



Fever 1793

by Laurie Halse Anderson

Teacher's Guide

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Synopsis

Chapter 1

On August 16, 1793, in Philadelphia, PA, fourteen-year-old Matilda ("Mattie") Cook wakes up grudgingly to face another hot August day filled with the strenuous chores appropriate to the daughter of a prosperous coffeehouse owner.

Chapter 2

Mattie lives with her mother, paternal grandfather, and freed black Eliza. Together, they run Cook Coffeehouse. A decade earlier, Mattie's father fell off a ladder and died two months after they opened the coffeehouse. Mattie considers Eliza, the cook, her best friend. Mattie is shocked to learn that her girlhood friend Polly, who helps out at the coffeehouse, has died.

Chapter 3

It emerges that Polly died of fever, and Mrs. Cook refuses to let Mattie pay her respects because the fever appears to be contagious.

Chapter 4

Mattie's grandfather is the Revolutionary War hero Captain William Farnsworth Cook. A genial man, he and his friends at the coffeehouse discuss the source of the fever.

Chapter 5

A week later, sixty-four people have died of fever and rumors are rife. To keep her safe, Mattie has not been allowed to leave the coffeehouse area, but her mother finally lets her do the marketing. There, she meets Nathaniel Benson, the young man she admires. A painter's apprentice, Nathaniel returns her affection.

Chapter 6

The coffeehouse is making a profit because of the fever and the family discusses how to spend the surplus. Mrs. Cook and Mattie are invited to tea with the wealthy Ogilvies.

Chapter 7

Mattie and her mother visit the Ogilvies. Pernilla Ogilvie, the mother, is a snob; her daughters Colette and Jeannine, are cruel and insufferable. The tea goes badly, becoming even worse when Colette Ogilvie collapses with the fever.

Chapter 8

The fever spreads wildly and many wealthy families leave the city. In 1793, 42,000 people lived in Philadelphia, America's capital. Mattie and her grandfather are horrified when Mrs. Cook takes ill, collapses, and is wheeled home in a barrow.

Chapter 9

Mattie is left alone to nurse her deathly-ill mother. She is diagnosed with yellow fever.

Chapter 10

Selflessly, Mrs. Cook insists that Mattie and Grandfather evacuate the city for a farm. Eliza will stay and nurse Mrs. Cook.

Chapter 11

Mattie and Grandfather travel out of town in a wagon, but it is stopped so village inspectors can verify the occupants are well.

Grandfather collapses, fever is suspected, and he and Mattie are thrown off the wagon.

Chapter 12

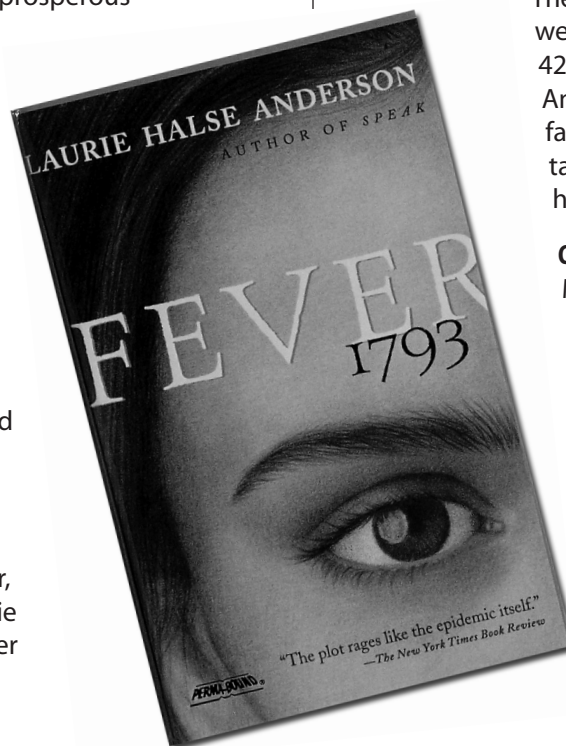
Mattie finds food and water and nurses her grandfather

Chapter 13

Mattie collapses with fever.

Chapter 14

Mattie awakens in a hospital called "Bush Hill," nursed by kindly Mrs. Flagg. Grandfather does not have fever; he is exhausted and overcome by heat. Stephen Girard has set up the hospital using the sensible French nursing practices—food, rest, cleanliness—rather than the barbaric English practice of bloodletting. As a result, Mattie recovers quickly.



Chapter 15

On the tenth day, Mattie is well enough to leave. They do not know where Mother is.

Chapter 16

They leave the hospital. On the wagon ride, Mrs. Bowles encourages Mattie to come to the orphanage rather than return to the fever-ridden city. Horrified, Mattie vows to return to her home.

Chapter 17

The coffeehouse has been looted. Their food is gone, but their money is safe. Starved, Mattie forages in the garden but barely finds enough food for her and Grandfather.

Chapter 18

Mattie takes a bath and puts on her mother's clothes, since hers are destroyed. They eat a meager meal.

Chapter 19

Looters break in. Mattie and her grandfather bravely fight, but Grandfather dies. Mattie is disconsolate.

Chapter 20

Mattie accompanies her grandfather's body to the grave and buries him with dignity. She tries to place a newspaper ad to find her mother, but the editor refuses because half the citizens of Philadelphia are gone. Mattie finds an abandoned girl.

Chapter 22

Mattie wanders all over town with the little girl Nell, looking for Eliza. She finally finds her.

Chapter 23

Eliza lives with her brother Joseph and his family. His wife has died of fever, but his twin sons Robert and William survive. The blacks have helped many people, regardless of color. On Eliza's advice, Mattie tries to take Nell to an orphanage, but they are too full to take her. Eliza learns that Colette Ogilvie did not die of the fever, but she did disgrace her family by eloping with her French tutor. Food is very scarce.

Chapter 24

Mattie goes on rounds with Eliza and sees horrible suffering. They return to find the twins have the fever.

Chapter 25

Mattie and Eliza move the twins to the coffeehouse, where it is cooler, to nurse them. Nell takes ill as well.

Chapter 26

With the frost, the fever abates, and the children recover. Mattie learns that Nathaniel and the Peales survived by eating the rare animals Peale had collected for his natural history museum.

Chapter 27

The survivors have a small feast of thanksgiving.

Chapter 28

Mattie reopens the coffeehouse with Eliza as full partner. Mother returns.

Chapter 29

Mother is greatly weakened by the fever. During her illness, she had searched for Mattie, nearly dying in the process.

Epilogue

Mattie works hard but is pleased by her efforts. In a few years, she and Nathaniel plan to marry.

Appendix

This section provides historical background.

Timeline

1681	First American parks dedicated in Philadelphia.
1682	First American brick house built in Philadelphia.
Feb. 12, 1698	First American public school established in Philadelphia.
July 31, 1729	First treatise against slavery published in any part of the world appeared at Philadelphia written by Ralph Sandiford.
1731	First American public library founded in Philadelphia.
Dec. 7, 1736	The Union Fire Company, the first known volunteer fire department, is established in Philadelphia by Benjamin Franklin and others.
1743	American Philosophical Institution founded in Philadelphia by Benjamin Franklin and others.
June 15, 1752	Benjamin Franklin and his son William demonstrate Franklin's theory of lightning and electricity.
Nov. 26, 1762	The first school of anatomy in North America is founded in Philadelphia.

1773 American Medical Society founded in Philadelphia.

1789 The first Congress of the United States meets in Philadelphia at Congress Hall.

1790 Yellow fever breaks out in New York City.

1793 Yellow fever breaks out in Philadelphia; over 4000 die.

Aug. 16, 1793 *Mattie's girlhood friend Polly dies of yellow fever.*

Aug. 24, 1793 64 people have died of yellow fever in the Philadelphia area.

Aug. 30, 1793 *Mattie and her mother visit the wealthy Ogilvie family; Colette Ogilvie collapses with the fever.*

Sep. 2, 1793 Wealthy Philadelphia families flee the city to avoid the fever; *Mattie's mother collapses.*

Sep. 6, 1793 *Mattie's mother sends her and her grandfather out of Philadelphia to a farm.*

Sep. 7, 1793 *Mattie and her grandfather flee the city; Grandfather collapses, and yellow fever is suspected.*

Sep. 8, 1793 *Mattie cares for her grandfather.*

Sep. 10, 1793 *Mattie collapses from the fever.*

Sep. 12-20, 1793 *Mattie awakens in Bush Hill hospital and begins her recovery.*

Sep. 24, 1793 *Mattie leaves Bush Hill in search of her mother. Mattie realizes the family coffeehouse has been looted and the food, but not their money, is gone.*

Sep. 26, 1793 *Mattie and her grandfather are attacked by looters; Grandfather dies.*

Sep. 27, 1793 *Mattie buries her grandfather with dignity. Mattie searches for and finds Eliza, the black woman who cooked at the coffeehouse and is Mattie's best friend.*

Sep. 28, 1793 *Mattie is unable to leave Nell at an overcrowded orphanage.*

Oct. 3, 1793 With the onset of winter, cases of yellow fever abate.

Oct. 30, 1793 *Survivors of the epidemic have a small celebration.*

Nov. 10, 1793 *Mattie reopens the family coffeehouse with Eliza as full partner. Mattie finds her mother, weakened from the fever.*

Dec. 10, 1793 *Mattie considers her family, career, and her plans to marry Nathaniel Benson.*

1794-1798 Yellow fever breaks out annually in the Philadelphia area.

1841 Outbreaks of yellow fever across the Southern states.

1847 Yellow fever strikes New Orleans.

1852-1853 Cases of yellow fever rampant especially in the American South; 8000 die in New Orleans.

1867 Yellow fever continues to haunt the Southern States; 3000 die in New Orleans.

July-Aug. 1898 Of the 5700 deaths in the Spanish-American war, 5000 are attributed to yellow fever.

1940 Thousands of deaths in the Sudan attributed to yellow fever.

1960-1962 15,000-30,000 deaths in Ethiopia attributed to yellow fever.

1978 91 deaths in Bolivia, Ecuador, Brazil, Colombia, and Peru attributed to yellow fever.

1978 63 deaths in Gambia attributed to yellow fever.

1978 40 deaths in Ghana attributed to yellow fever.

Author Sketch



Laurie Halse (pronounced "Haltz") Anderson was born in 1961, in Potsdam, NY. Initially, school was painful for Anderson because of her parents' relative poverty, but things improved when she joined several athletic teams and made friends. She earned her associates degree from Onondaga County Community College in 1981 and her bachelors in language/linguistics from Georgetown University in 1984.

After college, Anderson married, had her children, and worked both as a reporter for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and as a freelance magazine writer and editor. Later, she began writing for children, focusing at first on picture books.

Anderson published her first book for adolescents, *Speak*, in 1999. The novel won an array of honors, including being a finalist for the prestigious National Book Award. The reviews were laudatory. Although she is a popular author on the school-and-library lecture circuit, Anderson remains devoted to her writing. She adheres to a strict schedule, writing from 4:30 a.m. to noon every day.

Critic's Corner

Fever 1793 has garnered an impressive bouquet of awards. In 2000, *Fever 1793* was named an ALA Best Books for Young Adults selection, Junior Library Guild selection, Children's Book-of-the-Month selection, Parent's Guide to Children's Media Award, "Pick of the Lists," American Booksellers Association, and 100 Best Books of Fall selection, New York Public Library. In 2003, it was awarded the Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award, and recognized by the Illinois Reading Council, the Illinois School Library Media Association, and the Illinois Association of Teachers of English.

School Library Journal reviewer Kathleen Isaacs noted, "Readers will be drawn in by the characters and will emerge with a sharp and graphic picture of another world."

Other Books By The Author

The Big Cheese of Third Street (2002)
Catalyst (2002)
End of the Race (2002)
Fear of Falling (2001)
Fight for Life: Maggie (2000)
Homeless (2000)
Manatee Blues (2000)
Masks (2002)
Ndito Runs (1996)
No Time for Mother's Day (1999)
Prom (2005)
Saudi Arabia (2001)
Say Goodbye (2001)
Speak (1999)
Storm Rescue (2001)
Teacher's Pet (2001)
Thank You, Sarah: The Woman Who Saved Thanksgiving (2002)
Time To Fly (2002)
Trapped (2001)
The Trickster (2000)
Turkey Pox (1996)
Twisted (2007)

Bibliography

ALAN Review, spring-summer, 2000, "Speaking Out," pp. 25-26.
Booklist, Frances Bradburn, review of *Fever 1793*, p. 332; April 1, 2001, Stephanie Zvirin, review of *Fever 1793*, p. 1486.
Horn Book, fall, 1996, p. 246; September, 1999, review of *Speak*, p. 605; September, 2000, Anita K. Burkam, review of *Fever 1793*, p. 562.
New York Times Book Review, November 19, 2000, Constance Decker Thompson, review of *Fever 1793*, pp. 45-46.
Publishers Weekly, review of *Fever 1793*, p. 96.
School Library Journal, August, 2000, Kathleen Isaacs, review of *Fever 1793*.
Voice of Youth Advocates, December, 2000, Christine M. Hill, "Laurie Halse Anderson Speaks: An Interview," pp. 325-327; December, 2000, Dr. Stefani Koorey, review of *Fever 1793*, p. 344.

General Objectives

1. To understand historical fiction
2. To analyze the novel's title
3. To assess the main character's personality
4. To recognize the novel's themes
5. To describe the novel's plot
6. To sympathize with the main character's plight
7. To find examples of compassion
8. To sympathize with the main character's grief and loss
9. To recognize the significance of setting
10. To describe the novel's mood

Specific Objectives

1. To understand the causes and effects of the fever
2. To understand the social, political, and economic realities of 1793
3. To assess Mattie's intelligence and resilience
4. To recognize the importance of courage under harsh circumstances
5. To describe how Mattie copes with illness and death
6. To appreciate the heroism of the Free African Society
7. To distinguish the intermingling of real and fictional characters
8. To see how Mattie grows and matures
9. To understand Mattie's feelings toward Nathaniel
10. To grasp why people fled from Philadelphia

Literary Terms And Applications

For a better understanding of Laurie Halse Anderson's style, present the following terms and applications to the novel:

characterization: the different ways an author tells readers about characters. Writers can tell about characters directly or let readers reach their own decisions about a character indirectly by showing the comments, thoughts, and actions of the other characters. Anderson uses both direct and indirect characterization to show Mattie as a brave, independent, and mature young woman.

conflict in literature: a struggle or fight. There are two kinds of conflict. In an external conflict, characters struggle against a force outside themselves. In an internal conflict, characters battle a force within themselves. *Fever 1793* has a strong external conflict as the residents of Philadelphia – especially Mattie, her grandfather, mother, and their cook Eliza – struggle against each other as result of the fever and the horror it unleashes.

historical fiction: a make-believe story based on real people and events. *Fever 1793* is based on the real outbreak of yellow fever in Philadelphia in 1793: all the main characters are fictional but the minor characters (such as George Washington, Dr. Benjamin Rush, and Stephen Girard) are real.

The Importance of Setting

At the close of the 18th century, Philadelphia was the bustling capital of the United States, with George Washington and Thomas Jefferson in residence.

In 1681, King Charles II of England gave William Penn the title to Pennsylvania. Penn arrived at the site to establish the city of Philadelphia the following year. He planned a rectangular grid pattern on 1,200 acres between the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers. At this time, the plan consisted of a 22- by 8-block grid pattern, a building and housing layout, and potential for the city to grow. His plan also provided an innovative urban planning design of four public squares (now parks) and a town square (now City Hall). Penn's plan would influence the future growth of Philadelphia and help establish the urban planning pattern for most later cities in America.

During the next few years, Philadelphia flourished, swelling to 7,000 residents in the early 1700s. A trading and manufacturing center, Philadelphia became a key port and major city before the American Revolution. By 1774, Philadelphia had become the military, economic, and political center of the colonies. The First Continental Congress convened at Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia in 1774. The Second Continental Congress met at Philadelphia the following year. Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, in Philadelphia. The city served as the seat of national government from 1776 to 1800 (except for a brief period in 1789 and 1790) until Washington, D.C., became the capital in 1800.

Map of Independence National Historic Park in Philadelphia, PA used courtesy of the National Park Service. It can be found at: www.nps.gov/carto.

Cross-Curricular Sources

Novels

James Lincoln Collier, *My Brother Sam Is Dead*

Esther Forbes, *Johnny Tremain*

Alice McGill, *Miles' Song*

Laura Ingalls Wilder, *Little House On The Prairie*

Elizabeth George Speare, *The Witch Of Blackbird Pond*

DVDs And Videos

The American Revolution (1994)

Influenza 1918: The American Experience (1998)

Nonfiction

Elizabeth Anne Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic Of 1775-82*

Jim Murphy, *An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793*

Michael Oldstone, *Viruses, Plagues, And History*

J.H. Powell, *Bring Out Your Dead: The Great Plague of Yellow Fever in Philadelphia in 1793*

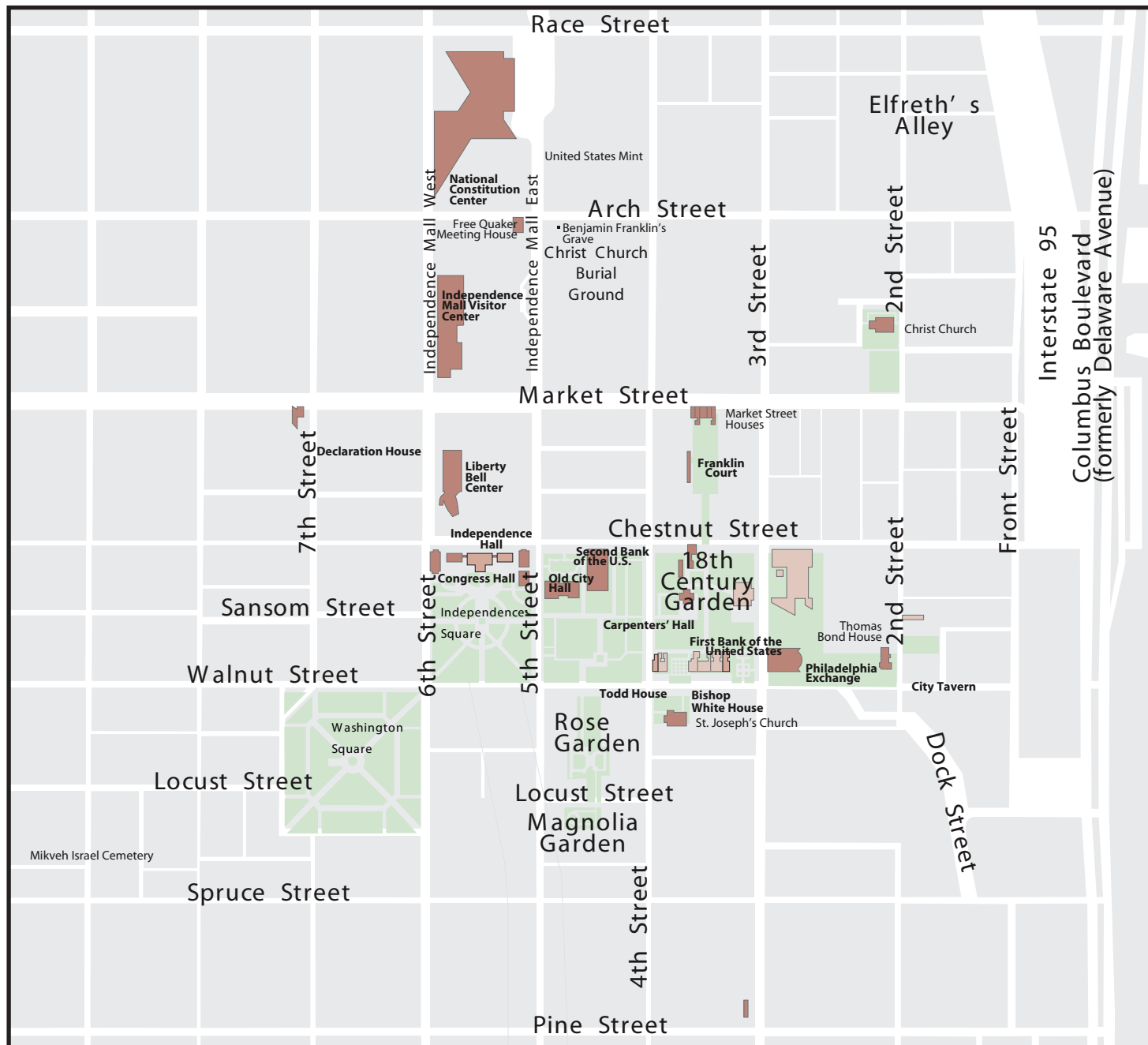
Internet

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<http://teenreads.com/authors/au-anderson-laurie.com.asp>



Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in Laurie Halse Anderson's *Fever 1793* should include these aspects:

Themes

- courage
- history
- tragedy
- fate
- generosity
- illness
- kindness
- love
- coping skills
- race relations

Motifs

- showing courage under horrific conditions
- learning American history
- making a living
- coping with fate
- being generous
- enduring great illness
- experiencing and showing kindness
- showing love
- having grace under pressure
- surviving in a city made frantic with disease

Meaning Study

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the novel. Explain the meaning of each. Chapter and page numbers indicate the context from which the item is taken.

1. My city, Philadelphia, was wide awake. (Chap. 1, p. 4)
(At the close of the 18th century, Philadelphia was the bustling capital of the United States, with Washington and Jefferson in residence. Anderson has carefully researched this historical event and infuses her story with rich details of time and place.)
2. A week later, sixty-four people had died. (Chap. 5, p. 24)
(Fever 1793 is based on an actual epidemic of yellow fever in Philadelphia that wiped out 4,000 people—or 10 percent of the city's population—in three months.)
3. Wit is the most dangerous talent you can possess. (Chap. 7, p. 46)
(Each chapter begins with an historical headnote. This one from "A Father's Legacy to his Daughters" is the theme for the comic relief in this chapter, as Mattie's wit shines through during a visit to her wealthy neighbors' house, the Ogilvies. She underscores the silliness of their snobbery through her witty thoughts.)
4. "Mother!" I screamed. (Chap. 8 p. 62)
(Although Mattie resents her mother's sour bossiness, she recognizes her widowed mother's hard struggle for survival. When her mother takes ill with yellow fever, Mattie begins a desperate odyssey of coping and survival.)
5. They told of thieves who crept in and stole jewelry off the dead and dying. (Chap. 15, p. 106)
(The rich flee to the country, abandoning the city to looters, corpses, and frightened survivors. The novel paints a vivid picture of the seedy waterfront, and the devastation the disease wreaks on a once thriving city.)
6. Mother's shift and blue-and-white striped overskirt fit better than I had imagined. (Chap. 18, p. 132)
(Mattie takes a bath and then dons her mother's clothes. The bath—a symbolic baptism—and dressing in her mother's clothes symbolize that she has become an adult.)
7. The sights and smells of Eliza's patients were no worse than Bush Hill, but I was not prepared for the heartache. (Chap. 24, p. 192)

(Eliza's story is part of an important chapter in African-American history, as the members of the Free African Society courageously and selflessly minister to the ill and dying.)

8. Frost. This was no dream. (Chap. 26, p. 210)
(The frost arrives and the epidemic ends, but in the madness, many lives have been shattered, often beyond repair.)
9. "I'm going to open the coffeehouse for business. Tomorrow." (Chap. 27, p. 224)
(Mattie's sufferings have helped her grow from a willful child into a capable young woman who rebuilds her family's business.)
10. Did the Epidemic Really Happen? (Appendix, p. 244)
(The Appendix provides the fascinating historical underpinnings for the novel.)

Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the book.

Questions 1-5 (Literal Level)

1. When and where is the story set? Why is the setting important?
(The story takes place in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, during the summer of 1793. At that time, Philadelphia was America's capital and thus had great importance to the country as a whole. In addition, scientists had not yet discovered how yellow fever was spread or how to cure it. Thus, ignorance and terror grip the city.)
2. What is the fever and how is it spread?
(The fever is yellow fever, an infectious disease spread by the bite of the female Aedes aegypti mosquito.)
3. How did Nathaniel stay alive during the fever?
(Nathaniel is an apprentice with Mr. Peale, a painter. Peale had collected animals for a natural history museum. Before the animals are killed and stuffed, Nathaniel and the family eat them.)
4. How does Grandfather die?
(After Mattie and Grandfather return to the deserted coffeehouse, two robbers break in. Grandfather fires his rifle at the men, but the shot misses and they jump him. In the scuffle, Grandfather is pummeled badly. The injuries prove too severe, and he dies.)

5. What finally causes the fever to stop?
(*The fever is spread by infected mosquitoes. When the frost comes on October 23, it kills the mosquitoes and the plague can no longer be spread.*)

Questions 6-8 (Interpretative Level)

6. How does Mattie change as the book progresses?
(*Mattie's sufferings change her from a willful child to a strong, capable young woman able to manage her family's business.*)
7. What is Mattie's relationship with her mother?
(*Although Mattie loves her mother and admires her strength, she resents her mother's bitterness and dictatorial manner.*)
8. Why does Mattie help push the burial cart and say a prayer over her grandfather's grave?
(*Mattie loves her grandfather very much. As a result, she insists on burying her beloved grandfather with the dignity befitting his public stance as a hero of the American Revolution and his private kindness to her and her mother.*)

Questions 9 and 10 (Critical Level)

9. Why do you think the author included some humorous parts?
(*The comic relief, such as the Ogilvies' adventure with the French tutor, help relieve the book's tragedy.*)
10. What do flowers symbolize in the story?
(*Early in the novel, Nathaniel paints a picture of flowers for Mattie. Later, he tosses flowers out the window at her. The flowers stand for his love for her.*)

Questions 11-12 (Creative Level)

11. Write a brief sequel to the story in which you explain what happens to Mattie, Nathaniel, Eliza, and Mother.
12. Working with a small group of classmates, role-play a dialogue between Eliza and Mattie, in which they discuss their experiences in the summer of 1793.

Across The Curriculum

Art/Music

1. Make a scale model of the coffeehouse.
2. Draw or paint a new cover for the novel.
3. Imagine you are creating a movie of *Fever 1793*. Choose background music for three especially dramatic scenes.

4. Using scenes from the novel, create a mural of the main events.
5. Make an advertisement for the reopened coffeehouse.

Language Arts

1. Recast one chapter from Eliza's point of view.
2. Write a newspaper article for a Philadelphia newspaper of the time, explaining the fever and its effects on the city.
3. Choose any three headnotes and explain what they add to your understanding of the novel and the historical era.
4. Create a character sketch of Eliza or Mattie.
5. Write a dialogue between Mattie and her father in which she explains what happened in her life since his untimely death.

History/Social Studies

1. Learn more about the Free African Society. Share your findings with the class as a speech or in a web page.
2. Choose any one of the historical figures in the book, such as Mr. Peale, and write a report on his life.
3. Create an historically accurate map of Philadelphia in the late 18th century. Be sure to include the waterfront area.

Science

1. Compare and contrast French and English methods for coping with yellow fever. Which medical care was most effective? Why?
2. Explain the theory behind bloodletting.
3. Make a booklet showing people today how to deal with an outbreak of an infectious disease, such as yellow fever, the flu, or measles.

Speech/Drama

1. Working with a partner, role-play a scene between Mattie and Nathaniel in which they explain their feelings for each other.

2. Write and deliver a speech that President Washington might have made to calm the residents of Philadelphia during the fever.
3. Choose a dramatic scene from the novel, such as Grandfather's death. Working with some classmates, perform the scene.

Math

1. Make a menu for the coffeehouse, using the foods that Mattie was serving. By each food, include its price in contemporary dollars.
2. Before the fever takes hold, Mattie wants to expand the coffeehouse. Find out how much it would cost for a coffeehouse owner in your neighborhood to add on a room. Be sure to include the added cost of a tax increase.

Alternate Assessment

1. Write a character sketch for Mattie.
2. Make a list of actions that show Eliza is heroic.
3. Read another novel by Anderson and compare and contrast it to *Fever 1793*.

Teacher's Notes

Vocabulary

Match each word to its meaning. Write the letter of your choice in the space provided.

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| _____ 1. rouse | A. wake up |
| _____ 2. wretched | B. poisonous |
| _____ 3. abhorred | C. food |
| _____ 4. vowed | D. strong |
| _____ 5. victuals | E. grabbed |
| _____ 6. Quakers | F. homeless people |
| _____ 7. swooned | G. ashes, coals |
| _____ 8. apothecary | H. disgraceful |
| _____ 9. tedious | I. bad smell |
| _____ 10. robust | J. promised |
| _____ 11. noxious | K. religious sect |
| _____ 12. refugees | L. alone |
| _____ 13. expire | M. finish, end |
| _____ 14. yarn | N. grinder |
| _____ 15. clenched | O. pharmacy |
| _____ 16. stench | P. hated |
| _____ 17. pestle | Q. fainted |
| _____ 18. disreputable | R. boring |
| _____ 19. ember | S. miserable |
| _____ 20. solitary | T. story |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

Match each description with a name from the list. Place the letter of your answer in the blank provided at left.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| A. Nathaniel Benson | F. Matilda Cook |
| B. Eliza | G. Mrs. Flagg |
| C. Captain William Farnsworth Cook | H. King George |
| D. Polly Logan | I. Stephen Girard |
| E. Silas | J. Nell |

- ___ 1. the woman who kindly nurses Mattie in the hospital
- ___ 2. the Frenchman who goes against prevailing wisdom to set up his own hospital and treatment for fever
- ___ 3. the young orphan Mattie takes under her wing
- ___ 4. the main character, a fourteen-year old who helps her mother run their family's coffeehouse
- ___ 5. Mattie's friend, the first person Mattie knows who dies of the fever
- ___ 6. A young man apprenticed to a painter
- ___ 7. Mattie's parrot
- ___ 8. Mattie's cat
- ___ 9. Mattie's grandfather, a hero of the Revolutionary War
- ___ 10. the freed slave who works as a cook in the coffeehouse

Part II: Sentence Completion (20 points)

Circle the term that best completes each of the following statements.

- 1. The story is set in **(Philadelphia, Washington, DC)**, America's capital in 1793.
- 2. Mattie's **(older brother, father)** fell off a ladder and died when Mattie was only four years old.
- 3. Mattie considers **(Polly, Eliza)** to be her best friend.
- 4. At the beginning of the story, Mattie's mother wants her to marry the son of the wealthy **(Bensons, Ogilvies)**.
- 5. When Mattie's mother gets the fever, she is treated by **(bloodletting, strong drugs)**.
- 6. When she becomes ill with the fever, Mattie is taken to a hospital called **(City General, Bush Hill)**.
- 7. When she gets back to the coffeehouse, Mattie finds that all their **(money, food)** has been stolen.
- 8. Grandfather dies **(of fever, in a fight with robbers)** and is buried in a mass grave.
- 9. At the height of the fever, about **(half, three-quarters)** of the people in the city have either died or deserted for the countryside.
- 10. Nathaniel survived by eating **(fish he caught, wild animals)**.

Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

Part III: True/False (20 points)

Mark the following statements either T for true or F if a part is false.

- ___ 1. All of the characters in the story are fictional, made up by the author.
- ___ 2. Mattie's cousin Frances died of yellow fever, and Mrs. Cook refuses to let Mattie pay her respects because fever appears to be contagious.
- ___ 3. Mattie and her mother are very close to each other and get along very well, more like sisters than mother and daughter.
- ___ 4. At the beginning of the outbreak of fever, the coffeehouse makes a profit.
- ___ 5. Mrs. Cook gets the fever and at first, Mattie nurses her alone.
- ___ 6. Mrs. Cook insists that Mattie leave the city and get as far away as she can from the plague of fever.
- ___ 7. Nathaniel dies of the fever, even though he is carefully nursed in the hospital.
- ___ 8. The English, not the French, know how to cure the fever.
- ___ 9. Many of the black people in the city are nursing those ill with fever, despite the great personal risk they face.
- ___ 10. Colette Ogilvie did not die of the fever, but she did disgrace her family by eloping with her French tutor.

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

- 1. Which character in the novel did you admire the most? Why?
- 2. Summarize the plot (story line) of *Fever 1793*.
- 3. Describe what you learned about early American history from this novel.
- 4. Compare and contrast Mattie and her mother. How are they the same and different?

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Fill in the Blank (20 points)

Write in the term that best completes each of the following statements.

1. When the story opens, Mattie is _____ years old and working in her family's business.
2. The fever is spread by _____, even though people do not know it.
3. Mattie's grandfather was a hero in the _____ War.
4. When the novel opens, Mattie's mother has decided that soon Mattie should _____ because she is old enough for this step in her life.
5. As the fever spreads, President George Washington and other leaders such as Thomas Jefferson _____.
6. As the fever rages, Mattie reveals herself as a(n) _____ person.
7. To find her mother, Mattie tries to _____, but she is unable to carry out her plan.
8. Mattie's mother spent most of the plague time safe _____, which Mattie does not discover until the end of the story.
9. Mattie tries to take Nell to a(n) _____, but they are too full to take her.
10. When the twins get sick, Mattie and Eliza move them to _____, where it is cooler.

Part II: Identification (20 points)

Briefly describe each person, place, or thing and explain why it is important in the story.

1. flowers
2. the coffeehouse
3. the orphanage
4. Stephan Girard
5. the Free African Society

Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

Part III: Matching (20 points)

Complete each of the following descriptions with a name from the list that follows. Place the letter of your answer in the blank provided at left. Use each name only once.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| ___ 1. Eliza's brother, a cooper | A. Robert and William |
| ___ 2. The young painter's apprentice Mattie loves | B. King George and Silas |
| ___ 3. The snobby Ogilvie sisters | C. Joseph |
| ___ 4. Mattie's pets | D. Mr. Peale |
| ___ 5. Woman who wants Mattie to go to an orphanage | E. Nathaniel Benson |
| ___ 6. The young orphan Mattie adopts | F. Mattie Cook |
| ___ 7. Mattie's mother | G. Lucille Cook |
| ___ 8. Eliza's nephews | H. Colette and Jeannine |
| ___ 9. the novel's main character | I. Mrs. Bowles |
| ___ 10. A well-known painter | J. Nell |

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Describe the spread of the fever.
2. Explain how Mattie changes over the course of the novel.
3. Analyze how the story would be different if it took place in Philadelphia today.
4. Explain what function the Ogilvie family fulfills in the novel.

Answer Key

VOCABULARY

- | | | | |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. A | 6. K | 11. B | 16. I |
| 2. S | 7. Q | 12. F | 17. N |
| 3. P | 8. O | 13. M | 18. H |
| 4. J | 9. R | 14. T | 19. G |
| 5. C | 10. D | 15. E | 20. L |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. G | 6. A |
| 2. I | 7. H |
| 3. J | 8. E |
| 4. F | 9. C |
| 5. D | 10. B |

Part II: Sentence Completion (20 points)

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Philadelphia | 6. Bush Hill |
| 2. father | 7. food |
| 3. Eliza | 8. in a fight with robbers |
| 4. Ogilvies | 9. half |
| 5. bloodletting | 10. wild animals |

Part III: True/False (20 points)

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

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Fill in the Blank (20 points)

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. fourteen | 6. brave |
| 2. mosquitoes | 7. place an ad |
| 3. American Revolutionary | 8. at a friend's farm |
| 4. get married | 9. orphanage |
| 5. leave town | 10. coffeehouse |

Part II: Identification (20 points)

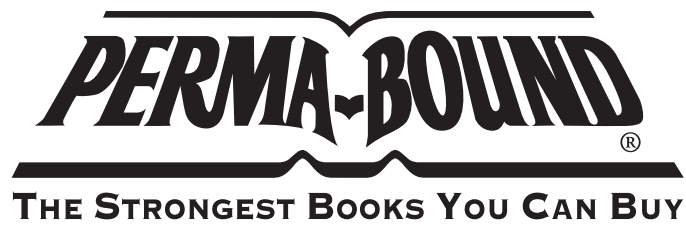
- Flowers symbolize Nathaniel's love for Mattie. Early in the novel, he paints a picture of flowers for her; later, when the fever rages, he is able to toss some flowers down to her from the room where he is sheltered.
- The coffeehouse is the Cook family business. At the beginning of the story, Mattie regards the work as a necessary evil, but by the end, she eagerly assumes ownership and makes impressive changes.
- The orphanage is the last refuge for children who have lost their parents and relatives in the fever. It appears that Mattie will have to go to the orphanage, but she finds Eliza, who takes care of her.
- Stephan Girard is the French immigrant whose revolutionary methods of dealing with the plague – food, rest, and cleanliness instead of bloodletting– helped save many lives.
- The Free African Society was a group of former slaves who selflessly nursed those afflicted with the fever and helped their families as well, at great personal risk to their own health.

Part III: Matching (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. C | 6. J |
| 2. E | 7. G |
| 3. H | 8. A |
| 4. B | 9. F |
| 5. I | 10. D |

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.



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