

# EDUCATOR'S GUIDE for DOLL TROUBLE



## A Story of Loss, Courage, and Empathy

Emma and her beloved doll, Mia, do everything together—until a tragic accident with a lawn mower leaves Mia disfigured. When Emma is teased by other children, she hides Mia away. But when she meets Sophia, Emma discovers that true bravery means standing by your friend and finding the courage to help others.

## About the Author

Kim A. Larson is the award-winning author of *Goat's Boat Won't Float* (The Little Press, 2024) and *Doll Trouble* (Clavis Publishing, 2026). She has over a dozen short stories and poems published in regional anthologies and was honored with the SCBWI Ann Whitford Paul Award, two Minnesota State Arts Board grants and three Lake Region Arts Council grants.



## Pre-Reading Discussion Questions

- **Cover Observations:** Look at the cover of *Doll Trouble*. What do you think happened to the little girl's doll?
- **Predictions:** What do you think the girl will do with her doll?
- **Personal Connection:** Do you have a favorite toy or “lovey”? How would you feel if it got lost or damaged?

# Post-Reading Discussion Questions

- **Identifying Feelings:** How did Emma feel when the other kids laughed at Mia? Have you ever felt embarrassed by something you loved?
- **Defining Bravery:** At the beginning of the story, Mia helps Emma be brave. By the end, how does Emma show bravery on her own?
- **Empathy and Action:** Why did Emma decide to give her new doll to Sofia? What did Emma do that showed how she felt about Mia?
- **Identifying the 5 Ws:** Can you identify the 5 Ws of *Doll Trouble*?

## Extension Activities

- **Art:** Have students draw a picture of their own “brave friend” (a toy, a pet, or a person).
- **Writing:** Ask them to write (or talk) about a time when their friend helped them feel brave.
- **SEL:** Emma tries to fix Mia with bandages and hugs. Discuss as a class: What are “heart boo-boos”?
- **SEL:** Create a “Kindness Poster” where students list things they can say or do (like Sofia did) to help a friend who is feeling sad or embarrassed.

Find more resources at [KimALarson.com](http://KimALarson.com)

