

Andy Russell, Not Wanted by the Police

by David A. Adler

Annotation

Andy and his pal, Tamika, are watching the neighbor's house while the Perlman's are on a business trip to South America. After a few days, a mystery begins to build with the discovery of some smelly clues. Andy fears someone has broken into the neighbor's house and may be living there. After an unsuccessful encounter with the police, Andy refuses to stop his investigations until he solves the mystery. Fans of the Andy Russell series will enjoy this story, filled with likable characters and humorous text.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.davidaadler.com/>

Realia

Item: Garbage bag filled with as many of the following items as possible – Oat Bran Toasties cereal box, army boot, purple stocking, two paintbrushes, used tube of paint

Statement: What if you found these items in your neighbor's garbage can when they were supposed to be away on a vacation? Find out if Andy and his friend call the police or get to the bottom of this mystery by themselves in *Andy Russell, Not Wanted by the Police*.

Food

Oat Bran Toasties Cereal, Green Tea, Ginger-Snap Cookies, Pistachio Ice Cream

Challenging Words

admires	(p. 108 PB)	garbage	(p. 47 PB)
anxious	(p. 21 PB)	identity	(p. 15 PB)
appendage	(p. 104 PB)	illustration	(p. 49 PB)
collage	(p. 104 PB)	incognito	(p. 1 PB)
dangerous	(p. 12 PB)	intelligence	(p. 26 PB)
demonstrate	(p. 110 PB)	merge	(p. 104 PB)
emergency	(p. 66 PB)	microscope	(p. 71 PB)
energy	(p. 107 PB)	mysterious	(p. 47 PB)
fingerprint	(p. 9 PB)	sculpt	(p. 107 PB)
gallery	(p. 107 PB)	souvenirs	(p. 3 PB)

Figurative Language

Similes

- "Clues. Look at all this stuff. Each piece of garbage is like a fingerprint." (p. 9 HB)

Curriculum Connections

Character Education:

- Discuss the responsibilities of watching over someone else's home while they are away.

- Discuss the steps Andy and his family took to solve the mystery at the Perlman's house. Ask students what they would have done in Andy's position.

Fine Arts:

- Have students create original sculptures like Elke Bell's *Ode to the Foot*.

Language Arts:

- Have students write a creative story or an identity profile using the items found in their classmates' garbage at home or at school.
- Give students the following prompt to write a mystery story:
We knew something strange was going on when . . .
- Provide other short mystery or 'who done it' stories for students to read in class.
- Have students write a different ending to the story.
- Have students write a letter to the Perlmans that would explain the situation as Andy saw it, or as it was finally resolved. This would allow the students to summarize the book, or tell the story in their own words.

Mathematics:

- Have students study fractions like the students in Andy's class.

Science:

- Begin a unit on plants incorporating the vocabulary used by Andy's teacher in the story.
- Have students re-enact Andy and Rachel's gerbil race as a class science project.

Social Studies/Geography:

- Give students a map or globe to locate Cotacachi, Ecuador.
- Have students research Catacachi, Ecuador and compare their findings to the letter sent by the Perlmans.

Escaping the Giant Wave

by Peg Kehret

Annotation

The family spent three weeks planning their dream vacation to Oregon. Thirteen-year-old Kyle's dad was receiving the Salesman of the Year award and, as an added bonus, this would be Kyle's first time flying. The family's plans soon unravel after they arrive in the small Oregon beach town and progressively worsen when an earthquake and tsunamis hit the area. Kyle's fast thinking helps save his younger sister Bee Bee and himself during this traumatic time. A bibliography of books, Internet sites, a videorecording, and pamphlets are also included.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.pegkehret.com/>

Realia

Item: Warning Sign

Statement: Kyle reads a warning sign on the beach, but does he pay attention to what the sign says? Read *Escaping the Giant Wave* to see if Kyle remembers and heeds the warning.

Food

Pineapple, Tomato, and Extra Cheese Pizza, Vanilla Milk Shakes, Baby Carrots with Ranch Dressing, Dill Pickle Sandwich, Warm 7-Up

Challenging Words

acrid	(p. 61 HB)	modem	(p. 136 HB)
baffled	(p. 6 HB)	mutual fund	(p. 8 HB)
capsize	(p. 81 HB)	nonchalant	(p. 17 HB)
challenge	(p. 2 HB)	premises	(p. 64 HB)
compromise	(p. 4 HB)	quartet	(p. 82 HB)
devious	(p. 4 HB)	remorse	(p. 124 HB)
frugality	(p. 13 HB)	skeptical	(p. 147 HB)
inhale	(p. 60 HB)	tsunami	(p. 30 HB)
inland	(p. 116 HB)	undergrowth	(p. 105 HB)
megaphone	(p. 143 HB)	vantage	(p. 101 HB)

Figurative Language

Metaphors

- "The sun was a red basketball as it slid toward the horizon." (p. 93 HB)

Similes

- "Relief and anger mixed in my mind like the colors of paint swirling together. 'You're in big trouble' I said." (p. 44 HB)
- "The carpet looked as if someone had set dozens of tiny fires in a random pattern across the floor. Sparks flew up, then drifted down again, like flocks of fireflies." (p. 65 HB)

- “I heard sirens now, rising and falling like a pack of howling wolves. Fire trucks must be on the way.” (p. 66 HB)
- “I looked. Yellow flames shot out of every window on the third floor. As we looked up at our room, the roof collapsed with a loud rumble like a dozen dump trucks all unloading at the same time.” (p. 67 HB)
- Other similes: pages 43, 47, 48, 56, 93 and 100 HB

Idioms and Expressions

- “Learn to pop a wheelie on my scooter” (p.2 HB)
- “My mind went in circles like Alexander the Greatest when he chases his tail.” (p. 73 HB)
- “Oh lawsy, that’s a good one’ the woman said.” (p. 78 HB)
- “Better safe than sorry, that’s my motto.” (p. 80 HB)
- “Pansy began to tremble, shaking as if she were scared silly.” (p.100 HB)

Curriculum Connections

Character Education:

- Have each student create a list of four school year goals, seal the goals in an envelope and give to you. At the end of the school year, have each student open his/her envelope, read the goals and determine if they accomplished those goals.
- Discuss bullying and what each student can do about a school bully.
- Role play with the class by having selected students pretend they are in charge of a group when a disaster such as a tsunami hits your area. What leadership qualities do the students think they would need to lead a group to safety?

Fine Arts:

- Pair students with a partner to create “nature” collages using articles found outside such as grass, sticks, feathers, etc.

Language Arts:

- Have students write a short, but very descriptive, report about their summer vacations.

Mathematics:

- Organize the class into groups. Have each group chose a stock and read the stock market section of the newspaper to watch Target or Wal-Mart, etc. stock for a month. After graphing the stock fluctuations, have students report on whether the stock value changed significantly in one month.
- Have students research Internet sites on the tsunami and write down five numerical facts about a tsunami wave.

Science:

- Assign a one page report on the tsunami. Have students describe what causes a tsunami and how destructive one can be when it hits land. What parts of the world are hit by tsunamis?
- Have students look up “earthquake” in an encyclopedia and identify the signs of an earthquake and describe the Richter scale.

Social Studies/Geography:

- Assign students several geography tasks such as:
 - Looking at a map of the United States – how far is Oregon from Kansas?
 - Deciding if Fisher Beach is a real or fictitious town in Oregon?

Gooney Bird Greene

by Lois Lowry

Annotation

Feisty Gooney Bird Greene tells her second grade class fantastic, but “absolutely true” stories. Her eccentric outfits of pajamas with cowboy boots, a pink tutu over green stretch pants, or gray sweatpants with a sleeveless lacey blouse and long black gloves help to embellish the telling of the improbable stories. Readers will be anxious to read more about this likable, freckle-faced storyteller.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.loislowry.com/>

Realia

Item: Chopsticks

Statement: Who eats sushi for their school lunch? Read Gooney Bird Greene to find out more about this unusual girl.

Food

Sushi, Avocado, Oatmeal Cookies, Ham Sandwiches, Iced Tea, Black Bean Soup, Tuna Fish, Gumballs

Challenging Words

beloved	(p. 30 PB)	intermission	(p. 41 PB)
cliffhanger	(p. 16 PB)	lopsided	(p. 48 PB)
consumed	(p. 34 PB)	patiently	(p. 24 PB)
dangled	(p. 35 PB)	pinafore	(p. 35 PB)
descriptive	(p. 44 PB)	slithered	(p. 30 PB)
dialogue	(p. 16 PB)	sternly	(p. 26 PB)
draped	(p. 25 PB)	suspense	(p. 46 PB)
extinct	(p. 40 PB)	sushi	(p. 3 PB)
flashback	(p. 49 PB)	symphony	(p. 66 PB)
imaginary	(p. 9 PB)	tiara	(p. 44 PB)

Figurative Language

Idioms and Expressions

- “You might as well sit down, Mrs. Pidgeon,” Gooney Bird said politely. ‘Take a load off your feet.’” (p. 13 PB)
- “Put on your thinking caps, class,” Gooney Bird said. “Think back to when I talked about Catman last week.” (p. 69 PB)

Curriculum Connections

Character Education:

- Remind the students that Gooney Bird was a very truthful person who only told ‘absolutely true’ stories. Have the students write three true facts about themselves on an index card and one false fact. Team students with a partner, read the card to the partner and have the partner pick the false

fact. (This is an easy way for students to get to know their fellow classmates.) Students can rotate around the class until everyone has had a chance to pair with a different partner.

- Refer students to examples in the text that portray honesty as a strong character trait of Gooney Bird. Have students list a strong character trait that they have and give supporting details or tell a story to demonstrate it.

Language Arts:

- Pick one or many of the stories that Gooney Bird told throughout the book and use these as story starters for your class.

Mathematics:

- Have students interview classmates to determine what area of the United States or the world they are from. Create a database from the data collected which compiles the different states, counties or cities of birth. Have students analyze the data to note similarities, etc.
- Divide class into teams and have them use bags of gumballs to sort and graph based on a variety of criteria.

Social Studies/Geography:

- Build on the story that Gooney Bird told about how she came to Watertower from China, Texas. Have students research their city's name and try to find other states (or countries) with the same city (*i.e.*, St. Petersburg, FL and St. Petersburg, Russia). Students can also research the origin of their own city's name.

Granny Torrelli Makes Soup

by Sharon Creech

Annotation

Everyone should have an Italian grandmother like Granny Torrelli! She not only teaches twelve-year-old Rosie how to make soup, but she also teaches her about friendship and life. When Rosie and her best friend Bailey's friendship needs mending, Granny Torrelli has the perfect recipe. She shares stories that help Rosie understand the ever-changing demands of friendship. These nourishing bits of wisdom are sprinkled throughout this skillfully written, humorous story that is filled with sage advice and spiced with Italian words.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.sharoncreech.com/index.html>

Realia

Item: Soup pot and stirring spoon

Statement: Rosie and Bailey are best friends. They have been best friends their whole lives. But something happens to make Rosie so angry at Bailey that she says she hates him. However, Rosie remembers what's important about love, life, and friendship when *Granny Torrelli Makes Soup*.

Food

Chicken Soup; Oranges; Italian Bread; Pasta, Sauce and Meatballs

Challenging Words

agitated	(p. 124 PB)
cavatelli	(p. 114 PB)
ghastly	(p. 55 PB)
knead	(p. 113 PB)
ladle	(p. 39 PB)
mangling	(p. 90 PB)
oregano	(p. 119 PB)
rummaging	(p. 15 PB)
throttle	(p. 91 PB)
zinnias	(p. 138 PB)

Figurative Language

Metaphors

- "I think about that Janine girl, that new girl up the street, that too-friendly new girl, and just like that, my heart switches from warm to cold. I am ice girl, ice queen." (p. 84 PB)
- "My ice queen has turned into a tiger, rumbling in me, wanting to pounce on that Bailey boy." (p. 91 PB)
- "My first impulse is to say, No, Bailey, I am staying with you here forever, but something stops me, some little sly fox who has replaced my tiger." (p. 127 PB)

- “I walk Bailey to the door and remind him that tomorrow is the pasta party. My tiger and fox and ice queen must be asleep, because I hear myself say, Maybe we should invite Janine?” (p. 137 PB)
- Other metaphors: pages 89, 92, 96, 100, 101, 103, 111, 131 PB

Similes

- “We zip around the kitchen, dash out the door with our zuppa and bread and oranges, and we slip across the lawn and up the steps and knock on the door, and suddenly my heart is thumping like a little frog in my chest because what if Bailey slams the door again, and what if Bailey is still mad, and what if Bailey doesn’t want our zuppa and bread and oranges?” (p. 71 PB)
- “I am too busy strangling the dough to answer. I am thinking how that Janine girl made me introduce her to Bailey, and how she swooned all over him, wasting her smiles and tossing her head at someone who couldn’t even see her. And when she figured that out, she cooed and patted him, like he was a little dove, and Bailey smiled his big smile at her, and I wanted to throttle them both.” (p. 91 PB)
- “I am trying to picture it. There is a little play going on in my head. There is Pardo swooning over Violetta, and Granny Torrelli monster-cutting Violetta’s hair, and Violetta ending up looking like a movie star, and then Marco moving in and swooning over my Granny Torrelli, and Pardo hating Marco.” (p. 120 PB)
- Other similes: pages 105 and 119 PB

Idioms and Expressions

- “Bailey is nodding. I get it, he says. The shoe is on the other foot now, right?”
- “‘Yes, how you say? Bull’s eye? You hit a bull’s eye, Bailey boy. At first, I do not get it, though,’ Granny Torrelli says. ‘At first, I think, Why is my life such a mess? Why did that Violetta have to come and steal Pardo’s heart, and how did this Marco boy have to come and be such a nuisance?’” (p. 120 PB)

Curriculum Connections

Character Education:

- Have students list the character traits demonstrated by Rosie and Bailey in their relationship as friends.
- Initiate a discussion about the way Rosie and Bailey worked out their conflict.

Foreign Languages:

- Have students list the Italian words and phrases in the story and identify the Latin root words from which the Italian words and phrases are derived.
- Expand this activity by having the students compile a list of English words derived from those Latin root words.

Language Arts:

- Have students write a script for a cooking show featuring a favorite chicken soup recipe with accompanying dishes.
- Read several poems that describe people. Have students write a poem that describes one of the characters in the story.

Mathematics:

- Have students locate a chicken soup recipe in a cookbook or from a family member. Have students double the recipe; triple the recipe; half the recipe; etc.

Gregor the Overlander

by Suzanne Collins

Annotation

Gregor and his two-year-old sister Boots fall down an air vent in their New York apartment laundry room and into the Underland, a fantastic subterranean world inhabited by translucent-skinned humans, giant talking cockroaches, spiders, and rats. Fast-paced action ensues as the unlikely warrior hero Gregor fulfills the prophecy to save the humans and his father from the warlike rats. This engrossing adventure will have fantasy fans quickly turning the pages and looking forward to the next Gregor challenge.

Realia

Item: Flashlight

Statement: Why were the batteries and flashlights so important to Gregor and the Underlanders? Find the answer to this question in *Gregor the Overlander*.

Food

Mushrooms, Rice, Grilled Fish, Bread, Herbal Hot Tea, Can of Root Beer Soda

Challenging Words

annihilation	(p. 66 PB)	plausible	(p. 135 PB)
ascent	(p. 50 PB)	plummeting	(p. 14 PB)
assent	(p. 109 PB)	prophecies	(p. 107 PB)
crevice	(p. 17 PB)	proximity	(p. 37 PB)
demeanor	(p. 131 PB)	prudence	(p. 131 PB)
echolocation	(p. 38 PB)	rancid	(p. 286 PB)
gnarled	(p. 69 PB)	repulsed	(p. 163 PB)
lucid	(p. 4 PB)	swath	(p. 142 PB)
mesmerizing	(p. 160 PB)	terse	(p. 33 PB)

Figurative Language

Metaphors

- “Gregor’s knees turned to jelly and he sunk slowly to the sand.” (p. 81 PB)
- “‘What sort of light am I supposed to bring back?’ asked Gregor. ‘Is there a sacred torch or something?’ ‘That is a metaphor. By ‘light,’ Sandwich means ‘life.’ If the rats can truly extinguish our light, they extinguish our life as well,’ said Vikus.” (p. 135 PB)
- “‘We thought you lost,’ said Mareth, who was bleeding freely from his thigh, ‘not lost in direction,’ said Luxa. ‘Lost forever.’ Gregor realized she meant dead.” (p. 177 PB)

Similes

- “‘Hi!’ said Boots, waving at the Underlanders and looking completely delighted. ‘Hi! Hi, you!’ The Underlanders’ reserve melted like butter in a skillet.” (p. 51 PB)
- “Regalia was even more impressive from above. On the ground, he couldn’t see that the streets, which were paved in various shades of stone, were laid out in a complex geometric pattern so that the city looked like a giant mosaic.” (p. 62 PB)

- “He ripped his face off the sticky ropes, and it felt like someone had yanked strips of adhesive tape off his skin.” (p. 171 PB)
- “The spider leaned down and snapped a thread with its jaws. Gregor and Boots shot up fifty feet in the air and yo-yoed up and down like they were on a big rubber band.” (p. 173 PB)
- “The laughter swept through Gregor like waves of sunshine. It was him. It really was his Dad!” (p. 279 PB)
- Other similes: pp. 6, 8, 55, 64, 73, 79, 106, 120, 126, 286

Idioms and Expressions

- “‘I mean, I think they were going to eat me until I mentioned your name.’ Vikus brightened a little. ‘Truly? Well, that is something. Where there is life there is hope.’
‘That’s so weird. That’s what my grandma always says!’ said Gregor.” (p. 181)
- “‘Run, boy. Run like the river. Fly you high, Gregor the Overlander!’ said Ripred as he took off down the road. ‘Fly you high, Ripred! Fly you high!’ shouted Gregor as Ares and Aurora sped over the rat’s head.” (p. 269 PB)
- “The last words of the prophecy came back to him again. THE LAST WHO WILL DIE MUST DECIDE WHERE HE STANDS. THE FATE OF THE EIGHT IS CONTAINED IN HIS HANDS. SO BID HIM TAKE CARE, BID HIM LOOK WHERE HE LEAPS, AS LIFE MAY BE DEATH AND DEATH LIFE AGAIN REAPS.
So it was about Henry as well as Gregor. Henry had decided to stand with the rats. . . . He had not taken care where he’d leaped, had not looked at all because he was so caught up in helping the rats.” (p. 270 PB)
- “‘Perhaps we shall see you here again someday,’ said Luxa.
‘Oh, I don’t know. My Mom’s probably going to ground me for the rest of my life just to keep me safe,’ said Gregor.
‘What means this, ground you?’ asked Luxa.
‘Never let me leave the apartment,’ said Gregor.” (p. 303)

Curriculum Connections

Character Education:

- Initiate a discussion with the class on the role of older siblings. Expand the discussion by listing the possible responsibilities (*i.e., babysitting, cooking*) and by noting the consequences of these on the older child. Conclude the discussion by having the students’ blend these responsibilities into the overall needs of the family.
- Have students compare and contrast the feelings and family/sibling responsibilities of Gregor, Kyle (*Escaping the Giant Wave*), and Moose (*Al Capone Does My Shirts*).

Fine Arts:

- Discuss with students different types of fabrics or textiles, placing particular emphasis on strength, softness, and absorbency. Extend the discussion by comparing today’s textiles with historical products. Visit textile museum collections such as: <http://www.textilemuseum.ca/> (Textile Museum of Canada) or <http://www.metmuseum.org/home.asp> (textile collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York). Discussion could be followed with a creative weaving project.

Language Arts:

- Have students study the sentence structure of the cockroaches. Then have the students create short skits using this syntax structure or another one created by the students. Extend the activity by discussing why the students think the author used this dialogue technique in the story.

Mathematics:

- Have students calculate the size of the rodents, spiders, and bats in the story using descriptive passages from the text. Have students draw a chart to scale to illustrate the differences in size to the real animals.

Science:

- Organize class into small groups to research spiders, insects, and bats. Have groups prepare mediated oral reports, focusing on habitat, food, life cycle, etc.
- Divide class into groups of 5 students. Have each group research the five senses. For the final report, the groups should create an imaginary world in which one or more of the senses would be particularly important as they were in the Underlander world.

Social Studies/Geography:

- Have students work in small groups to create a diorama and/or map of Underlander. Have students substantiate their designs by referring to descriptive passages in the book.
- Have one of the groups (from activity above) also create a map and transfer it onto a large bulletin board in the library media center.

How Tía Lola Came to ~~Visit~~ Stay

by Julia Alvarez

Annotation

Miguel does not fit in to the Vermont town after moving from New York City when his parents are divorced. To add to his embarrassment, his flamboyant Tia Lola comes to visit from the Dominican Republic. With her brightly flowered dresses, red lipstick, and maracas, Tia Lola makes quite an impression on the little town. She brings humor to the story as she tries to learn English, but she also brings stability and love to the lives of Miguel and his sister. Readers will be delighted with this heartwarming and uplifting story.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.juliaalvarez.com/books/>

Realia

Item: Dominican Republic flag

Statement: Where does Tía Lola put her Dominican Republic flag? Read why Tía Lola posts her flag at the center of the garden in *How Tía Lola Came to ~~Visit~~ Stay*.

Food

Black Beans and Salchichon, Tasty Sausage, Huevos Rancheros, Lettuce, Raspberries, Eggplant, and Chili Peppers

Challenging Words

acquired	(p. 136 PB)	mutual	(p. 72 PB)
admission	(p. 60 PB)	potions	(p. 53 PB)
carpetbag	(p. 14 PB)	psychologist	(p. 21 PB)
descending	(p. 105 PB)	recognize	(p. 9 PB)
encouragement	(p. 22 PB)	sensitive	(p.108 PB)
glimpse	(p. 3 PB)	stereotypes	(p. 56 PB)
ingredients	(p. 15 PB)	superstitious	(p. 56 PB)
microphone	(p. 11 PB)	welcome	(p. 13 PB)

Figurative Language

Similes

- “His mother’s sweetened-up voice is like a handful of chocolate chips from the package in the closet. Impossible to resist.” (p. 8 PB)
- “Once upon a time. . . and Miguel feels a secret self, different from his normal everyday self, rising up like steam from a boiling kettle into the air and disappearing inside Tía Lola’s stories.” (p. 18 PB)
- “The beauty mark that was above her upper lip on the right side is now on the left side. Tía Lola tends to forget about little things like that. It winks like a star.” (p. 25 PB)
- “Rudy is tall and big-shouldered, with rumpled gray hair and thick eyebrows and red cheeks. He looks like someone who has lived in the Old West, but has retired to modern times in Vermont.” (p. 32 PB)

Idioms and Expressions

- “Of course, the raccoons don’t care a hoot about Tía Lola’s map.” (p. 68 PB)
- “Becky has a green thumb,” Mami remarks one day as she comes in the door with a bunch of basil their neighbor has given her.” (p. 69 PB)
- “They came running in the house, soaking wet. ‘It’s raining cats and dogs!’ Miguel remarks as he throws off his jacket.” (p. 69 PB)

Curriculum Connections

Character Education:

- Explain to the students that they will be role playing by pretending to have just met someone visiting from another country that does not speak English. Have the students perform a short skit in which they make him or her feel more comfortable.

Fine Arts:

- Take the students to the library media center to research flags from other countries. Then have them design a flag for a country that uses their favorite colors.
- Divide class into small groups to make a piñata of their favorite animal.

Foreign Languages:

- Have a team of students develop a glossary of Spanish terms used in the book, including the definitions.

Language Arts:

- Discuss techniques authors use to develop characters and use examples from the novel. Have students write a short essay describing what they think Colonel Charlebois was like as a boy playing baseball on a team in 1934.

Mathematics:

- Send two students to the library media center to locate a recipe for huevos rancheros. Have them read the directions and figure out if they would have enough for the class or would they have to double/triple the recipe. Students would report their findings to the class.
- Create a bulletin board on temperature. On one part of the board have students chart the temperature difference between Vermont and the Dominican Republic in the summer and the winter.

Science:

- Organize class into small groups to conduct research on what causes leaves to change color. Then have students collect leaves for displays to accompany their reports.

Social Studies/Geography:

- Use your classroom computer to show students how to visit the Dominican Republic and how to locate pictures and information about this country. Expand this activity to a research assignment on other Caribbean islands and have students compare their findings.
- Display a map of the United States and have students compare Vermont and New York. Discuss how the states are alike and how are they different.

Ida B

by Katherine Hannigan

Annotation

Fourth grader Ida B is an unforgettable, sensitive character who likes predictability and nature. However, when her mother becomes ill, Ida B and her family must face unexpected changes and make difficult decisions. Ida B returns to public school after being homeschooled for several years which requires many adjustments. Additionally, her parents must sell acres of her beloved woods. Ida B feels betrayed and angry, but with the help of her understanding parents, Ida B begins to heal. Readers will become absorbed in this tender and compelling story of human emotions.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.pippinproperties.com/authill/hannigan/>

Realia

Item: Apple

Statement: If you could talk to an apple tree, what do you think it would say? Read *Ida B* to find out what the trees say to her.

Food

Apples; Hot Rolled Oats with Raisins and Milk; Peanut Butter on One Slice of Bread; Lima Beans; Brussell Sprouts

Challenging Words

aluminum	(p. 7 PB)	maximize	(p. 38 PB)
clasped	(p. 203 PB)	ornery	(p. 95 PB)
commotion	(p. 62 PB)	perpetual	(p. 21 PB)
dilemma	(p. 115 PB)	rambunctious	(p. 36 PB)
ferocious	(p. 166 PB)	ruckus	(p. 16 PB)
forbearance	(p. 9 PB)	sacrificial	(p. 91 PB)
forlorn	(p. 54 PB)	snickering	(p. 53 PB)
formulate	(p. 100 PB)	superb	(p. 146 PB)
impenetrable	(p. 21 PB)	tribulations	(p. 104 PB)
interfere	(p. 133 PB)	wallop	(p. 48 PB)

Figurative Language

Similes

- “I jumped out of the tree, almost landing on Rufus the Saliva Factory, because I felt like I’d gotten a shock right through me.” (p. 15 PB)
- “In the morning my face looked scrubbed, like I’d washed it with steel wool. It was red and shiny and kind of pinched looking.” (p. 23 PB)
- “One night we were walking along, Daddy took a deep breath, the kind that sounds like you’re smelling something when the air’s going in and you’re sighing when the air’s coming out, and it means something important’s about to be spoken.” (p. 28 PB)

- “In the morning, I’m like a snake in the spring: I need to lie out on a warm rock and let the sun sink into me for a while before I can start wiggling around and get on with the day.” (p. 59 PB)
- “But Mama and Daddy aren’t like that at all. They’re like birds: they wake up before it’s light, and they’re singing and fluttering around just as soon as their eyes are open.” (p. 59 PB)
- “That cancer was like bugs in a tree: one day you don’t see them at all and the next it seems like they’re everywhere, eating the leaves and the fruit.” (p. 66 PB)
- Other similes: pages 32, 36, 42, 55, 61, 62, 70, 80, 82, 86, 95, 96, 102, 133, 137, and 144 PB

Idioms and Expressions

- “‘Hold your horses, Ida B,’ Daddy told me. ‘There’s plenty of time to do whatever you’re planning.’” (p. 3 PB)
- “If you need a sudden death tiebreaker, you can be very complicated, but you have to be fair.” (p. 141 PB)

Curriculum Connections

Character Education:

- Begin a discussion on identifying categories of differences among students. Divide students into pairs to create a venn diagram of differences and similarities of each other.
- Have students create a list of items that make them angry and list positive ways to deal with that anger.

Fine Arts:

- Have students create mood paintings. Explain to students that they will have a way to creatively express a mood or a feeling through color.
- Discuss how the author uses vivid imagery throughout this book and use examples to clarify for the students. After reading the first few chapters, have the students draw a picture of what they think Ida B’s surroundings look like. A follow-up could be having the students describe their own neighborhood or house in writing, pass the paper to a classmate and have the other student draw the neighborhood or house from the description given.

Language Arts:

- Initiate a discussion by reading a passage from the book describing how upset Ida B was that the teacher would not call her by her nickname. Have students think of a time when someone or something upset them and have them write about it, using descriptive terms to explain their feelings.

Mathematics:

- Display 7 or 8 different kinds of apples (Red Delicious, Granny Smith, Red Rome, Golden Delicious, etc.) with labels of their names on a shelf or table in the classroom to generate interest. Using one apple at a time, ask the students to describe what it looks like (red/yellow? spotted/not? big/little?). Record the student’s responses on a giant apple cutout on a classroom wall. Then cut each apple into small bite-size pieces allowing each student to taste it, describe the flavor and texture (sweet/sour? soft/hard? juicy/not?), etc. Record the responses.
- Take a vote to see which type of apple is the students’ favorite. Tally the votes and make a graph showing the results.
- Direct the students to write a paragraph about what they learned during this activity or about the kind of apple they liked the best, using the adjectives generated during the class test-taste.

Science:

- Reinforce how important the apple orchard is in Ida’s life. Conduct the following experiment using apples. Have students write a hypothesis about whether they think an apple will sink or float and

how many seeds it will have inside. Allow them to carry out the experiment. Repeat the experiment with other types of fruit as a follow-up activity.

Social Studies/Geography:

- Have students locate Wisconsin on a map. How close is Canada to Wisconsin? Assign students a research project on Canada or Wisconsin.

Additional Websites:

Visit the following website for discussion questions about the book:

http://www.harpercollins.com/global_scripts/product_catalog/book_xml.asp?isbn=0060730242&tc=rg

Booktalks are available at the website listed below:

http://nancykeane.com/booktalks/hannigan_ida.htm

Lewis and Clark and Me

by Laurie Myers

Annotation

Detailed illustrations help tell the tale of Seaman, the bear-dog, who traveled with Lewis and Clark when they explored the United States' western territory. Seaman narrates this fictionalized account of the journey and his interactions with other animals he meets such as squirrels, bears, buffalo, and beaver. This short, easy read is certain to be a winner with both animal lovers and history buffs.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.lauriemyers.com/>

Realia

Item: Large bone

Statement: "I chewed it and sucked out all the delicious marrow." Who gave this to Seaman? Read *Lewis and Clark and Me* to find out.

Food

Fish, Venison

Challenging Words

cunning	(p. 26 HB)	perseverance	(p. xv HB)
delicacy	(p. 29 HB)	rampaging	(p. 37 HB)
docility	(p. 7 HB)	reeked	(p. 25 HB)
fatigue	(p. 31 HB)	sentinel	(p. 36 HB)
gnats	(p. xiv HB)	torment	(p. xiv HB)
intense	(p. 40 HB)	treaty	(p. xiii HB)
marrow	(p. 33 HB)	triumphal	(p. 60 HB)
mutual	(p. 6 HB)	vibrate	(p. 37 HB)
obliged	(p. 51 HB)	yearn	(p. 3 HB)

Figurative Language

Metaphors

- "York and I were a double show." (p. 42 HB)

Similes

- "Buffaloes can be very peaceful animals, even shy, but when they stampede, they are as deadly as any creature I've seen. Once, I saw a buffalo trample trees like they were grass." (p. 35 HB)
- "At that moment everything became clear, like the streams in the mountains." (p. 25 HB)

Idioms and Expressions

- "After that, he didn't need a rope. I would follow this man to the ends of the earth." (p. 7 HB)
- "We were both looking toward the water. It was one of those moments when time stands still." (p. 37 HB)

- “When the excitement died down, Lewis joined me at the campfire.” (p. 40 HB)

Curriculum Connections

Character Education:

- Ask students to act out meetings between groups of people who have never encountered each other before (*i.e.*, the Native Americans and York). How would the students explain differences in appearance to people who did not speak their language?
- Ask students to act out what they would do if someone offered to buy something valuable from them (*i.e.*, the Shawnee wanted to buy Seaman). What would determine whether they would sell or not?

Fine Arts:

- Have students create an illustration for one of the incidents not pictured in the book. Use the same realistic style as the illustrator.

Language Arts:

- Read other excerpts from *The Journal of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* to the students and have them create journal entries as though Seaman were writing them.

Mathematics:

- Have students use the map in the front of the book to calculate distances between various places on the route of the expedition.

Science:

- Ask students to research the Newfoundland breed and one or two other dog breeds. Have students compare and contrast two or three breeds' characteristics such as size, weight, etc.

Social Studies/Geography:

- Have students create a timeline of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.
- Ask students to locate information on Fort Clatsop and create a diorama.

Million Dollar Kick

by Dan Gutman

Annotation

Whisper Nelson hates soccer, but, when her sports star sister is too young, Whisper enters a contest to kick a goal past the town's leading professional star. If she scores, she wins a million dollars. Not wanting to be humiliated, seventh grader Whisper decides to learn about the game. Well-developed characters, realistic dialogue, and soccer tidbits carry this engaging sports story to its exciting conclusion.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.dangutman.com/>

Realia

Item: A book with cover title *Soccer for the Complete Idiot* (Make cover yourself)

Statement: Why would a girl who hates soccer buy a book entitled *Soccer for the Complete Idiot*? Perhaps it has something to do with the contest she won and her chance to make the *Million Dollar Kick*!

Food

Donuts, Mini bags of Pretzels, Chocolate Protein Bars, Homemade Cookies

Challenging Words

aggravated	(p. 19 PB)	lob	(p. 168 PB)
ambled	(p. 54 PB)	medium (art)	(p. 133 PB)
awe (in awe of)	(p. 89 PB)	moronic	(p. 48 PB)
cleats	(p. 95 PB)	physics	(p. 97 PB)
crafty	(p. 88 PB)	ponder	(p. 34 PB)
deflect	(p. 138 PB)	quipped	(p. 81 PB)
excruciating	(p. 200 PB)	regaled	(p. 134 PB)
gnat	(p. 72 PB)	riveted	(p. 109 PB)
jet-lagged	(p. 7 PB)	swarm	(p. 2 PB)
juxtaposition	(p. 117 PB)	velocity	(p. 148 PB)

Figurative Language

Metaphors

- "I have a memory that's stuck in my brain. It's like a song that you hear once on the radio and can't get out of your mind for the rest of the day. Sometimes I even dream it. It's my mental videotape." (p. 4 HB)

Similes

- "He used to bring home those little bags of pretzels they give out on his plane, and when we went on long car trips, I would make him pass them out like a flight attendant." (p. 7 HB)
- "The bell rang at that point and everybody rushed to lunch, like a bunch of sheep being herded into a pen." (p. 17 HB)

- “Did you ever hear the word *whomperjawed*? When something is whomperjawed, it doesn’t fit quite right. Like a jar with a lid that’s just a little bit too big.” (p. 19 HB)
- “The referee blew her whistle again, like a car behind you honking for you to get moving.” (p. 186 HB)
- Other similes: pages 17, 22, 46, 52, 132 HB

Idioms and Expressions

- ““Do you live in a cave?” Briana said.” (p. 23 HB)
- “I came over here because it’s too easy for people to say no over the telephone. I prefer to take my chances on a face-to-face visit.” (p. 45 HB)
- “My mother was always good at looking right through me.” (p. 73 HB)
- “So she was lying to me! Briana was right. Carmen was trying to psych me out at the press conference.” (p. 103 HB)
- Other idioms and expressions: pages 116, 117, 132, and 175 HB

Curriculum Connections

Character Education:

- Discuss with the students if they have developed a passion or “thing” such as Ellie did with soccer or Whisper with art. Ask them if they can you picture themselves being passionate about something. Have them research if there are classes or training sessions available on their interests. Do they know what cost is involved—equipment, materials, lessons? What would it take to explore that passion?

Fine Arts:

- Have students research the surrealist artists referred to in chapter 11 to determine if they can locate some of the paintings Whisper describes. Visit the Salvador Dali Museum if you are in the St. Petersburg area or at least the website (<http://www.salvadoralimuseum.org>). The website includes a short video describing surrealism as well as the Surrealist Game.

Language Arts:

- Assign a self-reflective writing assignment in which the students describe the worst age for themselves so far. What made it bad? How could they have made it better? If they haven’t lived through a bad age (lucky them!), have them write about Whisper or another person and how they would help them through their tough times.

Physical Education:

- Have students try to reproduce the \$1million kick. Have everyone try making a penalty kick. Then discuss the techniques Whisper learned. Have students practice the techniques in physical education and have the students try the kick again. Ask the students if “practice makes perfect” or at least improves the odds.

Social Studies/Geography:

- Organize the students into small groups to research the Oklahoma City Bombing in 1995, referred to in Chapter 13. As part of the assignment, have students visit the website (<http://www.oklahomacitynationalmemorial.org/>). Then have the students research the 9/11 tragedy. Have students complete a chart comparing and contrasting the two events.

Once Upon a Marigold

by Jean Ferris

Annotation

This quirky fantasy is filled with lighthearted fun and likeable characters from Edric the Troll to the doting father, King Swithbert. Taking center stage, however, are the lovely princess Marigold and strong-willed, clever, young Chris. Meanwhile, the evil mother, Queen Olympia, supplies the plot twists by planning to murder Marigold and the king in order to become the sole ruler of the country. This fast-paced story, filled with romance and comedic subplots, moves quickly to a satisfying conclusion.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.jeanferris.com/>

Realia

Item: Colored Rock Crystals

Statement: “It’s a big cave with lots of rooms, and in each room the walls and ceilings are studded with a different kind of crystal.” Edric the Troll introduces Christian to the cave in *Once Upon a Marigold*.

Food

Strawberries, Artichokes, Spinach Salad, Cherries Jubilee

Challenging Words

anonymous	(p. 102 PB)	indignantly	(p. 17 PB)
assortment	(p. 23 PB)	indulgently	(p. 131 PB)
atone	(p. 92 PB)	ignited	(p. 216 PB)
bulwark	(p. 52 PB)	jerkin	(p. 4 PB)
collapsible	(p. 4 PB)	lacerating	(p. 33 PB)
consequences	(p. 136 PB)	menace	(p. 15 PB)
contraption	(p. 23 PB)	prevaricate	(p. 214 PB)
correspondence	(p. 102 PB)	promontory	(p. 23 PB)
fraught	(p. 122 PB)	tradition	(p. 9 PB)
haphazardly	(p. 6 PB)	wheeled	(p. 218 PB)

Figurative Language

Metaphors

- “The ball rolled away from the dogs and came to rest against Christian’s basket of tools. When the barking floor mops came running after it, Christian couldn’t help reaching out to pet them from where he knelt next to the wall.”

Similes

- “In the large yellow-crystal room that Ed used for his main parlor, he built up the fire, stumbling repeatedly over Bub, who was laid out in front of it like a hearth rug, breathing deeply in relief at being safe at home.” (p. 10 PB)

- “When he finally made it to his sleeping place in the straw of the stable loft, he was so exhausted, physically and emotionally, that he was out like a log, as Ed would have said.” (p. 94 PB)
- “A great shower of sparks exploded outward like fireworks as Christian headed back to the kitchen.” (p. 98 PB)
- “‘You know,’ she said, settling down cross-legged on the flagstones, her skirts poufed out around her so that, to Christian, she looked like a flower growing in a fancy pot, ‘I’ve thought about that a lot – because ruling means having power, and when you have it, you have to use it wisely.’” (p. 135 PB)

Idioms and Expressions

- “‘Imperious little son of a gun, acting like some big cheese in a small pond, expecting me to pick up after him like I was his servant.’” (p. 12 PB)
- “‘Ideas? What kind of ideas can a little kid have?’ Ed asked. ‘For pete’s sake.’” (p. 17 PB)
- “‘Bull by the horns,’ Christian said.” (p. 76 PB)
- “‘Well, blow me over with a feather!’ Ed thought.” (p. 102 PB)
- “‘If he’d made even a slight move in the wrong direction, many pounds of metallic figures would have fallen over in a cataract of noise that would have sealed his fate in an instant.’” (p. 120 PB)
- “‘Right. Marigold. So, what do you think about sweetening the pot a little?’” (p. 127 PB)

Curriculum Connections

Character Education:

- Arrange class into small groups and have each one adopt a cause like Edric the Troll. Have groups write persuasive letters or send e-mails to effect change for the better.
- Have students write essays describing what it would be like to be able to read another person’s thoughts. Have them discuss the ethical issues involved.

Fine Arts:

- Refer students to Christian’s golden phoenix pendant that proved he was royalty. Have students design their own pendant.

Language Arts:

- Assign teams of students a Greek myth to study and report on like Marigold and Christian did in the story.
- Hold a brief, fun session on having the students guess each others middle names when they only know the first letter.

Mathematics:

- Place a large piece of graph paper on the bulletin board and then have students survey several grade levels to determine how much money the tooth fairy left each student. Have students graph the results.
- Have students study local maps to determine where they live. Assign each student a partner. Based on the local map, have students figure out how far a carrier pigeon would have to fly to deliver p-mail between the partners.

Science

- Teach students to use a telescope to view something in the distance. Have them record their findings.

- Have students study crystals under a microscope and research the different types of gem stones and where they are found.
- Instruct students to invent something from found objects. Have students display their inventions in the library media center.

Social Studies/Geography:

- Discuss historical housing and the reasons for these dwellings. Organize the class into collaborative groups and have them research castles. Each group will then design their own castle complete with a coat of arms.

Owen Foote, Super Spy

by Stephanie Greene

Annotation

Owen and his buddies embark on their most daring adventure yet, spying on the school principal. Outfitted with camouflage headgear (made from Dad's boxer shorts) and walkie talkies, the boys embark on their covert assignment. But after a tumble down the hill, Owen is left to face the consequences of their actions. Owen's fans will not be disappointed with this latest lighthearted addition to the series.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com/catalog/authordetail.cfm?authorID=2881>

Realia

Item: Piece of camouflage clothing

Statement: Why would Owen Foote create camouflage headgear out of a pair of his father's boxer shorts? Read *Owen Foote, Super Spy* and find out why!

Food

Soda and Chips; Stir-fry; Chocolate Chip Cookies

Challenging Words

anthropologist	(p. 44 HB)	laughingstock	(p. 6 HB)
arborist	(p. 16 HB)	methodical	(p. 56 HB)
avid	(p. 16 HB)	Morse code	(p. 17 HB)
camouflage	(p. 1 HB)	peonies	(p. 15 HB)
careening	(p. 65 HB)	septic tank	(p. 88 HB)
CIA	(p. 5 HB)	smirked	(p. 7 HB)
comrade-in-arms	(p. 72 HB)	techniques	(p. 16 HB)
flailing	(p. 9 HB)	voyeur	(p. 44 HB)
genetic	(p. 44 HB)	waistband	(p. 2 HB)
jockeying	(p. 55 HB)		

Figurative Language

Metaphors

- "A table saw's shrill voice cried out from the garage. (p. 23 HB)
- It was the three of them, side by side, in the middle of the road. The cavalry, riding to face the enemy. (p.77 HB)

Similes

- "I can't stand it" Lydia staggered into the kitchen and fell into a chair as if she had been mortally wounded." (p. 3 HB)
- "He looked like a forest. Just the way he had planned. Sometimes his mom didn't have a clue." (p. 10 HB)

- “They were out on their porch with their baby. It looked like a sack of potatoes with a bowling ball on top, as far as Owen could see.” (pg. 11 HB)
- “He and Joseph were just about to leave when the baby did the most amazing thing. It threw up, straight out, like water from a squirt gun.” (p. 11 HB)
- “Our peonies are as big as footballs.” (p. 15 HB)
- “They dove in behind it like baseball players sliding into second base.” (p.24 HB)
- Other similes: pages 36,39, 41, 55, 65 HB

Idioms and Expressions

- “It’s like my dad says,” said Owen. “You never know what you can do until you have to.” (p.28 HB)
- “Kindergarten, for pete’s sake.” (p.31 HB)
- “It would be nice to get five dollars for A’s, though, wouldn’t it? Owen said. “You and I would clean up.” (p.31 HB)
- “He’s a nervous wreck he’ll get caught.” (p. 44 HB)
- “Mr. Foote laughed. Looks like they’ve got your number, honey.” (p. 45 HB)

Curriculum Connections

Language Arts:

- Have students discuss/write about the following question:
“Is it ever ok to spy on someone?” Have students explain their reasons.
- Give the students the following prompt for a creative writing activity:
“My most embarrassing moment was when...”

Mathematics:

- Organize students into small groups and have them research various types of codes and their historical applications. Then have each group create their own code and exchange messages with other groups.

Science:

- Have students research how plants, animals and people use camouflage as protection. Use a word processing program to create a chart showing the different protective measures for each species.
- Expand the above activity by having students create camouflage designs for different environments (*i.e.*, beach, forest, snow, desert).

Seaward Born

by Lea Wait

Annotation

In 1808, courageous thirteen-year-old Michael decides to escape to freedom in the North by stowing away on a sailing ship leaving from Charleston harbor. Throughout his journey, Michael's skills as a seaman and a cook help make him a valuable crewman and earn him needed money. Cleverly woven into the narrative are historical details on slavery life showing hardships endured during those troubled times. Historical notes and a bibliography complete this fast-paced novel.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.leawait.smartwriters.com/index.2ts?page=1002>

Realia

Item: Small wooden boat

Statement: Born a slave, Michael keeps a small boat as his only company reminding him of his dream to one day be free and sail the seas. Read *Seaward Born* to learn how Michael makes his dreams come true.

Food

Johnny Cake, Salt Pork, Chowder, Cornbread, Shrimp or Lobster Pie

Challenging Words

brig	(p. 29 HB)	packet (ship)	(p. 35 HB)
callused	(p. 12 HB)	pallet	(p. 103 HB)
contorted	(p. 62 HB)	pettiauger	(p. 18 HB)
covering	(p. 79 HB)	petticoats	(p. 46 HB)
dank	(p. 106 HB)	starboard	(p. 62 HB)
disparagingly	(p. 135 HB)	swabbing	(p. 1 HB)
gruel	(p. 71 HB)	tack	(p. 94 HB)
halyards	(p. 119 HB)	tankard	(p. 33 HB)
larboard	(p. 62 HB)	taunting	(p. 91 HB)
namesake	(p. 3 HB)	zealots	(p. 100 HB)

Figurative Language

Metaphors

- "Michael nodded. "Couple of years back there was snow. Like little specks of soft white sand fallin' from the sky. Mama said it was tiny feathers from angels' wings. Then it disappeared." (p. 17 HB)

Similes

- "Masted vessels filled the harbor, their sails like the great wings of angels, carrying people safely from one shore to another." (p.2 HB)
- "He remembered the cruel looking creatures Mama had puzzled over cooking and then boiled like giant shrimp until they turned as red as summer sunset." (p.16-17 HB)

- “The dank smell of the dark marsh soil beneath their feet surrounded them like rotten eggs in a henhouse.” (p. 23 HB)
- “Like chickens in the wind they fall, squawking, and petticoats flying like feathers.” (p. 46 HB)
- “Noah dozed off and on. The rolling of the ship swayed him gently from side to side, like a mother rocking him in a cradle.” (p. 69 HB)
- Other similes: pages 105 and 119 (HB)

Idioms and Expressions

- “Jim came out of the door they had painted blue to ward off evil spirits. ‘You look as full of yourself as a dog full of fleas,’ he said to Michael.” (p. 7-8 HB)
- “That boy is seaward born.” (p. 19 HB)
- “Noah held himself tight and pretended not to hear. He remembered one of mama’s sayings: Talking ‘bout fire doesn’t boil the pot.” Ezra Lean was only talking.” (p. 96 HB)
- “Papa would have said, “You’re in high cotton, boy, high cotton. For someone from the South, there was no better place.” (p. 102 HB)

Curriculum Connections

Fine Arts:

- Teach the students to sing some of the songs quoted at the beginning of each chapter. *Slave songs of the United States* available at <http://store.doverpublications.com/0486285731.html> contains words and music to all spirituals referred to in this book. Have students research spirituals and sea shanties and give mediated oral reports to the class.

Mathematics:

- Review map legends with the students. Then have students map the route Michael journeyed from Charleston to Boston to Maine to Canada. Have students complete a timeline, noting the incremental times/distances. Have students calculate how long this trip would take today by car. (Driving distances calculator: <http://www.onlineconversion.com/drivingdistance.htm> or use atlas) Other questions to ask: Approximately how many miles per hour did Michael travel by ship? If a flight between Charleston and Boston takes 2 hours, how many miles per hour would you be flying? Create similar word problems to compare and contrast travel times of now and in the past.

Social Studies/Geography:

- Research more about what it was like to be a slave. Useful websites include:
 Voices from the days of slavery
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/collections/voices/>

 Slavery in the South, a lesson plan
<http://www.valdosta.edu/~rlporter/intro.html>

Trading Places with Tank Talbott

by Dori Hillestad Butler

Annotation

Jason's parents insist that he takes swimming lessons even though he hates putting his face in the water. Tank Talbott's parents enroll him in dance lessons. All Jason wants to do is finish writing his horror-movie script and Tank would rather do anything other than be mistaken for a dork face like Jason. Since the boys look alike, they team up in an unlikely switch of the classes. As Tank thrashes his way through swim class and Jason learns all the right moves in dance class, the two boys also learn about life and friendship in this well-written and up-to-date tale.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.dorihillestadbutler.com/>

Realia

Item: Life jacket or life preserver

Statement: If you can't swim, do you need to wear a life jacket when you are in a boat? Find out about Jason's mishap when he did not have one on and he fell into the water. Read about the consequences of this event in *Trading Places with Tank Talbott*.

Food

Chocolate Pudding, Cupcakes, Cheese Squares

Challenging Words

assuming	(p. 46 HB)	overflowed	(p. 7 HB)
attitude	(p. 5 HB)	pathetic	(p. 36 HB)
awesome	(p. 9 HB)	scrunched	(p. 32 HB)
dispenser	(p. 36 HB)	seriously	(p. 79 HB)
innocence	(p. 10 HB)	skeptically	(p. 113 HB)
lurched	(p. 56 HB)	tentacles	(p. 1 HB)
nervous	(p. 3 HB)	transition	(p. 15 HB)

Figurative Language

Similes

- "His stomach felt like it had grown a million feet. And all those feet were running and jumping and kicking inside of him." (p. 3 HB)
- "Jason cleared his throat again. 'Just don't swim around like you've been doing it your whole life.'" (p. 24 HB)
- "But as the day wore on, a couple of the things Tank said nagged at Jason like a pebble inside his tennis shoe." (p. 51 HB)
- "They giggled. What an annoying sound. Like when Jason tried to play the violin and he couldn't get the strings to work right." (p. 82 HB)
- "Tank tried again. He still looked like an elephant with two left feet." (p. 97 HB)

- Other similes: pages 28, 36, and 87 (HB)

Idioms and Expressions

- “Jason put his glasses back on. He felt like a huge weight had been lifted from his shoulders.” (p. 6 HB)
- ““Would it really kill you to tell a little white lie?” Tank asked.” (p. 58 HB)

Curriculum Connections

Character Education:

- Read the book to the class and then initiate a discuss exploring the topics of respecting each other versus bullying other class members.

Language Arts:

- Read the story to the class, but do not read the chapter titles. Instead, after completing the book or each chapter, have students suggest their own chapter titles compare them with the author’s. Discuss the purpose of chapter titles and other author techniques.
- Give students the following prompt for a creative writing activity:
“Who would you like to trade places with and why?” Be certain to include reasons for your choice.
- Let students compare/contrast the actions or traits of good friends versus the actions of bullies and/or other unethical friends. Have students write a short essay on this topic.

Science:

- Research the concept of floating and how people, animals and plants use it to their advantage.

The World According to Humphrey

by Betty G. Birney

Annotation

Curious and likeable Humphrey the hamster narrates this story about life in classroom 26. Through weekend trips home with humans, Humphrey learns about their problems and finds ways for them to learn from one another. He manages to change for the better the lives of the principal, teacher, custodian, and a shy student. Readers will enjoy this lively and engaging animal tale filled with humor and wisdom.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.bettybirney.com/index.html>

Realia

Item: Tiny notepad and pencil

Statement: This notebook and pencil belong to class pet Humphrey the hamster. Read his observations of life both in school and on his visits to students' homes in *The World According to Humphrey*.

Food

Sunflower Seeds, Cauliflower, Cupcakes with Orange Icing, Carrots, Lettuce, Broccoli

Challenging Words

bustled	(p. 109 PB)	pinning	(p. 120 PB)
cunning	(p. 110 PB)	pondering	(p. 48 PB)
gnaw	(p. 21 PB)	rippling	(p. 54 PB)
inkling	(p. 5 PB)	scowled	(p. 105 PB)
mealworms	(p. 38 PB)	species	(p. 1 PB)
nocturnal	(p. 9 PB)	sprawling	(p. 84 PB)
pagoda	(p. 3 PB)	vinegary	(p. 112 PB)

Figurative Language

Similes

- "But when it's Sayeh's turn to clean my cage and feed me, she holds me in her hand so gently, I feel like I'm floating on a cloud." (p. 17-18 HB)
- "At last, the bell rang and the students flew out of the door like a flock of homing pigeons in a movie Ms. Mac showed us." (p. 26 HB)
- "Suddenly Clem bounded into the room, a big mass of yellow fur poking his huge nose right up against my cage. His wet nostrils were like two eyes staring in at me and he stuck out a giant tongue that came at me like a tidal wave." (p. 67 HB)
- "Miranda closed the door so the dog had to stay out side, but we could still hear him whining and crying like a baby out in the hall." (p. 68 HB)

Idioms and Expressions

- “It even makes a clicking sound. But from the inside, believe me, it’s a piece of cake to open.” (p. 73 HB)
- “Tears ran down his cheeks. I was feeling a little teary-eyed myself.” (p. 80 HB)
- “Then I guess I dozed off. Remember, I had hardly had a wink of sleep since I’d arrived.” (p. 90 HB)
- “On the other hand, I’m no spring chicken and I’d like to settle down and raise a couple of kids and maybe a couple of hamsters, too, you know?” (p. 115 HB)
- Other idioms and expressions: pages 6, 10, 14

Curriculum Connections

Character Education:

- Choose one of the people Humphrey visited and pretend that you visited instead. How could you have helped that person solve his/ her problem? What advice would you give? How would your advice or actions help your friend?

Foreign Languages:

- Learn some phrases in Spanish, Japanese or another foreign language. (Also ask what languages students speak at home.) Have students learn the phrases Sayeh’s mother spoke to Humphrey (p. 52-53).

Language Arts:

- Research school and county regulations regarding animals in the classroom. What are the reasons pets might not be allowed in the classroom? Ask students to write a persuasive essay arguing for or against allowing pets in school.

Mathematics:

- Look up the time zones for Sao Paolo, Brazil and Tokyo, Japan using the following web site <http://www.worldtimezone.com/> or an atlas or almanac. If you wanted to call Ms. Mac at 6 a.m. before she went to school in Sao Paolo what time would you need to call from your house? If Jason, the Brisbanes’ son left Tokyo at 3 p.m. and arrived in Los Angeles at 11 a.m. the same day, how long was his flight? Using a time zone chart and airplane schedule, (try <http://www.united.com> or similar site) make similar word problems for your class.
- Design the perfect cage for Humphrey using graph paper. Choose the best design and then draw it to scale on a poster sized paper. Would the perfect cage fit in your classroom?

Science:

- Ask students to research a pet they would like to have in the classroom. What is the initial cost for the pet? What supplies are needed? What kind of care is needed? Can this pet be taken home on the weekends? Make a chart to compare and contrast the pros and cons of different animals as pets.

Social Studies/Geography:

- Concentrate on learning the 50 states and capitals by using a Geo-Safari or puzzle as a center activity. Try holding a Geo Bee at the end of the month.

The Young Man and the Sea

by Rodman Philbrick

Annotation

In this takeoff of the *Old Man and the Sea*, twelve-year-old Skiff deals with the death of his mother, a grieving father, and a sabotaging bully. With his father reduced to a grieving drunk and thousands of dollars needed to repair their boat, Skiff looks for ways to make money. After Tyler, the rich bully, sabotages his lobster pots, Skiff decides to fish out in the ocean for the huge bluefin tuna in his small 10-foot plywood boat. This leads to a heart-pounding adventure featuring Skiff's courage and endurance.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.rodmanphilbrick.com/>

Realia

Item: Oars

Statement: When Samuel is bringing his catch back to shore, why does he have to use these instead of the motor on his boat? Read *The Young Man and the Sea* to find out.

Food

Tuna Fish, Lobster, Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich

Challenging Words

barb	(p. 155 PB)	grapple	(p. 97 PB)
bilge	(p. 18 PB)	jetty	(p. 83 PB)
caulking	(p. 50 PB)	keel	(p. 31 PB)
chittering	(p. 9 PB)	skiff	(p. 135 PB)
chum	(p. 135 PB)	stern	(p. 143 PB)
filched	(p. 114 PB)	winch	(p. 12 PB)
gandering	(p. 45 PB)	vise	(p. 92 PB)

Figurative Language

Similes

- "Moving water sounds sleepy, like a tired person going "shush," and before you know it I'm flat-out fast asleep." (p. 26 HB)
- "Shadows of boats is more like it. Looming things that move with the current, swinging all together like a flock of ducks set down on a pond, beaks to the wind." (p. 82 HB)
- "The thing that makes me maddest of all, that makes me feel like I swallowed a frog, is how right he is. My word against his." (p. 86 HB)
- "Passed out with his mouth open, like a little bird waiting for the next meal." (p. 90 HB)
- "Keep hold of it while I ever so quiet stand up and turn around and face the front. Quiet now. Quiet as a mouse." (p. 152 HB)

- “When that happens the outboard makes a funny sound, like an old cat trying to cough up a fur ball. Don’t sound good, that’s for sure, and it makes me worry about a wave coming over the stern.” (p. 174 HB)

Idioms and Expressions

- “In the end he’s asleep before the show gets over. I already know what happens, so I turn off the TV and go, “Sleep tight and don’t let the bedbugs bite.”” (p. 41 HB)

Curriculum Connections

Character Education:

- Discuss statements that people might say that would make students cry (as in the comments Tyler made to Samuel). Is it wrong or immature to cry?
- Ask students to tell about things they have done, or know that others have done, that required determination and bravery.

Fine Arts:

- Have students make prints from fish, using paint to coat the scales and pressing paper onto the fish.

Language Arts:

- Ask students to write a newspaper article describing a time when they, or someone they know, succeeded in a difficult task.
- Have students research why Samuel’s adventure was called a “Nantucket Sleigh Ride.”

Mathematics:

- Ask the students to calculate how much Mr. Nagahachi would pay for a fat 900-pound tuna, and how much he would pay for a skinny 900-pounder. What would the difference in pay be? (p. 105 HB)
- Divide the class into teams and have them measure the length of Samuel’s boat (36 feet) in a hallway or on the playground. How many yards long was the boat? How many inches? How does the length compare to a car? How does it compare to a school bus?

Science:

- Assign a research project on the game fish caught off the coast of Florida. What is a typical weight of each variety? Make a table or graph showing this information.

Social Studies/Geography:

- Have students use a map of the New England states to locate Portland, Maine; Boston; and Nantucket. Then have them find interesting facts about each location and report to the class.
- Discuss local geographic conditions and how this impacts economic conditions in those parts of the United States. Introduce students to northern conditions for fishing and lobstering by watching a videorecording on this topic in Maine.