

# Close reading plan

Queen of the Falls by Chris Van Allsburg

Created by Jane E. Martellino, 2014 Connecticut Dream Team teacher

What makes this text complex				
<b>Text and Author</b>	Queen of the Falls by Chris Van Allsburg		<b>Where to Access Text</b>	Not available online
Text Description				
Annie Taylor, a short, plump and fussy sixty-two year old widow, runs a charm school, right by Niagara Falls. When her school begins to fail,, she resolves to find fame and fortune by being the first person to go over the thundering waters of Niagara Falls in a barrel. The sophisticated take-away for this book is the impact stereotyping makes on the main character's life in her pursuit of fame and fortune. The power of Chris Van Allsburg, as a master storyteller through his text and illustrations, add to the complexity of the text. The deep level critical thinking required for this text is appropriate for second semester fifth grade. Base on a true story.				
Quantitative				
<b>Lexile and Grade Level</b>	1060 and 5th grade		<b>Text Length</b>	Fiction picture book based on historical figure
Qualitative				
Meaning/Central Ideas		Text Structure/Organization		
Meaning and central ideas of the text (imagination, determination, problem-solving, risk-taking, bravery, pursuing one's goals) can be implied from the text. The topic of stereotyping and the impact it makes on an individual's path is subtle and must be inferred over the entirety of the text and would be considered exceedingly complex.		The text structure includes a time shift which is very complex. The text must take the reader back in time in order to understand how the central character becomes the central figure in the key event. Illustrations are very complex and extend the meaning of the text.		
Prior Knowledge Demands		Language Features		
The text alludes to cultural elements because of the time period (early 1900's). Very complex issues are implied such as careers/roles in society for women, support for low-income and poverty stricken individuals, and the attraction to Niagara Falls especially by daredevils (circus-type performers). There are no references to other texts. However, the text is very complex in regards to life experiences with references to charm school, formal dance classes for the city's finest, boarding house, poorhouse, and celebrities showcased through state fairs which are all integral to understanding the text.		The language is fairly complex in that it contains some ironic and /or figurative language. The vocabulary ranges from the familiar to the unfamiliar and archaic which is very complex for the reader. The text includes many complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words.		
Vocabulary				
Tier Two Words (General academic vocabulary)		Tier Three Words (Domain-specific words)		
<i>"Words that are far more likely to appear in written texts than in speech. [They] often represent subtle or precise ways to say relatively simple things—saunter instead of walk, for example." (CCSS ELA Appendix A)</i>		<i>"[Tier Three words]...are specific to a domain or field of study (lava, carburetor, legislature, circumference, aorta) and key to understanding a new concept within a text." (CCSS ELA Appendix A)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• churning</li> <li>• securely</li> <li>• fateful</li> <li>• tragedy</li> <li>• souvenir</li> <li>• anniversary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• content</li> <li>• feat</li> <li>• peddle</li> <li>• fame</li> <li>• fortune</li> <li>• gaze</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cascading</li> <li>• daredevil</li> <li>• discombobulation</li> <li>• onlookers, spectators</li> <li>• pamphlet</li> <li>• postcard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• death-defying</li> <li>• currents</li> <li>• frigid</li> <li>• hoax</li> <li>• plunge</li> <li>• hypnotis</li> </ul>	
Potential Reader/Task Challenges				
Identifying the theme of how damaging stereotyping is to all people may be challenging since it must be inferred throughout the key events in the text.				

Text-dependent questions		
Question	Standard alignment	Page of this document
TDQ #1: How does Chris Van Allsburg initially depict Annie through words and images? Use quotes from the text to support your answer.	RL.5.1	#4
TDQ #2: How does Chris Van Allsburg use text and images to compare and contrast Frank Russell and Billy Banks?	RL.5.1 RL.5.3 RL.5.7	#10
TDQ #3: Why was Annie given the title “Queen of the Falls” and what was the result?	RL.5.1 R.L.5.4	#17
TDQ #4: Chris Van Allsburg states, “ When Annie was still in Bay City, imagining her path to fame and fortune, she believed going over Niagara Falls in a barrel would be the hard part, but she was wrong.” What lesson did Van Allsburg teach through Annie’s challenges?	RL.5.2 RL 5.5	#20
Target Standards		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RL.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</li> <li>• RL.5.2 <i>Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.</i></li> <li>• RL.5.3 <b>Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).</b></li> <li>• RL.5.4 <i>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.</i></li> <li>• RL.5.5 <i>Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.</i></li> <li>• RL 5.7 <b>Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).</b></li> </ul>		
Note: Bold print is new learning and italic print is same learning from previous year(s).		

## Question 1

<b>Question #1</b>	How does Chris Van Allsburg initially depict Annie through words and images? Use quotes from the text to support your answer.	
<b>Standard(s) covered:</b>	<b>RL.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</b> <b>Note:</b> Bold print is new learning and italic print is same learning from previous year(s).	
	<b>Example response that meets standard</b>	<b>Look-fors</b>
	<p><i>Chris Van Allsburg introduces Annie as an aging teacher and independent woman. She was the “owner and only teacher of a charm school” on main street, Bay City, Michigan. In the past, she lived an independent and adventurous life. She travelled around America offering classes in dance and manners. However, families were no longer interested in sending their children to a “charm school”. “As she grew older, her class sizes grew smaller” and she eventually had no students. She made the decision to close her school. At this point in the story, she is frightened that she may end up in the “poorhouse”. Chris Van Allsburg wrote that she had “not saved very much money during her years of traveling and teaching”. Chris Van Allsburg also describes Annie as a “short, plump, and a fussy sixty-two year old widow.” In his illustrations, Annie looks like an old fashioned grandmother. Her hair is white and pinned in a bun and she wears glasses. All the illustrations show her wearing fancy shirts buttoned up to her neck and skirts down to her toes. Chris Van Allsburg’s initially depicts Annie as an out-of-work, aging, charm school teacher who was very independent and courageous in the past, but is now very worried about her future.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurately identifies physical features of the main character, which depict Annie as short, plump, white hair, proper attire, etc.</li> <li>• Accurately quotes background on her present lifestyle from the text- “Poorhouse”, “closed her school”</li> <li>• Makes an inference about Annie (main character) that she is elderly, grandmother-like, proper, worried... based upon details from text and images.</li> </ul>
<b>If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:</b>		
<b>Objective</b>	In this lesson, you will learn how to draw inferences about a character by selecting quotes and images and considering what they show about the character.	
<b>Prior knowledge to review</b>	Inferencing (making connections between details across the text). Referring to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. (RL 4.1)	
<b>Steps to achieve objective</b>	<b>Think aloud for direct instruction</b>	

<p>1) Re-read the text, looking for places where the author and illustrator describe or show the main character. Jot down these details.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The question says I should look for text and images that show how Chris Van Allsburg initially depicts Annie. (Underline “text, images, initially depicts Annie” as you read the question aloud).</li> <li>• Hmm...”initially” means early on, like introducing the character and “depicts” is a fancy way of saying “shows”.</li> <li>• So, I am going to re-read the text, looking for words, phrases, and images that show what Annie’s character is like early in the text.</li> <li>• (Model rereading and stop at the first mention of Annie.) Okay! Here the author introduces a character by stating... a “charm school that teaches manners and dance to the children of Bay City’s finest families.” As I read on, I see... here the author says, “The school’s owner and only teacher was a short, plump, and fussy sixty-two-year-old widow named Annie Edson Taylor.”</li> <li>• I need to jot down the details I just located. So, I will create a t-chart to record my evidence. I will label the left side of my t-chart: “Details from text (T) or image (I) that describe Annie”. I will write these phrases (owner and only teacher of a charm school, short and plump, fussy, sixty-two-year-old, widow) on separate lines on the left column of the t-chart and label each phrase (T) for text since those words were explicitly stated in the text.</li> <li>• I will continue rereading the early pages of the text, stopping to record any details that depict Annie.</li> <li>• I notice that Chris Van Allsburg included an illustration of a woman on the same page where this text is found.</li> <li>• As I look closely at the image, I notice the woman’s hair is white and pulled into a bun, she’s wearing wire-framed glasses, she’s dressed in a high frilly collared, long sleeve white shirt and long black skirt. The woman is gesturing to a little boy who is sitting in a classroom as if she is inviting him to dance with her. This is Annie! I will record those specific details on the left side of my t-chart and will label the evidence with (I) for image since those details are explicitly shown in the image.</li> <li>• I will continue looking closely at any images of Annie found early in the story and will record details on the t-chart.</li> </ul>
<p>2) Ask, “What do these words, phrases, and images reveal about the character?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Now that I have collected details on how Annie is initially depicted through words and images, I ask myself, “what do these details reveal about Annie?”</li> <li>• So the first detail I recorded on my t-chart is: “owner and only teacher of the charm school.” Hmm.. I recall the text said a charm school teaches manners and dance. That makes me think, Annie is a “proper lady”, she sounds “formal” because she wants kids to know how to dance the waltz and to have good manners when eating. I want to record my thinking, so I will label the right side of my t-chart, “Inference-what this detail tells me” and record “ formal, proper lady.” I am going to draw a little arrow from the detail to the inference so I know they are connected.</li> <li>• I am also thinking about the word “owner”. I read in the text that the year was 1901 (go back and verify as part of the think aloud) Knowing this time period, makes me think that Annie was talented, but also independent and courageous to have her own business as a woman during a time period where most women stayed home and raised families. So, I will record “talented, independent, courageous” under the inference column, and I will draw a little arrow from the detail (owner) to the inference(independent, courageous) so I know they are connected.</li> <li>• The next detail I recorded is “short and plump”, I am inferring that even though she teaches dance, she is not that active since “plump” means fat. So, on the column on the righthand side of my t-chart, next to “plump”, I will record “inactive, overweight”. And, I will draw an arrow connecting the detail to my inference.</li> <li>• I will continue to reread each detail recorded in the left side of the t-chart, think about what it is showing me about Annie, and I will record my inference on the right hand side of the t-chart.</li> </ul>

<p>3) Jot down a description of the character, using direct quotes to support your answer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Now I am ready to follow the final step which tells me to construct a response, using direct quotes to support my answer to the question, “How does Chris Van Allsburg initially depict Annie through words and images?”</li> <li>• I will begin with an introductory sentence, which restates the question and gives an overview response. Chris Van Allsburg introduces Annie as...</li> <li>• Let's see.. in my t-chart, my first details reveal that Annie owned her own school and I inferred from that detail that she was talented, proper, independent woman. So, I will begin with... <i>Annie Edson Taylor is first introduced by Chris Van Allsburg as a talented, proper, independent woman, who was the “owner and only teacher of a charm school on main street, Bay City, Michigan.”</i> I placed quotation marks around the portion of my sentence that I recorded directly from the text. Notice how I described Annie by using a trait word, which I inferred in the last step, but I backed it up with a quote.</li> <li>• Since I want to group my details around the same topic, “Annie's professional life”, I am looking at my other details, and thinking...”Which of these details relate to her job?”</li> <li>• Let's see... in my t-chart I recorded “as she grew older, her class sizes grew smaller”. This is the part of the text that revealed that Annie had to close her school for lack of interest from the community. In my thinking, I recorded on my t-chart that her skills were outdated.</li> <li>• So, I will write in my response.. <i>Unfortunately, her skills of teaching dance and manners were not popular. Families no longer were interested in sending their children to a “charm school”. She made the decision to close her school. “As she grew older, her class sizes grew smaller” and she eventually had no students.</i></li> <li>• Repeat with the remainder of evidence in the t-chart grouping details related to a similar topic together.</li> <li>• A common mistake students make is to end their paragraph with their last piece of evidence without really wrapping up their ideas. A summary statement is really helpful because it shows that the writer has completed what he/she wants to say and it leaves the reader with the paragraph's main idea.</li> <li>• I will conclude my explanation with a summary statement. Hmm.. my summary statement will state my conclusion of how Chris Van Allsburg initially depicted Annie through text and images. Here's one: <i>Chris Van Allsburg's initially depicts Annie as an out-of-work, aging, charm school teacher who while very independent and courageous in the past, is now very worried about her future.</i></li> </ul>
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### Extension and practice

- If students are struggling with making inferences based upon the text or the images, then prompt the students with questions that can foster inferences such as: What did \_\_\_\_\_ make you think about? What do you think the author meant by saying...? What details do you notice in the image? Have you seen those details before and what did they show you?
- If students are struggling to quote accurately from the text, start by defining that a quote is the exact words an author or person uses. Photocopy a page of the modeled text and have students circle the text that answers an explicit question. Create a chart of stem phrases (such as “the author says...” or “for example...”) students can refer to as they practice responding orally to questions about the text.
- If students have mastered the objective and need to be challenged, have them read another book on Annie Edson Taylor (Ex: Barreling Over Niagara Falls written by Nancy Kelly Allen and illustrated by Lisa Fields). Have the students use the same TDQ #1 and then discuss the differences in how she is initially depicted by the different authors and illustrators.

### What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to other historical fiction texts to teach quoting text accurately (RL 5.1)

See more examples of how to teach (name skill and standard)

Objective: In this lesson, you will learn how to draw inferences about a character by selecting quotes and images and considering what they show about the character.

1. Re-read the text, looking for places where the author and illustrator describe or show the main character. Jot down these details.
2. Ask, “What do these words, phrases, and images reveal about the character?”
3. Jot down a description of the character, using direct quotes to support your answer.

[Draw inferences from text](#) RL.6.1

[Make an inference and verify with direct quotes](#) RL.5.1

[Describe a character using evidence from the text](#) RL.4.3

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER KEY FOR TDQ#1  
 ANNIE EDSON TAYLOR

DETAILS FROM TEXT (T) OR IMAGE (I)	INFERENCE- WHAT THIS DETAILS TELLS ME
owner and only teacher of charm school (T)	smart, independent, talented, formal, proper lady
short and plump (T)	inactive, overweight
fussy, 62 year old lady (T)	particular about things, aging
for years travelled around America offering classes in dance and fine manners (T)	adventurous, probably single and had no family, liked things proper
now lives in Bay City, Michigan (T)	maybe where she will retire
at one time had 100 students, as she grew older, her classes grew smaller (T) (T)	uh oh, going out of business
only one student left, closes school (T)	out-of-work
home is a small room in a boarding house (T)	doesn't have much money or very many things
had not saved much money in traveling years (T)	did not plan for her future, liked to enjoy life as it happened
frightened to end up in poorhouse (T)	scared and has no one to care for her
white hair in a bun (I)	old fashioned
wearing wire-rimmed glasses (I)	can't see well



DETAILS FROM TEXT (T) OR IMAGE (I)	INFERENCE- WHAT THIS DETAILS TELLS ME
dressed in high neck, frilly, long sleeve white blouse and long black skirt (I)	old fashioned and very proper looking

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER KEY FOR TDQ#1  
ANNIE EDSON TAYLOR

DETAILS FROM TEXT (T) OR IMAGE (I)	INFERENCE- WHAT THIS DETAILS TELLS ME

DETAILS FROM TEXT (T) OR IMAGE (I)	INFERENCE- WHAT THIS DETAILS TELLS ME

Question 2

<b>Question #2</b>	How does Chris Van Allsburg use text and images to compare and contrast Frank Russell and Billy Banks?
<b>Standard(s) covered:</b>	<p>RL.5.3 <b>Compare and contrast two or more</b> <i>characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).</i></p> <p>RL.5.1 <b>Quote accurately from</b> <i>a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</i></p> <p>RL.5.7 <b>Analyze how</b> <i>visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).</i></p> <p><b>Note:</b> Bold print is new learning and italic print is same learning from previous year(s).</p>
<b>Example response that meets standard</b>	<b>Look-fors</b>

<p><i>Chris Van Allsburg uses text and images to reveal that Frank Russell and Billy Banks are dishonest and untrustworthy men who just want to work for Annie so they can get rich.</i></p> <p><i>Chris Van Allsburg introduces Frank Russell in an image. Frank Russell looks sneaky and maybe untrustworthy. He is shown with an eyebrow raised and his hand to his chin like he is thinking. His hair and mustache look greasy. He has a sneaky grin on his face. Chris Van Allsburg states, “He would parade Annie across America. Both he and Annie would get rich.” This shows he wants to make lots of money by promoting Annie. Since he is not convinced that people will believe an old woman could ride the falls, he lies to the newspaper reporters. In the text, Chris Van Allsburg states, “He stretched the truth a good deal by describing Annie as a forty-two year old adventuress.” Then, when he realizes people are not buying tickets to see Annie, he takes the barrel and tries to sell it. The text shows he is sneaky and dishonest.</i></p> <p><i>Chris Van Allsburg does not show an image of Billy Banks. In the text, Chris Van Allsburg states, Annie was able to get the barrel back, and found herself a new manager named Billy Banks.” Just like Frank Russell, Banks takes Annie to fairs around the country. However, just like Frank Russell, when he sees that crowds are not coming to the fairs to see Annie, he steals the barrel too. The text states, “ He and a pretty young woman went ahead to the next fair on Annie’s schedule, and the woman pretended to be the Queen of the Falls.”</i></p> <p><i>Frank Russell and Billy Banks only want to get rich. They both steal from Annie. Their actions prove they are dishonest and untrustworthy men.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Accurately describes Russell’s and Bank’s actions of promoting Annie and then when they are not making money, both steal the barrel.</li> <li>•Accurately describes that only Frank Russell is depicted in an illustration and uses words to describe him as sneaky.</li> <li>•Makes an inference that the two characters are dishonest, not trustworthy, liars, or thieves</li> <li>•Concludes that both men had similar motivations (fame and fortune- the author uses those two words frequently, so the students should include them) and character traits (dishonest or untrustworthy)</li> </ul>
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If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:

<b>Objective</b>	In this lesson you will learn how to compare and contrast two characters by looking for similarities and differences in their actions as depicted in text and images.
<b>Prior knowledge to review</b>	<p>Inferencing (making connections between details across the text). Referring to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. (RL 4.1)</p> <p>Describing in depth a character in a story by drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions). (RL4.3)</p> <p>Making connections between the text of a story and a visual presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text. (RL4.7)</p>
<b>Steps to achieve objective</b>	<b>Think aloud for direct instruction</b>

<p>1. Reread the text, looking for places where the author and illustrator describe or show each character's actions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The question says I should look for text and images that reveal how Chris Van Allsburg shows the similarities and differences between Frank Russell and Billy Banks. (As you read the question aloud, underline the words: text and images, Frank Russell, Billy Bank).</li> <li>• A common mistake readers often make is to look at the text only and ignore the images. I will use them both to see how they connect, so I can determine what Chris Van Allsburg is revealing about the characters.</li> <li>• Looking at the text, I notice Van Allsburg has a full page image of a new character. Hmmm. There is no caption. As I study the image closely, I notice a man dressed in a suit, bow tie, and wearing a straw hat. He is shown with an eyebrow raised, his hand to his chin in a thinking position, slicked down hair and mustache, and he has a sneaky grin on his face. I need to read the text that follows the image to find out who this is. Oh... the text says, "Annie needed a manager to go ahead of her to the falls and to stir up interest with the newspaper reporters. She hired Frank Russell, a man who worked at fairs and carnivals." So, the character in the image is Frank!</li> <li>• I need to jot down the details I observe in the illustration and the text. To help me differentiate where the details come from, I will use columns on a t-chart to differentiate the source of the details. Since I will be comparing two characters, I will put the name Frank Russell as the heading for the left column and Billy Banks on the right. Under each character's name, I will create two sub columns. The left one will be labeled details, the right column will be labeled "what it shows/tells me" because I am going to have to think about these details.</li> <li>• Hmm, let's see. I will write bulleted items such as: hired as manager, worked at fairs/carnivals, sneaky expression, greasy hair and mustache, dressed in a suit under details for Frank.</li> <li>• I will continue rereading the text, stopping to record any details that show Frank Russell's actions.</li> <li>• I will repeat the same steps looking for details about Billy Banks.</li> </ul>
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<p>2. Ask yourself, “What do these details tell me about what kind of person this character is?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Now that I have collected details on both Frank Russell and Billy Banks, I ask myself, “what do these details tell me about what kind of person this character is?”</li> <li>• Looking at my t-chart, the I recorded: “hired as manager to stir up interest about Annie so she can get rich and famous.” Hmm... He needs to “sell” her as an attraction. He needs to plan how to get crowds of people to pay money to see Annie. This tells me he must be creative, eager, and a salesman because he needs to make Annie a celebrity so she can get rich and famous. So, I will write “creative, eager, salesman” in the column next to the detail. Remember, in the last step, we labeled this column already.</li> <li>• The next details I recorded... “sneaky expression, hand to chin like thinking, eyebrow raised.” This makes me think he is trying to decide about something but thinking and planning in a conniving (sneaky, plotting) kind of way. So, I will record those thoughts in the second column.</li> <li>• I will continue to reread each detail recorded on my t-chart about Frank Russell, think about what it is showing/telling me about the character, and I will record my inference.</li> <li>• Then, I will repeat this process with the details I recorded on Billy Banks.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Ask yourself, “How are the two characters similar and different?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Now that I have thought about what the details from the text and images reveal about Frank Russell’s and Billy Banks’ actions, I need to ask myself, “How are these characters similar and different?”</li> <li>• Hmm... Looking at the graphic organizer, I notice...I recorded that both men were hired as managers to promote Annie. So, they had similar careers. They were both “Annie’s manager”.</li> <li>• I notice that I wrote down that Frank looks sneaky. Since I did not have an image of Billy, then I can consider this a difference. Only Frank Russell is depicted as sneaky when he is first introduced to the reader. It’s like Chris Van Allsburg is warning us about him.</li> <li>• Looking back on the organizer, I notice... both men would get rich if they could sell lots of tickets by taking Annie to many shows throughout the USA. Hmm. both men were motivated by the same thing--they both wanted to get rich. That’s another similarity.</li> <li>• Continue comparing and contrasting information recorded on the graphic organizer.</li> </ul>

<p>4. Write a paragraph that shows how the two characters are the same and different based upon their actions. I think both characters are _____ (character trait) because _____ (evidence of their actions).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• So, I will begin with... <i>Chris Van Allsburg uses text and images to reveal that Frank Russell and Billy Banks are dishonest and untrustworthy men who just want to work for Annie so they can get rich.</i></li> <li>• Since I need to support my conclusion that both of these men were dishonest and motivated by money, I need to show evidence I obtained from text and images. If I am comparing and contrasting the two characters, I think I will write a short paragraph on each one.</li> <li>• Let's see... on my post-its, I recorded how Frank Russell is first shown in an illustration- <i>dressed like a salesman, eyebrow raised, thinking, and grinning.</i> In my thinking, I recorded that he appeared sneaky. So, I will write in my response: <i>Chris Van Allsburg introduces Frank Russell in an image. Frank Russell looks sneaky and maybe untrustworthy. He is shown with an eyebrow raised and his hand to his chin like he is thinking. His hair and mustache look greasy. He has a sneaky grin on his face.</i></li> <li>• Next, I will include evidence from the text that supports my thinking. Let's see.. my post it notes recorded Frank's actions that proved he was dishonest. So, I will write in my response... <i>The text reveal he is sneaky and dishonest. For example, he wants to make lots of money by promoting Annie. Since he is not convinced that people would believe an old woman could ride the falls, he lies to the newspaper reporters. He tells them she is 42 years old. Then, when he realizes people are not buying tickets to see Annie, he takes the the barrel and tries to sell it.</i> Notice how I introduced the evidence with a clause "For example". This creates a logical path of thinking for my reader to follow.</li> <li>• Repeat with the evidence on Billy Banks. I will conclude my explanation with a summary statement. Hmm.. my summary statement will re-state my conclusion of how Chis Van Allsburg revealed the similarities in the character and motivation of Frank Russell and Billy Banks through text and images. Here's one: <i>Frank Russell and Billy Banks only want to get rich. They both steal from Annie. Their actions prove they are dishonest and untrustworthy men.</i></li> </ul>
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### Extension and practice

- If students are struggling with capturing details about a character from an illustration, then prompt the students by asking explicit questions about the illustration beginning with who is in the illustration, what is he/she doing, what kind of expression does the character have on their face, what does that expression indicate, and so on. Make a chart for the classroom so that students can refer to it for independent practice
- If students are struggling with comparing and contrasting character's based upon their actions, then have them record single details on post-it notes as they read the text. Then, have students work in partnerships. Each student will hold the post-it notes for only once character. As one student reads aloud a detail on a post-it note, the other student will review their post-its to determine if it is a similar or different action. Provide students with a large venn diagram so they can move the post-it notes around as they determine similarities and differences.
- For students who have mastered comparing and contrasting the actions of the character, challenge them to choose either Billy Banks or Frank Russell and compare and contrast his character traits to Annie's.

### What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to (name type of text and skill/standard

See more examples of how to teach (name skill and standard)

Objective: In this lesson you will learn how to compare and contrast two characters by looking for similarities and differences in their actions as depicted in text and images.

1. Reread the text, looking for places where the author and illustrator describe or show each character's actions.
2. Ask yourself, "What do these details tell me about what kind of person this character is?"
3. Ask yourself, "How are the two characters similar and different?"
4. Write a paragraph that shows how the two characters are the same and different based upon their actions. I think both characters are \_\_\_\_\_ (character trait) because \_\_\_\_\_ (evidence of their actions).

[Make Connections to Text and Illustrations.](#) RL.4.7

[Describe a Character Using Evidence from What the Character says, Does, and Thinks.](#) RL.4.3

[Describe a Characters Personality Using Details from the Text](#) RL.4.3

[Develop Ideas about Characters by Tracking their thoughts and actions](#)

[Compare and Contrast Characters](#) CCSS RL.5.3

**GRAPHIC ORGANIZER FOR COMPARING AND CONTRASTING**  
**FRANK RUSSELL** **BILLY BANKS**

DETAILS	WHAT IT SHOWS/TELLS ME	DETAILS	WHAT IT SHOWS/TELLS ME
hired as manager to stir up interest about Annie so she can get rich and famous	creative, eager, salesman	hired by Annie to help her get rich and famous	creative, salesman
sneaky expression, hand to chin like thinking, eyebrow raised	thinking and planning in a conniving way	in the summer, he took Annie to county fairs	promoting Annie, trying to get her rich and famous
greasy hair and mustache	slick	he put her between juggling acts and hypnotist	does not see her as elegant or royal like her title, Queen of the Falls.
dressed in a suit	presentable, businesslike	when he saw people weren't interested, he stole the barrel	thief and betrayer
believes Annie is determined	confident in this plan	took a pretty young woman to the next fair on Annie's schedule and she pretended to be Annie	liar
was certain he could make lots o money and get rich	motivated by money	Annie stopped him from pretending the other woman was her but he ran off with the barrel and it was never seen again	thief and betrayer
would parade Annie across America	ambitious		
stretched the truth about Annie's age	lies		
travelled with Annie through the fall and winter of 1901 visiting lecture halls and theaters	ambitious and determined to make money		
knew he was not getting rich off Annie, ran off with the barrel and planned to see it	will do anything to make money including lying, stealing, and betraying Annie		



**GRAPHIC ORGANIZER FOR COMPARING AND CONTRASTING**

**FRANK RUSSELL**

**BILLY BANKS**

DETAILS	WHAT IT SHOWS/TELLS ME	DETAILS	WHAT IT SHOWS/TELLS ME

DETAILS	WHAT IT SHOWS/TELLS ME	DETAILS	WHAT IT SHOWS/TELLS ME

Question 3

<b>Question #3</b>	TDQ #3: Why was Annie given the title “Queen of the Falls” and what was the result?		
<b>Standard(s) covered:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RL.5.4 <i>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.</i></li> <li>• RL.5.1 <b>Quote accurately from</b> a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Bold print is new learning and italic print is same learning from previous year(s).</p>		
<b>Example response that meets standard</b>		<b>Look-fors</b>	
<p><i>Annie wants to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel so she can become rich and famous and avoid being poor. Her manager, Frank Russell names her “Queen of the Falls” after her successful ride. Annie is the first person to ride over the falls so she should be treated like a queen because she did conquer the falls. At first, it seems like her title is working. By advertising Annie’s appearances at fairs using the dramatic title “Queen of the Falls,” a lot of people come to buy tickets to meet her. However, once people meet Annie, they find it hard to believe “this grandma” is the brave and fearless “Queen of the Falls”. Excited crowds always lose interest when they discover that a little old lady is the “Queen of the Falls.” This title actually prevents Annie from achieving “fame and fortune” because it misleads people into thinking they would be meeting a young, adventurous daredevil. They just cannot believe the “Queen of the Falls” is an old woman and they become quickly disinterested.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reader mentions of the literal meaning of the word Queen (ruler, conquerer, royalty)</li> <li>• Reader supplies reason for the title- given by manager in order to promote Annie as a celebrity</li> <li>• Reader states the result of the title-specifically that it failed because it indicated a more adventurous looking woman than the aging Annie.</li> </ul>	
<p>If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:</p>			
<b>Objective</b>	In this lesson you will learn how to determine the meaning of a phrase by thinking about the literal meaning of the phrase and how it connects to events and impacts the text.		

<b>Prior knowledge to review</b>	<p>Determining the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text. (RL.4.4)</p> <p>Inferencing (making connections between details across the text). (RL4.1)</p> <p>Referring to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. (RL 4.1)</p>
<b>Steps to achieve objective</b>	<b>Think aloud for direct instruction</b>
<p>1. Reread the section of the text where the phrase is used. Jot down details about the events surrounding the phrase.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The question asks, “Why was Annie given the title, “Queen of the Falls “and what was the result.” Hmmm. This title must be pretty significant because it is also the title of the book.</li> <li>• So, I first need to skim the text and notice when Annie was first referred to as the “Queen of the Falls”. When readers skim text, their eyes move quickly over the sentences instead of pausing on each word because they are looking for a specific word or phrase.</li> <li>• As I skim the text, I notice the first reference to “Queen of the Falls” happens after Annie completes the daredevil stunt.</li> <li>• Let me read on to determine why this title.</li> <li>• I see.. her manager, Frank Russell began to look for ways to make money for both of them. The author states, “He took Annie to a large fair in a nearby Buffalo. Hundreds of people line up to buy tickets so they could see the amazing Queen of the Falls”</li> <li>• So, I just confirmed who gave Annie the title and why. Annie’s manager (Frank Russell) created this “stage name” to promote Annie so they could both get rich and famous by selling lots of tickets to meet Annie. He is trying to make a celebrity out of Annie and created a name to create interest.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Ask, “What is the literal meaning of this phrase and how does it connect to the events in the text?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Now that I have evidence from the text on why Annie was given the title, “Queen of the Falls,” I need to think about why those particular words.</li> <li>• Hmm... the word “queen” means a ruler. Someone who has authority or control over a country. Also, people respect and honor a queen. I have seen that people curtsy/bow before the queen and people will wait hours in line just to catch a glimpse of the queen.</li> <li>• So, when I think about the title, “Queen of the Falls”, it makes sense because Annie was the first person to successful go over the falls in a barrel. So in a way she “ruled” or “conquered” the falls! People will respect and honor her and will want to meet this Queen because she is the first person to ever do this daredevil, death defying stunt! They will probably wait in longs lines just to catch a glimpse of Annie.</li> </ul>

<p>3. Ask, “How does this phrase impact the text?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Now that I know why this specific title was given to Annie, the question asks, “What was the result of the title?”</li> <li>• Hmm...I need to locate evidence that confirms whether or not the title attracted lots of people to the fairs like Frank Russell intended.</li> <li>• As I re-read, I notice the text states, “ The reaction to Annie was always the same. Excited crowds quickly lost interest when they discovered the fearless “Queen of the Falls” was a little old lady.” Hmm.. it seems like the title is not working at all.</li> <li>• As I continue reading and locating evidence to support my thinking that maybe this title did not work, I notice that Billy Banks also used this title and it had the same results. The text states, “ Mr. Banks took Annie to county fairs... the Queen of the Falls was not well received.”</li> <li>• So, since Frank Russell gave Annie the title, “Queen of the Falls” as a stage name to attract people to want to buy tickets to meet this fearsome adventuress, it initially seemed to be a fitting title since Annie did rule the falls. However, the title indicated someone of power and strength and when people met Annie they were in disbelief because she did not look like a strong and powerful. She looked like a little old lady. The title did not work. People quickly become disinterested. Annie and Frank did not get rich and famous as they had planned.</li> </ul>
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### Extension and practice

- If students are struggling to connect the literal meaning of a phrase to events in the story, have them create (symbols) nonlinguistic representations of the literal meaning of the phrase and then as partners, look for evidence in the text that demonstrates the phrase and add those details to their nonlinguistic representation.
- For students who have mastered connecting the literal meaning of a phrase to events in the story, have the students work in partnerships to select another significant event in the story and brainstorm literal phrases that would enhance the impact of the event. Or have the students create and defend a title that would have resulted in success for Annie on her path to fame and fortune.
- If students have difficulty distinguishing titles or nicknames in the text, create a chart of titles used for various staff in the school. Discuss what those titles mean and why they are used. Then, add any nicknames students are addressed by, and discuss what event(s) led to the creation of such nicknames and examine what message the nickname delivers. Consider any other literary characters the students are familiar with and re-visit the background on their nicknames or titles.

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to (name type of text and skill/standard)

See more examples of how to teach (name skill and standard)

Objective: In this lesson you will learn how to determine the meaning of a phrase by thinking about the literal meaning of the phrase and how it connects to events and impacts the text.

1. Reread the section of the text where the phrase is used. Jot down details about the events surrounding the phrase.
2. Ask, "What is the literal meaning of this phrase and how does it connect to the events in the text?"
3. Ask, "How does this phrase impact the text?"

[Determine the meaning of words as they are used in a text](#) CCSS RL.5.4

[Determine the meaning of a word](#) CCSS RL.5.4

[Explain how scenes fit together](#) CCSS RL. 5.5

Question 4

Question #4

TDQ #4: Chris Van Allsburg states, "When Annie was still in Bay City, imagining her path to fame and fortune, she believed going over Niagara Falls in a barrel would be the hard part, but she was wrong." What lesson does Van Allsburg teach through Annie's challenges?

Standard(s) covered:

- RL.5.2 *Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.*
  - RL.5.5 *Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.*
- Note:** Bold print is new learning and italic print is same learning from previous year(s).

Example response that meets standard

Look-fors

<p>Chris Van Allsburg teaches readers that stereotyping other people limits or hinders their ability to achieve their dreams and goals. When Annie was on her path to fame and fortune, she successfully responded to every obstacle she faced <i>prior</i> to going over the falls by using her skills. She showed how smart she was and how persuasive she could be by coming up with the daredevil idea, designing the barrel, and getting others to support her plan. Even though the challenges were tremendous, Annie was successful because she could rely on her abilities. However, as Chris Van Allsburg wrote, “When Annie was still in Bay City, imagining her path to fame and fortune, she believed going over Niagara Falls in a barrel would be the hard part, but she was wrong.” Annie faced her greatest obstacle after completing the stunt. She wasn’t successful even though she was responding to each obstacle because she just could not get people to believe she was the adventuress that was advertised as the “Queen of the Falls.” The image people had created in their minds of this adventurous, daredevil woman, simply did not match the real Annie. Other people’s attitudes and beliefs impacted Annie’s ability to achieve her goal of fame and fortune. They stereotyped her and it prevented her from achieving the fame and fortune she wanted. This was an important lesson learned from this text. The greatest challenge Annie faced was being stereotyped as a boring old woman and yet she was just the opposite. Not only did Annie not reach her goal but people also missed out on getting to know Annie and learning from her because they stereotyped her.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reader identifies obstacles Annie faces related to her daredevil attempt (figuring out an idea to make money, designing a barrel, finding a barrel maker, hiring a manager, surviving the falls).</li> <li>• Reader explains how Annie was able to overcome obstacles related to her attempt to go over the falls.</li> <li>• Reader explains how Annie responds to the challenge of spectators and fans not believing she was the Queen of the Falls.</li> <li>• Reader identifies a lesson learned from Annie’s challenges (an example could be.. stereotyping people limits their ability to achieve goals --Annie could not achieve fame and fortune because she was stereotyped. Stereotyping prevented people from being inspired by an older woman who was a dare devil).</li> </ul>
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If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:

<b>Objective</b>	In this lesson, you will learn how to determine the theme of a story by identifying the main obstacles the character faced and determining how the character responded to the obstacles.
<b>Prior knowledge to review</b>	Determining a theme of a story from details in the text; and summarizing the text. RL.4.2
<b>Steps to achieve objective</b>	<b>Think aloud for direct instruction</b>

<p>1) Review your notes, listing challenges the character faces throughout the story.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The question asks...Chris Van Allsburg states, “ When Annie was still in Bay City, imagining her path to fame and fortune, she believed going over Niagara Falls in a barrel would be the hard part, but she was wrong.” What lesson did Van Allsburg teach through Annie’s challenges?</li> <li>• So, I need to review my notes from previous lessons to determine the obstacles/challenges Annie faced on her path to fame and fortune.</li> <li>• I think making a chart of the obstacles and challenges Annie faced from the beginning of the story to the end will help me to understand Van Allsburg’s statement.</li> <li>• So, starting right at the beginning of the text, the first challenge I notice is Annie closing her school and not having a job. On my time line, I will record “Annie’s Charm School closes-out of work.”</li> <li>• As I continue re-reading, I notice she is afraid of going to the poorhouse and is trying to think of ideas to get rich and famous. Hmm...This is an obstacle. So, on my timeline, I will record “Needs idea to get rich”.</li> <li>• Continue reading and recording obstacles/challenges on a chart.</li> </ul>
<p>2) Ask, “How did the character respond to each of the obstacles and what was the result?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As I review my chart, I will pause at each obstacle and recall how Annie responded to it.</li> <li>• The first obstacle recorded is “needs to get rich.” Hmmm, I recall Annie thought of thought of a dare devil idea. I will add a column to my chart and label it “response.” In that column, on the same row as the first obstacle, I will record “Very worried about ending up in the poorhouse. Refused to take ordinary jobs.”</li> <li>• The next obstacle is that she needs an idea to get rich and famous because she does not want to take an ordinary job. Hmmm. How did Annie respond to that challenge? I recall that the text said she spent weeks thinking of ideas and eventually read in the newspaper about how large numbers of tourist visit Niagara Falls each year. If she could do what no one had ever done, go over Niagara Falls in a barrel, she would be rich and famous. So, I will record that action as her response to the obstacle.</li> <li>• The next obstacle was “she needs a strong barrel if she would survive the falls.” Hmmm. How did she respond? She designed a barrel.</li> <li>• Continue reviewing obstacles and asking how the character responded.</li> </ul>
<p>3) Looking across the character’s responses to obstacles, ask, “What was the result of this response?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As I review my chart, I want to think about what resulted from Annie’s response to each obstacle so I can determine if there is a pattern or trend. I will add a third column to my chart and label it “Result”. So as I review each obstacle and response I will determine the result and record it in my chart.</li> <li>• So, the first obstacle was that she closed her school and was now out of work. Her response was that she was very worried about ending up in the poorhouse but would not consider ordinary jobs because she did not want to clean the homes of her former students or wait on them in a store. Hmm... Pride prevents her from taking ordinary jobs but it provokes her to be really creative and adventurous. I will record those thoughts in the column labeled “results”.</li> <li>• The next obstacle I recorded was “Needs idea to get rich to avoid money problems.” I also recorded Annie’s response as “Spends time thinking of ideas and reading about how large numbers of tourist visit Niagara Falls each year. She realized, if she could do what no one had ever done, go over Niagara Falls in a barrel, she would be rich and famous. Hmm... this makes me think She is courageous, a daredevil, a risk-taker who could get rich if succeeds at the stunt which would allow her to overcome the obstacle.</li> <li>• Continue recording results for each obstacle/response.</li> </ul>

<p>4) Look for patterns in your notes, asking, “What lesson does the reader learn from the character’s experiences?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In reviewing the chart I created in the previous steps, I am noticing a trend or pattern that shows when Annie responded to every challenge <i>prior</i> to going over the falls with her intelligence, persuasive abilities and problem solving skills. She showed how smart she was and how persuasive she could be by coming up with the daredevil idea, designing the barrel, and getting others to support this plan. I can conclude that she was always successful when she could rely on her own abilities.</li> <li>• But, then I notice a trend or pattern with the challenges she faced <i>after</i> going over the barrel. The results were a bit different. It seems that she wasn’t successful even though she was responding to each obstacle appropriately. Hmm... she just could not get people to believe she was the adventuress that was advertised as the “Queen of the Falls.” Even though she had two different managers, she still could not get rich or famous because people did not believe an old lady could be the “Queen of the Falls.”</li> <li>• I am noticing these challenges all have to do with other people’s attitudes and beliefs about what they felt an old lady could or could not achieve. This is called stereotyping. Looking across my notes at the obstacles, responses, and results, I am wondering what lesson I can learn from Annie’s experiences.</li> <li>• Hmm. It seems that when Annie was faced with any obstacle including a death-defying one like going over the falls, she had the intelligence, courage, and problem solving skills to overcome it. However, when she faced other people’s narrow minded attitudes/beliefs about what an elderly woman could or could not do, she could not overcome their attitudes/beliefs . And it prevented her from achieving her goal of getting rich and famous. This makes me realize that I should be very careful about stereotyping people because I might prevent them from achieving their goals.</li> </ul>
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### Extension and practice

- If students have mastered identifying the central lesson learned, challenge them to determine a secondary message and support it with evidence from the text. Or have the students compare two texts with a similar lesson/theme and have them create a dialogue between the two characters in which they discuss the obstacles they endured and overcame and what they learned from the experience.
- For students who have mastered analyzing theme, have them re-visit the text used in an extension activity for TDQ#1 Barreling Over Niagara Falls by Nancy Kelly Allen. Have the students compare and contrast the themes that emerge from Annie’s story through the perspective of the two authors Nancy Kelly Allen versus Chris Van Allsburg).
- If students are not looking across the text but instead focusing on one section, remind students that theme or lesson learned must be the big idea that the author is trying to share for the entire text, not just a section. So, it’s important to look at all of the text to support the this big idea. Create a chart with each of the obstacles encountered by the main character and move through the text as a group, at each obstacle asking, “What does the author want me to learn about life by observing how the characters responds to each obstacle?” Jot down examples for each obstacle, then put them together in a paragraph. Another version of this activity could be to start by dividing the students into groups, each of which are assigned just one obstacle from the text. Once each group has identified obstacle, characters response, and the result, explain that in order to really support the big idea, we need to combine all of the ideas from across the text, like creating a complete puzzle. As a class, generate a paragraph that incorporates the contributions from each section of text. To help the students evaluate if their thinking is leading to a big idea, have students ask, “Is this a lesson learned by the character that can also impact my life?”



## What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to (name type of text and skill/standard)

See more examples of how to teach (name skill and standard)

Objective: In this lesson, you will learn how to determine the theme of a story by identifying the main obstacles the character faced and determining how the character responded to the obstacles.

- 1) Review your notes, listing challenges the character faces throughout the story.
- 2) Ask, "How did the character respond to each of the obstacles and what was the result?"
- 3) Looking across the character's responses to obstacles, ask, "What trend or pattern do you notice?"
- 4) Looking across the obstacles, responses, and results, ask, "What lesson does the reader learn from the character's experiences?"

[Determine the theme of a story](#) CCSS RL.4.2

[Identify Cause and Effect of events in a story by examining a character's actions](#) CCSS RL.4.1

[Determine how the author tell you the theme](#) CCSS RL.5.2

[Explain how scenes fit together](#) CCSS RL. 5.5

**QUEEN OF THE FALLS - TDQ #4**
**ANSWER KEY**

CHALLENGE	RESPONSE	RESULT
Annie's charm school closes- out of work	Very worried about ending up in the poorhouse. Refused to take ordinary jobs.	Pride prevents her from taking ordinary jobs but provokes her to be really creative and adventurous.
Needs idea to get rich to avoid money problems.	Spends time thinking of ideas and reading about how large numbers of tourist visit Niagara Falls each year. She realizes if she could do what no one had ever done, go over Niagara Falls in a barrel, she would be rich and famous.	She is courageous, a daredevil, a risk-taker who could get rich if succeeds at the stunt which would allow her to overcome the obstacle.
Needs a strong barrel	She draws pictures and designs one.	She is creative and a problem solver and overcomes the obstacle.
Needs a barrel maker who will create a barrel according to her designs.	She re-designs her barrel and then convinces the maker it is a safe one.	She is persuasive and overcomes the obstacle.
Needs a manager to promote her before the attempt and after	She at first lies about her age to attract a manager, but convinces Frank Russell she can succeed. She hires him.	Newspaper reporters flock in to interview her prior to the attempt and are amazed afterwards. She gets the publicity and spectator interest just as she hoped.
Needs to make money for the stunt	Travels all around the country with Frank Russell	She is determined, but nothing she does can convince people that she is worthy of the title, Queen of the Falls and deserves all the fame and fortune that should go along with it.
Frank Russell steals her barrel and quits	She gets the barrel back and hires a new manager, Billy Banks	She does not quite but somehow gets her barrel back and hires a new manager.
Needs to make money for the stunt	She travels all summer with Billy Banks to county fairs	Again, while she is determined, there is nothing she does can convince people that she is worthy of the title, Queen of the Falls and deserves all the fame and fortune that should go along with it.
Billy Banks steals her barrel	She has a new barrel made and sets up a souvenir stand in a park near the falls and sells postcards.	Even though she was persistent in trying to reach fame and fortune, people still did not believe she was the Queen of the Falls and she never got rich or famous because of being stereotyped.

**QUEEN OF THE FALLS - TDQ #4**

<b>CHALLENGE</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>RESULT</b>

