* FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY * FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY * FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY *

Name _____ Date _____

# Haven
# by Valerie Biel

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

Read Aloud Video

## What's It About?

Taking only what they can quickly pack, 11-year-old Mardella Houston and her mom secretly move away from her abusive, drug-dealing father to start a fresh life in the one-stoplight town of Haven, Minnesota. But Mardella's sure she's to blame—if only she hadn't dialed 911, none of this would be happening. Her dad wouldn't be in jail, her mom would still have her old job, Mardella would still have friends, and they wouldn't be starting over. She knows she should be grateful that her mom's new job at Rest Haven Senior Living gives them a place to live—but the over-age-65 residence is a boring, run-down, funny smelling place. Even so, Mardella volunteers to make their new home as cheerful as possible. Through these colorful projects, she is surprised that she soon has new friends—of all ages. But when her father gets out of jail, angry and determined to find them, Mardella realizes she's made another terrible mistake—one that might destroy her chance at a new, happy life. This time it's up to her to fix everything and keep her mom and new friends safe. This moving middle grade novel sensitively addresses a tough topic through the eyes of a preteen. (Ages 9+)

## Who Wrote It?

Valerie Biel writes books for middle grade to adult audiences--stories inspired by her travels and her insatiable curiosity. She helps other authors with their book promotion and marketing and frequently teaches writing workshops and independent publishing classes to students of all ages. When Valerie's away from the computer, you might find her wrangling her overgrown garden, reading everything she can get her hands on, or traveling the world--often on trips for the charity she runs with her husband, The World Orphan Fund. Once upon a time, she graduated from the University of Wisconsin with degrees in journalism and political science. She lives with her husband on a (tiny) portion of her family's century-old farm in rural Wisconsin, but regularly dreams of finding a cozy cottage on the Irish coast where she can write and write.

AR Reading Level: N/A

Lexile Level: N/A

## I want to read this book: YES / NO

## WHAT I THINK

Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.