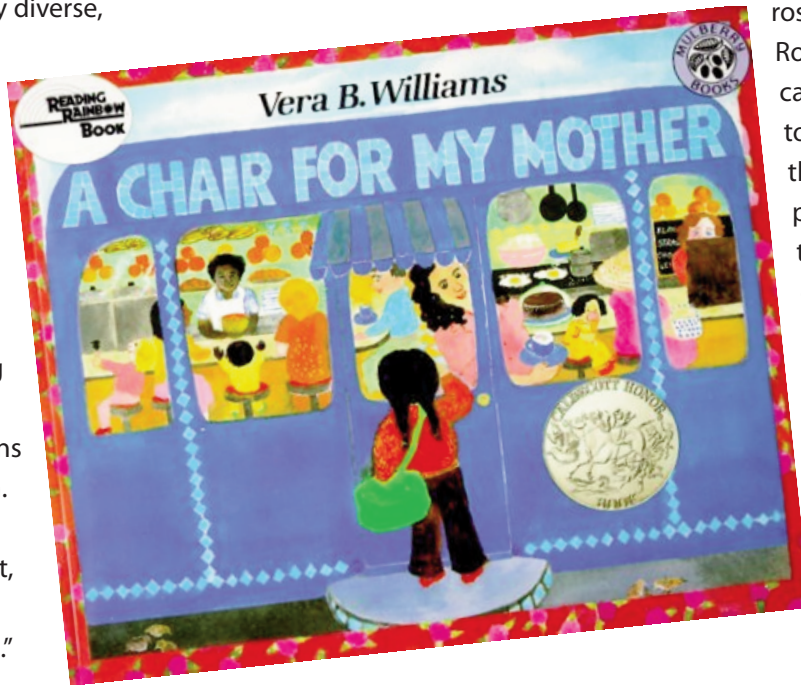




This guide was prepared using the Mulberry edition, ©1982. Other editions may differ.

Synopsis

Vera B. Williams uses bright, colorful, expressionistic illustrations alongside a simple, straightforward text to create a heartwarming story of family love, unity, and mutual help. The story is told in a matter-of-fact way by young Rosa, who lives with her waitress mother and her grandma in an ethnically diverse, urban, working-class neighborhood. Every day when Mama comes home from work, she pours the change from her tips onto the kitchen table. Rosa counts the coins, which then go into a big glass jar. Grandma and Rosa also contribute coins to the jar when they can. They are saving to buy a “wonderful, beautiful, fat, soft armchair...the best chair in the whole world.” Their old furniture, and every other possession, burned up in a fire last year. Rosa and her mother had been coming home from shoe shopping, and when they reached their block, they found their house in flames with fire engines out front. Thank goodness, Grandma was safe, but all that was left of the house and its contents were charcoal and ashes. Rosa, Mama, and Grandma moved into the apartment below Aunt Ida and Uncle Sandy; they painted the walls a cheerful yellow, but the rooms were very empty. Right away, though, many neighbors brought over all sorts of household goods to replace what had burned. But Rosa and her family still have no sofa and no big chairs, and Mama is so tired when she gets home from work that



she really needs a comfy chair. So Mama brought a giant jar home from the diner, and the three family members started collecting coins. Now, at last, the jar is full. Mama, Rosa, and Grandma have the coins converted to ten dollar bills at the bank and then they shop through four furniture stores, trying out all kinds of armchairs. Finally they find the chair of their dreams, covered in red velvet with pink roses splashed all over it. Rosa, Mama, and Grandma can all sit in the chair together. Grandma sits in the chair and talks with people going by during the day. Mama sits in the chair after work to watch the TV news. And Rosa can sit in the chair with Mama after supper, and fall asleep right in her lap.

Timeline

last year	A fire destroyed Rosa’s, Mama’s, and Grandma’s home and all its contents.
after the fire	Rosa, Mama, and Grandma move into a new apartment, but have no furniture or household goods. That same day, neighbors bring over food and all sorts of household furnishings.
this year	Mama brings home a big jar, and the family starts to fill it with coins.
recently	The jar is full; Mama and Grandma have the coins changed to bills; Rosa, Mama, and Grandma shop for the perfect

armchair and bring it home that very day.

now The armchair provides comfort and a place for Rosa to snuggle with her mother after supper.

Author Sketch

Award-winning author-illustrator Vera B. Williams was born in 1927 in Hollywood, California, of immigrant parents, one from Russia, the other from Poland. The family was, in Williams' words, "culturally Jewish though anti-religion."



Williams and her sister grew up mainly in New York City, where their parents encouraged the girls to take advantage of Depression-era free offerings of arts, crafts, dramatics, and dance classes. While attending New York's High School of Music and Art, Williams wrote and illustrated her first children's book. In 1949, she graduated from Black Mountain College in North Carolina, an experimental school that stressed learning as a cooperative community activity. Williams married her college sweetheart and they, with friends from Black Mountain, then founded a cooperative community and school at Stony Point, New York. Williams put her writing/illustrating interest on hold while she raised her three children and taught at the communal school.

In 1970, following a divorce and the closing of the school, Williams moved to Canada, where she again taught at an alternative school. During her years in Canada, Williams finally began creating both text and illustrations for children's picture books. Her first book as writer-illustrator, *It's a Gingerbread House*, appeared in 1978. Williams moved back to New York in 1979, settling in New York City, and has continued her writing/illustrating career there ever since. Her years of community living are expressed in her books, with their themes of family and community cooperation. Williams is also a political activist involved in feminist, environmental, and peace issues; she once spent a month in federal prison for her actions during an anti-nuclear protest.

Critic's Corner

Vera B. Williams is known and admired for her stories about simple pleasures and family love and unity, brought to life with bright, warm, childlike, vibrant illustrations. She also deftly presents multi-ethnic characters and strong, independent female characters, always acting together cooperatively. *A Chair for My Mother* is Williams' best-known book, a 1983 Caldecott Honor Book, ALA Notable Book, winner of the *Boston Globe-Horn Book Award* for Illustration, and Reading Rainbow selection. It is also the first in the Rosa trilogy, which continues with *Something Special for Me* (1983) and *Music, Music for Everyone* (1984). Of *A Chair for My Mother*, *Booklist* assessed, "The atmosphere of anticipation and family warmth is strong. Williams' illustrations are energetic watercolor paintings brimming with color and a cozy, indulgent expressionism." *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books* called it "a quiet but sunny story" and continued, "This hasn't a great deal of action, but it has the satisfactions of a wish granted and a joint project completed, and it is pervaded by a feeling of family unity." *Horn Book* admired the "color-splashed watercolors recalling the patterns of Matisse and the primitive quality of Gauguin" and summed up, "The result is a superbly conceived picture book expressing the joyful spirit of a loving family." *Book World* (*The Washington Post*) added, "Almost every page vibrates with primary colors so intense and warm you can almost feel them physically." *A Chair for My Mother* is also available in Spanish as *Un sillón para mi mamá* (1994) and on cassette in both English (Random House, 1982) and Spanish (Live Oak Media, 1994) versions.

Other Books by Vera B. Williams

As author:

It's a Gingerbread House (1978)
The Great Watermelon Birthday (1980)
Three Days on a River in a Red Canoe (1981)
A Chair for My Mother (1982)
Something Special for Me (1983)
Music, Music for Everyone (1984)
My Mother, Leah and George Sand (1986)
Cherries and Cherry Pits (1986)
Stringbean's Trip to the Shining Sea (with Jennifer Williams) (1988)
"More More More" Said the Baby (1990)
Scooter (1993)
Lucky Song (1997)
Amber Was Brave, Essie Was Smart (2001)

As illustrator:

Hooray for Me! by Remy Charlip and Lilian Moore (1975)
Our Class Presents Ostrich Feathers: A Play in Two Acts, by Barbara Brenner (1978)
Long Walks and Intimate Talks, by Grace Paley (1991)
Home: A Collaboration of Thirty Authors & Illustrators (1996)

Awards

- 1983:** Boston Globe-Horn Book Award, Picture Book category, *A Chair for My Mother*
Caldecott Honor Award, *A Chair for My Mother*
- 1985:** Jane Addams Children's Book Award, Honor Book, *Music, Music for Everyone*
- 1991:** Caldecott Honor Award, "More More More" *Said the Baby*
- 1994:** Boston Globe-Horn Book Award, Fiction category, *Scooter*
- 1995:** Library of Congress exhibition, "Family, Friends, and Community: The Art of Vera B. Williams"
- 1998:** Charlotte Zolotow Award, *Lucky Song*
- 2002:** Jane Addams Children's Book Award, Honor Book, *Amber Was Brave, Essie Was Smart*
- 2008:** Regina Medal of the Catholic Library Association; body of work

Bibliography

Booklist, Nov, 1, 1982, p. 375; Feb., 1, 1995, p. 1013.
Book World, November 7, 1982, p. 16.
Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, December 1982, p.79.
Chevalier, Tracy, ed. *Twentieth-Century Children's Writers*, third edition. Chicago/London: St. James Press, 1989. *Contemporary Authors*, Vol. 123; New Revision Series, Vol. 38. Detroit: Gale Research, 1988, 1993.
Holtze, Sally Holmes, ed. *Fifth Book of Junior Authors and Illustrators*. NY: H.W. Wilson Co., 1983.
Horn Book, October 1982, p. 514.
The New York Times Book Review, Nov. 14, 1982, p. 43.
Publishers Weekly, Oct. 29, 1982, p. 45.
School Library Journal, October 1982, p. 147; May 1984, p. 53; November 1994, p. 131; April 1995, p. 89.
Silvey, Anita, ed. *Children's Books and Their Creators*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995.
Something About the Author, Vols. 53 & 102. Detroit: Gale Research, 1988, 1999.
Williams, Vera B., "Boston Globe-Horn Book Award Acceptance," in *Horn Book*, February 1984, pp. 34-38.

Internet

Vera B. Williams Teacher Resource Guide,
<falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/williams.htm>

Vera B. Williams biography,
<en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vera_Williams>

Terms and Objectives

General Objectives

1. To use discussion questions to recall details, interpret characters and events, read or listen critically, and respond creatively to the story and its illustrations
2. To expand vocabulary through context clues and word study
3. To expand responses to a book by completing a variety of related activities, some in other areas of the curriculum
4. To exercise artistic, craft, and dramatic skills to help interpret reading

Specific Objectives

1. To understand what past event has caused Rosa, her mother, and her grandmother to start saving their coins and what future event the saved coins will bring about
2. To identify characteristics of Rosa's family unit from information given by both the text and the illustrations
3. To relate the style and colors of the illustrations to the emotional effects they create and express
4. To become familiar with the job of waitressing and the practice of tipping servers
5. To note the theme of family and community cooperation as expressed in the novel
6. To recognize what the chair means to Rosa, her mother, and her grandmother

The Importance of Setting

The general setting is an ethnically diverse, working-class urban neighborhood. Rosa's mother works at the Blue Tile Diner, a busy, warm, inviting neighborhood spot. Rosa, her mother, and her grandmother live in a first-floor apartment below Rosa's Aunt Ida and Uncle Sandy. They previously lived in a house in the same neighborhood that burned last year. The apartment is cheerful, painted yellow and furnished with household goods donated by many neighbors; it has an eat-in kitchen and a front room where Grandma can sit by the window and chat with neighbors outside. A large glass jar sits in the kitchen, filling up with coins donated by Mama, Grandma, and Rosa. When the jar finally fills up, Mama and Grandma take the coin rolls to the local bank, where they exchange the coins for bills. Downtown, reached by bus, Mama, Grandma, and Rosa visit four furniture stores where they tryout all the arm-chairs until they find their dream chair. This splendid red

A Chair for My Mother Vera B. Williams

armchair, splashed all over with pink roses, is a wonderful addition to the apartment, providing a place for comfort, protection, and snuggling.

Cross-Curricular Sources

Community Stories

Melrose Cooper, *I Got Community*

Judy Cox, *Now We Can Have a Wedding!*

DyAnne DiSalvo, *City Green*

Alice K. Flanagan, *Our Neighborhood* series

Gail Gibbons, *Fire! Fire!*

Christine Loomis, *In the Diner*

Elaine Moore, *Good Morning, City*

Marissa Moss, *Mel's Diner*

Family Stories

Susan V. Bosak, *Something to Remember Me By*

Helen E. Buckley, *Grandfather and I* and *Grandmother and I*

Arthur Dorros, *Abuela* and *Isla*

Bob Graham, *Spirit of Hope*

Eloise Greenfield, *William and the Good Old Days*

Lore Segal, *Tell Me a Mitzi*

Natasha Wing, *Jalapeno Bagels*

Morag Loh, *Tucking Mommy In*

CD-ROM

Community Construction Kit (Tom Snyder Productions)

Destination: Neighborhood (Edmark Corp.)

Exploring Where and Why: Grade 2 Communities Here and There(Nystrom)

Zap! Around Town (Sunburst Communications)

Internet

"Reading Rainbow: A Chair for My Mother"

<http://pbskids.org/readingrainbow/books/episode_detail_020.html > **and** <www.canlearn.com/ReadingR/AChairformyMother.html >

"Cyberkids": <www.cyberkids.com>

A Chair for My Mother summary and lesson, <www.kid-seconbooks.com/html/chair_for_my_mother.html>

A Chair for My Mother teaching resources, <www.uiowa.edu/~humiowa/achair3.html>

A Chair for My Mother comprehensive lesson plan, <www.pde.state.pa.us/pafamilyliteracy/lib/pafamilyliteracy/A_Chair_for_My_Mother.pdf>

Videos

Fire Trucks in Action (High Profiles)

FireWatch (Groves Inc.)

I Can Be Safe (Colman Communications/Rainbow Educational Media)

Themes and Motifs

In discussing the book, help students understand that the story deals with these main issues and situations.

Themes

- family love and unity
- community cooperation
- working together toward an attainable goal
- joy in simple pleasures
- recovering from loss

Motifs

- armchairs
- waitressing and tips
- saving and coins
- fire loss
- grandmother
- working mother
- Goldilocks

Meaning Study

Discuss with students the meaning of the boldfaced words from the story in the following sentences.

1. My mother works as a waitress in the Blue Tile Diner. (A diner is a type of restaurant that resembles a rail-road dining car, which you can see from the curved roof line of the Blue Tile Diner. A diner usually has counter service—shown in the illustration—as well as booths with tables. A waitress is a woman who takes orders and serves food at a restaurant, as Rosa's mother does at the Blue Tile Diner.)
2. I wash the salts and peppers and fill the ketchups. (This is a little job that the diner's owner, Josephine, lets Rosa do so she can earn some money. She washes the salt and pepper shakers and refills the ketchup dispensers that are on each table and counter at the diner.)
3. My mama empties all her change from tips out of her purse for me to count. (A tip is money that diners give to a waitress or waiter for serving them. Diners pay the full charge for the meal itself to the restaurant; the tip is extra money just for the server. Most of the money a waitress or

waiter earns comes from tips. When Rosa's mother comes home after work, she gives Rosa all the coins from her tips to count and then put in the big jar. Mama would also have bills from tips that she keeps as the money she uses to support the family.)

4. A wonderful, beautiful, fat, soft armchair. We will get one covered in velvet.
("Armchair" refers to any chair with armrests, but in this case, Rosa means a big, overstuffed, soft, upholstered armchair that will be big enough for her, Mama, and Grandma all to sit in together if they want to. The fabric covering the chair will be velvet, which has a dense pile that is very soft, which will add to the chair's comfort?)
5. Mama had new pumps.
(Pumps are women's shoes, with low heels and no straps, held on by a snug fit at the heel and the toe.)
6. My mother brought home little paper wrappers for the nickels and the dimes and the quarters.
(Banks provide paper wrappers to customers who collect coins. Each type of coin—penny, nickel, dime, and quarter has its own wrapper. You fill each wrapper with a fixed amount of each coin that adds up to a sum of 50 cents, \$2, \$5, or \$10. Then you can bring the wrappers to the bank and change the coins into bills, which is what Mama and Grandma do.)
7. Grandma said she felt like Goldilocks in "The Three Bears" trying out all the chairs.
(When Goldilocks, in the well-known fairy tale, goes into the house of the Three Bears, she tries out the three armchairs: Papa Bear's, Mama Bear's, and Baby Bear's, and she decides Baby Bear's chair is "just right." Trying out all the chairs in the four furniture stories makes Grandma feel just like Goldilocks.)
8. They came right down in their pickup truck to drive the chair home for us.
(A pickup is a light truck whose open body has low sides and a tailboard. It is ideal for hauling large items, such as an overstuffed armchair. When you buy something at a furniture store, you usually have to wait a while for the store to deliver it to you. Rosa, Mama, and Grandma want their chair right away, so Aunt Ida and Uncle Sandy come to the store with their pickup truck to take the chair home right away.)

Comprehension Study

Discuss the following questions with your students. You could ask students in higher grades to write their answers to the questions in their own words.

1. Look at the pictures in the book, without reading the story. Write or tell a few sentences about one or more of the pictures. Describe 1) how each person in the picture is feeling at that moment and 2) what is happening in the picture. As you read or listen to the story, see if what you wrote or told about the picture(s) was accurate.
2. What kind of feeling does the illustration give you about the Blue Tile Diner? What kinds of foods and customers do you see there?
(It looks like a warm, friendly, bright, busy place to be [the warm colors inside contrast invitingly with the bright but cool blue of the exterior]. It is a family-oriented, neighborhood type of place, with lots of children as customers. We see pies, cake, ice cream, fried eggs, fruit, and coffee-typical diner food.)
3. Describe Rosa's family.
(Rosa is a young girl who lives with her single-parent mother and her grandmother. Rosa's mother works hard as a waitress to support the three of them. The family is warm and loving and close. The three of them work together toward their joint goal and are mostly cheerful and supportive of each other.)
4. Why are Rosa, her mother, and her grandmother saving their coins? Why do they need the item they plan to buy? Are they successful?
(Last year, their home burned, and everything Rosa, Grandma, and Mama owned was burnt up. Their neighbors have generously given them many household items and furniture. But they still do not have a sofa or any big, comfy chairs. Since the family is poor, they cannot go out and purchase a chair on credit. So Rosa, Mama, and Grandma carefully save up their coins so they can buy a wonderful armchair. Mama really needs a comfortable chair to collapse into when she comes home tired from work. Grandma could also use a comfy chair to sit in while she is peeling potatoes and doing other chores. In the end, the jar fills up and provides enough money to buy the perfect chair.)
5. What feeling do you get about Rosa's home and family life from the kitchen illustration?
(The warm, bright colors give a feeling of life and happiness in spite of the family's economic difficul-

ties. The kitchen looks cheerful, Rosa and Grandma are having a happy exchange, and Mama looks peaceful and content as she naps.)

6. Why does Mama look worried on the days when she comes home with only a small amount of tips? (A waitress or waiter makes most of her or his income from tips, so on days that Mama does not get much in tips, she has not earned much for her day of work. The family is not well-off, so Mama needs to do well with tips every day she works.)
7. What kind of emotions do you see expressed in the illustrations of the fire and Rosa's home after the fire is put out? (The fire scene is dramatic, with Uncle Sandy running toward Rosa and Mama and gesturing back, and with Mama racing frantically toward the house, Rosa racing behind her, worried to death about Grandma. In the background, the firefighters work to put out the flames that are shooting out the windows and roof. The next scene is somber. Mama, Rosa, and Grandma gaze sadly on the ruined, charred remains of their home. The painting conveys the mood of sad loss with its gray and black tones, a startling contrast to the bright, splashy, primary colors of the rest of the book.)
8. Look at the pictures and read (or listen to) the text of the neighbors coming to greet Rosa and her family on the day they move into their new apartment after the fire. What does this tell you about these neighborhood people? Can you find the things in the pictures that are mentioned in the text that the people are bringing to Rosa's family? (The neighborhood people are supportive and sharing, and they are practicing community cooperation. They are generously sharing some of their own possessions so Rosa and her family can get back on their feet after the fire, even though these are not well-off working-class people, just like Rosa and her mother and grandmother.)
9. What kind of attitude does Grandma express in her speech of thanks to the neighbors? (Grandma says, "Its lucky we're young and can start all over." Grandma is not quite young any more, but she is expressing a youthful attitude and a positive, can-do approach to the devastation of having to start over again at this stage of her life.)
10. What does the chair mean to Rosa, her mother, and

her grandmother once they get it home? (The chair provides a much-needed resting place in the apartment. It gives pleasure by being beautiful. Its a refuge, a place of protection. It is a symbol of family unity. It is a nurturing spot.)

Across the Curriculum

Invite students to complete any of these activities that are suitable for their grade and interest level.

Music

1. As Grandma does, hum one of your favorite tunes. Can classmates tell what tune this is?

Mathematics

1. How many coins do you think might be in the full jar? Count what you can, and then guess how many more might be there. Ask a math teacher which guess is likely to be closest to being correct.
2. Start saving coins yourself, with family members if they want to take part. When you have a small jar full of coins, sort them out and then count them.

Language Arts

1. Retell the story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* in your own words. You could also illustrate your story.
2. Write some dialogue—a conversation between Rosa and Grandma, and maybe Mama as well—for the kitchen scene in the book.
3. Imagine you are Rosa, and keep a diary about the things that happen in your life.
4. Find out what personal incident in the author's childhood provided the basis for this story. (To the teacher: You could share this story with students; you'll find it in Williams' *Boston Globe-Horn Book Award* acceptance speech in *Horn Book*, February 1984, pp. 34-38.)
5. Read or listen to the other Rosa stories by Vera B. Williams: *Something Special for Me* and *Music, Music for Everyone*.

Social Studies and Geography

1. On a map, locate urban areas near where you live.
2. List the job duties of a waitress or waiter. Do you think this is a job you would like?
3. Does your neighborhood have the businesses and services people need nearby? Try to locate at least one local bank, fire station, restaurant, furniture store, food market, and shoe store. Draw a map of your neighborhood and locate these busi-

ness on your map, plus your home.

4. The author of this book grew up during the Great Depression, and she based the story on an incident from her own childhood. Find out more about what it was like for kids to grow up during the Depression.

Health and Safety

1. Invite a fire official to your class to give a talk on fire safety in your home and school. Then make sure your family has a plan for escaping in the event of a fire at your home.
2. Help an adult make a potato dish, as Rosa's Grandma does, or an onion or other soup, as Rosa does at the diner. Are these nutritious dishes?
3. Make up a menu for the Blue Tile Diner that is a balance of good foods that are also tasty and popular.

Science

1. Explain what causes fires to start and why things burn. What are "charcoal and ashes," which is all that is left of Rosa's family's home and possessions after their fire?
2. Read about tulips-what they are and how to plant and grow them. Share what you find out with classmates. If possible, plant some tulips yourself and see if they come up and bloom in the spring.

Art

1. Look at the borders around each set of two pages in the book about Rosa. How does each border relate to the picture and text that it surrounds?
2. Design a border to go around a page or two-page set in another book that you especially like. Have the border match the illustration and text in some way.
3. Using bright colors, create a picture of Rosa trying out an armchair in one of the furniture stores where she goes shopping with Mama and Grandma.
4. Look at art books showing paintings by Matisse and Gauguin. Do they remind you in any ways of the illustrations in this Rosa book?

Student Involvement Activities

1. Visit a local diner and have a meal or snack there. Does this place remind you in any way of the Blue Tile Diner?
2. Save up your own coins for something very special you'd like to buy. What is this special thing? After you've saved for a week or so, count your money and compare it with the price of the thing you want to buy. Do you think you have a realistic

chance of saving enough to make your purchase?

3. If you'd like to earn money, ask around your neighborhood to see if there are any small jobs you could get, like the tasks Rosa does for Josephine at the diner.
4. Go to a local bank and get wrappers for different kinds of coins. If you save enough of any one kind of coin, fill a wrapper and exchange it at the bank for bills.
5. Visit your local fire station and learn about the ways in which your local firefighters help keep you and your neighbors safe from fire.
6. Visit a furniture store with lots of stuffed armchairs. Try out different chairs, as Rosa and her mother and grandmother did, and then choose your favorite. Or look at a furniture store catalogue and choose the chair you'd most like to have and also the chair you'd choose for your mother.
7. Donate something of your own to the victims of a local fire.
8. Tell about a time when members of your family worked together to reach a common goal.
9. With classmates, act out some scenes based on the novel, adding your own dialogue and extra action.
10. Compare Rosa's family with your own. How are the two families alike? How are they different?
11. Imagine your home was badly damaged by fire. What would you miss most of what was lost?

Alternate Assessment

Depending on student ability level, you could have students write their responses to one of these assessment vehicles or simply discuss their response with you, individually or in a group setting.

1. Explain why Rosa, Mama, and Grandma do not have a sofa or any armchairs any more. Tell why it is important to get an armchair, and how Rosa, Mama, and Grandma accomplish this.
2. Explain what the illustrations tell you about Rosa's family and Rosa's neighborhood.
3. List the ways in which people in the story help each other.

Vocabulary Test

Read each sentence. Below the sentence, find the answer that could be used in place of the word in boldface (dark) type. Write the letter of the answer in the blank in front of the sentence.

_____ 1. My mother works as a waitress in the local **diner**.

- (a) large plate
- (b) playground
- (c) small restaurant

_____ 2. Sometimes Grandma gets a good **bargain** on something she buys.

- (a) swap
- (b) low price
- (c) high price

_____ 3. We were walking down the street looking at everyone's **tulips**.

- (a) small pets
- (b) trees
- (c) spring flowers

_____ 4. All the **neighbors** stood in a bunch across the street.

- (a) people who live near you
- (b) relatives
- (c) bosses

_____ 5. We were able to move into the **apartment** downstairs.

- (a) a house
- (b) a set of rooms to live in
- (c) a store

_____ 6. My other grandpa brought us his **beautiful** rug.

- (a) lovely
- (b) strange-looking
- (c) dirty

_____ 7. Grandma has to get as **comfortable** as she can on a hard kitchen chair.

- (a) angry
- (b) sleepy
- (c) feeling at ease

_____ 8. They knew we couldn't wait for the chair to be **delivered**.

- (a) taken away
- (b) brought, or taken to
- (c) burnt up

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Matching (10 points)

Read each description. Write the letter that matches in front of each description.

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| _____ 1. A single working parent. | a. Rosa |
| _____ 2. Rosa's uncle who lives upstairs. | b. Grandma |
| _____ 3. A young girl who lives with her mother and grandmother. | c. Josephine |
| _____ 4. Owner of the Blue Tile Diner. | d. Sandy |
| _____ 5. An older woman who says, "It's lucky we're young and can start over." | e. Mama |

Part II: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write the letter of the ending in the space in front of each sentence.

- _____ 1. Rosa's mother has a job working as a
(a) teacher. (b) waitress. (c) dentist.
- _____ 2. Rosa, Mama, and Grandma lost everything they owned to a(n)
(a) fire. (b) burglar. (c) ice storm.
- _____ 3. Rosa, Mama, and Grandma now live in a(n)
(a) house. (b) homeless shelter. (c) apartment.
- _____ 4. The coins that Rosa, Mama, and Grandma are saving go into a big
(a) jar. (b) safe. (c) piggy bank.
- _____ 5. Rosa, Mama, and Grandma are saving up to buy a(n)
(a) sofa. (b) armchair. (c) bed.
- _____ 6. Mama and Grandma change the rolled-up coins into paper money at the
(a) furniture store. (b) bank. (c) diner.
- _____ 7. While she is testing all the chairs, Grandma says she feels like
(a) Snow White. (b) Cinderella. (c) Goldilocks.
- _____ 8. Ida and Sandy bring the chair home in their
(a) pickup truck. (b) minivan. (c) wagon.
- _____ 9. The new apartment where Rosa now lives has red and white
(a) floors. (b) walls. (c) curtains.
- _____ 10. The wonderful chair is going to be
(a) small and narrow. (b) fat and soft. (c) hard and low.

Part III: True/False (20 points)

Mark each sentence with a **T** if it is true or an **F** if any part of it is false.

- _____ 1. The author of this book also painted the book's pictures.
- _____ 2. Most of the pictures in this book are dark and gloomy.
- _____ 3. Grandma is hurt in the big fire.
- _____ 4. Rosa earns money doing small jobs at the diner.
- _____ 5. Mama worries on days when she does not earn many tips.
- _____ 6. The terrible fire happened five years ago.
- _____ 7. The neighbors give Rosa's family many of their own things to replace what was lost.
- _____ 8. Rosa, Mama, and Grandma have to move because they cannot pay their rent.
- _____ 9. The saved money is not enough to pay for the chair that Rosa, Mama, and Grandma want to buy.
- _____ 10. Rosa likes to fall asleep sitting in Mama's lap in the chair.

Part IV: Essay (Extra Credit)

Write or tell your answer to one of these questions to get extra points on your test.

1. How do Rosa, Mama, and Grandma help one another?
2. Describe Rosa's neighborhood.

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Matching (10 points)

Read each description. Write the letter that matches in front of each description.

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| _____ 1. A woman who works as a waitress. | a. Rosa |
| _____ 2. Mama's sister who lives upstairs. | b. Grandma |
| _____ 3. A young girl who adds her own money to the savings jar. | c. Josephine |
| _____ 4. The boss who owns the business where Mama works. | d. Ida |
| _____ 5. An older woman who hums while she cuts up potatoes. | e. Mama |

Part II: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write the letter of the ending you chose in the space in front of each sentence.

- _____ 1. Rosa lives in
(a) the country. (b) the city. (c) a beach town.
- _____ 2. Rosa's mother works at the Blue Tile
(a) Inn. (b) Video Store. (c) Diner.
- _____ 3. Often when Mama comes home from work, she is
(a) angry. (b) very tired. (c) ready to quit.
- _____ 4. Rosa, Mama, and Grandma used to live in a(n)
(a) house. (b) homeless shelter. (c) camper.
- _____ 5. Rosa, Mama, and Grandma paint their new apartment
(a) yellow. (b) gray. (c) blue.
- _____ 6. Rosa, Mama, and Grandma save up this kind of money:
(a) one-dollar bills. (b) only quarters. (c) all coins.
- _____ 7. Mama puts into the big jar all the coins she earns in
(a) salary. (b) tips. (c) refunds.
- _____ 8. Rosa puts all the saved money into paper
(a) wrappers. (b) bags. (c) baskets.
- _____ 9. Rosa, Mama, and Grandma shop for the armchair at four different
(a) shoe stores. (b) furniture stores. (c) yard sales.
- _____ 10. The perfect armchair is red with a pattern of pink
(a) stripes. (b) flowers. (c) birds.

Part III: True/False (20 points)

Mark each sentence with a **T** if it is true or an **F** if any part of it is false.

- _____ 1. Most of the pictures in this book are bright and cheerful.
- _____ 2. Burglars stole everything Rosa, Mama, and Grandma once owned.
- _____ 3. Rosa's cat is killed in the fire.
- _____ 4. Rosa enjoys counting the money they put in the jar.
- _____ 5. Grandma is too sick and old to go out of the apartment.
- _____ 6. No matter how hard they try, Rosa, Mama, and Grandma just cannot fill the jar with their coins.
- _____ 7. One day when Rosa and Mama come home, fire engines are on their street.

- _____ 8. The people in Rosa's family fight and argue a lot.
- _____ 9. The new chair is big enough for Rosa, Mama, and Grandma to sit in it all together.
- _____ 10. Rosa, Mama, and Grandma have to wait two weeks for the store to deliver the new chair to their home.

Part IV: Essay (Extra Credit)

Write or tell your answer to one of these questions to get extra points on your test.

1. Describe Rosa's family.
2. Explain why having a comfortable armchair is important to Rosa, Mama, and Grandma.

Answer Key

VOCABULARY TEST

- | | |
|------|------|
| 1. c | 5. b |
| 2. b | 6. a |
| 3. c | 7. c |
| 4. a | 8. b |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (10 points)

- | | |
|------|------|
| 1. e | 4. c |
| 2. d | 5. b |
| 3. a | |

Part II: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. b | 6. b |
| 2. a | 7. c |
| 3. c | 8. a |
| 4. a | 9. c |
| 5. b | 10. b |

Part III: True/False (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. T | 6. F |
| 2. F | 7. T |
| 3. F | 8. F |
| 4. T | 9. F |
| 5. T | 10. T |

Part IV: Essay (Extra Credit)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Matching (10 points)

- | | |
|------|------|
| 1. e | 4. b |
| 2. d | 5. c |
| 3. c | |

Part II: Multiple Choice (20 points)

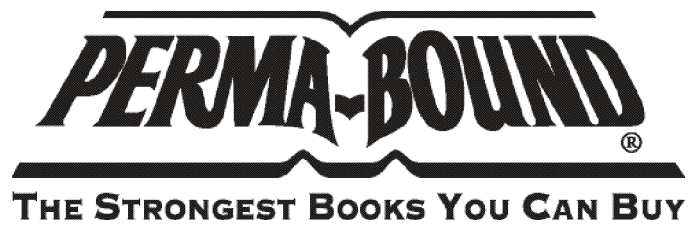
- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. b | 6. c |
| 2. c | 7. b |
| 3. b | 8. a |
| 4. a | 9. b |
| 5. a | 10. b |

Part III: True/False (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. T | 6. F |
| 2. F | 7. T |
| 3. F | 8. F |
| 4. T | 9. T |
| 5. F | 10. F |

Part IV: Essay (Extra Credit)

Answers will vary.



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