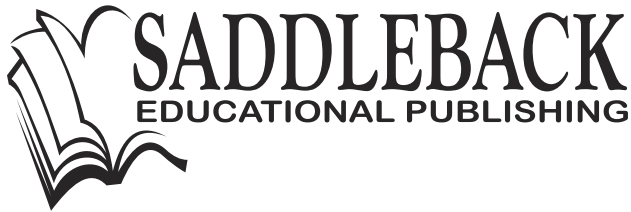


Focus **ON READING**

*Walk Two
Moons*

MARSHALL K. HALL

This is a sample not intended for classroom use.



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Introduction/Classroom Management

WELCOME TO *FOCUS ON READING*

Focus on Reading literature study guides are designed to help all students comprehend and analyze their reading. Many teachers have grappled with the question of how to make quality literature accessible to all students. Students who are already avid readers of quality literature are motivated to read and are familiar with prereading and reading strategies. However, struggling readers frequently lack basic reading skills and are not equipped with the prior knowledge and reading strategies to thoroughly engage in the classroom literature experience.

Focus on Reading is designed to make teachers' and students' lives easier! How? By providing materials that allow all students to take part in reading quality literature. Each *Focus on Reading* study guide contains activities that focus on vocabulary and comprehension skills that students need to get the most from their reading. In addition, each section within the guide contains a before-reading **Focus Your Reading** page containing tools to ensure success: **Vocabulary Words to Know**, **Things to Know**, and **Questions to Think About**. These study aids will help students who may not have the prior knowledge they need to truly comprehend the reading.

USING *FOCUS ON READING*

Focus on Reading is designed to make it easy for you to meet the individual needs of students who require additional reading skills support. Each *Focus on Reading* study guide contains teacher and student support materials, reproducible student activity sheets, an end-of-book test, and an answer key.

- **Focus on the Book**, a convenient reference section for the teacher, provides a brief overview of the entire book including a synopsis, information about the setting, author data, and historical background.
- **Focus Your Knowledge**, a reference page for students, is a whole-book, prereading activity designed to activate prior knowledge and immerse students in the topic.

The study guide divides the novel into 6 manageable sections to make it easy to plan classroom time. Five activities are devoted to each section of the novel.

Before Reading

- **Focus Your Reading** consists of 3 prereading sections:

Vocabulary Words to Know lists and defines 10 vocabulary words students will encounter in their reading. Students will not have to interrupt their reading to look up, ask for, or spend a lot of time figuring out the meaning of unfamiliar words. These words are later studied in-depth within the lesson.

Things to Know identifies terms or concepts that are integral to the reading but that may not be familiar to today's students. This section is intended to "level the playing field" for those students who may not have much prior knowledge about the time period, culture, or theme of the book. It also gets students involved with the book, increasing interest before they begin reading.

Questions to Think About helps students focus on the main ideas and important details they should be looking for as they read. This activity helps give students a *purpose* for reading. The goal of these guiding questions is to build knowledge, confidence, and comfort with the topics in the reading.

During Reading

- **Build Your Vocabulary** presents the 10 unit focus words in the exact context of the book. Students are then asked to write their own definitions and sentences for the words.
- **Check Your Understanding: Multiple Choice** offers 10 multiple-choice, literal comprehension questions for each section.

Check Your Understanding: Short Answer contains 10 short-answer questions based on the reading.

After Reading

- **Deepen Your Understanding** is a writing activity that extends appreciation and analysis of the book. This activity focuses on critical-thinking skills and literary analysis.
- **End-of-Book Test** contains 20 multiple-choice items covering the book. These items ask questions that require students to synthesize the information in the book and make inferences in their answers.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Focus on Reading is very flexible. It can be used by the whole class, by small groups, or by individuals. Each study guide divides the novel into 6 manageable units of study.

This literature comprehension program is simple to use. Just photocopy the lessons and distribute them at the appropriate time as students read the novel.

You may want to reproduce and discuss the **Focus Your Knowledge** page before distributing the paperbacks. This page develops and activates prior knowledge to ensure that students have a grounding in the book before beginning reading. After reading this whole-book prereading page, students are ready to dive into the book.

The **Focus Your Reading** prereading activities are the keystone of this program. They prepare students for what they are going to read, providing focus for the complex task of reading. These pages should be distributed before students actually begin reading the corresponding section of the novel. There are no questions to be answered on these pages; these are for reference and support during reading. Students may choose to take notes on these pages as they read. This will also give students a study tool for review before the **End-of-Book Test**.

The **Focus Your Reading** pages also provide an excellent bridge to home. Parents, mentors, tutors, or other involved adults can review vocabulary words with students, offer their own insights about the historical and cultural background outlined, and become familiar with the ideas students will be reading about. This can help families talk to students in a meaningful way about their reading, and it gives adults something concrete to ask about to be sure that students are reading and understanding.

The **Build Your Vocabulary** and **Check Your Understanding: Multiple Choice** and **Short Answer** activities should be distributed when students begin reading the corresponding section of the novel. These literature guide pages are intended to help students comprehend and retain what they read; they should be available for students to refer to at any time during the reading.

Deepen Your Understanding is an optional extension activity that goes beyond literal questions about the

book, asking students for their own ideas and opinions—and the reasons behind them. These postreading activities generally focus on literary analysis.

As reflected in its title, the **End-of-Book Test** is a postreading comprehension test to be completed after the entire novel has been read.

For your convenience, a clear **Answer Key** simplifies the scoring process.

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Focus on the Book

Synopsis

The author begins the story by telling of Salamanca Tree Hiddle (Sal) and her father's move to Euclid, Ohio, from Bybanks, Kentucky. The reader learns that before the move, Sal's mother had taken a bus trip to Idaho and never returned. The present-day story begins when Sal takes a trip to Idaho from Euclid with her grandparents to see her mother. Sal thinks that if she and her grandparents make it to Lewiston, Idaho, by her mother's birthday, she will be able to bring her home.

During the car trip, Sal begins telling her grandparents about her new life in Euclid, Ohio, especially about her new friend, Phoebe Winterbottom. Throughout the book, Sal spends part of the time telling about her experiences during her trip with her grandparents and the other part of the time flashing back to her experiences with Phoebe and to her time with her mother before she left.

Sal and her father moved to Euclid because her father had a new woman friend, Margaret Cadaver, and their farm in Bybanks reminded him too much of Sal's mother. Sal resents Margaret; she feels her father is moving on from her mother too quickly. When Sal started school in Euclid, she met Phoebe Winterbottom in class, who happened to be Margaret Cadaver's neighbor. Sal began to learn about Phoebe's wild imagination and her proper family. Phoebe became convinced that Mrs. Cadaver killed her husband. When a strange boy showed up at Phoebe's door, she was sure that he was a lunatic and had been leaving the strange messages in envelopes that had been appearing on her front steps. Later Phoebe's mother disappeared, and even though she had left notes for her family and prepared frozen meals, Phoebe believed the lunatic had kidnapped her. In helping Phoebe deal with her mother's disappearance, Sal learned more about how she felt about the loss of her own mother.

Meanwhile, Sal and her grandparents make the trek from Ohio to Idaho, stopping at major landmarks on the way. Sal is very anxious to get to her mother in Idaho and has little patience for stopping the places her grandparents want to see. She continues the story of Phoebe to pass the time.

As Sal nears the end of the story of Phoebe, many mysteries are solved. After a great deal of investigating, Phoebe and Sal finally found Phoebe's mother at

the university with the potential lunatic. Eventually Phoebe's mother returned home and told the family that the lunatic, Mike, is her son. Phoebe also learned that Mrs. Partridge, Mrs. Cadaver's blind mother, had been leaving the mysterious messages on Phoebe's front steps. Mrs. Cadaver did not kill her husband; he died in a car accident. Mrs. Partridge was also in the car with him, and that is how she lost her eyesight.

After seeing Old Faithful in Yellowstone National Park, Sal's grandmother becomes very ill, and Sal and Gramps have to take her to the hospital just before they get to Lewiston, Idaho. Sal realizes that they are going to be at the hospital a while and if she wants to do anything about seeing her mother, she will have to take care of it herself. Sal takes Gramps's car, and drives toward Lewiston. She finds the spot where a bus drove off a cliff. The reader learns that her mother was on that bus and died in the crash. The reader also finds out that Mrs. Cadaver was the only survivor of that bus accident. She was sitting right next to Sal's mother during the trip, and they became good friends. Sal then realizes why her father wanted to be so close to Mrs. Cadaver.

After seeing her mother's grave, Sal returns to her grandfather and learns that her grandmother has died. Sal and her grandfather return to Ohio. Then Sal, her father, and her grandfather go back to Bybanks, Kentucky, where they can be close to their memories of Sal's mother and grandmother.

About the Author

Sharon Creech was born July 29, 1945, and grew up in a suburb of Cleveland, Ohio, called South Euclid with her parents, sister, and three brothers. Her house was always full of other family members and friends who told many stories. Her favorite hobbies included listening to these stories, climbing trees, and riding her bike.

Each summer Creech's family took a car trip. They often visited Quincy, Kentucky, where her cousins lived on a farm. Creech is especially fond of her family's trip to Idaho when she was twelve. These experiences have made their way in to many of Creech's novels.

When Creech was young, she dreamed of being many things, including a painter, an ice skater, a singer, a teacher, and a reporter. Even though she spent a lot of her time reading and writing as a child, she never thought she would be an author.

(continued)

Focus on the Book (continued)

While she wrote mostly poetry when she was a child, she became quite interested in storytelling while attending Hiram College in Ohio. She took several literature and writing courses. After graduating from college, she attended graduate school at George Mason University in Virginia.

Creech became an English teacher after graduate school. In 1979, she moved to England with her husband, Lyle Rigg, where he was the headmaster of the American School. Creech taught in England and Switzerland. She began writing adult fiction, publishing two books in England. Her third book was for young adults, and she has been writing for this age group ever since. *Walk Two Moons* was her first book to be published in the United States, and it was awarded the Newbery Medal.

Historical Background

Although a Bybanks, Kentucky, really exists, the Bybanks in the story is fictional. Sharon Creech based the Bybanks in the story on Quincy, Kentucky, a place she often visited as a child. Her cousins lived on a large farm in Quincy with hills, trees, a swimming hole, a barn, and a hayloft, all of which appear in *Walk Two Moons*.

When Creech was young, she learned that she was part Native American. Her family would tell Native-American stories, which is where many of the Native-American stories in *Walk Two Moons* come from. Creech was proud of her Native-American heritage, and she wanted Sal to embrace her Native-American heritage, also.

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SAMPLE

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Focus Your Knowledge

- One of the recurring themes throughout the novel is how people deal with fear. Have you ever faced a fear? What was that experience like?
- Nature plays an important role in this novel. How do you feel about the natural world? Do you feel connected to it? Do you find nature soothing, frightening, or inspiring? As you read, notice how Sal responds to nature.
- Several journeys—both physical and emotional—are undertaken in the novel. What other journeys have you read about? What important journeys have you taken yourself?
- Mysterious notes, journals, and postcards are all featured in the novel. Sometimes people's words or meanings are misinterpreted by the characters. When have your words been misunderstood? What happened then?

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Focus Your Reading

Vocabulary Words to Know

Study the following words and definitions. You will meet these words in your reading. Be sure to jot down in your word journal any other unknown words from the reading.

caboodle—a collection; a lot

roosting—settling down

ornery—having an irritable disposition

yarn—a narrative of adventures; a tall tale

remarkable—worthy of being noticed;
likely to be noticed

scads—a large number or quantity

gallantly—bravely

diabolic—of, relating to, or characteristic of
the devil

hankering—a strong desire

pandemonium—a wild uproar

Things to Know

Here is some background information about this section of the book.

The **Ohio River** is a nine-hundred-eighty-mile river that begins in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It flows through western Pennsylvania and along the borders of West Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois. It then flows into the Mississippi River.

A **whang-doodle** is an imaginary creature.

Muesli is a breakfast cereal of Swiss origin consisting of rolled oats, nuts, and fruit.

The **Hoosier state** is the nickname for Indiana.

Lake Michigan is one of the five Great Lakes located between Michigan and Wisconsin.

The **Rocky Mountains** are the largest mountain chain in North America. They extend from Alaska to New Mexico.

The **Badlands** is a national park located in southwestern South Dakota. It consists of formations of eroded rock, which are unique in shape.

The **Black Hills** are mountains located in South Dakota and Wyoming.

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Focus Your Reading

Questions to Think About

The following questions will help you understand the meaning of what you read. You do not have to write out the answers to these questions. Instead, look at them before you begin reading, and think about them while you are reading.

1. How did Sal feel about moving from Bybanks, Kentucky, to Euclid, Ohio?

2. Where is Sal's mother?

3. Why does Sal travel with her grandparents across the country?

4. Who is Phoebe Winterbottom, and how does she compare to Sal?

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5. What kind of relationship did Sal's parents have?

Build Your Vocabulary

Read the sentences below. On the line, write your definition of the word in bold type. Then, on another sheet of paper, use that word in a new sentence of your own.

1. “I have lived most of my thirteen years in Bybanks, Kentucky, which is not much more than a **caboodle** of houses **roosting** in a green spot alongside the Ohio River.”

caboodle: _____

roosting: _____

2. “Sometimes I am as **ornery** and stubborn as an old donkey.”

ornery: _____

3. “Gramps said, ‘How about a story? Spin us a **yarn**.’”

yarn: _____

4. “‘She’s really **remarkable**,’ I said.”

remarkable: _____

5. “‘Gloria lived in the wildest, most pepped-up world—a scary one, but oh!—**scads** more exciting than my own.’”

scads: _____

6. “‘Excuse me,’ Gramps said **gallantly**. ‘I believe I see a damsel in some distress,’ and off he marched to her rescue.”

gallantly: _____

7. “‘What was the **diabolic** thing that happened to Mr. Cadaver?’ Gramps asked.”

diabolic: _____

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8. “Gramps said, ‘Did Gloria really have a **hankering** for me?’”

hankering: _____

9. “It was complete **pandemonium** at the Finneys.”

pandemonium: _____

Check Your Understanding

Multiple Choice

Circle the letter of the best answer to each question.

1. How far is Euclid, Ohio, from Bybanks, Kentucky?
 - a. 200 miles
 - b. 300 miles
 - c. 400 miles
2. Where does Sal say she forgot something at the house back in Bybanks?
 - a. under the floorboards in her closet
 - b. behind some plaster in the wall
 - c. under a tree in the backyard
3. How far away is Lewiston, Idaho, from Euclid?
 - a. 2,000 miles
 - b. 2,500 miles
 - c. 3,000 miles
4. What is Sal terrified of?
 - a. spiders and insects
 - b. planes
 - c. cars and buses
5. What was Sal's mother's favorite tree?
 - a. willow tree
 - b. sugar maple tree
 - c. chestnut tree
6. What does Sal's father do for work in Euclid?
 - a. He works at an accounting firm.
 - b. He works on a farm.
 - c. He sells farm machinery.
7. Why did Sal think it was remarkable that Mrs. Partridge guessed Phoebe's age?
 - a. Mrs. Partridge is hearing impaired.
 - b. Mrs. Partridge is blind.
 - c. Mrs. Partridge had never met Phoebe before.
8. What is interesting about Margaret's last name?
 - a. It means *dead body*.
 - b. It is not the same as her mother's.
 - c. She prefers not to use her last name.
9. What does Margaret do for work?
 - a. She is a science teacher.
 - b. She stays home and takes care of her mother.
 - c. She is a nurse.
10. What did Sal think Ben's hair smelled like?
 - a. Phoebe's mom's blackberry pie
 - b. the trees back in Bybanks
 - c. grapefruit

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Check Your Understanding

Short Answer

Write a short answer for each question.

1. To what does Sal compare the story of Phoebe, and why?
2. What are some of the reasons that Sal goes on the trip across the country with her grandparents?
3. When does Sal want to get to her mother, and why?
4. Sal prays quite frequently. What does she pray to, and what does she pray for?
5. How is Sal different in appearance from the girls in her class?
6. How did Sal's mother teach her to pick blackberries?
7. What does Sal mean when she says she was like a mirror?
8. What is similar about the trip Sal's mother took to Idaho and the trip Sal and her grandparents are taking there?
9. How did Phoebe react to the stranger who came to the door?
10. How did Phoebe's mother react when she learned about the stranger looking for her?

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Deepen Your Understanding

Someone left a strange message on Phoebe's front steps that said, "Don't judge a man until you've walked two moons in his moccasins." What do you think this message meant? Do you think Sal walks in other people's moccasins? Are there times when you think she should try this? Explain.

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