The background of the cover is a vibrant, dreamlike illustration. A large, dark tree trunk stands in the center, with its branches spreading out. Two children are perched on a thick branch, looking up. Another child stands at the base of the tree, looking up. The sky is a mix of blue and yellow, with many small birds flying. The overall atmosphere is magical and nostalgic.

# The World of SHARON CREECH

## A TEACHING GUIDE

### INCLUDES:

- Discussion prompts and activities for the Newbery Medal–winning *Walk Two Moons*, the Newbery Honor–winning *The Wanderer*, and many more novels by Sharon Creech
- A guide to teaching poetry in the classroom using *Love That Dog* and *Hate That Cat*



Many readers ask me where I get my ideas. This is probably the hardest question to answer, because a book contains hundreds, maybe thousands, of ideas, squirming and changing and evolving as I write. I don't know the story before I begin. I only have a vague image in my mind of a character and a place. Then I write in order to find out what the story is. I want to know why the character is in this place and what is happening now, what happened before, and what will happen later.

Sometimes people and events in my "real life" spark ideas for stories. In *Absolutely Normal Chaos*, for example, Mary Lou's family is very much like my own family. Like Mary Lou, I have a sister and three brothers (my brothers' names are the same as those of the brothers in the book), and when I was Mary Lou's age, my cousin came to live with us; but none of the things that happen to Mary Lou's cousin happened to my own cousin. In *Walk Two Moons*, the trip that Salamanca takes with Gram and Gramps follows the same route that I took with my family when I was Sal's age; but we weren't searching for my mother (she was in the car with us), and we didn't face the danger and difficulties that Salamanca does.

The fictional town of Bybanks appears in many of my stories. Bybanks is based on the real town of Quincy, Kentucky, where my cousins live on a farm and where I spent many wild days as a child, running through the hills. Other real-life sparks include my father, Arvel, who was the inspiration for Uncle Arvie in *Pleasing the Ghost*. The two years that I lived in Switzerland sparked some of the ideas in *Bloomability*. A trip that my daughter took, sailing across the Atlantic when she graduated from college, inspired *The Wanderer*.

I am also often asked if I am going to write sequels. Some of my books are already related to each other, though not exactly sequels. You will find familiar characters and places popping up all over. I suspect that this will continue to happen in future books, because each book I finish seems to leave threads with me that I want to pick up again when I start a new story.

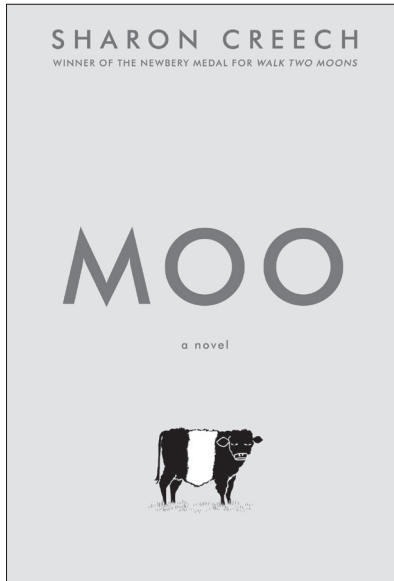
I love to hear about my readers' families and interests, and many readers ask about my family and my interests. I was born in Cleveland, Ohio; later lived in Washington, DC; and later still spent twenty years in England and Switzerland. My two children (a son and a daughter) are now grown and living in the States, and my husband and I have also returned to the US. We live in Maine. We have no pets because we travel so much. Some things I enjoy doing are reading, kayaking, swimming, and cross-country skiing. When I was young, my two favorite things to do were to climb trees and ride my bike.

I hope you take many "walks" with many characters and that you will enjoy the worlds they take you to.

Huzza, Huzza.

*Sharon Creech*

# Moo



## Setting the Scene

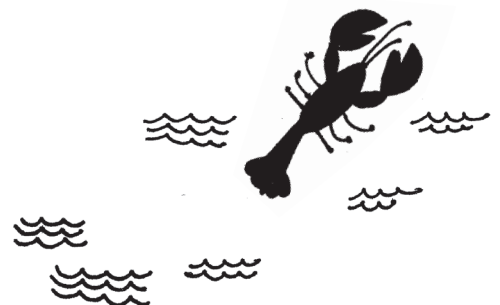
When Reena, her little brother, Luke, and their parents first move to Maine, Reena doesn't know what to expect. She's ready for beaches, blueberries, and all the lobster she can eat. Instead, her parents "volunteer" Reena and Luke to work for an eccentric neighbor named Mrs. Falala, who has a pig named Paulie, a cat named China, a snake named Edna—and that stubborn cow, Zora. What begins as farm chores turns to fun as Reena and Luke learn that even the most stubborn and short-tempered of beings can become true friends. This heartwarming story, told in a blend of poetry and prose, reveals the bonds that emerge when we let others into our lives.

## Before Reading

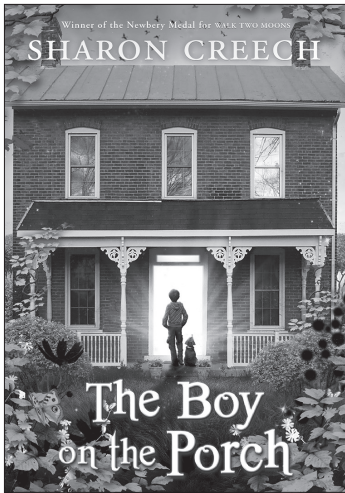
Many county fairs hold food and livestock competitions where people in the community can exhibit their talents and those of their animals. With a partner, ask students to investigate the location of their county and state fairs and to determine the categories of their fair's competitions, the available entertainment, and the types of exhibits. Then ask each partner to create a flyer for the next fair to submit to the fair planners.

## Discussion Questions

1. How do Reena's friends react to the news that she is moving to Maine? What is Reena's response to her friends?
2. How does Luke's drawing help him communicate? How do his drawings express his emotions?
3. Why does the author use the spacing and shape of the letters in a word? Find an example to share with the class.
4. What character traits does Mrs. Falala exhibit that make her seem mean? How does Mrs. Falala's past continue to affect her future?
5. Why do Reena and Luke's parents volunteer them to help Mrs. Falala? What are Reena's and Luke's reactions to their parents' idea?
6. How does Reena react to Zora when she begins to work with her? How and why does her relationship with Zora change?
7. Zora is a Beltie cow. What is unique about Beltie cows and special about Zora's bloodlines?
8. What is Luke's reaction when he learns that the meat he eats comes from animals like Zora and Paulie? How does Mrs. Falala reassure him?
9. What role does Zep play in helping Reena understand Zora? How does Zep's cow, Yolanda, help Zora?
10. How does Reena's experience at the fair help build her confidence? How do her parents react to all that she has accomplished?
11. Why is it ironic that Mrs. Falala is found in her "remembering room"? What is Luke's reaction to Mrs. Falala's drawings?
12. What does Reena suggest to Mr. Colley that helps her family, Mr. Colley, and Mrs. Falala's animals?



# THE BOY ON THE PORCH



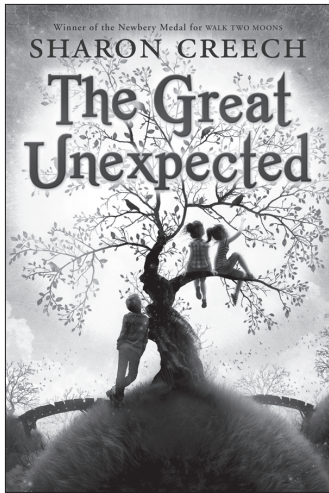
## Setting the Scene

In the spare, lyrical style of a folktale, *The Boy on the Porch* tells the story of John and Marta, a young farming couple, who awake to find a boy asleep on their porch. A note in the boy's pocket says that the mysterious note writer will return for the child, Jacob. Jacob, the couple discovers, doesn't speak but instead taps out rhythms that show his thoughts and feelings. The couple grows to love him, but what will they do when the note writer returns, as promised? *The Boy on the Porch* is an inspiring story of love, generosity, and hope.

## Discussion Questions

1. What genre would you say this story is and why? Compare and contrast it to stories in the same genre. Compare and contrast it to stories in a different genre but with similar themes or topics.
2. Who are this story's point-of-view characters, and what point of view is used to tell the story? How can you tell? Use examples. Do the point-of-view characters always interpret what's happening in the story the way you do? What are the similarities and differences? Why are there sometimes differences between your interpretation of events and the point-of-view characters' interpretations?
3. What do you know and infer about Jacob's parents from the action of leaving him on the porch and from the note Marta and John find? When you finally learned the truth about his parents, were you surprised? Why or why not?
4. On page 21, Marta says: "John, we should stop calling him 'boy.' It isn't right. It makes him sound—I don't know—unimportant." What does she mean by this? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
5. Is Jacob's music a language or is it simply sounds he makes to express himself? Explain your answer. Do you think you would have an easy time communicating with him? Why or why not?
6. On page 52, John asks Marta where Jacob comes up with the ideas for his paintings. Marta says, "I don't know. I think he's a genius." What does she mean by this? Do you agree or disagree? Why? What makes someone a genius and why?
7. Sharon Creech uses some great words to help tell her story, like "foundlings" and "glomming" on page 34, and "dilapidated," "abandoned," and "derelict" on page 92. What do these mean? How do they contribute to the tone of the story?
8. Using examples from the story, how would you characterize Marta? How would you characterize John? How do they relate to each other? How do they change over the course of the story? How do their actions affect Jacob and the overall story line?
9. What would you say are the story's central themes? How do these themes develop over the course of the story? Provide examples to support your answers. How does the story compare and contrast with other stories, in this genre or others, that share the same themes?
10. What do the shoes Jacob finds represent to him? What do they and the rest of the shoes represent to Marta and John? How do all the shoes contribute to the development of the characters and the overall story line?
11. John and Marta eventually keep looking for the boy's parents. Are they right or wrong to do so? Why? Would you have done the same thing if you were one of them? Why or why not?
12. What does the ending suggest about Jacob's life since John and Marta last saw him? Explain your answer. Why do you think Sharon Creech ends the story where she does? Before you read the end, what did you think would happen and why?

# THE GREAT UNEXPECTED



## Setting the Scene

In the little town of Blackbird Tree, a series of curious events unfolds when Naomi and Lizzie, two spirited orphan girls, meet the strangely charming new boy, Finn. Three locked trunks, the mysterious Dangle Doodle man, a pair of rooks, a crooked bridge, and that boy change their lives forever. As the story alternates between their small town and across-the-ocean Ireland, two worlds are woven together, revealing that hearts can be mended and that there is indeed a gossamer thread that connects us all.

## Before Reading

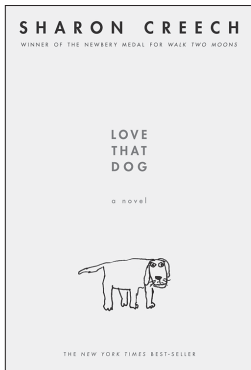
Ask your students to read the Overheard Conversations at the beginning of the book. Discuss both exchanges. What do these conversations mean? What might they have to do with the story? Do your students remember having similar conversations with their families when they were younger?

## Discussion Questions

1. In the prologue, Naomi recounts being told the story of the man pulling all he needs out of his donkey's ear. She worries that the man will pull out some unexpected horror. When Joe realizes this, he has her repeat that she is "not in the story" (p. 2). What does Joe mean by this? As the book progresses, does Naomi's tendency to place herself in the story continue? When and why is the story of the donkey's ear referred to later in the novel?
2. Finn is the name of several characters in *The Great Unexpected*. Name them and their roles in the story. What happens to Naomi's Finn? Who is he? How is he connected to the events in Ireland? How does he make Naomi feel?
3. Occasionally Lizzie says she needs "to go stand on the moon awhile" (p. 16). What does this mean? Why does she do this? What happens when Naomi tries to stand on the moon? How do their two different experiences with this practice illustrate the differences between the girls? In what other ways are Lizzie and Naomi different? In what ways are they the same?
4. Lizzie describes a book on their summer reading list, *The Great Unexpected*, as "way too long and too hard" (p. 45). Naomi thinks the book sounds like her life, "if you took the *great* out" (p. 45). Why do you think the author chose to reference the title of her novel this way? Do you agree with Naomi: is her life "The Unexpected"? Are the lives of all the characters in the book unexpected? Why or why not? What types of surprises happen in the novel?
5. Who is the target of Sybil's revenge? How does she orchestrate it? Who helps her? Why does she think it's necessary? She and Pilpenny often talk of having a murder (p. 140). What does this mean?
6. Near the end of the novel, Naomi thinks, "Did a delicate cobweb link us all, silky lines trailing through the air?" (p. 220). How are the characters in *The Great Unexpected* connected? Did any of these connections surprise you? Which ones? Were there any hints of these connections given in the story? If so, what were they?
7. Lizzie and Naomi play a game: "real or not real" (p. 205). What does this mean? When do the girls play it? Why do they have trouble telling the difference? Is it always easy to understand what is real and what isn't? Are there other instances in the book where it's hard to tell what is "real"?
8. It is both "reassuring and maddening" to Naomi that Lizzie does not tell lies (p. 89). Why does Naomi feel this way? How does Lizzie's honesty affect their friendship? How can something be reassuring and maddening at the same time?
9. Joe, Nula, and Naomi take "Sunday pauses" (p. 59), during which they take time to be happy with what they have. How is this different from the way Lizzie spends her Sundays? Compare and contrast the role religion plays in the two girls' lives. How does Lizzie's church and their work with the "unfortunate elderly" impact the story (p. 59)?
10. Dogs have many important roles in *The Great Unexpected*. Why is Naomi so scared of dogs? Why are there no dogs living in Blackbird Tree? What does the lack of dogs show about the people of the town? What kind of relationship does Sybil have with her dogs? Why must Naomi finally get over her fear?

# LOVE THAT DOG

## Setting the Scene



### *Love That Dog*

“I don’t want to,” begins Jack, the narrator of *Love That Dog*. “Can’t do it. / Brain’s empty.” Jack’s story is told as a narrative poem: it chronicles how a boy learns to write but also poignantly illustrates his love for his dog, his growing admiration for words and images, and his relationship with Miss Stretchberry, the teacher who helps him believe he might really have something to say. In a voice that’s sometimes irreverent and always accessible, Sharon Creech explores what makes a poem and what makes a poet, inspiring readers to believe that they can write something that “is really / a poem / really really / and a good poem, too.”



### *Hate That Cat*

Not even a stodgy uncle can put a damper on how Jack feels when he returns to Miss Stretchberry’s class! *Hate That Cat* continues Jack’s story; in this year’s journal, he learns poetic devices, exults in images, and makes clear how much he does not want a replacement for his dog, Sky. Jack also becomes aware of how others, including his mother, perceive poetry and sound, words and rhythms. He makes it his mission to “hear / all the sounds / in the world,” writing them down so that he can share those sounds with others, as well as his love for particular things and—perhaps surprisingly—one particular creature.

## Teaching Poetry: Tips for Making Poetry Accessible and Fun for Students

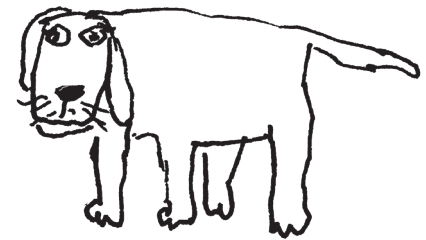
- **Show that it’s okay.** Discuss with your students Jack’s early reactions to poetry and emphasize that it’s all right not to “get” a poem the first time you read it. Ask students to track Jack’s reactions to William Carlos Williams, which go from a total lack of understanding to imitation and homage. Tell students about a poem that you didn’t like at first but that eventually grew on you.
- **Teach useful annotations.** Show your students how physically marking a poem as they read can help them understand it. Helpful symbols to learn might include a question mark (for something that is confusing), an eye (for a striking image), or an ear (for something that sounds good). Encourage students to identify passages in which they can make a connection to themselves, other texts, or the world at large.
- **Feel the rhythm.** Jack learns to tap out the rhythm of a poem; your students will enjoy doing the same. Choose poems with a steady beat and read them aloud, emphasizing the stressed syllables. As an extension, encourage students to investigate the connections between poetry and music. Do their favorite musical artists use meter in their lyrics? What about rhyme or alliteration?
- **Read out loud.** Share a short poem with your students each morning. Vary the poems that you read to show students that poetry can get them to laugh, help them picture faraway places, remind them of their own lives, or just sound good “beat-beat-beating” in their ears.
- **Provide journal time.** Jack uses his journal to react to the poems he is reading and to experiment with his own writing. Provide students with a poetry journal and regularly scheduled writing time, starting with short increments and building up to longer periods. Use your responses to ask guiding questions and direct students to other poems that may inspire.



# & HATE THAT CAT

## Understanding Poetry: Terms and Concepts

- **Alliteration**—the repetition of a beginning sound. Examples from *Hate That Cat*: “creepy cats,” “delightful dog.”
- **Assonance**—the repetition of vowel sounds. Examples from *Hate That Cat*: “clasps the crag,” “sea beneath” (from “The Eagle” by Alfred, Lord Tennyson).
- **Consonance**—the repetition of similar sounds, especially consonant sounds, at the end of words. Example from *Love That Dog*: “shaggy straggly.”
- **Imagery**—words an author uses to help the reader visualize and imagine with the senses. Example from *Hate That Cat*: “pouncing with her cactus claws.”
- **Metaphor**—a comparison that suggests that one thing is the same as another; metaphors often use a being verb, like “is” or “was,” to equate the two things. Example from *Hate That Cat*: “The black kitten / is a poet / L E A P I N G / from / line / to / line.”
- **Onomatopoeia**—words that imitate sounds. Examples from *Hate That Cat*: “buzz buzz buzz,” “pop! pop!,” “inkle and trickle.”
- **Rhyme**—two or more words that end with the same sound. Example from *Love That Dog*: “bright” and “night.”
- **Rhythm**—a repeating pattern of sounds and syllables. When Jack uses his fingers to tap “HARD-soft HARD-soft / slow and then faster” in *Hate That Cat*, he is helping his mother feel the rhythm of “The Black Cat” by Christopher Myers.
- **Simile**—a comparison that says that one thing is like another; a simile contains the word “like” or “as.” Example from *Hate That Cat*: “The chair in my room / is like a pleasingly plump momma.”



## Discussion Questions

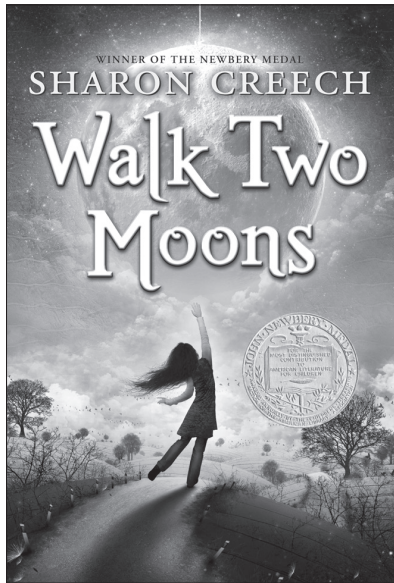
### *Love That Dog*

1. Jack’s beliefs about poetry change throughout the year. What do you believe about poems? What makes something a poem? How are poems different from stories and other kinds of writing?
2. When he’s first learning to write poetry, Jack borrows a lot of ideas from other poets’ works. Why? Does borrowing from others help him to develop his own style? Where do you draw the line between being inspired by someone else and copying his or her work?
3. Jack feels nervous about having his work displayed in the classroom. Why does he want his early poems to be anonymous? How does he expect his classmates to react? Do you ever have a hard time sharing your work? Why?
4. Look back at Jack’s poems about his dog, Sky. How do these poems build on each other? How does Jack reuse his own words, and where can you find lines that were inspired by other poets?
5. Are you at all similar to Jack? Discuss Jack’s growth as a reader and as a writer, using quotes from the book. Which one of his statements about poetry most echoes your own feelings?

### *Hate That Cat*

1. Miss Stretchberry tells Jack that alliteration and onomatopoeia can enrich a poem and that “they can also make a poem / sound purple” (p.11). What does she mean? Is a poem sounding purple a good thing? Why does Miss Stretchberry use the word *purple*?
2. Describe how Jack’s feelings about Skitter McKitter and the fat black cat evolve. Why does Jack care about the kitten? How do his feelings for Skitter differ from his feelings for Sky?
3. Jack’s mother doesn’t speak the way he does. How do we, as readers, find out that she’s deaf? What imagery does Jack use to describe her?
4. Jack’s poetry changes when he shares it with his mother. Discuss the things that he does to help her feel the sounds in his words. How does onomatopoeia become more important to Jack as the story progresses?
5. What does Jack appreciate about the poems that Miss Stretchberry introduces him to? What does each poem teach him? Which of the poems at the back of the book is your favorite, and why?

# WALK TWO MOONS



## Setting the Scene

Salamanca Tree Hiddle, Sal for short, takes a trip with her grandparents from Ohio to Idaho to visit her mother, who mysteriously never returned from her own journey there. By the end of the novel readers discover that Sal's mother in fact died while on her trip. As the road trip with her grandparents progresses, Sal struggles to understand her mother's death and to fit her memories into a life that keeps moving forward. An additional story unfolds as Sal entertains her grandparents with the tale of her friend Phoebe, whose mother unravels alongside Sal's own story, as the girls discover many truths about love, loss, and the complexity of human emotion.

## Before Reading

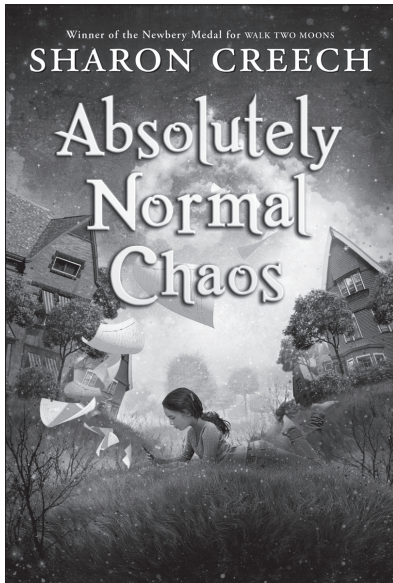
Draw students' attention to the saying in the front of the book: "DON'T JUDGE A MAN UNTIL YOU'VE WALKED TWO MOONS IN HIS MOCCASINS." Discuss what this saying might mean. What does it make them think the story will be about?

## Discussion Questions

1. Sal says that behind Phoebe's story is her own. What does she mean by this? What are some similarities between their stories? What are some differences? Why do you think each of the girls' mothers believed she had to leave?
2. Sal's father sometimes tells her she's "trying to catch fish in the air" (p. 115). Explain this figure of speech. How does it apply to Sal?
3. Describe the relationship between Sal's gram and gramps. Use examples from the book to illustrate your description.
4. When Sal's class is asked to draw their souls in fifteen seconds, Sal and Ben draw identical pictures. Why do you think each chooses the symbol of "a circle with a large maple leaf in the center" (p. 130)? What do Sal and Ben have in common that might cause them to see their souls in similar ways?
5. What is Sal's father's relationship with Margaret Cadaver? How is it different from what Sal thought it was?
6. Why do you think the author created ambiguity around Sal's missing mother? Why didn't she just make it clear that Sal's mother had died?
7. "In the course of a lifetime, there were some things that mattered" (p. 260). What does Sal think those things are? What do you think they are?
8. Throughout her trip to Idaho, Sal prays to trees because "this was easier than praying directly to God" (p. 7). Why does Sal trust trees to answer her prayers? What kind of relationship does she have with trees?
9. Sal imagines that worry would be the one bad thing in a box of good just as hope was the one good thing among the bad in Pandora's box. In what ways is worry the opposite of hope? How does each help and harm?
10. Mr. Birkway discusses a poem by e. e. cummings entitled "the little horse is newLY" (p. 123). Why does Sal relate to the poem? Why does her first kiss with Ben remind her of the poem?



# ABSOLUTELY NORMAL CHAOS



## Setting the Scene

Mary Lou Finney is less than excited about her assignment to keep a journal over the summer. But then cousin Carl Ray comes to stay with her family, and what starts out as the dull dog days of summer quickly turns into the wildest roller coaster ride of all time. How was Mary Lou supposed to know what would happen with Carl Ray and the ring? Or with her boy-crazy best friend, Beth Ann? Or with the permanently pink Alex Cheevey? Suddenly a boring school project becomes a record of the most incredible, unbelievable summer of Mary Lou's life.

## Before Reading

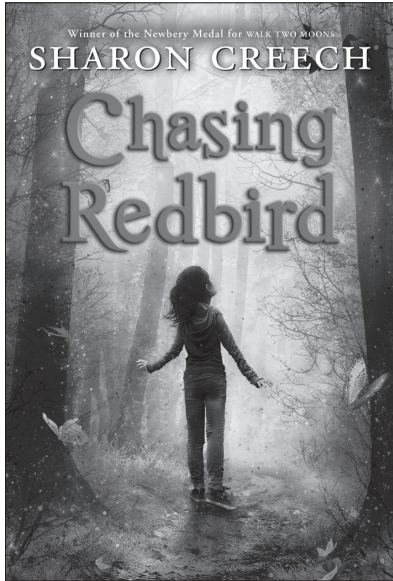
*Absolutely Normal Chaos* begins with a letter from Mary Lou to her teacher, Mr. Birkway, begging him not to read her summer journals. Ask the class if they have ever kept a journal. Would they like their teacher reading it? Why or why not?

## Discussion Questions

1. Describe Mary Lou's relationship with Alex Cheevey. What is their relationship like at the start of the novel? How does it change? Why? What do you imagine their relationship is like after the book ends?
2. When Mary Lou is lamenting the end of the school year, she writes, "Isn't that just typical? You wait and wait and wait for something, and then when it happens, you feel sad" (p. 8). Are there other examples of this in the novel? What are they?
3. Mary Lou refers to an unexpected sad event as a "snapper" (p. 161). Why does she call it that? What events in the book are "snappers"? Why?
4. Throughout her journals, Mary Lou takes notes about the *Odyssey*, a book she's reading for school. Are any of the characters in the *Odyssey* like people in Mary Lou's life? What does Carl Ray mean when he says the *Odyssey* is a metaphor? A metaphor for what?
5. Near the end of the summer Mary Lou writes, "I don't even recognize myself when I read back over these pages" (p. 228). In what ways has Mary Lou changed over the course of the novel? Is she more mature? Why? Provide examples from the book.
6. When Mary Lou describes the idea of the "wheel of fortune," she writes, "Already, I'm worrying that I'm too happy, and I'm either going to have to pay for this or it's all going to end real soon" (p. 114). What does Mary Lou mean by this? Are there instances in the book that verify this theory?
7. In what ways does Mary Lou grow as a writer over the course of the summer? What different types of writing elements does she use in her journals?
8. How does Mary Lou feel when she visits Carl Ray's family? How is his family like the Finneys? How are they different? Why doesn't Mary Lou tell her brother what it's like at Carl Ray's before he goes to visit?



# CHASING REDBIRD



## Setting the Scene

Zinnia Taylor lives with her large family on their farm in Bybanks, Kentucky, and is tired of always having to answer “Which one are you?” When she discovers an overgrown trail beginning on the farm, she claims it for her own and makes it her summer project to clear its entire twenty-mile length. In the process of uncovering the trail, Zinny also uncovers truths about herself and her family—including memories of her cousin Rose, who died when both she and Zinny were only four years old.

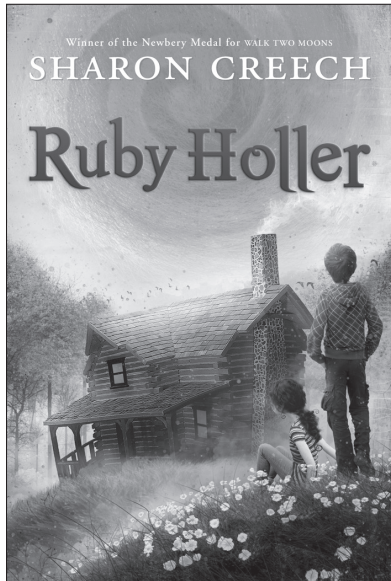
## Before Reading

Have students examine the illustration of the Bybanks-Chocton Trail in the front of the book. Elicit that the site names, such as Spook Hollow and Maiden’s Walk, probably refer to local legends. Ask students to recall legends from their own community that have given names to local streets, areas, or attractions.

## Discussion Questions

1. Throughout *Chasing Redbird* Zinny experiences conflicting and confusing feelings about the people who are special to her: Uncle Nate, Jake, even her parents. Give some examples of Zinny’s confusion about these characters and explain why she feels so conflicted.
2. How does the natural world of the woods play a part in Zinny’s story? Do the other members of Zinny’s family share her enthusiasm for nature?
3. Throughout the novel Zinny continually explains her life as a “bowl of spaghetti” (p.1). Discuss this metaphor and how it works within the story.
4. Why do you think Jake steals the dog, the ring, and the car? Is it all because he’s “sweet on” Zinny (p.100), or are there other reasons for his stealing? From the clues that Sharon Creech gives you about Jake’s life, what kind of relationship do you think Jake has with his parents? Does he share the kind of closeness Zinny has with her parents?
5. There are many supernatural events in *Chasing Redbird*. Does the ghost of Aunt Jessie actually wander through the woods? What kinds of emotions does Zinny feel every time she senses Aunt Jessie’s ghost?
6. Zinny often talks about missing her friend Sal, who is the main character in *Walk Two Moons*. For those who have read *Walk Two Moons*: How is Zinny’s mission to clear the trail similar to Sal’s race to retrace her mother’s steps? Compare how these two main characters deal with the losses in their lives.
7. Constantly being referred to as an anonymous “pumpkin,” a “tadpole,” or, worst of all, “the strangest and stingiest dirt-daubing doodlebug” (p. 52), Zinny strikes out to clear the trail. By the end of the novel, do you think Zinny has successfully set herself apart from her brothers and sisters by creating the trail? Has her identity changed in the eyes of her family, the public, Jake? Does Zinny think she has changed herself by the end of the story? How can you tell?
8. Both Zinny’s cousin Rose and Aunt Jessie fall to untimely deaths, and throughout the novel Zinny feels much guilt about the loss. Consider this quote from Zinny: “Why did people get old? Why did people get sick? Why couldn’t the hand of God fix whooping cough? Why couldn’t it snatch a woman back from a drawer? Why couldn’t it fix Uncle Nate? I couldn’t stand it. I wanted answers to my questions, and I wanted them *immediately*” (p. 178). How does this quote help explain Zinny’s feelings about her aunt’s and cousin’s deaths?
9. Sharon Creech spends a good deal of time describing the different portions of the Bybanks-Chocton Trail. Discuss the interesting names of these trails: Maiden’s Walk, Baby Toe Ridge, Shady Death Ridge, and Surrender Bridge. Consider what these names mean with reference to Zinny’s story.
10. Uncle Nate often calls Aunt Jessie his “Redbird.” What does the term “Redbird” symbolize in the novel?

# RUBY HOLLER



## Setting the Scene

“Trouble twins” Dallas and Florida are orphans who have given up believing there is such a thing as a loving home. Tiller and Sairy are an eccentric older couple who live in the beautiful, mysterious Ruby Holler, but they’re restless for one more big adventure. When they invite the twins to join them on their journeys, they first must all stay together in the Holler, and the magic of the place takes over. Two pairs of lives grow closer and are changed forever.

## Before Reading

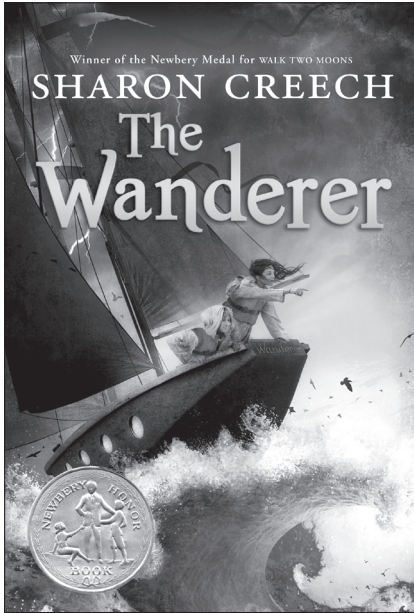
Ask your students to consider the title *Ruby Holler*. Are they familiar with what *holler* means in this case? Discuss what a holler is and where it might be found. Ask students to observe the artwork found on the front of the book. Do they think they would like to live in a holler? Why or why not?

## Discussion Questions

1. “One person’s trouble is another person’s joy” (p. 65). Consider this statement in relation to the Trepids’ nickname for Dallas and Florida: the trouble twins. In what ways do the twins cause both trouble and joy for their two sets of caregivers?
2. How did Dallas and Florida get their names? Do you think these names fit the twins? Why or why not?
3. Both Dallas and Florida and Tiller and Sairy have trouble imagining themselves without the other. What happens when they go on their separate adventures? Are they capable of surviving alone?
4. When Sairy asks Dallas to tell her about conditions in some of the homes the twins had lived in, “his mind automatically stopped the scene and played a different one” (p. 159). What types of coping mechanisms are used by Dallas throughout the novel? What types are used by Florida or Z?
5. Describe Ruby Holler. What does it look like? How is it different from the Boxtton Creek Home? How do the twins behave differently when they are in each place?
6. Tiller and Sairy teach the twins how to carve things out of wood. Why does this experience frustrate Dallas and Florida? Tiller tells Florida, “You pretend you don’t know because you don’t want what’s inside [the block of wood] to curl up tighter and refuse to come out” (p. 207). How does this sentiment relate to Sairy and Tiller’s relationship with the twins?
7. Tiller and Sairy have lots of interesting names for their recipes, such as mission-accomplished cake, getting-over-being-an-orphan cookies, and welcome-home bacon. Why do they have these names? What do you learn about Tiller and Sairy when they talk about these foods?
8. What do you think happens after the end of the story? Do you think Z really is the twins’ father?



# THE WANDERER



## Setting the Scene

Thirteen-year-old Sophie, her two cousins, and her three uncles sail across the Atlantic Ocean to England in a forty-five-foot sailboat to visit their grandfather in England. Sophie tries desperately to prove herself as a sailor, and she and her cousin Cody record the adventures and dangers they experience on their transatlantic journey.

## Before Reading

*The Wanderer* begins with this quotation:

“This tale is true, and mine. It tells  
How the sea took me, swept me back  
And forth . . .”

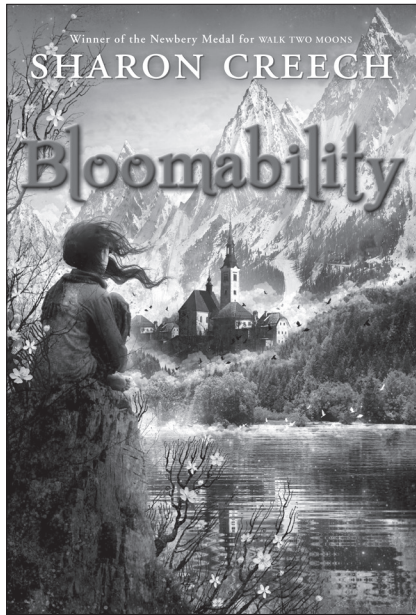
—anonymous, “The Seafarer”

Ask your students to consider this quotation. What does it tell them about the story to come? Have any of them been to sea? Does the quotation remind them of the ocean? In what ways?

## Discussion Questions

1. Chapter 1 begins with Sophie’s poetic musings: “The sea, the sea, the sea. It rolled and rolled and called to me. *Come in*, it said, *come in*.” We see variations on these lines echoed throughout the book (pp. 87, 99, 106, 113, 160, 176, and 190). How do the slight changes in this refrain reflect Sophie’s changing relationship with the sea?
2. In what ways is *The Wanderer* like a mystery novel? How does the author “drop clues” for the reader? Did you find it suspenseful?
3. The book first switches from Sophie’s to Cody’s point of view on page 27, the first entry in his “dog-log.” It’s our first hint that Sophie is an orphan and has only lived with her current parents for three years. What was your reaction when you found out? Did it change your view of Sophie’s reliability as a narrator?
4. Sophie’s father calls her Three-sided Sophie on page 3: “one side is dreamy and romantic; one is logical and down-to-earth; and the third side is hardheaded and impulsive.” Do you agree with his assessment? Can you find moments in the book that reflect these three sides of Sophie?
5. Sophie is the only girl on a crew of men and boys. How does Sophie feel about this? Do the boys and men treat her differently because she is a girl? If so, how?
6. Uncle Stew decides that each crew member has to teach the others something while on the trip. What does each of the young people’s choices—Cody’s juggling, Sophie’s storytelling, and Brian’s points of sail—show us about these three characters? What do the crew members’ attitudes toward one another’s choices tell us about them?
7. The characters in *The Wanderer* all deal with pain differently. What are some of Sophie’s challenges and survival mechanisms? Cody’s? Uncle Mo’s? Uncle Dock’s?
8. Sophie’s evolving relationship with Cody is one of the cornerstones of *The Wanderer*. How does Sophie’s impression of Cody change from the beginning when she wonders “if he has any brains in his head” (p. 48)? How does Cody’s impression of Sophie change?
9. Sophie has a recurring dream she calls “the one with The Wave” (p. 142). What role do dreams play in this novel?

# BLOOMABILITY



## Setting the Scene

Domenica Santolina Doone, also known as Dinnie, is used to traveling from state to state every time her father finds a new “opportunity.” But when she has an opportunity of her own—to go with her aunt and uncle to an American school in the Italian-speaking town of Lugano, Switzerland—she’s not very happy about it. Once in Lugano, Dinnie struggles with homesickness, fears being forgotten by her family, and questions who she really is. But with the help of her new international friends, Dinnie comes to love her beautiful surroundings and focus on the positive, learning to embrace this new opportunity.

## Before Reading

Have students examine the rendering of Domenica’s map of Lugano in the front of the book. What hints does the map offer about what will follow? Next, draw their attention to the quotation from Ralph Waldo Emerson’s “Nature” that precedes the Contents page: “I become a transparent eyeball.” Ask students to think about what this quote might mean.

## Discussion Questions

1. Why does Dinnie refer to her time with her parents as her “first life” and her time in Switzerland as her “second life”? If her “third life” begins at the end of the book, how do you think it would differ from the first two?
2. Dinnie observes that both Lila and Guthrie have very strong personalities, and worries about whether she is as interesting as they are. Toward the end of the book, she is surprised when Guthrie calls her interesting. Why does he think this? Do you think Dinnie is interesting? Why or why not?
3. What appeals to Dinnie about struggling? How does she use being “full of struggles” to help her deal with her new life in Switzerland (p. 107)?
4. To Dinnie, Switzerland is a strange and unfamiliar place that grows to feel comfortable. What similarities does she discover between Switzerland and her various homes in America? What differences? How do both the similarities and differences help Dinnie appreciate her experiences there?
5. After Guthrie is rescued from the avalanche, Dinnie has a dream that her bubble is gone (pp. 228–29). What does that signify to Dinnie? How do the preceding events lead up to this revelation?
6. Explain the contrasting perspectives of Lila and Guthrie, taking into consideration Guthrie’s story of the two prisoners. How does Dinnie’s personality complement theirs?
7. Discuss Uncle Max’s graduation speech about variety (p. 250). How do variety and acceptance at the international school affect Dinnie? How is it different from her previous experiences? Consider Stella’s advice on moving to a new place and fitting in, such as “expect the worst” and “dress plain the first day” (p. 78). How does it make Dinnie feel about herself?
8. Dinnie observes that “for all our differences in nationality, in language, in culture, and in personality, we were all more alike than not” (p. 256). Explain what she means by this. Why is it so important to Dinnie to have a sense of belonging?
9. How do Dinnie’s dreams illustrate her concerns and thoughts? Select some examples to discuss.
10. By the end of the book, Dinnie resolves that she no longer feels like a stranger, even while moving from place to place. Like a snail, she carries her home on her back. What does she discover about the notion of home? How do her experiences in Switzerland lead her to that conclusion (p. 261)?

# THE CASTLE CORONA



## Setting the Scene

When peasant children Pia and Enzo happen upon a pouch in the forest surrounding the Castle Corona, their lives become intricately entwined with the royal family's, and many characters' lives are transformed as a result. As a thief, two hermits, a wordsmith, and a village gossip propel this fairy tale to an unusual "happily ever after," the novel addresses some of life's great questions. In *The Castle Corona* the privileged are far from perfect, the worlds of the rich and the poor have more in common than meets the eye, and discovering true identity is at the bottom of it all.

## Before Reading

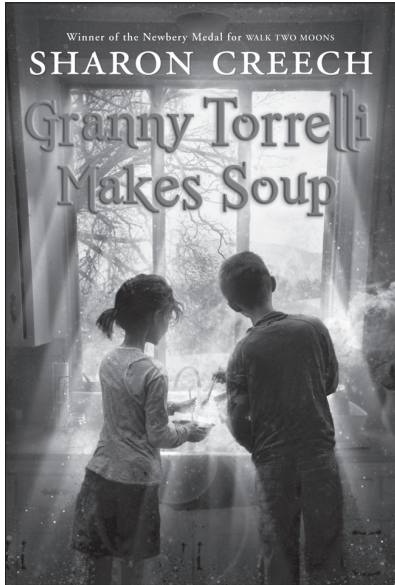
*The Castle Corona* is an "illuminated" novel. Explain to your students what *illuminated* means in this context. Show and discuss the types of illustrations in this book. What do they add to the feeling of the novel?

## Discussion Questions

1. In what ways is *The Castle Corona* a typical fairy tale? In what ways is it a different kind of fairy tale?
2. Pia is likened to an eagle because of her alertness and confidence (p. 27). Enzo is likened to an antelope for his swiftness (p. 66). Consider what you know about Prince Gianni, Prince Vito, and Princess Fabrizia. What animals would you assign to represent each of them and why?
3. What parts of the book did you find funny? What made those parts funny?
4. On page 20, Queen Gabriella contrasts insignificant things that people think about with "larger" things. In your life, what are some of your larger concerns versus what you see as insignificant?
5. Signora Ferrelli refers to wisdom as "the wind in your face." What does this mean? Do you agree?
6. What prompts Queen Gabriella to visit the village? Why did this visit turn out the way it did?
7. What do the palace garden and the hornbeam tunnel do for King Guido and Queen Gabriella, respectively? Do you have a place like these?
8. There are many instances of storytelling, daydreaming, gossiping, and conversing in this tale. What message or messages does this novel have about stories and storytelling?
9. In what ways does the saying "The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence" relate to this story?
10. Which characters have changed by the end of the story? How are they different and what caused their changes?



# GRANNY TORRELLI MAKES SOUP



## Setting the Scene

Rosie's lifelong best friend, Bailey, is blind. However, this has never mattered to Rosie—she has always found a way to get around any difficulties that have developed. But now that they're in different schools and have different friends, both Rosie and Bailey find themselves jealous of the new experiences they're unable to share together. They just can't seem to get along at all anymore, and Rosie doesn't know what to do to fix the problem. But Rosie's Granny Torrelli does! With a dash of humor and a pinch of wisdom, Granny Torrelli helps Rosie and Bailey discover the recipe for a lasting friendship.

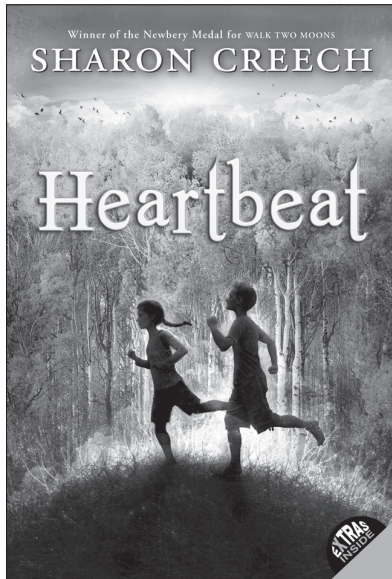
## Before Reading

Much of *Granny Torrelli Makes Soup* centers around Rosie's grandmother and the food that she and Rosie make together. Talk to your students about their extended family. Do they have any specific foods that they make together? What are they? Are they only made at certain times? Discuss how cooking together can make families closer.

## Discussion Questions

1. The preparation and consumption of food is an important element in the story. What role does food play in Rosie's life? Granny Torrelli's? The whole family's? Can you give examples?
2. Rosie describes herself as a tiger, a fox, and an ice queen to convey specific feelings she experiences. Which feeling is reflected by the tiger? The fox? The ice queen? Can you think of similar ways to characterize feelings that you face?
3. Granny doesn't just make soup; she makes sense. What are some of the secret recipes and "little miracles" that Granny performs (p. 112)?
4. How does Bailey's blindness affect his friendship with Rosie? What changes? What stays the same? How does their friendship differ from one between two people with sight?
5. Why do you think Granny Torrelli still harbors sadness and regret over the loss of her friendship with Pardo? What do you think she would do differently if given a second chance?
6. The experiences that Granny Torrelli dealt with as a young woman, such as her love for Pardo and her jealousy of Violetta, are very similar to those that Rosie and Bailey are facing now. Do you think Bailey and Rosie recognize these similarities? Do you think Granny Torrelli's reminiscing helps Rosie and Bailey better understand their own feelings?
7. Rosie spent a whole year learning Braille in secret to surprise Bailey. Why do you think she wanted it to be a surprise? Why do you think Bailey became so upset? And why was he okay with teaching Janine?
8. Granny Torrelli tells Rosie and Bailey she cut Violetta's hair because she was jealous that Pardo paid so much attention to the new girl. Do you think Granny Torrelli would have felt good if the haircut had made Violetta look ugly? Why are Rosie and Bailey so shocked that Granny Torrelli behaved like a "monster girl" in her youth (p. 106)?
9. Rosie learns important lessons while preparing the soup and pasta with Granny. What does she learn from sharing those meals with the others?
10. Rosie feels very protective of her friendship with Bailey. Why do you think she suggests to Bailey that they invite all the neighbors to the pasta party even though she usually likes to keep him to herself?

# HEARTBEAT



## Setting the Scene

Twelve-year-old Annie loves to run. When she's barefoot and running, she can hear her heart beating . . . *thump-THUMP, thump-THUMP*. It's a rhythm that's familiar when everything's shifting. Her mother is pregnant, her grandfather is aging, and her best friend, Max, is increasingly moody. Everything is changing, even the apple Annie's been assigned to draw a hundred times. But running and drawing help her keep up with all of the different rhythms around her and find out where her own rhythms fit within them. Sharon Creech masterfully weaves this story, told in free verse, about a young girl finding her identity and learning how it fits in with the many rhythms of life.

## Before Reading

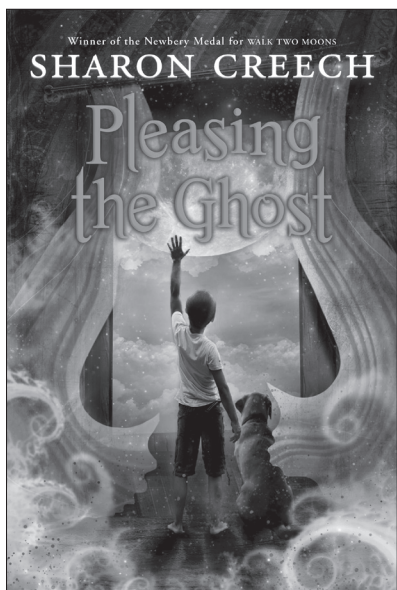
*Heartbeat* is a novel told in verse. Discuss this writing style with your class. Have they ever read a novel in verse before? If so, what did they think? What pros and cons can they think of for telling a story through poems?

## Discussion Questions

1. On page 3, Max says he is in training to escape. What do you think he wants to escape from? How will running help him achieve his goal?
2. In the poem "Grandpa" (p. 9), Annie's grandfather says he didn't want the trophy and that it was a silly thing. Why do you think he feels this way?
3. Annie writes a poem about things she fears and things she loves on pages 32 through 36. Discuss her list and how you would change it to make it even more universal.
4. Annie's grandfather is losing his memory and forgetting much of what happened to him in life. This concerns Annie, so she poses the question, "And if you forget / is it as if / it never happened?" (p. 43). How would you answer this question?
5. A best friend is often hard to come by, but Annie knows Max is her friend. On page 50 she says, ". . . and I like this about Max / that I do not have to explain." What makes this a likable characteristic?
6. Annie feels fortunate to have her family, but Max thinks Annie is spoiled because she has two parents and a grandpa (p. 12). Why do Annie's and Max's attitudes toward family differ?
7. Even though his mind is losing its sharpness, Annie's grandfather helps her with her problems and builds a relationship with Max. What benefits do Annie and Max receive from the relationship? How do these relationships benefit Annie's grandfather?
8. Annie not only learns a lot about herself, but she begins to understand the effect people and situations can have on a person: that every experience helps mold a person to be something. She asks Max, "Why are we here?" (p. 27). Do you think Annie discovers the answer to her question by the end of the book? Why or why not?
9. Max and the girls' track coach are convinced Annie does not want to join the team because she is afraid, which is not the real reason. Based on her thoughts as revealed on pages 70 and 83 and on Grandpa's secret revealed on page 172, how would you explain her decision?
10. In the poem "Infinitely Joey" on page 158, Annie ponders the promise and uncertainty of life. How would you respond to her questions and thoughts? How do your views relate to her views? What would you add or take away from this poem?



# PLEASING THE GHOST



## Setting the Scene

Ever since nine-year-old Dennis's dad died, a veritable parade of ghosts has been passing through his bedroom. When the ghost of his uncle Arvie blows into his room on a warm breeze, Dennis isn't surprised, but Uncle Arvie is the first ghost who wants something from Dennis. Dennis would love to help Uncle Arvie, but he can't quite understand what his uncle is asking for. What, for example, is "Fraggle pin Heartfoot a wig pasta?" Dennis has to find out, because this is one ghost who isn't going to leave until he gets what he came for.

## Before Reading

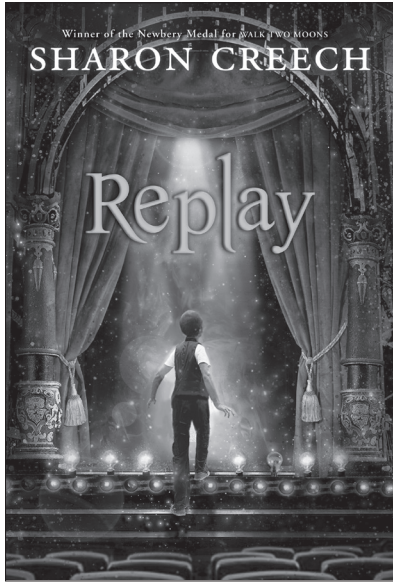
Ask students to consider the title *Pleasing the Ghost*. What can they determine about the book from the title? What type of book do they think this will be? A funny book? A scary book? Ask them to list things they know about ghosts. After the class has finished the book, ask them if their initial impressions were confirmed by the story.

## Discussion Questions

1. Uncle Arvie tells Dennis that only kids can see ghosts. Why do you think that's so? Are there other things that kids are better at believing in than adults?
2. Due to his stroke, Uncle Arvie tends to mix up his words. Did you have a hard time understanding what he was saying? What were some of the clues Dennis used to understand his uncle?
3. There are several instances of foreshadowing in *Pleasing the Ghost*. One of these occurs when Dennis first talks about wanting to see a particular ghost. What is he referring to?
4. Dennis's teacher tells him, "You and Billy have something in common" (p. 4). What do the two boys share? When are their similarities revealed?
5. When Uncle Arvie arrives, he asks Dennis for "three pleases" (p. 11). What are these three pleases? How does Dennis help Uncle Arvie?
6. When Dennis shows his aunt Julia the box with the letters and money, she calls it a miracle. Is it a miracle? Is Dennis's ability to communicate with Uncle Arvie a miracle?
7. Why is Billy such a bully? Do you think that Dennis and Billy will ever become friends?



# REPLAY



## Setting the Scene

Leo may have been given a bit part in the school play . . . but he dreams he is the biggest star on Broadway. His big, noisy family makes him feel like a sardine squashed in a tin, and they call him “fog boy” because he is always replaying things in his head. As an actor in the school play, he is eager for the curtain to open. But in the play that is his life, Leo is ready to discover what part will be his.

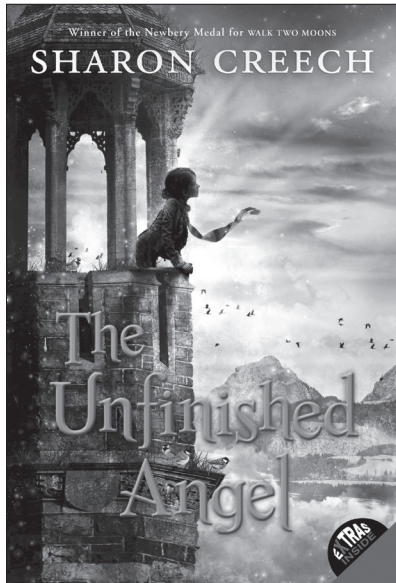
## Before Reading

Ask your students to open the book. Explain to them that the front matter has been designed to look like a play, complete with a cast of characters and a scene list. Discuss what a cast of characters might look like for your class or for their individual families. What types of scenes might make up an average day? After you finish the book, discuss why the author formatted the story in this way.

## Discussion Questions

1. Leo’s family calls him by two nicknames, “sardine” and “fog boy.” How did Leo get these nicknames? What do these nicknames tell you about Leo’s family?
2. When Mr. Beeber is trying to get the cast to understand their characters better, he asks them to describe what their characters might have been like when they were younger. He also suggests that the cast imagine people they knew when they were kids. What does Leo imagine? Who does Leo think about? What do you learn about Leo’s father and brothers from this exercise?
3. Leo imagines what it would be like if everyone was given a Life Script that foretold everything that was going to happen. What would be some pros and cons of possessing such knowledge? Would you like to have a Life Script?
4. “It was like everyone else was in a play and I was the audience. I couldn’t see myself, but maybe everybody feels this way” (p. 48). What emotion is Leo describing? Use examples from the text to describe why he feels that way.
5. What does Leo learn about his father from reading *The Autobiography of Giorgio, Age of Thirteen*? In what ways was his father like him as a child? What does he learn about the rest of his family? Do you wish you could read a journal your father kept when he was your age?
6. “Leo, you make gold from pebbles” (p. 83). What does Leo’s father mean by this? How does Leo’s ability to use his imagination impact his life?
7. Leo is worried that he will mess up, or “glurts” during the play. What happens during the play? How does the play impact the story?
8. Grandma Navy tells Leo, “As long as there are children, there is hope” (p. 145). What does she mean by this? How does Leo’s family feel about children?
9. While thinking about the play, Leo muses, “Maybe when you write a play you can only choose one very small part of one or two lives, but how do you choose which part, which lives?” (p. 148). How does this thought relate to the book as a whole? How does the author manage to focus on a short period of time for Leo while also discussing years in the lives of Leo’s family?

# THE UNFINISHED ANGEL



## Setting the Scene

Meet one extraordinary angel—an angel that floats and swishes high above a tiny Swiss village and lolls about the stone tower of the Casa Rosa trying to guess what its mission is. Luckily, things become clearer once bright, imperious Zola moves in. She's just a girl, but she is determined to change this village, where neighbors have been longtime enemies, children have been lost, and people have been living their lives sleepily. It's not easy, though, especially when the neighbors toss snakes into her yard and won't stop their dogs from arfing all afternoon long! *The Unfinished Angel* is a story for lovers of language and for those who, like Zola, realize that caring for people is the way to bring them together, for magic is found in the most ordinary acts of kindness.

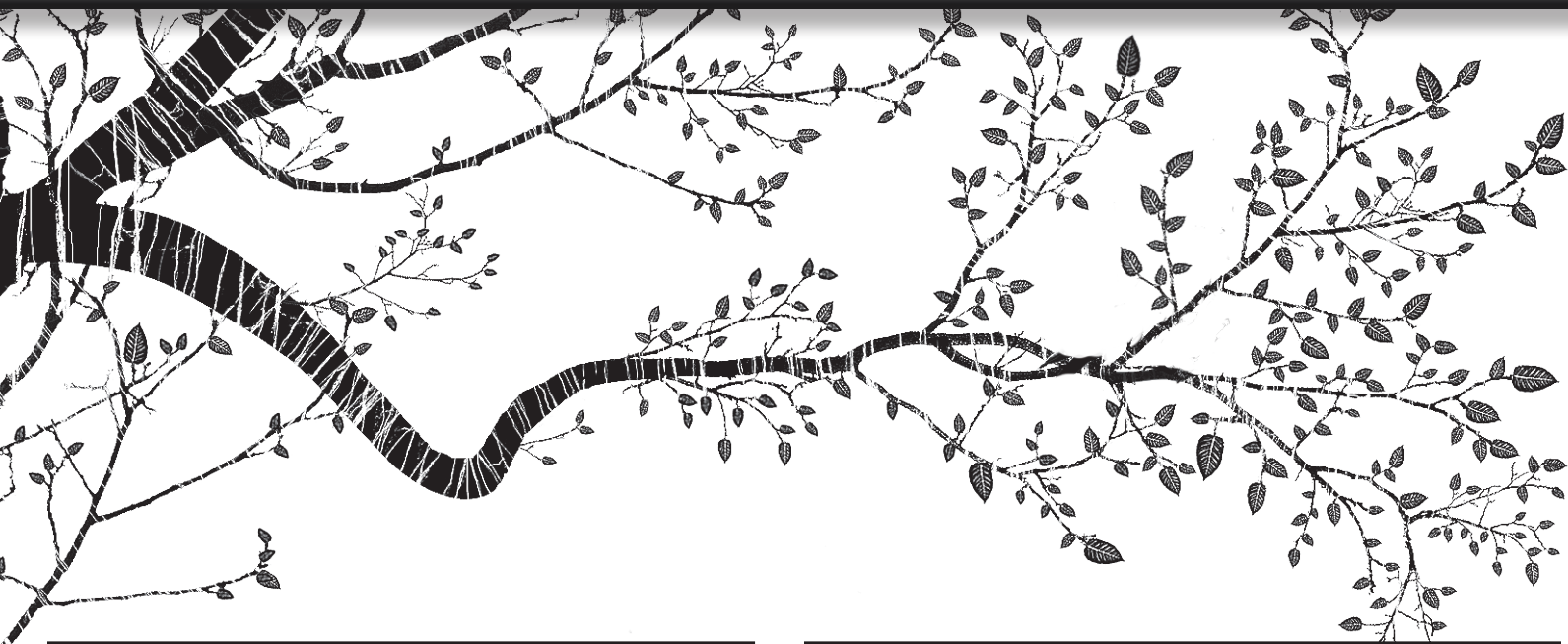
## Before Reading

Ask students to consider Pearl B. Benjamin's quote from the front of the book: "Once upon a time there was an angel, and the angel was me." What do they think the quote means? Why do they think the author would have chosen it to start the novel?

## Discussion Questions

1. The angel worries about missing "all the training" and not knowing what its purpose is on Earth (p. 2). Do you know that feeling? Do you think things would have worked out differently (or better) if the angel had a training manual?
2. Describe Mr. Pomodoro and his relationship with his daughter. As the angel says, it often seems as if Mr. Pomodoro doesn't know what to do with his "colorful child" and is "relieved" that Zola "is content to be on her own" (p. 44). Why do you think this is?
3. Why does Zola ask the angel to help the children before she asks the Divinos or the other villagers? Is it right or fair for her to ask these things of the angel before she asks them of others?
4. What do you think the angel means by saying that people "like to be in the knowing; they like to give permissions" (p. 73)?
5. Mr. Pomodoro is tired of many things in the world outside the village and says that he is "weary of *incivility*" (p. 9). What do you think he means? How is this village in the Ticino different from the rest of the world?
6. Why do you think the angel was sent to the Ticino instead of somewhere else?
7. The Divino family and the Pomodoro family are both split up for a large part of the story. Is it important for family members to live together? Is it important for them to live in the same place for a long time? Do you think that you will stay close to home when you get older? Explain.
8. The angel says that young families "are urgent to go to big cities or to other countries. *It will be perfecto there!* they think. *We will be rich!* and *We will have a big house! Big car! Big boat!*" (p. 109). What do you think people are looking for when they move away?
9. Zola has the "soft heart of a bunny," but the angel also says that she has a "smart heart" because it does not go soft for "every puny silly thing" (p. 115). When does Zola let her heart go soft? What makes your heart feel soft?
10. Do you like the way the angel thinks and speaks? Why or why not? Do you enjoy reading invented words, like "linky," "chip-chopped," or "fabbagrating"? What are your favorite invented words from the novel?

# ACTIVITIES ACROSS



## Language Arts

- In *The Wanderer*, Sophie and Cody write about each other from their own points of view. Have students choose a secondary character in one of the novels and write an internal and external description of the protagonist.
- In *Absolutely Normal Chaos*, Mary Lou reads about the life journey of Odysseus while she is on her own journey of self-discovery. Have students find a poem or story to help illustrate an event that happened in their lives. Then have them write about that event making reference to the poem or story.
- The entire script for the play *Rumpopo's Porch*, performed by Leo and his classmates in *Replay*, appears at the end of the book. Assign roles and have your students act out the play. What insights into the book do they gain from performing the play? Was it funny? Do your students think the characters in the book were well cast?
- Have your students select their favorite poem that appears at the end of *Love That Dog* or *Hate That Cat*. Ask them to use that poem's form to write one of their own. Jack gets his start with "The Red Wheelbarrow," so give William Carlos Williams's style a try first.

## Social Studies

- Many of the main characters in Sharon Creech's novels have a connection to Bybanks, Kentucky. Although Bybanks is a fictional place, have students locate Kentucky and the Ohio River on a map of the United States. Then ask them to keep notes on the geographic locations mentioned in the novels as they read and to locate these as well, such as West Virginia in *Absolutely Normal Chaos*. Students may want to plot out the route Sal traveled with her grandparents, color a map with the many places Dinnie and her family lived, or trace the route taken by Sophie to England.
- When Sal visits Mount Rushmore in *Walk Two Moons*, she thinks about the local Indians' perspective: "I've got nothing against the presidents, but you'd think the Sioux would be mighty sad to have those white faces carved into their sacred hill" (p. 179). Research the history of Mount Rushmore and ask students to present the points of view of the different groups who are connected to the land.
- In Global Awareness Month at Dinnie's school, the students learn about "disaster man-made and natural." Review the subjects Dinnie studies (*Bloomability*, pp. 147–48) and ask students to present a report on one of these subjects, discussing both the problem and possible solutions.

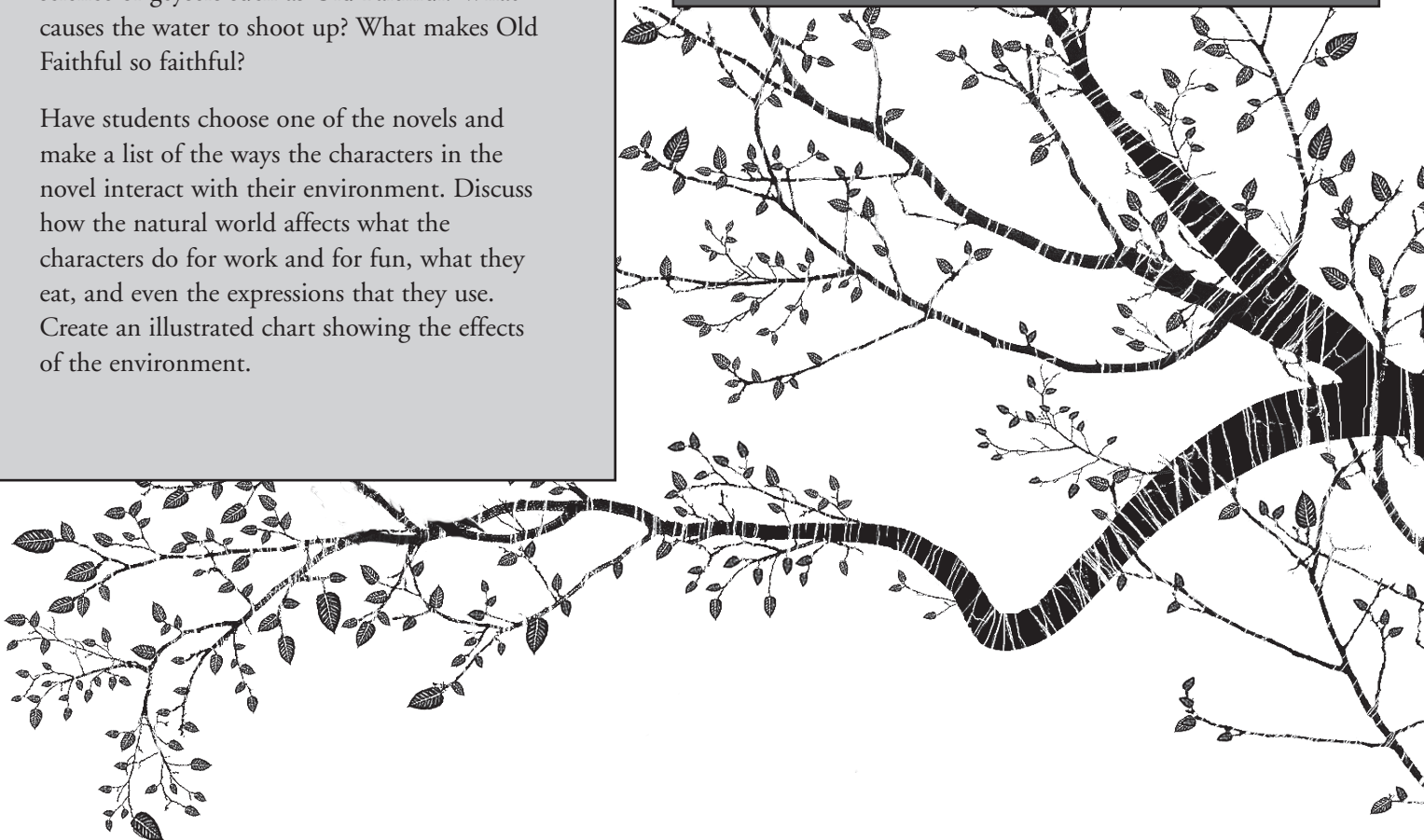
# THE CURRICULUM

## Science

- Sophie's ship, *The Wanderer*, is caught in a storm at sea and Uncle Dock says, "We're in a force-ten gale with winds at fifty knots an hour and waves like walls of water pounding us day and night, and still we have no sails up" (p. 201). So how did *The Wanderer* survive? Have students research storms at sea and the nautical terms Uncle Dock uses. They should write their report like a ship's log, explaining what happened and why.
- In *Walk Two Moons*, Sal's gram says that she's waited her entire life to see Old Faithful, the famous geyser in Yellowstone National Park. She says it looks like "an upside-down waterfall" (p. 224). Have students research the science of geysers such as Old Faithful. What causes the water to shoot up? What makes Old Faithful so faithful?
- Have students choose one of the novels and make a list of the ways the characters in the novel interact with their environment. Discuss how the natural world affects what the characters do for work and for fun, what they eat, and even the expressions that they use. Create an illustrated chart showing the effects of the environment.

## Math

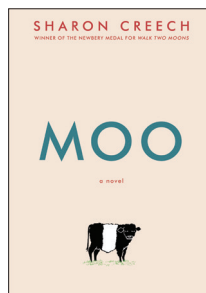
- Have students estimate the total mileage of the route Sal or Dinnie travels and have them trace the route on a map. Have students perform the same exercise for Sophie's journey, but have them find out the exact distance of a nautical mile vs. a statute mile. Present the following word problem: If *The Wanderer* was traveling at 20 knots, how many miles per hour is that? (1 knot = 1.15 mph)
- Zinny has a 20-mile trail to uncover. It takes her more than an hour to walk 4 miles of the trail once it's cleared. If she were not allowed to camp out overnight but could work up to eight hours a day on the trail, would she be able to finish clearing the trail? Ask students to explain their answers.



NOBODY TELLS A STORY LIKE NEWBERY MEDALIST

# SHARON CREECH

A Selected Bibliography



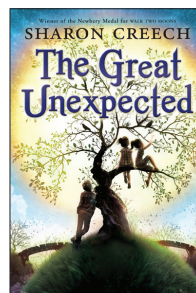
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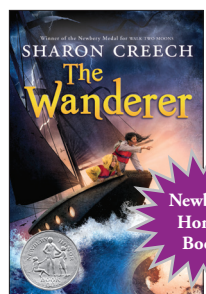
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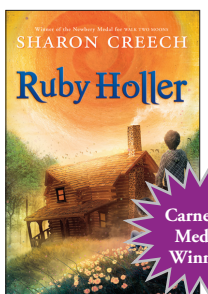
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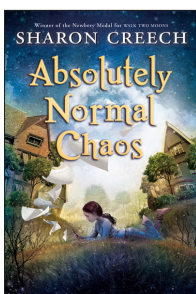
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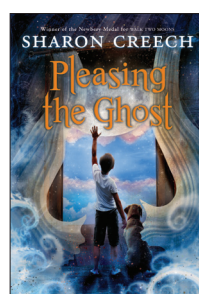
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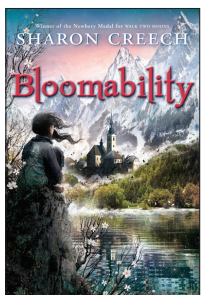
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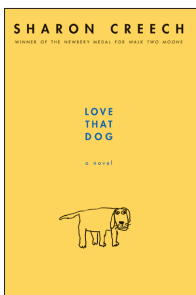
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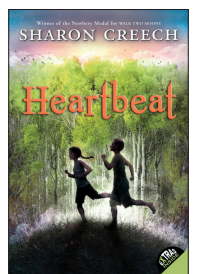
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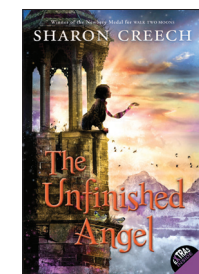
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