

Half a Chance

By Cynthia Lord

Annotation

- Lucy's family moves to a small, lakeside community in New Hampshire. She and her new friend Nate secretly plan to spend the summer taking photos for a contest which her professional photographer father will be judging. To their surprise, they learn that photos can sometimes show more than people want to see.

Book Talk

- Lucy's family moves again - this time to an old house on a lake. Lucy tries to see her new home through a camera lens, like her father would. He's a famous photographer, always away on a shoot. Lucy wonders if her photos might ever meet his high standards. Then she learns that he's judging a photo contest and she decides to enter anonymously. Lucy makes friends with Nate, the boy next door. She learns to kayak and joins in the community watch of nearby nesting loons. She stays focused on taking photos for the contest. Slowly her photos reveal something to Nate...his grandmother is changing, her memory is fading. Nate and Lucy learn to capture the beauty in moments and that life is full of inevitable change.

Book Trailers

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSyE4vszdow>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vOibyNmtfJU>

Author on the Internet

- Website: <http://www.cynthialord.com/half-a-chance.html>
- Blog: <http://cynthialord.livejournal.com/>
- Email: cindy@cynthialord.com
- Twitter: [@Cynthia_Lord](#)
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/cynthia.lord?fref=ts>

Items to use in a library display

- Kayak, oars/paddles, camera, model of a loon, pinecones, sunscreen and insect repellent

Food

- Popsicles, p. 27; "No Mores": graham crackers, peanut butter, with toppings...unsalted cashews, raisins, granola, Christmas-colored sprinkles,

shredded coconut, candy Red Hots, dried cranberries, p. 76; ice cream with strawberries, bananas, hot fudge, and maraschino cherries, p. 86-7.

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics

- <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/discussion-questions-half-chance-cynthia-lord>

First Line of the Book

- "Lucy, we're going to love this place!" Dad called to me from the porch of the faded, red-shingled cottage with white trim.

Non-Fiction Companion Titles

- *Loon* by Susan Vande Griek and Karen Reczuch
- *Oh Look! Baby Loons!* by F. C. West

What to Read Next

- *Counting By 7s* by Holly Goldberg Sloan
- *Absolutely Almost* by Lisa Graff

Other Books by this Author

- <http://www.cynthialord.com/books.html>

Additional Resources

- Music: Row, Row, Row Your Boat, p. 58; B-I-N-G-O using the name Ansel, p.58
- Interview with the author:
http://www.meghan-mccarthy.com/authorstalk_cynthialord.html
- Lesson ideas: Photo Scavenger Hunt
<http://www.cynthialord.com/half-a-chance.html>
- Interview with the author:
<http://mrschureads.blogspot.com/2014/05/newbery-honor-author-cynthia-lord.html>