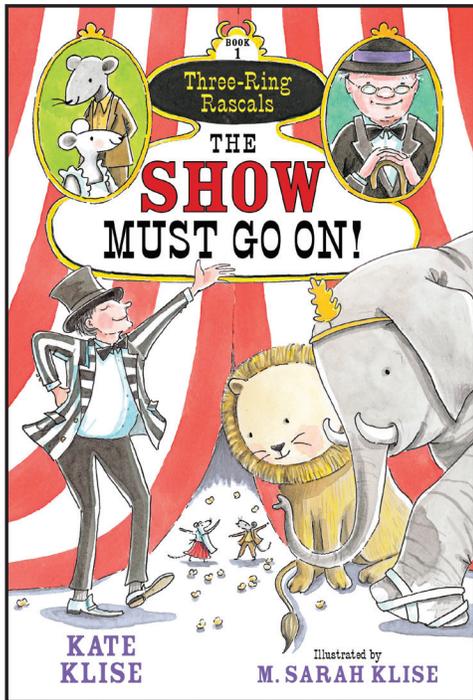


# THREE-RING RASCALS: THE SHOW MUST GO ON!

by **KATE KLISE**, illustrated by **M. SARAH KLISE**



## MIDDLE-GRADE HARDCOVER FICTION

On sale September 10, 2013  
Ages 7-10  
\$15.95  
144 pages, 5 1/2 x 8 1/4  
ISBN: 978-1-61620-244-6  
E-Book ISBN: 978-1-61620-311-5

## BOOK TALK

Sir Sidney is getting too tired to travel with his fantastic circus and his beloved friends: Leo the lion, Elsa the elephant, the Famous Flying Banana Brothers, and the small but helpful mice Bert and Gert. He advertises for a circus manager and finds a replacement named Barnabas Brambles. Once Sir Sidney leaves the circus, however, it's clear Barnabas Brambles is interested in one thing only: making money—for himself. He feeds the animals goopy goulash and schedules too many shows and too much travel. He even tries to trap Bert and Gert. Can the animals survive a week with Barnabas Brambles? If so, can they teach the new circus manager a trick or two?



Photo Credit: Dawn Shields

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**KATE KLISE** lives and writes on her farm near Norwood, Missouri. She has written novels for adults and young readers, as well as picture books, many illustrated by her sister M. Sarah Klise. Their most recent series, *43 Old Cemetery Road*, has been nominated for reading awards in seventeen states and is a Junior Library Guild selection. When Kate Klise isn't home writing, she is often visiting schools and libraries around the country.

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

**M. SARAH KLISE** draws and dwells in a Victorian cottage in Berkeley, California. Together with Kate Klise, she has created more than twenty award-winning books for young readers.



## PRAISE FOR THREE-RING RASCALS: THE SHOW MUST GO ON!

"Entertaining . . . Most children will agree the book is 'smafunderful (smart + fun + wonderful).'"—*Kirkus Reviews*

"[A] sweetly nutty kickoff to the Klise sisters' Three Ring Rascals series."—*Publishers Weekly*

"Whimsical illustrations are generously positioned throughout the text . . . Beginning chapter-book readers will thoroughly enjoy this fun and fast-paced title."—*School Library Journal*



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Gert enjoys making up new words by putting together words that she already knows, like smafunderful (smart + fun + wonderful) and dramatic (dramatic + drastic). What are your favorite words invented by Gert?
2. Gert describes Barnabas Brambles as a “vully” (vulgar + bully). What do you think Barnabas Brambles was like when he was a kid? Would you have been friends with him? Why or why not?
3. The cast and crew of the Three-Ring Rascals series include humans, felines, mice, a bird, and an elephant. Who is your favorite character? What does this character do or say that makes you like him or her best?
4. On page 39, Sir Sidney dreams about his friends, Elsa dreams about peanuts, and Barnabas Brambles dreams about money. What do the dreams tell you about the characters? What have you dreamed about that told you something about yourself?
5. Barnabas Brambles estimates that he will make \$26,250 profit during the week he runs the show, but he winds up making much less. Tell about a time when you’ve failed at a goal, as Barnabas Brambles fails in this story. What did you learn from failing? How did failing change how you acted afterward?
6. Was Sir Sidney’s decision to hire Barnabas Brambles a mistake? Why or why not?
7. What jokes do you think Bert should tell at his joke store? If you had a joke store, what jokes would you tell there?
8. The Three-Ring Rascals are scheduled to perform in Peoria, Tulsa, Denver, and San Francisco. Then Barnabas Brambles adds St. Louis, Oklahoma City, and Las Vegas. Have you or anyone you know visited the cities that Sir Sidney’s Circus tries to reach (perhaps you even live in one of these cities)? What was it like? If you’ve never been to any of the cities, which one would you most like to visit?
9. Do you think real-life bullies can change the way Barnabas Brambles promises to change in the book? Why or why not? Do you think Barnabas Brambles might do mean things again in Book 2?
10. If you were a performer in Sir Sidney’s Circus, what kind of performer would you be? What tricks would you do?



Written by Laura Williams McCaffrey

 ALGONQUIN YOUNG READERS

An imprint of Algonquin Books  
A division of Workman Publishing

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