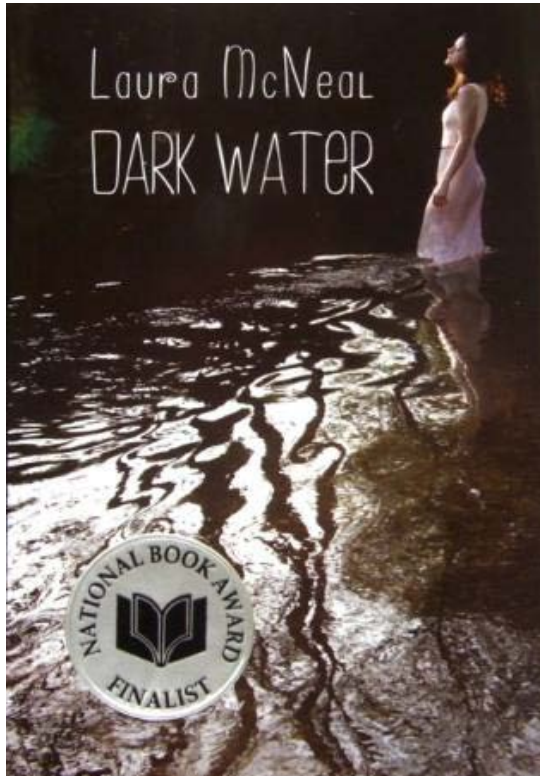


TEACHER'S GUIDE

Aligns with
Common Core
State Standards!

DARK WATER by Laura McNeal



"Notable for well-drawn characters, an engaging plot and, especially, hauntingly beautiful language, this is an outstanding book."

—Kirkus (starred review)

"With beautiful prose that draws us into the rhythms of a landscape that, like adolescence itself, is both fertile and harsh, Laura McNeal accomplishes a difficult feat: evoking compassion for a young woman whose search for love and independence leads to the ultimate tragedy. . . This is coming of age in the truest sense."

—the National Book Foundation

"...*Dark Water* is not so much a look at serious issues through the lens of teen love, but rather a look at teen love through the lens of serious issues."

—Genevieve Wood, *Spellbinder Books*
(Lone Pine, CA independent book store)

"Drawn in by the appeal of clandestine love and looming disaster, teens will also be rewarded with much thought-provoking substance in this novel's complex characters and hauntingly ambiguous ending."

— School Library Journal

"Amiel's resolve is yet another way in which McNeal keeps "Dark Water" from becoming a typical tale of young romance. Through their friendship the true goal of the book is realized. We see a discussion of the working immigrant life in the US. The workers are both desperately needed and ultimately disdained. This is a hugely important topic, and to see it tackled with such grace and wrapped in such a nice prose package is wonderful. I would love to see this novel discussed; especially in a classroom setting." — Michelle Cavalier, *Cavalier House Books* (Denham Springs, Louisiana independent book store)

YA Fiction | 304 pp | ISBN | Also available in eBook and audio

Reading Level: ages 12 and up

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This guide is brought to you by

Sharon Kennedy and Erica Rand Silverman

Sharon Kennedy and Erica Rand Silverman are both former New York City high school teachers. Sharon now supervises student teachers at Teachers College and Erica Rand Silverman is a children's literary agent. They team up on educational consulting projects (kind of like when they would plan together at school!)

about the book

Fifteen-year-old Pearl DeWitt and her mother live in Fallbrook, California, where it's sunny 340 days of the year, and where her uncle owns a grove of 900 avocado trees. Uncle Hoyt hires migrant workers regularly, but Pearl doesn't pay much attention to them . . . until Amiel. From the moment she sees him, Pearl is drawn to this boy who keeps to himself, fears being caught by *la migra*, and is mysteriously unable to talk. And after coming across Amiel's makeshift hut near Agua Prieta Creek, Pearl falls into a precarious friendship—and a forbidden romance.

Then the wildfires strike. Fallbrook—the town of marigolds and palms, blood oranges and sweet limes—is threatened by the Agua Prieta fire, and a mandatory evacuation order is issued. But Pearl knows that Amiel is in the direct path of the fire, with no one to warn him, no way to get out. Slipping away from safety and her family, Pearl moves toward the dark creek, where the smoke has become air, the air smoke.

Laura McNeal has crafted a beautiful and haunting novel full of peril, desperation, and love.

about the author



Laura Rhoton McNeal grew up in a series of Air Force towns, including Clovis, New Mexico, Sumter, South Carolina, and West Point, Utah. In none of these places did she feel appropriately dressed. When her father, a pilot, was assigned to do air surveillance during the cold war, she lived briefly in Keflavik, Iceland, but she was a baby then and didn't have to worry so much about fashion.

After earning a master's degree in fiction writing from Syracuse University, she taught 8th, 9th, and 11th grade English in Salt Lake City, giving everyone way too much homework, for which she apologizes sincerely. She then married Tom McNeal, with whom she collaborated first on a picture book called *The Dog Who Lost His Bob* and then on four young adult novels published by Knopf. Her first solo novel, *Dark Water*, was published in 2010 and was a finalist for the National Book Award.

Tom and Laura live with their two boys in southern California, where they are now being punished for Laura's over-zealous teaching: hours and hours of homework every night.

“Tú eres de dos mundos”

about the guide

Dear Educator,

There are seven sections to this guide: Pre and Post Reading; Take a Closer Look; Persuasive Writing and Speaking; Text-to-Self Motivating Questions; Guided Reading; Interdisciplinary Activities; and Supplemental Materials.

We’re especially excited to be sharing a comprehensive list of fiction and nonfiction supplemental materials that range in length and complexity to aid you in creating lesson plans that encourage comparing and contrasting of diverse texts. We know how time consuming it can be to find rich resources that connect with classroom literature and hope that this helps.

We’d also like to point out that great care was taken to align this guide with the Common Core State Standards while also emphasizing ways to engage students in personally connecting to the novel.

The organization of this guide is not meant to indicate a particular lesson plan order. Use the materials, questions and activities at the most appropriate time in your unit and please note that questions and activities may require additional scaffolding depending on the age and skill set of your students.

We love feedback. If you can think of ways that our guide could better serve you, don’t hesitate to let us know at info@we-love-teaching.com.

We hope you and your students enjoy the novel!
Sharon and Erica

before you read

One exceptional aspect of DARK WATER is the way it so gracefully humanizes the issue of undocumented immigration in the United States through likeable and fully realized characters who represent a variety of views. It is an excellent resource for those educators wishing to explore this topic with young people.

We encourage educators who do so to consciously create a safe space for discussion.

about the guide and common core state standards

If you are using the Common Core State Standards to focus your curriculum, we hope it will be useful for you to know that this guide pays particular attention to the following anchor standards:

READING

Key Ideas and Details

- Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from text.
- Key Ideas and Details: Determine central ideas or themes and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

Craft and Structure

- Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentence, paragraphs and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

WRITING

Text Types and Purposes

- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Comprehension and Collaboration

- Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

LANGUAGE

Knowledge of Language

- Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

If you would like to learn more about the Common Core State Standards we suggest you check out their website at www.corestandards.org.

pre and post reading

Pre-reading

Read the poem “Where I’m From” by George Ella Lyon with the class and assign students to write their own Where I’m From poems. This is an excellent class community building exercise. (source: Reading, Writing, and Rising Up! by Linda Christensen)

In the opening chapter, Pearl says, “You can only belong to one world at a time” (1). Before reading the novel, ask the class to discuss what the protagonist might mean by this. Make predictions about the novel based on this line. Have the students describe a time in their own lives when they found this to be true or false.

The setting plays an important role in this novel. Have students find Fallbrook California on the map/atlas. Through a discussion of the terrain, location, weather and population have students make educated guesses on the way the setting may impact the story.

Post-reading

Instruct students to stand in a circle and place a copy of DARK WATER on the floor in the center of the circle. One at a time, have students step into the circle, lift the book and mime an interaction with the book that conveys their opinion of it or conveys the emotions of a particular character during a period of internal or external struggle. Example, a person who loves the book might lift it up and hug it.

DARK WATER was nominated as National Book Award finalist. Read the other three titles nominated the same year (2010) and form your own committees to select a winner. As a class, discuss the criteria you feel is most important in evaluating the nominees. [<http://www.nationalbook.org/index.html>] Be prepared to defend your choice.

Use the suggested supplemental resources to further the class discussion on immigration in the United States. Draw the students’ attention to the Dream Act and have them research the implications of the federal government bill and state bill where you live. Have a class discussion on their findings.

Discuss the reasons people give gifts. List the ways that Amiel uses natural or discarded objects found in the forest to create repurposed gifts for Pearl. Brainstorm what natural or discarded objects are easily found in your environment that could be repurposed. Select some objects from your brainstorming and create a “gift” to share with your class or a “gift” from one character in DARK WATER to another.

As a review of the major themes covered in the novel, divide students into groups of four and ask each group to create a tableau (or freeze frame) to represent a specific theme. As each group holds their tableaux, ask the class to discuss what theme is being represented through their body positioning, the importance of this theme and to discuss specific details from the text that supports this theme.

Choose one particular theme from the novel. Write an essay comparing the theme from DARK WATER to a similar theme from another text read during this unit (article, poem, nonfiction book, novel, video, documentary, etc.). Use specific evidence from the two texts to show how the authors use particular techniques to develop the selected theme. Discuss the similarities and differences between what the two texts say about the theme. Make sure to note how comparing and contrasting these ideas provides you with a better understanding of the theme overall.

Interpret this quotation and find evidence in the novel to support whether you agree or disagree: “Out beyond the place of right-doing and wrong-doing, there is a field. I’ll meet you there” (Rumi).

Listen to the audio version of chapter 48 or another of your choice. Before listening, ask students to jot down some notes on what they expect from an audio version of this chapter. Listen to the chapter. Ask students to discuss whether their expectations were right. Have a class discussion on how their experience would be different if they were listening to the audiobook rather than reading the novel. What techniques do writers use to engage readers vs. techniques that audiobook-readers use to engage their listening audience? Allow students to request other chapters to listen to.

persuasive writing and speaking

Have students stand in a vertical line, with you at the head of the line. As you make statements, ask students to step to the right (agree) or left (disagree) to convey their opinion. You may choose to allow students to show the degree of their feelings based on how far right or left they step. Between statements ask students to explain their position. Example statements: Robby should forgive Pearl; If Amiel loved Pearl he wouldn't have run from the sirens during the fire; Greenie's romantic relationship hurt her friendship with Pearl; Pearl should not try to find Amiel in Mexico; Pearl should see her father.

Who's to blame for Uncle Hoyt's death? Is anyone to blame? Write a persuasive essay asserting who in DARK WATER or society at large, or anyone, is to blame for Uncle Hoyt's death. Be sure to address why others might disagree.

Aunt Agnes writes to Pearl, "a fault acknowledged is halfway forgiven" (283). What does Aunt Agnes mean, do you agree and do you think this should provide Pearl with solace?

What if Pearl had actually talked through her feelings for Amiel with her family? Put students into groups of four and assign each one a character role of Robby, Pearl, Uncle Hoyt and Pearl's mother. In character, ask students to answer questions: Is it okay for Pearl to have feelings for Amiel? Should she act on them? Is it okay for Amiel to live in the woods? Should Uncle Hoyt continue to hire Amiel given Pearl's feelings?

Do you agree or disagree with this statement: Amiel's situation in DARK WATER is a microcosm of many undocumented workers. Define *microcosm*. Write an essay in which you compare and contrast Amiel's experiences with factual historical occurrences in the United States.

Imagine you are Amiel, Pearl or Robby. As the character write an editorial to the local newspaper in Fallbrook, CA explaining how you would improve the immigration policy for southern California. Be sure to include evidence from your research about immigration policy.

Would you characterize Pearl as brave or selfish? Ask students to choose a side and prepare three specific reasons for their choice. Divide the class into small groups to debate amongst themselves and let them know that you'll be a setting up a fishbowl and selecting groups at random to converse in front of the rest of the class.

Research popular "wisdoms". Have students choose one and analyze in writing how it directly relates to the characters, conflicts, themes, etc. in DARK WATER.

Define *proverb* with the class. Have students research proverbs from all over the world. Have them find two proverbs that Pearl and Amiel might agree with and have them explain why they think this using evidence from the novel to support their answers.

take a closer look

questions on craft, language and literary elements

Take a closer look at the beginning of Pearl's relationship with Amiel. Consider what you know about Pearl and her life from the beginning chapters of the novel. How might this explain her interest in Amiel and the quickness for which she develops feelings for him?

List the variety of language McNeal's characters use when referring to undocumented immigrants. List the variety of language used in the national discourse surrounding immigration. Write an essay analyzing the *connotations* associated with particular words and the history behind the use of these words.

Analyze how McNeal *structures* the novel and how the structure impacts the *pacing*. Consider chapter lengths and foreshadowing.

Consider how an author writes an emotionally resonant story. Discuss Robby's relationship with his father. How does that storyline heighten the tragedy of the novel? Can you find other ways McNeal's decisions escalate the emotional resonance?

Find at least three examples of *foreshadowing* in the beginning chapters of the novel. What does the reader learn from these moments and how do they impact the telling of the story?

Nostalgia is a motif that weaves itself through DARK WATER. Define *motif* and nostalgia with students. Ask them to pay attention to McNeal's use of recurring references and *flashbacks* to innocence and childhood (53). They may create a running tab of how many times Pearl reflects back to these "happier" times and discuss why they think McNeal has Pearl do this. Is this an effective technique? Provide specific evidence from the text to support your argument.

Describe Pearl's relationship with her mother and father. How does McNeal *characterize* these relationships? Provide specific examples from the text to support your description. How do her parents' opinions of each other affect Pearl's opinion of them?

When her mother is distraught in the yard, Pearl thinks, "She needed saving, but I didn't move. It was as if my mother, the expert swimmer, were drowning but I had never learned to swim" (166). How does McNeal use *metaphor* to convey Pearl's *conflict*?

Consider McNeal's *juxtaposition* of all three parent/child relationships (Pearl/parents, Amiel/parents, Robby/parents). Describe how this juxtaposition impacts each character's views of their own relationships. How does it impact the reader's view?

Pearl and Amiel have distinct qualities that make them stand out from others. Describe their particular characteristics and how McNeal uses *characterization* to construct these unique characters. In what ways are these characteristics *symbolic* of their place in

life/society? Find specific references in the novel to support your analysis.

Through the hobby of raising silkworms, Pearl and her mother learn interesting details about the behavior and life of these caterpillars. List the details from the novel. Compare and contrast the ways in which the silkworms are a *metaphor* for the characters and their relationships. Provide details from the text to support your claim.
(www.suekayton.com/silk.htm)

How does McNeal's decision to write Amiel's character as a mime early in the novel increase the tension between Pearl and Amiel? Would the novel be "better" if Amiel spoke? Analyze how McNeal's decision affects the *rising action* in this novel.

Think about the ways in which Amiel uses his body among the other workers and how later in the novel when her high school peers ask her questions about the fire, Pearl responds in a whisper, "I can't really talk" (271). How does McNeal use these two examples in the novel to compare and contrast the two characters' status in their peer groups? Is their status static or does it change? Find specific examples from the text to support your claim.

At the end of the novel, McNeal leaves Pearl and Amiel's future ambiguous. Why does she choose to do this? Is it an effective choice? What other novels have you read that have ambiguous endings? Debate whether you feel this is an effective writing choice.

In what ways do the characters of Pearl, Agnes, Robby, Pearl's mother and Greenie deal with forgiveness differently? Compare and contrast.

Literary terms and techniques in italics. Teacher may want to define with students.

text-to-self motivating questions

Are you nostalgic for another time in your life? Share the memories that come to your mind. If not, consider why that might be.

If you had to draw an image to represent yourself instead of signing your name, what would it be?

Think of a friendship in your life that went through a big change. What do you think causes friendships to change?

If you were among a group of people who didn't know that you spoke their language, would you rather admit to it and take part in the conversation or pretend you didn't know and eavesdrop?

If you had to leave home and could only bring three small things with you, what would they be?

Have you ever been blamed for something you did or didn't do? How did you feel and what did you do about it?

Think of a time you wanted someone to forgive you and a time you needed to forgive someone else. Why do you think forgiveness is so difficult?

Imagine you are an adult. Looking back on this last year, are there any choices you've made that your adult self would change? Why? Do you think this means that you shouldn't have made them?

How do you define love? What does love look like? Would you do anything for love?

Is there one thing a person could do that you think is unforgivable?

Would you spy on your parents/guardians if you had a good cause?

How do you define family?

How do you define home?

How did you feel about immigration before reading DARK WATER? Did your view change after reading it? Why or why not? What scenes, characters, conflicts and/or lines affected your view the most?

guided reading questions

Chapter 1

1. Using the text, define “heterochromic”.
2. Pearl reveals that Uncle Hoyt used to tell her when she was little that her heterochromic eyes “meant [she] could see fairies and peaceful ghosts”. How could you describe Uncle Hoyt from these comments to Pearl?
3. How can you interpret Amiel’s whisper to Pearl, “Tú eres de dos mundos”?
4. Pearl says, “Now that he’s gone, I try to see things when I’m alone. I put one hand over my blue eye, and look south. With my brown eye I can see all the way to Mexico.” From this statement, what predictions can you make about Pearl and Amiel?
5. When Pearl’s eyes begin to water, she removes her hand and thinks, “Tomorrow, I’ll look again.” What does this reveal about Pearl’s character?

Chapter 2

1. We are introduced to the *setting*, Fallbrook, California early on. Using explicit details from the text, how would you describe Fallbrook to someone who has never been?
2. What inferences can you make about how Pearl feels about Fallbrook? Use textual evidence to support your claim.
3. Pearl describes Fallbrook vegetation as “beautiful from a distance but tangled and confusing up close”. Analyze this statement. What might McNeal be saying about Fallbrook? What might she be *foreshadowing*?

Chapter 3

1. Amiel is seventeen years old when he and Pearl meet, but he tells his employers that he is twenty. What are Amiel’s motivations for not revealing his true age?
2. Pearl’s mother repeatedly states, “*The wolf is at the door.*” What *connotations* do we associate with a “wolf” and why might McNeal choose to have Pearl’s mother frequently speak this line?
3. McNeal recurrently refers to constricted and constrained spaces when describing Fallbrook. Identify some of those examples in the text and analyze how she is starting to develop a particular *theme* for her novel.
4. Throughout her novel, McNeal *juxtaposes* positive images and negative images to create a shift in *mood*. Cite an example from the text and describe what mood it creates.

Chapter 4

1. Pearl is curious about the boys and men who wait for work on the corner and she asks her Uncle Hoyt why they are all Hispanic. He tells her, "...white teenage boys don't pick avocados in California. Neither do grown white men. Not enough money in it for them. Or status." Read the article "Field of Tears: They Came Illegally for the best of reasons" focusing on "The stolen jobs nobody wants" (*The Economist*, Dec. 16, 2010). Compare and contrast what Uncle Hoyt says with the reasons the article offers as to why the day laborers are mostly Hispanic.
2. How does the incident where one of Uncle Hoyt's workers is deported propel Pearl's decision to ask her uncle to hire Amiel?
3. What *tone* is McNeal using when Pearl thinks, "*If nobody knows you, how do you ever get a job?*"

Chapter 5

1. Pearl refers to her father as a "louse". What *connotations* does this word hold?
2. Pearl states that the "wild grass...had sprouted after the winter rains" and that this time was her "favorite two months of the whole year". How might McNeal be comparing grass growing after the rains to how someone *figuratively* grows after a conflict?
3. McNeal reveals that Robby and Pearl no longer speak with one another. How does this *foreshadowing* affect the reader and the *rising action*?
4. Based on Robby's dialogue, how would you *characterize* him and how does Pearl seem to feel about him?
5. McNeal *alludes* to "eyes" throughout her novel. Identify an example where she does this and what information does this allusion offer the reader?
6. What is the *denotative meaning* of a mime and why do you think McNeal has her character miming in her novel?
7. Why do you think McNeal *alludes* to the song "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" from the musical "The Wizard of Oz"?

Chapter 6

1. How does McNeal describe Pearl's uncle's guesthouse?
2. What can we infer from McNeal's *images* about how Pearl feels about her mother?
3. With your teacher, read excerpts from Chekhov's short story "Gooseberries". Why does McNeal choose to *allude* to this when Pearl is telling a story about her mother?
4. How and why do Pearl and her mother seem to switch roles?

5. Define nostalgia. McNeal introduces us to one of her *themes* about nostalgia. Where can you identify textual evidence that supports this theme?
6. How can we now compare Pearl's "upside down" experiences with Dorothy from "The Wizard of Oz"?

Chapter 7

1. McNeal refers to the "wolf" again in this chapter. Who/what might she be referring to?
2. What qualities do silkworms have?
3. What is Robby hinting at when he wishes people were "bred not to wander"?
4. How can you *synthesize* Robby's collection of Tintin figures with McNeal's development of the nostalgia *theme*?

Chapter 8

1. How does Robby's decision to go back home to pick up reeds for his concert affect *suspense* in the *plot*?
2. Why does McNeal refer to Robby's dad as a "bad actor in a high school play"?
3. How do Robby's and Pearl's *points of view* of their fathers compare and contrast? Use explicit examples from the text to support your claim.
4. How does McNeal change Pearl's mother's use of her calendar to develop her *theme*?
5. Why does Robby *allude* to a "succubus" when describing the car of the woman he sees leaving his home?
6. Pearl introduces us to the river. Based on her vivid descriptions, what can we infer about how she feels about the river?
7. Why does Robby talk to an ostrich? What might an ostrich represent?
8. How does Robby's retelling of the story about his uncle propel Pearl to visit Amiel with coffee?

Chapter 9

1. Pearl describes the effects of a previous fire on her uncle's farm as "ghastly" but then describes how on this particular day, the tree limbs reach high over head and open up to reveal the sunlight. Why does McNeal *juxtapose* these two negative and positive images? What does it reveal about Pearl's feelings toward Amiel?
2. Why does Pearl feel her mouth dry up when Amiel looks at her so intently?

Chapter 10

1. Pearl and her mother have a very superficial discussion in the middle of the night about the silkworms. What might they really want to say to each other about how they are each doing?

Chapter 11

1. Why does McNeal end chapter 10 with Pearl discussing her relationship with her mother and begin chapter 11 with Pearl analyzing her relationship with her father? How do we see Pearl's relationships with her parents devolving?
2. Why does Pearl worry about her mother when her father informs her he wants to take her to Paris at the end of the school year?
3. Pearl's heart skips a beat when Amiel waves to her from his bicycle. She thinks, "What is it about a person that makes him harmless to others and fatal to you, like a bee sting or a trace of peanut butter?" How does this line intensify the rising action?
4. Why does McNeal refer to the purple jacaranda tree twice in this chapter?

Chapter 12

1. Why does McNeal use *italics* when she has Robby speak "*Marcel Marceau*"?
2. After examining the *dialogue* between Robby and Pearl, how do their *points of view* toward Amiel differ? How does McNeal use their language to convey their feelings?
3. At the end of chapter 12, how does McNeal use *dramatic irony* to increase tension in the plot?

Chapter 13

1. Why does Pearl refer to fourth grade as "the last summer of making things up"?
2. What is McNeal trying to emphasize when she adds a *dash* when describing Pearl and Greenie are not only throwing Ken and Barbie a wedding but an actual rehearsal dinner?
3. Why does Pearl repeatedly refer back to toys from childhood: Barbie, Ken, Lincoln Logs?
4. McNeal describes different colors throughout her novel. Why might she name Pearl's childhood friend "Greenie"?
5. What effect do McNeal's frequent *flashbacks* have on the reader and on her *themes*?
6. How does Pearl feel when she thinks that Greenie's loyalty falls with Hickey now, and how can you tell?
7. Why does McNeal capitalize "Normal World" after Greenie takes a sip from her beer?

8. Pearl teases Hickey that one of her eyes sees the present and one sees the future. Up to this point, what *inferences* can you make about what Pearl sees in her own future?
9. While at the river with Greenie and Hickey, Pearl walks in the river and begins to describe it as having its “old charm” but as she continues down the river, her descriptions become bleaker and dimmer. What could the river and its changing qualities *symbolize* for Pearl?
10. How is Pearl’s relationship with Greenie changing?

Chapter 14

1. How can we *characterize* Pearl’s unconscious decision to never cross to the other side of the calm Santa Margarita River?
2. How does Pearl’s *allusion* to *Sleeping Beauty* inform the reader of how she feels about Amiel?
3. Why does Pearl refer to “potential mates” and being “dumb” in their presence when she sees Amiel coming toward her on his bike, and how do these details support McNeal’s *tone* toward growing up.
4. Using context clues, how can we define “disconcerted” and why is Pearl disconcerted?
5. McNeal mentions “eyes” often in her novel. How can we connect the color sepia to McNeal’s nostalgia theme?
6. How does McNeal use the piece of paper with notes between Pearl and Amiel to increase the intensity in the *plot*?

Chapter 15

1. What are “squatter camps” and how does Pearl’s mother react to Pearl’s long walk through the woods?
2. How does Pearl seem to feel about herself when she compares herself to Agnès?
3. Pearl’s mother gives Robby a Tintin figurine for his birthday. How does Robby share qualities with the character Tintin?
4. When she attempts to distract Uncle Hoyt from seeing Robby in the car, how does Pearl question her own judgments of Uncle Hoyt, and how do her and Robby’s attitudes toward Uncle Hoyt compare and contrast?
5. Define “morals” and how do they play a role in Robby’s, Pearl’s and Uncle Hoyt’s relationships?
6. How does McNeal use humor and sarcasm to develop Pearl’s character? Find explicit details from the text to support your assertion.

7. Why does McNeal use the surfing *analogy* and what does this information reveal about the changes in Robby and Pearl?

Chapter 16

1. McNeal begins this chapter with a *simile* where she compares “the sky spreading its whiteness through the room” with a bad headache. What *mood* is she creating by having Pearl wake up with such negativity?
2. What is the fifth instar and what does Pearl compare her pride to?
3. Pearl describes herself as reckless. How is this a change from the Pearl we met at the beginning of the novel? Cite examples of this recklessness.
4. What is the *denotative meaning* of the word “hobo”? What *connotation* does it hold and why might McNeal choose to have the boy near the river speak this word in her novel?
5. How can you *interpret* Robby’s response to Pearl’s question about why no one ever declares they want to be a homeless person or an “illegal alien” for Halloween?
6. Notice the language McNeal’s character’s speak when discussing undocumented workers. Who speaks which, and what *connotation* does each carry?

Chapter 17

1. What effect do Robby’s questions at the restaurant have on Mary Beth?
2. Define “occlusion”. Do you think McNeal intentionally has Robby speak this word to Mary Beth? Why or why not?

Chapter 18

1. How do Robby and Pearl hatching parallel plans for different reasons affect the *plot*?
2. When sneaking a bike ride to the river, Pearl hints that she would like to disappear. What *inferences* can you make about from what or from whom she would like to escape?
3. What specific *imagery* does McNeal use in her writing to reveal Pearl’s anxiety as she trudges through the river to find Amiel?
4. Why does Pearl use the term “illegal immigrant” in her description of her walk through the river where in her earlier thoughts and dialogue she uses other terms to describe an undocumented worker? What effect does this have on the *mood*?
5. Notice the *juxtaposition* of the two parts in this *compound sentence* when Pearl finally sees Amiel in the tree: “He wasn’t holding an ax, and his feet were bare.” How does McNeal use this juxtaposition to make a statement about Amiel’s vulnerability?
6. What colors does McNeal use to describe her time at the river with Amiel, and why does she use these particular colors?

7. What details help reveal Pearl's fear as she hurries to get home in the dark woods?
8. How is Amiel's silence in his speech and in the way he moves through the woods linked to his life of hiding?
9. Pearl recognizes that she is planning her dishonesty. How is her relationship with her mother changing and why might McNeal reveal this at the end of the chapter?
10. How does McNeal use *foreshadowing* in this chapter to intensify the anxiety of the reader?

Chapter 19

1. Define "chimera" and what it *symbolizes* in this novel.
2. How does Pearl's mentioning of Tintin change the *mood* and how does it add to McNeal's *theme* of nostalgia?

Chapter 20

1. How does Pearl's character *compare* and *contrast* with an actual pearl?
2. Why might McNeal have Pearl attempting and failing to analyze two poems about death?

Chapter 21

1. Pearl says she is suspicious of people who say, "*Things happen for a reason.*" Why does she say this, and would the other characters agree with her? Why or why not?
2. How does Pearl react when Amiel speaks English words to her for the first time?
3. How does the *mood* change when Amiel goes from juggling fruit to juggling a machete, and how can we connect this mood shift to the development of the plot?

Chapter 22

1. Describe all the secrets Pearl holds.
2. How does Pearl's attitude toward Aunt Agnès change?
3. Amiel insists on speaking in English when talking with Aunt Agnès at the urgent care office. What does this reveal about Amiel?
4. What *details* does McNeal use in her writing to underscore the disparity in wealth between Aunt Agnès and Amiel?

Chapter 23

1. Aunt Agnès says to Pearl, “The culture says you cannot have, so you want.” *Synthesize* Aunt Agnès’ *point of view* about Pearl loving Amiel with Robby’s point of view. How does Pearl’s opinion compare and contrast to theirs?
2. How can you *interpret* Aunt Agnès’ saying, “Love does much but money does all”? How can we connect Pearl and Amiel’s experiences to this?

Chapter 24

1. Explain why Pearl feels “like a helium balloon” in her mother’s hand, and how does McNeal use this *simile* to convey changes in Pearl and her mother’s relationship?
2. Why does McNeal *flashback* to Pearl during her preschool years and the image of Pearl’s little hands on her mother’s cheeks?
3. How does the description of the bicycle ride to the river differ from McNeal’s earlier *imagery* of the same route? Why might McNeal make this shift at this point in her novel?
4. Using Pearl’s examples of Thoreau and Laura Ingalls Wilder, *analyze* how Pearl’s *point of view* of the river might compare and contrast to Amiel’s and to other undocumented workers’?
5. McNeal writes descriptively about nature throughout her novel. *Identify* some of her numerous examples from her characters’ thoughts, dialogue, etc. What statement about rivers and/or nature in general might McNeal be making?
6. Why does Amiel tell Pearl to go away? How does Pearl interpret this?
7. Why does McNeal use the *analogy* of a circuit board when Pearl’s hand and Amiel’s touch?

Chapter 25

1. Make connections between the *tension* increasing and Pearl’s realization that the *setting* of Fallbrook is distinctly divided between two worlds: the river world and the world of the hilltops. Why does McNeal choose to have Pearl “discover” this at this point in the novel?
2. *Reflect* on what Pearl expects to see when she covers one eye at Paddy O’Hara’s restaurant.
3. In Pearl’s father’s new car, describe the details McNeal uses to reveal Pearl’s feelings toward her father. What details hint at a happier relationship?
4. According to Pearl’s father, how do Pearl’s mother’s and father’s views about work and taking care of their family *contrast* ?
5. How does Pearl’s father use *rhetoric* to convince Pearl of his point of view about her mother’s work choices and his own?

6. How can we *interpret* McNeal's *tone* when she has Pearl's father say to Pearl about her mother, "We all have to grow up sometime"?

Chapter 26

1. What qualities does Pearl's mother share with a "grebe", and how does McNeal's continuous descriptions of nature in her novel help develop her nature-related *themes*?
2. To get something useful from the silkworms, Pearl's mother would need to destroy them. How might this situation be *analogous* to Pearl's family's situation?
3. Why does Pearl say to her mother, "Maybe silk isn't the business for us"?
4. How might the *image* of the two cocoon "lovers" be hinting at something in Pearl's future?
5. How does the stress of the plot build after Pearl tells her mother about her father's new condo?

Chapter 27

1. How is the *mood* affected when we read about Pearl's dream?
2. Why might McNeal *juxtapose* the images of a crisp, clear Sunday morning and the haunting eyes of a coyote?
3. Pearl continues to recall qualities of Uncle Hoyt's character that she admires. How does this contradict with Robby's and her assumptions about his infidelity?
4. McNeal chooses to list all of the "non-Mexican businesses" after a *colon* (:), starting with the word "Village", and she writes that these are the places where Pearl normally shops. Why might McNeal choose to use these techniques?
5. Robby repeatedly speaks of an ostrich. What could the ostrich represent?

Chapter 28

1. How is McNeal's use of the word "homochromic" *symbolic*?
2. Why is Pearl's mother jabbing her own earlobes, and how does this description convey her state of mind?

Chapter 29

1. Analyze Pearl's increased deceit as the *plot* gets more complicated.
2. Why is Hickey insulted by Pearl's offer to give him twenty dollars as a reward for finding the envelope? How does his reaction challenge Pearl's earlier judgments of him?

Chapter 30

1. How and why does Pearl feel responsible for her mother's happiness?

Chapter 31

1. How does Pearl's feeling of happiness compare to the expanding bark of a sycamore tree?
2. Why does McNeal refer to the "greenness" all around Pearl and Amiel, and how does this connect to McNeal's *theme* of nostalgia and growing up?
3. How does McNeal continue to use the natural elements as a *motif* throughout her novel, and how does this motif affect the *mood* in this chapter?
4. Desperately Pearl says to Amiel that they live in America and they are "equals". Why does Amiel not answer Pearl?
5. What *internal conflicts* does Pearl struggle with after she and Amiel finally kiss?

Chapter 32

1. How does Pearl's relationship with Aunt Agnès *compare* and *contrast* with her relationship with her own mother, and why does McNeal choose to highlight this comparison at this point in the novel?

Chapter 33

1. Pearl identifies herself as the "hobo girl of Agua Prieta" and imagines that is how the hikers near the river see her. How is Pearl's view of herself changing?
2. Pearl reveals Hickey and Greenie have "entered a cocoon" as they spend more and more time together. How does this *figure of speech* convey the developing changes in Pearl's and Greenie's relationship, and how does it help Pearl express her feelings about the change?
3. McNeal alludes to misdirection often in her novel. Where do you see examples of misdirection and how do these *allusions* enrich the plot?
4. Pearl's mother discards the corpse of the lady moth and says to Pearl that "sometimes you've got to know when to give up." How does Pearl's mother's journey with her silkworms align with her own life struggles?
5. How does McNeal overlap her *themes* to weave a more complex story?
6. Why might McNeal have Pearl reading *Wuthering Heights*?
7. How is it a *turning point* in the novel when Amiel finds the white shells for Pearl and hides them in the black oak, and how does this action by Amiel affect the movement of the plot?
8. How does McNeal illustrate to her readers a *parallel* longing from Pearl: a longing for a more simple time and a longing to enter a new phase in her life?

Chapter 34

1. Why does Pearl's mother lie to Pearl about where she works?
2. How is Pearl's life *analogous* to the upside down house McNeal continues to discuss, and why does Pearl state that she would feel at home there?

Chapter 35

1. Why does McNeal align the *image* of a childhood game piece – a Scrabble tile, with Pearl's adolescent feelings toward Amiel?

Chapter 36

1. Why does Amiel continue to silence Pearl while they are fishing?
2. What are the *denotative* and *connotative* meanings for the word "coyote"?

Chapter 37

1. Why are many of McNeal's *chapters* only a few pages long?
2. Why does Pearl fight against developing any sympathy for Mary Beth? How does McNeal attempt to create sympathy for Mary Beth through the *dialogue* in Subway?

Chapter 38

1. Where is Amiel from and why does McNeal only now have him reveal this?
2. How does Amiel avoid the topics he does not want to discuss with Pearl?

Chapter 39

1. How does McNeal create a specific *mood* in the opening paragraph, and how is this mood continued throughout the chapter?
2. How are the readers' emotions heightened?
3. Why is it Pearl's instinct to duck her head when hikers walk by on the other side of the river?
4. Pearl reiterates this feeling of not being able to quite articulate what she wants to say. How can we *synthesize* this feeling with Amiel's lack of *literal* and *figurative* voice?
5. How did Amiel really lose his voice, and how does this information drive Amiel and Pearl even closer in their relationship?
6. Why in the middle of her breathtaking kiss with Amiel does Pearl refer to the silkworms and their "coffin egg"?

7. Why does McNeal *juxtapose* Amiel and Pearl's kiss with the roaring of the police helicopter above? How does this affect the movement of the story?
8. What is the significance of the mourning doves singing disappointedly, "You knew. You knew who knew"?
9. How do the events in this chapter seem to shatter a piece of Pearl's and Amiel's innocence?

Chapter 40

1. How do Pearl's judgments of Mary Beth seem to be changing? What statement might McNeal be making about how people judge others?

Chapter 41

1. How does McNeal use beautifully effective *imagery* and *personification* to paint a vivid picture of the powerful fiery winds that began on September 13?

Chapter 42

1. Why is Pearl nervous when her mother kisses her on the cheek as she heads off to school?
2. What details does McNeal use to create anxiety and fear?
3. Pearl's mother must stay in her classroom until all of the students are picked up. How does this factor affect Pearl's path?

Chapter 43

1. How do we see the themes of nostalgia, nature, immigration and family beginning to overlap as McNeal increases the alarm readers feel as Pearl heads directly into the line of the fire?

Chapter 44

1. What is the significance of the misspelling of "YOUR NEXT" scrawled on the tree near Amiel's house, and how might this reveal McNeal's *tone* toward those who would threaten Amiel in this way?
2. Pearl decides to try to save the battery on her phone by shutting it off. She "held the button down like [she] was smothering a small plastic animal." How is McNeal's use of language changing as Pearl enters a more dangerous situation? Where else do we see this change and how does it affect the *mood* in the story?
3. How does McNeal highlight the differences between Amiel and Pearl as they decide how to survive, and do these differences change their relationship?
4. By choosing to put herself in harm's way to save Amiel, does McNeal write Pearl as a heroine or as a naïve, adolescent girl? Could she be both?

Chapter 45

1. Why does McNeal open this chapter with a *flashback* to Pearl and her mother creating sun prints?
2. What *characteristics* do we learn about fires, and how does McNeal describe fire as if it were a character in her novel?
3. Why does Pearl *compare* herself to a skeleton key?
4. As Pearl reflects on the physical and emotional experience she has with Amiel, how does McNeal emphasize Pearl's confusion about growing up?
5. How does Amiel express his strong emotions for Pearl?

Chapter 46

1. What significance does McNeal's *allusion* to Noah's Ark hold?
2. What *inferences* can you make about Pearl's feelings of guilt?
3. When Pearl thinks about the events that took place with the marine, McNeal writes the events in one long sentence. Why might she use this technique at this particular moment?
4. McNeal repeats the line that "the parakeet can't live with the tortoise". How does the reappearance of this line affect the movement of the plot?
5. As we envision Uncle Hoyt speeding on his motorcycle back toward the fire, what details intensify our emotions?

Chapter 47

1. McNeal describes what fires look like from above with "smoke the color of chocolate milk". Why does this seem like an *ironic* description, and why might McNeal choose to use it?
2. How does McNeal create a feeling of heartache and despair in the final paragraph of this chapter, and how does she *juxtapose* this with one of her *central ideas*, adolescent love?

Chapter 48

1. How is Amiel *analogous* to a cowboy, and how can we use *feminist theory* to analyze why McNeal has Pearl make this comparison when they are in such a dire situation?
2. Why does Pearl try to blame a "teenage brain" after she awakes and thinks, "*What have I done?*"
3. How does McNeal's use of the word "fable" convey Pearl's idealism lessening and her sense of reality growing? How is this a departure from the Pearl we met earlier in the novel?
4. Why does Pearl finally call Uncle Hoyt and tell him where she is?

5. Pearl thinks repeatedly, “He couldn’t hear the ring over the motorcycle engine.” What effect does this *repetition* have on the reader, and why does Pearl repeat this line?
6. Analyze the significance of Pearl, while searching for Uncle Hoyt, internally chanting the story her mother used to read to her as a child?
7. How do Amiel and Pearl protect themselves from the fire?
8. Why might Pearl imagine that the mountain lion they saw had blue-brown eyes?

Chapter 49

1. Why does McNeal use a *colon* and *personification* to emphasize the drowned phone, weighing heavily in Pearl’s pocket?
2. Why does Pearl compare Amiel’s expression to that of the mountain lion?
3. How does McNeal use detail in nature to express Pearl’s innermost thoughts and feelings to readers?
4. Why does McNeal close this chapter with Pearl thinking she had “no power to run”? What can we *infer* about how Pearl feels about Amiel running away from the firefighters, from the situation, and from her?

Chapter 50

1. How can we *synthesize* the length of this chapter with Pearl’s state of mind and with McNeal’s *central themes* of fire, growing up, immigration, and forgiveness/family?

Chapter 51

1. While Pearl is recovering in the hospital, she thinks she hears Robby in her room hiss, “The ostrich died. You killed it.” McNeal refers to the ostrich throughout her novel. What and/or whom do you think the ostrich *symbolizes*?
2. Since the fire, McNeal indicates Pearl is having difficulty talking. Why are these details about her injured/sore throat significant?
3. How does Uncle Hoyt die, and why is Pearl’s mother’s mentioning of the “slope” of the hill meaningful?

Chapter 52

1. Why does Pearl think it must be painful for her mother to ask her such intimate questions? Why might it also be painful for Pearl, and how do these details weave themselves into McNeal’s nostalgia and forgiveness *themes*?

Chapter 53

1. How has Pearl's relationship with her father changed since the conversation in his car about travelling to Paris? What and whose actions affected this relationship?

Chapter 54

1. How has Pearl's relationship with her mother changed since before the fire? What and whose actions have affected this relationship?

Chapter 55

1. How could the fire burning objects at random be a *metaphor* for life? For Pearl's life?
2. What is McNeal's *tone* when she writes details about the fire, as if it is one of her characters?
3. What is the *subtext* when Pearl's mother says to Pearl, "I wouldn't have burned your baby pictures"?
4. How is Pearl showing redemption, and is this an easy path? Explain.
5. Why is it *ironic* that Pearl compares her and her mother to "hobos"?
6. How have Pearl's and her mother's roles as child and parent transformed through this tragedy and what details support this?
7. How does McNeal's nuanced description of the objects Pearl recovers from the house disclose her *point of view* about what's important in life?

Chapter 56

1. Why is Pearl so fearful when it's time to return to school, and why does her mother insist she return?
2. How is McNeal's eye *motif* a lens for what Pearl feels in her heart?
3. In the context of the nostalgia *theme*, analyze the breakdown of Pearl's relationship with her childhood friend Greenie.
4. How does McNeal use *irony* when she writes Pearl as falsely mute at Uncle Hoyt's funeral.
5. How does Pearl's guilt manifest itself?
6. Why is it significant that Pearl's mother does not flee the funeral or cemetery on the marine's motorcycle even though Pearl believes she would have wanted to? How is McNeal's *characterization* of Pearl's mother different from earlier in the novel?

Chapter 57

1. What is the implication of the dove's haunting cry, "*You knew who. You knew who*"?

2. In reference to *archetypal criticism*, how does McNeal use the colors green and black to illuminate her views on innocence and hope vs. reality and despair? What other details convey Pearl's struggle with growing up while at the same time wanting to hold on to the innocence of childhood?

Chapter 58

1. How does Mary Beth's story affect Pearl's view of her Uncle Hoyt? Why is Pearl so relieved? Why are readers so relieved?
2. Pearl acknowledges her fault for Uncle Hoyt's death. Why does she tell Mary Beth with whom she is not really friendly?
3. Why does Pearl not blame her father for Uncle Hoyt's death?
4. What can we *infer* about how Robby's letter affects Pearl? What details support this?
5. How does Aunt Agnès' letter comfort Pearl?

Chapter 59

1. How is Pearl's final "vision" fable-like? Does this illustrate Pearl's continuing struggle with a romanticized love/innocence and with reality? Or does this reveal a mature hope after such despair?
2. Why might McNeal close her novel with an ambiguous ending? How is this an effective or ineffective choice?

Further Discussion

1. How does McNeal overlap her themes and plot lines to make a statement about immigration in the United States and growing up without a voice?
2. Examine four different countries' immigration policies. How do their policies compare and contrast with one another and with the United States' immigration policies?
3. How does Pearl's character compare and contrast with female characters in other novels about personal growth and initiation? How are women portrayed in all of these novels and do they hold the power in their relationships?

interdisciplinary activities

LANGUAGE ARTS

Creative Writing: Pg. 3-4- The author has been praised for her beautiful and vivid descriptions of the town of Fallbrook. As a class, list some examples of McNeal's description of the setting and identify the literary techniques that make them so effective. Pick a setting that is special to you and write a descriptive paragraph using some of the identified literary techniques.

Literary Techniques: Pg. 112 - Research other popular "wisdoms". Have students choose one and analyze in writing how it directly relates to the characters, conflicts, themes, etc. in *Dark Water*.

Literary Techniques: Pg. 130 - Define symbol with the class. What might the river symbolize in this novel? Have students write a haiku in either Pearl's or Amiel's voice that reveals how he or she feels about the river. Have them thinking about what the river represents for each of the characters.

Poetry: Pg. 176 - Read "We Wear the Mask" by Paul Lawrence Dunbar and discuss its connection to the characters in the novel.

Greek Mythology: Pg. 221 - Study Cassandra and her tragic situation. Throughout the novel, there are instances where Pearl does not feel listened to. Rewrite one of these passages so that Pearl's family and friends truly listen to and react to what Pearl says. Analyze how this might affect the remainder of the novel.

Creative Writing: Pg. 229 - Choose particularly powerful passages in McNeal's novel. Identify what types of techniques McNeal is using in her writing and for what particular effects. Imagine McNeal forgot to add one scene into her novel. Using McNeal's style of writing and writing techniques, write this new scene. Focus on using a technique for a specific effect on your audience/readers.

Poetry: Pg. 283 - Read some of your favorite poems. Find one that you think connects to some of the themes in DARK WATER. Explain how you think images, lines, and themes in the poem relate to themes in the novel.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social Studies: Pg. 1 - Think about a notable person in history, the arts or current events known for living in "two worlds." Describe the two worlds and discuss the effects this "two world" living has had on their work.

History/Politics: Pg. 8 - Research the history of Mexican immigration to California to help Pearl answer her question about why all the men who wait for work on the corner are Hispanic.

Genealogy: Pg. 53 - Have students ask a close, older relative – a grandmother, great uncle, great grandfather, etc. – to recall a fond memory from their childhood. If possible, have them bring in an artifact that is connected to this childhood memory to share with the class. Have students discuss why we sometimes look back upon our earlier lives with such nostalgia.

Social Studies: Research an event in history when an historical figure made a mistake. Did he or she apologize or acknowledge this fault? Write an essay in which you argue whether it was the right decision to apologize (or not to apologize).

SCIENCE

Science: Pg. 83 - Have students research the stages of silkworm growth and silk production. Have students chart the stages of development for the silkworm and simultaneously chart the stages of Pearl's growth throughout the novel. (check out this site: <http://www.suekayton.com/silk.htm>)

Science: Pg. 170 - Research the characteristics of sycamore tree bark. If possible, bring some in to the class. Feel its texture. Describe its properties. Make comparisons between the bark and Pearl's emotions when she is near Amiel.

Science/Biology: Pg. 259 - Research characteristics and myths of an ostrich. How can we connect this new information to the novel?

Science: Pg. 267 - Study the characteristics of fire. Does fire always burn in such a random fashion? How do wind and other variables affect the way it burns?

ARTS

Film: Pg. 14 - Show a clip from ***THE ART OF SILENCE: PANTOMIME WITH MARCEL MARCEAU***. Ask students to make a list of the characteristics they see in the mime. What qualities does he share with Amiel? How does the mime make the viewer understand his thoughts, feelings, and needs?

Art: Pg. 110 - Have students draw a symbol to represent their names or their personal qualities. Have them explain their artwork and how it represents them.

Theater: Pg. 134 - After a whole class discussion about Pearl's longing to return to more innocent times, students write their own monologues about how they would or would not like to return to their childhood years. Have each student begin their monologue with the line, "My childhood?" They may perform their monologues for the class.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL

Social/Emotional: Pg. 11 – Ask students to empathize with the men looking for work. Imagine you are one of the men on the corner looking back at Pearl and her family in their car. Write a monologue from his perspective. What thoughts might you have? What feelings might you experience? Why are you feeling these emotions?

Human Behavior: Pg. 20 - Have students read details about the outcomes of divorce http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/Parents/divorce.html and how parents can alleviate some of the negative effects. Have students write a letter to Pearl's parents giving them advice on how to handle the divorce with Pearl's best interests in mind.

Psychology: Pg. 242 - Research how people respond differently during emergencies. Why do people make the decisions that they make?

supplemental materials

Please note, all suggested supplemental reading texts, video, websites and art are subject to the copyright protections stipulated by the original source.

IMMIGRATION

You may wish to provide your students with supplemental reading materials that enrich the conversation on immigration. The following sites and materials are recommended:

Immigration Policy Center	website	www.immigrationpolicy.org
PBS	website	www.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans
New York Times Learning Network	website	http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/04/27/learning-about-u-s-immigration-with-the-new-york-times/
United States Student Association	website	www.usstudents.org/our-work/legislative/federal-dream-act-details
The Statue of Liberty Ellis Island Foundation	website	www.ellisland.org
DAP 218 60	website	http://dreamact.info/students
"I am an American Day Address"	speech	Learned Hand **
"Indian Kitchen"	poem	Frances Ram (we need to check this)
"A Quilt of a Country"	essay	Anna Quindlen **
<u>Strangers Among Us: How Latino Immigration is Transforming America</u>	nonfiction book	Roberto Suro
"Brown Signs California Dream Act"	article	Patrick McGreevy and Anthony York for the <i>Los Angeles Times</i>
"The Good Daughter"	essay	Caroline Hwang
"Divided by Immigration Policy"	article	John Leland for the <i>The New York Times</i>

NATURE & ENVIRONMENT

To enrich the conversation on the impact of nature and the environment the following sites and materials are recommended:

"Dry River Bed"	poem	Esnala Banda
"The River"	poem	Ralph Waldo Emerson
"Twelfth Song of Thunder"	poem	Navajo tradition
"Two Ways of Seeing a River"	excerpt from essay	Mark Twain
"Fire Adapted Communities"	website	http://www.adcouncil.org

NOSTALGIA/GROWING UP

To enrich the conversation on nostalgia and coming of age as a teen the following sites and materials are recommended:

The Teen Brain	short documentary video	NPR
"Eleven"	poem	Sandra Cisneros*
"The Road Not Taken"	poem	Robert Frost *
"Saturday at the Canal"	short story	Gary Soto *
"Oranges"	short story	Gary Soto *
"I am Offering this Poem to You"	poem	Jimmy Santiago Baca **

EYES

To enrich the conversation on the metaphorical nature of eyes the following materials are recommended:

"Grant Wood: American Gothic"	poem	Jane Yolen
"American Gothic"	painting	Grant Wood
"Untitled (Fluttering Eyes)"	painting	Kiki Smith
"Pantoum for These Eyes"	poem	Kristine O'Connell George

DISCRIMINATION/STEREOTYPES/POWER OF LANGUAGE

To enrich the conversation on stereotypes, discrimination and language the following materials are recommended:

“Will Jeremy Lin’s Success End Stereotypes?”	article	Timothy Yu for CNN.com
“Bryant Says Homophobic Slur ‘Out of Frustration’ During Game	article	J. Michael Falgoust for <i>USA Today</i>
“Jorge the Church Janitor Finally Quits”	poem	Martin Espada
“The Meanings of a Word”	essay	Gloria Naylor for <i>The New York Times</i>
“Don’t Let Stereotypes Warp Your Judgment”	essay	Robert L. Heilbroner

FORGIVENESS & FAMILY

To enrich the conversation on forgiveness the following materials recommended:

“Forgiving my father”	poem	Lucille Clifton
“My Name”	vignette	Sandra Cisneros***

recommended long texts

The Adventures Of Tintin by Herge

The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros

The Words We Left Unsaid by Laura Georgakakos

American Me: Teens Write about the American Experience by Marie G O’Shea, Laura Longhine, & Keith Hefner

Dear Miss Breed: True Stories of the Japanese American Incarceration During World War II and a Librarian Who Made a Difference by Joanne Oppenheim

Remix: Conversations with Immigrant Teenagers by Marina Budhos

Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare

Under the Mesquite by Guadalupe Garcia McCall

Common Core:
 * 6-8 exemplar text
 ** 9-10 exemplar text
 *** exemplar author

references and resources

We consulted the following resources when creating this guide

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