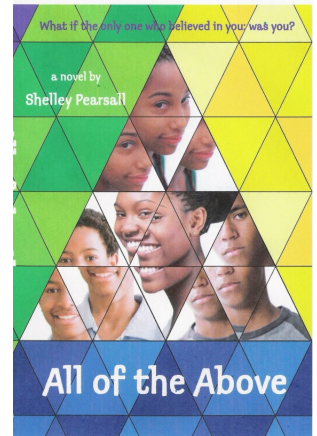


# ALL OF THE ABOVE Reading Guide

Inspired by a true story, ALL OF THE ABOVE is the delightful and suspenseful story of four urban teens in Cleveland, Ohio and their quest to build a spectacular 16,384-piece rainbow pyramid called a tetrahedron. Weaving together the voices of the teens and their community, award-winning author Shelley Pearsall has written an engaging novel about math, life, and the determination of the human spirit. A popular choice for school-wide reading. Recommended for 5th – 8th grades. **ALA Notable Book**



**“This tale sparkles as it unifies voices of pride, determination, and hope.”**  
– Publishers Weekly

Published by Little, Brown and Company Books for Young Readers, 2006  
ISBN: 978-0-316-11526-1

## Curriculum Connections

### LANGUAGE ARTS

Decorate tetrahedron shapes with character details, illustrations, vocabulary, quotes, and other favorite book details. Then tape the shapes together to create a cool 3-D “book report” tetrahedron.

### MATHEMATICS

Check out the following NCTM website for directions on making a tetrahedral kite:  
**<http://illuminations.nctm.org>**  
**Search: tetrahedrons**  
Lesson plans for other tetrahedron activities can be found on the same site.

### ART

Study the geometric creations of artist M.C. Escher. Create an Escher-inspired design or tessellation.

### RESEARCH

Read nonfiction books about the Vietnam War. Interview a local veteran or visit the Veterans History Project (Library of Congress website):  
**[www.loc.gov/vets/](http://www.loc.gov/vets/)**

### READER’S THEATER

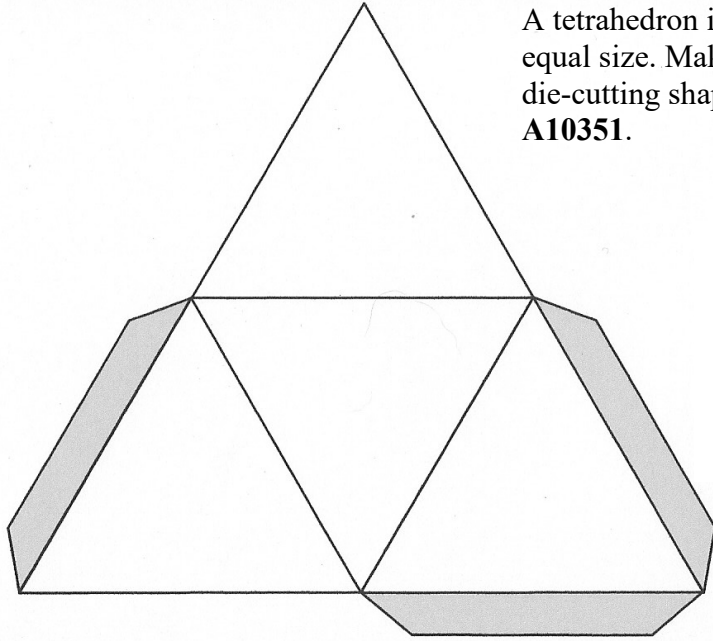
With seven different character voices, ALL OF THE ABOVE makes a great Reader’s Theater choice. Assign parts and simple props and read the story aloud. Add extra interest with a podcast interviewing the “characters.”

### NARRATIVE WRITING

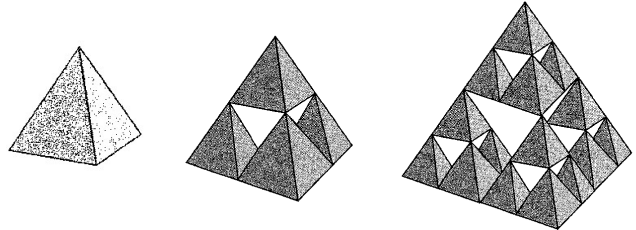
Have students add a short chapter to the novel written in their own voice -- as if they are now part of the project. Include dialogue with the other characters. Or create a new voice for the story (principal, new student, friend of Aunt Asia, etc.).

Check out photos of the real Cleveland tetrahedron project on Shelley Pearsall’s website at **[www.shelleypearsall.com](http://www.shelleypearsall.com)**

# How to Build a Tetrahedron



A tetrahedron is a type of pyramid made up of four triangles of equal size. Make copies of the pattern or purchase a tetrahedron die-cutting shape from [www.ellisoneducation.com](http://www.ellisoneducation.com), product # A10351.



Fold and tape your tetrahedrons together in groups of four to form larger tetrahedrons: 4, 16, 64, 256, 1024, 4096, 16384 and so on. **Hints for building bigger structures:** Use heavy paper and lots of tape. Yardsticks can be attached to support sides.

## Discussion Questions

1. How is each character important to the project? Describe the contribution each character makes.
2. What scene or character had the biggest impact on you? Why?
3. Reread Mr. Collins words on pages 3, 99, 199 and 235. In what ways do the characters mirror the qualities of a tetrahedron? (Who represents the glue? The sharp edges? The hidden spaces?)
4. Why do you think Shelley Pearsall titled her book ALL OF THE ABOVE? What does “all of the above” mean? How does the title connect to the story? See pages 17-18 for ideas.
5. What will happen to the characters next? Discuss your predictions at the end of the book.
6. If your school wanted to set a world record, what would you try to do? Brainstorm a list of ideas.



### Request a School Visit or Skype Chat with the Author

A former teacher, Shelley Pearsall, M.Ed., has worked with more than 150,000 students across the U.S. as a visiting author. Contact [shelleyvisits@yahoo.com](mailto:shelleyvisits@yahoo.com) if you are interested in one of her popular school visits or Skype chats about ALL OF THE ABOVE.