

A Long Way From Chicago: A Novel in Stories

by Richard Peck (Published by Scholastic)

Approved for use in Communication Arts, Grade 6

Summary

Joey and his sister, Mary Alice, live in Chicago, but they spend one week every August with their grandmother in another small town in Illinois. This book starts in 1929, and each chapter discusses each summer and the adventures that the children have with their grandmother. This story happens during The Great Depression, and there are connections to what life was like during this time.

Connection to the Curriculum

Through this novel, students are able to recognize the significance of literature and its contributions to various cultures. The author develops the characters effectively allowing students to not only examine methods of characterization but also to connect to the characters. Students can make personal connections to compare and contrast their experiences to the family's experiences in the book. It is made clear how two different towns can have two totally different cultures.

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:

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

1.4.5- 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.

2.2.8- The student compares and contrasts various languages, traditions, and cultures found in 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 story deals with the realities of the Great Depression and differences between cultures.

Additional Unit Design Connections

Coming soon:

To be completed during future curriculum development activities