

One for the Murphys

By Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Teacher's Guide

Be
someone's
hero.



One
FOR THE
Murphys

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Be
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Synopsis:

In the wake of heart-breaking betrayal, Carley Connors is thrust into foster care and left on the steps of the Murphys, a happy, bustling family.

Carley has thick walls and isn't rattled easily, but this is a world she just doesn't understand. A world that frightens her. So, she resists this side of life she'd believed did not exist with dinners around a table and a "zip your jacket, here's your lunch" kind of mom.

However, with the help of her Broadway-obsessed and unpredictable friend, Toni, the Murphys do the impossible in showing Carley what it feels like to belong somewhere. But, when her mother wants her back, will she lose the only family that she has ever known?

Author Bio:

Lynda Mullaly Hunt is the author of middle-grade novel, *ONE FOR THE MURPHYS* (Nancy Paulsen Books/Penguin), winner of The Tassy Walden Award: New Voices in Children's Literature. She is also a former teacher and Scenario Writing coach. Lynda has been Director of the SCBWI-NE Whispering Pines Retreat for six years. She lives with her husband, two kids, impetuous beagle and beagle-loathing cat. Lynda's next MG novel, *ALPHABET SOUP*, will be released in spring, 2014.



Praise for *ONE FOR THE MURPHYS*:

"This is a beautiful book, filled with hope. You'll cry and laugh along with Carley as she learns to lower her defenses enough to love—and, more surprisingly, be loved. It's a story you'll long remember."

—Patricia Reilly Giff, Newbery Honor-winning author of *Pictures of Hollis Woods* and *Lily's Crossing*

"An astonishing debut! Lynda Mullaly Hunt's direct style of writing has readers rooting for Carley Connors and *all* of the Murphys from start to satisfying finish."

—Leslie Connor, ALA Schneider Family Award
Winning author of *Waiting for Normal* and *Crunch*.

"Hunt's writing is fearless and *One For The Murphys* is a story that is at once compassionate, thought-provoking and beautifully told. From the first page, I was drawn into Carley's story. She is a character not to be missed or forgotten."

—Jacqueline Woodson, Newbery Honor-winning author of *Show Way and Feathers*

Themes within ONE FOR THE MURPHYS:

Being a Hero: When Carley arrives, she finds that she must sleep under a sign that reads, “Be someone’s hero.” At first, she thinks it’s a bit of cruel irony. However, the more she learns about the Murphys—and herself—her idea of what being a hero actually is changes. Just about every character in the book can be considered a hero. Use these characters to discuss how ordinary people can do extraordinary things—not only on behalf of others but for themselves as well.

Being “Lucky”: The word “lucky” comes up often in the novel. However, Carley’s definition of the word changes during her stay with the Murphys. She uses the word sarcastically at the beginning of the book, but those same things that made her feel unlucky in the beginning, make her feel lucky toward the end.

Bravery/courage: Both small and large acts of courage permeate the book. “Courage” is defined by Carley when she speaks to Daniel while playing basketball. However, there are acts of courage on the parts of Carley, Mrs. Murphy, Mr. Murphy, Mrs. MacAvoy, Toni, Daniel, and Carley’s mother.

Love as an agent of change: Well, Carley’s entire journey is evidence of this. Carley changes from self-involved and emotionally walled-off to demonstrating acts of affection and vulnerability. Two examples of this are putting herself on the line to protect Michael Eric from Jimmy Partin and also helping Daniel with basketball. Toni also shows her change of heart in coming forward to defend Carley against Rainer in the cafeteria.

Themes within ONE FOR THE MURPHYS:

Looks can be deceiving: Unfortunately, it's common for people to draw conclusions prematurely. Carley does this in summing up the Murphys and in her first impressions of Toni. Upon arriving at Toni's house, Carley assumes that Toni must have an easy life because of her home. In addition, Toni's first impressions of Carley and the Murphys are also incorrect. In the situation that put Carley in foster care to begin with, incorrect assumptions play a part here as well.

Vulnerability/Showing your True Self: Again, this is a theme that runs through the book in reference to several characters. Showing one's true self can be frightening but the payoffs can make it well worth it.

Other themes: betrayal, friendship, trust, family, resilience, defying gravity, gratefulness.

Trees as Metaphors

Trees: References and descriptions of the trees show up from the very beginning. They are metaphors for a family's love.

Trees references from book:

- In social worker's car—bare branches wave them by.
- Trees stand behind house like guards on watch (and house is brown like soil)
- Wreath with green leaves on the front door (in winter)
- "Be someone's hero" on wooden sign.
- When Carley is upset, she runs to an orchard. Trees as shelter.
- Mrs. Murphy makes her apple pies — fed metaphorically and literally
- Trees outside school
- Tree outside library. Family loves this tree.
- Hangs Jimmy Partin in a tree by his overalls to protect Michael Eric
- Color of the Red Sox hat that Carley is given—green like the trees. She feels like she belongs to something special.
- Throughout book, the trees and Carley change together—opening up and blossoming as time goes on.
- *The Giving Tree*

Red Herrings

Clues that leave reader to believe that Carley may stay with the Murphys:

1. The title of the book
2. Mrs. Murphy's book from the library
3. Carley's mother saying that she can stay with the Murphys

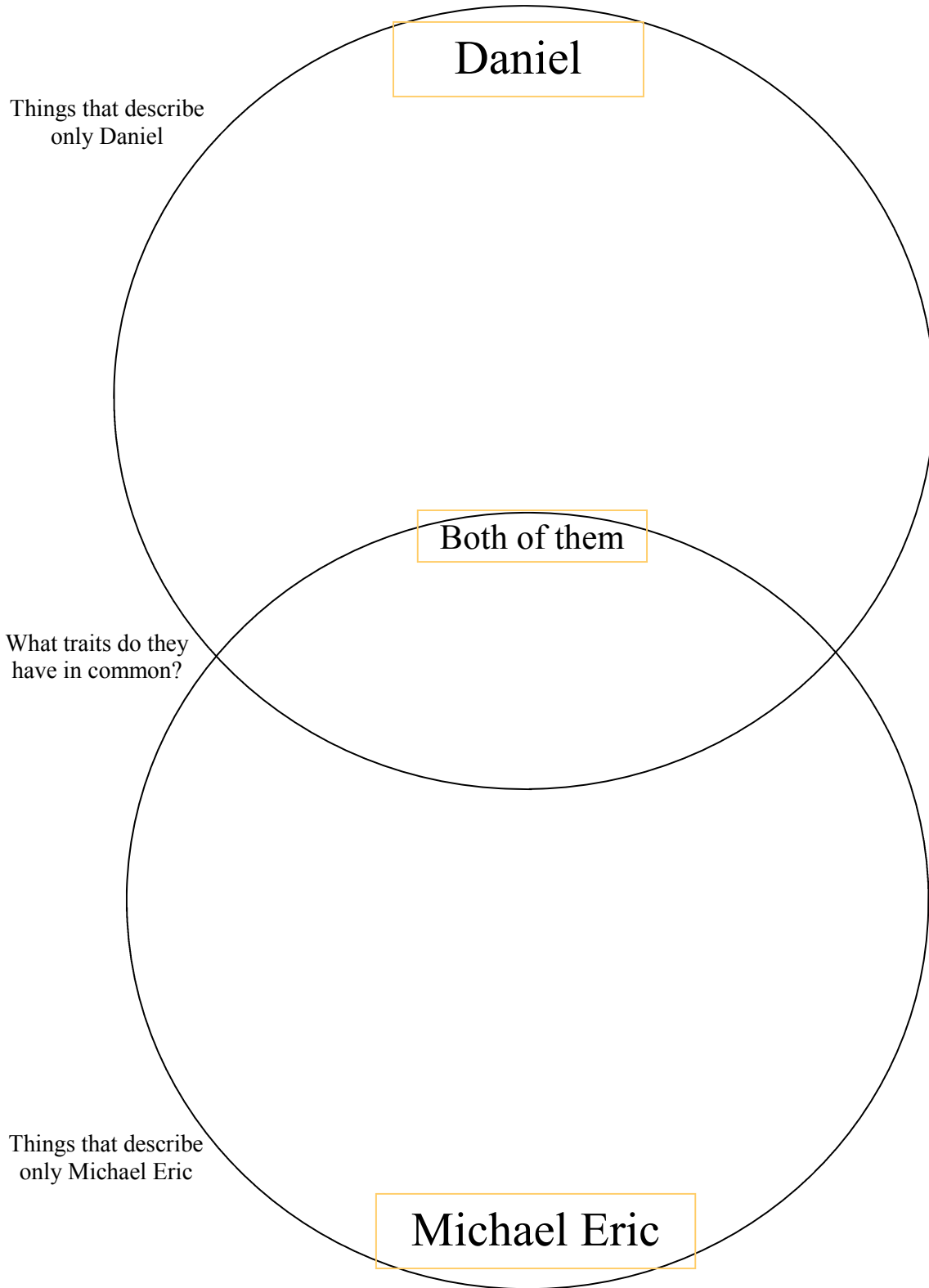
Prediction Exercises

- Look at the cover. Can you draw any conclusions about the girl?
- Are there any objects on the cover that you wouldn't expect? What do you think they could mean?
- Any predictions about the title, ONE FOR THE MURPHYS? Who do you think the Murphys are?

Things I know about foster care:	Predictions I could make about the story:

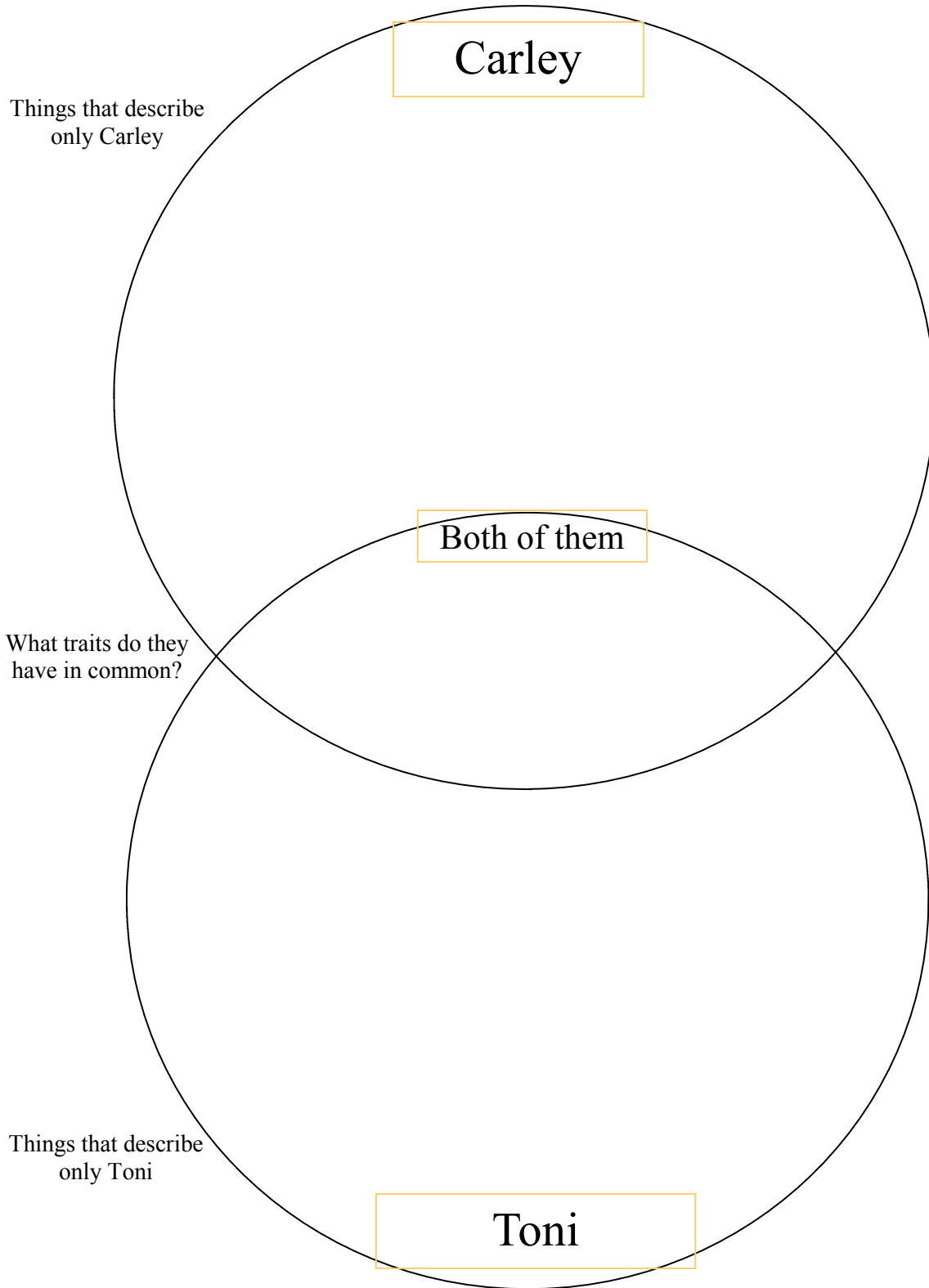
Venn Diagram

(compare and contrast)



Venn Diagram

(compare and contrast)



Cause and Effect

There are several times in *One for the Murphys* when Carley does something that sets something else in motion that she doesn't intend to happen. Please find two examples of this and list them below.

Cause

Effect

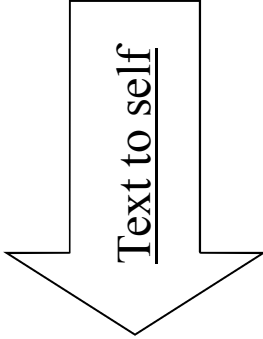
Cause

Effect

Making Connections

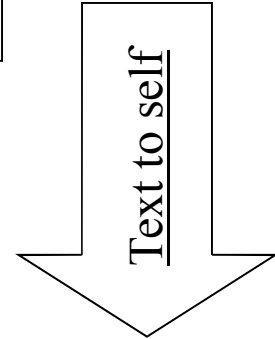
One for the Murphys

Text to self



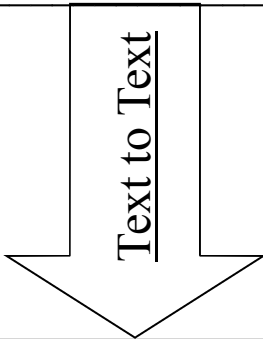
How I connected:

Text to self



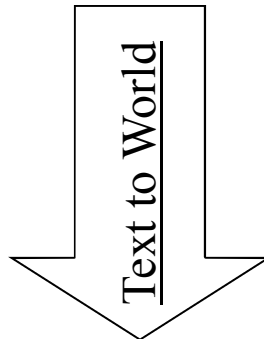
How I connected:

Text to Text



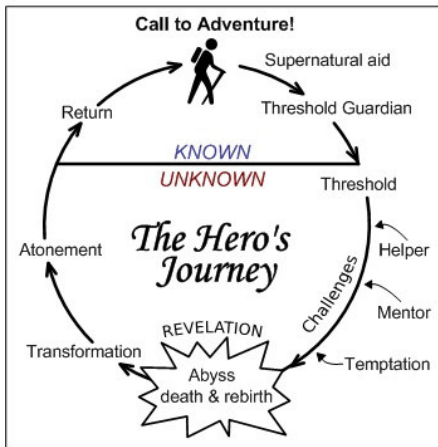
How I connected:

Text to World



How I connected:

The Hero's Journey



The Hero's Journey Outline

The Hero's Journey is a pattern of narrative identified by the American scholar Joseph Campbell that appears in drama, storytelling, myth, religious ritual, and psychological development. It describes the typical adventure of the archetype known as *The Hero*, the person who goes out and achieves great deeds on behalf of the group, tribe, civilization, or self.

Thewritersjourney.com

1. Ordinary World

This is where the Hero exists before his present story begins, oblivious of the adventures to come. It's his safe place. His everyday life where we learn crucial details about our Hero, his true nature, capabilities and outlook on life. This anchors the Hero as a human, just like you and me, and makes it easier for us to identify with him and hence later, empathize with his plight.

2. Call To Adventure

The Hero's adventure begins when he receives a call to action, such as a direct threat to his safety, his family, his way of life or to the peace of the community in which he lives. It may not be as dramatic as a gunshot, but simply a phone call or conversation but whatever the call is, and however it manifests itself, it ultimately disrupts the comfort of the Hero's Ordinary World and presents a challenge or quest that must be undertaken.

3. Refusal Of The Call

Although the Hero may be eager to accept the quest, at this stage he will have fears that need overcoming. Second thoughts or even deep personal doubts as to whether or not he is up to the challenge. When this happens, the Hero will refuse the call and as a result may suffer somehow. The problem he faces may seem too much to handle and the comfort of home far more attractive than the perilous road ahead. This would also be our own response and once again helps us bond further with the reluctant Hero.

4. Meeting The Mentor

At this crucial turning point where the Hero desperately needs guidance he meets a mentor figure who gives him something he needs. He could be given an object of great importance, insight into the dilemma he faces, wise advice, practical training or even self-confidence. Whatever the mentor provides the Hero with it serves to dispel his doubts and fears and give him the strength and courage to begin his quest.

5. Crossing The Threshold

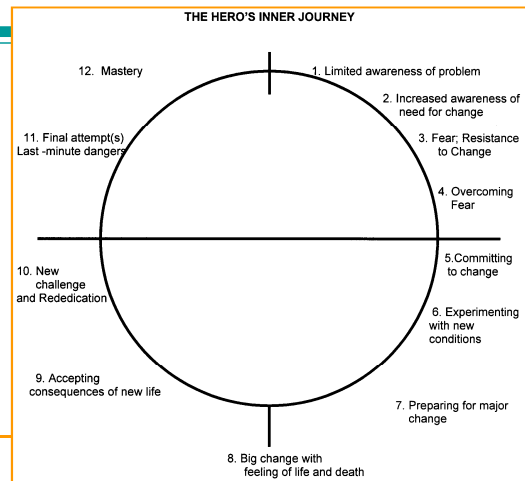
The Hero is now ready to act upon his call to adventure and truly begin his quest, whether it be physical, spiritual or emotional. He may go willingly or he may be pushed, but either way he finally crosses the threshold between the world he is familiar with and that which he is not. It may be leaving home for the first time in his life or just doing something he has always been scared to do. However the threshold presents itself, this action signifies the Hero's commitment to his journey and whatever it may have in store for him.

6. Tests, Allies, Enemies

Now finally out of his comfort zone the Hero is confronted with an ever more difficult series of challenges that test him in a variety of ways. Obstacles are thrown across his path; whether they be physical hurdles or people bent on thwarting his progress, the Hero must overcome each challenge he is presented with on the journey towards his ultimate goal.

The Hero needs to find out who can be trusted and who can't. He may earn allies and meet enemies who will, each in their own way, help prepare him for the greater ordeals yet to come. This is the stage where his skills and/or powers are tested and every obstacle that he faces helps us gain a deeper insight into his character and ultimately identify with him even more.

The Hero's Journey, cont.



8. Ordeal

The Supreme Ordeal may be a dangerous physical test or a deep inner crisis that the Hero must face in order to survive or for the world in which the Hero lives to continue to exist. Whether it be facing his greatest fear or most deadly foe, the Hero must draw upon all of his skills and his experiences gathered upon the path to the inmost cave in order to overcome his most difficulty challenge.

Only through some form of "death" can the Hero be reborn, experiencing a metaphorical resurrection that somehow grants him greater power or insight necessary in order to fulfill his destiny or reach his journey's end. This is the high-point of the Hero's story and where everything he holds dear is put on the line. If he fails, he will either die or live as he knows it will never be the same again.

9. Reward (Seizing The Sword)

After defeating the enemy, surviving death and finally overcoming his greatest personal challenge, the Hero is ultimately transformed into a new state, emerging from battle as a stronger person and often with a prize.

The Reward may come in many forms: an object of great importance or power, a secret, greater knowledge or insight, or even reconciliation with a loved one or ally. Whatever the treasure, which may well facilitate his return to the Ordinary World, the Hero must quickly put celebrations aside and prepare for the last leg of his journey.

10. The Road Back

This stage in the Hero's journey represents a reverse echo of the Call to Adventure in which the Hero had to cross the first threshold. Now he must return home with his reward but this time the anticipation of danger is replaced with that of acclaim and perhaps vindication, absolution or even exoneration.

But the Hero's journey is not yet over and he may still need one last push back into the Ordinary World. The moment before the Hero finally commits to the last stage of his journey may be a moment in which he must choose between his own personal objective and that of a Higher Cause.

11. Resurrection

This is the climax in which the Hero must have his final and most dangerous encounter with death. The final battle also represents something far greater than the Hero's own existence with its outcome having far-reaching consequences to his Ordinary World and the lives of those he left behind.

If he fails, others will suffer and this not only places more weight upon his shoulders but in a movie, grips the audience so that they too feel part of the conflict and share the Hero's hopes, fears and trepidation. Ultimately the Hero will succeed, destroy his enemy and emerge from battle cleansed and reborn.

12. Return With The Elixir

This is the final stage of the Hero's journey in which he returns home to his Ordinary World a changed man. He will have grown as a person, learned many things, faced many terrible dangers and even death but now looks forward to the start of a new life. His return may bring fresh hope to those he left behind, a direct solution to their problems or perhaps a new perspective for everyone to consider.

The final reward that he obtains may be literal or metaphoric. It could be a cause for celebration, self-realization or an end to strife, but whatever it is it represents three things: change, success and proof of his journey. The return home also signals the need for resolution for the story's other key players. The Hero's doubters will be ostracized, his enemies punished and his allies rewarded. Ultimately the Hero will return to where he started but things will clearly never be the same again.

Common Core Standards

—Grade 5: Reading Literature

Key Ideas and Details

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.1](#) Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- [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.
- [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).

Craft and Structure

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.4](#) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.5](#) Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.6](#) Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.9](#) Compare and contrast stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics.

Compare/contrast One for the Murphys to:

- Pictures of Hollis Woods By Patricia Reilly Giff
- The Great Gilly Hopkins By Katherine Paterson
- The Road to Paris By Nikki Grimes
- Everything on a Waffle by Polly Horvath

Common Core Standards

—Grade 6: Reading Literature

Key Ideas and Details

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1](#) Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- [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 distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
- [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.

Craft and Structure

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.4](#) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.5](#) Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.6](#) Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

Common Core Standards

—Grade 7: Reading Literature

Key Ideas and Details

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.1](#) Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- [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.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.3](#) Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

Craft and Structure

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.4](#) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.5](#) Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.6](#) Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

Common Core Standards

—Grade 8: Reading Literature

Key Ideas and Details

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.1](#) Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.2](#) Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.3](#) Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

Craft and Structure

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.4](#) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.6](#) Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.9](#) Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.

Common Core Standards

*****Teachers—Please see Culminating Activities for writing topics/suggestions to address the Writing Core Standards.**

—Grade 5: Writing

Text Types and Purposes

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.**
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1a Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer’s purpose.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1b Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1c Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., *consequently*, *specifically*).
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1d Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.**
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.3a Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.3b Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, and pacing, to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.3c Use a variety of transitional words, phrases, and clauses to manage the sequence of events.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.3d Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.

Common Core Standards

*****Teachers—Please see Culminating Activities for writing topics/suggestions to address the Writing Core Standards.**

—Grade 5: Writing, cont.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.6 With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of two pages in a single sitting.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.7** Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.8** Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.9** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.9a** Apply *grade 5 Reading standards* to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or a drama, drawing on specific details in the text [e.g., how characters interact]”).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.9b Apply *grade 5 Reading standards* to informational texts (e.g., “Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which points”).

Range of Writing

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.10** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Common Core Standards

*****Teachers—Please see Culminating Activities for writing topics/suggestions to address the Writing Core Standards.**

—Grade 6: Writing

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1** Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1a Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1b Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1c Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1d Establish and maintain a formal style.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1e Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.
 -
- **CCSS.ELA-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.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2a Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2b Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2c Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2d Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2e Establish and maintain a formal style.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2f Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.
 -
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3a Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3b Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3c Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3d Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3e Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

Common Core Standards

*****Teachers—Please see Culminating Activities for writing topics/suggestions to address the Writing Core Standards.**

—Grade 7: Writing

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.**
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1a Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1b Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1c Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1d Establish and maintain a formal style.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1e Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
- **CCSS.ELA-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.**
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2a Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2b Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2c Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2d Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2e Establish and maintain a formal style.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2f Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.**
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3a Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3b Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3c Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3d Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

Common Core Standards

*****Teachers—Please see Culminating Activities for writing topics/suggestions to address the Writing Core Standards.**

—Grade 8: Writing

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence**
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1a Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1b Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1c Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1d Establish and maintain a formal style.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1e Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.**
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2a Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2b Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2c Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2d Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2e Establish and maintain a formal style.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2f Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.**
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.3a Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.3b Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.3c Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.3d Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.3e Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

Common Core Standards

—Grade 5—Speaking and Listening:

Comprehension and Collaboration

- **CCSS.ELA-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.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.1a** Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.1b** Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.1c** Pose and respond to specific questions by making comments that contribute to the discussion and elaborate on the remarks of others.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.1d** Review the key ideas expressed and draw conclusions in light of information and knowledge gained from the discussions.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.2** Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.3** Summarize the points a speaker makes and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.4** Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

Common Core Standards

—Grade 6—Speaking and Listening:

Comprehension and Collaboration

- [CCSS.ELA-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.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1a](#) Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1b](#) Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1c](#) Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1d](#) Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.2](#) Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.3](#) Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.4](#) Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.5](#) Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.6](#) Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Common Core Standards

—Grade 7—Speaking and Listening:

Comprehension and Collaboration

- **CCSS.ELA-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.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.1a** Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.1b** Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.1c** Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.1d** Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.2** Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.3** Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.4** Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.5** Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.6** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Common Core Standards

—Grade 8—Speaking and Listening:

Comprehension and Collaboration

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1](#) Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1a](#) Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1b](#) Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1c](#) Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1d](#) Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.2](#) Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.3](#) Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.4](#) Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.5](#) Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.6](#) Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Chapters 1-5

Vocabulary:

foster child	social worker	misshapen	Rockefeller
decipher	malaria	axis	palindrome

Questions:

1. The first chapter does not say exactly what has happened to Carley, but the author provides the reader with several hints. What can you infer about Carley and her current situation from the first chapter? Use specific details to support your inferences.
2. On page 4, Carley thinks, "And I hope that I do not like her." Why do you think she would have that wish about her foster mother?
2. Carley counts a lot. She counts the stairs at the Murphys', she counts the leaves on the wreath... Why do you think that she counts?
3. In chapter 5, Carley says, "Funny how something can be defined by the one thing that makes it different from everything else. Like 'foster kid.'" Or a giraffe with its long neck like Michael Eric points out. If you had to define yourself by one thing that makes you different from everyone else, what would you say?
- 6) Carley hasn't cried in over a year. What do you think about that?
- 7) Do you like Carley? Why or why not?

Predictions:

- 1) How do you think the Murphy boys will act toward Carley?

Chapters 6-10

Vocabulary:

parched	determination	unique	human nature
consequences	hoist		

Questions:

1. In Chapter 6, why is Daniel so upset? What does Daniel say to Carley that makes her run? Why do you think she runs?
2. The flashback in chapter 7 brings us back to the night that everything changed for Carley. At the end of the flashback we get a startling revelation. What is it? How did you react to it?
3. How does Carley's shopping trip with Mrs. Murphy differ from shopping with her mom?
4. How is Carley's behavior at the restaurant unexpected? Why do you think she behaves that way? How did you feel about it as you read it?
5. Why does Carley say that Mrs. Murphy scares her more than anyone else in chapter 10?
6. Why is "A Genie, Fresh Rolls, and a Penguin" a good title for Chapter Ten? Be sure to use specific details to support your answer.

Chapters 11-15

Vocabulary:

intent	impede	insinuate	tenacious
atrocities	prosecutor	oblivion	mantra

Questions:

1. What was your favorite game to play when you were younger?
2. What happens with the police officer? What does Mrs. Murphy do? How does it impact Carley's relationship with her?
3. Carley feels uncomfortable with Mr. Murphy. What helps her start to break the ice with him?
4. Why do you think Carley says that she is "happy and disappointed at the same time" that the Murphys don't know it's her birthday?
- **5. Complete Mr. Ruben's assignment: Choose a person in history who has changed the world for good. Conduct a brief research project using two to three different sources to support your claim. (CCSS W6:7).

Teachers: This could be done independently or in partners as Mr. Ruben did. Also, additional speaking and listening standards may be integrated depending on presentation requirements, particularly in regard to incorporating technology.

Chapters 16-20

Vocabulary:

deceiving	superficial	Broadway	pathetic
bore	obsessed	navigating	

Questions:

1. Have you ever had to work with someone you didn't like? How did you handle it? Write five pieces of advice for Carley to make her project with Toni go smoothly.
2. How does Carley handle the situation when Michael Eric has a seizure and goes to the hospital? What do you think this shows about Carley's character?
3. What surprises Carley when she is getting the Easter baskets ready for Mrs. Murphy? Why do you think she's surprised?
4. Where does Carley go when she skips school? What does she learn about Mrs. Murphy there and how does she react?

Chapters 21-25

Vocabulary:

eulogies

gene

plagiarism

ostracized

Questions:

1. Half way through chapter 21, Mrs. Murphy says, "I think you would know that better than anyone else." What does she mean?
2. "This is the first time anyone has cared enough to ground me." What does this mean?
3. Toni doesn't want to take Carley to her house. Why not? How are Toni and Carley more similar than they realize?
4. Both Toni and Carley admit to feeling like they don't fit in. Have you ever felt that way? Do you think everyone feels that way at some point?
5. How does Carley realize that the Murphys aren't perfect? Why do you think that is an important lesson for her to learn?
6. Why do you think Toni wants the note from Mrs. Murphy included in the lunch she buys from Carley? Why do you think this makes Carley hesitate to sell it?

Chapters 26-30

Vocabulary:

agony	abyss	authorities	intimidating
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Questions:

1. What happens when Toni finds out that Carley is a foster kid? How do you think you would have reacted if you were Toni?
2. Who does Carey call on the phone and why?
2. After Mrs. MacAvoy's visit, Carley tells Mrs. Murphy that she hates it that she doesn't hate that she's good to her. Explain.
3. Chapter 30 is the beginning of a turning point for Carley. How has Carley changed from the beginning of the book to this point. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Chapters 31-35

Vocabulary:

gullible

locusts

loathing

deadpan

Questions:

1. What is Carley's definition of courage? Do you agree with her? Disagree? Why?
2. Describe a time in your life when you did something courageous according to Carley's definition of the word.
3. Is what Carley does to Jimmy Partin justifiable? Why or why not?

Chapters 36-40

Vocabulary:

ironic	guillotine	testimony	
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Questions:

1. How do you think you would feel about visiting your mom if you were Carley?
2. *The Giving Tree* is Mrs. Murphy's favorite book. Carley thinks it is dumb. Find and read the book. What do you think the message is?
3. What was your favorite children's book? Describe the story.
4. What does Carley ask Mrs. Murphy and how do both characters react to the situation?

Chapters 41-45

Vocabulary:

execution

paramount

injustice

unconditional

Questions:

1. Carley says "The part that keeps me safe would rather stay mad at her," when Mrs. Murphy wants to talk to Carley after the Mom incident. What do you think she means by that?
2. What does Mrs. Murphy say the message is in *The Giving Tree*? How does it compare to Carley's interpretation of the book? What about your interpretation?
3. In *The Giving Tree*, do you think the Tree is strong or weak? Why?
4. The title of chapter 43 is "Pals Spelled Backwards." Why is this an appropriate title for this chapter? Support your answer with details from the text.
5. Why did the conversation with Mr. Murphy turn out to be significant to Carley?
6. What happens on Carley's second visit to her mom? Then what does Mrs.

Chapters 46-50

Vocabulary:

realign

optimal

Questions:

1. What does Mrs. Murphy reveal about herself to Carley? Why do you think she tells her?
2. Who has been a hero in your life? Why?
3. Explain the meaning of the title of the book.
4. What is the one thing that Carley is afraid to ask for from Mrs. Murphy, but finally gets? Why has she been afraid to ask?
5. What is the nicest thing anyone has ever said to you? Why?
6. What presents does Carley receive before she goes? Why is each important to her and her time with the Murphys?
7. How does Carley change from the beginning of the book to the end? Use specific examples to support your response.
8. Why do you think the author chose to have Carley go back to her mom at the end? Would you have made the same choice? Why or why not?

Culminating Activity Options:

Teachers: These culminating writing activities address several different Writing Standards (i.e. Compare contrast characters, give an opinion and back it up with facts/excerpts from text, research a topic) Classes of students could all complete one of the three assignments or students could have a choice.

- 1.** Fast forward twelve years into the future. Carley is now twenty five. Write a letter from Carley to Julie Murphy explaining what Carley's life has been like since she left the Murphys. Where is she now and what is she doing?
- 2.** *One for the Murphys* was written in the first person, meaning Carley narrates the story and we see everything from her perspective. Choose a different character in the book and write a chapter for the book that shows what life with Carley is like from his/her perspective.
- 3.** In *One for the Murphys*, Carley develops a special relationship with Julie Murphy. At the end Carley tells Julie that she is her hero. Who is your hero? Write a narrative that tells the story of who the person is to you and how they became your hero.
- 4.** Read *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein. Have students cite an opinion as to whether they think the Tree is weak or strong. Give evidence to support opinion.
- 5.** Choose a person who has changed the world for the better- (just like the students in Mr. Ruben's class did) and do a short research project on that person.
- 6.** Most of the characters in *One for the Murphys* are heroes. Who is your favorite and why do you consider he/she to be a hero? Use evidence from the text to help prove your point.

Culminating Activity Options:

Extra:

4. Write class-wide letters to the author. Did you agree with her ending? Are there other things you would have changed? What did you like about the book? Which character would you most like to meet for real? Why?

Although the author is unable to answer each letter individually, she will respond with a note to the class and send some bookmarks. Mail letters to:

Lynda Mullaly Hunt

PO Box 360

East Glastonbury, CT 06025