

Sahara Special By Esme Codell

- ① **Sahara Jones** – main character; repeated 5th grade; wants to be a writer; brown eyes; lives in a bad neighborhood in Chicago
Mrs. Jones – Sahara's mother; divorced; works in a restaurant ②
Rachel Wells – Sahara's cousin, classmate, and best friend; one year younger; very shy
Freddie – Rachel's little brother
- ① **Mr. Stinger** – school counselor
- ② **Peaches** – Sahara's name for the Special Needs teacher
Madame Poitier (PWAH-tee-yay) – Miss Pointy; wild, copper hair; heavy makeup; Sahara's new teacher
Darrell Sikes – classmate; also repeated 5th grade; goes to Special Needs with Sahara
Cordelia Carbuncle – classmate; Rachel's friend; wears makeup
Paris – classmate; wears hair in braids; goes to library on Sat mornings; friends with Luz; saw Sahara take Luz's sticker
Luz – classmate; doesn't speak English well; gets lots of stickers
Dominique – classmate; large and strong
Sakiah – classmate; perfect attendance; tells on everyone
Raphael – classmate; likes to laugh; big mouth
Kiarre – classmate; class policewoman
Ernie – classmate; hides from gangs in library; named for fireman uncle
Boris – classmate; Ernie's friend; Miss Pointy gave him Aesop's Fables
Mrs. Rosen – Sahara's neighbor; old lady
Aesop – slave to King Xianthus; fable teller in ancient Greece; mute; ugly

Individual Attention – Sahara and Darrell are assigned to this with Peaches

- ② **Heart Wrenching Life Story & Amazing Adventures** – name of the book Sahara is writing about herself
Autobiographia Literia – Sahara's favorite poem; written by Frank O'Hara; Sahara gave a copy to Darrell

1. Who did Sahara write, but never send, letters to?
 - a. The president
 - ① b. **Her father.**
 - c. Beverly Cleary
2. Where did she keep her letters, instead of mailing them?
 - a. In section 904 in the library.
 - ② b. Underneath her mattress.
 - c. **In her desk at school.**
3. In which store does Sahara's mother allow her to buy anything she wants?
 - ② a. **A book store**
 - b. Target.
 - c. The grocery store.
4. Where does Sahara go to get individual attention?
 - a. The special needs room.

- 3
- b. **The hallway.**
c. The nurse's office.
5. What did Sahara's classmates say to her when they saw her in the hallway with the Special Needs teacher?
- a. Hi, Sweet Sahara
b. Hi, Stupid Sahara
c. **Hi, Sahara Special**
6. Where does Sahara hide her writings?
- 3
- a. **In section 904 in the library.**
b. In an empty locker at school.
c. Underneath her mattress.
7. What does Sahara's mother want the school to do instead of putting her in Special Needs?
- a. Transfer her to a different school.
2
- b. **Make her repeat 5th grade.**
c. Assign her to a different teacher.
8. Which game do the upper grades play at recess?
- a. Four square.
3
- b. Tag.
c. **Double-dutch.**
9. What is Sahara's True Ambition?
- 2
- a. To be a model.
b. **To be a writer.**
c. To be a teacher.
10. Why was Sahara's mother angry about the Special Needs program?
- a. The special needs teacher was mean to Sahara.
b. **Darrell behaved badly in the program.**
c. The program cost extra money.
11. When did Sahara's schoolwork start to suffer?
- a. When Rachel stopped being her best friend.
2
- b. When Rachel's family moved away.
c. **When her parents got divorced.**
12. What did Sahara think Darrell's life story should be called?
- 3
- a. Crazy Boy
b. **True Crimes**
c. Special Darrell
13. What did Rachel lose three times on purpose?
- 1
- a. **Her eye glasses.**
b. Her school text book.
c. Her report card.
14. What does Rachel's mom allow her to wear only on Sundays?
- 2
- a. A dress.
b. **Lip gloss.**
c. High heels.
15. What did Sahara draw on all the models in Seventeen magazine?
- a. Mustaches

- b. Eye glasses**
 - c. Tatoos.
- 16. What does Sahara do on Saturday mornings?
 - a. Clean the house while her mother is at work.
 - b. Go to the library and eat pancakes for lunch.**
 - c. Write in her journal.
- 17. Where did Sahara see Paris every Saturday?
 - a. The restaurant where her mother worked
 - b. The library.**
 - c. The grocery store.
- 18. Who brought Paris to the library?
 - a. Her brothers.**
 - b. Her mother.
 - c. Her aunt.
- 19. How did Miss Pointy decorate her desk on the first day of school?
 - a. She put up pictures of her former students.
 - b. She brought a lamp, diploma and vase of flowers.**
 - c. She put a big basket of fruit on her desk.
- 20. What did Miss Pointy pass out to each of the students on the first day of class?
 - a. Dictionaries
 - b. A study contract.
 - c. Journals.**
- 21. How much did Miss Pointy want the students to pay for the journals?
 - a. \$1.50
 - b. \$2.00**
 - c. \$3.00
- 22. What job did Miss Pointy assign to Darrell?
 - a. Cleaning the board.
 - b. Watching her back.**
 - c. Keeping her eyes peeled.
- 23. Who volunteered to stay after school and help Miss Pointy?
 - a. Rachel**
 - b. Sahara
 - c. Paris
- 24. What word did Miss Pointy say is a swear word in her class?
 - a. Stupid
 - b. Ugly
 - c. Boring.**
- 25. What was the first writing assignment in the journal?
 - a. Write about your life.**
 - b. Write about your name.
 - c. Write about your pet.
- 26. What did Sahara write in her first journal entry?
 - a. I want my file back.
 - b. I wrote letters to my dad.
 - c. I am a writer.**

27. What do the children have to put in the basket before school starts?
 - a. Yesterday's homework.
 - b. Their journals.
 - c. **Their troubles.**
28. What did Miss Pointy do when Darrell kicked her desk?
 - a. Sent him to the office.
 - b. Called his mother.
 - c. **Kicked over his desk.**
29. Which stories did Miss Pointy like to share with her class?
 - a. **Aesop's Fables**
 - b. Ghost stories
 - c. Fairy tales
30. Why did Aesop tell stories about animals instead of people?
 - a. He liked animals better than people.
 - b. **He didn't want the King to be angry with him.**
 - c. He had a lot of pets.
31. What does Miss Pointy do for students whose work is very impressive?
 - a. Gives them candy.
 - b. **Gives them stickers from her Happy Box.**
 - c. Gives them pencils.
32. What does Miss Pointy's class do every day after lunch?
 - a. Write in their journal
 - b. Puzzling
 - c. **Share stories**
33. What story did Miss Pointy tell about George Washington?
 - a. **He admitted cutting down a cherry tree.**
 - b. He crossed the Delaware the day after Christmas.
 - c. He refused to serve a third term as president.
34. Who came bursting into Miss Pointy's classroom?
 - a. **Darrell's mother.**
 - b. Sahara's mother.
 - c. Rachel's mother.
35. What did Miss Pointy tell Darrell's mother she should have done before coming to the office?
 - a. Called Miss Pointy on the phone.
 - b. Called the principal on the phone.
 - c. **Stopped in the office for a pass.**
36. What did Luz do when Darrell's mother burst into the classroom?
 - a. **Pressed a button to signal the office.**
 - b. Ran to the office for help.
 - c. Burst into tears.
37. Why does everyone in Miss Pointy's class do their homework?
 - a. Miss Pointy brings in brownies on Friday if everyone did their work.
 - b. **Miss Pointy gives stickers for prizes**
 - c. Miss Pointy calls your parents if you don't do your work.
38. What does Luz do with her stickers?

- a. Gives them to her little sister.
 - b. Sticks them on the wall above her bed.
 - c. **Sticks them on her journal.**
39. What did Miss Pointy give to Luz?
- a. **Her childhood sticker collection.**
 - b. A book of Aesop's Fables.
 - c. A new journal.
40. What can Ernie and Boris do together anytime during class?
- a. Practice their math facts.
 - b. Draw on their sketch pads.
 - c. **Look at Boris's copy of Aesop's Fables**
41. What advice does Miss Pointy give Sahara about writing?
- a. **A write writes.**
 - b. A writer reads.
 - c. A writer does her homework.
42. Which words does Miss Pointy say do not mean much?
- a. Stupid, boring
 - b. **Good, nice, bad, pretty, ugly**
 - c. Stuff, thing
43. What did Sahara take that belonged to Luz?
- a. Her journal.
 - b. **A sticker.**
 - c. A book of Aesop's Fables.
44. Who saw Sahara take Luz's sticker?
- a. **Paris**
 - b. Darrell
 - c. Rachel
45. What did Sahara do with the sticker?
- a. Stuck it on her journal.
 - b. Took it home with her.
 - c. **Dropped it on the floor.**
46. Who gave the sticker back to Luz?
- a. Sahara
 - b. Rachel
 - c. **Paris**
47. Why was Luz angry with Paris?
- a. She wouldn't tell Luz who took the sticker.
 - b. She wouldn't give Luz another sticker.
 - c. **She thought Paris took her sticker.**
48. What does Miss Pointy do to protect Luz's stickers?
- a. **Cover her journal with clear contact paper.**
 - b. Put Luz's journal in a locked drawer.
 - c. Put her journal in a plastic bag.
49. Why does Sahara like the students in her class?
- a. They gave her stickers when she didn't get any.
 - b. **They don't make fun of her for repeating 5th grade.**

- c. They don't make fun of her name.
50. Why did Sahara and Rachel both stay home from school?
- a. They had lice.
 - b. They had the stomach flu.**
 - c. They school was closed because of snow.
51. Why did Miss Pointy stop by Sahara's apartment?
- a. She wanted to talk to Sahara's mom about Sahara's file.
 - b. She thought Sahara was pretending to be sick.
 - c. She brought Sahara's homework.**
52. Sahara's mother was surprised that Miss Pointy hadn't read _____.
- a. Sahara's journal.
 - b. Sahara's file.**
 - c. The letters Sahara wrote to her father.
53. Why did Miss Pointy want Sahara's mom to give her money?
- a. Sahara had stolen money from Miss Pointy.
 - b. Miss Pointy wanted to publish the student's writings.
 - c. Sahara owed Miss Pointy \$2 for the journal.**
54. What does Sahara's mother tell Miss Pointy she looks at without permission?
- a. The letters Sahara wrote to her father.
 - b. Sahara's journal.
 - c. The notebook Sahara keeps under her mattress.**
55. What is the first journal assignment that Sahara wrote for Miss Pointy?
- a. How I got my name
 - b. Where I live**
 - c. My life story
56. What did Miss Pointy tell Peaches about Darrell?
- a. Darrell's mother had refused services.**
 - b. Darrell was dangerous.
 - c. Darrell was getting all A's in her class.
57. What did Sahara leave on Darrell's desk?
- a. A flower.
 - b. A letter.
 - c. A poem.**
58. What did Sahara do with the first sticker Miss Pointy gave her?
- a. Stuck it on her journal.
 - b. Gave it to Paris.**
 - c. Gave it to Darrell.
59. What was Darrell's reaction to the poem Sahara gave him?
- a. He swore and said he wasn't an orphan.**
 - b. He cried.
 - c. He told his mother someone was picking on him.
60. How did the old teacher in Miss Pointy's story get to school each day?
- a. She rode a horse.
 - b. She walked.**
 - c. She drove in a car.
61. How long had the teacher in Miss Pointy's story been teaching?

- a. **25 years**
 - b. 27 years
 - c. 30 years
62. What was the teacher in Miss Pointy's story jealous of?
- a. The principal.
 - b. **Buds, horses and children**
 - c. Farmers
63. What do teachers do for extra credit?
- a. Coach sports teams.
 - b. Take evening classes.
 - c. **Love children.**
64. What do the children in Sahara's class think the teacher should do to the bad boy in the story?
- a. Give him detention.
 - b. Fail him.
 - c. **Beat him.**
65. What did the teacher in Miss Pointy's story tell the students to write about in their journals?
- a. How I got my name
 - b. **What I wish**
 - c. Where I live
66. What did the bad boy in the story write in his journal?
- a. **I wish she wasn't a teacher in this school.**
 - b. I wish I didn't go to this school.
 - c. I wish I was smart enough to teach school.
67. What did the bad boy feed the horse and the bird?
- a. Grain.
 - b. Carrots.
 - c. **Apples.**
68. What did the bad boy find in the woods?
- a. A horse.
 - b. Apples
 - c. **The teacher's books.**
69. What did Sahara wish for in her journal?
- a. She wished her father would come home.
 - b. She wished to be a writer.
 - c. **She wished she could get the letters in her file back.**
70. What did Sahara think the story about the old teacher was about?
- a. Wishes are powerful.
 - b. **There is a secret person inside everyone.**
 - c. School is a place where people can change.
71. What kind of club did Luz and Paris ask Sahara to join?
- a. A writing club.
 - b. A secret, girls-only club.
 - c. **A book and sticker club.**
72. Which stories did Miss Pointy ask the class to read out-loud?

- a. Where I live.
 - b. What I wish.
 - c. **How I got my name.**
73. How did Sahara learn about the Sahara Desert?
- a. Her father taught her.
 - b. **She watched a video in school.**
 - c. She read about it at the library.
74. What did Miss Pointy give to Sahara at the end of the book?
- a. A book for her sticker collection.
 - b. Another journal.
 - c. **Her school file.**
75. What did Sahara do with the letters she wrote to her father?
- a. She finally mailed them to her father.
 - b. **She threw them out the window.**
 - c. She saved them under her mattress.