to pedal through the streets, feeling the wind. I saw Mrs. Johnson, who waved and smiled. She always makes me feel welcome in the neighborhood.

In the afternoon, I spent some time at the library. I found a book about mysteries that made me think about my own detective adventures. Maybe one day I'll solve a real mystery!

Till tomorrow,
Tami

Exploring the Mystery Genre

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hh8fVCJ6X9c>

This video (1:30) covers the typical elements of a mystery including characters, plot, and plot structure. The video tells us that mystery stories often follow a three-part path.

1. Describe the 3 parts listed in the video.
2. Does this story follow that path? Explain your answer.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gTU1hJyqV0>

This book is the first in a series. That means you can read more adventures with Tami! This video (2:16) covers the key elements that make a mystery series fun.

1. The video's speaker names 2 famous mystery series. What are they?
2. Can you name 2 more mystery series (movies, books, or podcasts)?
3. The speaker tells us people love mysteries because they teach us that "ordinary people can solve big problems." What do you think?

What to read next:

This book is part of a series! That means you can read more books about Tami's adventures. Her next adventure is [The Museum of Oddities](#).

Continuing reading other mysteries with us!

- [The Night Telephone](#) (one full reading level lower)
- [Forever and Ever](#) (about ½ reading level lower)
- [No Stopping Her](#) (about ½ reading level higher)