

**Suzanne Crowley**  
*Finding Esme*

**Quotes (to be used to promote the book):**

“She says our sorrows are linked together like our honeycombs, deep and cavernous, full of lonely hollows.” pg. 1

“All my funny pieces would meld together perfectly and someday my special gift, my gift that was waiting for me, would work itself to the surface for all to see.” pg. 3

“Better to keep your mouth shut, she says, and seem a fool than to open it and remove all doubt. She should talk, though; her mouth gets her in trouble more than there's summer fleas on a backyard hound.” pg. 27

“But sometimes you just can't perfume a hog.” pg. 33

“You ain't ever gonna conquer your fears unless you face them head-on.” p. 66

“You gotta know when to leave something alone.” p. 189

“There are things we know for sure and things we don't. It's the unknown, the unexpected, the tornado that turns on you in a moment, that are the most troubling. And there's nothing you can do about it but wait.” p. 200

“Grief shades people in different ways. Harlan was painted all over us, and there was no way to wash it off.” pg. 138

“Or it might be about growing up and noticing what's around you, honey, what you can fix and what you can't.” pg. 193

Sweetmaw started up the pink Buick again, and we drove on down the road, that vibrating, lawn mower feeling moving up my legs as the tears rolled down my face.” pg. 193

## Read-Alikes

If students like this book, here are some other recommended titles.

Author	Title	Publisher	Copyright	ISBN 13-digit	Annotation
Beasley, Cassie	Tumble & Blue	Dial Books	2017	978-0525428442	An immersive, supernatural middle grade adventure. Hear the whispers of long-kept family secrets in shadowed corners. Feel the humidity of a languid Georgia summer. Beasley, author of Circus Mirandus, weaves the tale of two tweens spending the summer looking for the way out of an ancestral curse.
Connor, Leslie	Waiting for Normal	Katherine Tegen Books	2008	978-0060890889	Twelve-year-old Addie tries to cope with her mother's erratic behavior and being separated from her beloved stepfather and half-sisters when she and her mother go to live in a small trailer by the railroad tracks on the outskirts of Schenectady, New York.
DiCamillo, Kate	Raymie Nightingale	Scholastic, Inc.	2016	978-1-338120691	Hoping that if she wins a local beauty pageant her father will come home, Raymie practices twirling a baton and performing good deeds as she is drawn into an unlikely friendship with a drama queen and a saboteur.
Duncan, Lois	Gift of Magic	Little, Brown	1971	978-0-316195454	A young girl, gifted with extrasensory perception, struggles to cope with her unusual ability
Eager, Lindsay	Hour of the Bees	Candlewick Press	2016	978-0-763679224	Twelve-year-old Carolina meets her grandfather, Serge, when her family travels to Albuquerque to sell Serge's sheep ranch and help him move into a nursing home. Carol hates to miss part of her summer, but changes her mind when Grandpa begins telling her stories about her heritage, of the magic tree that heals, of a green-glass lake, of 100 years of no rain, and of the magical bees that brought the rain back.

Lloyd, Natalie	A Snicker of Magic	Scholastic Press	2014	978-0-545552707	The Pickles are new to Midnight Gulch, Tennessee, a town which legend says was once magic--but Felicity is convinced the magic is still there, and with the help of her new friend Jonah the Beedle she hopes to bring the magic back.
Monk, Sue	Secret Life of Bees	Viking, Penguin	2013	978-0-143124320	Set in South Carolina in 1964 the book tells the story of Lily Owens, whose life has been shaped around the blurred memory of the afternoon her mother was killed...
Reynolds, Jason	Patina	Atheneum Books for Young Readers	2017	978-1-48145018	A newbie to the track team, Patina "Patty" Jones must learn to rely on her family and teammates as she tries to outrun her personal demons.
Ryan, Pam Munoz	Becoming Naomi Leon	Scholastic, Inc.	2004	978-0-439269971	Naomi minds her life with the same obedience as a clock ticking. Then one evening, everything she has known about Gram and her little brother begins to unravel.
Sloan, Holly Goldberg	Counting by Sevens	Dial Books	2013	978-0-803738553	Twelve-year-old genius and outsider Willow Chance must figure out how to connect with other people and find a surrogate family for herself after her parents are killed in a car accident.

## Book Trailer (to promote the book to readers)

Made with Adobe Spark - spark.adobe.com

<https://spark.adobe.com/video/bgWR5zqHCD62V>

## Discussion Questions

For teachers or book clubs

1. What do you think the bees symbolize in the book?
2. What was Esme's gift and how did she use it? Did she want the gift?
3. In your opinion, was Bee and Esme's gift a blessing or a curse?
4. What gifts do you think you have? What makes you special?
5. What was special about Esme's friendship with Finch?
6. In what ways do Aunt Bee's and Aunt Sweetmaw's names fit their personalities?
7. What did the bones symbolize to Esme?
8. Why was Esme so hurt when Finch wrote the letter to university about the bones?
9. Why do you think the neighbor gave so much to Finch and so little to Esme when she died?

## Finding Esme Passive Programs

### Title: Dino Dig Display

Description: Create a display of books and tools related to paleontologists and their tools, dinosaur digs, fossils and bones. Have a computer or iPad or other connected device available to access the suggested websites.

Create a dino dig area using a children's blow-up swimming pool filled with sand, hay, styrofoam peanuts or other filler in which you have hidden small prizes such as small toys or candy.

Provide "tools" such as pie pans or shovels with which to dig and paint brushes to clean items found.

### Suggested Books, Websites and Resources:

Author	Title	Publisher	Copyright	ISBN	Annotation
Bardoe, Cheryl	Mammoths and mastodons : titans of the Ice Age	Abrams Books for Young Readers	2010	0-8160-4731-6	Describes the daily life of mammoths and mastodons based on the study of a recently discovered, fully frozen baby mammoth. Also includes information on several of their fossil remains which were discovered in Russia and in the United States. Includes a glossary, color photographs and maps, and fact boxes.
Bausum, Ann ; photographs from the American Museum of Natural History.	Dragon bones and dinosaur eggs : a photobiography of Roy Chapman Andrews	National Geographic Society	2000	0-7922-7123-8	A biography of the great explorer-adventurer, who discovered huge finds of dinosaur bones in Mongolia, pioneered modern paleontology field research, and became the director of the American Museum of Natural History.
Fern, Tracy; Photos by Boris Kulikov	Barnum's bones : how Barnum Brown discovered the most famous dinosaur in the world	Farrar, Straus, Giroux	2012	978-0-374-305161	Text and illustrations look at the life of paleontologist Barnum Brown.
Haines, Tim illustrations, Gary Hincks	Walking with dinosaurs : a natural history	DK	2000	0-7894-5187-5	Describes the earth's environment when dinosaurs flourished, the characteristics and habits of various species, and how changes in climate, landmasses, and vegetation led to the extinction of these massive reptiles.

Holmes, Tom	Paleontologists : searching for dinosaur bones	Enslow Publishers	2016	978-0-7660-69640	Are you interested in dinosaurs and how they lived? Do you want to travel the world, digging through the earth's history? Then perhaps a career in paleontology is for you! Through first-hand accounts, interviews, and case studies, you'll learn what it takes to be a paleontologist.
Kerley, Barbara; illustrations by Brian Selznick, based on originals by Mr. Hawkins	The dinosaurs of Waterhouse Hawkins : an illuminating history of Mr. Waterhouse Hawkins, artist and lecturer : true dinosaur story in three ages	Scholastic	2001	0-439-11494-2	The true story of Victorian artist Benjamin Waterhouse Hawkins, who built life-sized models of dinosaurs in the hope of educating the world about what these awe-inspiring ancient animals and what they were like.
Thomas, Peggy	Forensic anthropology : the growing science of talking bones	Facts on File	2003	0-8160-4731-6	Uses actual cases, some drawn directly from headlines, to describe some of the advances and techniques being employed in the field of forensic anthropology at the beginning of the twenty-first century.
Walker, Sally M.	Written in bone : buried lives of Jamestown and Colonial Maryland	Carolrhoda Books	2009	0-8225-7135-8	Reports on the work of forensic scientists who are excavating grave sites in James Fort, in Jamestown, Virginia, to understand who lived in the Chesapeake Bay area in the 1600s and 1700s; and uncovers the lives of a teenage boy, a ship's captain, a colonial officer, an African slave girl, and others.
Washburne, Sophie	Clues in corpses : a closer look at body farms	Lucent Books	2018	978-1-534561724	When human remains are found at a crime scene, forensic anthropologists examine them to determine the time and cause of death, as well as the identity of the victim. How do they know the answers to these questions? Body farms are facilities where specialists can study the ways bodies decompose under different conditions, which helps forensic anthropologists solve crimes more effectively. Informative fact boxes, full-color photographs, and engaging sidebars offer a closer look at these little-known research facilities. Readers are sure to be captivated by stories of farms unlike any they have ever heard of before.

## **Title: Dream Wall**

### Activity Introduction:

This activity creates a community wall of students' / patrons' dreams for the future. Patrons can post immediate dreams or goals for the future.

### Books to Display or Book Talk:

Create a book display near your dream wall. Include any books that are about dreams and goals. Here is a sample list:

- The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, by: Sean Covey
- Brown Girl Dreaming, by: Jacqueline Woodson
- Dream: A Tale of Wonder, Wisdom, and Wishes, by: Susan Bosak
- Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music, by: Margarita Engle
- Hidden Figures: the American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race, by: Margot Lee Shetterly
- The Running Dream, by: Wendelin Van Draanen
- Salt in His Shoes: Michael Jordan in Pursuit of a Dream, by: Deloris Jordan
- We Beat the Street: How a Friendship Pact Led to Success, by: Sampson Davis
- The Young Traveler's Gift, By: Andy Andrews

### Activity Supply List:

- Bulletin Board, chart paper or some other surface students can write on or attach things to
- Pencils, Pens, Crayons, Markers, Tape
- Sticky notes or squares of paper for students to write on
- Banner with Dream Wall title, or what ever title that you want for your wall

### Detailed description of activity: (step-by-step guide)

1. Create your space: put up your banner, and chart paper or decorate your bulletin board.
2. Create a display of books about dreams and goals
3. Set up a table or cart with paper, sticky notes, pens, pencils, tape, etc. for patrons to use to write down their goals and attach them to the board.
4. If you are using a dry erase board, have markers and erasers available.
5. Create a or print the sample direction sheet to display with the supplies.

Activity Resources: flyers, activity sheets, handouts, direction sheets, etc. See Directions sheet PDF included.

## *Finding Esme* Active (Public Library or School) Programs

### **Title: Beekeeping and Importance of Bees in Pollination**

Based on the Lesson Plan *Trouble in the Hive: Researching the Decimation of Honeybee Colonies* from The New York Times Learning Network.

Refreshments: In advance of event, collect several kinds of fruits that depend on pollination by honeybees, like apples, peaches, raspberries and almonds. Offer fruit drinks that also depend on pollination such as orange or apple juice, as well as water. Before patrons arrive, arrange the items in serving dishes on a table at the front of the room. As they arrive, invite patrons to enjoy the foods presented.

Welcome and Introduction: After welcoming the patrons to the program, ask, “Where do these foods come from, and what ecological factor do they all have in common?”

You might need to prompt them to think about the source of fruits. Botanically speaking, a fruit is the ripened ovary of a flowering plant. A fruit contains seeds, which, in turn, contain embryonic plants that will grow into new plants when planted in the ground.

Many flowering plants, and many of our favorite fruit crops, depend on bees to pollinate their flowers, so they may successfully produce fruits like the ones they are eating and that are used to make juices such as the ones they were offered. Bee pollination is one ecological factor all the fruits on display have in common.

#### Introduce Special Guest: Texas Master Beekeeper

The Texas Master Beekeeper Program (TMBP) from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension program is an educational program designed to increase the knowledge and skill level of participating beekeepers. As part of the program, TMBP helps to educate the general public about beekeeping. Those in the program are required to earn public service credits by acting as honey bee ambassadors to the general public. Request a Master Beekeeper for your program by filling out a Texas Master Beekeeper Request Form:

<https://masterbeekeeper.tamu.edu/request-a-service-from-texas-master-beekeepers/>

#### Invite Patrons to Explore Stations relating to learning more - Examples

1. Read article: “The Buzz About Colony Collapse Disorder” Provide copies of the article or ipads/computers with links to the article for them to read. Post a list of Discussion questions: What is colony collapse disorder? What is pollination? Why is pollination important to agriculture? What are commercial hives? What is the relationship between crop farmers and the owners of commercial hives? Why do many beekeepers suspect

pesticides may play a role in colony collapse disorder? What effect might colony collapse disorder have on the prices of bee-pollinated foods, like almonds?

2. Video: “A Disastrous Year for Bees”  
Materials: iPad or Computer with link to the video
3. Read Picture Book “Flight of a Bumblebee” by Raymond Huber and Brian Lovelock. Scout is a female bee in a hive of 50,000. Her job is to locate and communicate the location of flowers with nectar so the hive can survive the winter.  
With your group, create and act out a skit explaining Scout’s role in her hive. Video it for upload to the web if desired.
4. Create a container garden that’s pesticide-free as a safe space to encourage native bees and other beneficial insects.
5. Create a video post as a public service announcement to help save the bees. Explain why bees are important to the environment and our food supply.

Supplies:

Selected refreshments and drinks, paper plates, cups, ice, napkins, utensils needed.

Flyers: Example of flyer to promote the event, created through Canva (<http://www.canva.com>)  
[https://www.canva.com/design/DADOaguufaI/coP9dGt3itA8IszR0eVnuA/view?utm\\_content=DADOaguufaI&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link&utm\\_source=sharebutton](https://www.canva.com/design/DADOaguufaI/coP9dGt3itA8IszR0eVnuA/view?utm_content=DADOaguufaI&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=sharebutton)

iPads/Internet-connected computers for Stations

Picture book Flight of the Honey Bee by Raymond Huber and Brian Lovelock

Paper cups or small pots for container gardens; seeds, seedlings or small flowers to plant; potting soil; tools needed for planting

Video cameras or other recording devices to film skits and public service announcements.

Internet Connected to Computer to share videos to library website, Facebook or other social media.

Permission slips for patrons to consent to sharing their creations/images on social media/the Internet.

Resource Bibliography:

Lesson Plan Resource

Gonchar, Jennifer Cutraro and Michael. “Trouble in the Hive: Researching the Decimation of Honeybee Colonies.” *The New York Times*, The Learning Network, 8 May 2013, [https://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/05/08/trouble-in-the-hive-researching-the-decimation-of-honeybee-colonies/?\\_php=true&\\_type=blogs&\\_r=1](https://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/05/08/trouble-in-the-hive-researching-the-decimation-of-honeybee-colonies/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_r=1). Lesson Plan exploring bee hive colony collapse disorder.

## Article

Zissu, Alexandra. "The Buzz About Colony Collapse Disorder." *NRDC*, National Resource Defense Council, 4 Oct. 2017, <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/buzz-about-colony-collapse-disorder>. Bees keep dying at record rates, putting our food supply at serious risk. Here's how you can help take the sting out.

## Video

Matt H. Mayes and Axel Gerdau. "A Disastrous Year for Bees." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 29 Mar. 2013, <https://www.nytimes.com/video/science/earth/10000002143340/a-disastrous-year-for-bees.html>. For America's beekeepers, who have struggled for nearly a decade with a mysterious malady called colony collapse disorder that kills honeybees en masse, the last year was particularly bad.

Texas Master Beekeeper Program offered by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Program  
<https://masterbeekeeper.tamu.edu/>

Texas Master Beekeeper Request Form:

<https://masterbeekeeper.tamu.edu/request-a-service-from-texas-master-beekeepers/>

## Book

Huber, Raymond, and Brian Lovelock. *Flight of the Honey Bee*. Walker Books, 2015. Scout is a female bee in a hive of 50,000. Her job is to locate and communicate the location of flowers with nectar so the hive can survive the winter.

## **Title: *Finding Esme* Research**

### Introduction/Purpose of Program

This research pathfinder can be used as an introduction to the story of *Finding Esme* by Suzanne Crowley or after the novel is read as a full research project. The purpose is to learn about some of subjects explored in the book.

TEKS (for school program):

Research TEKS

LA.6.22 Research/Research Plan

LA.6.23 Research/Gathering Sources

LA.6.24 Research/Synthesizing Information

LA.6.25 Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas

### Detailed Description of the Program

Students will choose or be assigned a topic that relates to the book *Finding Esme* by Suzanne Crowley. Teachers edit the pathfinder to add resources available in their school library. Teachers review the pathfinder and research skills with students before beginning project.

Students will use the attached Pathfinder to help research their topics. Teachers can decide on how the information will be presented: research paper, slideshow, skit, poster, web page, etc.

Supplies: Paper and pencils, Computers, *Finding Esme* Pathfinder (included in folder), Library books for research, Passwords for the databases if needed

Resources (print and electronic): *Finding Esme* Pathfinder, *Finding Esme* novel, Computers, Database list and passwords, Library visit for print resources