

Name: Shannon Carlisle
Canonical Name: 221b Baker Street
Email Address: carlisleasha@gmail.com

How did you become interested in Sherlock Holmes?

As a child, I was a reluctant reader. However, in 5th grade, my teacher introduced me to several novels that finally fueled my desire to read... and both novels were mysteries. When reading From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler, by E. L. Konigsburg, I longed to be living in the Metropolitan Museum of Art with Claudia Kincaid and her brother as they attempted to identify the sculptor of the angel statue. Was it Michelangelo? I also wanted to live in Sunset Towers with the characters of The Westing Game, by Ellen Raskin, and unravel the mystery behind Mr. Westing's death. With this new passion for mysteries, I read several Sherlock Holmes stories as a youth.

However, I didn't become a Sherlock Holmes enthusiast until 2011. That fall, I was given a new charge... to become the accelerated learning teacher at my school. My classrooms have had themes, and my room was currently "the garden". I was the "kid gardener" charged with nurturing "the seeds", my students. However, with my new position, I needed a new classroom theme... one that would inspire and embrace my new students. It was then that I decided my classroom would be 221b. I felt that my learners could relate to many of Sherlock Holmes' character traits. Additionally, after analyzing his observational skills and deductive reasoning, it was my hope that my students would call upon those same powerful skills during their own studies daily.

What is your favorite story or stories?

A Scandal in Bohemia, The Red-Headed League, and The Six Napoleons

Who are your favorite characters other than Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson?

Mrs. Hudson and Mycroft Holmes

What do you enjoy about our monthly meetings?

Not only do I enjoy the challenge of recounting the setting, the characters and their motivations, and the plot from the monthly story, but I also enjoy listening to each member analyze the world of Sherlock Holmes from their own unique perspectives. There are many Holmesian experts in our scion, but even a novice like myself feels welcomed and comfortable to participate.

Biographical Sketch

A 16-year teaching veteran, Shannon Carlisle is the accelerated learning teacher at a local elementary school serving kindergarten-4th grade students. She considers herself the Chief Sherlockian of the school and has adorned the hallway to her classroom with Baker Street signs and decorated her classroom door to resemble the front door of the great detective.

During the first week of each school year, she invites 4th grade students to her classroom, 221b Baker Street, to participate in Sherlockian training. As Sherlockians-in-

Training, the students attempt to solve the “Mystery of the Borrowed Bear”. During the week, the students use their observational skills to examine the crime scene. Additionally, the students use their deductive reasoning to draw conclusions about the crime after listening to the suspect interviews and analyzing the forensics lab results.

As a part of the investigation, the students learn about Sherlock Holmes and his use of observation, deduction, and forensic science to solve cases. She reads aloud the first few pages from “A Scandal in Bohemia” to illustrate Sherlock’s skills. In the selection of text, Holmes observes and deduces so much about Dr. Watson before the doctor even speaks. The line “You see, but you do not observe...” is posted throughout the week (and then throughout the rest of the school year). It serves as a reminder to observe carefully when attempting to solve the mystery. She also introduces the students to Dr. Watson, the Baker Street Irregulars, and Sherlockian societies.

Throughout the rest of the school year, her advanced language arts students complete a more in depth study of Sherlock Holmes’ character by analyzing his resume, developed by Dr. Marino Alvarez, and reading abridged versions of the short stories. Her students have also performed The Red-Headed League play, adapted from the short story by Dr. Alvarez, and conducted research that was shared with Sherlockians around the world through the Sherlockian E-Times and “The Serpentine Muse”.

During 2013, The Beacon Society presented her with the Beacon Award for her efforts to introduce young people to the great detective. During the spring of that same year, she was selected by the Tennessee Department of Education as a Regional Winner of the Tennessee Teacher of the Year competition. She was selected by a panel of judges who reviewed all of the District Teacher of the Year candidates from the 15 school districts comprising the Mid-Cumberland Center of Regional Excellence (CORE) area. Additionally, she was runner-up in the Best Public School Teacher section of Nashville Scene’s 2012 Best of Nashville contest.

Shannon earned an undergraduate degree in elementary education and a masters degree in special education: teaching the gifted and talented from the University of Northern Colorado.

Her husband is wonderfully supportive of her Sherlockian endeavors, and she is raising her three children to appreciate the great detective.