



**Title:** Serafina and the Twisted Staff  
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**Publisher:** Disney Hyperion  
**Audiobook:** Penguin Random House - Listening Library

**Genres:** Historical Fiction  
 Mystery-thriller  
 Fantasy

**Grades:** 5th through 10th Grade

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

**Formats:** Hardcover ISBN-10: 1484775031  
 Audiobook ASIN: B01HSH125Y  
 Audiobook CD ISBN: 0451485610  
 Ebook ASIN: B01EMJ2W00

**Length:** 384 pages

**Websites:** robert-beatty.com  
 disneybooks.com

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Educational materials available for Serafina and the Twisted Staff

- Writing & Discussion
- Activities
- **Vocabulary**

#### COMMON CORE COMPATIBLE

*Serafina and the Twisted Staff* and its educational materials are well suited for **Common Core** curriculum.

Go to [robert-beatty.com/education](http://robert-beatty.com/education) for links to the PDF files, teacher testimonials, and other curriculum resources.

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Version 1.1 - August 20, 2016





## A WORD GRAPHIC

**#1** **Word:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>It looks like this:</b>	<b>Definition:</b>
	<b>Synonyms</b>
	<b>Antonyms</b>

**An original sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

**#2** **Word:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>It looks like this:</b>	<b>Definition:</b>
	<b>Synonyms</b>
	<b>Antonyms</b>

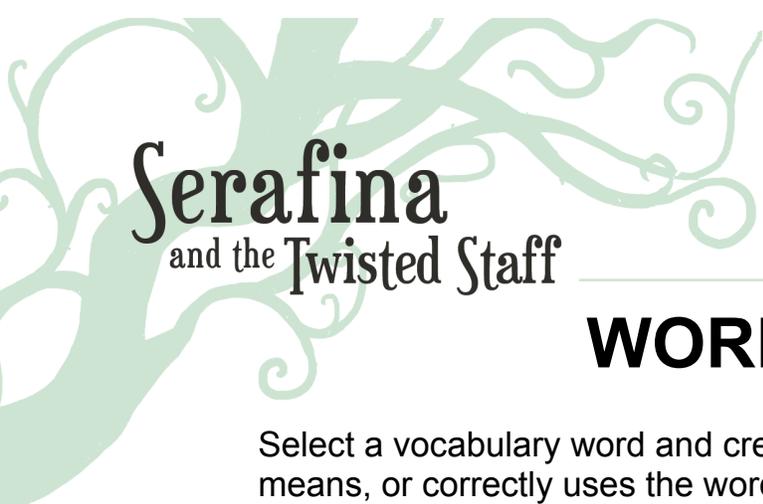
**An original sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_



## FOUR SQUARE Vocabulary Style

- Select a vocabulary word.
- Write the word in the center box.
- Record the information from each circle in the square it's attached to.

<p>The definition in your words.</p>	<p>What the word has to do with the book.</p>
<p>A connection you have to the word— a memory, how it makes you feel...</p>	<p>3 synonyms for the word</p>



# WORD CARTOON

Select a vocabulary word and create a cartoon that either shows what the word means, or correctly uses the word.

word \_\_\_\_\_

definition \_\_\_\_\_

sentence \_\_\_\_\_

word \_\_\_\_\_

definition \_\_\_\_\_

sentence \_\_\_\_\_



## Figurative Language

Figurative Language is when a writer expresses meaning through the comparison of one thing to another in a creative way. This includes similes, metaphors, personification, and other techniques. In some cases, figurative language is meant to “paint a picture” in the reader’s mind. It’s best when the figurative language also captures the voice of the story. And of course, it’s important to avoid figurative language that breaks outside of the setting and character of the story, for example, it wouldn’t be good in this story if Serafina compared something to a computer, which she had never seen before. Here are a few examples of figurative language in the story:

### **METAPHORS**

- P. 27 “She stumbled through the sea of trees...”
- P. 56 “A storm of questions flooded her mind...”
- P. 312 “The trap had sprung. She and Braeden were the mice.”

### **SIMILES**

- P.18 “They coursed her like a pack of wolves on a deer.”
- P. 23 “She reckoned he must be one of the local mountain folk, like her pa, who were well known for being tough as nails and twice as sharp, but the boy had fought as hard as a rabid bobcat.”
- P. 48 “With its slate-blue roof, elegant arches, and spied towers, it looked like a fairy tale castle of old, the kind she had read about in the mansion’s library when everyone else was asleep.”
- P. 54 “Seeming to realize that Braeden wasn’t falling for her precious-princess routine, the English girl changed tone as fast as a rattlesnake changes the direction of its wind.”
- P. 142 “She walked along a stoney reach where the moonlit mist fell down the mountains like the waves of a silver sea.”
- P. 177 “It felt like a salve on the wounds of her heart.”
- P. 236 “It was like a waterfall of rats.”
- P. 290 “He was not wearing a long coat or carrying a walking stick, but he was gazing into the camera and his eyes look like dots of silver.”



## Figurative Language

### PERSONIFICATION

- P. 126 "Was the house itself turning against her?"  
P. 163 "The mountains were alive with moving water."  
P. 187 "Waysa's words crashed into her, but she tried not to listen."

### ALLUSIONS

- P. 89 Ming Dynasty (vase)  
P. 364 "Night Before Christmas" poem

### FORESHADOWING

- Ch 1 - exodus of the birds  
Ch 6 - should have destroyed  
Ch 14 Otters and all the other animals leaving

### ONOMATOPOEIA

- P. 298 "tink"

### REPETITION

"a tick-tick-ticking sound, followed by a raspy hiss"

### ALLITERATION

- P. 265 "Her feet and hands kept sticking to the ground, making little sucking and snapping noises as she moved."  
P. 167 "She'd seen such caves where the river came down in a deafening roar of churning whitewater, but here, the water poured down in a smooth, even flow, with sunlight passing through it, creating a shimmering, silver wall."  
P. 230 "What about your dinner?" she asked, gesturing, toward the glittering folk gathering in the Banquet Hall in the distance."

### ZOOMORPHISM

- P. 140 The metal snake weaved in and out of the trees, but as it crossed a trestle bridge over a river, a plume of white steam roiled up into the moonlit clouds."  
P. 167 "She'd seen such caves where the river came down in a deafening roar of churning whitewater, but here, the water poured down in a smooth, even flow, with sunlight passing through it, creating a shimmering, silver wall."



## Figurative Language

### ASSIGNMENTS

1. Pick one or more of the examples of figurative language and explain what it means and why the author used it in the way he did.
2. Pick a character or item (such as the twisted staff, snakes, or pa) in the story and use figurative language to describe.
3. Following-up on #2, now create figurative language that breaks outside the character's point-of-view and/or the setting of the story.



## **Serafina's Character-Driven Phrases**

In addition to her Southern dialect (which is covered in a separate section), Serafina uses a variety of special phrases and words that help develop her character and enrich the voice of the story. Because of her unusual origin, most of these intertwine her viewpoint with the animal world.

### **Character driven phrases**

P. 2 “As she dropped onto the rat, she snatched him up quicker than a whiskerblink and clutched him in her hand.”

P. 51 “mornin’ y’all. I’m just back from catchin’ some wood rats and nearly gettin’ eaten up by a pack of wolfhounds. How you two doin’ this mornin’?”

P. 82 “ She had to do everything she could to keep from purring.”

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

1. Pick one or more of the phrases above and describe in your own words what it means and why the author used it in the way he did.
2. Using your imagination, describe a new character (such as a boy who loves dogs or a man who only thinks about fishing) and provide several phrases that character might use.
3. Serafina has a peculiar way of speaking and thinking. This is part of the story’s “voice.” What are some of the characteristics of Serafina’s voice/perception in the story? What does Serafina’s way of expression add to the story? She’s using phrases that you may not be familiar with, but do they make you feel closer to the character or farther away?



## Southern Dialect

In addition to being filled with a variety of interesting standard English words, *Serafina and the Twisted Staff* is filled with Southern dialect and local idioms. An **idiom** is an unusual word or expression that is characteristic of a certain people. Serafina and her pa (Chapters 9 and 10, and Essie (Chapter 11) are the characters in the story who tend to use these phrases, while the Vanderbilt's tend to speak more standard English.

### Example Southern Dialect Sentences

P. 65 “Her pa had often boasted that the Biltmore had the first and finest electric elevator in the South, but he seemed a might less keen on the machine today.”

P. 67 “I ain’t no banjo, Pa, so quit pickin’ on me.”

P. 75 “My nanny and papaw raised me for a while, out on a farm up Madison County way, pert nigh Walnut, but when they passed, I didn’t have nowhere to go.”

P. 83 “I’d be much obliged,” Essie said, nodding.

P. 86 “If we stay holded up here like a couple of treed coons much longer, they’re gonna send the dogs out for us.”

P. 96 “But just as she was looking at it, something tiny pulled a key from the ring, darted down Mrs. King’s dress, and shot along the floor quicker than two blinks and a sneeze.”

P. 192 “And as her pa started making their breakfast, he gave her a bit of a gentle talkin-to.”

P. 57 “I said you could go out into the forest at night to spend time with your mother, but you’re breakin’ my heart, comin’ home lookin’ like this.”

P. 64 I’m needin’ your word on this,” he said.

### Some general tendencies

Back in 1899, the Southern mountain folk often put an “a” in front of their verbs so that their sentences had a smoother, more sing-songy feel to them, such as a-runnin, a-holdin, and a-comin.

The Southern mountain folk often flipped their words around and added many more words than we use today, like when Pa says “That’s way back up in through there to them rocks.” (p. 195)



## Serafina's Southern Idioms (continued)

### Southern Words

reckoned	figured out or believed (page 4)
yonder	over there (page 5)
sigogglin	crooked (page 65)
briggity	filled with self-importance (also pronounced/spelled biggity) (page 67)
bothernation	oh my (used in vexation and annoyance) (page 68)
highfalutin	fancy and elite social status (page 53)
yourn	yours (page 59 & 81)
momucking	destructive mischief (page 194)

### Others to discover while reading...

eh law	OMG, as in "Eh law, what happened to you, child?"
liketa	almost or just about
haint	ghost
run-in	fight or conflict
a spell	a little while
schoolin'	education
ain't / hain't	isn't it
outten / outta	out of
everwho	whoever (they also used everwhat, although it's not in the book)
poke sallet	dish of cooked greens made from pokeweed
right	as in "right sorry" means very or extremely
a mite	a little bit
awful puny	sick

### ASSIGNMENTS

1. Read Chapter 9, 10, or 11 and make a list of examples of Southern dialect.
2. What other stories have you read that utilize dialect and idioms to achieve a strong voice?
3. Pick a different time and place (maybe even your own current time and place), and list several expressions or words that you might use to develop the voice of your story.
4. Discuss or write about other English dialects in America and the world.



## Vocabulary Words and Definitions

### Chapter 1

Ferocious	very fierce or violent
Adorned	to make (someone or something) more attractive by adding something beautiful
Gargoyle	a carved figure of a human or animal on a building
Dignitaries	people of high rank or important position
Luxuriously	very comfortable and expensive: richly appealing
Newfangled	recently invented or developed and hard to understand
Scintillating	sparkling with brilliant light

### Chapter 2

Calamity	an event that causes great harm and suffering
Unison	a harmonious agreement or union
Meandering	a winding path or course
Trepidation	a feeling of fear that causes you to hesitate because you think something bad or unpleasant is going to happen
Gnarled	having many twists and hard bumps or knots
Dismay	worried, disappointed, or upset
Rustic	characteristic of or resembling country people
Malevolence	a desire to cause harm to another person
Craggy	rugged and rough in a way that suggests strength



**Chapter 3**

Vicious	very violent and cruel
Indignation	anger caused by something that is unfair or wrong
Mongrel	a dog with parents of mixed breeds
Feral	resembling a wild beast

**Chapter 4**

Boscage	a growth of trees or shrubs
Terrain	the physical features of the land
Chute	a narrow tube or passage that things and people go through
Bedraggled	wet or dirty from being in rain or mud

**Chapter 5**

Disguise	to change the usual appearance so that something is not recognized
Undulating	resembling slow, long waves
Prominence	the state of being important or well-known
Catastrophe	a terrible disaster

**Chapter 6**

Poultice	something wrapped in a cloth and then placed on the skin for healing purposes
Lichen	a type of small, moss-like plant that grows on rocks and walls
Lore	traditional knowledge or belief
Diligently	characterized by steady and earnest effort
Cleave	to split as if by a cutting blow



**Chapter 7**

Utter                      to speak or pronounce  
Guise                     general external appearance

**Chapter 8**

Fedora                    a soft felt hat with a curled brim  
Stave                     a stick, staff, or pole  
Satchel                  a small bag with a shoulder strap  
Attire                     clothing, especially rich or splendid garments  
Accoutrement         clothing, accessories, equipment and other personal items  
Feign                     to represent fictitiously; put on an appearance of  
Facetiously             not meant to be taken seriously or literally  
Foreboding             a strong inner feeling of approach evil or misfortune  
Lacquer                  a clear liquid that dries to form a hard protective coating

**Chapter 9**

Inkling                   a slight, uncertain idea about something

**Chapter 10**

Scuttlebutt             rumors or gossip  
Bushel                    a large amount (a basket-like container for carrying fruit and grain)  
Rudiments              the basic principles and fundamentals of an area of knowledge  
Availing                  to make use of



**Chapter 11**

Interrogate	to ask someone questions in a thorough and often forceful way
Warily	suspiciously
Tentatively	not done with confidence: uncertain and hesitant
Feminine	relating to, or suited to women or girls
Mesmerizing	to interest or amaze so much that nothing else is noticed
Array	to lay things out so that they are in order or look attractive

**Chapter 12**

Vulnerable	easily hurt or harmed physically, mentally, or emotionally
Cameo	a piece of jewelry that has a carved design
Withering	acting or serving to cut down or destroy
Ming	a Chinese dynasty dated 1368–1644
Bristling	a short, stiff hair, fiber
Poised	still, but ready to move
Intricately	having many interrelated facets or parts
Stalwart	marked by outstanding strength and vigor of body, mind, or spirit



**Chapter 13**

Revelry	a wild and noisy celebration
Unequivocally	to do something without showing or allowing any doubt
Bewilderment	to be very confused
Clasp	a device for holding together objects or parts of something
Hew	to shape something by cutting with a sharp tool such as an ax
Vermin	small pest animals that are difficult to get rid of

**Chapter 14**

Treacherous	very dangerous and difficult to deal with
Fatal	causing death
Ambience	the mood or feeling of a particular place
Conceited	having or showing too much pride in your own worth or superiority

**Chapter 15**

Chasm	a deep hole or opening in the surface of the earth
Sibilant	to make a sound like a hiss
Crescendo	to gradually increase to a high volume
Torrent	a large amount of rushing water
Crepuscular	relating to twilight
Deranged	to be insane



**Chapter 16**

Brandishing            to wave something, such as a weapon, in a threatening or excited manner  
Anguish                extreme suffering, grief, or pain

**Chapter 17**

Trekking                to go on a long and often difficult journey

**Chapter 18**

Decrepit                old and in bad condition or poor health

**Chapter 19**

Tufted                    a small bunch of feathers, hairs, grass, etc., that grow close together  
                                  AND a style of furniture in which the fabric is pulled down by buttons  
Marauding              to roam about and raid and steal from others  
Roil                        to twist and coil in a turbulent way

**Chapter 20**

Cadaver                 a dead body  
Nuisance                something that cause annoyance or minor trouble



**Chapter 22**

Uncanny	strange or unusual in a way that is surprising or difficult to understand
Discernible	to see or understand the difference
Taut	very tight from being pulled or stretched
Amethysts	a clear purple gem
Phenomenon	something that is unusual to understand or explain fully
Awe	a strong feeling of wonder or fear
Guttural	formed or pronounced in the throat

**Chapter 23**

Conjurer	a wizard, a person who practices the magical arts
Affliction	something such as a disease that causes pain or suffering

**Chapter 24**

Instinctively	comes naturally, from the gut, rather than through formal learning
Rejuvenate	to give new strength or energy

**Chapter 25**

Subterfuge	the use of tricks especially to hide, avoid, or get something
Deceit	dishonest, tricky behavior
Necromancers	the practice of talking to the spirits of dead people

**Chapter 26**

Jubilee	a celebration
Reproach	an expression of disapproval
Hideous	very ugly or disgusting



**Chapter 28**

Assuage to make something less painful or severe

**Chapter 30**

Ethereal light, airy, something that is other worldly

Saunter to walk along in a slow and relaxed manner

Cobble to patch or put together by different parts

Extinguish to put out flames or put an end to

**Chapter 31**

Gall brazen boldness that includes defiance

**Chapter 32**

Profusion a large amount of something

Cumbersome hard to handle or manage because of size or weight

**Chapter 34**

Stout thick, brave and strong

Demeanor a person's overall behavior

Confounded bewildered and confused

Agitate to disturb, excite, and anger

Deteriorating to become worse as time passes

**Chapter 35**

Exasperation the state of being very annoyed or upset



**Chapter 36**

Valiant                      courageous, good, and noble

**Chapter 38**

Rouse                      to wake up or cause to become active

Vengeance                revenge

Scroungers                people who gather items that don't specifically belong to them, but isn't necessarily stealing

**Chapter 39**

Subsistence                providing food and support for direct use, rather than for sale

Depleted                    to greatly reduce and/or use up

Reclamation                to restore or recover something to its previous value or state

Happenstance              something that happens by chance

Depraved                    having an evil and immoral character

Conniving                    to secretly plan an evil deed

Vestiges                      the last small part that remains of something that existed before

**Chapter 40**

Lair                            the place where a wild animal hides and lives

Parquet                      a floor made of small pieces of wood that fit together to form a pattern

**Chapter 44**

Bellows                      a device that produces a strong blast of air when its sides are pressed together

Careened                    to go forward quickly without control, swinging way to the side



**Chapter 45**

Condescendingly with an attitude of superiority, of being better than others

**Chapter 47**

Kith familiar friends, neighbors, and relatives

**Chapter 48**

Skeins a flock of geese and ducks in flight

Echelons groups arranged in a v shape and/or in parallel lines

**Chapter 49**

Smithereens small pieces; bits

Charlatan a fake who claims to have more knowledge/skill than he or she actually has

**Chapter 50**

Opulent wealthy, rich, fancy, beautiful

**Chapter 51**

Nefarious extremely wicked



**QUIZ Chapter 1-10**

<b>Vocabulary Word</b>	<b>Definition</b>
— 1. Ferocious	A. a desire to cause harm to another person
— 2. Scintillating	B. anger caused by something that is unfair or wrong
— 3. Calamity	C. traditional knowledge or belief
— 4. Gnarled	D. general external appearance
— 5. Malevolence	E. sparkling with brilliant light
— 6. Craggy	F. having many twists and hard bumps or knots
— 7. Indignation	G. very fierce or violent
— 8. Feral	H. rumors or gossip. talk or stories about someone that may not be true
— 9. Disguise	I. an event that causes great harm and suffering
— 10. Lore	J. to represent fictitiously; put on an appearance of
— 11. Guise	K. rugged and rough in a way that suggests strength
___ 12. Feign	L. to change the usual appearance so that people will not recognize that person or thing
___ 13. Facetiously	M. not meant to be taken seriously or literally
___ 14. Scuttlebutt	N. relating to, or resembling a wild beast



**QUIZ Chapters 11-20**

<b>Vocabulary Word</b>	<b>Definition</b>
___ 1. Array	A. to be very confused
___ 2. Ming	B. extreme suffering, grief, or pain
___ 3. Stalwart	C. marked by outstanding strength and vigor of body, mind, or spirit
___ 4. Unequivocally	D. to do something without showing or allowing any doubt
___ 5. Bewilderment	E. old and in bad condition or poor health
___ 6. Ambience	F. a Chinese dynasty dated 1368–1644
___ 7. Conceited	G. to make a sound like a hiss
___ 8. Sibilation	H. to move in a violent and confused way
___ 9. Anguish	I. having or showing too much pride in your own worth or goodness
___ 10. Trekking	J. to place things in a particular position so that they are in order or look attractive
___ 11. Decrepit	K. a person, thing, or situation that is annoying or that cause trouble or problems
___ 12. Marauding	L. to go on a long and often difficult journey
___ 13. Roil	M. the mood or feeling of a particular place
___ 14. Nuisance	N. to roam about and raid and steal from others



**QUIZ Chapters 21-30**

<b>Vocabulary Word</b>	<b>Definition</b>
___ 1. Uncanny	A. to make (something, such as an unpleasant feeling) less painful, severe
___ 2. Conjurer	B. very tight from being pulled or stretched : not loose or slack
___ 3. Awe	C. to make by putting together different parts
___ 4. Taut	D. one that practices magic arts
___ 5. Affliction	E. based on feelings or desires that do not come from thinking or learning
___ 6. Instinctively	F. to give new strength or energy to (something)
___ 7. Rejuvenate	G. to put out something burning or to cause the end or death of (something)
___ 8. Subterfuge	H. a strong feeling of fear or respect and also wonder
___ 9. Deceit	I. the practice of talking to the spirits of dead people
___ 10. Necromancers	J. strange or unusual in a way that is surprising or difficult to understand
___ 11. Assuage	K. light, airy, other worldly
___ 12. Ethereal	L. dishonest behavior
___ 13. Cobble	M. something (such as a disease) that causes pain or suffering
___ 14. Extinguish	N. the use of secretiveness and tricks to hide, avoid, or get something



**QUIZ Chapters 31 - 40**

<b>Vocabulary Word</b>	<b>Definition</b>
___ 1. Gall	A. the place where a wild animal lives
___ 2. Happenstance	B. very evil : having or showing an evil and immoral character
___ 3. Demeanor	C. to gather or borrow items without intending to return or replace them
___ 4. Confounded	D. the state of being very annoyed or upset
___ 5. Agitate	E. brazen boldness that includes defiance
___ 6. Exasperation	F. very confused
___ 7. Valiant	G. to disturb, excite, or anger (someone)
___ 8. Scroungers	H. courageous, good, and noble
___ 9. Depleted	I. to secretly plan an evil deed
___ 10. Depraved	J. to be used up or heavily reduced
___ 11. Conniving	K. a person's overall behavior
___ 12. Vestiges	L. the last small part that remains of something that existed before
___ 13. Lair	M. something that happens by chance



**QUIZ Chapters 41-52**

<b>Vocabulary Word</b>	<b>Definition</b>
___ 1. Bellows	A. small pieces; bits:
___ 2. Careened	B. groups arranged in Vs or parallel lines
___ 3. Condescendingly	C. a device that produces a strong blast of air
___ 4. Kith	when its sides are pressed together
___ 5. Skeins	D. familiar friends, neighbors, or relatives
___ 6. Echelons	E. extremely wicked
___ 7. Smithereens	F. acting like you believe you are more intelligent
___ 8. Charlatan	or better than other people
___ 9. Yestermorn	G. wealthy, rich, fancy, beautiful
___ 10. Opulent	H. a flock of geese or ducks in flight
___ 11. Nefarious	I. a person who claims to have more knowledge
	or skill than he or she actually has
	J. to sway to the side, out of control
	K. yesterday morning



**QUIZ ANSWER KEYS**

**Ch1-10**

1. G
2. E
3. I
4. F
5. A
6. K
7. B
8. N
9. L
10. C
11. D
12. J
13. M
14. H

**Ch 11-20**

1. J
2. F
3. C
4. D
5. A
6. M
7. I
8. G
9. B
10. L
11. E
12. N
13. H
14. K

**Ch 21-30**

1. J
2. D
3. H
4. B
5. M
6. E
7. F
8. N
9. L
10. I
11. A
12. K
13. C
14. G

**Ch 31-40**

1. E
2. M
3. K
4. F
5. G
6. D
7. H
8. C
9. J
10. B
11. I
12. L
13. A

**Ch 41-52**

1. C
2. J
3. F
4. D
5. H
6. B
7. A
8. I
9. K
10. G
11. E