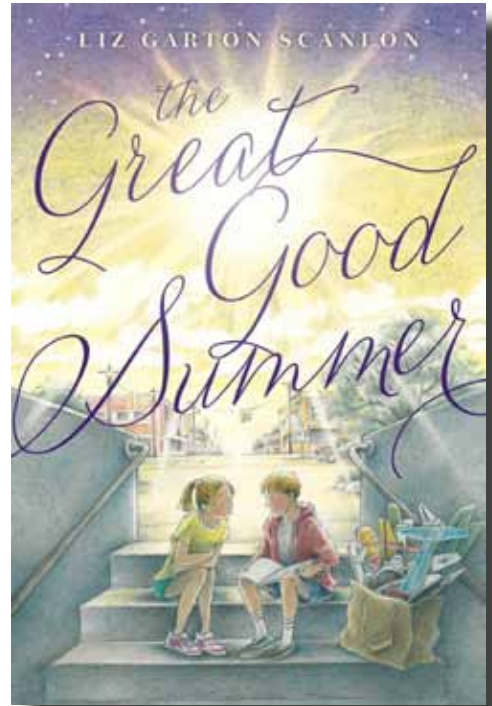


A Common Core State Standards
Aligned Educator's Guide for

*The
Great Good
Summer*



Ages: 8-12 Grades: 3-7 ISBN: 9781481411479

By Liz Garton Scanlon

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Ivy Green's mama has gone off with a charismatic preacher called Hallelujah Dave to the Great Good Bible Church of Panhandle Florida. At least that's where Ivy and her dad think Mama is. But since the church has no website or phone number and Mama left no forwarding address, Ivy's not entirely sure. She does know she's missing Mama. And she's starting to get just a little worried about her too.

Paul Dobbs, one of Ivy's schoolmates, is also having a crummy summer. Paul has always wanted to be an astronaut, and now that NASA's space shuttle program has been scrapped, it looks like his dream will never get off the ground.

Although Ivy and Paul are an unlikely pair, it turns out they are the perfect allies for a runaway road trip to Florida—to look for Mama, to kiss the Space Shuttle good-bye, and maybe, just maybe, regain their faith in the things in life that are most important.

Guide created by Debbie Gonzales



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The Educator Guide Format and Personal Bookmarks Procedures

To allow for a deep study of *A Great Good Summer*, the book has been divided into four sections. Each section consists of discussion questions followed by projects and activities.

Personal bookmarks are printed on the following page. Listed on these bookmarks are the four designated chapter groupings and a space allotted for Target Completion Dates. A suggested format for a group or individual novel study is to assign weekly Target Completion Dates for students to finish reading prior to the weekly book discussion session.

Procedure:

- Print bookmarks on cardstock—one per student in novel study group.
- Trim the edges of bookmark.
- Give to student with these directions:
 - ~ Write their name on it.
 - ~ Copy Target Completion Dates in designated space below assigned chapters to be read.
 - ~ Keep the bookmark in the book for reference through the course of the novel study.



Personal Bookmarks

This bookmark belongs to _____



Chapters 1 to 5
to be read by _____

Chapters 6 to 11
to be read by _____

Chapters 12 to 17
to be read by _____

Chapters 18 to 23
to be read by _____

This bookmark belongs to _____



Chapters 1 to 5
to be read by _____

Chapters 6 to 11
to be read by _____

Chapters 12 to 17
to be read by _____

Chapters 18 to 23
to be read by _____

This bookmark belongs to _____



Chapters 1 to 5
to be read by _____

Chapters 6 to 11
to be read by _____

Chapters 12 to 17
to be read by _____

Chapters 18 to 23
to be read by _____



Discussion Questions—Chapters 1 to 5

At home when I showed my motto to Mama, she said, “Yes, every good day starts with an idea. That may be true. But not all ideas are good.” (p. 5)

- The word idea is defined as being something understood, planned, or believed. Examine Ivy’s motto: Every good day starts with an idea. According to the definition, explain the logic behind her words. Tell why this motto is important to her.
- Explain why Mama stated that “not all ideas are good.” Consider the reasons why she felt this way. Is it possible that Mama was giving Ivy a clue regarding her perspective of life? How so?
- In regards to the effect the fires had on Mama and her leaving home with Hallelujah Dave and The Great Good Bible Church of Panhandle Florida, evaluate how her actions align with the definition of an idea. Is Mama’s leaving understandable, planned, or believable? Explain your answer.
- Is God an idea? Explain your answer.

I hope I’ll be a little bit like Mrs. Murray when I grow up. She actually does something with her ideas instead of just think about them. (p. 13)

- Explain why Mrs. Murray seems to delight in Ivy’s motto. Tell why her response differs from Mama’s.
- Compare Mama and Mrs. Murray. Tell of ways that the two are the same.
- Contrast Mama and Mrs. Murray. Explain how the two are different.
- Tell why Ivy decided not to sign the petition requiring Mrs. Murray to post an outline on the board when teaching.
- The word listen is defined as to hear and pay attention. Explain why it is important to listen to ideas, especially those of loved ones.

“Ivy, do you need help?” Paul’s looking at us through the fence, his hands hanging limply at his sides, flying gear in each one. (p. 20)

- Ivy first introduced Paul as an egghead and a brainiac. Define the terms *egghead* and *brainiac*. Identify the personalities of these types of people.
- In this scene, Paul stops what he is doing, something that he thoroughly enjoys, to ask Ivy if he can help. Tell what this action reveals about his character.
- Consider Ivy’s idea of Paul. Is it understandable, planned, or believable? Explain your answer.



“The truth, baby. They’re church folks. Church folks understand other church folks.” (p. 23)

- Define the word truth. Tell what the word means to you.
- Is truth an idea? Explain your answer.
- Explain what Daddy meant when he said that “Church folks understand other church folks.”
- Do church folks share common beliefs and ideas? How so?
- If church folks understand other church folks and Mama was a member of the church, explain why her actions are misunderstood.

I try to follow along—verse one, then two, then four—the way we’re supposed to, but I can’t resist. I peek straight away at verse three, the bit we skip every time. Mama says we leave it out to leave room for God, which is the same reason she and Daddy didn’t give me a middle name. (p. 25)

- Explain the reasoning behind skipping a verse in a hymn.
- Discuss what “leave room for God” means. Predict how God can work within that space.
- Justify why Ivy’s parents didn’t give her a middle name. Explain the logic behind it.
- Explore the role of having faith and leaving room for God. Explain how the two concepts work together.

“You can sit out here and try to get your prayers heard if you want, but I’m just killing time and looking for contrails.” (p. 34)

- Paul believes that there is no heaven or hell. Explain his reasoning.
- Is Paul considered a “church folk”? If so, explain why his ideas are not in line with Pastor Lou’s.
- Paul is a scientist. Consider how scientific reasoning affects Paul’s faith in God.
- Symbolism is a literary tool using actions or words to represent ideas or qualities. In this scene, Paul is challenging the ideals of the church while gazing into the heavens in search of contrails. Discuss how his words and actions can be perceived as symbolic.



A Scientific Study of Point of View

Objective: To compare and contrast the first- and third-person narrative points of view by using the Scientific Method.

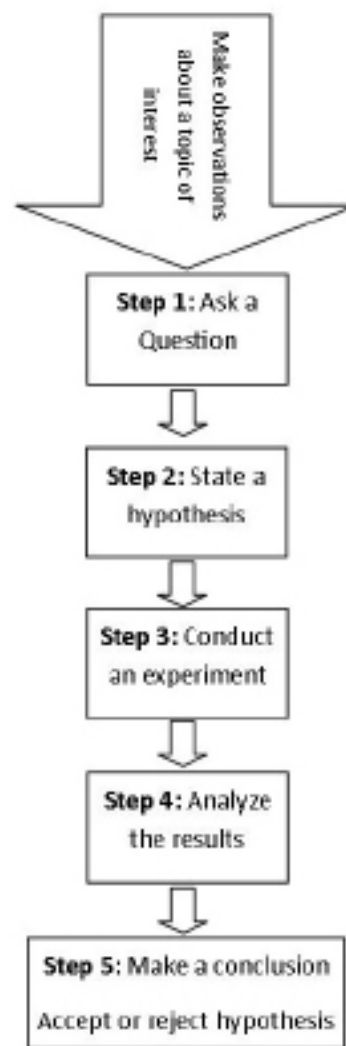
Materials:

- *The Great Good Summer*—pp. 46-49
- “The Book of Ruth Summary: How It All Went Down” printout (Guide, p. 8)
- The Hypothesis—An Experiment in Point of View worksheet (Guide, p. 9)
- Pencil

Procedure:

- Instruct students to define who is telling the story of *The Great Good Summer*. Have them validate their answers.
- State that the book is written in a first-person point of view. Discuss the nuances of the first-person point of view, also known as the spoken voice.
- Discuss the nuances of the third-person point of view, also known as the written voice. Explain that the voice of the third-person narrator is outside of the story rather than being a character in the story.
- Explain that the intention of this lesson is to assess which point of view allows the reader to understand characters’ emotional state more effectively through the use of the Scientific Method.
- Review the graphic to the right by discussing the terminology and intent of each step.

- ~ **Make observations.** Think about the use of narrative point of view. Consider it. Discuss it. Read the selected passage in *The Great Good Summer* (pp. 46-49) and The Book of Ruth Summary: How It All Went Down printout to inform your hypothesis.
- ~ **Ask a question.** Which point of view most effectively allows the reader to connect with the protagonist’s emotional state?
- ~ Answer the question with a **hypothesis**, an educated guess.
- ~ Test your hypothesis through **experimentation**, by comparing and contrasting writing and text samples.
- Use The Hypothesis—An Experiment in Point of View** worksheet to do this.
- ~ Once experimentation is complete, **analyze** your observations.
- ~ Form a **conclusion** based on whether your findings support or reject your hypothesis.



The Story of Ruth: How It All Went Down

By the Schmoop Editorial Team at www.schmoop.com, a rollicking source for homework help, teacher resources, and online test prep. Homework help lovingly written by PhD students from Stanford, Harvard, Berkeley.

Our story opens on a nice Jewish family with a problem. Famine has hit Bethlehem, which forces Elimelech and his wife, Naomi, to move east to Moab with their two sons to get some grub. There, they set up shop, eat some food, and live for about ten years. The sons marry two local girls, Ruth and Orpah, during this time. Life is good. Or so it seems.

One by one, Elimelech and his two sons die. Bummer. This leaves Naomi, Ruth, and Orpah manless and in need of help. Naomi decides to head back to Bethlehem (ten years is enough time to get over a famine, right?) and her daughters-in-law pack their luggage and join her. Naomi begs the girls to stay behind, and while Orpah is convinced and hightails it back to Moab, Ruth pledges her devotion to Naomi, forsaking her god and her people to become part of Naomi's life. Ruth's stubbornness pays off and Naomi lets her tag along.

In Bethlehem, things are not good for the ladies. Naomi is feeling down and out and Ruth is reduced to gleaning in the barley fields. There, Ruth happens to run into a well-known rich guy named Boaz, who instantly takes a liking to her and offers her all kinds of sweet gleaning privileges. Boaz also happens to be a relative of Naomi's late husband, which is very, very important, since Boaz would have an obligation to marry Ruth and provide for her as family.

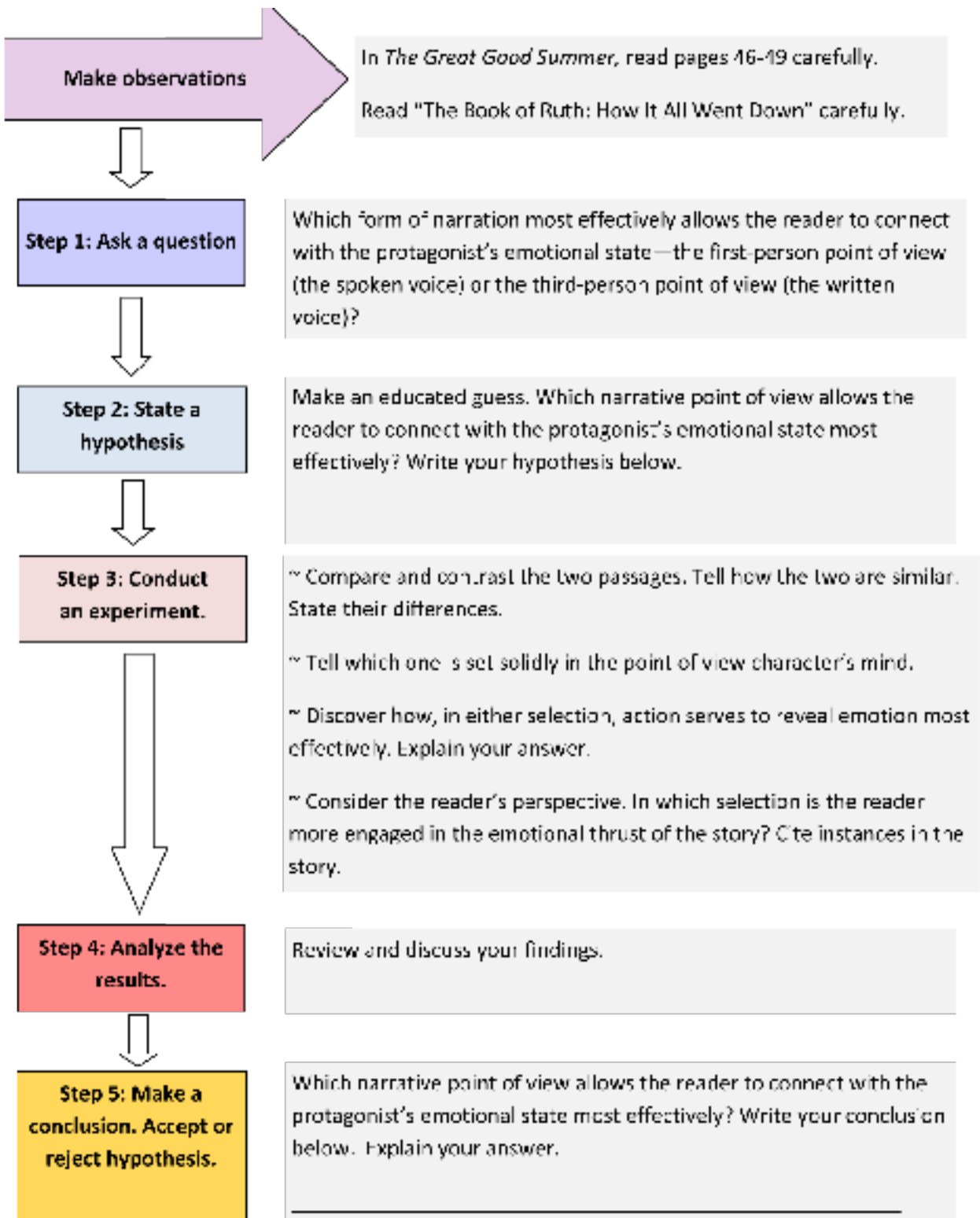
When Naomi hears about Boaz and what a stand-up guy he is, she hatches a plan for Ruth to snag him as a husband. She tells her daughter-in-law to visit Boaz at night in secret and lie at his feet. Ruth does what her mother-in-law asks, and Boaz is pleasantly surprised to see the cute girl from the fields is interested in him. He tells Ruth that he would love to marry her, but that there's another relative with even closer ties to her in-laws. Boaz sets out to meet the guy and everyone is left to hold his or her breath while we wait to find out whom Ruth will end up with.

As it turns out, this random relative is interested in buying some land that Naomi has, but he's much less interested in taking her daughter-in-law as his wife. So a deal is struck—the other guy renounces his claim on Ruth and Boaz is free to marry her. Wedding bells start ringing and everyone is happy.

Soon, Ruth and Boaz have a son, which makes Naomi happy. The women in town name the baby Obed, and, surprise, surprise, he goes on to be the grandfather of King David. Talk about a happy ending!



The Hypothesis—An Experiment in Point of View Worksheet



Discussion Questions—Chapters 6 to 11

Daddy picks the postcard back up and holds it between his two hands like it's an extra hand—like its Mama's hand—as if he's gonna put Mama herself right smack in the middle of his prayer. (p. 55)

- Interpret Daddy's action. Tell how his pressing Mama's postcard between his hands reveals his feelings for her.
- Ivy stated that Daddy should be mad at God. Analyze Daddy's character. Does he strike you as an angry man? Why or why not?
- Daddy tells Ivy not to take "anger out on the wrong guy" (p. 54). Identify who their anger should be directed toward—Hallelujah Dave and/or Daddy? Explain your answer.

Anyway, here's kind-of-cute Paul Dobbs, a little twitch in his smile, sitting on the steps by the side of the church, just the way I found him when I skipped out of service a few weeks back. (p. 63)

- Consider the symbolism of Paul and Ivy meeting at the church steps—the place where they first communicated.
- Observe the changes in Ivy's impression of Paul. Notice how she is describing him in a different, more complimentary manner. Explain why this is so.
- Foreshadowing is a literary technique in which the author gives the reader an advanced sign of what is to come in the future. Tell how earlier in the story when Paul asked Ivy if she needed help (p. 20), his question served as foreshadowing for his willingness to travel with Ivy to Florida.

"Well, yeah," says Paul. "I think I'm ready. And I think it's crazy, too, but a lot of great ideas are at least a little bit crazy. Don't you think?"

I don't answer, because I don't know the answer to that. I guess he's talking about a leap of faith, right? (p. 78)

- Define the term leap of faith.
- Explain how taking a leap of faith can be considered to be something crazy. Why is this so?
- Do you agree with Paul, that a lot of great ideas are at least a little bit crazy? Why or why not? Explain your answer.



“Blest be the tie that binds,” I whisper under my breath, because Paul cannot keep me away from my mama’s favorite hymn. He just plain can’t. (p. 91)

- Access the words and music for the hymn “Blest Be the Tie That Binds.”
- Listen, follow along with the words, and consider why this hymn was Mama’s favorite. Discover which phrases Mama might have identified with.
- Discuss why Ivy identifies with the lines “Blest be the tie that binds,” “We pour our ardent prayers,” and “When we asunder part, It gives us inward pain.”
- Explain why Ivy seems defensive regarding Mama’s favorite hymn. Tell why she feels that Paul would want to keep her away from it.

Pastor Lou’s voice booms through my head. “I will never leave or forsake you.” Ruth learned that from God, and Mama was supposed to learn that from Ruth. But she didn’t. She left, and I am forsaken. I am forsaken and scared and dirty and dead broke. (p. 104)

- The word *forsaken* is defined as being disowned, abandoned, and run out on. Consider Mama’s reasons to leave Loomer. Did she intend to forsake Ivy? Explain your answer.
- In the act of leaving Loomer, has Ivy forsaken Daddy? Was it her intention to abandon him? Explain your answer.
- Explore the symbolism of the bus driver named Magdalena. Note that a woman named Mary Magdalene traveled with Jesus as one of his followers. Discuss other aspects of faith, mystery, and spirituality that serve as ties binding Ivy’s story together.



A Plane or a Shuttle?

“I’m never gonna get the chance to be a real astronaut, and now I don’t even get to pretend anymore.” (p. 59)

Objective: To write an opinion piece by supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

Materials:

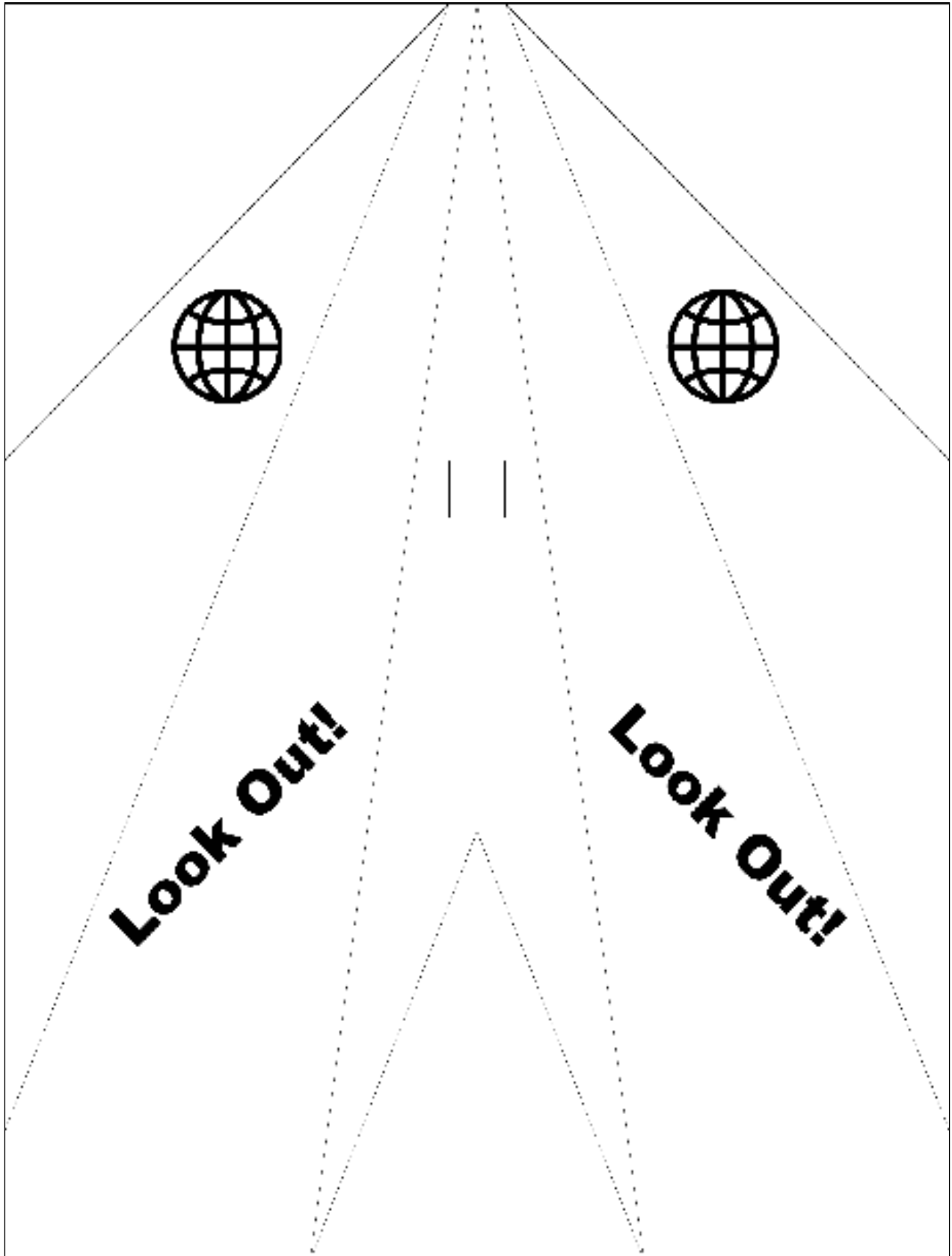
- Paper Airplane Folding Pattern (Guide, p. 13)
- Paper Airplane Folding Pattern Instructions (Guide, p. 14)
- A Commentary by Brian Anderson, Ph.D. (Guide, p. 15)
- Tape
- Writing paper
- Pencil

Procedure:

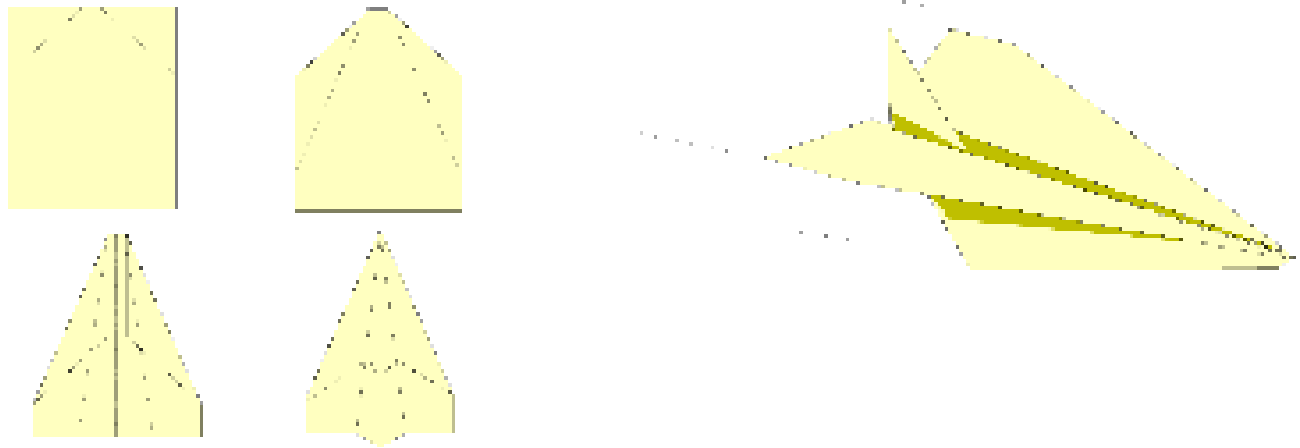
- Print Paper Airplane Folding Pattern and Paper Airplane Folding Pattern Instructions.
- Fold paper airplane according to printed instructions.
- Once completed, observe its form. Notice how it is structured to capture air in flight.
- Launch paper airplane by tossing it into the air, noting its movement in flight.
- Review the commentary by Brian Anderson in which he explains the differences and similarities between the NASA shuttles and regular airplanes.
- Use the information in the interview and your observations regarding the structure and flight capabilities of your paper to formulate an opinion stating whether the features and function of your paper plane resemble that of the NASA shuttle or an airplane.
- Write a short opinion piece supporting your position with facts and observations.



Paper Airplane Folding Pattern

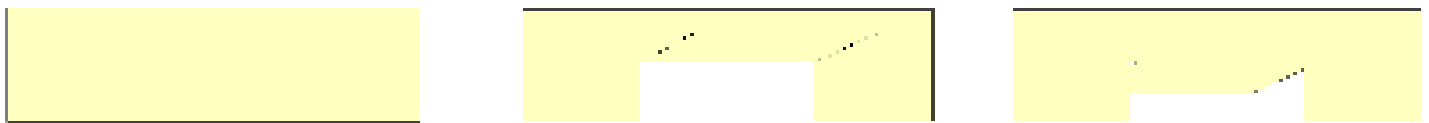


Paper Airplane Folding Instructions



THE PLANE

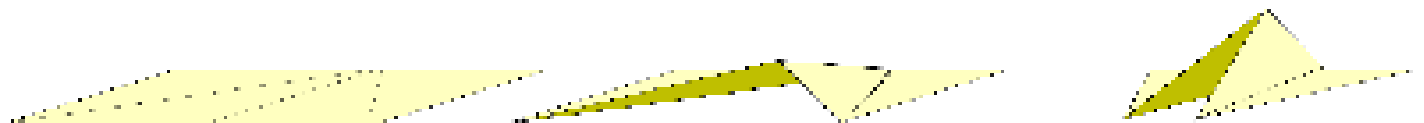
- Lay the paper over so that the printed fold lines are facing down.
- Then the corners - back half - are outside fold lines and inside. Repeat for the other set of folds.
- Fold up along the center line so that it is inside and gray lines are on the outside.
- Finally fold down each wing.
- Throw briskly and slightly angled up.



THE ADJUSTABLE FLAP

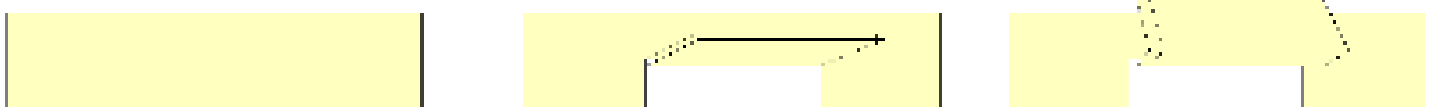
- Cut on sides.
- Fold up to make the plane rise. Fold down to make the plane drop.

Note: When printing on printers that require a large border, margins, the adjustable flaps may not print.



THE BACK-UP TAIL

- Bring the two angled fold lines together.
- Crease along the top.



THE FASTENING CLIP

- Cut on the sides.
- Fold to one side to hold the plane together.

A Commentary by Brian Anderson, Ph.D.

Brian holds a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois, a master's degree in marine science from the University of Texas, and a Ph.D. in chemistry, also from the University of Texas. In addition to writing children's books, Brian teaches chemistry at the University of Texas and answers occasional science questions in Highlights magazine. For more information about Brian and his books access his website at www.zackproton.com.

When contrasting the old NASA space shuttles and airplanes, some of the differences are:

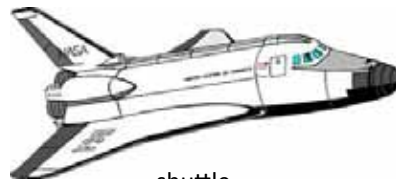
- An airplane can't go into outer space. Airplane engines and space shuttle engines both work basically the same way -- they use oxygen to burn fuel and expel exhaust gases backward to push the vehicle forward (Newton's third law of motion). Airplane engines get their oxygen from the air around them, and space shuttles bring their oxygen with them.
- The space shuttle doesn't have engines for horizontal flight. A space shuttle is actually a steerable glider. That's why, when it lands in California, they can't just fly it like a plane to Florida, and have to load it onto a 747 instead.
- A space shuttle goes about 35 times faster than an airplane (top speed of 17,500 mph versus 500 mph for a 747). An airplane would break apart at those speeds.
- A space shuttle lifts off vertically, uses detachable solid rocket boosters to get off the ground.
- Space shuttles and airplanes serve different purposes.

When comparing the old NASA space shuttles and airplanes, some of the similarities are:

- General size and shape.
- Both are vehicles used for transporting people and cargo.
- Both can "fly" (keeping in mind that the space shuttle really launches and glides rather than flying under its own power like an airplane does).
- Both rely on Newton's third law of motion to move forward by expelling exhaust gases backward.



airplane



shuttle

Writing Prompt: Consider the similarities and differences of the old NASA space shuttle and airplanes listed above. State whether the construction and flight patterns of a paper plane resemble that of the NASA shuttle or an airplane. Support your observation and opinions with the listed examples above and/or additional research.



Discussion Questions—Chapters 12 to 17

“Just this morning. He was in the Tallahassee paper, and I hate to tell you this, but that man’s in jail. I don’t know where that puts your mama, but the fellow who calls himself Hallelujah Dave is most definitely in the county jail.” (p. 118)

- Describe Ivy’s reaction to this news. Identify with her feelings.
- Note Paul’s response when Ivy dropped the phone after hearing that Hallelujah Dave was in jail, that he thanked the pastor of the Highpoint Baptist Church for his help. Tell how his actions are consistent with his character.
- The word help is defined as to give assistance, relief, or guidance. Explain how this little word can make such a difference in the way individuals see and react to the world around them.

“I owe a lot of folks some kindnesses,” is how he put it, “But most of ‘em won’t have none of it, and I can’t blame ‘em. Giving you guys a hand, it’s just something I can do.” (p. 122).

- Explain how Skinny Ricky is an unlikely candidate to lend assistance to Ivy and Paul. Tell why he doesn’t seem to be the helping sort.
- On page 121, Ivy states that when Skinny Ricky leaned across the bus aisle to speak to her, she didn’t scream, faint, or throw up. Instead, she looked straight at him and said, “Can I help you?” Explain her change in nature. Tell what has happened to change her point of view.
- Do you think Ivy was sincere when she asked Skinny Ricky if she could help him? Why or why not? Explain your answer.
- Could it be that helping Ivy and Paul benefitted Skinny Ricky in some way? How so?

But y’know who does look scared? Mr. Hallelujah Davey Floyd Roman with the glassy eyes. He looks shocked and scared, and now his mouth hangs open like a net for catchin’ bugs. And it seems like he might be done train-talking for a while, because he doesn’t say a single thing. (p. 136)

- Discuss why Ivy’s confrontation shocked Hallelujah Dave.
- Explain why his tone changed from train-talking through gritted teeth to a more normal one.
- Consider why Hallelujah Dave stated that Ivy’s mother, Diana Green, was one of the folks that were the “maddest at him” (p. 137). Predict how hearing that must’ve made Ivy feel.



“Peace be with you,” I sort of accidentally say as we clasp. I can’t help it—it’s an automatic thing, from church.

“And also with you,” says Ricky, like it’s automatic for him, too, if you can believe that. Skinny Ricky – a churchgoer, of all things. Which makes me think, no wonder he helped us, never mind his shady past. (p. 140)

- Explain why Ivy is surprised that Skinny Ricky is a churchgoer.
- Earlier, Daddy stated that “church folks understand other church folks” (p. 23). If this is so, what is it about Ivy that Skinny Ricky understands as a churchgoer? Conversely, what is it about Skinny Ricky that Ivy understands?
- The word forgiveness means pardon, charity, and an end to blame. Which of these terms best describes Skinny Ricky’s motivation and willingness to help Ivy? Explain your answer.
- List the similarities of Ruth’s story to Ivy’s quest. Tell of ways that Ivy is not forsaken—mysterious ways that she is being cared for.

Without turning her head to look up at me, she reaches to touch the gold cross at her neck, the one Daddy gave her for their tenth anniversary when she passed her old one down to me. They’re nearly the same, only this one’s real gold, through and through. (p. 152-3)

- In this scene, Mama speaks to Ivy without looking at her. Discuss what this action reveals about the way Mama is feeling.
- Describe how Mama’s solid gold cross serves as a symbol for Daddy’s love for her.
- Apply the definition of forgiveness to Mama’s situation. Is she in need of forgiveness? How so?



Star Study

“They’re not all that different, really,” Paul answers. “I mean, Ursa Major and Ursa Minor are a mother and child. They’ve been through all sorts of terrible stuff, including getting turned into bears, but they end up right next to each other forever in the sky. Doesn’t that sound like the sort of ending you’d get in the Bible?” (p. 128)

Objective: To explore the thematic interpretation of similar story premises.

Materials:

- Ursa Major and Ursa Minor Story and Craft Guide (Guide, p. 19)
- A 5 ½ x 5 ½ inch sheet of black construction paper
- A thumb tack
- Carpet, cork board, or folded towel (something to protect surface from pin pricks)
- Tape
- Paper clips
- Scissors
- A window



Procedure:

- Print the Ursa Major and Ursa Minor Story and Craft Guide.
- Read the story. Discuss the story as it relates to the graphic printed on the page.
- Using scissors, trim around the border of the graphic.
- Place graphic on top of 5 ½ x 5 ½ inch sheet of black construction paper. Secure together with paper clips.
- Lay graphic and 5 ½ x 5 ½ inch sheet of black construction paper flat on carpet. Using a tack and the stars on the graphic as a guide, poke holes through the papers.
- Remove paper clips.
- Using tape, secure the 5 ½ x 5 ½ inch sheet of black construction paper with constellation pin-pricked impressions to a window. Note how the constellation is revealed through the light shining from outside the window.



Writing Prompt: *In a short explanatory essay, compare and contrast the story of Ursa Major and Ursa Minor with Ivy and Mama’s story. Describe the similarities between the two. List the ways that the stories differ. Answer Paul’s question. Does the story of Ursa Major and Ursa Minor sound like a bible story? How so?*



Ursa Major and Ursa Minor Story and Craft Guide



As the Greek myth goes, Callisto, a nymph, was impregnated by the god Zeus while she slept. Zeus's jealous wife Hera turned Callisto into a bear. When Callisto's son Arcas had grown, she encountered him in the forest. Arcas didn't recognize her and raised his bow to shoot. Zeus intervened and turned Arcas into a bear too. Zeus grabbed them both by their long tails and hurled them into the sky where they remain as Ursa Major and Ursa Minor (the Great Bear and the Little Bear). Ursa Minor contains the North Star, Polaris.



Discussion Questions—Chapters 18 to 23

“It’s just that everything makes perfect sense if you listen to Pastor Lou,” says Mama. “Even God makes sense. Davey arrived and reminded me of the other parts of God – the fire and the anger, but the mystery and miracles, too. So, yeah, I guess that is a little bit like space, isn’t it?” (p. 188)

- Justify Mama’s reasons for leaving with Hallelujah Dave.
- Examine how Mama’s idea to travel with the members of the Great Good Bible Church was a leap of faith.
- Recall a time in the story where the fire and anger of space was explored.
- Explain how space is like God, according to Mama.
- Discuss how the idea of God is like space.

“Yeah, always,” says Paul. “I asked for a telescope when I was five. I didn’t get it, though. My mom and dad gave me a pair of kid binoculars instead, with a picture of Woody Woodpecker on them. I don’t think they quite got what I wanted to do.”

“Parents often don’t,” says Mama. (p. 193)

- Tell how the Woody Woodpecker binoculars serve as a symbol for Paul’s parents’ disconnect with his love for science.
- Explain why Mama is able to sympathize with Paul’s frustration with his parents’ lack of understanding. Has she endured a similar experience? How so?
- Describe your impression of Paul’s parents. Explore their seeming lack of concern for his well-being. Discuss how their distinguished style of parenting has affected Paul.

“How in God’s name could a person even imagine a thing like that?” I ask as we stare up at the wide white wings and American flags. “And then be brave enough to fly it? To space, of all places? I mean, is that brave or crazy?”

“Brave and crazy go together,” says Paul, smiling, answering but not looking at me. (p. 203)

- State how space travel is the ultimate leap of faith.
- Do you agree with Paul that brave and crazy go together? Explain your answer.
- List ways that Ivy behaved or reacted in a brave and crazy manner.
- Discuss how being brave and crazy turned out to be a good idea.



Ivy Ruth Green.

My whole name, even though I didn't know it till today. (pg. 212).

- Give examples of how Ivy's story mirrors Ruth's.
- Space has been described as a place of fire and anger, mysterious and miraculous. Explore the blank between Ivy's first and last name, the space in which God worked. Is it possible that the blank space between her names is an adequate size for miracles to take place? How so?
- Ivy stated that she admired Mrs. Murray because she actually did things with her ideas rather than simply think about them. Discuss how Ivy was transformed as a result of her ideas.
- Tell how Ivy's trials revealed her inner strengths and purpose.



Theme Search

She'll understand that sometimes when you're looking up in wonder at the great-good heavens above, you are so full up with mystery and surprise that it feels nice to hold on to something that you really know. (p. 213)

Objective: To explore the theme in a literary text.

Materials:

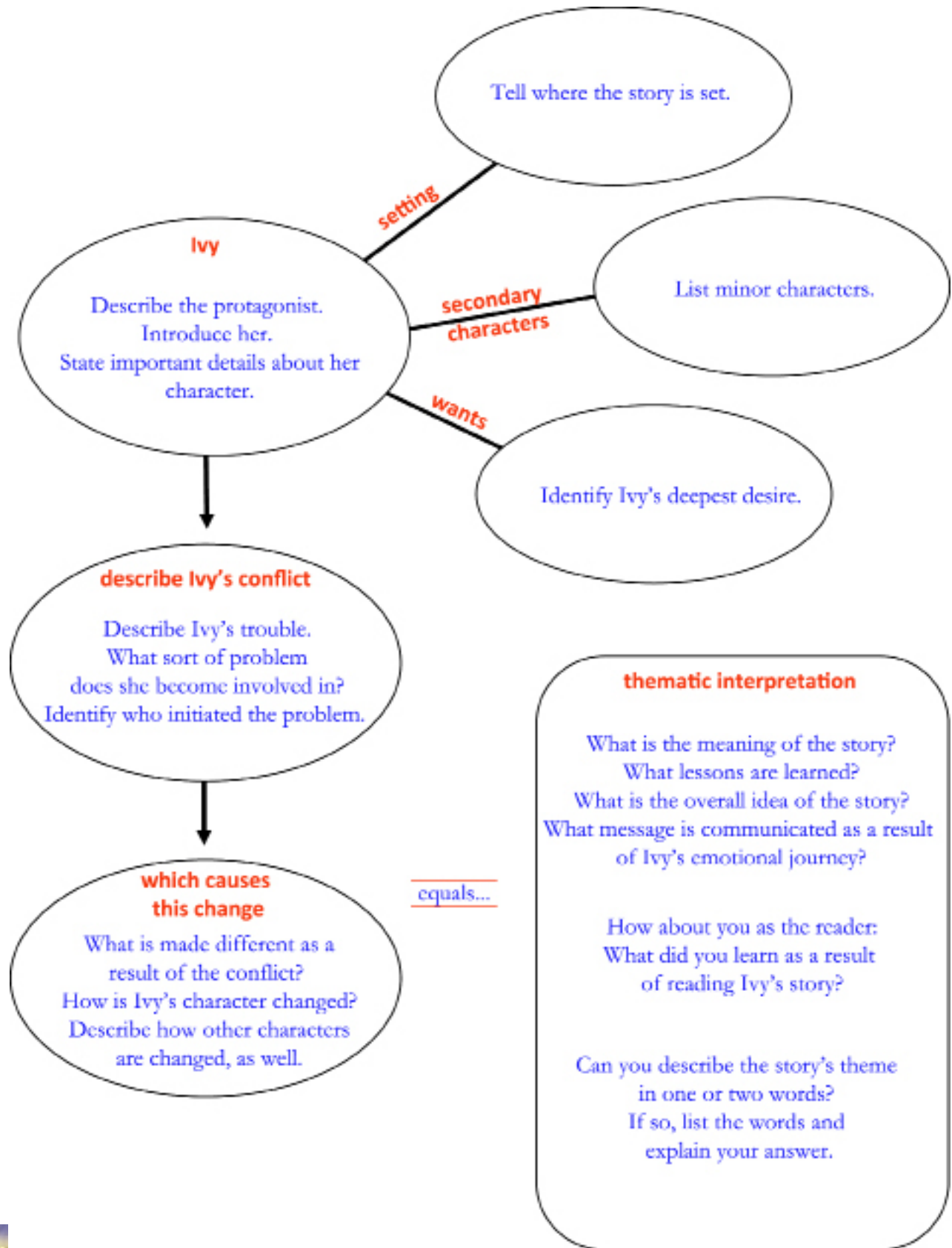
- *The Great Good Summer*
- The Theme Search Template Sample Overview (Guide, p. 23)
- The Theme Search Template (Guide, p. 24)

Procedure:

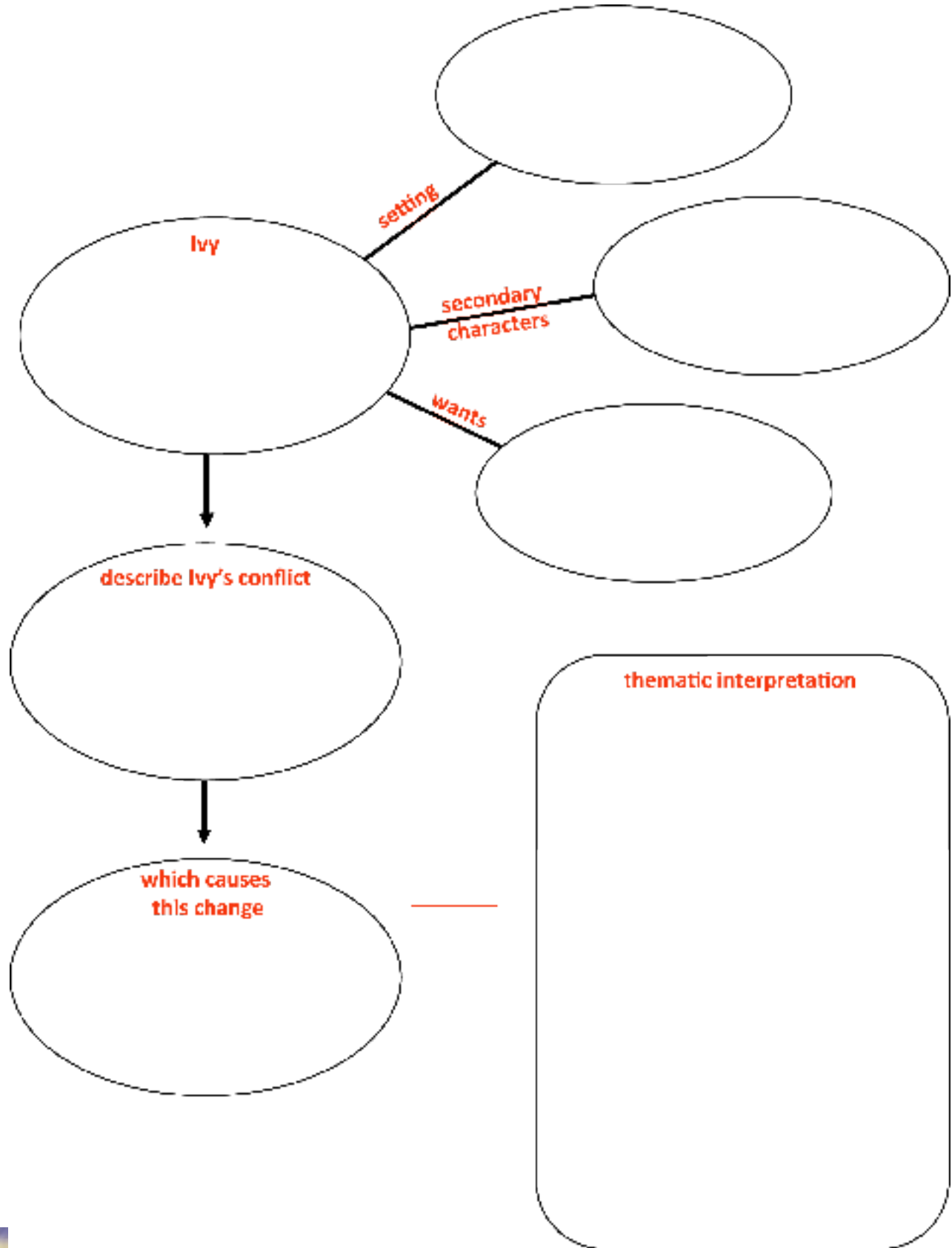
- Print out the Theme Search Template Sample Overview and Theme Search Template.
- Explain the definition of the theme of a story, that it is the overarching message or idea of the book. State that the theme of a story is revealed by tracing and interpreting the protagonist's emotional journey.
- Use the Theme Search Template Sample Overview when discussing aspects of the lesson. Explore the various literary aspects of *The Great Good Summer* labeled in each oval shape printed on the template.
- Instruct students to fill out the Theme Search Template according to their perception of the characters and events.
- Once the specifics of the literary aspects are identified in the oval shapes, instruct students to analyze the details listed. Use analysis to interpret the overall theme of the story.
- Some suggested themes to explore might be:
 - ~ Family
 - ~ Forgiveness
 - ~ Faith
 - ~ Spirituality



Theme Search Template Sample Overview



Theme Search Template



References

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Common Core State Standards Alignment

English Language Arts Standards—Reading: Literature

		Discussion Questions	Point of View	Theme Search	Close Study	Name or Symbol?
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.1	Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.	x	x	x	x	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.2	Retell stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.		x		x	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.3	Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the solution or problem.	x				x
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.6	Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.		x			
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 2–3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.	x	x	x	x	x
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.	x	x		x	x
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.					x
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.3	Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).	x	x		x	x
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in the grades 4–5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	x	x	x	x	x
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.					x
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.3	Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).	x	x		x	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.6	Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.		x			



English Language Arts Standards—Reading: Literature (cont.)

		Discussion Questions	Point of View	Plane or Chapter	Star Study	Theme Series
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.10	by the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 4-5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.	X	X	X	X	X
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text (visually, if appropriate), from personal opinions or judgments.					X
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.3	Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.	X	X		X	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.					X

English Language Arts Standards—Writing

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.1	Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.		X		X	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.				X	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.7	Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.				X	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1	Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.		X		X	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.				X	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.7	Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.				X	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1	Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.		X		X	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.				X	



English Language Arts Standards—Writing (cont.)

		Discussion Questions	Point of View	Plotter/ Story Arc?	Start/End?	Theme/Search
CCSS.W.6.2 Literacy.W.6.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.				X	
CCSS.W.7.2 Literacy.W.7.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.				X	

English Language Arts Standards—Speaking & Listening

CCSS.SL.3.1 Literacy.SL.3.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.	X	X	X	X	X
CCSS.SL.3.2 Literacy.SL.3.2	Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.	X	X	X	X	X
CCSS.SL.4.1 Literacy.SL.4.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.	X	X	X	X	X
CCSS.SL.5.1 Literacy.SL.5.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.	X	X	X	X	X
CCSS.SL.6.1 Literacy.SL.6.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.	X	X	X	X	X
CCSS.SL.7.1 Literacy.SL.7.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.	X	X	X	X	X

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