

***Crispin: The Cross of Lead* by Avi (Published by Hyperion)**

Approved for use in Communication Arts, Grade 6

Summary

After being declared a "wolf's head" by his manor's corrupt steward for a crime he didn't commit, the boy known as Asta's son has to flee a tiny village that's the only world he's ever known. He meets a man named Bear who takes him under his wing and teaches him some ideas about life in general. The boy has a lead cross, but he cannot read the words that are written on the cross. He discovers that his name is Crispin, and that his parents' origins are something that he never imagined. This takes him on an interesting adventure with several twists and turns.

Connection to the Curriculum

This book provides period detail and plenty of chase-scene suspense. There are several very compelling characters with interesting and twisting relationships. Students can, therefore, examine the setting, plot development, and characterization. The setting is during the time of feudalism, and students learn about laws and life during this time, connecting to the 6th grader's study of the Middle Ages. Because of this connection to the past, there is vocabulary that enhances the study of the book.

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.

Possible Skills Taught (Indicators)

Reading:

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

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

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).

2.2.7- The student understands the effects history and cultures may have on works of literature.

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, set in the medieval time period, contains some limited violence associated with the times (a man who has hanged himself is discovered). In addition, Crispin discovers that his biological father has had several relationships with women.

Additional Unit Design Connections

Coming soon:

To be completed during future curriculum development activities