

The People Could Fly

Folk Tale by Virginia Hamilton

Common Core
Interactive Notebook



Activities



ELA Core Plans

Teacher-Written Standards-Based Lesson Plans

Thank you for purchasing this teaching unit. We hope you love it, and we look forward to your feedback!

Tammy and Shannon



DO NOT PHOTOCOPY
(Except for your own classroom)



DO NOT POST ONLINE.

By Shannon Temple and Tammy Lewis

ELA Core Plans

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Introduction to Interactive Notebooks

What are interactive notebooks?

An interactive notebook is simply a place to record information and process ideas. It is a notebook that becomes sort of like a personalized textbook. Students become very active when completing an interactive notebook, and this type of involvement is great for learning!

What kind of notebook do I need to use?

- Most teachers require their students to purchase the composition notebooks. These are sturdy, pages do not tear out easily, and they will hold up for years.
- However, with that being said, we use five subject notebooks in our classrooms. The main reason we do this is because we teach ELA, and as all ELA teachers know, it's like teaching ten subjects all in one! We like the five subject notebooks because we can divide it into sections. The lessons included in this book would be in our *Literature Section*.
- You may prefer to use the composition notebooks, and that is totally fine! Both types have their pros and cons. All of our pages are made to fit a composition notebook but will also fit perfectly in a spiral one.

What kind of glue do I need to use?

- You really need to use the Elmer's school glue. The glue sticks seem like a natural choice, but the truth is that they just do not bond the paper permanently. You will have to make sure your students know and follow the procedures for gluing, which needs to be – small dots, one inch apart. They do not need to use long strands of glue.

Note to the Teacher

You can find an audio version of the story at <http://www.prx.org/pieces/58171-the-people-could-fly>.

- The handouts and activities in this packet can be used in an interactive notebook or without one. The first activity (Making Predictions) is for prereading. The other activities can all be completed after reading the story.
- Answer keys and directions for foldables/flaps are included!

We hope you enjoy this teaching unit!

Making Predictions

Each of the words in the box is from the story. Place each word in the box in which you think it belongs. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, using as many of the words as you can, write a prediction statement explaining what you think will happen in the story.

whip	master	plantation	seer
fields	magic	flew	hot
time of slavery	babe bawling	overseer	

Setting

Plot/Conflict

Characters

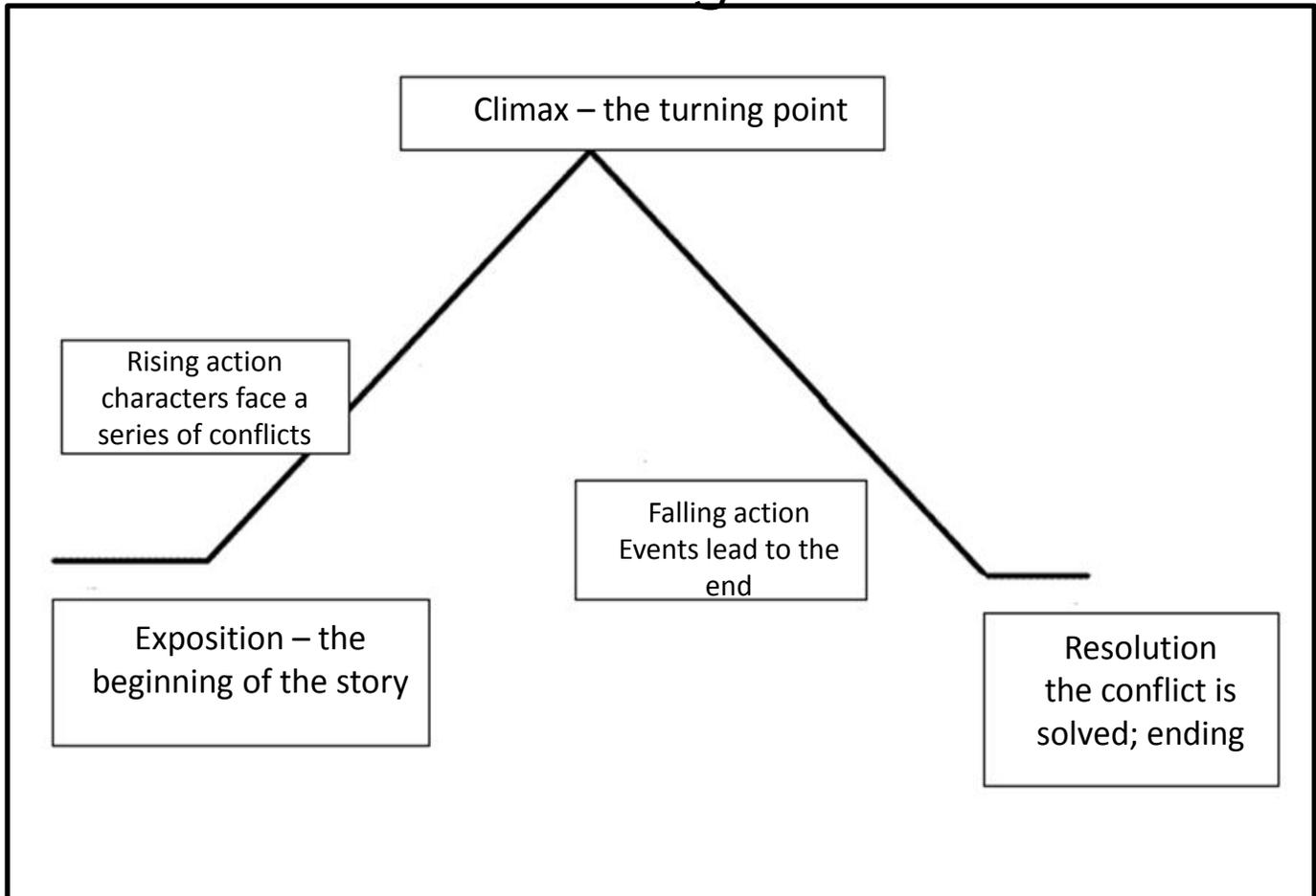
Unknown Words

Folk tales

Folk tales are stories passed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. They often feature supernatural events and characters with supernatural abilities.

After reading this story, write a summary of “The People Could Fly” on the lines below.

Plot Diagram



Helpful Tips

- When analyzing the plot, it is helpful to figure out the climax first. Once you have it figured out, it is easy to determine the exposition, rising action, falling action, and resolution.
- The climax of a story will never be near the beginning because the only parts left after it are the falling action and resolution.
- The climax is the turning point. This means things change.
- After the climax, there is only the falling action and the resolution, so it will be an important event near the end of the story.

The People Could Fly

Plot Diagram

Exposition

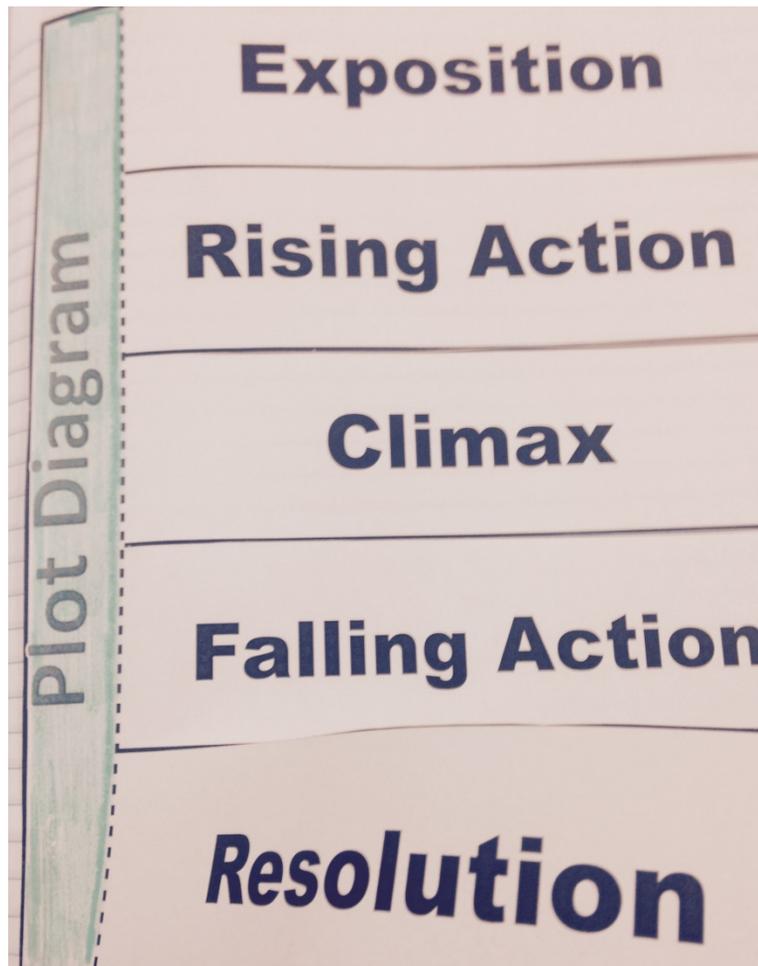
Rising Action

Climax

Falling Action

Resolution

How To Make Plot Flaps



Cut out the box. Do not cut the dotted lines. Cut lines in middle up to the dotted lines so that each flap can open. Glue only under the side strip that says *Plot Diagram* (behind dotted lines). When finished, students can write the parts of plot on the notebook paper under each flap.

Parts of Plot

Answer Key

Exposition – History is given of how once long ago in Africa, people could fly. Then, they were captured for slavery and couldn't tell anymore one who could fly from one who couldn't.

Rising Action – Slaves labored. Driver cracked his whip on those who weren't working hard enough or fast enough. Sarah's baby started crying. Driver whipped the baby.

Climax: Toby helps Sarah fly to freedom.

Falling Action: Toby helped others by saying magic words that allowed them to fly away.

Resolution: Toby flew away. Those who couldn't fly watched. Later, when they were free, they told the story of the slaves who flew to freedom.

***Note:** This is a sample analysis of the plot. Climax can be debatable. For example, some students may say that the climax is when the baby is whipped.

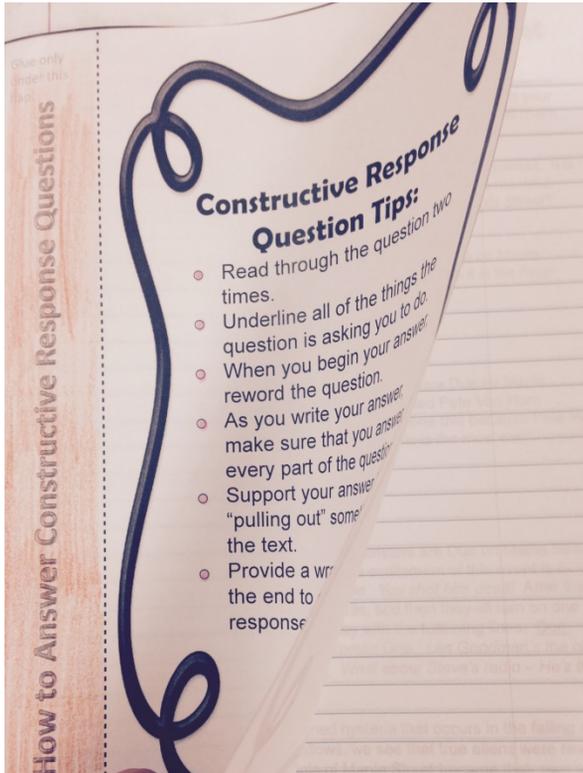
Glue only
under this
flap.

How to Answer Constructive Response Questions

Constructive Response Question Tips:

- Read through the question two times.
- Underline all of the things the question is asking you to do.
- When you begin your answer, reword the question.
- As you write your answer, make sure that you answer every part of the question.
- Support your answer by “pulling out” something from the text.
- Provide a wrap-up sentence at the end to conclude your response.

How To Make foldable



Cut out the square shape. Do not cut the dotted lines. Glue the flap behind the dotted lines only so that the page can be lifted. Underneath the flap, students can write “Textual Evidence Sentence Starters”.

Students can write these on notebook paper under the flap.

Textual Evidence Sentence Starters

On page _____, the story states...

The author wrote...

The author states...

An example is...

According to the text...

The passage _____ proves _____

One example that shows this is...

Another example from the text is...

The author shows this by...

"The People Could Fly"

Text Dependent Questions

1. What is the effect of beginning the story with the words *They say* and then starting the second sentence with the word *Say*?
 - a. These words immediately let the reader know that the story will be frightening
 - b. These words create the feeling of a storyteller and help the reader realize this is a folktale.
 - c. These words create suspense because the reader wants to know what has been said.
 - d. These words suggest that something bad has happened.
2. According to the story, why couldn't the ones who could fly take their wings on the slave ships?

-
3. Look back at the third paragraph. List some words and phrases that show the emotions that the people felt.

-
4. What can you infer from the fact that Sarah did not have the heart to croon the baby?
 - a. She was ready to give the baby to someone else so that she didn't have to take care of the child anymore.
 - b. She was angry at herself for allowing the baby to cry.
 - c. She was too weary to help the baby.
 - d. She was a bad mother.
 5. Wings are often used in literature and art as a symbol for freedom. Do the wings that the slaves have represent freedom in this story? Explain by using the text to support your answer.

"The People Could Fly"

Text Dependent Questions

The owner of the slaves callin' himself their Master. Say he was a hard lump of clay. A hard, glinty coal. A hard rock pile, wouldn't be moved.

6. What type of figurative language is used in this passage?

- a. idioms
- b. metaphors
- c. personification
- d. similes

7. Analyze the figurative language used in the passage above. What does this language say about the master?

There was a great outcry'. The bent backs straightened up.

8. After Toby stands up to the Master and laughs and then says the magic words, why do you think the slaves' backs straightened up?

9. How are Toby and the Master alike?

- a. They are both leaders.
- b. They are both owners of a plantation.
- c. They both have magical powers.
- d. They are both helpful.

10. The magic ability to fly set some of the slaves apart from others. Why do you think that all of the slaves did not have this ability? In your answer, use the portion of text from the story that states all could not fly.

"The People Could Fly"

Text Dependent Questions

1. What is the effect of beginning the story with the words *They say* and then starting the second sentence with the word *Say*?
 - a. These words immediately let the reader know that the story will be frightening
 - b. These words create the feeling of a storyteller and help the reader realize this is a folktale.**
 - c. These words create suspense because the reader wants to know what has been said.
 - d. These words suggest that something bad has happened.

2. According to the story, why couldn't the ones who could fly take their wings on the slave ships?

The slave ships were too crowded.

3. Look back at the third paragraph. List some words and phrases that show the emotions that the people felt.

full of misery, sick, forgot, no longer breathe the sweet scent

4. What can you infer from the fact that Sarah did not have the heart to croon the baby?
 - a. She was ready to give the baby to someone else so that she didn't have to take care of the child anymore.
 - b. She was angry at herself for allowing the baby to cry.
 - c. She was too weary to help the baby.**
 - d. She was a bad mother.

5. Wings are often used in literature and art as a symbol for freedom. Do the wings that the slaves have represent freedom in this story? Explain by using the text to support your answer.

Sample Answer: The wings that the slaves have in this story do not represent freedom. According to the story, "The ones that could fly shed their wings". This means that at the end of the story, they flew without them. Freedom came from within the slaves and because of Toby's magic words, not because of the wings. Freedom was something that they believed in. According to the text, when Sarah flew, "...she rose just as free as a bird. Tall trees could not snag her". Perhaps if she had those wings, the trees could have snagged her.

***Note: Students could write that the wings do symbolize freedom. This can be a correct answer as long as they support their answers with text.**

"The People Could Fly"

Text Dependent Questions

The owner of the slaves callin' himself their Master. Say he was a hard lump of clay. A hard, glinty coal. A hard rock pile, wouldn't be moved.

6. What type of figurative language is used in this passage?

- a. idioms
- b. metaphors**
- c. personification
- d. similes

7. Analyze the figurative language used in the passage above. What does this language say about the master?

A hard lump of clay, means he is unmovable in his attitude and demeanor. These metaphors show that the master had no sympathy for the slaves, and his opinion toward them could not be changed.

There was a great outcry'. The bent backs straightened up.

8. After Toby stands up to the Master and laughs and then says the magic words, why do you think the slaves' backs straightened up?

Their backs straightening symbolizes hope. The slaves stood up straighter because they were proud of what was happening, and it made them feel like there was hope for freedom.

9. How are Toby and the Master alike?

- a. They are both leaders.**
- b. They are both owners of a plantation.
- c. They both have magical powers.
- d. They are both helpful.

10. The magic ability to fly set some of the slaves apart from others. Why do you think that all of the slaves did not have this ability? In your answer, use the portion of text from the story that states all could not fly.

Sample answer: **Some people have more of a will to do something about a situation than others, and sometimes, fear holds people back. According to the end of the story, the slaves who could not fly said, "Take us with you!" The narrator then states that their looks spoke it, but they were afraid to shout it. Sometimes, fear holds people back. All of the slaves could not fly because some were crippled by fear.**

Find Textual Support.

Cut the solid lines only. Glue only between the dotted lines. Write passages under each flap.

Find one
passage that
supports that
this folktale
inspires hope.

Find one
passage that
includes dialect.

Find a passage
that portrays
the kind of
person that
Toby is.

Find a passage
that portrays the
kind of person
that the overseer
is.

Sample Passages for Textual Support

Passage that supports this folk tale inspires hope: *Way above the plantation, way over the slavery land. Say they flew away to Free-dom.*

Passage that includes dialect: *The Overseer rode after her, hollerin’.*

Passage that portrays the type of person Toby is: *Toby was there where there was no one to help her and the babe.*

Passage that portrays what type of person the Overseer is: *“Keep that thing quiet,” called the Overseer. He pointed his finger at the babe.*

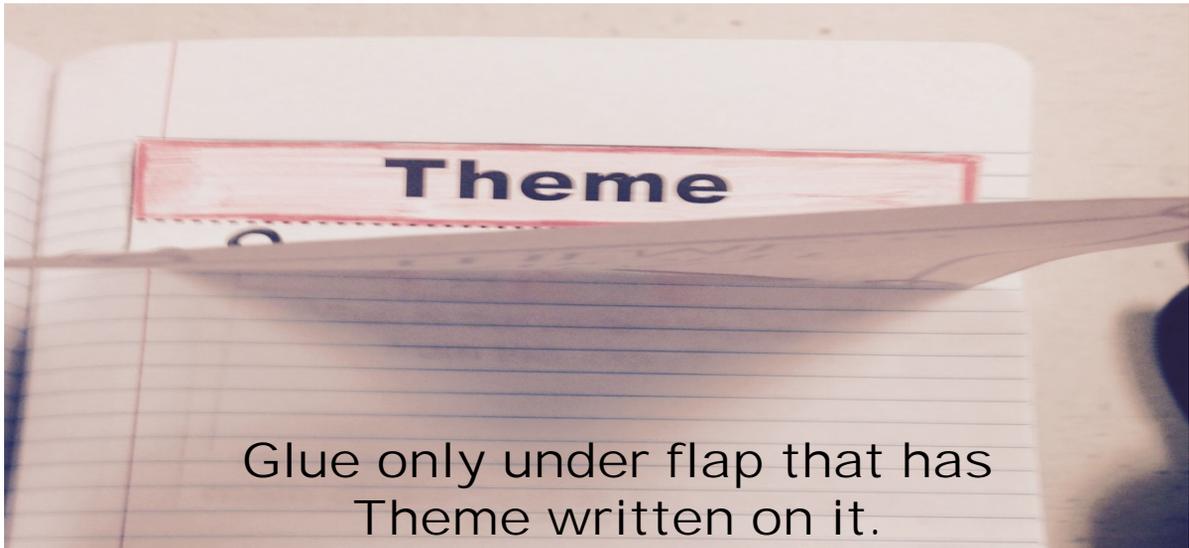
The People Could Fly Theme

Directions. Cut out the box. Do not cut the dotted lines.
Glue only under the top flap that has "Theme" written on it.
Then, lift the flap to write notes about theme.

Theme

*Some things to
remember about
theme . . .*

How To Make foldable



Cut out box. Do not cut dotted lines. Glue down the flap only so that it can be lifted.

Notes to Write under flap:

- Theme is what the author wants you to remember most.
- Occasionally the theme is stated directly in the story, play, novel/passage.
- Most often, the theme is unstated and is revealed to the reader gradually throughout the story.
- Theme is written as a statement, not just a word.
- Different readers can have completely different theme statements. This is fine as long as each reader can support his/her idea with evidence from the story.

Directions: Cut out each box. You're going to stack each piece to make a flap booklet. Glue the largest box down first (#1) by putting glue under the tab only. Then, glue the next two boxes on top by putting glue on the tab only. The smallest box will be on top. You should be able to flip each box up to write the answers underneath.

What is the theme from this story?

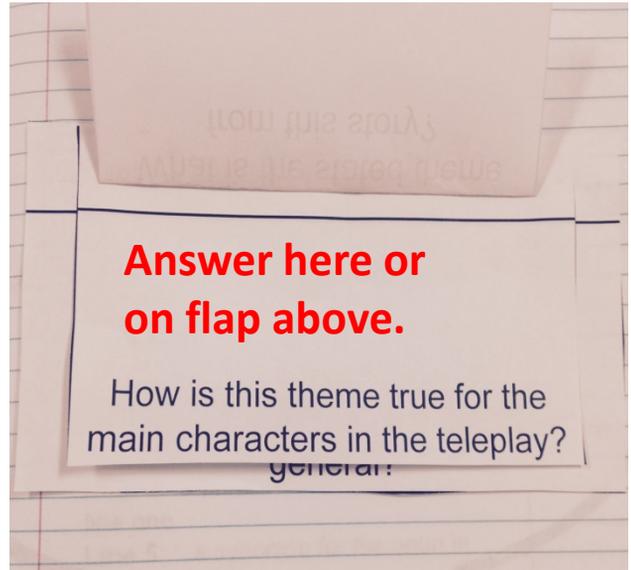
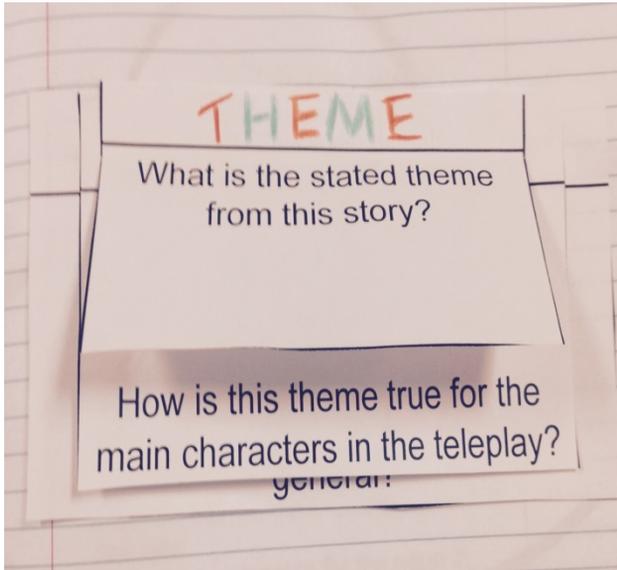
2. Glue under this tab.

How is this theme true for the main characters in the story?

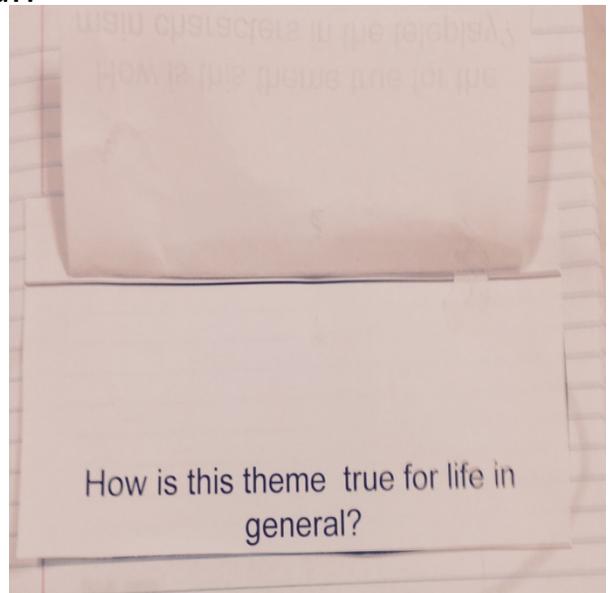
1. Glue under this tab.

How is this theme true for life in general?

How To Make Flap Book



Glue largest box down first. Put glue under flap only. Next, glue flap of next biggest box. Smallest box is glued on top. Each flap should be able to be lifted so that answers can be written underneath.



Theme ~ Sample Answers

Sample theme statements:

Hope always leads to freedom.

The human spirit is stronger than the human body.

Freedom is available, whether you fly to it or walk to it.

People will always seek freedom, at any cost.

How is this theme true for the characters in this story?

Sarah and Toby both fly to freedom. Those who did not fly had to “wait for a chance to run”.

How is this theme true for life in general?

To this day, people still seek freedom at any cost, not only from slavery but from all sorts of bondage.

“I Am” Poem

Directions: Follow the pattern of the “I Am” poem to write a poem about one of the major issues or themes in “The People Could Fly”.

Sample topics: slave, overseer, a slave who could fly, a whip

I Am

I am (choose something from the story....., a slave, a whip, the hot field, the overseer etc..)

I wonder (something you would be curious about if you were that feeling, person or thing)

I hear (a sound (real or imaginary) you would hear if you were that feeling, person, or thing.)

I see (a sight (real or imaginary) you would see if you were that feeling, person, or thing.)

I want (an actual desire that you would want if you were that feeling, person, or thing.)

I am (the first line of the poem restated)

I pretend (something you would pretend to do – if you were this feeling, person, or thing.)

I feel (a feeling you would have about something imaginary if you were this feeling, person, or thing.)

I touch (If you were this, what is something you imaginarily touch?)

I worry (If you were this, what is something that would really bother you?)

I cry (something that would make you very sad if you were this feeling, person, or thing.)

I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

I understand (something you would know is true if you were this feeling, person, or thing.)

I say (something you would believe in if you were this feeling, person, or thing.)

I dream (something you would actually dream about if you were this feeling, person, or thing.)

I try (something you would really make an effort about if you were this feeling, person, or thing.)

I hope (something you would actually hope for if you were this feeling, person, or thing.)

I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

Sample first stanza using I am a slave without wings.

I am a slave without wings

I wonder when I will have a chance to run.

I hear the delightful sound of their wings as the free ones
fly.

I see the master with his whip coming toward me.

I want to be carried away from my fear and pain

I am a slave without wings.

I Am

I am

I wonder

I hear

I see

I want

I am

I pretend

I feel

I touch

I worry

I cry

I am

I understand

I say

I dream

I try

I hope

I am

Other Ideas

- Listen to the song “I Believe I Can Fly”. Pass out the lyrics, and have students write a paragraph explaining how this song would be a good theme song for this story. Brainstorm other songs that could be used as a “soundtrack” for this story.
- Have students work with a partner to write a narrative poem. This poem should rhyme, have at least four stanzas, and tell the story of “The People Could Fly”.
- Have students write a six word memoir for either Toby or Sarah. To do this, students must only write six words, and these words should express something that these two characters would deeply believe in or live by.
- As a class, make an anchor chart listing the elements that make this story a powerful story.
- Put students in groups, and allow them to complete a dramatic reading of a portion of the story. You could assign each group a portion of the story to read in a dramatic way, and then let each group take turns doing so.

If you enjoyed this teaching unit, visit our website:

www.elacoreplans.com

We have tons of resources for ELA teachers including [novel units](#), [short story lessons](#), [writing activities](#), and [Common-Core bell ringer activities](#). You can print free samples from all of these online teaching materials!

Happy Teaching! 😊

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