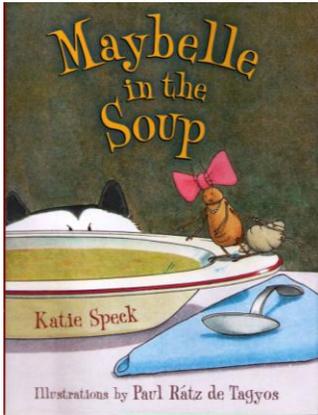


*A Teacher's Guide to*  
**Maybelle in the Soup**

Written by Katie Speck  
Illustrated by Paul Rátz de Tagyos



### About the Author

Katie Speck grew up in New Orleans, where cockroaches were huge, ubiquitous, and wonderfully yucky. Maybelle is based on a character her grandmother invented to put a funny face on the enemy. The author now lives in Kansas City, Missouri, with a husband, an assortment of pets, and a bug or two. To find out more about Katie and her books, visit her at:

<http://www.katiespeck.com/katiespeck/Home.html>.

### About the Illustrator

Mr. Rátz de Tagyos still calls New Rochelle, New York home, where he was born and raised. As a kid, he always loved to draw, and eventually he went on to study at the Parsons School of Design in New York City. Learn more about Mr. Rátz de Tagyos and his art at <http://www.prdt.net>.

### Kudos for *Maybelle in the Soup*

“...a fun and original early chapter book that should prove popular with all but the most squeamish of readers.” ~*ALA Booklist*

“...kids will fall in love with the buggy heroine’s sense of humor and taste for yummy food.”~*Scholastic’s Instructor Magazine*

“Delightful details will make adults giggle right along with new readers...a lot of fun, especially for reading aloud. Maybelle is one cockroach who will be welcome back any day.” ~*Kirkus Starred Review*

*Named as a Junior Library Guild Selection and one of six best new books for early readers by Scholastic’s Instructor Magazine’s Teachers’ Picks List*

### Story Summary

Maybelle knows she should stay put in her cozy, safe home under the Peabody’s refrigerator. But as the Peabody’s JUST SO dinner party unfolds, Maybelle’s curiosity makes a splash.

### Pre-Reading

Ask students the following:

1. Have you ever seen a bug in your house? What kind? What did you do? What did the bug do?
2. What rules do you follow that keep you safe? Have you ever broken any of these rules? If so, what happened?

## Chapter Guides

Each chapter guide includes:

- **Vocabulary** that might be new for your students. Choose a few words from each list and guide students in using text and picture clues to infer meanings.
- **Discussion Starters** inspired by Bloom's Taxonomy that lead students from basic comprehension to higher level thinking skills.
- **Making Connections** to encourage students to form text-to-self connections to strengthen comprehension.
- **Predicting** where students are invited to make predictions based on their analysis of the characters' traits in the story.

The chapter guides may be used to encourage whole class discussions, lead teacher-guided reading groups, or to provide structure to students working either in cooperative small groups or independently. The guide is not meant to be assigned to students in its entirety.

### Chapter 1: Bug Dreams

#### Vocabulary

cozy	fond	JUST SO	sensible	obeyed	kiddo	dined
------	------	---------	----------	--------	-------	-------

#### Discussion Starters

1. Why did Henry say he was always getting wet? (*knowledge*)
2. Maybelle said she was tired of crumbs and spills. What did she want to eat instead? (*comprehension*)
3. The Peabodys liked everything JUST SO. "No dust, no mess, and absolutely, positively NO BUGS!" What else do you think the Peabodys dislike? (*application*)
4. The story opens with this line: "Maybelle was a lovely, plump cockroach." Would the Peabodys agree with this description? Why or why not? (*analysis*)
5. Maybelle has three rules: "When it's light, stay out of sight; if you're spied, better hide; and never meet with human feet." Create your own set of rules for staying safe. (*synthesis*)
6. Henry tells Maybelle that she should be content with what she has. Do you think this is good advice? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

#### Making Connections

Henry warns Maybelle to stay out of sight. If the Peabodys see her, they'll call the bug man, and Maybelle would be in a pickle! Tell about a time when you got yourself into a pickle.

#### Predict

The last line in the chapter says: "... a cockroach may not get exactly what a cockroach wants, but you can't blame her for trying." What do you think Maybelle will try to do? Will she get what she wants?

## Chapter 2: A Very Special Dinner

### Vocabulary

china      dreadful      mock turtle soup

#### Discussion Starters

1. Which item on the menu does Maybelle most want to taste? (*knowledge*)
2. Who is the Bug Man? What does he do? Why are Maybelle and Henry afraid of him? (*comprehension*)
3. How would you know if your pet (or you!) had fleas? (*application*)
4. How do we know that this dinner is very important to Mrs. Peabody? What clues does the text give? (*analysis*)
5. Create a menu for your own Very Special Dinner. (*synthesis*)
6. Maybelle describes Mrs. Peabody's feet as "dreadful" and "big." How would you describe Mrs. Peabody's feet? How would Mrs. Peabody describe Maybelle's six feet? (*evaluation*)

#### Making Connections

Tell, write or draw about a time when you prepared for a special occasion. What was the occasion? What did you do to make it special?

#### Predict

Do you think Maybelle will try to taste the mock turtle soup? If so, will she succeed?

## Chapter 3: Soup's On

### Vocabulary

false eyelashes      scurried      startled      tureen      teetered      broth

#### Discussion Starters

1. Name two of the ingredients in mock turtle soup. (*knowledge*)
2. Why did Maybelle finally break her first rule and come out of hiding? (*comprehension*)
3. Think of a way to get Maybelle out of trouble. (*application*)
4. Did Maybelle have a plan before she headed for the soup? (*analysis*)
5. If you were Maybelle's friend, what advice would you give her about sneaking a taste of the soup? (*synthesis*)
6. Was it a good idea for Maybelle to try the mock turtle soup? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

#### Making Connections

Have you ever been tempted to eat something that you knew you shouldn't? What happened? Would you ever try it again?

### Predict

What will happen now that Maybelle has fallen into the soup? Will she get out? If so, how?

## Chapter 4: Maybelle in the Soup

### Vocabulary

daintily	gasp	scrambling	squeals	swatted	humans
roach	fluttered	flicked	screeched	chandelier	

### Discussion Starters

1. Which rule did Maybelle try to follow in this chapter? (*knowledge*)
2. Why did Maybelle end up breaking this rule? (*comprehension*)
3. How would you go about catching a strange bug that had joined you for dinner? (*application*)
4. What would you do if you found Maybelle in your soup? (*analysis*)
5. What might have happened if Mrs. Snodgrass hadn't spied Maybelle on her spoon? (*synthesis*)
6. The Peabodys and Snodgrasses pride themselves on their impeccable manners. Do you think they showed good manners? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

### Making Connections

How do you feel about bugs? Are there any situations where you don't mind meeting bugs? Where would you least like to meet a bug?

### Predict

How do you think Maybelle feels as she looks down on the messy table below? What do you think she'll do next?

## Chapter 5: A Bug on a Rug

### Vocabulary

globes	leftovers	bleu cheese	slimy
gooey	lump	chopped goose liver	smear
sideboard	plunged	fled	crouched
skidding	batted	struggled	

### Discussion Starters

1. Which types of food did Maybelle taste? (*knowledge*)
2. What path did Maybelle take to get from the chandelier to the food? (*comprehension*)
3. If you could have small samples of anything you wanted, what would you eat? (*application*)
4. How does Maybelle feel about whipped cream? How do you know? (*analysis*)

5. Come up with a way that Henry could save Maybelle from Ramona the cat.  
(*synthesis*)

6. Is Ramona a good cat or a bad cat? If you had a cat, would you want her to keep bugs away from your house? (*evaluation*)

### **Making Connections**

Have you ever eaten too much? What did you eat? How did you feel afterwards? What did you do after you finished eating?

### **Predict**

What do you think Ramona will do with Maybelle? Will Maybelle wake up? Will she be saved? How?

## **Chapter 6: A Surprise for Mrs. Peabody**

### **Vocabulary**

stunned	plump	weeping	ice pack	revolting
coverlet	squinted	clutched	sternly	unfortunate

### **Discussion Starters**

1. Which rule did Maybelle almost break in this chapter? (*knowledge*)
2. Why did Ramona bring Maybelle to Mrs. Peabody? (*comprehension*)
3. Demonstrate how Ramona presented her “gift” to Mrs. Peabody. How did Ramona feel? What would her facial expression have looked like? (*application*)
4. The first line of this chapter reads: “It was just as well that Maybelle didn’t know where she was.” Do you agree with this? (*analysis*)
5. How was Maybelle saved? (*synthesis*)
6. Are the Peabody’s mean or kind? How do they treat Ramona? How do they treat Maybelle? (*evaluation*)

### **Making Connections**

Have you ever given a gift that the recipient didn’t like? Explain what happened. Have you ever received a gift that you didn’t like? What was it? What did you do?

### **Predict**

What will happen when the Bug Man comes? What will Maybelle do?

## **Chapter 7: Henry Hatches a Plan**

### **Vocabulary**

fretted	preferred
---------	-----------

### **Discussion Starters**

1. How did Henry save Maybelle from Mr. Peabody’s foot? (*knowledge*)

2. What is Henry's plan now? Why do Maybelle and Henry need a plan? (*comprehension*)
3. If you were Maybelle's friend, where would you tell her to hide? (*application*)
4. Why is Maybelle happy about going to the hotel? (*analysis*)
5. Maybelle asks Henry what a vacation is. Describe a perfect vacation for a cockroach. Describe a perfect vacation for you! (*synthesis*)
6. Maybelle hid in Mrs. Peabody's folded pink underpants. Is this a good hiding place for a bug? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

### **Making Connections**

Henry and Maybelle "...talked late into the night, about chocolates and dogs and other tasty things." Tell about a time when you stayed up late talking with someone. Whom did you talk to? What did you talk about?

### **Predict**

Do you think Mrs. Peabody will discover Maybelle in her suitcase? If not, how will Maybelle get away?

## **Chapter 8: Where's Henry?**

### **Vocabulary**

crept	whined
-------	--------

### **Discussion Starters**

1. Where did Maybelle hide while the Peabodys unpacked? (*knowledge*)
2. Why didn't Maybelle and Henry feel welcome at the hotel? (*comprehension*)
3. How would your classroom look if it were JUST SO? (*application*)
4. Why was the Grand Hotel "even more JUST SO" than the Peabodys' house? (*analysis*)
5. By the end of the chapter, Maybelle still doesn't know where Henry is. Where should she go to look for him? Where would he most likely be? (*synthesis*)
6. Maybelle wonders: "Was *this* the vacation Henry had promised?" Do you think Maybelle's first vacation has started off well? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

### **Making Connections**

Have you ever been disappointed on a vacation? Tell what happened.

### **Predict**

Where did Henry go? How will Maybelle find him? Where will she go next?

## **Chapter 9: Under Wraps**

### **Vocabulary**

bounding	dozed off	smoothed	twitched
wailed	hushed	room service	

### Discussion Starters:

1. Where had Henry gone? (*knowledge*)
2. Why was Maybelle feeling grumpy? (*comprehension*)
3. If you were Maybelle, how would you sneak past Ramona to get to the chocolates? (*application*)
4. What didn't Maybelle eat the chocolates? (*analysis*)
5. Is there a way that Maybelle could have eaten the chocolates? How? (*synthesis*)
6. Do you think it's safe for Maybelle and Henry to leave the room? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

### Making Connections

Maybelle braves her way to the chocolates even though Ramona the cat is nearby. Have you ever done anything brave to get what you want? What happened?

### Predict

What will Maybelle and Henry find on the other side of the door of room 1010? Where will they go next?

## Chapter 10: Maybelle on Wheels

### Vocabulary

nibble	clatter	shoved
--------	---------	--------

### Discussion Starters

1. What did Maybelle spy out in the hall? (*knowledge*)
2. What does Henry mean when he says he's off to try some French food? (*comprehension*)
3. Pretend you are staying at a hotel and can choose anything you'd like for room service. What would you order? (*application*)
4. Why did the sight of a waiter's shoes send Maybelle's heart racing? (*analysis*)
5. Think of all the ways Maybelle might escape. What would be the safest way? The most risky? (*synthesis*)
6. If Maybelle has to hide in some food, what kind of food would best camouflage her? Which food would make the worst hiding place for Maybelle? (*evaluation*)

### Making Connections

Have you ever had to hide from something you were afraid of? What happened?

### Predict

Where do you think the waiter is headed? Will Maybelle see Henry again?

## Chapter 11: Eat and Be Eaten

### Vocabulary

clattered	garbage disposal	stalk	scrambled	blender
rocketed	parsley	clapped	dared	

### Discussion Starters

1. Which room is the busiest room in the hotel? (*knowledge*)
2. Did Maybelle like the taste of the green-bean casserole? How do you know? (*comprehension*)
3. Read the descriptions of the kitchen sights and sounds on pages 40 and 41. the next time you go to lunch, make note of your school cafeteria's sights and sounds. (*application*)
4. How does Maybelle feel about the garbage disposal? How do you know? (*analysis*)
5. In this chapter, we see the kitchen through Maybelle's eyes. For example, Maybelle pictures the garbage disposal with "great, grinding teeth." How would Maybelle describe the things in your classroom? (*synthesis*)
6. Do you think this was the kind of adventure Maybelle was looking for? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

### Making Connections

Maybelle had several close calls in the kitchen, but she ended up content under the silver lid. Can you remember a time when a scary situation turned out to be fun?

### Predict

Will Maybelle get to taste the food on the plate under the silver lid? What will happen when the lid is lifted? Will Maybelle be seen?

## Chapter 12: Hello Again!

### Vocabulary

flourish	grandly	hollered	dignity
addressing	whimpered	dined	parsley

### Discussion Starters

1. Why did the diners scratch their ankles? (*knowledge*)
2. How did Maybelle make herself feel better after she ran inside Mrs. Peabody's purse? (*comprehension*)
3. Look at the illustration of Mrs. Peabody and the waiter on page 46. Can you make your expression look like one of theirs? How does each of them feel? (*application*)
4. At the beginning of the chapter, it said that "Mr. and Mrs. Peabody sat at a lovely table by the window, looking JUST SO." What does this mean? Pretend to be one of the Peabodys and look JUST SO. (*analysis*)
5. What do you think Mrs. Peabody would do if she discovered Maybelle in her purse? What would Mr. Peabody do? (*synthesis*)
6. Was Mrs. Peabody's purse a good place for Maybelle to hide? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

### Making Connections

Where do you go when you want to feel safe? What do you do to calm yourself down when you're upset?

### Predict

Will the Peabodys discover Maybelle in the purse? Where could Henry be? Will he be able to keep Maybelle out of trouble?

## Chapter 13: Checkout

### Vocabulary

bellowed	vicious	shame	bear	fumed	precious
odd	lobby	yapping	flea dip	obeying	antenna

### Discussion Starters

1. Where did Maybelle spend the night? (*knowledge*)
2. At the beginning of the chapter, how did Maybelle know Henry was not on Ramona the cat? (*comprehension*)
3. Read about Maybelle's trouble on pages 52 and 53. Pretend you are Mr. Peabody or the hotel manager and act out this scene. Now try it with a friend! (*application*)
4. At the end of the chapter, how did Maybelle figure out that Henry was probably on Ramona? (*analysis*)
5. Imagine Maybelle and Henry talking in the suitcase on their way out of the hotel. What might they have said? (*synthesis*)
6. Why did the hotel manager turn red in the face the first time? The second time? (*evaluation*)

### Making Connections

Mr. Peabody gave the hotel manager "a piece of his mind." Tell about a time when you were angry with someone and told that person how you felt.

### Predict

Will the Peabodys discover that Maybelle and Henry are stowaways in their suitcase? If so, what will they do?

## Chapter 14: Home Sweet Home

### Vocabulary

contentment	whirred	suits me	omelet
-------------	---------	----------	--------

### Discussion Starters

1. Why were the Peabodys happy to be home again? (*knowledge*)
2. How did Maybelle feel about being back home? (*comprehension*)
3. Maybelle hears the soft whirring of the refrigerator. What are some sounds from your home that comfort you? (*application*)

4. Now that Maybelle is safe at home once again, has she learned to be more cautious? Why or why not? (*analysis*)
5. If you lived with Maybelle and Henry, what advice would you give them about going on future adventures? (*synthesis*)
6. Do you think Maybelle and Henry were glad that they went on vacation to the Grand Hotel? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

### Making Connections

Have you ever been away from home overnight? How did it feel when you came back?

### Predict

Do you think Maybelle will want to venture out of her safe home again? Why or why not?



### Culminating Activities

The following are suggested culminating projects that address each of the eight multiple intelligences identified by Dr. Howard Gardner: Bodily-kinesthetic, Interpersonal, Verbal-linguistic, Logical-mathematical, Naturalistic, Intrapersonal, Visual-spatial, and Musical. Consider having students choose a culminating activity that best matches their learning styles.

### Bug Games

#### (linguistic, interpersonal, logical-mathematical)

Give students a piece of white cardstock the size of a board game. In pairs or small groups, have children make a *Maybelle in the Soup* board game. Give them square templates to trace a path from start to finish on the board. Brainstorm a list of Maybelle's successes and setbacks in the story. Ask students to refer to the list when writing game directions in the squares. Two examples might be:

Maybelle tastes  
the soup! Move  
forward two  
spaces.

Mrs. Snodgrass  
spies Maybelle  
on the soup  
spoon. Eek!  
Lose 1 turn.

On the rest of the game board (outside the path), have students illustrate a favorite scene from each setting in the story. For game pieces, children can draw the characters on cardstock and stand them up on a base of play dough. Use a die or pair of dice for each turn. (*Using details from text to make inferences about problem and solution; Identify events from the beginning, middle and end.*)

### Wish You Were Here (linguistic, spatial)

On postcard-sized pieces of white cardstock, have students illustrate a scene from Maybelle's "vacation" and label the setting of the scene (for example: *Kitchen*, *Grand Hotel*). On the back, divide the space into two sections, like a real postcard. On the first half, children can write about one of Maybelle's and Henry's Grand Hotel adventures (a problem and how it was solved) from either bug's point of view. On the other half, they can address it to a classmate, add a stamp, and send it off in the mail! (*Using details from text to identify characters, setting, problem, and solutions.*)

### Musical Insects (musical, bodily-kinesthetic, naturalistic)

Do insects sing? Of course they do! To hear some samples, visit the Songs of Insects Jukebox at <http://www.musicofnature.com/songsofinsects/jukebox>. And to hear what Maybelle's cousin, the Madagascar Hissing Cockroach sounds like visit: <http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/bugs/madagascar-hissing-cockroach.html>.

What kind of sound(s) might Maybelle make? Hand out instruments (triangles, wood blocks, tambourines, etc.) and have the students sit in a circle. Choose a child to come to the center and mimic Maybelle's movements from a scene in the story. As the child moves, invite others to set these movements to music.

#### Examples:

If a child pretends to be Maybelle...	the accompanying music might be:
...tiptoeing near a sleeping Ramona the cat,	soft taps on the triangle with each careful step "Maybelle" makes.
...terrified in the mock turtle soup,	a tambourine shaking.
...scrambling into Mrs. Peabody's purse at the Grand Hotel,	all instruments together making loud, quick beats.

*(Demonstrating loud and soft dynamics and fast and slow tempi; Improvising short rhythmic and melodic patterns on classroom instruments; Creating a single tone or non-pitched accompaniment for songs and stories; Differentiating between nature, man-made, and animal sounds.)*

### What's Bugging You?

#### (intrapersonal, interpersonal, linguistic, spatial)

Ask students to reflect on things that "bug" them (friends not sharing, a brother who takes the last cookie on the plate, etc.). Give each child a 5"x7" index card to illustrate the one thing that bugs them most. As students share their illustrations, help the class to categorize the cards (into things that friends/teachers/parents do, for example.). Brainstorm ways that kids can deal with "being bugged."

*(Identifying the cause and effect of one's actions on others; Identifying appropriate ways to express needs, wants, and feelings.)*