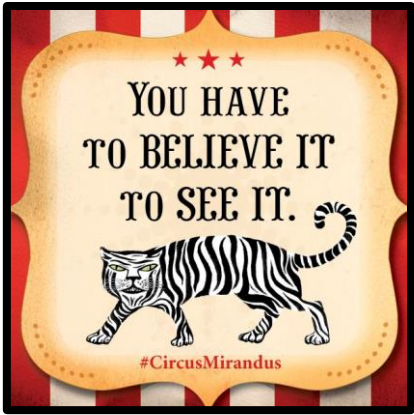


Circus Mirandus
by Cassie Beasley

Possible Discussion Questions



p. 3 – Micah Tuttle knew that most old ladies were ... basically chocolate cakes and warm sweaters on the inside. ... Micah's great-aunt, Gertrudis, was not. ... On the inside, Aunt Gertrudis was probably cough syrup.

What do you think the following characters would be on the inside?	
Micah	
Jenny	
Grandpa Ephraim	
Victoria	
The Man Who Bends Light	
Chintzy	
Mr. Mirandus Head	
You	

p. 116 – What Ephraim wanted, more than anything else in his last days at Circus Mirandus, was simple but impossible. He wanted to walk up to the Lightbender after the show. He wanted to stick out his hand and say, "Thank you. My name is Ephraim Tuttle, and you have changed me."

What had the Lightbender done that had changed Ephraim?
How had Ephraim changed?
Who, in your life, could you say has changed you?

p. 187 – Circus Mirandus' mission is to keep enchantment alive in the world. Victoria claims that children aren't special. The Man Who Bends Light says children are the key to everything.

Who makes a more convincing argument? Why?

p. 194-195 – Reread these pages together.

How did Victoria’s desire for power backfire?

Why does Mr. Head suggest that the Lightbender should be called “The Man Who Bends Minds”?

p. 221 – Grandpa Ephraim was staring out the car window “Because when you try too hard to hold on to something, you break it. ... Sometimes we need to let go so that other people can have a chance at the magic.”

When did a character try to hold on to something too hard?

Who was willing to let go?

p. 237 – “I do wish you and your friend had talked the Lightbender into coming for a visit,” he said. “It would have been something to see him standing in my very own house.”

“I don’t think he would fit in,” Micah replied

Grandpa Ephraim chuckled; ... “That’s the whole point of him,” he said. “That’s the whole point of it all.”

What did Grandpa Ephraim mean when he said this?



p. 267 – “Micah,” said the Lightbender. “What do you think magic is?”

“I guess it’s what’s inside of people like you,” he replied. “The parts of you that are too big to keep just to yourself.”

Do you agree with this definition?

What would you add or change to your definition of magic?

What is your “magic”?

p. 289 – Mr. Head was “reluctant to risk welcoming someone so young and untried into our ranks.”

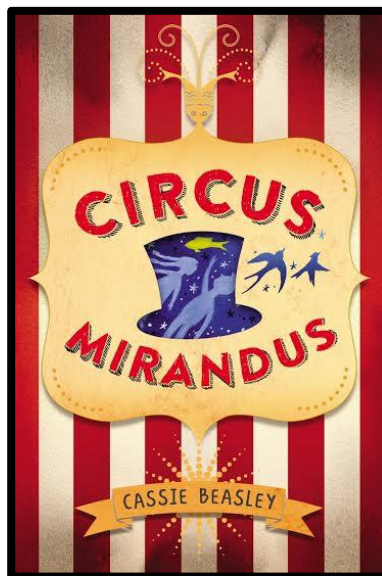
**Why does Mr. Head feel this way?
What happened in the past to cause these feelings?**



The author, Cassie Beasley, included many instances of young children dealing with death and hardship in this story. For example, Victoria’s parent died in a plane crash when she was 13, Micah’s parents died in a boat accident when he was 4, Ephraim’s mother died when he was 17, Grandpa Ephraim dies when Micah is 10.

**Why do you think death was such a common occurrence in this story?
What purpose does it serve?**

**Who do you consider to be the antagonist, or villain, in this story? Why?
Is there a protagonist, or hero, in this story? If so, what makes him/her the protagonist?**



How did your thinking change as a result of reading this book?