



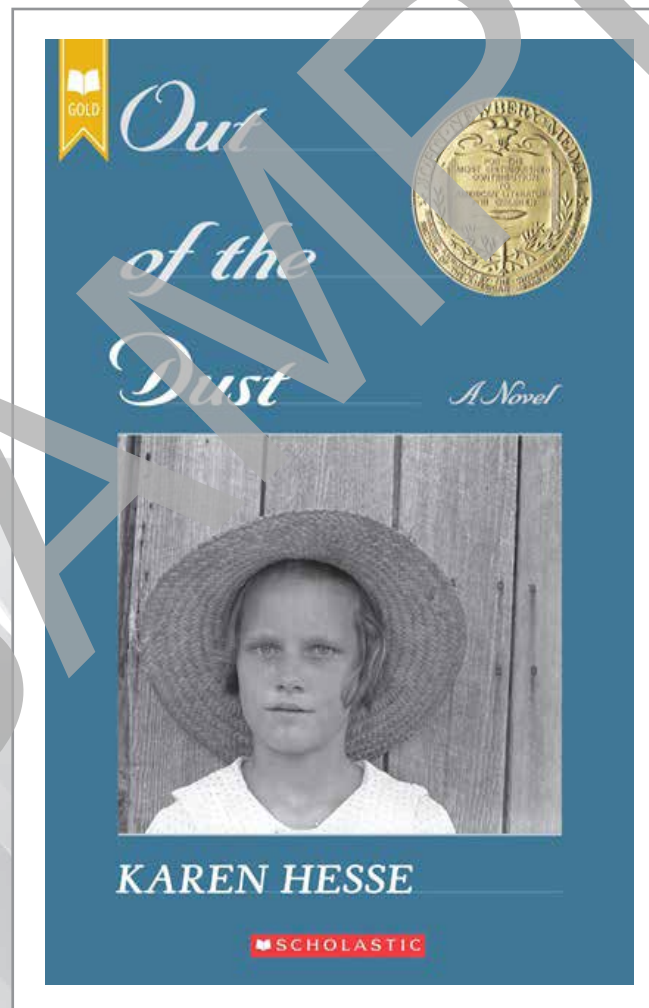
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Out of the Dust

Karen Hesse



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Out of the Dust

Karen Hesse

TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

ISBN 978-1-50204-064-0

Copyright infringement is a violation of Federal Law.

© 2020 by Novel Units, Inc., St. Louis, MO. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any way or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise) without prior written permission from Novel Units, Inc.

Reproduction of any part of this publication for an entire school or for a school system, by for-profit institutions and tutoring centers, or for commercial sale is strictly prohibited.

Novel Units is a registered trademark of Conn Education.

Printed in the United States of America.

To order, contact your
local school supply store, or:

Toll-Free Fax: 877.716.7272

Phone: 888.650.4224

3901 Union Blvd., Suite 155

St. Louis, MO 63115

sales@novelunits.com

novelunits.com

Table of Contents

Summary.....	3
Introductory Information and Initiating Activities	3
Section-by-Section.....	5
Sections contain: Vocabulary Words, Discussion Questions and Activities	
Concluding/Assessment Activities.....	42
Vocabulary Activities.....	43

Skills and Strategies

Thinking

Brainstorming, visualization,
inference

Vocabulary

Alliteration

Listening/Speaking

Discussion, oral memory

Comprehension

Predicting, sequencing,
comparison/contrast

Literary Elements

Characterization, story
elements

Summary

The Library of Congress description of *Out of the Dust* states: "In a series of poems, fifteen-year-old Billie Jo relates the hardships of living on her family's wheat farm in Oklahoma during the dust bowl years of the Depression." This book of free verse poems tells the story of Billie Jo as she emerges from the extreme hardships of her lot. She deals with grief and disfigurement as the result of an unfortunate fire which impairs her pregnant mother, who later dies while giving birth to Billie Jo's brother. Billie Jo, though she resembles her father, does not have a warm, loving relationship with him. Billie Jo's scarred hands are especially difficult for her to accept because she had been a capable pianist before the accident, following in the ways of her talented mother. In addition, Billie Jo deals with the environmental devastation of the Dust Bowl. Father and daughter eventually come "out of the dust."

This book won the 1997 ALA Newbery Award.

Introductory Information and Initiating Activities

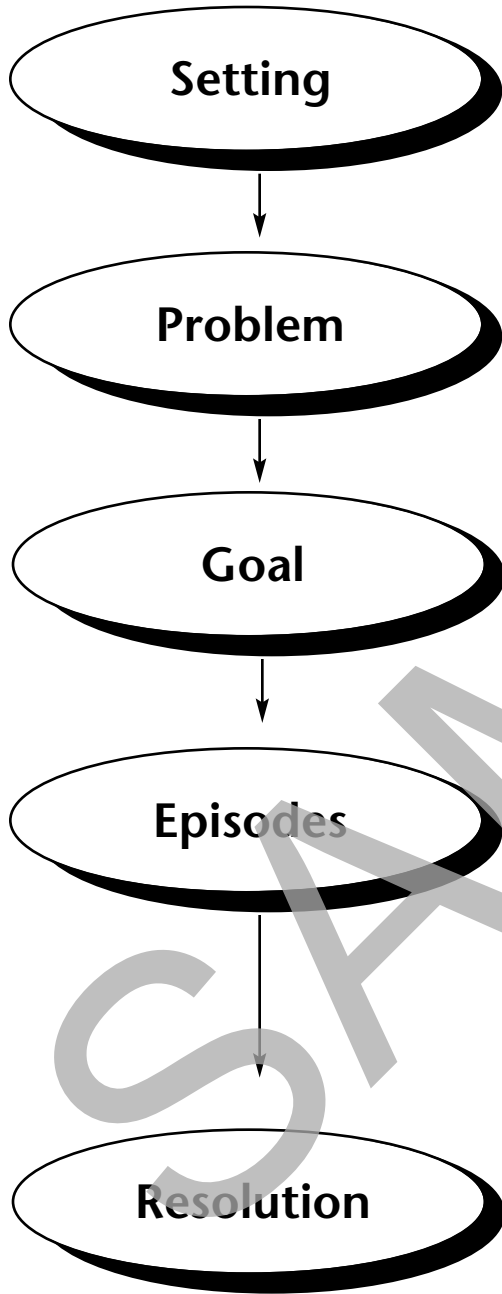
About the Author: Karen Hesse was born in 1952 in Baltimore, Maryland. She married Randy Hesse in 1971, and has two daughters. Hesse earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland. She and her family live in rural Vermont. She has always loved reading, considering libraries, along with chocolate pudding and cats, to be special friends. She enjoys writing, keeps a rigorous schedule, and says she would be a philharmonic conductor if not a writer. One of the most influential books she read as a child was John Hersey's *Hiroshima*.

Other Children's Books by Karen Hesse: *Wish on a Unicorn*, *Letters from Rifka*, *Poppy's Chair*, *Lester's Dog*, *Lavender*, *Sable*, *Phoenix Rising*, *A Time of Angels*, *The Music of Dolphins*

About the Newbery Award: The Newbery medal is named for an eighteenth-century British bookseller, John Newbery. Awarded annually by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association, the medal honors the year's most distinguished contribution to American children's literature.

Previous Newbery Award winners include: Konigsburg's *A View from Saturday*, Creech's *Walk Two Moons* (1995), Lowry's *The Giver* (1994), Rylant's *Missing May* (1993), Naylor's *Shiloh* (1992), Spinelli's *Maniac Magee* (1991), Lowry's *Number the Stars* (1990), Fleischman's *Joyful Noise: Poems* (1989), Freedman's *Lincoln: A Photobiography* (1988), Fleischman's *The Whipping Boy* (1987), MacLachlan's *Sarah, Plain and Tall* (1986), McKinley's *The Hero and the Crown* (1985), Cleary's *Dear Mr. Henshaw* (1984), Voigt's *Dacey's Song* (1983), Willard's *A Visit to William Blake's Inn* (1982), Paterson's *Jacob Have I Loved* (1981), Blos' *A Gathering of Days* (1980), Raskin's *The Westing Game* (1979), Paterson's *Bridge to Terabithia* (1978), Taylor's *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* (1977), Cooper's *The Grey King* (1976), Hamilton's *M.C. Higgins* (1975), Fox's *The Slave Dancer* (1974), George's *Julie of the Wolves* (1973), O'Brien's *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH* (1972), Byars' *Summer of the Swans* (1971).

Story Map



Characters _____

Time and Place _____

Beginning → Development → Outcome

-
7. What is the time period of this novel? How do you know? List things that were different in those times from current times.

Rabbit Battles—pages 6–7

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. How would you rate Billie Jo as an observer? *(Answers will vary. She provides a lot of specific detail.)*
2. What is the relationship between Mr. Noble and Mr. Romney? *(competitive, not civil)*

Losing Livie—pages 8–9

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. How does Billie Jo feel about Livie Killian moving? *(sad and jealous)*
2. What kind of emotions has Billie Jo shown so far in the book? *(Answers will vary—sadness, jealousy, envy, compassion)*

Me and Mad Dog—pages 10–11

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. Who are Arley Wanderdale and Mad Dog Craddock? *(Arley teaches music once a week at Billie Jo's school, and Mad Dog is a talented young singer Billie Jo knows from school.)*
2. Will Ma let Billie Jo play at the Palace Theatre? *(Answers will vary.)*
3. What are you learning about the relationship between Billie Jo and her mother? *(Answers will vary, but might include the strength of the mother as a strict disciplinarian, that Billie Jo admires and loves her mother, or that Billie Jo notices how her mother doesn't fit into the farm setting.)*

Permission to Play—page 12

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. How does Billie Jo manage to get permission to play piano at the Palace? *(She catches her mother when she's distracted.)*
2. How do you get permission from a parent? *(Answers will vary.)*
3. Look at the last line of the poem. Why are there two capitalized letters? Why is there a period at the end? *(It is the start of a new thought and the name of a specific place. The period must indicate the end of the poem, even though the words aren't a complete sentence.)*

On Stage—pages 13–14

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. Why are the lines of this poem arranged differently from the other poems you've read so far? *(Answers may vary—to simulate the two musical staves and the two hands used when playing the piano)*

A Photo Collage for *Out of the Dust*

Directions: In each of the mat holes, illustrate one or a group of the important people and places in the book. Include identification sentences in the manner of a photo collage.

