

LESSON ACTIVITY — FEMALE FORCE: MARTHA STEWART



Warm-Up Activity – Serendipity

Early in her career, Martha was asked to host a book release party by her husband Andrew who was president of a publishing company. The author states: “serendipity would play a part here” (page 13, panel 3). What does that mean — serendipity? Use the context clues in the art and text to come up with your own definition of “serendipity”. Share your definition with a shoulder partner then share some definitions with the class. Were the working definitions similar or different? Look up the definition in a dictionary. With your shoulder partner, compare and contrast your definitions to the dictionary definition.

Lesson Activity – Relationships

Martha Stewart’s relationships are a significant theme in the comic biography. Using specific text and art examples, analyze her relationships. What is stated explicitly in the comic about her relationships? What is implied? Give specific examples. What technique does the artist use to inform the reader about Martha’s relationships?

(Teacher’s Notes: Over and over, Martha loses friends or jobs over her inability to get along with others. She constantly has significant disputes in both her work and personal life. The artist uses a frameless panel in which Martha and someone close to her are having a dispute. The two are drawn with their backs to one another. This technique is repeated on page 13, panel 1 and on page 16, panel 3. Artistically, this hits home the idea that Martha cannot get along with anyone. This is often juxtaposed with a panel with the same two characters facing one another lovingly earlier. It all starts out good, but then something happens. She’s had fallouts with lovers, friends, bosses and business partners, many of which could not be resolved amicably. One might infer that Stewart has serious problems with personal and public relationships. Why would that be?)