5th Grade Unit 6

Coming of Age

Chapter Book Text Reviews

Activity #1

Intended for Teacher Use

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Text- 5 copies each | ***Wikipedia summary*** |
| http://img2.imagesbn.com/p/9780141303529_p0_v1_s260x420.JPG  AR 5.0  Quiz # 27940  Genre-Historical Fiction  192 pages | **Plot Summary**  The stories involve several vacations. Two children, Joey and Mary Alice Dowdel, spend time every summer with their resilient grandmother in rural Illinois.  "Shotgun Cheatham's Last Night Above Ground - 1929" (originally printed in *Twelve Shots: Stories About Guns,* 1997). The first summer the children go to their grandmother's house alone a reporter is doing a report on a resident of the town who has just died, Shotgun Cheatham. Grandma holds an open house for Shotgun and lies to the reporter by saying he was a war hero. Grandma's enemy, Effie Wilcox, comes too but then the coffin begins to move. Grandma shoots the coffin with her shotgun, while Ms. Wilcox and the reporter run out, but it turns out that it was the cat who moved the coffin.  "The Mouse in the Milk - 1930." The next summer, the Cowgill boys are tormenting the town and blow up Grandma's mailbox. Grandma tells one of the boys she won't be home for her daily milk delivery, knowing the boys would try to steal something from her. That night she turns the lights off and waits for them to come and steal; she catches them and has Joey get their parents. Grandma tells Mr. Cowgill that if his boys won't stop she'll tell everyone that she found a mouse in her milk, running his business to the ground.  "A One-Woman Crime Wave - 1931". Grandma uses fish traps (which are illegal) to get catfish from the lake while using the sheriff's boat (which she stole) to feed to drifters.  "The Day of Judgment - 1932". Grandma's gooseberry pie goes up against Rupert Pennypacker's for her town's honor and a flight in a biplane. Grandma switches the nameplates on the pies at the last minute. Rupert Pennypacker wins the contest with Grandma's pie, but Grandma still finds a way to get Joey a ride in an airplane.  "The Phantom Brakeman - 1933". Mismatched families of local lovers converge on Grandma's house and she uses an old ghost story to aid them. Vandalia Eubanks and Junior Stubbs run away together with the help of "The Phantom Brakeman" (Joey) and Grandma.  "Things with Wings - 1934". While Joey is having a love affair with a Hudson Terraplane 8, Grandma is finding a way to force banker Mr. Weidenbach to return Mrs. Effie Wilcox to her foreclosed home with rumors of Abe Lincoln.  "Centennial Summer - 1935". Grandma has a showdown with Mrs. Weidenbach about whose family has the most talent and the county's oldest living veteran.  "The Troop Train - 1942". Joey joins the army air corps because he loves airplanes. He sends a telegram to Grandma telling her that he was passing through her town. When the train comes by, Joey sees Grandma's house lit up and Grandma herself waving and blowing kisses to each and every cart passing by, hoping that he would see her, too. Joey waves back and goes off to fight in World War II.  Book trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=miWNzBPvMeU> |
| http://rjconte.com/books/out_dust.jpg  Not AR  Quiz  Genre-Poetry/  Historical Fiction  227 pages | ***Plot***  Set in Oklahoma during the years 1932–1934, **Out of the Dust** tells the story of a family of farmers during the [Dust Bowl](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dust_Bowl) years. The book follows main character Billie Jo's life and struggles. She and her Dad struggle as farmers and try to make do. Billie Jo is a great piano player. Billie Jo's father puts a pail of kerosene by the stove, assuming it was water Ma used the stove and let some coffee slip ending in flames. Billie Jo in a heroic moment throws a pail of flaming kerosene out landing on her pregnant mother. Her Ma soon dies giving birth and not long after so does the baby. Tragedy strikes when the piano is out of turn due to a dust storm and Billie Jo suffers a disfiguring accident that prevents her from playing. The structure of the novel is unusual in that the plot is advanced entirely through a series of [free verse](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_verse) poems.  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QCyUxjsobH0> |
| http://simania.co.il/bookimages/covers76/764729.jpg  AR  Quiz #  Genre-Children’s Novel  234 pages | Mary Lennox is a sour-faced, sassy, 10-year-old girl, who is born in India to selfish wealthy British parents who had not wanted her and were too wrapped up in their own lives. She was taken care of primarily by servants, who pacify her as much as possible to keep her out of the way. Spoiled and with a temper, she is unaffectionate, angry, rude and obstinate. Later, there is a cholera epidemic which hits India and kills her mother, father and all the servants. She is discovered alone but alive after the house is empty. She is sent to Yorkshire, England to live with her uncle, Archibald Craven at his home called Misselthwaite Manor.  At first, Mary is her usual self, sour and rude, disliking her uncle's large house, the people within it, and most of all the vast stretch of moor, which seems scrubby and gray after the winter. She is told that she must stay confined to her two rooms and that nobody will bother much with her and she must amuse herself. Martha Sowerby, her good-natured maidservant, tells Mary a story of the late Mrs. Craven, and how she would spend hours in a private garden growing roses. Later, Mrs. Craven was killed by an unfortunate accident, and Mr. Craven had the garden locked and the key buried. Mary is roused by this story and starts to soften her ill manner despite herself. Soon she begins to lose her disposition and gradually comes to enjoy the company of Martha, Ben Weatherstaff the gardener, and also that of a friendly [robin redbreast](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Robin) to whom she attaches human qualities. Her appetite increases and she finds herself getting stronger as she plays by herself on the moor. Martha's mother buys Mary a skipping rope in order to encourage this, and she takes to it immediately. Mary's time is occupied by wondering about the secret garden and a strange crying sound that can sometimes be heard around the house which the servants ignore or deny.  While exploring the gardens, Mary comes across a badger hole and finds a key belonging to the untended garden. She chances to ask Martha for garden tools, which Martha has delivered by Dickon, her twelve-year-old brother. Mary and Dickon take a liking to each other, as Dickon has a soft way with animals and a good nature. Eager to absorb his gardening knowledge, Mary lets him into the secret of the garden, which he agrees to keep.  That night, Mary hears the crying again. She follows the noise and, to her surprise, finds a small boy her age, living in a hidden bedroom. His name is Colin and she discovers that they are cousins: he is the son of her uncle; his mother died when he was a baby, and he suffers from an unspecified problem with his spine. Mary visits every day that week, distracting him from his troubles with stories of the moor, of Dickon and his animals and of the garden. It is decided he needs fresh air and the secret garden, which Mary finally admits she has access to. Colin is put into his wheelchair and brought outside into the garden, the first time he's been outdoors in years.  While in the garden, the children are surprised to see Ben Weatherstaff looking over the wall on a ladder. Startled and angry to find the children there in his late mistress' (Colin's mother's) garden he admits he believed Colin to be a cripple. Colin stands up out of his chair to prove him wrong and finds that his legs are fine, though weak from not using them for a long time.  Colin spends every day in the garden, becoming stronger. The children conspire to keep Colin's health a secret so he can surprise his father, who is traveling and mourning over his late wife. As Colin's health improves, his father's mood does as well, and he has a dream of his wife calling him into the garden that makes him immediately pack his bags and head home. He walks the outer wall in memory but hears voices inside, finds the door unlocked and is shocked to see the garden in full bloom with children in it and his son running around. The servants watch as Mr. Craven walks back to the manor, and all are stunned that Colin runs beside him  Movie trailer- students watch first 48 seconds…  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VrMahhudZv> |
| http://media.npr.org/assets/bakertaylor/covers/t/tuck-everlasting/9780312369811_custom-b8eea520543516bd9c635cba86c40278861ec078-s6-c10.jpg  AR 5.0  Quiz # 247  Genre- fantasy, romance  135 pages | 10-year-old Winnie Foster, bored and frustrated by her over-protected life in a fenced-off house on the edge of the town of Treegap, decides to slip away into the nearby woods. There, to her great surprise, she finds a boy drinking from a special spring beneath a towering ash tree. He appears to be about 17 years old, but says he is 104, and he tells her that his name is Jesse Tuck. As they talk, a woman and another somewhat older boy appear - the mother and the brother of Jesse - and they are alarmed to see her there. Full of fear and apologies, they sweep Winnie up and carry her off to their rustic house on a pond further north where Jesse's father, Pa Tuck, is waiting. Here, Winnie is introduced to their strange life - a life without end, the result of drinking from the strange spring. They are immortal. At first afraid and unbelieving, Winnie soon comes to love them, for they are open and affectionate with her. Pa Tuck takes her out on the pond in a rowboat and explains that she must keep the magic water a secret, for bringing immortality into the natural world would only take human beings out of the natural cycle of life and death and turning them into what he claims he and his family have become: "nothing but rocks on the side of the road." Winnie's brief time with the Tucks is ended with the appearance of a stranger, the nameless "man in the yellow suit" who confronts the Tuck family, tells them he's going to take Winnie back to her home in exchange for ownership of the magic spring, and grabs her to drag her away. Hearing this plan, Jesse's mother, Mae, seizes a shotgun and hits the stranger on the back of his head with the stock - a blow that kills him. But as she does this, the village constable appears and, accusing Mae of murder, takes her - and Winnie - back to Treegap. Mae is locked into a cell in the jailhouse and is likely to be tried for murder and hung. But she is immortal and cannot die, and the secret of the magic spring would be exposed. The Tuck family must rescue her from the jail cell. Jesse manages to talk to Winnie , and give her a bottle of the magic water, asking her to drink it when she turns 17 so that they can travel together over the wide world and even get married. That night, Winnie secretly leaves her house and joins the Tuck family where, when a barred window in the jail cell is pulled out, Winnie takes Mae's place, and the Tucks slip away under the noise and safety of a thunderstorm. Winnie is left with a choice: either she can wait until she is 17, then drink the water and go off with Jesse, or she can decide that a normal life will be the best a happiest. The final chapter tells how Ma and Pa Tuck, returning after many years to Treegap to look for Winnie, find that she has had the happy normal life she chose, and has died in peace.  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gsk3zJgi7FU> |
| http://ecx.images-amazon.com/images/I/51YSKN0X18L.jpg  AR 4.4  Quiz #125  Genre- children’s novel  278 pages | *M.C. Higgins* is a [coming-of-age novel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bildungsroman); it covers three eventful days in the life of teenager Mayo Cornelius Higgins. Its setting is in the [Appalachian mountains](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Appalachian_mountains) on Sarah's Mountain, a fictional mountain in [Kentucky](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kentucky) near the [Ohio River](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ohio_River) that is being encroached upon by a mining company. The book highlights the strange almost surreal customs of the hill people, including their traditions of song and superstition. At its core is the reconciliation M.C. must make between tradition and change.  The site below includes 3 videos- the 2nd one is an interview with Virginia Hamilton & family. The first video is a review (not a good one….) so you might not want to show this to them.  <http://mrschureads.blogspot.com/2012/12/the-newbery-challenge-mc-higgins-great.html> |
| http://blogs.slj.com/afuse8production/files/2012/05/WhereMountainMeetsMoon.jpg.jpg  AR 5.5  Quiz #131480  Genre- fantasy | In the exposition of Where the Mountain Meets the Moon, the main character, Minli, is introduced. She basically hates her village, and wants her family's fortune to change. Her parents, Ma and Ba, are also introduced. Ma is very negative and mean to Minli. Ba is more happy, and has a very good relationship with Minli. He tells her stories, which make her very happy.The setting is also revealed. Where the Mountain Meets the Moon takes place in the Village of the Fruitless Mountain. It is called the Village of the Fruitless Mountain because there is a huge mountain surrounding the village where nothing grows and no animals live. The village is very poor, there is hardly anything to eat, only rice. There is mud everywhere, it is on people, in their homes, and on their clothes. The Jade River also surrounds the Village. It also takes place in other places that Minli went on her journey. Some include the City of the Bright Moonlight, the Village of Moon Rain, and the Never Ending Mountain. The conflict is also introduced. There is a main, underlying conflict that causes other conflicts throughout the book. The underlying conflict is that Minli's family and village is really poor, That causes many problems throughout the book. One problem that is causes is that Minli runs aways to find the Old Man of the Moon, who could change their fortune. Another problem that it causes is that there is a strain in Minli's relationship with Ma. There are several parts to the rising action. The first part is when Minli runs away from her home, to find the Old Man of the Moon. Then, Minli meets the Dragon and they go on the journey together. Minli also meets a very important character on her journey. His name is Buffalo Boy. He helps Minli realize that her home life isn't so bad, and that she should appreciate more, because she has a real home and parents who love her, and he does not. He shows her how lucky she is. Next, Minli goes to the City of Bright Moonlight and meets the King. He gives her the borrowed line, which is essential to her journey. It turns out that a lion really had the borrowed line, and he gave it to the Dragon. Then, the climax was when Minli and the Dragon were in a cave, and the evil Green Tiger came. He tried to kill Minli, but the Dragon protected her. He got scratched and scared the Green Tiger away. His cut soon became infected by the poison of the Green Tiger and Minli set off to find help. She then met Da-Fu and A-Fu, two twin children who tricked and killed the Green Tiger. Their grandfather comes and helps the Dragon and Da-Fu and A-Fu take Minli to their village, which is the Village of the Moon Rain. Everyone in the village shows great hospitality, and the Dragon, now healthy, was soon reunited with Minli. Da-Fu and A-Fu take Minli to the Never Ending Mountain,to meet the Old Man of the Moon. Instead of asking the Old Man of the Moon to fix her family's fortune, she asks him why the Dragon cannot fly. The Old Man of the Moon allows him to fly, and Minli and the Dragon fly back to the Village of the Fruitless Mountain. The resolution is when Minli is reunited with her parents and the Fruitless Mountain is not fruitless and the Jade River is clear and fresh.  Website includes book trailer, author interview from “Al’s Book Club for Kids” on the *Today Show*, and an audio reading by the author. <http://www.gracelin.com/content.php?page=wherethemountainmeetsthemoon> |