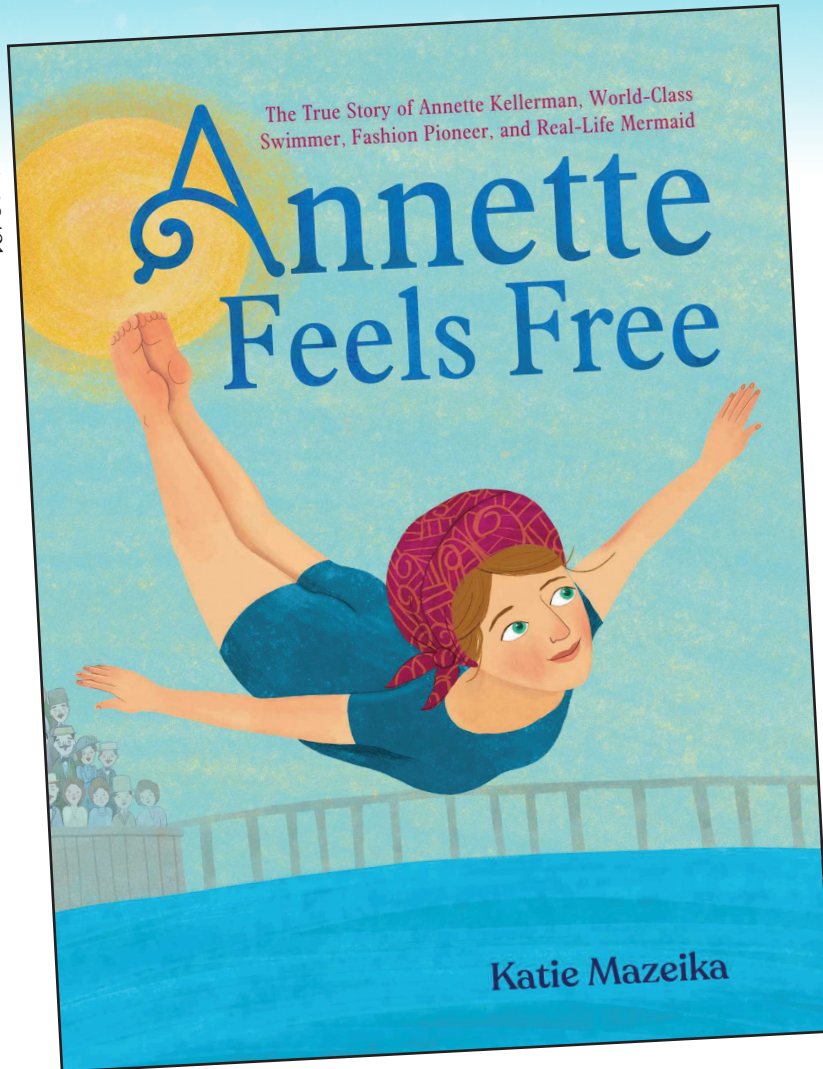


# Curriculum Guide

9781665903431



“Annette’s legacy in competitive, artistic, and recreational swimming is undeniable, and Mazeika’s text deftly balances her subject’s varied career. . . . Swim-pressive!”

–KIRKUS REVIEWS



## Annette Feels Free

The True Story of  
Annette Kellerman,  
World-Class Swimmer,  
Fashion Pioneer, and  
Real-Life Mermaid

By Katie Mazeika



**AS A LITTLE GIRL GROWING UP IN AUSTRALIA**, Annette loved to dance and twirl and pirouette. But when she got sick and had to start wearing braces on her legs, she stopped dancing. Until, one day, her dad took her swimming. Annette could finally dance again—in the water! As she grew older, Annette performed water ballets and broke every long-distance swimming record in Australia. She swam and danced with the fish in the Melbourne Aquarium and the newspapers dubbed her “The Original Mermaid.”

Annette traveled to England and America, where she performed water ballets, attempted daring dives, and competed in swim races. She competed against men and won, despite her heavy swim clothes that included a full skirt and pantaloons—clothes that only women had to wear, not men. So, Annette designed her own swim costume, which appeared scandalous at the time. And then she fought for the right to wear it—and for the right for all women to feel free.

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) addressed by the discussion questions and activities in this guide are noted throughout. For more information on the Common Core, visit [corestandards.org](http://corestandards.org).



 Aquariums are known for their amazing collection of fish and other sea life. What made the exhibits at Australia’s Melbourne Aquarium so special, and why did so many want to visit there?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1

 Look closely at the illustrations of Annette’s home life as a child. What feelings do the characters express in the pictures?


CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.7

 What challenge did Annette face when she was six? How did Annette’s life change as a result of this challenge?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1

 What did Annette’s father do to help her overcome her sad feelings? How did this new activity help Annette deal with her physical challenges?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1


 As a teenager, Annette broke every Australian long-distance swimming record. She competed and won when racing against men as well as women. What did Annette consider unfair about what men wore to swim in and what women were forced to wear?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1

 How did people react to the new swim costume Annette designed and wore to the beach? How did the judge react to Annette’s swim costume?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1

 Compare the “Kellermanettes” to the “artistic swimmers” in today’s Olympics.

 What lessons could the reader learn from the life of Annette Kellerman? Cite evidence from the story to support the lessons that you identify.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.2;  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.2;  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.2



# ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

## @Annette

Annette Kellerman lived in a time before social media. People came to know about her and her amazing talents through newspaper articles. Create a social media page for Annette Kellerman using information from the story. Include a profile picture, a list of details about her life including where she was from, a list of family members, and special places and events that are important to her (her “likes”). Also, create one “post” that Annette might have made about an important event in her life and include a picture and a caption. You might also want to add imagined responses from the people who would follow her social media.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3**



## Dear Journal

Annette Kellerman had an exciting and at times difficult life. Imagine what she might have been feeling and thinking during these high and low points. Create a journal with at least three entries written from Annette’s point of view that record what you think she might have felt during three important events in her life.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3**

## Find the Time

Work with a partner to investigate the historical time period of *Annette Feels Free*. Do you notice objects in the illustrations that are clues? Look closely at the text to see how rules and events in the story might help the reader understand the time period in which it is set. Share with your class the clues you located about the setting and participate in a class discussion about how things were different during Annette's lifetime as compared to now. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3**

## Powerful, Brave, Persistent, Strong . . .

Biographies are written about people who have contributed something to others or who have accomplished something unique. Annette Kellerman advocated for women’s rights *and* she accomplished extraordinary things, like inventing a now-Olympic sport, breaking multiple long-distance swimming records, revolutionizing women’s swimwear, and starring in more than a dozen movies! What adjectives would you use to describe Annette Kellerman? Choose one of these adjectives and think about how it applies to you and your own life. Write a personal narrative that describes a time in your life that this adjective could be used to describe you.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3**

The discussion questions and activities in this guide were created by Leigh Courtney, Ph.D. She teaches in the Global Education program at a public elementary school in San Diego, California. She holds both masters’ and doctoral degrees in education, with an emphasis on curriculum and instruction.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Snapshots of Milestones

Look through *Annette Feels Free* and identify three memorable moments in the life of Annette Kellerman. Draw a detailed, colored illustration of each moment and write a description of each memorable event.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.2



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# Sequencing Story Events



Look carefully at the list of events in Annette's life. Cut the events into strips and arrange and glue them in the order in which they happened.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Annette became a strong swimmer and performed water dancing for audiences.

Annette created a more comfortable "swim costume" for women and got in trouble for wearing it on a Boston beach.

Annette's father took off her leg braces and carried her into Lavender Bay to swim.

Annette managed to swim  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way across the English Channel with the help of some hot cocoa.

When Annette was six, her legs became wobbly due to an illness. A doctor gave her braces to wear on her legs.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Making Connections

Readers can better understand books by noticing how the stories connect to other books they've read, experiences they've had, or similar things happening in the real world. Think carefully about *Annette Feels Free* and what you've learned about Annette Kellerman and make connections!

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.9; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.9; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.9



## TEXT TO TEXT

Connections you can make between the story and other books you have read.

## TEXT TO SELF

Connections you can make between the story and your own life experiences.

## TEXT TO WORLD

Broader connections you can make to the larger world—to things you have seen or learned from television, movies, newspapers, etc.