



Walk Two Moons

Adapted by Tom Arvetis,
based on Newbery Award-winning book by Sharon Creech

Directed by Lisa Ann Goldsmith

May 10 - May 19, 2013

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FOR TEACHERS & STUDENTS

POST-SHOW CHAT SESSIONS

Stay after the school matinees to ask questions of both the actors and the production crew! During the 15-minute post-show chat sessions, delve into the story and then ask questions of the actors about the rehearsal process, theatre performance, and their experiences working on that particular production. No registration required!

THE LITERACY IN ACTION PROGRAM

Prime Stage Theatre's flagship education program strives to increase adolescent literacy through theatre in underserved and underperforming school districts in the Western Pennsylvania area. In this FREE program, schools receive tickets and books for each Prime Stage production, 10 in-school workshops, and professional development opportunities for teachers. If you would like your school to become involved, please download an application at our website: http://www.primestage.com/files/pdf/literacy_in_action_application.pdf

EVERYTHING IS FINE

Prime Stage Theatre is proud to offer a touring production of *Everything is Fine*, a 45 minute play designed to identify the warning signs of teen dating violence that can help save the life of a friend, loved one or even you. Written and performed by Pittsburgh area teens this show will make an impact at your school or community center. If you would like *Everything is Fine* to come to your school or community center, please visit our website, http://www.primestage.com/education/teen_dating_awareness.html

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEENS, FAMILIES AND ADULTS

Prime Stage Theatre offers opportunities for people of all ages to get involved with the theater. Check out our website to learn about the Teen Board, Mentorships, Volunteering, Book Readings and many other exciting events. There is something for everyone at Prime Stage! <http://www.primestage.com/>

WALK TWO MOONS RESOURCE GUIDE



Welcome to Prime Stage Theatre: *Bringing Literature to Life!*

Volume 4, Issue 3

4.23.2013



The Great Gatsby, PST 2012-2013



Fahrenheit 451, PST 2012-2013



The Elephant Man, PST 2011-2012

Dear Educator,

Welcome to Prime Stage Theatre's 2012-2013 Season! We had a very successful season last year with acclaimed productions of *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Elephant Man* and *A Wrinkle in Time*. This year, we inspire you to imagine and discover the alarming future in *Fahrenheit 451*, the roaring twenties in *The Great Gatsby* and an incredible journey in *Walk Two Moons*.

This Resource Guide is designed to provide historical background and context, classroom activities and curricular content to help you enliven your students' experience with the literature. We hope it will inspire you to use theatrical games and creative thinking in your classroom in order to spark personal connections with the theme and characters in the stories.

If you have any questions about the information or activities in this guide, please don't hesitate to contact me. I'm happy to help and welcome your suggestions!

Monica Stephenson
Education Director
mstephenson@primestage.com

Did you know...

*Prime Stage Theatre has been in existence for 16 years.

*Prime Stage Theatre's very first production was *A Woman Called Truth* about Sojourner Truth.

*Prime Stage Theatre first performed at the Station Square Playhouse – now the Hard Rock Cafe!

Check out what's inside!

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Curriculum Connections Corner

Prime Stage Theatre is committed to directly correlating our programs to the PDE Academic Standards. *Walk Two Moons* and this resource guide may be used to address the following curriculum content standards:

Arts and Humanities: 9.1-9.4

Reading, Writing, Speaking, & Listening: 1.1-1.9

Geography: 7.1-7.4

History: 8.1, 8.3



SUMMARY – WALK TWO MOONS

‘Don’t judge a man until you’ve walk two moons in his moccasins
–Sharon Creech, *Walk Two Moons*

The book *Walk Two Moons* in 30 seconds...

For reasons that are unclear to Salamanca Tree Hiddle, her mother left the family farm in Kentucky for Lewiston, Idaho, and did not return. Sal’s grief-stricken father rents out the farm that Sal loves and uproots her to Euclid, Ohio. Sal hates her new home and cannot accept her father’s disturbing relationship with red-haired Margaret Cadaver, a nurse who has persuaded Mr. Hiddle to move to Ohio for work. Sal refuses to believe that her mother will never return.

That summer, Gram and Gramps Hiddle take her on a six-day car trip from Euclid to Lewiston, Idaho. Sal’s goal is to reach the destination on Sal’s mother’s birthday. The trio travels westward, retracing the exact route taken by Sal’s mother. Along the way, Sal tells her grandparents the story of her best friend, Phoebe Winterbottom. Phoebe is a high-strung, prim, and wildly imaginative girl. Phoebe feels certain that some sinister connection exists between Margaret Cadaver, some mysterious notes that start appearing on her family’s doorstep, and a strange boy, whom Phoebe dubs “the lunatic.” Sal gradually becomes caught up in her friend’s story. Sal also finds herself in a flirtation with Ben, a boy from school.

By this point in Sal’s tale, she and her grandparents have reached South Dakota. They stop to swim in the Missouri River, where a snake bites Gram’s leg. Sal and her grandfather rush Gram to the hospital, and although Gram recovers by the next morning, her health begins to falter after this point.

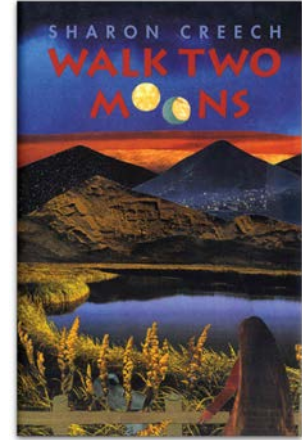
Phoebe’s mother disappears, without a word of explanation. Phoebe feels certain she has been kidnapped and begins an obsessive investigation for clues. Sal retells the story of her own mother’s disappearance. Sal had fallen from a tree and broken her leg. Her mother, who was pregnant, carried Sal home and rushed her to the hospital. That evening, Sal’s mother went into an early labor, lost the baby, and nearly lost her life. Overwhelmed with sadness, she insisted on taking a trip by herself to visit a cousin in Lewiston, Idaho. Sal and her grandparents are following the path Sal’s mother took on her trip to Idaho.

Phoebe’s family is growing more and more upset as the days go by. Sal and Phoebe rush to the police office to offer them the meager evidence they have collected. While there, Sal finds that the lunatic, who appeared on the porch earlier, is the police sergeant’s son. That same day, Sal learns that Mrs. Cadaver suffered a great loss only a few years prior, when a car accident killed her husband and blinded her mother.

Sal and her grandparents take in Old Faithful, and Gram, whose breathing is troubled, revels in its splendor. When they leave Yellowstone National Park, Sal resumes her story. Sal and Phoebe determine that the sergeant’s son lives at a nearby college campus, and, convinced he holds the key to the mystery, take a bus to visit him. On campus, the two girls find the lunatic and Mrs. Winterbottom sitting on a bench, holding hands. Sal runs away and finds herself at a nearby mental hospital. To her surprise, she runs into Ben and his mother, who is a patient at the hospital. The two young people giddily share a delicious first kiss. Mrs. Winterbottom returns home a few days later and explains to her family that the lunatic is actually her illegitimate son. She had always been afraid to tell her family for fear of letting them down. The Winterbottoms are shaken but are happy to be together again.

Sal decides that she will make amends with Mrs. Cadaver and listen to her story. Mrs. Cadaver explains to Sal that she and Sal’s mother became friends on the long bus trip from Ohio to Idaho, and that Mrs. Cadaver and Sal’s father became friends because Mrs. Cadaver was the lone survivor of the accident that killed Sal’s mother and was able to tell Sal’s father about the last days and moments of Sal’s mother’s life.

Sal and her grandparents have reached Coeur D’Alene in northern Idaho, but Gramps and Sal must rush Gram, who is gravely ill, to a hospital. Gramps will not leave her side. Knowing that Sal feels she must visit her mother’s grave on her birthday, he allows Sal to drive on her own. Sal makes the perilous drive in the dead of night, and finally stops at an outlook on a steep road



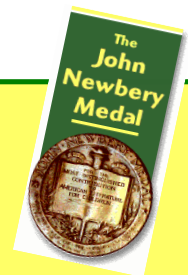
1995 Original Cover

where her mother’s bus had lost control and crashed. Sal climbs down to inspect the wrecked, abandoned bus. When she returns to the car, a sheriff stands ready to arrest her, but when he hears her story, he drives Sal to her mother’s grave. Sal is able to put closure in her mother’s death and realizes that the trip to Idaho was a gift from Gramps and Gram. They were giving her a chance to walk in her mother’s moccasins. When Sal makes it back to Coeur D’Alene she learns that Gram has passed away.

Sal and her father later return to their farm in Bybanks, Kentucky and begin trying to rebuild their lives their without her mother. Sal, who has made peace with her mother’s tragic death, looks forward to each day on the farm and to the upcoming visit of all her friends from Euclid, Ohio.

...or less.

Thirteen-year-old Sal’s mother left over a year ago. When her friend Phoebe’s mom disappears, painful memories of Sal’s own abandonment come to the surface. Determined to find Phoebe’s mother, the girls begin seeing murderous plots and schemes around every corner. Sal shares these conspiracy theories with her Gram and Gramps during a cross-country trip to confront her mother. But it is only through the telling of her friend’s tale that Sal ultimately realizes that things—and people—are not always what they seem.



Did you know...

In 1995 author Sharon Creech received the John Newbery Medal for *Walk Two Moons*. The John Newbery Medal is the most prestigious award for children’s literature in the United States. It’s a pretty big deal!

MEET SHARON CREECH, AUTHOR OF *WALK TWO MOONS*

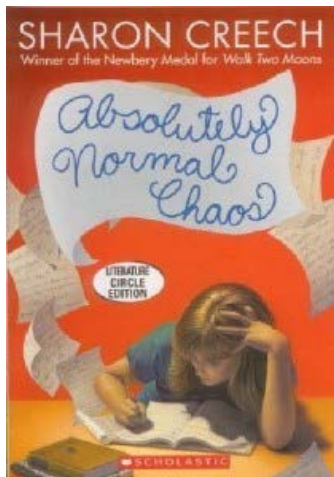
“A person isn’t a bird. You can’t cage a person.” –Sharon Creech, *Walk Two Moons*

In her own words Sharon Creech shares about growing up in Ohio and later becoming a successful writer.

I was born in South Euclid, Ohio, a suburb of Cleveland, and grew up there with my noisy and rowdy family: my parents (Ann and Arvel), my sister (Sandy), and my three brothers (Dennis, Doug, and Tom).

For a fictional view of what it was like growing up in my family, see *Absolutely Normal Chaos*. (In that book, the brothers even have the same names as my own brothers.) Our house was not only full of us Creeches, but also full of friends and visiting relatives.

In the summer, we usually took a trip, all of us piled in a car and heading out to Wisconsin or Michigan or, once, to Idaho. We must have been a very noisy bunch, and I’m not sure how our parents put up with being cooped up with us in the car for those trips. The five-day trip out to Idaho when I was twelve had a powerful effect on me: what a huge and amazing country! I had no idea then that thirty-some years later, I would recreate that trip in a book called *Walk Two Moons*.



Absolutely Normal Chaos Scholastic Book Cover

One other place we often visited was Quincy, Kentucky, where my cousins lived (and still live) on a beautiful farm, with hills and trees and swimming hole and barn and hayloft. We were outside running in those hills all day long, and at night we’d gather on the porch where more stories would be told. I loved Quincy so much that it has found its way into many of my books—transformed into Bybanks, Kentucky. Bybanks appears in *Walk Two Moons*, *Chasing Redbird*, and *Bloomability*. Bybanks also makes a brief appearance (by reference, but not by name) in *The Wanderer*.

When I was young, I wanted to be many things when I grew up: a painter, an ice skater, a singer, a teacher, and a reporter. It soon became apparent that I had little drawing talent, very limited tolerance for falling on ice, and absolutely no ability to stay on key while singing. I also soon learned that I would make a terrible reporter because when I didn’t like the facts, I changed them. It was in college, when I took literature and writing courses, that I became intrigued by story-telling. Later, I was a teacher (high school English and writing) in England and in Switzerland. While teaching great literature, I learned so much about writing: about what makes a story interesting and about techniques of plot and characterization and point of view. I started out writing novels for adults: *The Recital* and *Nickel Malley* were both written and published while I was living in England (these books were published in England only and are now out of print).



But the next book was *Absolutely Normal Chaos*, and ever since that book I have written mainly about young people. *Walk Two Moons* was the first of my books to be published in America. When it received the Newbery Medal, no one was more surprised than I was. I’m still a little bit in shock.

In addition to *Walk Two Moons*, I wrote *Absolutely Normal Chaos*, *Pleasing the Ghost*, *Chasing Redbird*, *Bloomability*, *The Wanderer*, *Love That Dog*, *Granny Torrelli Makes Soup*, *A Fine, Fine School*, *Fishing in the Air*, *Heartbeat*, *Who’s That Baby?*, *Replay*, *The Castle Corona*, *Hate That Cat*, *The Unfinished Angel*, and *The Great Unexpected*. I hope to be writing stories for a long, long time.

I am married to Lyle Rigg, and we live in western New York State on a lake. We have two grown children, Rob and Karin, and being with my family is what I enjoy most. The next-best thing is writing stories.

Sharon Creech’s website
www.sharoncreech.com/meet-sharon-creech

MORE FROM SHARON CREECH!

This story began as a follow-up to *Absolutely Normal Chaos*. In that book, Mary Lou Finney writes a summer journal, and as I began *Walk Two Moons*, I was merely speculating about what might happen when she turned in that summer journal to her English teacher. A few drafts later, Phoebe Winterbottom and her wild imagination leaped into the story, and she took over with tales of a disappearing mother and a lunatic. And then, shortly after rediscovering a fortune cookie message in the bottom of my purse (the message was "Don't judge a man until you've walked two moons in his moccasins"), I began a new draft with a new character: Salamanca Tree Hiddle. The fortune cookie message inspired a journey (walking "two moons") and a character who is a very small part Native American (the moccasins).

When I began Sal's story, all I knew was that she was a country girl and she was going on a trip. The rest of her story came out a little bit each day, as I sat down to write. I was too stubborn to throw away the earlier drafts with Mary Lou Finney and Phoebe Winterbottom, so they found their way into this new draft, along with Ben, the lunatic, Mr. Birkway, Margaret Cadaver, and Mrs. Partridge.

-Sharon Creech

Did you know...

Walk Two Moons was originally based on her first young adult book, *Absolutely Normal Chaos*. On her website, Sharon Creech tells us her initial inspiration for *Walk Two Moon*!



Sharon Creech with PST artistic director, Wayne Brinda

PST: What were some rewarding moments you had as a writer while creating the journey of Sal, Phoebe, and this story?

Sharon: I loved the way that Sal's story and Phoebe's story took on parallels I had not expected, so that each day I was eager to take that journey with the characters, eager to see what might happen.

PST: Your characters connect closely with adolescents. As an adult writer, how do you get into and capture the hearts, souls, and emotions of these incredible characters?

Sharon: I simply try to immerse myself in the character, young or old, and see what that person sees and feel what they feel. What we feel when we are young is not so very different from what we feel when we are older.

PST: Storytelling is a major part of *Walk Two Moons*. What was the inspiration for this approach and how did it evolve as you wrote the story?

At Prime Stage Theatre we love to have relationships with authors and playwrights! We are excited to welcome Sharon Creech to our opening night performance of *Walk Two Moons* and are grateful that she was willing to take the time to answer a few questions about her work.

Sharon: I think the storytelling element derives in part from family tradition: relatives sitting around on a porch or at a kitchen table telling tales. You could explain things better if you set the scene and acted out the action and dialogue. So that was in my blood. But also, I'd been teaching Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* in which a group of pilgrims tell stories to better pass the time along their journey to Canterbury, and that structure probably influenced me as well.

PST: What are some responses you receive from young and adult readers of *Walk Two Moons*?

Sharon: The book has been translated into over twenty languages and I've received beautiful letters from all over the world. Most readers share their favorite characters (Sal, Phoebe, Gram & Gramps) or scenes, and many, many readers want to know 'What happens next?' They want to know if Sal & Ben get married; if Sal's father and Mrs. Cadaver get married; what happens with Phoebe's new brother, etc. Although I don't know what-happens-next, I love that the characters have become that 'real' to the readers—real enough so that their lives must surely go on.

PST: What was different about the process of bringing your story to life for Prime Stage than when it premiered at Adventure Stage in Chicago?

Sharon: Tom Arvetis did most of the work! The first time, he tackled the huge task of taming a long, complicated story with several time frames and sub-stories into a dramatic piece for the Chicago stage. For Prime Stage, Tom refined that first version, having the benefit of having seen it performed live in Chicago. We collaborated on a few small points, but the script is very much Tom's.

PST: What are your thoughts about seeing the photo of the set being used for Prime Stage and some pictures of the actors?

Sharon: Tremendously exciting! To see my story being transformed by others into a tangible, visible, physical, live event is astonishing. The set looks fabulous. The actors: I can't wait to see them in action.

TOM ARVETIS, PLAYWRIGHT!

Tom is a writer and director whose work investigates the themes of identity, family and community. He founded Adventure Stage Chicago in 2004 and is responsible for the creative vision of the company, the implementation of all programming, and the supervision of the theater staff.

Tom's directing credits for Adventure Stage Chicago include *Augusta and Noble* by Carlos Murillo, *Six Stories Tall: a play about mermaids, monsters and spray paint!* by Marco Ramirez, *And A Child Shall Lead* by Michael Slade, *Katrina: The Girl Who Wanted Her Name Back* by Jason Tremblay (world premiere), *The Blue House* by José Cruz González (world premiere), and *A Woman Called Truth* by Sandra Fenichel Asher. Tom also directed a reading of *Katrina: The Girl Who Wanted Her Name Back* as part of the 2008 New Visions/New Voices Festival at the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts. Other directing credits include *Dragon/Sky* by Elizabeth Wong (workshop reading for Silk Road Theatre Project), *The Search for Odysseus* by Charles Way (The Simple Theatre) and *The City Wears a Slouch Hat* by Kenneth Patchen (Wanderlust Productions). Playwriting credits for Adventure Stage include *Walk Two Moons* (honorable mention in Chicago Theatre Beat's Best Shows of 2011) and *I Dream in Blues* (dubbed "the sleeper hit of the season" by the *Chicago Tribune*).



**"Tom Arvetis, Adventure Stage's founder and Artistic Director, has lovingly adapted Sharon Creech's Newbery Award winning novel into a moving, straightforward play for all ages."
-Centerstage Chicago**



Walk Two Moons, Adventure Stage Chicago 2011

As a producer, Tom has also cultivated partnerships with 500 Clown, Chicago Children's Humanities Festival, the Children's Theatre Company (Minneapolis), and the Chicago International Children's Film Festival, to name a few. Tom was an Ann Shaw Fellow with TYA/USA in 2009 and a finalist for a 2010 Chicago Community Trust Fellowship. He is a board member with the American Alliance for Theatre and Education. With the support of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Tom is currently helping an initiative to integrate artistic practice across all areas of social service programming at Northwestern Settlement. In 2013, ASC will premiere a community-based performance piece built in collaboration with West Town neighbors.

***Walk Two Moons* was first performed at Adventure Stage in Chicago in 2011. Prime Stage will be the second theatre company to perform *Walk Two Moons*. It is a Pittsburgh premiere!**

TOM ARVETIS & WALK TWO MOONS

Below is an excerpt from the *Chicago Sun-Times* by **Jennifer Burklow** describing how Tom Arvetis discovered *Walk Two Moons*.

“Walk Two Moons” is a project Arvetis has had on the backburner since 2005 when he discovered the novel at a bookstore.

“I was looking at Newbery Medal-winning books” to adapt, he said. “I picked this one off the shelf, didn’t really know anything about it, read the back cover and went home with it and devoured it and just was bowled over by the story.”

He couldn’t find an adaptation of the book, so he started “kicking around the idea [of adapting it for ASC (Adventure Stage of Chicago)] but it ultimately sat dormant for several years while other things took precedence.” Arvetis and ASC turned up the gas on the adaptation after doing a public reading of it in February. He believes it fits the ASC mission to produce plays about young people.

“It has a young female protagonist; she’s 13 years old. That’s really our first criteria,” he explained. “We want to make sure that every story we tell is told from the young person’s point of view, so that our audience doesn’t feel as though we’re talking down to them or we have some lesson to tell them, but it’s actually something that they can feel and see as their own experience.”

Even with the right protagonist, Creech’s multilayered story proved challenging for the adaptor — the narratives of several characters are filtered through Sal, making it challenging for a reader and even more challenging on the stage.

“That’s a really hard thing to track as an audience member,” Arvetis said. “Where am I in time? Am I with Sal in the present as she’s talking about something that happened in the past? Back in the past and in that moment? Am I on the car trip with Gram and Gramps talking to Gram and Gramps? Or am I in the car with Sal talking directly to the audience . . . all these different frameworks . . . I think that was biggest challenge for me as the playwright.”

Arvetis shared his first draft with Creech back in July 2011, asking for comments.

“I read it and I found myself really unable to comment because he’s taken a very long book with three different time lines and plot lines and somehow translated that into what will be I guess an hour and a half performance. I couldn’t tell what was left out, what was changed. I was just kind of transported. I think he’s done a great job” she said.

www.suntimes.com/lifestyles/8467744-423/walk-two-moons-done-justice-in-new-play.html



Walk Two Moon scenic model by Johnmichael Bohach, *Prime Stage Theatre 2013*

DISCUSS WITH YOUR STUDENTS!

Be The Playwright! How would you adapt *WALK TWO MOONS* as a play?

*What is the most important message to you? How could you bring that message to the forefront for the audience?

*What questions remain unanswered in the novel? How could you add scenes or dialogue to add to the story? Consider the events that happened before or after the events in the novel, or during the passage of time.

*Theater uses sight and sound! How could you use lighting, costumes, props, sound effects or movement to tell the story?

CHARACTERS

Tom Arvetis's stage adaptation of *Walk Two Moons* includes only twenty-one characters.

Look at the descriptions on the page and think about how you might choose a cast to portray these characters.

**What physical characteristic would you look for in the actor playing each character? Why?*

**What vocal quality would you expect each character to have? Would they speak slowly, quickly, gravelly, squeaky?*

**Which roles might be shared by one actor? How would you make each character unique?*

Sugar (Sal's mother): She is spontaneous and joyful. Attuned to the beauty of the outdoors, Sal's mother was at times conflicted by her roles as a housewife and mother. She became sad as a result of her miscarriage and decided to try to reconnect with who she was before she married and became a mother by traveling to visit a cousin in Idaho. Sal adores the memory of her mother and throughout the novel struggles to come to terms with the events and forces that led up to her mother's departure.

Margaret Cadaver: Phoebe's next-door neighbor and Sal's father's friend. Margaret helped Sal's father move to Euclid, away from his farm. Although Sal feels deeply suspicious of Margaret's intentions toward her father, Sal's father sees her as a friend. Their friendship is based on the fact that Margaret befriended Sal's mother during her last days alive. Margaret herself suffered a great tragedy when she lost her husband in a car accident.

Mr. Birkway: Sal's English teacher and Margaret Cadaver's brother. Mr. Birkway is a passionate and energetic English teacher whose enthusiasm inspires the interest of his students. Mr. Birkway makes a grave mistake when he, in all innocence, reads excerpts from his students' journals. He realizes his mistake only when his sister becomes implicated in the gossipy journal entries.

Sal (Salamanca): The narrator of *Walk Two Moons*. Sal is a high-spirited country girl troubled by the loss of her mother. Much of Sal's experiences center on trees, rivers, wild berries, and mountains. Although she is rebellious and often skeptical of adults, she is open-minded and deeply compassionate. Sal tells her story with verve and humor, peppering her sentences with colorful comparisons and exaggerations.

Gramps and Gram Hiddle: Sal's father's parents. They drive Sal across the country to visit her mother's final resting place in Idaho. Gramps and Gram married and lived in an unwavering spirit of love and joyfulness, despite the fact that Sal's father is their only son, of four, who lived to adulthood. Though her grandparents' unpredictability worries her, Sal looks to them for support, love, and adventure.

John (Sal's Father): A loving, gentle man. Sal's father takes Sal to Euclid, Ohio shortly after his wife's death because he is overwhelmed by grief for her at the farm. Sal's father, struggling with his own sense of loss, deals compassionately with Sal's anger and confusion. When they move to Euclid, he allows Sal to spend her time as she likes, often away from him. Ironically, his sweetness and gentleness often saddened Sal's mother, making her feel thoughtless and selfish in comparison.

Ben: Sal's schoolmate and romantic interest. Ben is a quirky, creative young man who persists, despite confusion and shyness, in expressing his affection for Sal throughout the novel. Ben lives with his cousin Mary Lou because his mother is not well.

Mrs. Partridge: Mrs. Cadaver and Mr. Birkway's mother, Mrs. Partridge lives with her daughter next door to Phoebe. Mrs. Partridge, despite her blindness, can guess people's ages by feeling their faces. She is an eccentric but lovable old woman.

Phoebe Winterbottom: Sal's best friend in Euclid, Ohio. Phoebe is high-strung, imaginative and often makes dramatic assumptions. Phoebe uses her propensity for melodrama, Sal theorizes, as a way to avoid dealing with bigger fears. Despite her stiff exterior, Phoebe desperately needs the love and security her family provides for her.

Mrs. Winterbottom: Phoebe's mother. She works diligently as a housewife and mother, but becomes increasingly saddened by her family's disregard of her. She one day disappears to reconcile her past and find her true self.

Mr. Winterbottom: Phoebe's father. Mr. Winterbottom fills his role as husband and father. He comes home from his nine-to-five job withdrawn and distant. Mrs. Winterbottom's departure challenges his understanding and expectations of her.

The Lunatic: The mysterious young man who appears on Phoebe's doorstep and lurks threateningly around her neighborhood. Mike turns out to be the adopted son of the local police chief, Sergeant Bickle.

Mary Lou Finney: Sal's classmate and Ben's cousin. Mary Lou is a loud, brash girl of whom Phoebe disapproves. Sal is secretly envious of her chaotic, loving household.

Sergeant Bickle: The chief of police. Sergeant Bickle listens skeptically but patiently to Phoebe's worries about her mother's disappearance.

Other characters in the stage adaption include: Doctor, Police Officer, Nurse, Boy and a Sheriff.



PUTTING IT IN CONTEXT

INSPIRATION

Where does a writer get ideas for an imaginative novel like

Walk Two Moons? Often they spring from his or her own experiences. Several of the themes and incidents in *Walk Two Moons* stem from Sharon Creech's life. In the novel, thirteen-year-old Sal takes a journey with her grandparents from a Cleveland, Ohio, suburb to Lewiston, Idaho. This is the same trip that Creech took the summer that she turned twelve. The journey remains a vivid memory for her: "What a journey! What a country!" she recalls. "What spectacular and unexpected sights reared up around each bend!" Longing for her mother, Sal is not so enthusiastic about the trip, but her grandmother echoes Creech's excitement.

During the trip west, the family stopped at an Indian reservation and bought Creech a pair of moccasins for her birthday. She was thrilled because she loved reading Native American stories. A cousin of hers had told her that one of their ancestors was an Indian. "I loved that notion," Creech explains, "and often exaggerated it by telling people that I was a full-blooded Indian." Similarly, in *Walk Two Moons*, Sal is proud of the fact that she is part Indian.

The Indian myths that Creech loved involved reincarnation—the belief that a person returns to life after death, usually in another form. "How magnificent and mysterious to be Etsanatilehi, the 'woman who never dies'," she writes. "I wanted to live a thousand, thousand lives." Not surprisingly, the theme of reincarnation plays a major role in *Walk Two Moons*. Sal takes comfort in the belief that her mother's spirit inhabits a beautiful "singing tree."

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Map Sal's Journey

Before beginning the book, obtain a map of the United States, as well as individual maps of the different states Sal and her grandparents drive through. (The states are Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho.)

As Sal and her grand parents progress through their trip, students can trace the route with a highlighter and use pins to mark the places they've visited.

Have students calculate the mileage and approximate driving times of different portions of the trip.

The Time and Place

The year in which the action of *Walk Two Moons* occurs is never disclosed. The omission may be because the author sought to give the novel a sense of timelessness.

If the time of *Walk Two Moons* is uncertain, however, the places are not. Euclid, Ohio, is a real city located northeast of Cleveland. Further, during the trip west, they stop at several well-known places of interest.

- * Chicago, Illinois
- * Madison, Wisconsin
- * The Wisconsin Dells
- * Pipestone National Monument in Minnesota
- * The Missouri River in South Dakota
- * The Badlands and Mount Rushmore in South Dakota
- * Old Faithful in Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming
- * Coeur d'Alene in Idaho
- * Lewiston, Idaho

See a map of Sal's Trip on the next Page!

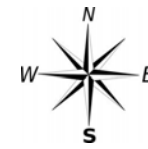
"Sometimes you know in your heart you love someone, but you have to go away before your head can figure it out."

— Sharon Creech, *Walk Two Moons*

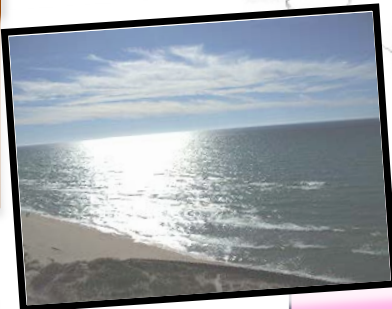
PUTTING IT IN CONTEXT

JOURNEY

On Sal's road trip from Euclid, Ohio to Lewistown, Idaho, she and her grandparents stop at a lot of places!



www.slideshare.net/ngabel/walktwomoons-383684



Lake Michigan is one of the five Great Lakes of North America and the only one located entirely within the United States.

"Are we at the ocean?" Gram asked.... "You gooseberry, that's Lake Michigan." Gramps kissed his finger and put it against Gram's cheek. *Chapter 7*



"I'd like to sleep in Coeur d'Alene tonight. You mamma sent us a postcard from Coeur d'Alene and on it was a bountiful blue lake." *-Gram, Chapter 40*

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho is the second largest city in the state. It is named after a tribe of Native Americans who were discovered by French Canadian fur traders in the 1890s.



We went to Pipestone National Park and saw Indians thunking away at the stone quarry. I asked one if he was a Native American, but he said, "No, I'm a person." I said, "But are you a Native American person." He said, "No, I'm an American Indian person." I said, "So am I. In my blood." *-Sal, Chapter 12*

Pipestone National Monument is located in southwestern Minnesota. The site is sacred to many Native Americans as its stones were used to make ceremonial pipes.

For more information about the site along Sal's journey, check out this awesome online slide show!
www.slideshare.net/ngabel/walktwomoons-383684

PUTTING IT IN CONTEXT

Because Sal's mother is part Seneca American Indian, Sal explores her world through the perspective of Native American history. Some of what she sees and learns on her road trip opens her eyes and makes her happy. Other things make her sad and disappointed, as she learns about the history of Native American people and how early North American settlers robbed them of their land.

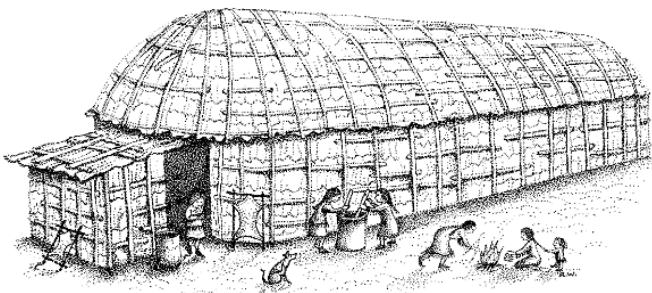
Learn more about the Seneca Indians!

How do you pronounce the word "Seneca"? What does it mean?

It's pronounced "SEH-neh-kah." It comes from the name of one of their villages, *Osininka*. In their own language, the Seneca call themselves *Onandowaga*, which means "people of the mountain."

What was Seneca culture like in the past?

The historical Seneca occupied territory throughout the Finger Lakes area in Central New York, and in the Genesee Valley in Western New York, living in longhouses on the riversides. The villages were well fortified with wooden stake fences. The homes were longhouses, which were large wood-frame buildings covered with sheets of elm bark. Seneca homes could be a hundred feet long, and an entire clan lived in each one--up to 60 people!



A drawing of a Seneca longhouse

Seneca men wore breechcloths and leggings. Seneca women wore wraparound skirts with shorter leggings. Men did not originally wear shirts in Seneca culture, but women often wore a long tunic called a kilt or overdress. The Senecas usually wore moccasins on their feet. In colonial times, the Seneca tribe adapted European costume like cloth shirts and blouses, decorating them with beadwork.

The people relied heavily on agriculture for food, growing the Three Sisters: corn, beans, and squash, which were known as *Deohako* (pronounced: Jo- hay- ko), "the life supporters." In

addition to raising crops, the early Seneca were also subsistence hunters and fishers.

The Seneca were also highly skilled at warfare, and were considered fierce adversaries. The Seneca were also renowned for their sophisticated skills at diplomacy and oratory.

What were men and women's roles in the Seneca Indian tribe?

Seneca men were in charge of hunting, trading, and war. Seneca women were in charge of farming, property, and family. These different roles were also reflected in Seneca government. The clans were always ruled by women, who made the land and resource decisions for each clan. But the chiefs, who made military decisions and trade agreements, were always men. Both genders took part in storytelling, artwork and music, and traditional medicine.

Today the Seneca Nation supports its own people and benefits surrounding communities with a variety of cultural, educational and economic efforts. Its varied enterprises include: world-class casino gaming, hospitality and entertainment, which employ over 3,500 people, as well as a convenience store chain (4 stores), construction management, and diverse holdings in business ventures.

Seneca culture and values remain strong and intact. Language, song, art, dance, and sports are all vital aspects of Seneca culture. Although the number of fluent Seneca language speakers is diminishing and the language is considered at-risk, there are language programs at the Seneca Nation in place to help protect, preserve and develop a new generation of Seneca language speakers to keep the Seneca language alive.

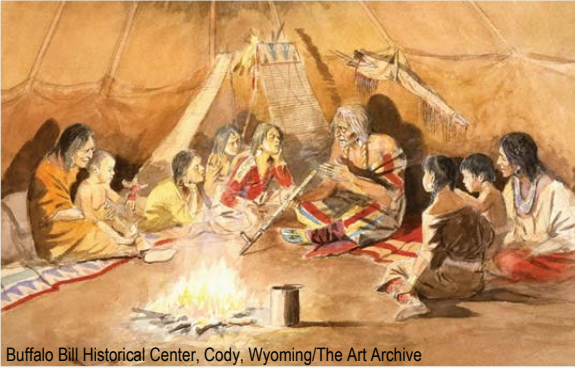
HERITAGE



Seneca Woman, Ah-Weh-Eyu (Pretty Flower) in traditional dress, 1908.

PUTTING IT IN CONTEXT

STORYTELLING



Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming/The Art Archive

Storytelling is the conveying of events in words, images, and sounds, often by improvisation or embellishment. Stories or narratives have been shared in every culture as a means of entertainment, education, cultural preservation, and to instill moral values.

Like her ancestors the Seneca Indians, Sal is an amazing storyteller! *Walk Two Moons* is, in fact, a collection of individual stories told from a number of different

perspectives woven together. Each story amplifies the meaning of other stories. Phoebe uses her story about the lunatic to ward off other, more threatening, explanations of Mrs. Winterbottom's disappearance. Sal uses Phoebe's story as a way to relive her own story and come to a better understanding of it. Gram and Gramps' stories provide Sal with a sense of her own family history and with a model for her own life and loves. The myths interspersed throughout the novel offer both the characters and the readers a means of understanding the origins, state, and implications of the human condition. Sal tells her own story as a means of reflecting on it and coming to accept it.

Here's a list of the stories!

- *Sal's own story
- *Phoebe's story
- *Sal's memories
- *Grams' & Gramps' stories
- *Mr. Birkway's journal assignment (everyone in Sal's class has a story)
- *Margaret's story
- *The Greek Myths in Mr. Birkway's Class
- *The Native American stories Sal's mother used to tell her

The stories in *Walk Two Moons* serve another purpose as well. As it turns out, it's really hard to actually walk two moons in another person's moccasins. We can't literally hop into another person's body and mind for two months. But when we hear their story, we can imagine that we are doing so. Stories are a way for us to gain understanding of and empathy for the people around us, and in turn understand ourselves a little better.

Storytelling is still popular today! Professional storytellers can be found all over the United States. PST Education Director Monica Stephenson recently sat down with professional storyteller & comedian Hillary Rea to learn more about the art of storytelling. (Read the whole interview at www.primestage.com/wordpress/)

Monica: When some people think of storytelling, they imagine someone sharing a tale at party or while sitting around the dinner table. What is the difference social storytelling and performance storytelling?

Hillary: I think most of the stories that I've used as a professional storyteller onstage at one time started out as a story that I told at a party or around the dinner table. The thrill of bringing a story to life on stage is the complete ownership of who you are, and how you choose to tell your story. The series of events may be heightened, you can take your time, and you have the ability to plan out what you are going to say as well as allow for the spontaneity that comes about when you share something for the first time.

Monica: What are the most important elements to building a good story?

Hillary: You always want to have an opening line that will draw your audience into your story. Bringing the listener into the action of your story immediately is always a good thing. Or a line that surprises the audience! Stay true to yourself, but know you have the power to tell it how you want to tell it. The audience will connect to you, the protagonist, if you tell us what you were going through at the time and how you changed or grew, once the events of your story have ended.

Monica: What advice do you have for anyone interested in trying storytelling?

Hillary: Everyone has a story to tell! Think of events in your life that stick out in your mind, that you find yourself sharing with friends, and then write them down. Experiment with a written version of your story, or you can even tape record yourself telling your story out loud – you'll find a rhythm and structure in which to tell it, where you can have fun and the audience can have fun listening to you.

Hillary Rea is a comedian, storyteller and host of the monthly storytelling shows

Tell Me A Story and *Fibber*. She is recent Moth StorySlam winner and performs regularly with First Person Arts. Hillary has been featured on the stage of *Animated Stories* and *Tales of the Cosmos* (Upright Citizen's Brigade), *The Soundtrack Series*, *RISK!*, *SpeakeasyDC* and *Comedy Dreamz*. She has performed in comedy festivals including Philly Sketchfest, First Person Festival, and the North Carolina Comedy Arts Festival.



PUTTING IT IN CONTEXT

MYTHS

Some of the stories in *Walk Two Moons* are Native American folktales and Greek myths! Sal shares the Native American stories when she remembers joyful moments with her mother. In Mr. Birkway's class, Phoebe and Ben present reports of Greek myths. Check out some of these old folktales and myths!

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Use the myths in *Walk Two Moons* as a springboard and have students research other Native American and Greek myths. Invite students to share or write a retelling of a Native American or Greek myth that most interests them.

Consider having students share their myths in a variety of ways, perhaps through drawing, movement or music.

In Chapter 27, Phoebe gives a report on the myth of Pandora's Box.

"On the night after Phoebe had given her Pandora report, I thought about the hope in Pandora's box. Maybe when everything seemed sad and miserable, Phoebe and I could both hope that something might start to go right."

—Sal

In Greek mythology, Pandora was the first woman on earth. When Prometheus stole fire from heaven, Zeus took vengeance by presenting Pandora to Epimetheus, Prometheus' brother. With her, Pandora had a jar which she was not to open under any circumstance. Impelled by her natural curiosity, Pandora opened the jar, and all evil contained escaped and spread over the earth. She hastened to close the lid, but the whole contents of the jar had escaped, except for one thing, which lay at the bottom, and that was hope.



A statue of Pandora (1861) by Loison at the Louvre Palace in Paris, France

A **Myth** is a story whose author is unknown and that explains a people's belief about nature, an event in history, or the origin of a custom or practice. Myths usually involve gods and heroes. Myths were important both to ancient Greeks and to Native Americans because they explained occurrences in their world. They are stories told over and over again.

In Chapter 24, Ben gives a report about Prometheus

Ben had to give his mythology report. He was nervous. He explained that Prometheus stole fire from the sun and gave it to man. Zeus, the chief god, was angry at man and Prometheus for taking some of his precious sun. As punishment, Zeus sent Pandora to man. Then Zeus chained Prometheus to a rock and sent vultures down to eat Prometheus's liver. In Ben's nervousness, he mispronounced Prometheus, so what he actually said was the Zeus sent vultures down to eat porpoise's liver —Sal

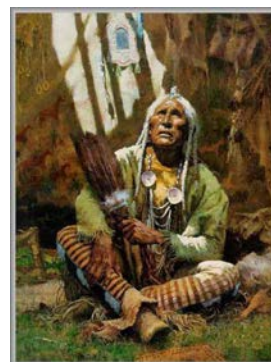


Prometheus fountain at Rockefeller Center, NYC

The story of Prometheus is a Greek myth. Prometheus was a Titan god entrusted with the task of molding mankind out of clay. His attempts to better the lives of his creation brought him into direct conflict with Zeus.

In Chapter 23, We learn about Napi.

"My mother once told me the Blackfoot story of Napi, the Old Man who created men and women. To decide if these new people should live forever or die, Napi selected a stone. 'if the stone floats', he said, 'you will live forever. If it sinks, you will die.' Napi dropped the stone into the water. It sank. People die." —Sal



Artist depiction of Napi

Old Man, also known as Napi, is a god and trickster figure in the mythology of the Blackfoot Indians. He is said to have created the world and all the creatures in it.

The first man he created was satisfied with the world, but the first woman was not. She wanted to know if people would ever die and if life would be the same forever as it was now. Old Man had not thought about whether humans would live forever. To answer the question, he threw a piece of wood into the river. If the wood floated, he said, humans would die and come back to life after four days. If it sank, they would die and never live again. The wood floated, but the woman was still not satisfied. She decided to try the test herself. However, instead of a piece of wood, she threw a stone into the water. The stone sank, so Old Man decreed that death for humans would last forever.

SYMBOLS

“You never know the worth of water until the well is dry.” -Sharon Creech, *Walk Two Moons*

Symbols are objects or references used by the author to add deeper meaning to a story. Identifying the many symbols in *Walk Two Moon* will bring a deeper meaning to the novel.

Blackberries

Blackberries remind Sal deeply of the way things used to be in Bybanks, when her mother was happy and the two of them would go blackberry picking together. Blackberries seem to represent living in the moment and enjoying all that life has to offer, which is what Sal and her mom used to do. Blackberry is also the name of the chicken Ben gives to Sal!



Hair

Sal has very long hair. Her mother also had very long hair but cut it before leaving for Idaho. To Sal, it represents the happiness her mother once knew. Her hair, saved but deeply hidden, reminds Sal of the idealized mother she is beginning to realize never existed.



Walk Two Moons, PST 2013 Photo

Sal's mother and Mrs. Winterbottom both cut their hair before or during their journey. Both women cut their hair as part of their attempt to transform themselves.

Trees

The trees represent Sal's emotional reaction to the natural world and her changing emotions – the tree on the farm did not sing on the day Sal learned that her mother would not come back. The word “Tree” is Sal's middle name.



The Marriage Bed

Grams' and Gramps' marriage bed is a symbol for their marriage and love. They've had it since the first day they were married. No matter where they are, Gramps always recites his saying, “This ain't our marriage bed but it will do.”

The Plaster Wall

We first hear about the plaster wall in chapter 1 when Sal says, “My father started chipping away at a plaster wall in the living room of our house in Bybanks shortly after my mother left us one April morning.”

Later she shares the following:

On the night that we got the bad news—that she was not returning—he pounded and pounded on that wall with a chisel and hammer. At two o'clock in the morning, he came up to my room. I was not asleep. He led me downstairs and showed me what he had found. Hidden behind the wall was a brick fireplace.

At the end of the book, Sal tells us that she begins to understand why her grandparents took her on the road trip to find her mother. In fact, she begins to understand a whole ton of things about the last year or two. She tells us:

Lately, I've been wondering if there might be something hidden behind the fireplace, because just as the fireplace was behind the plaster wall and my mother's story was behind Phoebe's, I think there was a third story behind Phoebe's and my mother's, and that was about Gram and Gramps.

Perhaps that plaster wall represents the stories that are buried within other stories and how these stories give rise to new stories. Just as someone once decided to build a plaster wall over the fireplace in Sal's home, Sal can choose to build something of her own, something new in her life.



There are even more symbols in *Walk Two Moons*! Can your class identify them?

THEMES

“In a course of a lifetime, what does it matter?”

-Sharon Creech, *Walk Two Moons*

Themes are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work. *Walk Two Moons* contains many rich themes for exploration and discussion. Below are listed some prominent themes from the novel with supporting statements.

Loss and Acceptance: As Sal tells about the disappearance of Phoebe's mother, she recognizes similarities in her own experience when her mother leaves (SPOILER ALERT!) and is later killed in an accident. Both girls experience the stages of grief: anger, denial, and acceptance. Sal is not able to see her dead mother or attend her funeral, she cannot put closure on her mother's life. It is not until Sal sees the accident site, sits at her mother's grave, and reads the headstone that she can finally accept her mother's death.

Walk Two Moons presents the notion that death and loss, as well as grief, are universal. All human beings experience the pain of loss. Sharon Creech allows her characters to experience the pain of loss as well as the feelings that accompany the acceptance of loss.

Taking A Journey: As Sal takes a physical journey across the United States with her grandparents, she also takes an inner journey that causes her to change. Before she leaves on her road trip, Sal still believes her mother will return. On the journey, Sal learns that she had nothing to do with her mother leaving because her mother chose to leave. Sal is able to let go of the guilt she has been feeling ever since her mother left. Sal also understands, for the first time, the magnitude of her father's grief. She is able to forgive her father for not taking her with him when he went to Idaho to bury her mother. A journey can give individuals insight that leads to maturity and independence.

Hope: Sharon Creech also includes the theme of hope. Sal's Indian heritage is important to her because she needs stories of reincarnation to give her hope for the future. The story of Pandora's box gives us a source of hope. Sal looks into Pandora's box and sees the horrible things that are a part of the world. She also sees that "most people seem a lot like us: sometimes afraid and sometimes brave, sometimes cruel and sometimes kind." Sal chooses to hold on to the hope that is in the bottom of Pandora's box and turn "to the other box, the one with the smooth beautiful folds inside." In order to be brave enough to face the evils in the world, everyone needs hope.

Classroom Activity

There are even more themes in *Walk Two Moons*! Have the class break into small groups and discuss the themes that they consider important in the novel. Select two themes that the group can all agree upon and express each one, using the following phrases: "*Walk Two Moons* tells us that . . . We know this because . . ." Complete the phrases by giving specific reasons. Each group will present the statements of theme to the class to determine whether the class arrived at the same conclusions.

Empathy: The first message that appears on Phoebe's doorstep reads, "Don't judge a man until you've walked two moons in his moccasins." Sal takes this advice to heart throughout the book. By putting herself in people's shoes, Sal becomes more compassionate and understanding of others. This practice gives Sal a way to measure and understand her own behavior and past.

Nature: From The Badlands to the Missouri River, in blackberries and in trees, Sal and her family have strong respect and appreciation for nature and understand it as one of the many blessings that life, often cruel and unpredictable, gives to us.

WHAT IS WHAT?

Sharon Creech shares quirky characters of *Walk Two Moons* and their stories through descriptions and imagery that use all five senses! Sal's stories often include smell, taste, look, feel and sound.

Listed below are some of the challenging vocabulary words in *Walk Two Moons*. Have students record and look up unfamiliar words as they encounter them while reading the book! Vocabulary activities can include a word wall, word ball or making a new sentence.

PDE Academic Standards 1.7-1.8

GLOSSARY

cadaver: dead body

filly: young, female horse

predict: to foretell

ornery: stubborn

lunatic: an insane person

diabolic: evil

divulge: to reveal

detect: to notice the presence of something

ambush: to make a surprise attack

vivid: bold or bright

pandemonium: chaos

gullible: easily fooled, naive

flinch: to pull back suddenly

elaborate: give more details

sheath: covering for a knife

cautious: careful

sullen: in a glum mood

trek: long, difficult journey

colossal: huge

boar: wild pig

rummage: to search through a place thoroughly

malevolent: wishing harm or evil on other

cantankerous: crankly, moody or quarrelsome

Walk Two Moons has colorful words and expressions that reflect the cultural background of the characters. Here are few: "whangdoodle," "trying to catch a fish in the air," "hog's belly full of things," etc. These words and expressions are known as colloquialisms.

Invite students to share colorful words or expressions that their families use in everyday speech. Make a list of these on the board. Have students explain to the class what these words and expressions mean and why they enliven the language. Encourage students to keep a list of the colorful words and expressions in the novel!

GRAM AND GRAMPS HIDDLE'S GLOSSARY

Sal's grandparents use many colloquialisms in their everyday, ordinary conversations. Sometimes they may be hard to understand. Here's a glossary to help define some of their expressions!

Chickabiddy: grandchild

Spin us a yarn: tell us a story

Whangdoodle: an adjective to describe something amazing or out of the ordinary

Gol-dang: gosh darn!

Thumbingly: very, very, very

Gooseberry: sweetie pie or honey

Jib-bang: gosh darn

Plum missed: completely missed

Horse feathers: oh, pooh!

CLASS ACTIVITIES

Prime Stage's mission, *bridging literature, life and learning*, encourages students to approach literature with curiosity and personal relevance. The activities below are intended to spark enthusiasm, interest and inquiry into the story before they have read the text or attended the performance.

Social Circles!

In *Walk Two Moons*, Sal shares stories of people from different groups in her life such as family, school, community, etc. These groups are her Social Circles. Have student investigate their social circles and connections!



Make a list of all of the social circles in which students might belong: school, church, sports, family, hobbies, etc.

On a sheet of blank paper, students will draw a circle for each group. Inside each circle, students can list the names and/or draw the face of each person they know! Students will start to see how everybody is connected!

Different Perspectives

Every person has a different way of seeing things. In *Walk Two Moons*, we get to see many different characters' perspectives. Have your class consider how people may see events or occurrences differently!

Make up a situation that might happen at school. For example: a winter snow closing, a pipe bursting in the girls' bathroom, a table breaking in the cafeteria, a teacher retiring, etc.. Chart how different people might feel about the situation. Include people such as students, teachers, secretaries, janitors, principals, parents, etc.

Sculpting The Words



Sharon Creech used figurative language her writing. Here's a fun way to sculpt her words! What you will need: Newspaper and a copy of *Walk Two Moon*

Ask your students to close their eyes and see the images as you slowly read the first paragraph of the novel out loud. Using only a piece of newspaper, have each student make a sculpture of an image they saw while you were reading. Have your students describe their sculptures to the class or through writing. You can also ask students to describe each other's sculptures!

Personal Journals

In the novel, Mr. Birkway asks his class to keep a journal. Have your students do the same!

Ask students to keep their own personal journals so that they can have records of their personal journeys in life. They can bring in their own journals, or you can provide them with composition books to be used as journals. Since these journals are private, don't read them. However, provide students with sustained silent writing time to work on journals. Encourage them to write about the trials and triumphs of the past week and what they are grateful for in the past week. At the end of that time, check to see that students have written in their journals and give students an opportunity to share their entry with the class if they'd like.

Students should be free to take them home to work on as long as they bring them to class.



CLASS ACTIVITIES

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Map of the United States

In this novel, Sal and her grandparents take a long trip across the United States. To help students prepare for the novel, give them a map of the United States and ask them to label the places:

Bybanks, Kentucky

Euclid, Ohio

Washington, D.C.

South Bend, Indiana

Lake Michigan

Madison, Wisconsin

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Wyoming

Mitchell, South Dakota

Badlands, South Dakota

Mount Rushmore

Ohio River

Lewiston, Idaho

Philadelphia

Illinois

Chicago, Illinois

Pipestone, Minnesota

Lake Mendota

Montana

Chamberlain, South Dakota

Missouri River

Yellowstone Park

Students can use these maps to trace the route that Sal and her grandparents took on their journey.

from scholastic website: www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/walk-two-moons-lesson-plan

Sacred Places

Many cultures have places that are sacred to them. As Sal travels, we learn about sacred Native American lands and Sal's own personal sacred place where she finds peace.

Point out some cultural places that may be sacred. These can be buildings such as churches, temples or mosques, or land.

Suggest that there are also places that are sacred to us as

individuals - places where we retreat for peace or spiritual refreshment. Have students think of their own sacred place, write a description of the place and why it is important to them. Students may also draw a picture of their sacred place and how it makes them feel.

Encourage students to look for these sacred places and note why they are sacred as they read *Walk Two Moons*.



Cool Writing Activities!

Inspire more curiosity about the book by having your students work on the following writing prompts.

*Describe a road trip you have taken. Explain why you took the trip and how you passed the time along the way. Describe what affected you most during the journey.

*At the beginning of the book there is a quote: "Don't judge a man until you've walked two moons in his moccasins." Reflect on this quote, what are some possible meanings of this quote? What situations might it apply to? When do people tend to judge others? Is it ever helpful?

*Describe a favorite memory.

* Recall a time when you formed an opinion about someone that turned out to be wrong. Write a brief description of why you formed the opinion and what happened that made you change your mind. What lesson did you learn from your experience?

CLASS ACTIVITIES

Prime Stage's mission, *bridging literature, life and learning*, encourages students to make personal connections to literature through meaningful, interactive exploration of the text and themes. The activities below are intended to enliven, clarify and enrich text as they read the novel.

What's in a name!

The meaning of names is very important in Sal's family.

Have each student discover the meaning of his/her own name and any stories that go along with it by using the link below. Many parents have beautiful or funny stories to share with their children about what their names mean and how the names were chosen. Have each student make a nameplate that includes the meaning(s) of his/her name.

Soul Drawings

In the book, Mr. Birkway gives his students 15 seconds to draw "their souls." The results are profound and say a lot about the students.

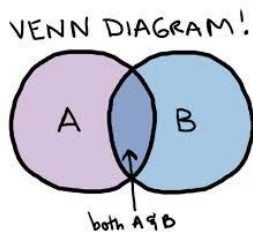
After reading that part of the book in chapter 21, have your students do the same and then discuss whether they find the pictures to be accurate representations.

*Would the pictures be better if there was more time involved?

Venn Diagram

Venn Diagrams provide a great way to compare and contrast!

Have students make Venn diagrams comparing Mrs. Winterbottom's departure to Sugar's leaving.



They can also do Venn diagrams comparing Phoebe's response to her mother's leaving with Sal's response to her mother's departure.

Another idea is to compare the Hiddles to the Pickfords or to compare the Winterbottoms to Sal's family. All of these make for interesting discussions.

Go here for a PDF of a Venn Diagram: <http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/pdf/venn.pdf>

Acting a Scene

Underage Driver

Pair students to role-play the scene in which Sal is stopped by the sheriff after taking

Gramps' car to visit the scene of the accident where her mother was killed. (Chapter 42) One student should assume Sal's role, and the other that of the sheriff. Students can work together to develop a script for each role.

Have students choose other moments from the book to role-play and develop.

Excerpt from

www.glencoe.com/sec/literature/litlibrary/pdf/walk_two_moons.pdf



Gram & Gramps Letter

Sal says that her father did not trust his own parents to behave themselves on the journey west. Imagine that he had asked Sal to write him a letter reporting on what Gram and Gramps were doing. Compose the letter that Sal might have written describing her grandparents' behavior on the drive from Euclid to Minnesota. Support the letter with incidents from the novel.

CLASS ACTIVITIES

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Character Party!

This is a fun way to understand the characters in *Walk Two Moons*.

Have students choose a character from the book. Characters can be assigned, picked from a hat, etc. However, they are not to know what characters the other students have chosen. Students are to remember three facts about their character.

Sal is hosting a party and has invited everybody she knows! One by one, have characters enter the party and mingle with one another. Each student must remember one fact about all the other characters they meet.

After the party is over, have students introduce each other as characters and share one fact that they remember!

Home Sweet Home

Have students use visual arts to make a scene that features key elements of the landscape of Bybanks, Kentucky, as it is described by Sal. Students should look throughout the novel for vivid descriptions of the place and try to capture the scene artistically.

Students can draw, paint, collage, etc.

Students can display their artwork if they wish.

Excerpt from
www.glencoe.com/sec/literature/litlibrary/pdf/walk_two_moons.pdf

Character Circles

Similar to the Social Circles activity on page 19, have students investigate all of Sal's social circles. Students will draw a circle for each group of characters represented in the book: Sal's family, family friends, school friends, best friends, different families of each friend, road trip characters, etc.

Inside each circle, students can write down the names of the characters.

How are they interconnected? What things do some of them have in common? How are they different?

Cool Writing & Discussion Activities!

Inspire your students to dig deeper as they read.

*Throughout the book Sal discusses the different terms used to describe Native Americans: Indians, Injuns, Native Indians, and American Indians. Discuss the origin of the name Indians and why some Native Americans dislike the term.

*Mr. Birkway reads two poems--"The Tide Rises, the Tide Falls" by Longfellow and "The Little Horse is newLY" by Cummings--that affect Sal strongly. Read the poems aloud and discuss or write your reactions to them.

*What do you think of the scene (beginning on page 199 of the hardcover edition) where Mr. Birkway reads students' journals aloud? Do you think it's ever okay to read someone's journal? If you found a friend's journal, would you read it?

*The author repeatedly uses the phrase "might as well try to catch a fish in the air." What does it mean? What are some other expressions that have similar meanings?

CLASS ACTIVITIES

Prime Stage's mission, *bridging literature, life and learning*, encourages students to reflect on their learning. The activities below are intended to provide opportunity to synthesize the learning and make personal meaning after they have read the text or attended the performance.

Message Murals

Five mysterious messages are left for the Winterbottoms.

- Don't judge a man until you've walked two moons in his moccasins.
 - Everyone has his own agenda.
 - In the course of a lifetime, what does it matter?
- You can't keep the birds of sadness from flying over your head, but you can keep them from nesting in your hair.
 - We never know the worth of water until the well is dry.

Divide the class into five groups and give each group one of the messages. Each group is to interpret the meaning of its message in a mural. The mural must include the message and symbols or pictures that convey its meaning. Students can also write what they think the message means or paraphrase it to go along with the pictures.

From scholastic <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/walk-two-moons-lesson-plan>

Grandparents

Sal has a close relationship with her grandparents. What are some of the good things that can come from spending time with grandparents? Write a story about something you have done with your grandparents or another adult other than a parent.

Walk Two Moons The Movie

Imagine that a movie version of *Walk Two Moons* is being produced and that you have been chosen to design the advertising poster. What image would you select to catch the eye of a passerby? What brief description of the book would accompany your photo or visual art? Create a poster that you feel captures the spirit of the novel.



Cool Writing & Discussion Activities!

Inspire your students to reflect on *Walk Two Moons*

* *Walk Two Moons* is an excellent way to introduce several literary techniques, including foreshadowing. Discuss with students the ways in which Gram's death is foreshadowed. Then discuss the ways in which Sal's mother's story is revealed.

* *Walk Two Moons* is about the importance of family and friends, and there is a special emphasis placed on mothers. This is a nice time to ask your students to write about what their own mothers mean to them. Have them mail their finished work to their mothers.

* Why do you think the author chose to make the setting of this book a cross-country car trip? Have student write and share their answers.

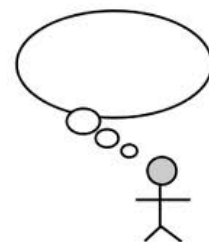
* What is the most important lesson that Sal learns at the end of *Walk Two Moons*? In a paragraph or two, discuss the most important lesson that she learns that has made her a different person than she was at the beginning of the novel.

CLASS ACTIVITIES

Prime Stage's mission, *bridging literature, life and learning*, encourages students to reflect on their learning. The activities below are intended to provide opportunity to synthesize the learning and make personal meaning after they have read the text or attended the performance.

Meaningful Moments Bubble Mural

Students may choose 1 or 2 moments from the performance (or the novel) that made a lasting impression on them. Using pictures and words, create a Thought Bubble illustrating each moment. Students should try to capture the emotion as they experienced it. Try to use the same colors, light quality and textures each observed in the performance. Students may hang their Thought Bubbles on the wall to create a mural. The mural should give the viewer an authentic understanding of what it felt like to be an audience member.



Surprising Choices

What surprised you about this production by Prime Stage Theatre? Consider the costumes, set design, music, lighting, special effects, acting and directing. What do you think motivated the production team or actors to make the choices that surprised you? Were they trying to solve a unique problem, create a strong response from the audience, make a creative statement or address some other need? Write a statement describing the surprising choice. Explain why you think it was a part of the production and whether or not you thought it was a good choice.

Set Symbolism

Discuss the imagery used in the set design for *Walk Two Moons*. Why do you think the production team used these images? What impact did it have on your interpretation of the story? What impact did it have on the audience?

What would you have done differently? Have student draw their interpretation of a set design for *Walk Two Moons*.

Did you enjoy reading *Walk Two Moons*? Do you want to learn more about the subjects in *Walk Two Moons*? Take a look at these awesome titles!

***Waterless Mountain* by Laura Adams Armer** - Winner of the 1931 Newbery Medal, this is an authentic novel about an eight-year-old Navajo boy's training as a medicine man. This deeply moving and accurate account of one young Navajo's childhood and spiritual journey is filled with wonder and respect for the natural world--a living record of the Navajo way of life before the influence of the white man.

***Onion John* by Joseph Krungold, Symeon Shimin (Illustrations)** - The story of a friendship between a 12-year-old boy and an immigrant handyman, almost wrecked by the good intentions of the townspeople.

***Up a Road Slowly* by Irene Hunt** - The Newbery Award-winning novel. After her mother's death, Julie goes to live with Aunt Cordelia, a spinster schoolteacher, where she experiences many emotions and changes as she grows from seven to eighteen.

***The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie, Ellen Forney (Illustrator)** Sherman Alexie tells the story of Junior, a budding cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the reservation to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot.

***American Indian Myths and Legends* selected and edited by Richard Erdoes, Alfonso Ortiz.** The stories in this collection are arranged by themes— including creation myths, trickster tales, monsters, animals, ghosts, and heroes.

PUTTING IT ON STAGE

Meet the Cast



Elly Bleier
(Salamanca)



Lily Lauver
(Phoebe)



Andy Kirtland
(John)



Ken Lutz
(Gramps)



Ivy Steinberg
(Sugar)



Lynne Franks
(Gram)



Julie Elizabeth Beroes
(Margaret/
Mary Lou)



Josh Brelsford
(Ben)



Matthew Carraher
(Mr. Birkway)



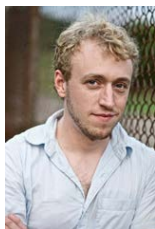
Philip Ball
(Mr. Winterbottom)



Dana Hardy
(Mrs. Winterbottom)



Colette Freiwald
(Mrs. Partridge)



Luke Bruehlman
(Officer/Sheriff)



Matt Henderson
(Lunatic/
River Bank
Boy/Brother)



David Taylor Little
(Sgt. Bickle)

"Flawlessly adapted, 'Walk Two Moons' challenges audiences to look outward into a world where everyone has the immense power to help one another. 'Walk Two Moons' has a poignant, valuable message for audiences of every age." - ChicagoBeat.



What does it take to direct Tom Arvetis' adaption of *Walk Two Moons*? Lisa Ann Goldsmith lets us in on her creative process and inspiration for this production.

How do you define the role of the director in a theater production? The director is the parent of a play, the one who nourishes and mentors and encourages the rest of the artists. I always like to say that a director is the person who chooses "the color palate" for a production. For example, I might decide that a certain character is green. It is up to the actor to find the right shade, i.e., kelly green, or forest green, or lime green. My job is to guide their process, helping the actors and designers find the right path towards what is eventually a full artistic collaboration.

***Walk Two Moons* tackles loss, belonging, family and friendship.**

Can you tell us a little about your preparation process? I lost my Mom just over a year ago, so when I first read this play and book last summer, that pain was still very fresh for me. I immediately understood where Sal was, and how we have to go through the grief in order to finally get to the understanding and the place of peace. Wayne and I worked with the playwright through some revisions of the script. I initially felt that some of the heart of the book was missing from the script, and through working on those revisions, that heart is now a big part of it.

The play is narrated by 13 year-old Sal. Did this present you with any theatrical challenges or opportunities? The greatest challenge in this regard is that I have cast a 14 year old actress to play Sal. (Luckily, I had some excellent young actors audition.) There is a certain something about a 13-14 year old that disappears by the time they are, say, 16. A freshness, a vulnerability, a sense of still being a child and not quite a young man or woman. That said, it is a challenge for any actor, let alone a young one, to switch back and forth from being IN a scene to direct address to the audience, which is what Sal does a lot of in this play. I feel certain that Elly is more than capable of accomplishing this.

What advice do you have for young people hoping to get involved in theater? Don't give up - keep at it! Everything you do in a theater makes you better at everything else, so participate in every aspect.

ATTENDING THE PERFORMANCE

House rules (and we don't mean your mama's house!)

It goes without saying that when most children today hear the word “theatre” they think “Oh, MOVIE theatre.” And with that thought comes all of those things that we do at movie theatres: eat popcorn, drink noisily from soda cups, put feet on the seat, text message—and the list goes on from there.

But live theatre is just that: it's LIVE with LIVE HUMANS who react and respond to the audience, something that we at Prime Stage think is the beauty of the theatre experience. Because of this, live theatre requires a higher level of respect between the audience and performer in order for the experience to be a positive one. As an audience member, **you** are the final and most important component of this production of *Walk Two Moons*.

Thinking Like a Critic

Critics play an important role in theatre. They are often the first to see the show and can write a wonderful - or horrendous - review for all the world to see. Prepare your students to attend the show by “thinking like a critic.”

Read the following questions before the show.

Think about the questions as you're watching the show and write your answers in a notebook or journal during intermission or on the bus ride home.

Write a critique of the show based on your responses.

PDE Academic Standards 9.1-9.4, 1.4-1.5

Please review the following “house rules” with your students prior to attending our production:

-Please stay together with your group and wait for an usher to help you find your seat.

-Please turn all cell phones & pager **completely off** before the performance. If you are texting during the performance, you will be asked to leave. (FYI, the theater will be dark, and light from your phone shines up on your face when you text. Everybody, including the actors on stage, can see you!)

-No photography or videotaping.

-Please stay in your seat until the intermission or the end of the play.

-No eating, drinking, or chewing gum during the performance.

-We encourage active listening and appropriate responses such as laughing or clapping. Please do not talk during the performance!

-Be polite and attentive. Show your appreciation by clapping. (FYI – the actors really love to see how much you enjoyed the show!)

PDE Academic Standards 1.6, 9.1

Actor choices—How did they move and speak? Did they seem like people we know? How did they relate to other characters?

Designer choices—What design element captured your attention the most -the set, costumes, lights, or sound -and why? How did the design elements work together to support the entire production? What choices did the designers make in materials, colors, intensity, detail, etc.? Were the design elements more descriptive or suggestive? What symbols were in the design elements?

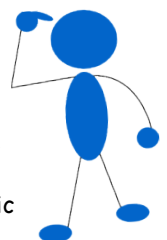
Director choices—What was the style, pace, and rhythm of the play? What stage pictures helped to tell the story? How did the director unify all the elements of the production?

Interpretation—Did the director make a statement about life now? How did the characters, design, and play make you feel? What did the play mean to you? What might it mean to others?

Evaluation—Why do you suppose the playwright wrote the play? Why was the play produced now? When were moments where the storytelling was very clear? When were moments you were confused about the story? Who would enjoy the play and why?

Remember—it's all about choices!

Whether you loved the play or not, identify the specific choices that made you feel that way!





Prime Stage Theatre performs all of its shows at The New Hazlett Theater in Pittsburgh's Historic North Side.

New Hazlett Theater

6 Allegheny Square East
Pittsburgh, PA
15212



PST Education Box Office

Phone: 412-841-7353

E-mail:

studentmat@primestage.com

CLASSROOM INTERNET RESOURCES

Sharon Creech's official website

<http://www.sharoncreech.com>

Information on *Walk Two Moons* presented in a fun way.

<http://www.shmoop.com/walk-two-moons/>

Glencoe McGraw-Hill Study Guide to *Walk Two Moons*

http://www.glencoe.com/sec/literature/litlibrary/pdf/walk_two_moons.pdf

Sharon Creech speaks at the 2009 National Book Festival in this You Tube video.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pm_wR5730Q8

Official website for the Seneca Nation of Indians

<http://sni.org>

LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION OF *WALK TWO MOONS* AND GO BEHIND THE SCENES WITH PST'S EDUCATION BLOG!

<http://primestage.com/wordpress/>

Do you have students interested in acting or dance?

Prime Stage & Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Education Department presents

Monologues & Movement

A Weeklong Summer Experience for Middle School Students

This unique theatre-and-dance camp, created by Prime Stage and Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, inspires fun, creativity, and self-confidence in students in grades 5-9.



Go to our website to register or get information!

www.primestage.com

and one more thing!

The following excerpt is from a review of *Walk Two Moons* that appeared in the New York Times, May 21, 1995:

It's great that the hero on the archetypal quest here is a young woman in search of courage and identity. . . . As Sal retraces her mother's steps through the Badlands and the Black Hills, she tells stories about her friend's mother, who also left, and we learn Sal's mother's story and her grandparents' story and her own. The storytelling is comic and affectionate, each chapter building to its own dramatic climax. Sal's voice is sometimes lost and lonely, expressing her grief and also her awe for the great country she's traveling through. We recognize that she's been stuck physically and emotionally. She learns that "a person couldn't stay all locked up in the house. . . . A person had to go out and do things and see things."



COMPREHENSION, CREATIVITY, AND COMMON CORE

Prime Stage Theatre aligns with the Common Core State Standards

English Language Arts College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards

Students attend theater performances of adaptations of Literature on the High School and Middle School reading lists.

Reading *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas* (7) **Speaking & Listening** *Comprehension and Collaboration* (2 & 3) **Language** *Knowledge of Language* (3)



Students participate in active discussions and Q&A sessions with actors, directors and designers after each performance.

Speaking & Listening *Comprehension and Collaboration* (1 2 & 3) *Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas* (4 & 6) **Language** *Conventions of Standard English* (1) *Knowledge of Language* (3) *Vocabulary Acquisition and Use* (4 5 & 6)



Students warm-up and improvise during in-school workshops led by specialized arts education teachers.

Speaking & Listening *Comprehension and Collaboration* (1 2 & 3) *Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas* (4 & 6) **Language** *Knowledge of Language* (3) *Vocabulary Acquisition and Use* (4 5 & 6)

Writing is an essential part of each workshop! Students create narratives, defend a claim, and convey experiences. They even collaborate on original plays, stories and poems.

Writing *Text Types and Purposes* (1 2 & 3) *Production and Distribution of Writing* (4 & 5) *Research to Build and Present Knowledge* (7 8 & 9) *Range of Writing* (10) **Language** *Conventions of Standard English* (1 & 2) *Knowledge of Language* (3) *Vocabulary Acquisition and Use* (6)



Our students read & analyze literature. They study and perform scenes! They examine characters and relate them to personal experiences.

Reading *Key Ideas and Details* (1 2 & 3) *Craft and Structure* (4 5 & 6) *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas* (7 8 & 9) *Range or Reading and Level of Text Complexity* (10) **Writing** *Text Types and Purposes* (3) *Research to Build and Present Knowledge* (7 & 9) **Speaking & Listening** *Comprehension and Collaboration* (1 2 & 3) *Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas* (4 & 6) **Language** *Conventions of Standard English* (1) *Knowledge of Language* (3) *Vocabulary Acquisition and Use* (4 5 & 6)



Students present their own original ideas and observations in our workshops.

Speaking & Listening *Comprehension and Collaboration* (1 2 & 3) *Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas* (4 5 & 6) **Language** *Conventions of Standard English* (1) *Knowledge of Language* (3) *Vocabulary Acquisition and Use* (5 & 6)

Students use technology, including the Internet, to communicate with other students from schools in Washington and Allegheny Counties!

Reading *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas* (7 8 & 9) **Writing** *Production and Distribution of Writing* (6) **Speaking & Listening** *Comprehension and Collaboration* (1 & 2) *Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas* (4 5 & 6)

