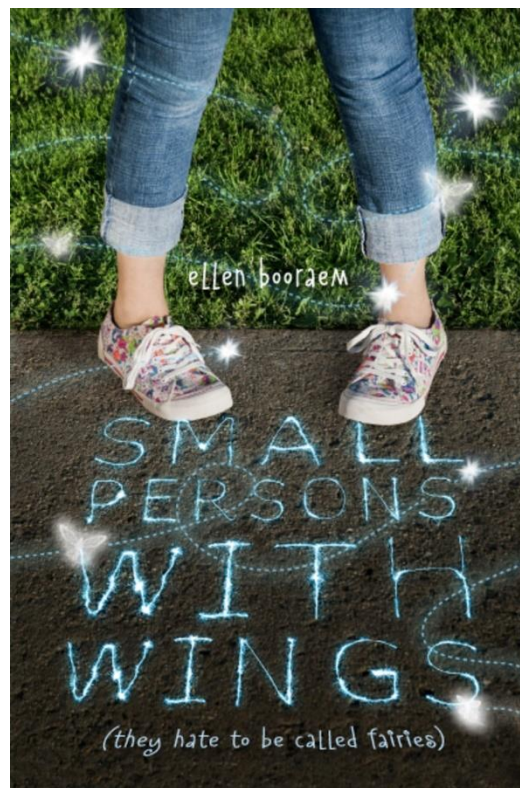


# Small Persons with Wings

Educators' Guide



# RELEVANT TOPICS

Addiction, weight issues, bullying, art history, Latin and French roots for English words.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. *SMALL PERSONS WITH WINGS* follows Mellie as she matures from a kindergartener to an eighth grader. Other than just growing up, how has her character changed by the end of the book?
2. Mellie's parents are very important to her. How does her relationship with them change over the course of the book?
3. What's your first impression of Durindana? Do your feelings about her change as you get to know her? How and why? What about some of the other Parvi: Fidius, for example, or Lady Noctua?
4. Fidius had some bad experiences before he met Mellie. How did they affect him?
5. How does the *Magica Artificia* affect the Parvi physically? How about mentally?
6. If Mellie drank the elixir, what would she see about herself? How about Timmo? What do you think Mellie's grandfather saw?
7. Mellie makes a big point of saying she and her parents are "round." What do her parents—especially her mother—seem to think about their weight and Mellie's?
8. Almost everybody in this book has a substance or an attitude they don't want to give up. You might almost say they were addicted, for better or worse. What are the Parvi addicted to? What about Mellie and her family? Timmo and his family?

# ACTIVITIES



• Build fairy houses like the one Durindana builds at the end of the book. (Building fairy houses is a [popular activity on Maine islands](#). The photo shows one I made while staying on Bear Island, off the coast of Deer Isle, Maine.)

You can build them indoors or—better yet—out in the woods, using natural materials. Find a tree trunk, a hole in a bank of moss, a small boulder—anything that might attract a fairy who needs shelter from the elements. Use acorns, shells, bark, pebbles or anything you can find to shore it up and decorate it.

For more ideas, check out *FAIRY HOUSES OF THE MAINE COAST* by Maureen Heffernan, executive director of the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens, or the *FAIRY HOUSES* books by Tracey Kane.

• Find five Latin words in the book that sound like English. In a dictionary or on-line, research what that word meant to the Romans, and the path it took to become an English word.

• Choose a painting from the past and recreate it as a live tableau, the way Mellie does with *The Glass of Absinthe* and *Venus at the Mirror*.

(To see some of the paintings Mellie mentions in the book, go to <https://www.ellenbooraem.com/degas>.)

