

Paris Pan Takes the Dare

● Discussion and Activities Guide ●



Teachers and Librarians:

This guide is packed with age-appropriate ideas for incorporating *Paris Pan Takes the Dare* into your lesson plans. Feel free to tailor these documents for your students.

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About the Book

Twelve-year-old Paris Pan's life is a mess. She's just moved to a tiny town in Nowheresville, Oklahoma; her family life is a comical disaster; her new friends are more like frenemies; and the boy she has a crush on is a dork. Things couldn't possibly get worse, until she discovers that a girl mysteriously died years ago while taking a seventh-grade rite of passage—the Dare—right near Paris's new house. So when Paris starts hearing strange noises coming from the creepy run-down shed in her backyard, she thinks they could be a message from the ghost of a girl. But



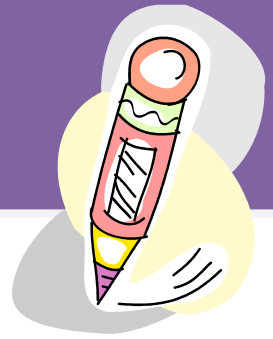
while she has no plans to make contact with the great beyond, her two new friends have other thoughts. Everyone who's anyone takes the Dare, and now it's Paris's turn.

About the Author

Cynthia spent her formative years in Oklahoma and Texas where she was a Whiz Quiz member, an Academic Decathlon, and a spelling bee champion. (Yes, she was very popular.) But today, her semi-quasi-nerd-esque days are over, and now she does only the really fun stuff, like learning how to master the Wii, imitating the animals at the zoo, and of course -- writing for children. www.cynthelialiu.com.

Writing Discussion Guide

● A Closer Look at *Paris Pan Takes The Dare* ●



Curriculum Connection: Language Arts

Terms to Know

foreshadowing

symbolism

climax

antagonist

protagonist

hyperbole

setting

mood

metaphor

simile

point of view

onomatopoeia

imagery

sentence structure

Discussion Questions

1. In the beginning of the book, Paris tells readers, "... when you want something badly enough, you'll do anything to get it. You'll lie to your friends. Steal from your family. Eat a whole box of orange Creamsicles. You might even take go as far as taking the Dare." This passage is an example of _____.
2. Who is the main antagonist in *Paris Pan Takes the Dare*? _____.
3. *Paris Pan Takes the Dare* is told in what point of view? _____.
4. In Chapter One, Paris says her school transcript is longer than any Harry Potter book. This is an example of _____.
5. What does Paris Pan's memory album symbolize? (see Chapter 7 for hint)
6. In Chapter 8, Paris says Robin's "eyes were cool steel." Paris's comparison is an example of a _____.
7. In Chapter 8, Paris sees Robin at her window. The mood of the scene is eerie and scary. What literary devices did the author use to create that mood?
8. The word Eeeeeeeeeer is an example of _____.
9. In Chapter 11, Paris says her sister was "planning to bust onto the court like a half-dressed pop star." Paris's comparison about her sister is an example of a _____.
10. Which scene in *Paris Pan* is the climax of the story?

● A Closer Look at *Paris Pan Takes the Dare* ●

Answer Key:

1. foreshadowing (suspense is also acceptable)
2. hyperbole (exaggeration)
3. Mayo
4. 1st Person
5. her desire for friendship
6. metaphor
7. through use of setting (in the dark, at night, the woods outside), metaphor (her eyes were cool steel) imagery (the dark shape of a girl, shadows of branches swaying against the wall, whistle of the wind, the shed door creaking, and sentence structure (short sentences for faster pacing)
8. onomatopoeia
9. simile.
10. The scene where Paris is in the woods on the night of the Dare.



Reading Discussion Guide

● Diversity and *Paris Pan Takes the Dare* ●



Curriculum Connection: Social Studies

Terms to Know

Generation	Ethnicity
Emigrate/Immigrate	Culture
Race	Customs
Discrimination	Stereotypes

Discussion Questions

Generations. Paris Pan's parents are originally from China, but Paris grew up in the United States. Paris Pan is a first-generation American-Born Chinese. How about you? Where is your family from? Are you a 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 6th generation _____ (complete the statement.)

Emigration. Many families in this country emigrated from other countries. Why do you suppose people move from one country to another? Discuss some reasons.

Race vs. Ethnicity. In Chapter 1, Jay guesses that Paris Pan is Japanese. People from Japan and China share similar physical features. But Paris isn't Japanese. Aside from country, what makes the Japanese different from the Chinese? What is the difference between race and ethnicity?

Culture. In the Pan family, Paris's mother prepares both Chinese food and American food. They speak Mandarin and English at home. Language and food are just a couple of things that make up one's culture. Can you name some more?

Customs. What American customs does Paris's family participate in? Are there any traditions or customs you participate in that are different from the traditions and customs of the people around you?

Discrimination and Stereotypes. Some would say that Paris Pan is stereotypically Chinese because she makes good grades. If Paris Pan heard this statement, she would probably feel discriminated against. Why?

● Diversity and *Paris Pan Takes the Dare* ●

Further Discussion

Aside from racial discrimination, what other kinds of discrimination exist? (e.g., physical disability, shape, stature, social status, class, etc.)

Name a couple of examples from *Paris Pan Takes the Dare* where one character discriminates against another character.

Have you or someone you know ever been stereotyped or discriminated against? Why do you think people stereotype or discriminate against others? Why do you suppose they may think it is okay to do so? How can you prevent yourself from stereotyping or discriminating against other people?



Additional Related Activities

- Encourage students to research their own genealogies. Create a family tree.
- Have students write a report about historical events in U.S. or World History related to discrimination.

Character Counts • Character Counts in Paris Pan Takes the Dare •



Paris Pan isn't perfect but by the book's end she demonstrates many characteristics we hope our children will demonstrate themselves such as trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. In fiction, it is often true that some characters will be stronger in one dimension than others. Help kids identify which characters in Paris Pan demonstrate which qualities. If they were to put themselves into a character's shoes, how would they improve upon that character's "character"? What would they change and how would they make the same?

TRUSTWORTHINESS

Honesty, loyalty, and the courage to do the right thing are a few qualities that make up trustworthiness. Mayo isn't the most honest character in the book, but she demonstrates loyalty to her friends which makes her friendship to Paris valuable. But how does Mayo's loyalty work against her? (Does her loyalty exclude others?) What would you change about her to make her a better person? What about Robin and Tom? Are they trustworthy and in what way? Which characters do you root for more?

RESPECT

The Pan's parents demand respect at the dinner table when Paris makes a snide comment about her mother. Why do you suppose Paris chose to be disrespectful in this instance? How might she have done things differently? What about Mayo? Mayo routinely insults people around her. Why do you suppose she acts this way? How does Mayo's disrespect affect other people? Name a character in the book who is the most respectful of others. Why did you pick that character? Is that character more likeable?

RESPONSIBILITY

At the end of the book, Paris must take responsibility for what has happened. How does she do it? Why does she need to take responsibility? Do these acts make Paris a stronger person by the book's end?

FAIRNESS

The issue of fairness comes up often between Paris and her siblings, Athens and Verona. While being fair is a great quality, life doesn't always turn out that way. However, that doesn't mean YOU can't be fair to others. Does Verona treat her sister fairly in the beginning of the book? How about at the end? What about Athens? How does he treat Paris at the beginning of the book and how does he treat her at the end? Does a little fairness go a long way?

● Character Counts in *Paris Pan Takes the Dare* ●

CARING

Being kind, compassionate and forgiving towards others are traits we'd all like to possess. However, sometimes it is difficult to demonstrate that caring when we have wants that conflict with our needs. At the beginning of the book, Paris is nice but she doesn't always show Robin and Tom that she cares about them. Why is that? When you read the story, what do you want Paris to do? Would Paris have made the right friendships earlier in the book if she had the courage to be honest? What about Dana? Why do you suppose Paris didn't snub Dana at the end? What is Paris demonstrating toward Dana when she extends an open invitation for Dana to join her at the tree with Robin?

Do you suppose Mayo would have a lot more friends at the end of the book if she had demonstrated more respect and caring for others?

CITIZENSHIP

Good citizenship goes beyond your closest friends. Demonstrating respect, responsibility, fairness, and caring for others outside of your circle is good citizenship. You can volunteer at a shelter, help out after school, or even be a good neighbor. Name an example of good citizenship from *Paris Pan Takes the Dare*. How does being kind to your neighbors benefit everyone?

Reader's Theatre

● The Big Game ●



Curriculum Connection: Language Arts, Fine Arts

Here's your chance to act out one of the funniest scenes from *Paris Pan*—the night of The Big Game, the very same night Paris has to walk into those woods and take the Dare. Reading doesn't always have to be a passive activity. Students will have fun turning *Paris Pan* into a live performance!

Instructions

1. Read aloud or assign the book to students first so they can become familiar with the story.
2. Hand out cue cards to students. Included is a template to use. Just print and cut.
3. The instructor should play the part of Paris Pan. Not only do you promise to be a great actor, but you will help the students with their cues as you enact the scene.
4. Ask the remaining students to be the “fans.” They have a part, too!
5. Allow students to practice their parts individually or as a group until they are reading fluently.

Roles

The Bumblebees (Home Team)

Paris Pan
Mayo**
Dana**
Verona
Honey Cheerleader #2
Honey Cheerleader #3



The Washington Giants (Away Team)

Giant #1
Giant #2
Giant #3

The audience:

Coach Dobson
Mr. Wolcott
Referee
Fans

* Mayo, Dana may double as Honeys, if desired.

● Reader's Theatre ●

Props (Optional)

1. Inflatable basketball beach ball (can be obtained from any party store)
2. Pom-poms, megaphone
3. Glamorous sunglasses for Verona
4. Yellow headbands or sweatbands for the Bumblebees
5. Green headbands or sweatbands for the Giants
6. A whistle for the referee

Before you begin

1. Read over the script and think about where you will need actors to stand in order to effectively act out the scene. (For example, Bumblebees on the left, the Giants on the right.)
2. Be sure to instruct actors and audience members to listen closely for your cues. Plan on emphasizing cue words in bold, like "Mayo said," or "Dana said," or "The crowd booed." This is how your students will know when to do their parts.
3. Since the Giants have no speaking lines, be sure to tell the Giants to act out what Paris is saying (but safely!).
4. Lead the audience through at least one round of cheering, booing, and "bringing the house down."
5. Feel free to rehearse at least once to work out the actions and the timing, and then do it again as a final performance. Your students may even want to do it several times for fun, with different students playing different roles.
6. Don't forget to ham it up! And tell your students to muster all their enthusiasm as well. PARIS PAN is supposed to be a fun book. Make it so!



● Reader's Theatre ●

Cue Cards

Mayo

Line 1: "You ready for tonight?"

Line 2: "Why not? If we have to play a whole team of eighth-graders, it's justice!"

Line 3: "You made that one over there mad. She threw the ball at you."



Dana

Line 1: "Fifth-graders. All of them."

Line 2: "Paris! Paris! Are you okay?"



Verona

"You know it—we're hot!

Now let's go make that shot!

Bumblebees, Bumblebees. Bzzzz-Sting!"



Referee

(blow whistle) "One free throw!"

Honey Cheerleader #2

"You know it—we're hot!

Now let's go make that shot!

Bumblebees, Bumblebees. Bzzzz-Sting!"

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Honey Cheerleader #3

"You know it—we're hot!

Now let's go make that shot!

Bumblebees, Bumblebees. Bzzzz-Sting!"

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Coach Dobson

Line 1: "Follow her lead!"

Line 2: "One more and you're off the team!"

Line 3: "Stand up, girl! Stand up!"

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Mr. Wolcott

Line 1: "Welcome the Sweet Water Bumblebees!"

**Line 2: "And now for our challengers, The Washington
Giants!"**

THE SCRIPT

(Cues are highlighted in larger font)

While we waited to be called onto the court, I stood next to my friends and mentally rehearsed how the game could go.

I'd let a Washington Giant slam into me. I'd tumble to the gym floor—in slow motion.

My ankle would twist and I'd scream in pain.

Mayo said, “You ready for tonight?”

Paramedics would rush toward me. I'd say, “I think it's broken!”

I glanced at Mayo and saw the mischief in her eyes.

*I'd let them walk me off the court. Then I'd wave
goodbye to the team just before the ambulance doors
closed.*



“Ready as ever.”

Mr. Wolcott announced,

“Welcome the Sweet Water Bumblebees!”

We jogged onto the court and warmed up at the hoop as **the crowd cheered**.
With Daddy's getup, my parents weren't hard to find. They smiled.

Then **Mr. Wolcott said**, “And now for our challengers, The Washington Giants!”

The crowd booed. I turned to look. A team of kids uniformed in shamrock green ran out onto the court. My jaw dropped.

They were the shortest players I'd ever seen.

Dana said, “Fifth-graders. All of them.”

I moved forward in line for the basket. “That can't be!”

● Reader's Theatre ●

Mayo said, “Why not? If we have to play a whole team of eighth-graders, it’s justice!” She shot the ball and it made it in.

How am I going to get crushed by a munchkin?!

The buzzer sounded, and I clenched my teeth. This was going to be harder than I thought. During first quarter, I got into every opponent’s face and begged them to fall into me. **But the Giants refused to do it. They just handed over the ball.** By the time the buzzer went off, **Coach Dobson** was so impressed with my skills, **she told my team**, “Follow her lead!”

I didn’t fare any better during second quarter. I decided crashing randomly into fifth-graders might do the trick. I fouled four times. **Dobson** changed her coaching strategy. **She said**, “One more and you’re off the team!” I caught a glimpse of Daddy in the stands. He didn’t seem pleased.

When **Verona and the Bumblebees** came on at half-time, the whole crowd gyrated to *Bzzzz-Sting!*

“You know it—we’re hot! Now let’s go make that shot!

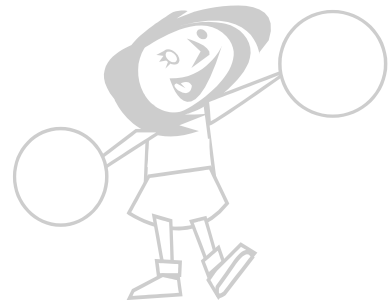
Bumblebees, Bumblebees. Bzzzz-Sting!”

My sister went all out. They even formed a pyramid.

Daddy smiled from the stands.

By fourth quarter, I was plumb out of ideas. **Every time the Giants passed the basketball**, I threw myself into the direct line of fire. I suffered from an aching back, sore stomach and bruised butt. Nothing warranted any medical attention, but the crowd loved me. I glanced at the clock. Seven seconds left. I looked at my fans in the stand—this was my last try. And then everything went black.

Dana said, “Paris! Paris! Are you okay?”



● Reader's Theatre ●

I opened my eyes. I was lying on the court. Coach Dobson and my teammates were hovering over me. **The coach said**, “Stand up, girl! Stand up!”

But ... but ... where are the medics?

Mayo said, “you made that one over there mad. She threw the ball at you.”

I sat up, rubbing my head. A pint-sized Giant glared at me.

The referee said, “One free-throw.”

The crowd roared.

A hush fell over the gym as I stood at the line. I bounced the ball and summoned the last ounce of energy in my weary body. I didn't care if I made it in. I slung the basketball in the general direction of the hoop. It flew through the air, bounced off the rim, hit the backboard, and sailed through the net.

The crowd brought the house down.

We won 86-6. Sweet Water broke a new record.

And I didn't break a thing.



Social Studies Project

● A Moment in Time ●



Curriculum Connection: Social Studies

In *Paris Pan Takes the Dare*, Paris creates a time capsule, capturing many of her experiences throughout the book. Did you know that the practice of intentionally burying time capsules began with the 1939 New York World's Fair? The Westinghouse Time Capsule was one of the most attention-getting exhibits at the fair, and the capsule contained issues of *Life* Magazine, coins, millions of pages of microfilm (similar to what Paris Pan had to sift through for her “science project”), and writings by Thomas Mann and Albert Einstein. The time capsule is supposed to be opened in 6939!

Let's not make anyone wait *that* long.

Capture a Moment in Time

1. Have students create their own time capsule.
2. Encourage students to include items that capture a moment in time, like the Westinghouse Time Capsule. These items could be related to the news, their family, their friends, and even writings that include their personal thoughts on certain subjects mentioned in 3.
3. Consider having the students ask themselves the following questions:
 - a. My idea of a true friend is ...
 - b. The biggest problem I am having right now is ...
 - c. The thing I like about myself that I will never change is ...
 - d. The thing I hope to change about myself by the time I open my time capsule is ...
 - e. One of my favorite things to do that I will never get tired of is ...
 - f. The most fun I've had recently was when ...

For an additional surprise effect, you could choose to do the time capsule project well before the students read *Paris Pan*. Then they'll have their very own time capsule to open after reading the book, and they'll see for themselves the change that can take place in a relatively short time!

How to create your own time capsule

(the following is an adaptation of the article "How to Create a Time Capsule" from wikiHow.com)

1. **Choose the duration for your time capsule.** For example: "This time capsule shall be opened on X day, X year." Mark the time capsule with the date it shall be opened.
2. **Select a container.** Examples of containers that would be great for storage in a classroom setting include a quart-sized Ziploc bag, a pocket folder, or a shoebox. If you plan to store the capsules outside, be sure to choose a container that is very waterproof.
3. **Determine the kinds of objects you would like to collect.** Consider items that are appropriate for the size of your container. Labels or packaging of favorite items, newspaper or magazine clippings that represent larger objects, and photos are great ways to keep the projects meaningful, yet compact.
4. **Set rules! NO PERISHABLE ITEMS and NO VALUABLES, period!**

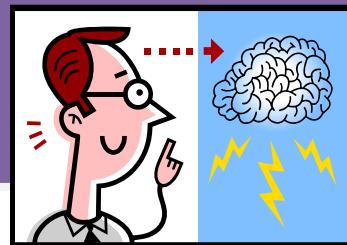
The Westinghouse Time Capsule



● A Moment in Time ●

Creative Writing

● Activities for the Right-Brain ●



Curriculum Connection: Language Arts

Paris Pan is known to have a wild imagination. In fact, sometimes that right-brain of hers works so hard, Paris has difficulty separate fantasy from reality. Worried your students spend too much time in the left-side of their brains? Use these simple and quick creative writing exercises to get students exercising the opposite side of their noggins in true Paris-Pan-style.

Exercise #1— Changing Point of View: Nobody asked Go what she thought

It's a little known fact that Go had the answers to the Dare mystery long before anyone else. If only Paris could have just read her pet's mind. Well, now she can with the help of your students. Have them pick a favorite scene from *Paris Pan* where Go is present. Ask them to write the same scene from Go's point of view.

Exercise #2—IVOA: Invent your own acronyms

Acronyms are everywhere for today's instant messaging/texting/tech-savvy maniacs (a.k.a. students). But it wasn't always that way. In fact, prior to the 1940s, the term *acronym* hadn't even been coined. However, as science and technology advanced, the use of acronyms like SONAR and NATO grew. Today? Acronyms aren't for high-flutin' names anymore. They can stand for just about anything, like TTYL (talk to you later) and ROFL (rolling on the floor and laughing.) What a change!

Mayo and Dana used a couple of interesting acronyms of in the books, such as TTITYGTM: Tap Twice if You Get the Message, and TYPTTFY: Tap Your Pencil Two Times For Yes.

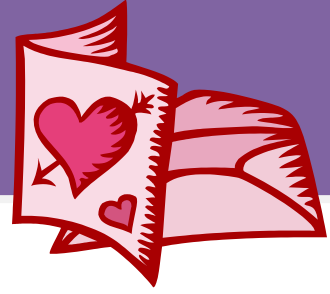
Have students coin their own acronyms based on the *Paris Pan* novel. What might be a few fun ones Paris Pan could have used in her notes to Tom?

Exercise #3—Your Personal Library

Paris Pan had a personal library of books containing advice she didn't want from any Pan, like *Look Natural*, *Look Beautiful*, *Rules of the Road: A Driver's Manual*, and *Psychology Today: Staying Sane in the 21st Century*. Have students invent some funny titles for their own personal libraries and have them explain why they'd like to have those books in their collections.

Arts and Crafts

● When You Care Enough to Send the Very Best ●



Curriculum Connection: Fine Arts

When you care enough to send the very best, do it à la Paris Pan.

Paris Pan was not only book-smart, but she was quite crafty, too, despite her poor drawing skills and lack of suitable materials. Throughout the book, Paris can be seen doing things like constructing a journal, brandishing a crucifix made from Popsicle sticks, and making a handmade card with silly drawings for her crush Tom.

Have your students create their own cards for *Paris Pan*'s author Cynthea Liu. Students should showcase a favorite scene from the book and include a heartfelt message to the author. There is one catch though. They may only use materials that Paris had in the book, and terrible sketches are a plus.

Materials You May Need

- Markers
- Cardboard
- Notebook paper
- Yarn

Give students extra credit for incorporating other materials that Paris Pan had in the novel that are not in the above list. (e.g. Popsicle sticks, construction paper, macaroni ...)

Additional Related Activity

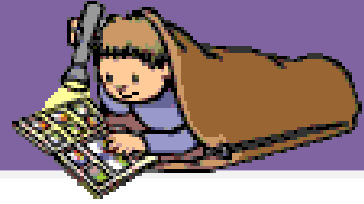
You are also welcome to send class-favorite cards to the author directly at

Cynthea Liu
P.O. Box 577552
Chicago, IL 60613

Students may enjoy seeing some of the author's favorite cards posted on her website in all their glory. On each card, please be sure to provide the first name, grade, school, city, and state of the creator.

Just for Fun

● Paris Pan Slumber Party ●



If you are reading *Paris Pan* together as a class, consider making the day you tackle Chapter 20 (the night of the Dare) a slumber party, without the slumber!

Set the Mood

- Have students bring favorite pillows, a small blanket, stuffed animals, or slippers. Perhaps they can come in loungepants or throw on a robe.
- Hand out glowsticks like the ones Mayo used in the woods.

Feed the Guests

- Encourage students to bring Paris-Pan-themed food for the class. Anything purple, something Chinese, candy from Johnny's Bait and Tackle (Pop Rocks, Twizzlers, etc.)

See a Movie

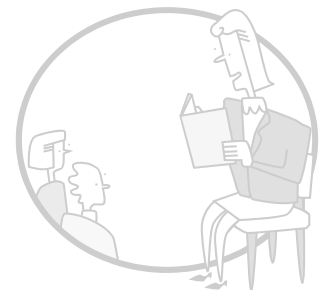
- Play a short behind-the-scenes video about the author of *Paris Pan* called "The Real Life of an Author" which can be downloaded for free at <http://www.cynthealiu.com>.

Play a Game

- Play *Truth or you guessed it ... Dare* (see next page), a fun quiz requiring students to separate fact from fiction about *Paris Pan Takes the Dare* and the author.

Tell the Story

- End by turning down the lights.
- Hand out glowsticks like the ones Mayo used in the woods.
- Read Chapter 20 and onward by a dim lamp or flashlight.
Ohhhh!

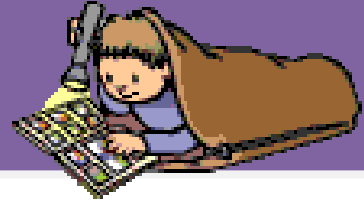


Send everyone home with a party favor

- Snap photos of your party and email them to cynthea@cynthealiu.com. Let Cynthea know your class's grade, the school's name, and city, state. Your class will get a kick out of seeing themselves on Cynthea's web site, and Cynthea will be sure to send each of your students a personalized party favor.

• Just for Fun

• ● Truth or Dare Quiz ●



If you fail this quiz about the author, you'll have to take the Dare! (Hint: Go to www.cynthealiu.com/movie and watch the book trailer for PARIS PAN.)

1. Cynthea Liu's mother was a computer programmer. T or F?
2. When Cynthea was little, she had a terrier, just like Paris Pan. T or F?
3. Cynthea has lived in rural town before. In the woods. T or F?
4. Cynthea's father doesn't pronounce Cynthea's name correctly. T or F?
5. Cynthea has moved at least three times as a child. T or F?
6. Cynthea worked as an educator before becoming an author.
7. Paris Pan's siblings have names that are derived from Cynthea's real siblings.
8. Cynthea has a daughter.
9. Cynthea has taken a dare in the woods.
10. Cynthea's book Paris Pan Takes the Dare is the first book she's written.

Answer Key: 1. True 2. True 3. True. 4. True. Mr. Liu's version of Cynthea is "Cyn-see." 5. True. From birth to high school, Cynthea has moved 7 times. 6. False. Prior to becoming an author, Cynthea was a management consultant, specializing in customer relationship management systems. 7. False. While Verona is named after Cynthea's sister Veronique, Paris Pan's brother Athens's name was completely made up. 8. True. 9. False. Cynthea has lived in the woods before, but she's never taken a dare in the woods. 10. False. Cynthea's first novel-length story was about a talking dog. Paris Pan is her second drafted novel. The Great Call of China is her third.