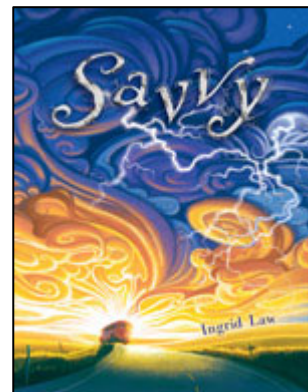


# *SAVVY*

## by Ingrid Law

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### INTRODUCTION

For generations, the Beaumont family has harbored a secret. They each possess a “savvy”—a special power that strikes when they turn thirteen. Grandpa Bomba moves mountains, Mibs’s older brothers create hurricanes and spark electricity...and now it’s the eve of Mibs’s big day. As if waiting for her savvy to show up wasn’t hard enough, Mibs’s family gets scary news two days before her birthday: Poppa has been in a terrible accident. With the hope that her new power will save Poppa, Mibs sneaks onto a salesman’s bus bound for the hospital... only to find the bus heading in the opposite direction. Suddenly, Mibs finds herself on an unforgettable odyssey that will force her to make sense of growing up—and of other people, who might also have a few secrets hidden just beneath the skin.



### ABOUT INGRID LAW

Ingrid Law is a writer and an artist. She is the author and illustrator of two e-books for children, and her artwork has appeared in local and national art shows in the US. She lives in Colorado with her teenage daughter. *Savvy* is her first novel.

### A CONVERSATION WITH INGRID LAW

#### **Q: What inspired *Savvy*?**

Watching my own daughter, I am constantly reminded of the challenges young people face—the struggle for identity, the enormous physical and emotional changes, the often conflicting voices of parents, friends, teachers, and media. While these challenges may not manifest themselves as hurricanes and electrical sparks in real life, I think they can feel just as powerful and out of control to the young person navigating them.

#### **Q: What do you think your savvy would be?**

If I could choose, I think I would like to fly or breathe underwater. When I was a kid, I was convinced that I could see air—see its movements and patterns through a room—but everyone insisted that it was impossible. I’ve always wondered how many things are impossible only because we are told they are.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Mibs wishes, at least temporarily, that her savvy could “give [her] the muscle to turn nasty girls into slimy green frogs or to glue their mouths shut tight with a nod of [her] head.” (p. 17) Why do the girls in Mibs’s class make fun of her? What would you do in her place?
2. The Beaumonts have to keep their savvies a secret from everyone. Would that be difficult for you? Do you think everyone has a secret? Who would you trust with your big secrets?
3. Why does Rosemary Meeks come to the Beaumont house? How are things different with the Meeks family around? Is her influence on the Beaumont house positive or negative?
4. Describe Mibs’s relationship with her parents and siblings. How is it complicated by their savvies? What are the positive and negative aspects of having siblings with extraordinary powers?
5. Grandpa says to Mibs, “Your savvy’s in your blood. It’s an inheritance, like your brown eyes or your grandma’s long toes or her talent for dancing to polka music.” (p. 121) Are people born with special talents or do they have to work at developing their unique abilities? Are there any talents you wish you had?
6. Explain how Mibs ends up on a bible delivery bus with Bobbi, Will, Fish, and Samson. Where do they hope to arrive? How do things go awry? Which scene in their wild adventure is your favorite?
7. “Perhaps Samson’s strengthening touch was just an ordinary sort of human magic, the kind of magic that exists in the honest, heartfelt concern of one person for another.” (p. 113) Explain “ordinary human magic” in your own words. Give another example of “ordinary human magic” you find in *Savvy*.
8. Slowly, Mibs discovers the way her savvy works. How does she figure it out? How is it different from the savvy that she originally hoped for? In the last year, what have you, like Mibs, discovered about yourself?

9. How does Lill Kiteley end up on the bus? What would you say is her special know-how? How does she use that know-how during her time on the bus and how does it affect the passengers?
  
10. How does Mibs's relationship with Will and Bobbi change over the course of the adventure? Who do you think changes the most in the story?
  
11. Fish and Rocket have a terrible time scumbling their savvies. How does this cause a ruckus for the Beaumont clan and others who know them? Are there any parts of your own personality that you have a difficult time controlling? Is it better to tone down parts of yourself so that you fit in society or is it more important to be yourself completely?
  
12. Momma warns Mibs that, "You can't get rid of part of what makes you *you* and be happy." (p. 186) What makes you *you*? How do you let that special part shine through?
  
13. When Mibs thinks about Will's obvious feelings for her she realizes that it "[makes her] feel too young and too old at the same time." (p. 223) Do you feel like kids today are forced to grow up too fast? How might different aspects of modern life (the media, school, friends, etc.) affect the ways in which kids mature?
  
14. After listening to so many voices in her head throughout the novel, what does Mibs discover about the voices that she and others listen to? Is there anything that boosts or stifles your confidence? How can you drown out the voices that don't matter?
  
15. What do you think makes Poppa wake up at last? Do you think it has anything to do with one of the Beaumont's savvies?