

LET'S TALK ABOUT BOOKS

Suggestions for Use

Edited by Chris Blair and Ellen Popit



Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award List 2010

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**Participants in the Rebecca Caudill Packet Creation Workshop
June 9, 2010**

Jillann Abbott	Philo Public Library District/LTLS
Melissa Barbre	Fairfield Elementary School District #112/ShLS
Chris Blair	Robinson CUSD #2 (retired)/ShLS
Brenda Davis	Jasper County CUSD #1/ShLS
Jill Dodson	Hope Welty Public Library District/RPLS
Sandra Hayes	Hope Welty Public Library District/RPLS
Tammy Krouse	Edwards County CCUD #1/ShLS
Vicky Ludwig	Neoga CUSD #3/RPLS
Donna Miner	Oakwood CUSD #76/LTLS
Rhonda Phillips	Vandalia CUSD #203/ShLS
Brenda Wells	Red Hill CUSD #10/ShLS
Jane Robertson	Anne West Lindsey District Library/ShLS
Sue Schultz	Red Hill CUSD #10/ShLS
Rita Stephens	Jasper County CUSD #1/ShLS
Brenda Wells	Red Hill CUSD #10/ShLS
Tracy Wright	Neoga CUSD #3/RPLS

Caudill Evaluators Who Contributed to the Packet

Connie Steudel	Carbondale Public Library (retired)/ShLS
Sandy Harp	Kings Consolidated School District/PALS
Leslie Forseman	Triopia CUSD #27/ALS
Kathy Murphy	Plainfield Public School/PALS
Michelle Glatt	Chiddix Junior High School/ALS
Janet Thompson	Chicago Public Library/CPL
Kathy Lattz	Monticello CUSD #25/LTLS
Pam Seals	Red Bud CUD #132/ShLS

Additional Contributors

Karen Zuber	St. Joseph's School/ShLS
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Introduction

The Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (RCYRBA) is now celebrating its twenty-fourth year. Twenty titles are nominated each year, and any students in grades four through eight in participating Illinois schools and public libraries who have read or heard three books may vote for the most outstanding book in February. The winner is announced in March. Children are encouraged to read the books on this list and share their thoughts and reactions with others, thus making the reading experience more enjoyable.

This packet of materials is meant to be a guide for librarians and teachers to help children enjoy and interpret what they read. It is designed as a beginning step when looking in depth at the books on the Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award Master List for 2011. It is hoped that the packet will start creative thoughts flowing in librarians, teachers, and children, who are trying to read books enthusiastically and with joy. All the materials developed are meant to be used "with" children and not given to them in isolation.

The following suggestions for the twenty titles on the 2011 RCYRBA Master List were developed by a group of librarians and teachers. Information is provided in nine areas: a summary, questions for students, journal starters, and activities designed to extend the book into other curricular areas, reading recommendations, promotional booktalks, related materials, web sites, and book review citations.

Summary: The summary provides an overview of the book for anyone who has not read a particular title.

Questions: The questions included are primarily open-ended with neither a right nor a wrong answer. Since readers' reactions to stories are different, they should be encouraged to express different points of view. The questions encourage students to relate reading to their everyday lives and are designed to promote more questions and discussion as a result. Questions can be given to students when they begin to read the book so they can think about their responses as they read and focus on the ideas that the author is trying to convey.

Journal Starters: These questions are designed to engage students in the writing process and to encourage them to put themselves in situations presented in the books.

Activities: There are a wide variety of activities included to suit different age and interest levels. Some are designed for groups, others for individuals.

Reading Recommendation: The reading recommendation is included to help librarians and teachers decide whether or not a particular title will be of interest to a group of students or to a particular individual. The recommendation is only made with consideration for grades four through eight, which are the grades included in the award. Occasionally, a caution is listed when a sensitive topic is included that may cause concern in some communities.

Booktalks: Booktalks have been added for the convenience of librarians and teachers who would like a prepared piece to use for book promotion. They are short, sometimes including a passage from the book, since hearing the voice of the author is often important when students are deciding whether or not to read a specific title.

Read-Alikes: A listing of related books that will aid in extending literature activities. Titles were suggested by teachers and librarians who have had experience with them. This list is not exhaustive and materials have not been screened for literary merit. These related books are divided into three general categories: additional books by the same author, topics which are mentioned in the story, and books which are similar. Because of their broad appeal throughout the curriculum, picture books are also included in this listing.

Web Sites: Sites were selected as a way to expand the activities and learning of the students. Some sites are for author information and others for organizations, locations or topics related to the book. The sites were checked on September 9, 2010 and were active at that time. If links to .pdf files take a long time to load, it is often easier to copy and paste them into your browser.

Book Review Citations: Book review citations have been included to aid teachers and librarians in case a challenge to any of the books on the list should occur.

This activities packet has been edited with care from materials developed by the contributors. The Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award Committee would appreciate comments and suggestions concerning the packet. Please direct communications to anyone on the committee or to the editors of the packet.

Developing this packet was a challenging, invigorating experience for the participants. Enjoy!

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Chains*. Atheneum Books For Young Readers, 2008.

SUMMARY:

Isabel and her younger sister Ruth, the slaves of Miss Mary Finch of Tews, Rhode Island, were promised their freedom upon her death, but when Miss Finch dies in May of 1776, the will granting their freedom is not found. Instead, they are sold to the Lockton family, Loyalists living in New York City. Madam Lockton proves to be a cruel and vindictive mistress. Both New York City and Isabel are in turmoil: the city because both the Loyalists and the Patriots wanting to control it, and Isabel from her all-consuming desire to gain freedom for her and her sister and not knowing which side is more likely to help her achieve that. Eventually, she becomes a spy for the colonial army. She must endure having her sister taken from her and being beaten and branded, until finally she is able to run away.

QUESTIONS:

What does Miss Finch teach Isabel that slaves are not allowed to do? Why is that important?
Isabel hides seeds in her pocket. What do they represent?
How is Isabel's life as a slave different in the Finch and Lockton homes?
Why does Isabel decide to become a spy?
What words could the letter that was branded on Isabel's face represent?
Why does Isabel risk her life to save Lady Seymour in the fire?
Isabel is given a copy of *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine. How does the book give her courage?
How does the relationship between Isabel and Curzon change through the novel?
In what ways is Isabel betrayed throughout the book?
What were the pros and cons for slaves to fight on either side during the Revolution?
How are the quotes at the beginning of each chapter related to the story?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

Freedom means...
The greatest risk I have ever taken is.....
If I were taken away from my home, I would miss...
America's freedom cost more than the lives of soldiers. It also cost.....

ACTIVITIES:

Create a time line of the major events of the Revolutionary War.
Identify references to chains that are found throughout the book.
Research New York City during the Revolutionary War.
Do a comparison of George Washington and King George
Keep a notebook of facts you learn about the Revolutionary War while reading *Chains*.
Each chapter has a quote at the beginning. Which ones do you like best and why?
On a paper chain, create a timeline of Isabel's life.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 6-8.

BOOK TALK:

Miss Finch had promised. When she died, Isabel and her sister Ruth would be given their freedom, but a greedy relative sells them again. Now the sisters belong to the Lockton family, Loyalists living in New York City and the future looks very grim. As Americans are fighting for their independence from the British, Isabel is fighting for her freedom, too. She is encouraged by Curzon, another slave, to become a spy for the colonial army, but Isabel believes that neither side is interested in giving slaves their freedom. If she wants it, she'll have to get it by herself.

READ-ALIKES:

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Forge*. Atheneum, October 19, 2010.
Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Independent Dames: What You Never Knew About the Women and Girls of the American Revolution*. Simon & Schuster, 2008.
Avi. *The Fighting Ground*. Lippincott, 1984.
Blackwood, Gary. *The Year of the Hangman*. Dutton Children's Books, 2002.
Collier, James Lincoln. *My Brother Sam is Dead*. Four Winds Press, 1974.
Collier, James Lincoln and Christopher. *War Comes to Willy Freeman*. Delacorte, 1983.
Forbes, Esther. *Johnny Tremain*. Houghton Mifflin, 1943.
Gregory, Kristiana. *We Are Patriots*. Scholastic, 2002.
Paine, Thomas. *Common Sense*. Phoenix, 2000.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Laurie Halse Anderson: <http://www.writerlady.com>
New York State Reading Association: <http://charlotteaward.wordpress.com/2010-nominees/young-adult>
Reading Guide: http://www.teachervision.fen.com/tv/printables/simonschuster/Chains_RG.pdf
African Americans in the Revolutionary Period:
http://www.nps.gov/revwar/about_the_revolution/african_americans.html
The American Revolution/African American Participation:
<http://americanrevwar.homestead.com/files/blacks.htm>
The Revolution's Black Soldiers: <http://www.americanrevolution.org/blk.html>
The Revolutionary War: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part2/2narr4.html>
Slavery in New York: <http://www.slaveryinnewyork.org/index.html>

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Chains*. Atheneum Books For Young Readers, 2008

Booklist 105(November 1, 2008): 42

Publishers Weekly 255(September 1, 2008): 54

School Library Journal 54(October 1, 2008): 138

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. *The Boy Who Dared*. Scholastic Press, 2008.

SUMMARY:

Helmuth Hübener is born in Germany in 1925. As a young boy, he loves his country and his patriotism is never questioned, but with the ascendancy of Adolf Hitler and the Nazis, Helmuth sees many changes in his country, family, and friends. Helmuth is so distraught by all he sees that by the time he is sixteen-years-old, he is distributing anti-Hitler leaflets. At seventeen, he is imprisoned and sentenced to death.

QUESTIONS:

How do Helmuth's beliefs change during his lifetime?

What does Mutti mean by, "Silence is how people get on sometimes"? (p. 72)

What are the different steps that lead Helmuth in his rebellion against the Nazis?

What convinces Helmuth to make the leaflets?

Do you think Helmuth's friends, Karl and Rudi, are right or wrong in not getting as involved with the leaflets as Helmuth is?

The German people could not protest or have contact with the outside world when the Nazi's had control of Germany. Could this happen today?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

I am glad I have been taught patriotism because.....

Honesty is the best policy because

If you believe in your country and what it stands for you should

I admire _____ for taking a stand on _____ because...

The most courageous thing I have ever seen is...

ACTIVITIES:

Interview someone who lived through World War II.

Read Susan Bartoletti's *Hitler Youth: Growing up in Hitler's Shadow* and compare the two books.

Research Germany from World War I to the rise of Hitler.

Make a timeline of Hitler's rise to power.

Have we given up any freedoms in the last ten years? If so, list them.

If anyone in your family served in World War II, learn if there are any "family stories" that can be shared.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 6-8

BOOKTALK:

Helmuth is a Mormon growing up in Nazi Germany. He does not feel comfortable with the actions of the Nazi's, yet everyone he loves tells him he needs to stay quiet about the bad things that are happening. He does keep quiet for awhile but he gets more and more uncomfortable. His minister is taken to a labor camp for speaking out against the Nazi's. Helmuth sees him when he is released and everything changes. Helmuth can no longer sit back and do nothing.

READ-ALIKES:

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. *Hitler Youth: Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow*. Scholastic, 2005.
Bachrach, Susan D. *Tell Them We Remember: The Story of the Holocaust*. Little Brown, 1994.
Forman, James D. *The Traitors*. Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1968.
Levine, Karen. *Hana's Suitcase: A True Story*. Albert Whitman, 2003.
Orlev, Uri. *The Island on Bird Street*. Houghton Mifflin, 1984.
Rogasky, Barbara. *Smoke and Ashes*. Holiday House, 2002.
Van der Rol, Ruud. *Anne Frank: Beyond the Diary*. Viking, 1993.
Wolf, Joan M. *Someone Named Eva*. Clarion Books, 2007.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Susan Campbell Bartoletti: <http://www.scbartoletti.com/>

Discussion Guide: <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/collateral.jsp?id=31656>

Children of the Holocaust, Stories of Survival:

www.adl.org/children_holocaust/children_main1.asp

The History Place – Nazi Germany/World War II: www.historyplace.com

Holocaust Education Resources: <http://www.wpunj.edu/dotAsset/136104.pdf>

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum: www.ushmm.org

You Tube – Helmuth Hubener PhotoStory: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1cto6mRGInk>

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. *The Boy Who Dared*. Scholastic Press, 2008.

Booklist 104(February 15, 2008): 81

Publishers Weekly 255(February 11, 2008): 70

School Library Journal 54(May 1, 2008): 119

Cassidy, Cathy. *Scarlett*. Viking, 2006.

SUMMARY:

Scarlett lives in London, thinking life is perfect until her parents get a divorce. She remains with her mother, and her father moves to a remote area of Ireland. She is angry and rebellious and, after being expelled from her fifth school in two years, her mother sends her to live with her dad. There Scarlett meets her new stepmother and a younger stepsister. She brings her troubles along with her, but Kian, a gypsy boy with his own problems, helps her to again find the good in life.

QUESTIONS:

“Red is nature’s warning color, signifying danger, trouble.” (p.3) What are some other colors that are associated with specific ideas?

Is life fair or isn’t it?

Why does Scarlett think her parents’ divorce is the end of the world for her?

How is life different for Scarlett in her mom’s and her dad’s homes?

How do you feel when Scarlett’s new teacher speaks Gaelic to her?

What are some of the steps that help Scarlett turn her opinion of life back to being positive?

Why does Scarlett’s dad keep all her old things?

Why does Scarlett decide to live with Mum and visit her dad, Clare, Holly and baby Hazel at Easter and during part of the summer?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

If someone were to describe me, I hope the description would be...

My best summer was when...

We shape our lives with the choices we make.” (p. 21) A choice and its consequences that I remember are...

ACTIVITIES:

Ask your parents about the origin of your name and research what it means.

Make a dictionary of British English to American English words.

Read some Irish folklore and legends.

Draw a map of Ireland and locate as many of the places mentioned in the book as you can.

Research the Morris Traveller. When and where were they made? Do you like them?

Read about the lives of gypsies.

Find a recipe for soap and make some.

Make a small quilt out of old fabric and ribbons of yours.

Find Irish recipes on the internet and make a dish to share with your class.

Draw a map of your neighborhood.

Make an illustrated dictionary of plants found in Ireland. Are any of these also found in Illinois?

Make a graph of your area’s temperatures and rainfall.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 5-8

BOOKTALK:

Life has been perfect for Scarlett until her parents get a divorce, leaving her with Mum in London and her dad moving to a remote area of Ireland. Scarlett becomes a very angry, rebellious girl. She is expelled from five schools in two years, with reasons such as inciting a food riot in one school and threatening a teacher in another. Now she is sent to the last place on earth that she would like to be - to live with her dad, stepmother, and younger stepsister. This new family offers Scarlett love, compassion, and a chance to start over, but can Scarlett give up the anger that so consumes her?

READ-ALIKES:

Dowell, Frances O’Roark. *Dovey Coe*. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2000.
Han, Jenny. *Shug*. Simon and Schuster, 2006.
Hannigan, Katherine. *Ida B: --and Her Plans to Maximize Fun, Avoid Disaster, and (Possibly) Save the World*. Greenwillow, 2004.
Tarshis, Lauren. *Emma-Jean Lazarus Fell Out of a Tree*. Dial Books for Young Readers, 2007.
Whelan, Gloria. *Listening for Lions*. HarperCollins, 2005.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Cathy Cassidy: <http://www.cathycassidy.com>
All Recipes.com: <http://allrecipes.com//Recipes/world-cuisine/europe/uk-and-ireland/ireland/Main.aspx>
Discover Connemara: <http://www.discoverireland.ie/Destinations/Connemara.aspx>
Fun & Simple Soap Recipes: www.teachsoap.com/recipes.html
Library Ireland: www.libraryireland.com/Folklore.php
Old Woodies: <http://www.oldwoodies.com/gallery-shootingbrakes6.htm>

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Cassidy, Cathy. *Scarlett*. Viking, 2006.

Booklist 103(December 1, 2006): 44
Publishers Weekly 253(November 20, 2006): 70
School Library Journal 52(November 1, 2006): 130

Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games*. Scholastic Press, 2008.

SUMMARY:

Survival – that is Katniss Everdeen’s goal when she is forced into an arena with twenty-three other young people, and the winner is the sole survivor. Katniss faces not only hunger, dehydration, fear, brutality, battle wounds, extreme weather conditions, and death all around her, but she also feels loyalty and love in the seventy-fourth annual Hunger Games.

QUESTIONS:

Katniss and Gale’s friendship begins with sharing knowledge of how to survive. In what other ways can friendships begin?

Why is Katniss willing to sacrifice her life for her sister?

How do the Hunger Games help the Capitol control the people in the twelve districts?

How do people from District 12 help each other, both before and during the Games?

How are the Capitol and its inhabitants different from the rest of Panem?

What class systems are found in the districts?

How does Katniss misjudge Peeta?

What is the hardest trial that Katniss faces during the Hunger Games?

What are some of the acts of defiance expressed against the Capitol?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

Peeta gives Katniss bread and, therefore, hope. I remember an act of kindness when...

A gift that means a lot to me is _____ because...

I was given the nickname _____ because...

If I had to leave home taking only one thing with me, I would take _____ because...

If I would be chosen to participate in the Hunger Games, I would . . .

ACTIVITIES:

Draw Katniss in her hunting clothes.

Make an illustrated dictionary of plants Katniss harvests for food and/or medicine.

Make an illustrated dictionary of political symbols.

Make some homemade bread.

Draw a map of Panem.

List the ways that the contestants are manipulated in the arena.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 7-8

BOOKTALK:

After the collapse of North America, Panem is established. This new country consists of the Capitol and twelve outlying districts, which are cruelly and autocratically governed. To keep the districts in line, the Hunger Games have been established, requiring each district to send two tributes, one boy and one girl, to the annual event, with each youth facing almost certain death. For the first time, though, the tributes from the same district will be declared dual winners, if they are the last two to survive.

From District 12, Katniss Everdeen and Peeta Mellark, form an alliance and survive all obstacles to win, but they are then faced with disapproval and great anger from the organizers because of how they win.

READ-ALIKES:

Collins, Suzanne. *Catching Fire*. Scholastic Press, 2009.

Collins, Suzanne. *Mockingjay*. Scholastic Press, 2010.

Dashner, James. *The Maze Runner*. Delacorte, 2009.

Golding, *Lord of the Flies*. Coward-McCann, 1954.

Lowry, Lois. *The Giver*. Houghton Mifflin, 1993.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Suzanne Collins: <http://www.suzannecollinsbooks.com/index.htm>

D.C.F. 2009-2010 Book Reviews and Discussion Questions:

<http://www.dcfaward.org/Activities/dcfbookreviews&questionss09-10.pdf>

Discussion Guide for *The Hunger Games*:

http://www.scholastic.ca/clubs/activities/images/hunger_games.pdf

Interview With You / Suzanne Collins: <http://www.interviewwithyou.com/suzanne-collins-interview-on-catching-firehunger-games/>

NoveList Young Adult Book Discussion Guide:

http://www.ebscohost.com/flashPromo/HungerGames_BookDiscussionGuide.pdf

Reading Group Guides: http://www.readinggroupguides.com/guides_h/the_hunger_games1.asp

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games*. Scholastic Press, 2008

Booklist 105(September 1, 2008): 97

Publishers Weekly 255(November 3, 2008): 58

School Library Journal 54(September 1, 2008): 176

Connor, Leslie. *Waiting for Normal*. HarperCollins, 2008.

SUMMARY:

Twelve-year-old Addie Schmeeter is “waiting for normal,” because her life has been far from that. Her father is deceased. Her mother and stepfather, a good and caring man, are divorced, and he has moved away taking her two younger half-sisters with him. Addie is left with Mommers, who has little time for her daughter. After a fire destroys their trailer, followed by an investigation by the Department of Youth and Family Services, Addie is sent to live with her stepfather’s family and finally has the opportunity to lead a normal life.

QUESTIONS:

- How does Addie make the best of her new life in the trailer?
- Why do Soula and Elliot become so important to Addie?
- How does Addie cope with her mother’s behavior?
- Why is it wrong for Mommers to be gone overnight?
- Do you think Dwight realizes what is happening?
- Why does Addie decide not to go visit Dwight and her sisters anymore?
- Addie refuses to play her flute, which she loves, in the concert. Why?
- Why is Piccolo so important to Addie?
- What do you think is “normal” and how is that different from Addie’s “normal”?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

- Normal for me is...
- When I was twelve-years-old, some of the things I did on my own were...
_____ is a hero to me because...
- If I would ever have a friend like Addie and know that she is staying alone, I would...
- If my parents did not come home, I would...
- I love my mother but sometimes she drives me crazy when she.....

ACTIVITIES:

- List some foods that are in your kitchen. Plan how many meals can be made from them.
- Take some empty food boxes and try to guess what to put in them to make them feel ‘real.’
- Have your parents help you make turkey soup.
- Learn about Leslie Connor. What inspired her to write this story?
- Research dyslexia.
- Invite your band/music teacher to class to demonstrate playing the flute.
- Cook an entire meal for your family.
- Talk with the adult in your home who plans and prepares meals. Plan, shop, and help cook meals for a week with the help of this adult.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 5-8

BOOKTALK:

What would you do if your parents were divorced, you lived with your mother, and she would be gone for days at a time, leaving you with very little food, which you would have to ration out carefully? What would you do if the days she was home, she spent hours on the computer and did little else?

Addie is in that situation, and her deepest desire is to get to live a “normal” life. Will she ever get that chance?

READ-ALIKES:

Klise, Kate. *Deliver Us From Normal*. Scholastic, 2005.
Pfeffer, Susan Beth. *Life As We Knew It*. Harcourt, 2006.
Timberlake, Amy. *That Girl Lucy Moon*. Hyperion Book, 2008.
Voigt, Cynthia. *Homecoming*. Simon and Schuster, 1981.
Weaver, Will. *Memory Boy*. Perfection Learning, 2003.
Weeks, Sarah. *So B. It*. HarperCollins, 2005.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Leslie Connor: www.leslieconnor.com

Author Interview:

<http://www.harpercollins.com/author/authorExtra.aspx?authorID=30604&isbn13=9780060890889&displayType=bookinterview>

Association of Texas Professional Educators Book of the Month Club:

<http://www.atpe.org/resources/educators/bookClubQuestions/09SepGrade6-8.pdf>

Rhode Island Teen Book Award Discussion Module:

www.yourlibrary.ws/ya_webpage/ritba/ritba10/ritba10.htm

Schneider Family Book Award (2009):

<http://www.ala.org/ala/awardsgrants/awardsrecords/schneideraward/schneiderfamily.cfm>

Dyslexia – Mayo Clinic: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/dyslexia/DS00224>

KidsHealth: http://kidshealth.org/kid/health_problems/learning_problem/dyslexia.html

Kids Peace: <http://www.kidspeace.org>

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Connor, Leslie. *Waiting for Normal*. HarperCollins, 2008.

Booklist 104(April 1, 2008): 50

Publishers Weekly 255(February 18, 2008): 155

School Library Journal 54(February 1, 2008): 112

Frost, Helen. *Diamond Willow*. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2008.

SUMMARY:

Twelve-year-old Willow lives in a remote Alaskan village. All she wants is the chance to drive her family's team of sled dogs. Even a trip to her grandparents' home and back will do. When she is finally given that opportunity, tragedy strikes, and Willow must deal with her guilt and grief, as well as the reactions of her family and friends. Through all of this, Willow receives help from her ancestors, whose spirits take on the appearances of various woodland creatures. She also learns the significance of her name and a family secret is revealed to her.

QUESTIONS:

Do you understand the concept of reincarnation as it is used in this story? Why would the author choose to include these sections?

Do you agree with Willow's decision to run away with the dogs? What other options are available to her?

What is the significance of the title of the book?

What do you think of the formatting of the book?

Why do Willow's parents keep her twin a secret?

Do you think your parents would let you travel in the wilderness alone?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

The goal I most want to achieve is...

_____ is my favorite pet because...

One time when I was reckless...

I feel that I am grown up enough to...

The spirits of my ancestors would take the forms of...

ACTIVITIES:

Learn about your name. How did your parents arrive at that choice for you? Does your name mean something in this or another language?

Learn about the Iditarod. Choose a team and follow its progress.

Research the care of sled dogs.

Write either a story poem or a review of the novel in a diamond shape and include a hidden message in darker ink.

Research the region where Willow lives. What social customs there are the same or different from where you live?

Tell a portion of the story from the viewpoint of Roxy.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grade 4-7

BOOKTALK:

How will twelve-year-old Willow save the life of the sled dog Roxy, especially since she is responsible for the dog's injury? Not only is Roxy the family's best dog, but she is also Willow's most loyal friend. To save her life, Willow will be defying her parent's wishes and also endangering the life of her friend Kaylie.

READ-ALIKES:

Blake, Robert J. *Swift*. Philomel Books, 2007.
Creech, Sharon. *Love That Dog*. HarperCollins, 2001.
Gardiner, John Reynolds. *Stone Fox*. Crowell, 1980.
George, Jean Craighead. *Julie of the Wolves*. Hampton-Brown, 1972.
Hill, Kirkpatrick. *Winter Camp*. Maxwell Macmillan International, 1993.
Hill, Kirkpatrick. *The Year of Miss Agnes*. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2000.
Mikaelsen, Ben. *Touching Spirit Bear*. HarperCollins, 2001.
Paulsen, Gary. *Dogsong*. Bradbury Press, 1985.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Helen Frost: <http://www.helenfrost.net/index.php>

Association of Texas Professional Educators---Book of the Month Club:

<http://www.atpe.org/Resources/Educators/bookClubQuestions/09OctGrade6-8.pdf>

Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award:

<http://www.dcfaward.org/Activities/dcfbookreviews&questionss09-10.pdf>

LYRC Study Guide:

<http://www.state.lib.la.us/literacy-and-reading/louisiana-young-readers-choice/lyrc-study-guides-2011>

North Carolina Children's Book Award:

<http://www.plcmc.org/bookhive/nccba/NCCBABooklet2010.pdf>

Alaska Native Heritage Center:

http://www.alaskanative.net/en/main_nav/education/culture_alaska/athabaskan/

AAA Native Arts: <http://www.aaanativearts.com/alaskan-natives/athabaskan.htm>

The History of Telida: <http://explorenorth.com/library/communities/alaska/bl-Telida.htm>

Official Site of the Iditarod: <http://www.iditarod.com>

Think Quest – Athabaskan: <http://library.thinkquest.org/22550/athabaskan.html>

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Frost, Helen. *Diamond Willow*. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2008.

Horn Book 84(July/August, 2008): 444.

School Library Journal 54(June 1, 2008): 140

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *Found*. Simon and Schuster, 2008.

SUMMARY:

An airplane appears out of nowhere with thirty-six passengers on board, all babies, and no adults. Thirteen years later, after mysterious letters arrive, Jonah and Chip, begin to investigate the circumstances of their adoptions. This leads to an FBI agent, an airport gate attendant who worked only one day, people who suddenly appear and disappear, and the world of time travel. They also realize that they do not know which adults they can trust and that they are caught in a plot to steal them away from the 21st century and send them back to an earlier time period from which they had been removed.

QUESTIONS:

Many kids wonder if they are adopted. Have you ever done that?
How is Angela DuPre's life ruined by seeing the airplane?
Who has the best intentions: JB, Mr. Hodge, or Angela?
Why are the clues to the mystery of Jonah and Chip's adoption sent in the form of letters?
Do you believe in time travel? Why or why not?
What traits do you look for to make you feel a person is trustworthy?
The hardback and paperback copies of the book have different covers. Which do you think is more effective?
Why do you think that Haddix is so successful with writing books in a series?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

If I could be anyone from history, I would choose to be...
Time travel is an interesting element to use to create...

ACTIVITIES:

Create a time capsule with at least five items representing a period in history.
Pick a 'missing' child from history. Compare life for that person then and if living now.
Research the adoption process in the United States.
Using the NOVA Online site, look at the section "Think Like Einstein" or the Carl Sagan presentation.
Research the uses of a Taser.
Research time travel or construct a miniature time machine.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 4-8

BOOKTALK:

Do you know who you are? If you do, you are most fortunate because Jonah and his friend Chip do not. They have just learned that they were passengers on an airplane that appeared out of nowhere, and, after they were taken off the plane, it just as suddenly disappeared. As to the thirty-six passengers that were on that plane – they were all babies, not one adult was on board! Now, thirteen years later, Jonah, Katherine, and Chip learn about this after receiving two letters with disturbing messages: first, “You Are One of the Missing,” and second, “Beware! They’re Coming Back to Get You.” In trying to unravel this mystery and facing danger with every step, they must figure out not only which adults they can trust, but also who they are, where they belong, and in what century!

READ-ALIKES:

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *Sent*. Simon & Schuster, 2009. (The Missing, Book 2)
Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *Sabotaged*. Simon & Schuster, 8/24/10. (Missing, Book 3)
Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *Torn*. Simon and Schuster, 2011 (The Missing, Book 4)
Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *Running Out of Time*. Simon and Schuster, 1995.
Baum, L. Frank. *Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Penguin, 1998.
Gutman, Dan. *Honus and Me: a Baseball Card Adventure*. Avon, 1997.
Gutman, Dan. *Mickey & Me: a Baseball Card Adventure*. HarperCollins, 2003.
Hahn, Mary Downing, *Time for Andrew: a Ghost Story*. Clarion, 1994.
Wells, H.G. *The Time Machine*, Penguin Classics, 1995.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Margaret Peterson Haddix: www.haddixbooks.com

Association of Texas Professional Educators---Book of the Month Club:

<http://www.atpe.org/Resources/Educators/bookClubQuestions/10JanGrade6-8.pdf>

Choose to Read Ohio – Found: <http://oh.webjunction.org/ohctrofound>

Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award:

<http://www.dcfaward.org/Activities/dcfbookreviews&questionss09-10.pdf>

Isinglass Teen Read Award Podcast:

<http://www.hopkintonschools.org/hhs/library/podcasts/Found.mp3>

LYRC Study Guide:

[http://www.state.lib.la.us/images/stories/LYRC/The Missing Book 1 Found.doc](http://www.state.lib.la.us/images/stories/LYRC/The_Missing_Book_1_Found.doc)

How Time Travel Will Work: <http://science.howstuffworks.com/time-travel.htm>

Time Travel: www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/time

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *Found*. Simon and Schuster, 2008.

Publishers Weekly 255(March 17, 2008): 71

School Library Journal 54(May 1, 2008): 124

Herlong, M. H. *The Great Wide Sea*. Viking, 2008.

SUMMARY:

Fifteen-year-old Ben and his younger brothers Dylan and Gerry are unprepared for their father's actions when he sells their home soon after the accidental death of their mother. Impelled by a lifelong dream, Dad drives the family to Key West where he purchases a thirty-foot sailboat, the *Chrysalis*, and plans a year of sailing adventures around the Bahamas. Unfortunately and tragically, dad's dream is not shared by the boys. Conditions are crowded on the boat and anger grows between Ben and his father. While taking a night watch, Dad falls overboard, then a nightmarish storm casts the three brothers on a deserted island and destroys the sailboat. The boys must learn how to survive totally on their own.

QUESTIONS:

Why does Dad sell the house and force the boys to sail for a year?
What would be the pros and cons of spending a year on a sailboat?
How is the name of the sail boat, *Chrysalis*, significant to this story?
Why is Blankie so important to Gerry?
How do the roles and responsibilities of each character change during the voyage?
How does each of the boys contribute to survival on the island?
With which boy can you most identify and why?
How does each boy react to Dad's reappearance?
Why do you think that Ben changes his mind at the end of the story about going home?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

If I am stranded on a deserted island, the people I would most want with me and why would be...
The hardest material possession for me to give up would be _____ because...
My most perfect day was when... or, my idea of a perfect day would be...

ACTIVITIES:

Create a scale model of the *Chrysalis* with information given on the author's website.
Draw a sailboat and label its parts.
Interview someone who sails.
Write a news story about the boys' survival; be sure to create a great headline!
Create a survival kit to keep in your family vehicle.
Make a map of the Bahamas and plot out where the family sailed.
Research the stars and how they are used in ocean navigation.
Research the culture, people and islands of the Bahamas.
Research the ocean life that is found around the Bahamas.
Learn how to swim.
Visit an aquarium.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 6-8

BOOKTALK:

Have you ever been trapped by circumstances beyond your control? Three brothers, Ben, Dylan, and Gerry, are. The past year has been the worst in their lives. After their mom dies in a tragic accident, their dad sells the house, telling the brothers they are all going to Key West, purchase a sailboat, and spend a year sailing around the Bahamas. All of Dad's friends and colleagues agree that this is the right thing to do – everyone, that is, except for the three most important – his sons. Now the four people are confined on a 30-foot sailboat with tensions elevating between Ben and his dad and a monstrous storm forming in the Atlantic Ocean.

READ-ALIKES:

Defoe, Daniel. *The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*. Franklin Library, 1984.
Fama, Elizabeth. *Overboard*. Cricket Books, 2002.
Nuzum, K.A. *A Small White Scar*. Joanna Cotler Books, 2006.
O'Dell, Scott. *Island of the Blue Dolphins*. Houghton Mifflin, 1960.
Paulsen, Gary. *Hatchet*. Puffin Books, 1987.
Paulsen, Gary. *The River*. Delacorte, 1991.
Paulsen, Gary. *The Voyage of the Frog*. Orchard Books, 1989.
Philbrick, Rodman. *Young Man and the Sea*. Blue Sky Press, 2004.
Piper, Ross. *Survival!: Staying Alive in the Wild*. Capstone Press, 2008.
Taylor, Theodore. *The Cay*. Doubleday, 1969.
Wyss, Johan David. *Swiss Family Robinson*. Classic Press, 1968.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Author Interview: <http://stream.publicbroadcasting.net/production/mp3/wwno/local-wwno-906447.mp3>

The Great Wide Sea: www.thegreatwidesea.com

Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award:

<http://www.dcfaward.org/Activities/dcfbookreviews&questionss09-10.pdf>

LYRC Study Guide: <http://www.state.lib.la.us/literacy-and-reading/louisiana-young-readers-choice/lyrc-study-guides-2011>

How to Survive – Stranded: <http://dsc.discovery.com/survival/>

Science Buddies – Which Stars Can You Use for Navigation in Different Parts of the

World: http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_ideas/Astro_p008.shtml

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Herlong, M. H. *The Great Wide Sea*. Viking, 2008.

Booklist 105(November 15, 2008): 58

School Library Journal 55(March 1, 2009): 145

Hiaasen, Carl. *Scat*. Knopf, 2009.

SUMMARY:

After a field trip to Black Vine Swamp, life just isn't the same at Truman School. The biology teacher, Mrs. Starch, is missing; the rumored juvenile delinquent, Smoke, is behaving even odder than before; and Marta and Nick are trying to make sense of what is happening. At the center of everyone's attention is the elusive Florida Panther. Some are looking for its scat, and others just want it to scat.

QUESTIONS:

Describe Mrs. Starch's interactions with Duane. Is there bullying? How does Duane's reaction affect the situation?

When Dr. Dressler visits Mr. Scrod's home to discuss Duane's situation at school, how does his visit differ from what he had envisioned the visit to be?

In what ways have Duane Scrod Sr.'s actions since his wife left helped and hurt his son?

"Hope springs eternal." What details from the story support this quote from the book?

Is Mrs. Starch's assignment for Duane to write a 500 word essay about pimples a fair punishment for his behavior in class? Why or why not?

Dr. Waxmo's teaching theory is, "Pick a page, then focus, focus, focus." Which topic would you want to be on page 117? Why?

JOURNAL STARTER:

Truman School was originally named the Trapwick Academy, but the Trapwick's were an embarrassment. If I could change the name of my school, I would you change it to _____ because...

ACTIVITIES:

Nadine, the parrot speaks three languages: English, French, and German. Create a mini-booklet of nouns in your classroom including all three languages.

Research the native plants and animals in your area. Are there any that are endangered or are being protected?

Twilly had a lucky necklace he kept with him. Do you have a lucky object, too? Explain and sketch the object.

Make a poster of animal tracks that you can find in your area.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 6-8

BOOKTALK:

Nick wants two things: one, to see a panther in the wild during the school field trip; and two, to have his dad return safely from Iraq. Nick learns nothing is ever simple. A wildfire cuts short the field trip to Black Vine Swamp, and now the biology teacher, Mrs. Starch is missing. Smoke, the juvenile delinquent in Nick's class, is suspected of being involved in the disappearance of Truman School's least favorite teacher and of starting the wildfire. Nick, with the help of his friend Marta, is trying to solve the mysteries.

READ-ALIKES:

Hiaasen, Carl. *Flush*. Knopf, 2005.

Hiaasen, Carl. *Hoot*. Knopf, 2002.

Hiaasen, Carl. *Sick Puppy*. Grand Central Publishing, 2005.

Adams, Richard. *Watership Down*. Scribner, 1972.

George, Jean Craighead. *The Case of the Missing Cutthroats: An Ecological Mystery*. Knopf, 1996.

George, Jean Craighead. *The Fire Bug Connection*. Knopf, 1993.

Hobbs, Will. *Jackie's Wild Seattle*. HarperCollins, 2003.

Lubar, David. *Hidden Talents*. Starscape, 2003.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Carl Hiaasen: <http://www.carlhiaasen.com/index.shtml>

Meet Carl Hiaasen:

<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/kids/news/story/0,28277,1881328,00.html>

Readers' Guide:

http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/teachers_guides/9780375834868.pdf

Florida Panther: http://www.defenders.org/wildlife_and_habitat/wildlife/panther.php

Florida Panther Net: <http://www.floridapanthernet.org/index.php>

Tracking/Scat: <http://www.denverzoo.org/kids/activities.asp>

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Hiaasen, Carl. *Scat*. Knopf, 2009.

Booklist 105(November 15, 2008): 58

Publishers Weekly 255(October 27, 2008): 55

School Library Journal 55(January 1, 2009): 104

Korman, Gordon. *Schooled*. Hyperion Books for Children, 2007.

SUMMARY:

Thirteen-year-old Capricorn (Cap) Anderson has never attended a public school. Actually, he's never been exposed to most things kids his age have experienced. He lives on a farm commune and is homeschooled by his hippie grandmother, Rain. After Rain breaks her hip falling out of a tree and needs extensive physical therapy at the hospital, he is left in the care of the guidance counselor at the middle school he must attend.

Cap learns to deal with the popular kids and their pranks, the definitely unpopular kids, and all of the students in between. Cap learns some valuable lessons about life in the world outside of Garland Farm, but he also teaches others, both students and adults, some valuable lessons.

QUESTIONS:

Why doesn't Rain introduce Capricorn to society more often?

Why does Mrs. Donnelly feel the need to take Cap home with her instead of putting him into a foster home?

What is peer pressure? Do you feel it in your class and/or at your school?

Does peer pressure always make something the right thing to do?

Would you like to live on a farm commune as Cap does in the beginning of the story? Why or why not?

On Garland Farm, Cap does not have consistent electricity, a phone, television, or many other modern conveniences. What would be the hardest thing from your current life to give up if you moved into Cap's world?

Does Cap spend the class' money inappropriately? Could some of those expenses be justifiable?

Which character in the story is the most like you? Why?

Which character in the story would you like to be the most? Why?

Do you remember your first few days at a new school? What could have helped you feel more comfortable there? If you haven't changed schools, how do the students in your class act toward a new student in your school? Does that always feel like the right thing to do?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

My first day at a new school was...

I had a hard time adjusting when...

I feel most lonely when...

Like Cap's attitude toward others, I want to...

ACTIVITIES:

Try relaxing techniques like Tai Chi.

During one day, count how many people you see whose names you know. Also, learn names of people you don't know. Count them as well.

Go to an orchard or a farm and help pick fruits or vegetables.
List how many ways you can use duct tape.
Try going without TV for one week and list what you do instead.
Create a book of quotations from the novel and explain what the quotes mean to you.
Research communes.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 4-8

BOOKTALK:

Imagine waking up one morning and realizing that by nightfall everything in your life has changed. What will you do? You can't stay in the only home you've ever known. You'll be going to public school for the first time in your life and during your first week of school, you are elected 8th grade president. How weird is that? Capricorn (Cap) Anderson has lived a very sheltered life with his hippie grandmother, Rain. What happens in the life of Cap and those around him is sure to make us all think twice about how we treat others.

READ-ALIKES:

Korman, Gordon. *No More Dead Dogs*. Hyperion, 2002.
Clements, Andrew. *The Landry News*. Atheneum, 2000.
Giff, Patricia Reilly. *Pictures of Hollis Woods*. Random House, 2002.
Paterson, Katherine. *Bridge to Terabithia*. HarperCollins, 1977.
Spinelli, Jerry. *Stargirl*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2000.
Spinelli, Jerry. *Love, Stargirl*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2007.
Urban, Linda. *A Crooked Kind of Perfect*. Harcourt, 2007.

RELATED WEBSITES:

Gordon Korman: <http://www.gordonkorman.com>

Biography: www.hyperionbooksforchildren.com/data/authors/doc/Korman90.doc

Discussion Guide:

<http://www.hyperionbooksforchildren.com/data/books/dgpdf/14231051681985.pdf>

Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Award:

<http://www.state.lib.la.us/empowerlibrary/Schooled.doc>

Tai Chi: http://kidshealth.org/teen/food_fitness/exercise/tai_chi.html#

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Korman, Gordon. *Schooled*. Hyperion Books for Children, 2007.

Booklist 103(September 1, 2007): 71

School Library Journal 53(August 1, 2007): 118

Law, Ingrid. *Savvy*. Dial Books, 2008.

SUMMARY:

Mibs is about to turn thirteen, and on her birthday she will receive her “savvy” – a special supernatural power. But when Poppa is in an accident, Mibs will do whatever it takes to get to him, even with a new crazy “savvy” to help her along... and get in her way.

QUESTIONS:

Why doesn't Mibs fit in at school?

Why do the Beaumonts have to keep their savvies a secret?

How difficult would it be to keep the Beaumont's secret? What steps do they take to do so?

Describe Mibs' relationship with her family members.

Mibs makes some poor choices- what are some of these? What alternative choices could she have made?

Describe Bobbi. Why does she act the way she does? Do you like her character?

Describe Will. He wants to grow up to be like his father. Who is his father and how/why does this surprise Mibs? What does he want to be like?

Describe Lester. Why does Mibs only hear Carlene and Rhonda's voices instead of Lester's?

When does this change? Why?

Mibs is going to Salina to “awaken” her father. Is she able to save her father? If so, how is it similar to or different than what she believed would happen?

Is Lill an angel? What makes Mibs think it may be so?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

If you could have one supernatural power, what would you want it to be?

If you had to think about what your “savvy” really is, what do you think it is? In other words, where are your real talents?

When is it okay to keep a secret, and when is it not?

Is turning thirteen any different than any other birthday?

What would be the positives to having a family with extra-ordinary powers; what would be the negatives?

ACTIVITIES:

Create a diorama of one of the Beaumont birthday parties or of a scene from the bus. Be prepared to discuss the scene and its importance to the book.

Momma seems to believe that even “normal” people have a type of savvy. Find and research five people who seemed to have extra-ordinary powers. What was each of the people capable of doing? Why do you consider them supernatural? How did they find their “power”?

Make a poster with some Momma's most important words of wisdom to Mibs. Be prepared to present why these are important to Mibs and what you can learn from them.

Create a poem capturing the emotions and difficulties of growing up- what are the hardest things a teenager faces?

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 5-8

BOOKTALK:

Imagine that your father is in the hospital and that what you believe to be the most important day of your life is coming up... what do you do? Mibs decides that she will do whatever it takes to get to her father and deal with her inheritance of special powers as they come.

READ-ALIKES:

Law, Ingrid. *Scumble*. Dial, 2010.
Cashore, Kristin. *Graceling* Harcourt Children's Books, 2009.
Levine, Gail Carson. *Ella Enchanted*. HarperTeen, 2004.
Lubar, David. *Hidden Talents*. Tor Books, 1999.
Mull, Brandon. *Fablehaven*. Shadow Mountain, 2006.
Sage, Angie. *Magyk*. Katherine Tegen, 2005.
Spinelli, Jerry. *Stargirl*. Knopf, 2000.
Tolan, Stephanie. *Surviving the Applewhites*. HarperCollins, 2002.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Ingrid Law: <http://www.ingridlaw.com>
Straight from the Jar (Ingrid Law's Blog): <http://straightfromthejar.blogspot.com>
Association of Texas Professional Educators:
<http://www.atpe.org/resources/Educators/bookClubQuestions/09DecGrade3-5.pdf>
Savvy and Scrumble by Ingrid Law:
<http://us.penguinroup.com/static/packages/us/yreaders/savvy/index.php>

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Law, Ingrid. *Savvy*. Dial Books, 2008.
Booklist 104(May 15, 2008): 60
Publishers Weekly 255(April 7, 2008): 60
School Library Journal 54(May 1, 2008): 130

Mass, Wendy. *11 BIRTHDAYS*. Scholastic Press, 2009.

SUMMARY:

11 Birthdays is the story of two friends who share the same birthday. They have celebrated their first 10 birthdays together. Then, at their 10th birthday party, Amanda hears Leo say some unkind things about her to his friends and there will be no shared 11th birthday party. The day of their parties comes and Amanda doesn't have the best time at her party. She goes to bed thankful it's over only to wake up the next day and it all happens again. This goes on day after day. She finally finds out that Leo is experiencing the same thing but no one else notices. They join forces to figure out what is happening and to end this repeating 11th birthday.

QUESTIONS:

What did Angelina D'Angelo ask of Amanda and Leo's parents on the day that they were born?

What does Amanda's mom do for Amanda each year to recognize her birthday?

What did Amanda's parents sneak into her room so that when she woke up on her birthday, she would discover it?

What interesting information did her neighbor, Mrs. Grayson, have for Amanda that could shed some light on Amanda's unique situation?

What does Leo do to make Amanda realize that she is not the only one who is experiencing their birthday over again?

How come Amanda had the T-shirt the next day after she and Leo skipped school, but not the poem that Leon had given her?

What was the feud about between the Ellerbys and the Fitzpatricks? How was it resolved?

What is the significance of the apple seed plants?

What do Amanda and Leo give to each other for their 11th birthdays and how are these gifts significant?

Is there any day you would like to repeat over and over? Why?

JOURNAL STARTER:

My most unusual birthday gift was...

ACTIVITIES:

Pick a theme for your next birthday party and plan the decorations, refreshments, games, invitations, etc.

Research your family---make a family tree with at least 4 generations in it.

Design the perfect birthday card for your best friend.

Watch the movie Groundhog Day (rated PG)

Create some scrapbooking pages like Amanda and her mother did.

Draw the Periodic Table.

Plant apple seedlings.

List the advantages and the disadvantages of being able to have a day that you can do over and over.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 4-6.

BOOKTALK:

How would you like to celebrate your 11th birthday over and over again, day after day? What if today was yesterday, today and tomorrow? Amanda and Leo have always celebrated their birthdays together until the 11th one. Their birthday is here, but it won't go away! Find out what happens in *11 Birthdays* by Wendy Mass.

READ-ALIKES:

Law, Ingrid. *Savvy*. Dial, 2008.

Levine, Gail Carson. *Ella Enchanted*. Scholastic, 1997.

Mass, Wendy. *Finally*. Scholastic, 2010.

Rogers, Mary. *Freaky Friday*. HarperCollins, 1972.

Vande Velde, Vivian. *Heir Apparent*. Perfection Learning, 2004.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Wendy Mass: <http://www.wendymass.com>

11 Birthdays: <http://www.kidsreads.com/reviews/9780545052399.asp>

Kids Wings Activities for 11 Birthdays: http://suzyred.com/2010_11_Birthdays.html

How Birthdays Are Celebrated: <http://www.birthdaycelebrations.net/traditions.htm>

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Mass, Wendy. *11 BIRTHDAYS*. Scholastic Press, 2009.

Booklist 105(December 15, 2008): 50

Publishers Weekly 255(December 22, 2008): 50

McKissack, Patricia C. *A Friendship for Today*. Scholastic Press, 2007.

SUMMARY:

Rosemary Patterson is one of the first students to integrate Robertson Elementary School in Kirkland, Missouri, in 1954. Integration has begun because of the Supreme Court decision on May 17, 1954. The Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* decision stated “school segregation violated the Equal Protection and Due Process clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment.” The book is based on the author’s sixth grade year in Kirkwood, MO

QUESTIONS:

A Friendship for Today is title of the book. Why is friendship used in the title of the book?
Why is integration of schools so important?
What did the Supreme Court case *Brown v Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* do to help end segregation?
What is meant by “separate but equal”?
Who was Thurgood Marshall?
What would you have done to end segregation?
Who was Jonas Salk?
What is polio?

JOURNAL STARTER:

Rosemary has shown great courage because.....

ACTIVITIES:

Ask students to review the U.S. Supreme Court decision *Brown v Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*.
Use a Visitor’s Guide to Oral Arguments of the U.S. Supreme Court, [http://www.supremecourt.gov/visting/visitors guide to oral argument.aspx](http://www.supremecourt.gov/visting/visitors%20guide%20to%20oral%20argument.aspx) to present a reenactment of *Brown v Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*.
Use documents from the Kansas State Historical Society at: <http://www.kshs.org/research/topics/cultural/brown/index.htm> to create a timeline from May 17, 1954 to the present to cite progress made in the Civil Rights movement.
Create a civics lesson citing the branches of government involved in ending segregation.
People living during this time period can be interviewed and their insights on the court decision and the end of segregation in schools can be share with the class.
Students may create a webpage detailing Jonas Salk’s work on a polio vaccine. This may be used in Biological Sciences classes to link to the Salk Institute as a resource.
Find a recipe for vinegar pie.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 4-8

BOOKTALK:

How would you have felt as one of the first students to integrate a new school? Rosemary does not understand the importance of the ending of segregation. Rosemary is alone without her friend James Stenson, (J.J.) on the first day of school. Grace, a white student, former tormentor develops a friendship with Rosemary. Rags, a stray cat becomes a metaphor the help explain Rosemary's own mixed emotions.

READ-ALIKES:

Adler, David A. *A Picture Book of Thurgood Marshall*. Holiday House, 1997.
Fogelin, Adrian. *Crossing Jordan*. Peachtree, 2000.
Fuqua, Jonathon. *Darby*. Candlewick, 2002.
Hoose, Phillip. *Caludette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2009.
Kehret, Peg. *Small Steps: The Year I Got Polio*. Albert Whitman, 2006.
Martin, Ann M. *Belle Teal*. Scholastic, 2001.
Miller, Jake. *Brown v Board of Education of Topeka: Challenging School Segregation in the Supreme Court*. PowerKids Press, 2004.
Rodman, Mary Ann. *Yankee Girl*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004.
Woodson, Jacqueline. *The Other Side*. Putnam, 2001.

RELATED WEBSITES:

Patricia McKissack: <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/contributor.jsp?id=3372>

Indiana Library Federation: <http://www.ilfonline.org/clientuploads/YHBA/10-11%20YHBA%20Resources/FriendshipforToday.pdf>

William Allen White Children's Book Awards:

<http://waw.emporia.edu/curriculumguides/cgpages0910/afriendshipfortoday.html>

Brown v Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas:

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/brown/brown-brown.html>

Brown v Board of Education-Kansas State Historical Society:

<http://www.kshs.org/research/topics/cultural/brown/index.htm>

Law Day: <http://www.abanet.org/publiced/lawday/home.shtml>

Jonas Salk: http://www.salk.edu/about/jonas_salk.html

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

McKissack, Patricia C. *A Friendship for Today*. Scholastic Press, 2007.

Booklist 103(February 1, 2007):58

Publishers Weekly 254(January 8, 2007): 52

School Library Journal 53(June 1, 2007): 154

Mull, Brandon, *Fablehaven*. Shadow Mountain, 2006.

SUMMARY:

Kendra and Seth are being left with their grandfather. They do not really know him and for some unexplained reason, Grandmother can't be found. They find themselves on an estate named *Fablehaven*. They quickly learn Grandfather and Grandmother are the caretakers of a hidden refuge to prevent the extinction of mystical creatures. When Seth unwittingly breaks a rule and unleashes some very evil beings, they are all plunged into a war between good and evil. Seth and Kendra find themselves tested to the full extent of their creativity, intelligence, strength, and courage.

QUESTIONS:

How and why did the fairy turn into a sprite?
How did Kendra get the Fairy Queen to help her?
Why didn't the satyrs help the children find their grandfather?
Where did the children finally find their grandmother?
Why were the fairies so upset with Seth?
Would you be willing to break the rules like Seth did?
Could you have done the things that Kendra did to save your family?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

If I were Seth, I would/would not have . . .
If I caught a fairy . . .

ACTIVITIES:

Draw one of the fairies described in the book.
Give a comparison for the size of the milch cow (a building, stadium etc).
Make a list of all the rules Seth broke and the penalties he was given.
Design a portrait of Hugo.
Pack a survival Kit
Make a Map of Fablehaven ----
List Mythological Characters and show how they compare to Harry Potter creatures

READING RECOMMENDATION: 4-8

BOOKTALK:

Imagine your parents are leaving on a trip. You are not invited to go along. They plan on shipping you off to your grandparents. The problem is you do not really know these grandparents. This is what happens to Kendra and Seth. When they arrive, they find the first few days a little boring and Grandfather has some strange rules. But after Seth and Kendra taste the milk left out for the insects around the lawn, they realize the insects are not really what they seem. They are fairies. When Grandpa explains that “Fablehaven” is a sanctuary for mystical creatures, both good and evil, the children begin to experience a whole new world. When Seth accidentally changes a fairy into a sprite, it is the beginning of an adventure that will test the intelligence, strength and courage of the children.

READ-ALIKES:

Mull, Brandon. *Fablehaven: Rise of the Evening Star*. Shadow Mountain 2008
Mull, Brandon. *Fablehaven: Grip of the Shadow Plague*. Shadow Mountain 2008
Mull, Brandon. *Fablehaven: Secret of the Dragon Sanctuary*. Shadow Mountain 2009
Mull, Brandon. *Fablehaven: Keys to the Demon Prison*. Shadow Mountain 2010
Mull, Brandon. *The Candy Shop War*. Shadow Mountain 2007
Mull, Brandon. *Pingo*. Shadow Mountain 2009
Collins, Suzanne. *Underland Chronicles* (Series) Scholastic, 2003.
Coville, Bruce. William Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Dial, 1996
DiTerlizzi, Tony and Black, Holly. *The Spiderwick Chronicles* (Series) Simon & Schuster
DiTerlizzi, Tony and Black, Holly. *Beyond the Spiderwick Chronicles* (Series) Simon & Schuster.
Hill, Stuart. *The Icemark Chronicles* (Series). The Chicken House
Lewis, C.S. *The Chronicles of Narnia* (Series) HarperCollins.
Pullman, Philip. *His Dark Materials* (Series) Alfred A. Knopf

RELATED WEB SITES:

Brandon Mull: www.brandonmull.com
Talk It Up: <http://www.multcolib.org/talk/guides-fablehaven.html>

BOOK REVIEWCITATIONS:

Kirkus 74(August 1, 2006): 793

Pearsall, Shelley. *All Shook Up*. Knopf, 2008.

SUMMARY:

Imagine the dilemma of finding out your dad is an Elvis impersonator at the same time you have to go live with him three states away from your home with your mom, start a new school, and generally get along in a new place. Josh's Dad used to be a perfectly normal shoe salesman, but suddenly he's an Elvis impersonator. That's Josh's problem and it is a big one. His dad just won't understand if he tells him he's embarrassed, so Josh tries to keep it as quiet as possible, especially when he starts 7th grade at a new school. Unfortunately, his dad is also dating the mother of one of the school outcasts who keeps putting notes on his locker. Josh even tries to find his dad a "normal" job, but when that backfires and his dad gets an invitation to perform at Josh's school, Josh takes action. He creates a letter inviting his father to Vegas for an Elvis competition. When his dad purchases a \$1500 rhinestone jumpsuit, Josh realizes his mistake and must come clean. His Dad is not quick to understand Josh's motivation or to forgive him, and Josh must find a way to make amends, but not before he steps in his father's shoes.

QUESTIONS:

Why might Josh's Dad prefer pretending to be a famous dead guy rather than find another job selling shoes?

Does your school have cliques? Is Josh's description of the distribution of kids in the cafeteria on pg. 69 familiar?

Do you think Josh's Dad would listen if Josh told him that it wasn't a good idea to perform at his school—would he cancel in consideration of Josh's feelings & reputation?

Josh says, "by writing the letter ... I was saving [my dad] from being hurt" (p 152): Who was Josh trying to save? Who deserved the most blame, his Dad for believing the letter, Josh for creating it, or both for being selfish and not considering the other's feelings?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

My parents had no idea how embarrassing it was when they...

The thing about cliques is...

ACTIVITIES:

Find out about Elvis by playing his music, seeing videos and learning about the Elvis phenomena.

Try on a famous persona, being Elvis, Michael Jackson or a more current teen star like the Jonas Brothers. Is it the clothes, the talent, or the fans that make a star?

Host a vintage clothing day and see what wild costumes you find by recycling clothing and accessories. What do garments say about a person?

Josh tries to come up with descriptions of himself similar to the ones listed for the school namesake. Josh comes up with “friend, soccer player, and thirteen-year-old” (p 55). Make Peanut Butter and Banana Sandwiches.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 5 - 8

BOOKTALK:

Josh is a perfectly normal 13-year old with a perfectly odd father. So when Josh has to leave his friends and his school in Boston to stay with his Dad in Chicago while his mother helps his Grandmother recover from a broken hip, he discovers his Dad has become an Elvis impersonator, sideburns, twisting hips and all. Not only does he have to fit in with the cool kids at his new school, but he also has to hide his father’s new calling which is especially difficult when his father’s girlfriend’s decidedly un-cool daughter, Ivory, keeps leaving notes on his locker signed “Elvisly yours.” It gets worse when his father announces he will perform at Josh’s school for a 50s concert. To save face, Josh constructs an elaborate lie, complete with the offer of \$5000 and a chance to perform in Vegas. What Elvis impersonator could turn down a chance at fame? How can Josh come to terms with his dad being both “The King” and his father?

READ-ALIKES:

Couloumbis, Audrey. *Love me Tender*. Random House, 2008.
Kent, Rose. *Kimchi & Calamari*. HarperCollins, 2007.
Marino, Jan. *The Day That Elvis Came to Town*. Little Brown and Company, 1991.
Sonneblich, Jordan. *Zen and the Art of Faking It*. Scholastic, 2007.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Shelley Pearsall: <http://www.shelleypearsall.com/>
The Official Site of the King of Rock and Roll: <http://www.almostelvis.com>
Indiana Library Federation: <http://www.ilfonline.org/clientuploads/YHBA/10-11%20YHBA%20Resources/AllShookUp.pdf>
Elvis Entertainer’s Network: <http://www.eenonline.com/entertainers/Illinois.htm>
Cliques: <http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/friend/cliq.html>
Embarrassing Parents: <http://www.teenissues.co.uk/SurvivingEmbarrassingParents.html>

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Pearsall, Shelley. *All Shook Up*. Knopf, 2008.
Booklist 104(May 01, 2008): 86
School Library Journal 54(July 01, 2008): 106
Voice of Youth Advocates (August 01, 2008)

Roy, Jennifer. *Yellow Star*. Scholastic, 2006.

SUMMARY:

From 1939, when Sylvia is 4 ½ years old to 1945 when she has just turned 10, a Jewish girl and her family struggle to survive in Poland's Lodz Ghetto during the Nazi Occupation.

QUESTIONS:

How do the Jews feel when they are made to leave their homes?

Why were Jews made to wear yellow stars?

What does Sylvia miss while at Lodz?

What fruit did Sylvia get to taste while at Lodz?

Where did Sylvia's father hide with her?

What is a ghetto? Are there ghettos in the 21st century?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

To be brave means to...

When I had nothing to amuse myself with, I...

I felt I had to be really quiet because...

ACTIVITIES:

Find a quiet place and imagine yourself hiding from everyone.

Interview someone who survived the holocaust.

Take one day to only play with things you find outside. No ready-made items.

Research facts about WWII and the Holocaust.

Study a map of Poland and locate Lodz.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 5-7

BOOKTALK:

Imagine one day, you're a happy-go-lucky Jewish pre-schooler. Next, you're being stripped of all possessions except the bare necessities. You're then marched to a small, cramped apartment and told that this is your new home. Sylvia feels like nothing will ever be normal again.

She and her family survive for 5 ½ years under horrendous conditions in Poland's Lodz Ghetto. Through it all, the family miraculously remains together throughout the whole terrible ordeal.

READ-ALIKES:

Bishop, Claire. *Twenty and Ten*. Viking, 1966.
Deedy, Carmen Agra. *Yellow Star: The Legend of King Christian X of Denmark*. Peachtree, 2000.
Frank, Anne. *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Bantam Books, 1952.
Lowry, Lois. *Number the Stars*. Dell Yearling, 1989.
Halperin, Michael. *Jacob's Rescue: A Holocaust Story*. Dell Yearling, 1993.
Judge, Lita. *A Thousand Tracings: Healing the Wounds of World War II*. Hyperion, 2007.
Matas, Carol. *After the War*. Aladdin, 1996.
Propp, Vera. *When the Soldiers Were Gone*. Perfection Learning, 2001.
Spinelli, Jerry. *Milkweed*. Perfection Learning, 2005.
Taylor, Peter Lane. *The Secret of Priest's Grotto: A Holocaust Survivor's Story*. Kar-Ben, 2007.
Ten Boom, Corrie. *The Hiding Place*. Guideposts Associates, 1971.
Yolen, Jane. *The Devil's Arithmetic*. Viking Penguin, 1988.
Wiesel, Elie. *Dawn*. Hill and Wang, 1961.
Williams, Laura. *Behind the Bedroom Wall*. Perfection Learning, 2005.

RELATED WEBSITES:

Jennifer Roy: <http://www.jenniferroy.com>

William Allen White Award: <http://waw.emporia.edu/curriculumguides/yellowstar.html>

Lodz Ghetto: <http://www.deathcamps.org/occupation/lodz%20ghetto.html>

Children of the Lodz Ghetto: <http://online.ushmm.org/lodzchildren>

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Roy, Jennifer. *Yellow Star*. Scholastic, 2006.

Booklist 104(April 15, 2006): 61

Publishers Weekly 253(March 20, 2006): 56

School Library Journal 52(July 1, 2006): 112

Schmidt, Gary D. *Trouble*. Clarion Books, 2008.

SUMMARY:

Henry Smith is a 14-year-old boy whose quiet life in Blythbury-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts is changed forever when he begins to question the prejudices displayed by his older brother, Franklin. When Franklin is hit by a car while running, the community is quick to blame the Cambodian refuge for the tragedy. Henry wants to clear away the Trouble that has found his family. With the help of his friend, his sister, a stray black dog, and a storm that reveals a long kept secret, Henry learns that Trouble has a way of finding everyone.

QUESTIONS:

Can Trouble be avoided? Why or Why not?

Near the end of the first chapter, Henry asks, “Is it possible for everything to change, and for nothing to change?” (Page 12) How does everything and nothing change for Henry?

How does Henry’s relationship with his parents, Franklin, Louisa, and Sanborn change from before the accident, just after the accident, and at the end of the story?

Henry often reads and disposes of the newspaper before his family reads the stories about the accident. Why would he do that, and was he justified in doing so?

How is the reaction of the media to the wreck found in Salvage Cove after the storm similar to the media’s coverage of Franklin’s accident?

How does Henry help Black Dog, and how does Black Dog help Henry?

Compare and contrast the communities of Blythbury-by-the Sea and Merton. How do the reactions of the citizens of these two communities play a role in the story?

The author used a unique writing technique by telling Chay’s story at the end of the chapters. How did this technique affect your experience with the story?

Does Henry’s reasons for wanting to climb Katahdin change during the story? Imagine that Franklin had recovered from the accident. How would the lessons discovered on the climb have been different/the same?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

Some think that trouble finds people; others think that people make their own troubles. I think

....

Henry’s father is bothered by the question of whether Franklin would have become a good man. I think Franklin would have grown up to...

Henry says, “The world is Trouble...and Grace. That is all there is.” I think...

ACTIVITIES:

Research immigration trends during the history of the United States.

Research the current debate about immigration laws in the United States.

Discover the origins of the name of the towns in your area. Look at old census records of your county. Create a webpage to preserve the history of town names that have changed or are no longer in existence.

Create a booklet or PowerPoint about the team sport of rowing.

Create a help sheet for someone caring for an abused dog.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 7-8

BOOKTALK:

T-R-O-U-B-L-E spells Trouble. Trouble of all shapes and sizes: prejudices, bullying, lies, cover-ups, apathy... "Henry Smith's father told him that if you build your house far enough away from Trouble, then Trouble will never find you." 14-year-old Henry has thought that his privileged life in Blythbury-by-the Sea has been free from Trouble, but after his older brother's, Franklin's, accident Henry begins to wonder if Trouble has been present all along. Find out how Henry plans to overcome Trouble, conquer a mountain, and settle events from the past with the help of an energetic black dog that seems set on turning Henry's world upside down.

READ-ALIKES:

Crew, Linda. *Children of the River*. Delacorte Press. 1989.

Cummings, Priscilla. *Red Kayak*. Dutton. 2004.

Harlow, Joan Hiatt. *Thunder From the Sea*. McElderry. 2004.

Ho, Minfong. *The Clay Marble*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1991.

Sachar, Louis. *Holes*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1998.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Gary Schmidt: <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/engl/faculty/schmidt>

Reader's Guide: http://www.hmhbooks.com/readers_guides/schmidt_trouble.shtml#further

Cambodian Genocide Program: <http://www.yale.edu/cgp/>

Khmer Rouge: http://www.ppu.org.uk/genocide/g_cambodia.html

Rowing: <http://avoncrew.org/aboutrowing.aspx>

Slave Ship: <http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/slaveship.htm>

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Schmidt, Gary D. *Trouble*. Clarion Books, 2008.

Booklist 104(March 3, 2008): 61

Publishers Weekly 255(March 31, 2008): 62

School Library Journal 54(April 1, 2008): 148

Scott, Michael. *The Alchemyst: Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel*. Delacorte, 2007.

SUMMARY:

In San Francisco, fifteen-year-old twins, Sophie and Josh, suddenly find themselves caught up in the deadly, centuries-old struggle between rival alchemists, Nicholas Flamel and John Dee, over the possession of an ancient and powerful book holding the secret formulas for alchemy and everlasting life.

QUESTIONS:

- What is Necromancy?
- Where was Perenelle taken and guarded by a sphinx?
- What metal could destroy the Elder Race?
- How were they able to escape from Dora's shop?
- What did Dee use to destroy the tree Yggdrasil?
- What special powers did the book have?
- What happened to Hekate during the day?
- What did Josh take from the book?
- Why did Hekate become mad at Josh?
- What colors were Josh and Sophie's auras?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

- If someone gave me the gift of eternal life, I would.....
- If I could choose to be a magical creature, such as a witch, alchemist, mage, or any other, I would choose _____-because.....
- If I had magical powers, would I use them? Or would I keep them secret? Why?

ACTIVITIES:

- In *The Alchemyst* the author prints the first chapter of book 2 at the end of the book. Read this chapter and see if you can predict what may happen in the second chapter of Book 2.
- What is a codex? Can you make one?
- Look up the author's website and find out information about Michael Scott.
- In ancient times alchemists attempted to change metals into gold. Look up alchemy and see if this is possible. Find out what they used and try it.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 5-8

BOOKTALK:

Sophie and Josh are twins who decide to take summer jobs in San Francisco. They witness John Dee trying to steal a book from Nicholas Flamel. Josh is able to grab the last two pages of the book before they get away. The book has special powers that can give a person eternal life. This begins an adventure for Josh and Sophie trying to stay ahead of mythological creatures, while still trying to help Nicholas to get the book back before Nicholas dies.

READ-ALIKES:

Scott, Michael. *The Magician*. Delacorte, 2008.
Scott, Michael. *The Sorceress*. Delacorte, 2009.
Scott, Michael. *Necromancer*. Delacorte, 2010.
Scott, Michael. *The Death of Joan of Arc*. Delacorte, 2010. (Kindle version only)
Babbit, Natalie. *Tuck Everlasting*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1975.
Goldstein, Lisa. *The Alchemist's Door*. Tor Books, 2002.
Nimmo, Jenny. *Magician Trilogy*. Orchard Books, 1986
Riordan, Rick. *The Lightning Thief*. Scholastic, 2005.
Sage, Angie. *Septimus Heap Series*. Harper Collins, 2005.
Smith, L.J. *Heart of Valor*. Aladdin, 1990.
Stroud, Jonathan. *Bartimaeus Trilogy*. Hyperion, 2004.
Ursu, Anne. *The Shadow Thieves*. Atheneum, 2006.
Yolen, Jane. *Wizards Hall*. Harcourt Brace, 1991.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Michael Scott: www.dillonscott.com

Pages Book Club: <http://reviews.pagesbookclub.net/books/the-alchemyst-by-michael-scott>

Study Guide: http://kpl.lib.mo.us/content_uploads/Alchemyst.pdf

The Alchemy Lab: www.alchemylab.com/flamel.htm

Encyclopedea Mythica: www.pantheon.org

The John DEE Society: www.johndee.org

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Scott, Michael. *The Alchemyst: Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel*. Delacorte, 2007.

Booklist 103(May 1, 2007): 86

Publishers Weekly 254(March 5, 2007): 61

School Library Journal 53(May 1, 2007): 142

Shafer, Audrey. *The Mailbox*. Delacorte Press, 2006.

SUMMARY:

Twelve year old Gabe comes home from school to find his uncle has died. Unsure of what to do, he becomes involved in keeping the uncle's death secret. When the authorities discover the secret both Gabe and his correspondent are unprepared for the consequences.

QUESTIONS:

How has Gabe come to live with his uncle?

Does Uncle Vernon treat Gabe differently than he treats others?

Why did Gabe not report his uncle's death to the authorities?

What do you learn about the note writer?

How is Gabe able to take care of himself?

Compare and contrast Gabe and his friend Webber.

What book and character does Gabe relate to and why?

How does Gabe feel about Guppy coming to live with him? Why?

When Gabe hears Uncle Vernon talking to him in his mind, how does this help Gabe?

What are some of the ways that Mr. Boehm show he cares about Gabe?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

A special pet that I have had ...

I might keep a secret from my friend because ...

ACTIVITIES:

Write a note to someone telling them what they mean to you.

Make a collection of Uncle Vernon sayings that relate to your life.

Research the Blue Ridge area finding pictures or drawings.

Have students write notes to each other for a week.

Interview a veteran of the Viet Nam war and their experiences.

Investigate Arlington National Cemetery and find out the requirement to be buried there.

Create your family tree with a description of the people on your tree.

Find and share some poems by Robert Graves.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 4 – 8

BOOKTALK:

Suddenly you are confronted with a life changing situation. How will you handle it, do you handle it all by yourself, or are you too scared to do anything about it? These conflicting feelings are what Gabe is trying to figure out. He doesn't want to go back into the foster care system. Someone is secretly trying to help him figure things out. Even though he is scared,

Gabe accepts that help. When all the secrets are revealed many lives will be changed. Gabe has to decide how he wants to live his life, what changes are right for him.

RELATED MATERIALS:

Bauer, Joan. *Stand Tall*. Perfection Learning, 2005.
Dadey, Debbie. *Whistler's Hollow*. Bloomsbury, 2002.
Dowell, Frances O'Roark. *Shooting the Moon*. Atheneum, 2008.
Giff, Patricia Reilly. *Pictures of Hollis Woods*. Wendy Lamb, 2002.
Kadohata, Cynthia. *Cracker, The Best Dog in Viet Nam*. Simon & Schuster 2007.
Key, Watt. *Alabama Moon*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux., 2006.
Myers, Walter Dean. *Fallen Angels*. Perfection Learning, 2008.
Schmidt, Gary. *Wednesday Wars*. Clarion, 2007.
Sherlock, Patti. *Letters from Wolfie*. Perfection Learning, 2007.
Testa, Maria. *Almost Forever*. Candlewick, 2003.

RELATED WEBSITES:

Audrey Shafer: <http://www.ashafer.com/home.html>
Virginia Readers' Choice for Middle School:
http://projects.nn.k12.va.us/crittenden/2008-2009_Virginia_Readers_Choice_for_MS.ppt
William Allen White Book Award:
<http://www.emporia.edu/libsv/wawbookaward/curriculumguides/themailbox.html>
Young Hoosier Book Award Novel Resources:
<http://www.lesliepreddy.com/yhba/09-10/Middle/Mailbox-Sanders.pdf>
Arlington National Cemetery: <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.org>
John Steinbeck, Of Mice and Men: <http://www.steinbeck.org/MainFrame.html>
US Army Homepage: <http://www.army.mil>
Veterans History Project: <http://www.loc.gov/vets>

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Shafer, Audrey. *The Mailbox*. Delacorte Press, 2006.

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books 60(December, 2006): 191
School Library Journal 52(November 1, 2006): 152

Sonnenblick, Jordan. Notes From the Midnight Driver. Scholastic Press, 2006.

SUMMARY:

Mad at his mother, Alex makes the stupid decision to drive a car after drinking heavily. Smashing into his neighbor's garden gnome leaves him sentenced to 100 hours of community service at a nursing home with crotchety Solomon Lewis. When the judge denies Alex's requests to switch people, Alex gives in and gives Sol a chance. Eventually Alex grows fond of Sol, who teaches him something about the guitar, respecting the elderly, and taking responsibility for his actions.

QUESTIONS:

Have you ever felt as angry and upset as Alex was at the beginning of the book?
During the novel, we get to hear Alex's point of view through his letters to the judge. At what point do his feelings about Sol start to shift? Why do they begin to change?
Music plays a big part in the story. If you're not a musician, can you still appreciate the story? Why? If you are a musician, how does it affect your view of the story?
Alex and his best friend Laurie are going through similar situations at home. Which character did you identify with more, Alex or Laurie? Why?
Pick three ironic situations within the story and discuss how they are important to it.
Describe Sol. Why do you think that he is so crotchety? What do you think of his musical display at the end of the story?
Why did Sol give his guitar to Alex rather than his daughter?
In which book do Steven and Annette also appear?
Think about forgiveness. What does it take to truly forgive someone who has hurt you deeply?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

The worst mistake I ever made was.....and I learned.....
The qualities of a strong friendship include.....

ACTIVITIES:

Donate a day to a local nursing home or hospital- Keep a journal of what you did and what you can learn from the experience.
Create a pamphlet discussing the negative effects of teenage alcohol use.
Create a Venn Diagram that illustrates how Alex and Sol are alike and how they are different.
Watch the movie, "Fiddler on the Roof."
Research jazz guitar. Determine if the artists Sonnenblick wrote about were real or made-up characters.
Look up the causes of emphysema. Think about what could have lead to Sol's having this disease.

READING RECOMMENDATION: Grades 7-8.

BOOKTALK:

Sometimes people make really stupid decisions. When Alex chooses to get behind the wheel of his mother's car, it is just that- a stupid decision! His whole world changes and he has to open up to not only others, but to himself and take accountability for his actions.

READ-ALIKES:

Sonnenblick, Jordan. *Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie*. Scholastic Press. 2005.
Coleman, Michael. *On the Run*. Dutton, 2004.
Cooney, Caroline B. *Hit the Road*. Delacorte, 2006.
Draper, Sharon. *Tears of a Tiger*. Atheneum. 1994.
DuPrau. *Car Trouble*. Harper Teen, 2005.
Hobbs, Valerie. *Defiance*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004.
Mikaelsen, Ben. *Touching Spirit Bear*. Harper Collins, 2001.
Myers, Walter Dean. *Monster*. Harper Collins, 1999.
Nixon, Joan Lowery. *Nobody's There*. Delacorte, 2000.
Siebold, Jan. *Doing Time Online*. Perfection Learning, 2004.
Trueman, Terry: *No Right Turn*. Harper Teen, 2006.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Jordan Sonnenblick: www.jordansonnenblick.com

Rhode Island Teen Book Award:

http://www.yourlibrary.ws/ya_webpage/ritba/ritba08/midnightdriver.htm

Scholastic Book Talk: <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/collateral.jsp?id=1438>

Teacher Time Savers:

<http://www.teachertimesavers.com/Notes%20From%20the%20Midnight%20Driver%20Sample%20Pages.pdf>

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Sonnenblick, Jordan. *Notes From the Midnight Driver*. Scholastic Press, 2006.

Booklist 103(October 1, 2006): 52.

Publishers Weekly 253(September 18, 2006): 55.

School Library Journal 52(October 1, 2006): 173.

