

# Going Green with Ida B

## • Keep 'em Reading •

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### Book Club Ideas and Activities

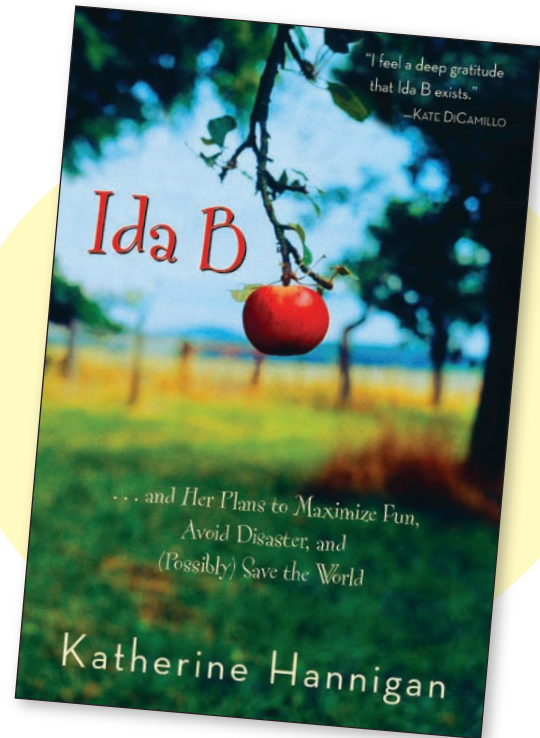
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Katherine Hannigan's *Ida B: And Her Plans to Maximize Fun, Avoid Disaster and (Possibly) Save the World* (Greenwillow Books, 2004) is a book that makes every reader fall in love. When her mother is diagnosed with cancer, Ida B has to leave her idyllic home-schooled education and her orchard tree-friends for the scary world of Ms. Washington's fourth grade public elementary school class. Ida B is determined to combat the unwanted changes in her life with plans of pay-back, but even the best-laid plans of Ida B may need some tweaking.

This delightful book is a perfect selection for a start-of-the-school-year, upper elementary book club. Students will enjoy reading about Ida B's lively new class and can appreciate Ms. Washington's wisdom as she talks to her newest student.

**Recycle On.** Ida B's family has a great love for the natural world, expressed throughout the book. Her father tells her, "We are the earth's caretakers." Before you begin this activity, ask students if they know the difference between something that is recyclable and something that is not. Once they understand what kind of items are recyclable, divide the group into twos and threes. Give each group a certain number of paper and plastic bags, empty milk cartons, scratch paper and newspapers, as well as markers and crayons. Give them ten minutes to create a 3D picture of Ida B, using all their materials. Present each final piece of art to the group.

**A Tree of Their Own.** Before Ida B goes to school, her only friends are the trees in her orchard. For this activity, you'll need apple tree seeds, dirt, Miracle Gro®, permanent markers, and one small gardening pot per child. Most of



these can be purchased inexpensively at a local craft store or gardening center.

Spread newspapers on the floor (or on tables, if the floors are carpeted). Set up a station for writing on the pots and another for potting and seeding the pots. Suggest that the children name their tree, like Ida B did, and decorate that name on the pot. When they are finished, give instructions on basic tree care. For those that are interested, recommend some children's gardening books.

**Create Environmental Journals.** Give each child a blank (preferably green) notebook or journal and schedule time for decorating. As the children color and decorate, tell them that this journal is to record how their neighborhood is helping the planet. Organize the journal into "How I'm Helping" and "How Others are Helping." For the personal section, introduce several different

