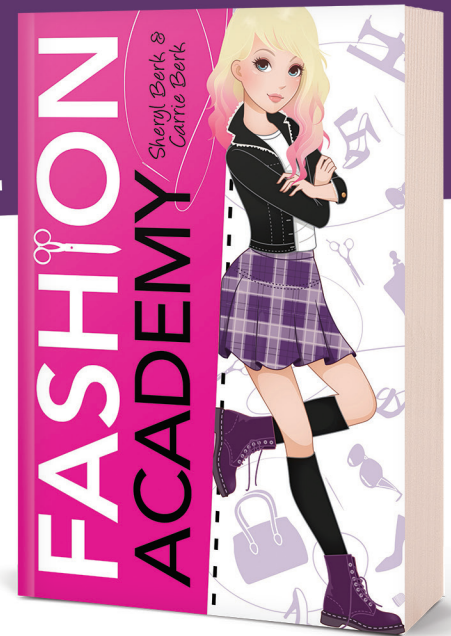


# FASHION ACADEMY

*Fashion Academy Book 1*



## A Curriculum Guide for Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7

### SNAPSHOT SUMMARY:

This is the story of Mackenzie “Mickey” Williams, a ten-year-old who dreams of becoming an avant-garde clothing designer. Her wish comes true when she attends the Fashion Academy of Brooklyn, New York, and is a finalist in their runway competition.

### FULL-LENGTH SUMMARY:

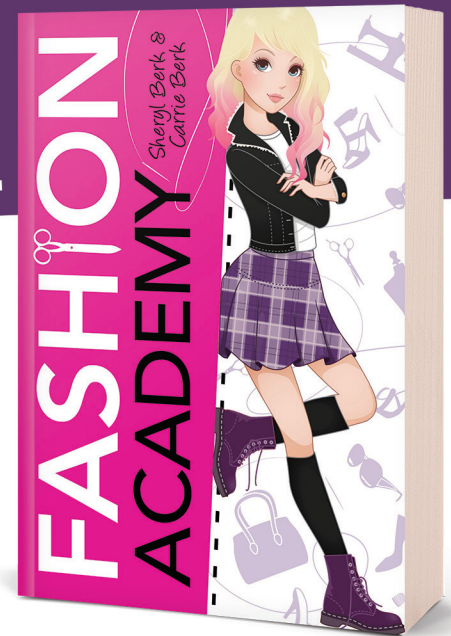
Mickey Williams loves to design clothing and accessories for her dolls, her friend Annabelle, and herself using scraps of fabric from her home and flea markets. Each outfit is creative and one of a kind and demonstrates Mickey’s talent, ability, and authenticity. Despite teasing from her classmates, she remains undaunted and true to herself.

Mickey’s art teacher gives her a brochure to the Fashion Academy of Brooklyn, a middle school for “the fashion designers of tomorrow.” She applies and receives a scholarship. Reluctantly, her mother agrees to allow her to move to the city to study and live with Olive, Mickey’s aunt, who is a vegan bird-watcher with old-fashioned ideals that are strange to Mickey. The young designer takes a dress form named Edith (after the designer Edith Head) with her to Aunt Olive’s small apartment. Mickey is the antithesis of Edith, and their first moments together are strained as Mickey hopes she has made the right decision. Mickey’s best friend, Annabelle, is heartbroken and gives Mickey a thimble necklace to remember her by.

For her first day at FAB, Mickey wears one of her own designs—a black-dyed denim jacket trimmed with doilies and a pair of bike shorts splattered with green and yellow paint. She wears high-top sneakers, and her hair is streaked with green chalk—a truly unique ensemble. She meets a boy named JC, who designs outfits for dogs (especially his pet Chihuahua, Madonna) and gives her the lay of the land. The two become fast friends. Mickey also meets Jade and Jake, a pair of affluent twins who will become her toughest competition at the school.

# FASHION ACADEMY

*Fashion Academy Book 1*



Her first class is Apparel Arts 1, and her teacher is Mr. Kaye, who JC has warned is a tough taskmaster. But eventually, he will become Mickey's mentor and encourage her to realize her potential. He challenges his students to create three looks based on various themes. Those scoring highest on these assignments will present a four-piece collection on the runway at semester's end. The winner of the Runway Challenge is the most desired title at FAB.

Mickey's first project is a T-shirt dyed in berry juice and decorated with cabbage leaves. Highly creative but smelly! She and JC decide to change her image, and she becomes Kenzie Wills, the daughter of a wealthy Finnish fashion designer. She has a complete makeover: blond hair, haute couture clothing, and a chauffeur (JC's actor friend in costume) to drive her to school. She impresses her classmates, particularly Jade, with her new persona. Mickey is suddenly popular and a member of the "in crowd."

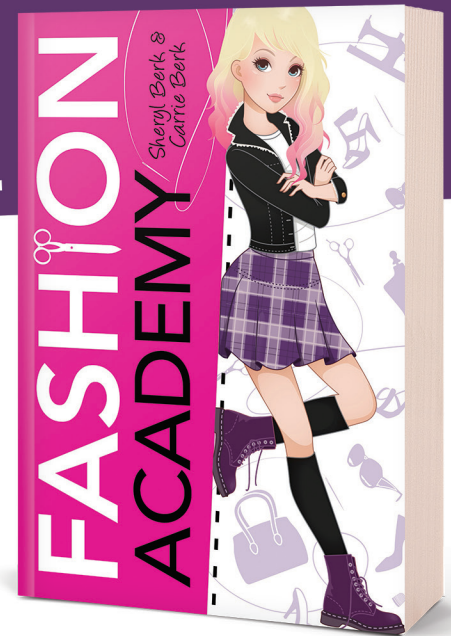
Her second project is a V-neck batwing shirt with a maxi skirt made out of Olive's curtains. Mr. Kaye gives it his highest grade, a 4+. The third competition has an alphabet theme. She and JC devise a jumpsuit made of bird-printed material with palazzo pajama legs, accessorized with a feather boa. Mickey is selected for the runway show, with a school-supplied budget of \$250.

She returns to her own self and, with the help of JC, designs four outfits to be modeled by friends and family. Her mother models a kimono with a glowing scribble print, Annabelle sports a one-shouldered crop top and bootie shorts with floor-length fringe, and Aunt Olive flaunts a print suit and a yellow feather hat. Finally, Mickey walks the runway in a strapless, pale-blue ball gown and sneakers. She is accompanied by Madonna, JC's dog, wearing a designer outfit and a tiara. Mr. Kaye tells her he is proud and impressed—she has found her design aesthetic. Despite all of Mickey's efforts, Jade wins the competition, and Mickey takes second place. But all is not lost! One of the judges is wowed by Mickey's collection and wants to feature her on a popular fashion blog. Now everyone will know who she is as a designer. Her career is on the rise.

Mickey returns to FAB for the second semester and is selected to be a judge in the first contest in Apparel Arts 2. She has proven herself as a fashion force to be reckoned with—on her own terms.

# FASHION ACADEMY

*Fashion Academy Book 1*



## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What did Aunt Olive mean by “Most birds will eventually find a flock to fly with”?
2. How did Mickey find her style?
3. Have you ever changed schools? How did you feel on the first day?
4. Why did Mickey change her name to Kenzie Wills? Was she right to do this? State your reasons.
5. Discuss the qualities that made Annabelle and JC good friends to Mickey. How do you define being a good friend?
6. Talk about the changes Aunt Olive underwent during the story.
7. How did Mr. Kaye serve as a mentor to Mickey? Has anyone ever done this for you? How?
8. Explain these elements of design: color, silhouette, texture, and line. Can you add any others to this list?
9. Suggest and explain other themes for fashion competitions.
10. What did Mickey mean by “I gotta be me”? Have you ever pretended to be a different person? How and why?
11. Should Jade have won the runway competition? State your reasons.

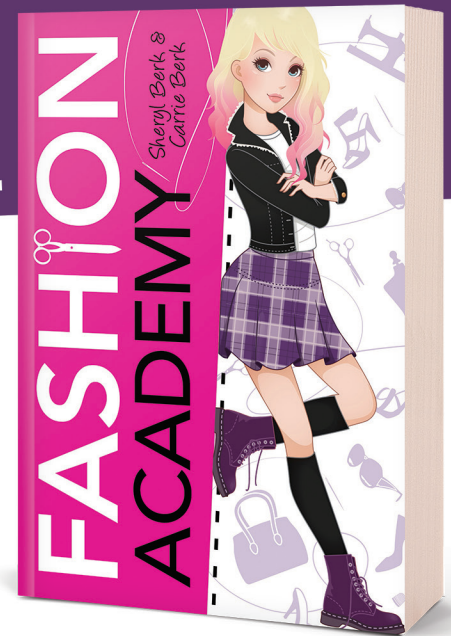
## NEW VOCABULARY

**Using clues found in the text, write your definitions of these words and phrases:**

1. Avant-garde
2. Clone
3. Brocade
4. Pushed over the edge
5. Stuck out like a sore thumb
6. In a nutshell
7. Brooch

# FASHION ACADEMY

*Fashion Academy Book 1*



8. Earthy
9. Gallivant
10. Crème de la crème
11. Fraternal twins
12. Vintage
13. Out of sight, out of mind
14. Mannequin
15. Dial it down a notch
16. Organic
17. Designer's block
18. Fashion faux pas
19. White lie
20. Haute couture

## ACTIVITIES

1. Create a design that demonstrates your style. Add color and fabric if possible. **(Art, Math)**
2. Draw a portrait of Mickey in one of her out-of-the-box outfits. **(Art)**
3. Stage a runway parade in your favorite outfit. Choose a theme and narrate. Share with your classmates. **(Art, Social Studies)**
4. Design an outfit for a pet (e.g., a dog, cat, hamster, goldfish). Name your company. **(Art, Math, Science)**
5. Make a diorama of one of the scenes of the story. **(Art, Retelling, Math)**
6. Draw, color, cut, and paste paper dolls of Mickey, Annabelle, Olive, JC, Mickey's mother, and Jade. Make a mural as a backdrop. **(Art)**
7. Design a T-shirt for your school. Use tie-dye, crayons, scraps of material, etc. **(Science, Art, Math)**
8. Create a logo for your fashion company. **(Art, Computer)**
9. Write a letter to Aunt Olive thanking her for her help and understanding. **(Writing)**