

Guided Reading Activities

Expanding Vocabulary: Pages 1-25 [RL6.2; LS6.4a]

Directions: Read the sentences below. Underline a few words that help you determine the definition of the underlined word. Then, choose from the definitions below and write the correct definition in the blank.

1. What with our nation involved in a great war and our young men leaving our sweet land of liberty, we must be vigilant on the home front. (p. 5)

Vigilant probably means _____

2. Now, it is time for me to hang up my crown as Manifest Huckleberry Queen of 1917 and trade it for the hardscrabble life of a journalist. (p. 6)

Hardscrabble probably means _____

3. They told people to give up their evil ways or follow the devil straight down the path to perdition. (p. 9)

Perdition probably means _____

4. Beyond the gate, leaves and dandelions lined a long grassless swatch of ground all the way to a dilapidated old house. (p. 10)

Dilapidated probably means _____

5. "You see, I'm what's called an interim pastor. Meaning the old one left and I'm just filling in till they can get a new one." (p. 12)

Interim probably means _____

6. "If I took these, it'd sure leave Hattie Mae in a pickle and a quandary and she wouldn't be able to type either one." (p. 25)

Quandary probably means _____

DEFINITIONS:

serving temporarily

getting very little back in return for a hard effort

dilemma; state of uncertainty

punishment in hell

watchful and alert

in disrepair or decay

Chapter Response Questions, Pages 1-25

IDENTIFYING SETTING [RL6.1; RL 6.5]

The **setting** of a novel refers to the time period and location of the story. It may change as the story unfolds. Answer these questions to determine the **setting** of *Moon Over Manifest*.

1. In what year does this story take place? How might you expect life to be different for the characters because of this setting?
2. At the end of Chapter One, Abilene sees a sign that reads, "Manifest: A Town with a Past."
 - a. What do you think the word "manifest" means?
 - b. Why might the author have chosen to name this town "Manifest"?
 - b. What do you think this sign, "A Town with a Past" suggests?
3. The second chapter has a newspaper article from a different date.
 - a. How many years earlier is the newspaper article from?
 - b. What historical event was taking place during this earlier time?
 - c. Why might the author choose to tell this story by alternating between two time periods in the same town?

DETERMINING POINT OF VIEW [RL6.6]

The **point of view** of a story refers to the perspective from which the story is told. *Moon Over Manifest* is told in a **first person point of view** because the story is narrated by the protagonist, who speaks for and about herself using the pronoun "I."

1. Why do you think an author would choose to write a book from a first person point of view?
2. As a reader, what do you gain from a first person point of view? What do you lose?
3. List three things you know about Abilene after reading this first chapter.

ANALYZING CHARACTER [RL6.1]

Authors develop a believable character by giving the reader information about his/her background, family life, personality traits, and feelings. We learn about the characters in a novel by examining what they think, feel, say, and do, as well as what others say and think about them.

1. What kind of character is Abilene? In the space below, find at least TWO passages from the text that you think best reveal to the reader what she's like. These can be her ACTIONS, something she SAYS, or a DESCRIPTION of her.

2. What do we know about Gideon, Abilene's daddy? In the space below, find at least TWO passages from the text that tell us something about him.

3. What do we know about Shady? In the space below, find at least TWO passages from the text that tell us something about him. These can be her ACTIONS, something she SAYS, or a DESCRIPTION of her.

Performance Task: Riding The Rails [RL6.1; RL6.9; W6.2; W6.9]

TASK: You've been asked to write a journal entry from the perspective of a hobo—or homeless person—during the Great Depression who rode freight trains illegally and lived in Jungles alongside the tracks. First, you must learn what life was like for these people and how they survived. Below are four sources for your research.

In Part 1, you will review each source and answer the questions that follow.

Then, in Part 2, you will write your journal entry using what you've gathered from these sources as well as your background knowledge from reading *Moon Over Manifest*.

Part 1

Sources for Performance Task: Read each source carefully, thinking about what it might tell you about the life of a homeless person during the Great Depression. Answer the questions that follow.

Source A: The Life of a Hobo

During the Great Depression, many people lost their jobs, and their homes and farms. Sometimes, they heard about work hundreds of miles ... or even half a continent away. Sometimes, they just didn't have any place else to go.

Many resorted to hopping on freight trains, illegally. More than two million men and perhaps 8,000 women became hoboes and lived a life of "riding the rails."

Riding the rails was dangerous. At least 6,500 hoboes were killed in one year. Some lost their lives in accidents; others by railroad "bulls," the guards hired by the railroads to make sure the trains carried only paying customers. Most of these hobos had to hunt constantly for food, sometimes begging at local farmhouses. The hobos developed an elaborate system of marking symbols to communicate to other hobos where generous folks were ... and where to stay away from.

Guards were hired to keep hobos off trains, so they couldn't just go to a station or a yard and climb on. Most would hide along the tracks outside the yard. They'd run along the train as it gained speed, and then jump up into an open (and hopefully empty boxcar.) If they



missed, they could lose their legs or their lives. When the train got close to a stop, hoboes had to jump off early before a new set of bulls came along to arrest them or beat them up. Still, many of these hobos had no choice but to risk riding the rails in order to find work.

Image Caption: A man in a Hobo Jungle kills a turtle to make soup

Text Source: http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe30s/water_07.html

Image Source: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/fsa.8a04756/>

Questions for Source A:

1. Why would people ride the rails?
2. What were some of the hardships?
3. How did this group of people become a sort of community who took care of each other?

Source B: An Interview with Walter Ballard on Riding The Rails

Question: "What was it like riding the rails?"

"I loved it. And I tell you, you don't recommend that to any young kid because it'll get in your blood. You're not agoing anywhere. You don't care. You just ride. And I wasn't married. I didn't care. It'll sure get in your blood because you don't have no worries about how you're going to get around. It's paid for. You're going to eat [in the hobo 'jungles']. That was more than you was doing at home, probably.

"Now we'd stop. I never mooched [begged] a meal in my life on that. Never did. We'd stop and work in town anywhere we could get a job. Well, we'd work and get our money and catch that freight on again. Yeah, it'll get in your blood. I still like it. That old whistle will take off there.

"I've been hijacked in the yards by the railroad bulls [guards], and, boy, they'd get rough with you, too. Me and my brother-in-law, we was going down through the yards, the railroad yards. Well, everybody catching the train, why, they'd be down in there prowling around. Well, this old boy – he was . . . a big guard, mean as he could be – he stepped out between the cars, and he said, 'Where you guys going?'

"'Oh, we was going up to North Dakota for the harvest.'

"He said, 'You just came from that away, didn't you?'

"'No, we're from *Texas*.'

"'Well, just get your hands up!' Boy, I'll tell you! He said, Now, you see that elevator down yonder?'

"'Yeah.'

"'You get your so-and-so down there, and you catch this train whenever it gets down there.'

"'Why, that train would be making 50 mile an hour when it got down there. [Laughs.]

So, we seen the guard go away. We run back up and caught it in the yard and left out. He knew we couldn't catch that train agoing that fast. But he meant it. He meant stay out of that yard. And then, in Cheyenne, Wyoming, one time, they run us all out. They was on horses. Boy, them pistols