



Things Seen From Above

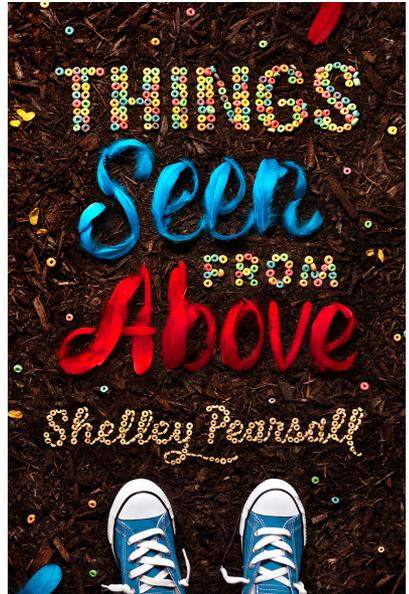
Reading Guide for Grades 4 – 6

Synopsis

Things Seen From Above is the heart-warming story of how a boy with a rare gift for seeing the world from a bird's eye view changes everyone's perspective.

The novel features **Joey Byrd**, a fourth grade outcast with a visual gift; **April**, a sixth grader who wants to escape from the social drama of the lunchroom; **Mr. Ulysses**, an observant and inventive janitor; and **Veena**, a new student from India. The story is told from alternating viewpoints through text and illustrations.

The setting is Marshallville, Michigan: a fictional town near Battle Creek, Michigan.



"An uplifting story of friendship, kindness, and new ways of seeing."

Kirkus Reviews

Questions for Discussion

- *Things Seen From Above* is a story about perspective and different points of view. Discuss: Who is looked up to? Who is looked down on? Who is an insider? Who is an outsider? Who sees the small details? Who sees the big picture?
- What is your own perspective? Talk about the character you related to the most and tell why.

- How did your impressions of Joey and April change as you read more of the story? Which characters surprised you the most?
- Do you agree or disagree with Joey’s art and abilities being made public? Explain why.
- How did you feel about Joey leaving Marshallville at the end of the book? Did it have to happen -- or not? Predict where he might be now.
- In the Author’s Note, the boy who inspired the story says, “Different kids like me have to use our creativity to escape trouble.” What do you think he means? How can we help kids like Joey?

GET CREATIVE!

Use outdoor chalk to create a large spiral to walk on & let go of worries.



Select a small object and sketch or photograph it from different angles including from above. More ideas here:

www.learn.ncartmuseum.org/lesson-plans/a-birds-eye-view/

Close your eyes and imagine you’re a bird. Picture how it would feel to have wings and where you would go. Write or draw what you imagined.

Be like Mr. Ulysses! Draw or build your own problem-solving invention.



Book Snacks

- Pepperoni Pizza
(Joey’s favorite food)
- Froot Loops cereal
- April & Noah’s
Homecoming Popcorn



Websites & Other Resources

Check out the websites of these amazing “birds-eye” artists:
www.stephenwiltshire.co.uk www.sandcircles.co.uk

Visit the author’s website: www.shelleypearsall.com