

Using
The Polly McDoodle Series (vols. 1–3)
in the classroom

The Invisible Polly McDoodle:

In the first of the Polly McDoodle mysteries, Polly is feeling invisible in her family. She feels that her parents pay more attention to her hockey-playing brother Shawn.

- Ask the students if they ever felt invisible in their classroom, in their family, or in the community.
- Like all mystery writers when Mary Woodbury writes she uses several important elements. What are they? (detective, clues, suspects, crime, crime scene) Have students check out a newspaper story or another mystery book to see if the elements are similar.
- Polly and Kyle have a tree fort in their backyard. Children could design a tree fort of their own individually or in small groups
- Polly draws a map of her neighbourhood. Students could draw one of their neighbourhood.

The Intrepid Polly McDoodle:

In the second of the Polly McDoodle mysteries, Polly and Kyle discover a polluted stream running into Small Shadow Lake.

- What would students in your class do if they discovered someone or something ruining the environment where they lived?
- The new girl in the apartment, Erin Darby, has lost her father. Polly and Kyle try to help her adjust to her loss. Ask the children if any of them have ever lost a pet or a person close to them. How did they feel? Who helped them?
- How can students find out about environmental groups and ways that

children can be involved in safeguarding the environment.

- Polly's sketch book plays an important role in each McDoodle mystery. Students could create a sketchbook of their own and carry it with them for a week. They could draw or write what they see. At the end of the week they could write about how it felt to keep a journal like Polly.

The Innocent Polly McDoodle:

In the third Polly McDoodle mystery Polly gets accused of stealing art supplies and putting graffiti drawings on the wall in the shopping mall.

- Ask students if they have ever had someone accuse them of doing something that they hadn't done. How did they handle it?
- Polly discovers Chris, a new little kid in the apartment building, invading the tree fort, Polly's space and her time. How do the students feel when someone tries to take over?
- The graffiti ghost is not a really bad person. He just wants to express himself. Have the students brainstorm ways that graffiti artists could be used creatively?
- Kyle and Erin are away while Polly is in the city. Have students write a letter or e-mail from Polly to Kyle or Erin about the mystery and what's happening at the mall.

