



SERAFINA and the SEVEN STARS

QUESTIONS for Discussion and Writing

Title: Serafina and the Seven Stars
 Author: Robert Beatty

Publisher: Disney Hyperion
 Audiobook: Penguin Random House
 Listening Library

Genres: Historical Fiction
 Mystery-thriller, Fantasy

Grades: 4th through 10th Grade

Subjects: MS English Language Arts (ELA)
 MS Social Studies
 HS History & English

Formats: Hardcover ISBN: 9781368007597

Length: 340 pages

Websites: robertbeattybooks.com
 disneybooks.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The questions in this document can be used as writing prompts and/or group discussion prompts for *Serafina and the Seven Stars*. For more writing assignment ideas, see the Activities, Assignments, and Quizzes document at robertbeattybooks.com/education/.

General Questions after Reading the Book	2
Quotes to Think and Write about	4
Chapter-by-Chapter Questions	
Chapters 1-3	6
Chapters 4-7	7
Chapters 8-11	8
Chapters 12-15	9
Chapters 16-20	10
Chapters 21-25	11
Chapters 26-29	12
Chapters 30-32	13
Chapters 33-36	14
Chapters 37-40	15
Chapters 41-44	16
Chapters 45-48	17
Chapters 49-53	18
Chapters 54-58	19
Chapters 59-62	20
Chapters 63-64	21

Content developed by Kim Donehower, Professor of English Education, as well as the author, Robert Beatty. Please send feedback to robertbeattyauthor@gmail.com.

Educational materials for *Serafina and the Seven Stars*:

- Questions for Discussion and Writing
- Activities, Assignments, and Quizzes
- Vocabulary

Go to robertbeattybooks.com/education/ for links to the PDF files, teacher testimonials, and other resources.

COMMON CORE COMPATIBLE

Serafina and the Seven Stars and its educational materials are well suited for Common Core curriculum.

Teachers and schools are free to use this material. All other rights reserved © 2019 Robert Beatty.

Version 1.1 - June 15, 2019



SERAFINA and the
SEVEN STARS

Date: _____ Name: _____

QUESTIONS

for Discussion and Writing

General Questions / After Reading the Book

1. Serafina experiences serious self-doubt a number of times in the book. What are the factors and experiences that lead her to feel this way? What are the things that help cure her self-doubt?
2. At the beginning of the story, Serafina is described as “flinchy,” reacting as though danger will pop out at her from around every corner. Why might Serafina feel this way? If you have read any of the other books in the series, how might Serafina’s experiences in those books contribute to how she feels now?
3. Braeden already knows Serafina can turn into a panther, Essie has guessed it, as, perhaps, has Jess, and Serafina has little concern about transforming into a panther in front of Lieutenant Kinsley. Why, then, does she want to keep this secret from her Pa?
4. Serafina seems to have a special relationship with the angel in the Angel’s Glade. Where might this relationship come from? What might the angel symbolize to Serafina?
5. What does Serafina learn about “faith” (pages 168-169) in this story, and how is it necessary for her success? How does Pa define faith? How would you define it?
6. What does the character of Jess teach us about the powers of observation? What role does observation play in Serafina’s ability to figure out what has been going on at Biltmore?



SERAFINA and the SEVEN STARS

QUESTIONS

for Discussion and Writing

General Questions / After Reading the Book

7. Based on her previous experiences fighting the man in the black cloak, Serafina wants to define the white deer as “evil” (p. 316), but immediately realizes that word does not fit:

“Obviously the white deer was evil: It had been killing people. So it had to be stopped. She and the people of Biltmore were good. So *it* was evil. Right? But the more she thought about it, the more she realized it wasn’t that simple.” (p. 316)

Would you describe the white deer as “evil”? How do you define evil? If the white deer reflects what can be in people, and people can be evil, would that make the white deer evil?

8. Serafina worries that, like her mother, she will become more panther than human. (p. 21-22) Do you think this could happen to Serafina? Why or why not? Are there moments in the story when she seems in danger of this? What might protect her from it?
9. On page 317, Serafina wonders whether the vengeance the white deer grew to reflect came from her, Serafina. What do you think about this theory? Is Serafina, or any other character, ever justified in feeling vengeance?
10. On page 331, Serafina has a revelation about all the battles she has fought. One way of capturing this is “violence leads to violence”; another is “the only way out is through.” Both these phrases appear throughout the book. What do they mean in light of what Serafina learns about how to get through threatening and difficult times?



SERAFINA and the SEVEN STARS

QUESTIONS
for Discussion and Writing

Quotes to Think and Write about

There are many quotable moments in *Serafina and the Seven Stars* that invite reflection and writing. Choose a quote below, or one of your favorite lines from the book, to think about and explore through writing:

“Why were certain things—even things that were obviously and deeply true—often the most difficult things to say to someone?” (p. 26)

“She thought it was interesting. If all the horses in the stable behaved perfectly on their own, was there still a need for the horse trainer? If all the souls in the church were already angels, what would the pastor do? If a mother’s baby cared for itself, would she love the baby as much? It seemed as if human beings longed for everything to be easy, she thought, but deep down, we didn’t want it. It seemed as if everyone had a job to do, a role to play, to fix the always breaking world.” (p. 42)

“Serafina’s blood boiled. She was sitting here at the dinner table, with her pretty hair and her pretty dress, pretending to be one of these people. But she wasn’t one of them. These humans wanted to hunt and kill the animals of the forest. They wanted to hunt and kill her own kind, her own brother and sister. Why would she want to be one of them? Why would she want to *protect* them? Why would she want to be a protector of Biltmore if *this* was Biltmore?” (p. 90)

“She wondered, if Lieutenant Kinsley saw her out in the forest in her true form, how fast would he pull the trigger? Was there truly even a difference between a panther and a girl?” (p. 137)



SERAFINA and the SEVEN STARS

QUESTIONS
for Discussion and Writing

Quotes to Think and Write about

“Her instincts were telling her to go right back into her bedroom, shut the door, lock it, and hide. But she knew she couldn’t do that. *We all have a job to do*, she thought. *And this is mine.*” (p. 147)

“Did everyone have some kind of black panther living inside them?” (p. 167)

“There’s an old saying: *The only way out is through*. Do you understand? When it feels like you’re stuck in a swamp, you gotta keep goin’.... You go on faith... Faith in what you know is true.” (p. 168-169)

“Our character isn’t defined by the battles we win or lose, but by the battles we choose to fight.” (p. 174)

“But if someone is murdering people connected with hunting, then that’s all of us,’ Braeden said. ‘We all live here!’ Serafina’s brow furrowed as she wiped her mouth. Did the acceptance of an act mean you were guilty of the act? She wasn’t sure.” (p. 250)

“*Violence brings violence, so come and get me!*” (p. 278)

“It took *knowledge* to solve these mysteries and defeat these enemies. Not just bravery and determination, not just sharp claws and muscled limbs, but *knowledge*. That’s what made the difference. If we’re going to succeed in whatever we set out to do with our lives, we need to *learn*, Braeden, we need to learn everything we can.” (p. 331-332)



SERAFINA and the SEVEN STARS

QUESTIONS
for Discussion and Writing

Chapter-by-Chapter Questions

Chapter 1

1. Where might Braeden have gone, and why?
2. Why might Serafina have trouble trusting (p. 8) or knowing whether something “was truth or lie?” (p. 8)

Chapter 2

1. Why is Serafina convinced there is an “enemy” among the people arriving at Biltmore? (p. 11)
2. On page 13, we learn that Serafina “had thought when this time of peace finally came, she would bask in the flow of trouble-free days.” But she can’t—why might this be so?
3. On page 14, Serafina wonders whether “the Vanderbilts of the future [would] become people of the Southern mountains?” What do you think?
4. Why does Serafina feel “useless” and “lost?” (p. 17)

Chapter 3

1. Why does Serafina enjoy looking at the planets?
2. On page 22, Serafina feels as though “she was becoming less human and more panther every day.” From what you’ve seen of Serafina’s reactions and emotions so far, do you think this is true? Why or why not?



SERAFINA and the SEVEN STARS

QUESTIONS

for Discussion and Writing

Chapter 4

1. How does Serafina feel about the hunting party having to come to Biltmore? Why might she feel this way?
2. On page 32, Serafina wonders where Braeden gets his energy from, and why he is “brimming with the fullness of life” when she is filled with worry and anxiety. Why do you think Braeden and Serafina have reacted so differently to all the bad things that have happened previously at Biltmore?

Chapter 5

1. Serafina wants to defend the white deer from the hunters, but she also wants to “tear the men apart with her rage.” (p. 35) Why might she feel this way?
2. Why does Serafina suddenly stop chasing the hunters, when she wants to kill them? (p. 36)

Chapter 6

1. Who does Serafina think the hunters were, and why does she think this? (p. 38-39)
2. Why is Braeden now “sickly and pale,” (p. 39) when he was “brimming with life” just a little while before?

Chapter 7

1. Why is it so strange to Serafina that Mr. Vanderbilt comes downstairs to Pa’s workshop?
2. Why does Pa encourage Serafina to go upstairs and watch for danger?
3. Why does Pa warn Serafina that some of the people upstairs “might not take to [her] right away?” (p. 50)
4. Where do you think Braeden has gone, and why do you think this?



SERAFINA and the SEVEN STARS

QUESTIONS

for Discussion and Writing

Chapter 8

1. On page 54, Serafina wonders whether “she just wanted to fight an enemy.” Why might she think this?
2. Serafina is unsure whether the meeting with Braeden even happened, or if it might have been a dream. What do you think, and why?
3. Why might Serafina be doubting her own ability to tell what is real and what is “a figment of her imagination?” (p. 55)
4. Why might the stranger, Jess, warn Serafina at the end of this chapter?

Chapter 9

1. Serafina tells herself that “it’s just a flight of stairs” that will separate her from her Pa, (p. 61) so why is she so disturbed by the idea of living in the upstairs part of Biltmore?
2. Serafina worries that the guests might think she is “putting on airs.” (p. 63) What might this mean, and why would Serafina be worried about it?

Chapter 10

1. Why is Serafina so happy to see her cats and Essie in her new room?
2. Essie tells Serafina not to “let none of them fancy folk give you any guff.” (p. 73) Why might Essie think this would happen?

Chapter 11

1. On page 75, Serafina knows she can’t trust “a single one” of the Vanderbilt’s friends, although she does feel secure with “her people”—the staff at Biltmore. Why might Serafina feel this way?
2. Is Serafina wrong to suspect the Vanderbilt’s friends? Is she right to be more trusting of the Biltmore staff? Why or why not?



SERAFINA and the **SEVEN STARS**

QUESTIONS
for Discussion and Writing

Chapter 12

1. How does Lieutenant Kinsley think about hunting and its purposes?
2. How does Colonel Braddock think about hunting and its purposes?
3. How does Serafina think about hunting and its purposes?
4. What are Serafina's impressions of Lieutenant Kinsley and Colonel Braddock, and what forms her opinions about them?

Chapter 13

1. Why does Serafina think that "Jess took in more information in [a] split second than another person might do in an hour?" (p. 94)
2. On page 96, Serafina is "unsure what to make of" Jess. Why might this be? What contradictory signals does Jess send?
3. Why does Jess call herself a liar? What kinds of lies does she tell?
4. Do you think Serafina should trust Jess? Why or why not?

Chapter 14

1. Why might the hunting dogs not be tracking Serafina, even though she is in the form of a panther?
2. Why is the Colonel so insistent that he should be the one to shoot the mountain lions?

Chapter 15

1. On page 102, why does Serafina not want her brother and sister to run to "the ridge they were headed for?"
2. What do you think Serafina will do when she reaches the hunters?



SERAFINA and the SEVEN STARS

QUESTIONS

for Discussion and Writing

Chapter 16

1. What do you think is attacking the group, and why do you think this?

Chapter 17

1. What's the Colonel's relationship with Jess? How would you describe it?
2. On page 113, Serafina wonders whether it's "possible that *she* had done this? ...Had she lost her mind in some kind of revenge-fueled rage? ...Had she actually *killed* them?" What do you think, and what are your reasons for your opinion?

Chapter 18

1. On page 114, Jess is described as Serafina's "friend." Do you think she is a "friend" to Serafina? Why or why not?
2. Why has Serafina "been second-guessing herself for months. But this time she was sure?" (p. 115)

Chapter 19

1. Do you think the creature Serafina encounters at the end of this chapter is the one who attacked the hunters on the ridge? What are your reasons for your opinion?

Chapter 20

1. On page 119, why is Serafina relieved to see the white deer?
2. Where do you think Braeden has gone, and why?
3. Why does Serafina feel "hunted" instead of followed? (p. 121)
4. Why might Serafina ask the angel for help?
5. On page 126, we are told that Serafina "didn't understand this evil. Or how to fight it. Was it inside her? But one way or another, with or without Braeden, she had to do it." (126) What do you think the "evil" is, and where do you think it comes from? What in the book so far makes you think this?



SERAFINA and the **SEVEN STARS**

QUESTIONS

for Discussion and Writing

Chapter 21

1. Why might Mr. Vanderbilt doubt Serafina? (p. 129)
2. Why does Serafina feel guilty about leaving Jess?

Chapter 22

1. Why does Pa understand what Serafina needs to do without her telling him? (p. 132)
2. Why is Lieutenant Kinsley “hopeful” that Serafina will join the search party? (p. 135) She is a thirteen-year-old girl. Why might he think she would be valuable in the search?

Chapter 23

1. Why might Lieutenant Kinsley be missing? (p. 142)
2. What or who might be running outside Serafina’s door?

Chapter 24

1. What do you think of Serafina’s theory about what happened to Mr. Kettering? (p. 148) What’s your theory, and what’s your evidence for it?
2. What might be making the *tap-tap-tap* noise?

Chapter 25

1. What might the creature be that Serafina sees on page 151?
2. Why would the white deer come inside the house? (p. 152)



SERAFINA and the **SEVEN STARS**

QUESTIONS
for Discussion and Writing

Chapter 26

1. On page 153, the white deer is described as “knowing.” What might it know?
2. Why might the deer be changing shape? (p. 154)
3. Why might the deer leave Serafina alone after it has confronted her?
4. Why might the body have disappeared at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 27

1. What worries does Serafina have about how Mr. Vanderbilt thinks of her? (p. 158-159) Why?
2. By the end of the chapter, Serafina calls the white deer her “enemy.” How does she know it is an enemy?

Chapter 28

1. Why might Mr. Vanderbilt attack the cook? (p. 164)
2. On page 165, Serafina starts to lose her ability to chase after and capture the culprit. Why? What makes this happen to her?

Chapter 29

1. On page 167, Serafina wonders, “How do you respond to something that’s impossible?” What do you think Serafina should do, and why?
2. Why can’t Serafina tell Pa “who she truly was?” (p. 169)



SERAFINA and the SEVEN STARS

QUESTIONS

for Discussion and Writing

Chapter 30

1. Why doesn't Serafina want to face Mr. Vanderbilt? (p. 172)
2. Why might Serafina keep returning to the Angel's Glade?
3. On page 174, Serafina wonders, "What exactly was she fighting for?" What do you think she's fighting (or should be fighting) for? What are your reasons?
4. On page 175, Serafina wonders if Biltmore could be evil. What do you think, and what are your reasons for and against this interpretation?
5. What does Serafina decide the one thing she must do is? (p. 176) Why do you think she chooses this?

Chapter 31

1. Why does Serafina *sneak* into Biltmore at the beginning of the chapter?
2. What kinds of creatures do you think are trying to get into the nursery, and why do you think this?

Chapter 32

1. What might the creatures on pages 183-184 be?
2. On page 187, Serafina wonders if Mr. Vanderbilt might want her to kill him. How might this be possible?
3. On pages 187-188, Serafina tries to figure out whether there is a pattern in who has been attacked. What pattern do you see?
4. Why does Serafina decide she has to take Nell out of Biltmore?



SERAFINA and the **SEVEN STARS**

QUESTIONS
for Discussion and Writing

Chapter 33

1. What does Serafina think will happen to Mrs. Vanderbilt if she leaves her behind?
2. Why does Essie help Serafina take the baby?
3. On page 194, why does Serafina think that “the people of Biltmore weren’t going to understand. They weren’t going to forgive her?” Do you think she’s right?

Chapter 34

1. Why does Nolan help Serafina and Essie take the baby?
2. On page 201, who takes Serafina’s hand? How do you know?

Chapter 35

1. On page 203, why do the riders surround Serafina and point rifles at her, even when Braeden tells them not to?
2. On page 205, why does Serafina not cry out or fight back?
3. How does Braeden convince the others about Serafina?
4. What else persuades the Vanderbilts that Serafina did not kidnap the baby?

Chapter 36

1. Why does Braeden have no doubts about Serafina, even when she doubts herself? (p. 214)
2. Why does Braeden come back home at this time?
3. Why might Braeden be willing to believe Serafina over his uncle? (p. 217-218)



SERAFINA and the SEVEN STARS

QUESTIONS for Discussion and Writing

Chapter 37

1. Where has Lieutenant Kinsley been all this time?
2. What did Jess do to her father's gun, and how did it affect the battle during the mountain lion hunt?
3. What did the white deer do to Kinsley and Jess?

Chapter 38

1. Why does Kinsley want to shoot the white deer?
2. Why does Braeden not want him to?
3. What do you think should be done with the white deer? What do you think its role is in what has been happening, and what are your reasons?
4. Who might the medieval warrior be, and why?
5. Where might the lions have come from?
6. On page 228, why does Kinsley say "that explains a lot?"
7. In what ways do the lions not act like normal predators?

Chapter 39

1. How does Serafina defeat the lions and the warrior?
2. What about the warrior's behavior does Serafina find disturbing? Why?

Chapter 40

1. How does Jess know Kinsley isn't dead?
2. How does Serafina use the evidence of the lions and warrior to try to figure out what has been going on? What does the evidence tell her?



SERAFINA and the SEVEN STARS

QUESTIONS

for Discussion and Writing

Chapter 41

1. Why does Serafina turn into a panther and scare the horses?
2. On page 241, things begin to make sense to Serafina. What helps her make the connections she needs to understand the mystery?
3. What do you think Serafina expects to find at the Diana statue?

Chapter 42

1. Why does the missing white deer mean “everything” to Serafina and fill her with relief? (p. 244) Relief about what?
2. Why did Serafina hope the statue of George Washington Vanderbilt was gone?

Chapter 43

1. Why is Serafina so happy at the beginning of this chapter?
2. What do you think the victims have in common? (p. 247)
3. How would you describe the mystery’s connection to hunting?

Chapter 44

1. Why does Serafina hug Mr. Vanderbilt at the beginning of the chapter, when he clearly does not expect it?
2. Why might the men be so shocked at the idea of abandoning Biltmore?
3. What does Mr. Vanderbilt come to understand about the mystery in this chapter?
4. Why does Serafina want to go to the library?



SERAFINA and the SEVEN STARS

QUESTIONS

for Discussion and Writing

Chapter 45

1. Why do Serafina and Braeden think the answer might lie in astronomy?
2. How might myths about the Seven Stars help Serafina and Braeden?
3. On page 262, what does Braeden mean by “It’s a reflection of ourselves at the moment when it occurred.... Like a mirror into a mirror. It’s a reflection of *us*, all turned against us?”
4. If the magic is only supposed to last for a little while, why is it still continuing?

Chapter 46

1. How does Serafina think they should treat the white deer?
2. What is Braeden’s approach to the white deer, and why is it different from Serafina’s?
3. What do you think they should do to the white deer to end the spell?
4. At the end of the chapter, Braeden asks, “How did you know? Did you read it in a book?” Serafina just keeps walking and doesn’t answer him. What is the answer to Braeden’s question? How did Serafina know?

Chapter 47

1. What is the doppelgänger, and who destroys it?
2. How might Braeden, Jess, and Serafina escape?

Chapter 48

1. Why do Serafina and Braeden separate from Jess?
2. Why does Serafina change into a panther at the end of the chapter?



SERAFINA and the SEVEN STARS

QUESTIONS

for Discussion and Writing

Chapter 49

1. What is Serafina's strategy with the white deer, and why does she not attack it?
2. How is Pa saved?

Chapter 50

1. What happens when Pa realizes Serafina is the panther?
2. How is it different from what Serafina expects?
3. How does it make Serafina feel?
4. Who starts firing arrows at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 51

1. How does Serafina save Mrs. Vanderbilt?
2. Why is it "no use" to fight the white deer? (p. 285)
3. How does Serafina know what to do, (p. 285) and what is her plan?

Chapter 52

1. Who shoots at the gargoyles?
2. Where is Serafina trying to take the white deer, and why?
3. Why does Serafina pause to remember Kinsley's words, "*It started following us. It's not going to give up?*" (p. 291)

Chapter 53

1. What attacks Braeden and Serafina?
2. On page 295, what might Braeden be doing to help Serafina, and how might it help her carry out her plan?



SERAFINA and the SEVEN STARS

QUESTIONS

for Discussion and Writing

Chapter 54

1. On page 299, Serafina realizes that “she could not fight. She could not defeat her enemy.” What does she do instead?
2. Why does Serafina think, “*You need to kill me.*” and “*Violence brings violence?*” (p. 299)
3. What does the angel do, and what happens as a result?
4. Why might the attacks of the white deer “mean nothing to the angel?” (p. 301)

Chapter 55

1. Serafina wonders of the angel, “*Who are you? What is your name? Why have you helped me?*” (p. 304) What do you think the answers to these questions are, and what are your reasons?
2. Why might the angel disappear?

Chapter 56

1. Why might crows be circling over Braeden?

Chapter 57

1. How does Serafina release Braeden from the wyvern?
2. On page 310, why do Serafina and Braeden climb inside a hollow tree?

Chapter 58

1. Why did Braeden summon the crows?
2. Why is Serafina surprised that Braeden trusted in her plan even when he didn’t know what her plan was?
3. What does it mean that “the angel in the glade already had a spirit” (p. 314) and how might Serafina have known this?



SERAFINA and the **SEVEN STARS**

QUESTIONS
for Discussion and Writing

Chapter 59

1. Do you think the white deer was “evil?” (p. 316) Why or why not?
2. Serafina points out that the white deer did not attack her and Braeden at first, but did later. (p. 316-317) What are the possible explanations for this?

Chapter 60

1. Why does Serafina expect to see people back at Biltmore?
2. Who/what remains at Biltmore instead?
3. Whom does Serafina spot on the sorrel horse at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 61

1. What might happen to Jess? What do you think should happen?
2. How has Serafina’s relationship with Pa changed?

Chapter 62

1. What has Essie figured out when she says she “didn’t just fall off the turnip truck?” (p. 329)
2. On page 331, what does Serafina realize about all the battles she has fought?
3. Why does Serafina now “understand” if Braeden has to go back to school? (p. 331)
4. On pages 331-332, what does Serafina realize about the role of knowledge in her successes?



SERAFINA and the SEVEN STARS

QUESTIONS
for Discussion and Writing

Chapter 63

1. Who does Braeden think should attend school on the Biltmore estate?
2. How does Braeden persuade Mr. Vanderbilt?

Chapter 64

1. How did gazing at the stars and planets help Braeden and Serafina when they were separated?
2. Why couldn't Braeden "find the words" to tell Serafina the day he left on the train?
(p. 340) What might those words have been?