

***Backwater* by Joan Bauer**

(Published by G. P. Putam's Son's)

Approved for use in Communication Arts, Grade 6

Summary

Stuck in a family overflowing with lawyers, Ivy Breedlove longs to be understood, to break free of unfair expectations and to find the truth about the mysterious hermit aunt who broke the family mold -- the relative no one will talk about. With an outrageous mountain guide leading the way, Ivy sets out on the journey of a lifetime to find the missing link in the Breedlove family. But is she too late?

Connection to the Curriculum

This novel fits the 6th grade curriculum in that it is a fictional story that includes much imagery and symbolism. Also, it can be read with an eye toward making inferences and drawing conclusions about characters, as well as discussing character development and changes in characters' perspectives as their experiences and insights change.

Standards

Course Objectives (Benchmarks)

Reading: 1.3- The students expand vocabulary. 1.4- The students comprehend a variety of texts.

Literature: 2.1- The students use literary concepts to interpret and respond to text. 2.2- The students understand the significance of literature and its contributions to various cultures.

Possible Skills Taught (Indicators)

Reading:

1.4.9- The student identifies characteristics or narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive texts.

1.4.12- The student uses prior knowledge, content, text type, and text features to make, revise, and confirm predictions.

1.4.13- The student generates and responds logically to literal, inferential, and critical thinking questions before, during, and after the reading of the text.

1.4.14- The student uses information from the text to make inferences and draw conclusions.

1.4.20- The student identifies and describes the author's purpose (e.g., to inform, to give directions, to entertain) and basic techniques the author uses to achieve that purpose.

Literature:

2.1.1- The student describes different aspects of major and minor characters (e.g. their physical traits, personality traits, feelings, actions, motives) and explains how those aspects influence characters' interactions with other characters and elements of the plot, including resolution of the major conflict.

2.1.2- The student identifies and describes the setting (e.g., environment, time of day or year, historical period, situation, place) and explains the importance of the setting to the story or literary text.

2.1.3- The student identifies major and minor events related to the conflict in a story (e.g., crisis/turning moment, climax, resolution) and explains how one event gives rise to another.

2.1.4- The student understands aspects of theme (e.g. moral, lesson, meaning, message, author's ideas about the subject) and supports with implicit and/or explicit information from the text.

2.1.5- The student understands the use of literary devices (e.g., foreshadowing, flashback).

A Note on the Text

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

This novel would appeal to both girls and boys. The novel would be suitable for differentiation within the classroom. The main character is an admirable heroine and displays a unique individuality and determination in attaining her goals for her future.

Additional Unit Design Connections

Coming soon:

To be completed during future curriculum development activities