

A LONG WAY FROM CHICAGO

LIVING LITERATURE SERIES

RICHARD PECK

A PERMA-BOUND PRODUCTION

TEACHER'S GUIDE

GUIDE WRITTEN BY MARY ELLEN SNODGRASS

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SYNOPSIS

Prologue: In adulthood, Joey Dowdel looks back to seven Augusts of his childhood when he and his sister Mary Alice visited their Grandma Dowdel.

Shotgun Cheatham's Last Night Above Ground: In 1929, Chicago is awash in gangsters and crime. Joey, aged 9, and Mary Alice, two years younger, take the Chicago-St. Louis train southwest to their grandmother's house in Piatt County in central Illinois. Their highly feared grandmother refuses to cooperate with a reporter nosing out details about the death of Cheatham, nicknamed "Shotgun" at age 10 for unintentionally shooting a cow. She confides that Cheatham fought under General Grant at Vicksburg and invites the reporter to return that night to view the casket in her living room.

That evening, Mrs. Weidenbach carries an expanded rumor of the deceased's war record. Seated by the reporter at midnight, Grandma leans toward the gauze drape at a sound from the coffin. She fires her Winchester at the lid; the reporter dives out the window. Joey realizes that the cat raised the stir in the coffin and that Grandma's behavior caused people to leave her alone.

The Mouse in the Milk: In 1930, Joey and Mary Alice are spending a quiet evening with Grandma when a horse and wagon drive by and the mailbox explodes. The next morning, Effie Wilcox asks to use the outhouse because someone overturned her own privy the previous night. The next morning, Grandma loads her shotgun as she complains to the delivery boy, Ernie Cowgill, of a mouse in her milk. She claims to be leaving to visit Cousin Leota Shrewsbury.

Grandma catches a mouse to put in a milk bottle. Sitting in a darkened house that night, they await intruders. When three of the Cowgill brothers break into the screen door in the kitchen, Grandma sets off a cherry bomb under them. She holds all three under her shotgun and sends Joey to the church to fetch their parents. Along with Effie Wilcox, the Cowgills arrive in the milk wagon. Cowgill agrees to repair the screen and replace the mailbox. When Grandma threatens to spread the word about the mouse in the milk, Cowgill takes a razor strop outside to punish his sons.

A One-Woman Crime Wave: In 1931, unemployed and homeless men ride freight trains into town, where Sheriff Dickerson hustles them along. Grandma takes the children fishing on posted land belonging to the Piatt County Rod & Gun Club. Joey faints when a snake drops into the boat. Grandma kills the snake and brings up an illegal trap of catfish from Salt Creek, where she removes the fish and rebaits the trap with cheese. Mary Alice gapes at local men at the club cavorting in their underwear. The sheriff accuses Grandma of taking his boat, but she continues rowing to the home of Aunt Puss Chapman, for whom Grandma was once a

hired girl.

After the weekly delivery of food and cleaning of the kitchen, the trio returns home late in the evening, when Grandma sends Joey for beer in the basement and fries potatoes and onions to accompany fish. They carry the food to the Wabash Railroad bank and serve dinner to hungry drifters. The sheriff and his deputies try to evict the men, but Grandma points out that they are outside the town limits. She confesses to getting the fish from an illegal trap, just as the sheriff does, and to leaving the boat at Aunt Puss's dock. Grandma hints that she will take Mary Alice to a doctor to work out the trauma of seeing the men in the gun club in their underwear. Earl Askew advises the sheriff to drop the issue.

The Day of Judgment: In 1932, the children look forward to visiting Grandma. Mrs. Weidenbach visits to comment on the country fair, where she has taken the blue ribbon for bread-and-butter pickles since World War I. She worries that her cucumber crop fails and that people blame bankers for the Depression. To keep the blue ribbon in the community, she urges Grandma to enter a gooseberry pie and promises to drive her to the competition in the Hupmobile.

For three days, Grandma practices making pie. At the fair, Joey longs to ride with Barnstorming Bernie Buchanan, who gives free rides to winners of blue ribbons. When Grandma comes up against Rupert Pennypacker, the state's best pie baker, she switches placards on the entries. After he wins the ribbon, the family shares lunch from a hamper. Grandma waves a blue ribbon at the pilot and demands a ride in his plane. Because she is too heavy, Buchanan takes Joey. Later, she confesses that Pennypacker won the ribbon with her pie.

The Phantom Brakeman: In 1933, Joey and Mary Alice go to the Coffee Pot for a cold drink. Idella Eubanks drives up and demands the wages of her daughter Vandalia, who wipes tables. Grandma makes soap and awaits an appearance of the ghost brakeman, who died in a train wreck in 1871. Mary Alice conceals Vandalia in her room and, on pretense of feeding a kitten, steals food for her. Mrs. Eubanks arrives to demand Vandalia, but Grandma refuses to let her enter.

Junior Stubbs, who sells insurance with his father, proposes eloping with Vandalia. His parents arrive and complain that Vandalia is trying to steal Junior. Idella climbs a ladder and tries to open the window. Grandma removes the ladder; Idella falls into the bushes. At 8:17 P. M., while the town awaits an end to the impasse, the Detroit-to-St. Louis train arrives. The ghostly brakeman causes enough stir for Vandalia and Junior to sneak aboard the train and depart. Later, Grandma reveals that she knows that Joey had played the ghost by dressing in Grandpa's overcoat.

Things with Wings: In 1934, Grandma meets the train to accompany Effie Wilcox, who travels to Palmyra after the bank foreclosed on her home. Joey falls in love with a Hud-

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son automobile like John Dillinger drove and wants driving lessons from Ray, the mechanic.

At breakfast, Joey wants \$2 for driving lessons. Grandma sends him and Mary Alice to the attic to find a stovepipe hat. They also locate a quilt. On the afternoon of the rummage sale, Mrs. Askew informs Grandma that Mrs. Weidenbach has offered \$15 for the hat. Grandma claims that it came from Effie's house and displays the initials M. T. L. on the quilt. The next day, Weidenbach wonders if Lincoln memorabilia came from Effie's house. Grandma ponders that the state might make it into a museum. She admits that the items are bogus and bargains with him to shorten his project with John Deere to leave Effie's house untouched. He accuses Grandma of blackmail. She demands title to the house for Effie and \$2 each for Mary Alice and Joey. That evening, Ray teaches Joey to drive. On the children's return to Chicago, Effie arrives back from Palmyra.

Centennial Summer: In 1935, the children come to Grandma's house for the last summer visit. She sends them to the attic for costumes to wear to the centennial celebration. Joey and Mary Alice try on Grandma and Grandpa's wedding clothes. The next morning, Mrs. Weidenbach asks Grandma's help with the Ladies' Hospitality Committee. Grandma declines and leads the children to visit Aunt Mae and Uncle Grady, whom Grandma gives a kitten. She inquires about his uniform from the Mexican War and asks Aunt Mae to borrow him for the Saturday celebration.

The festivities bring people from outside the town. At the talent show, Joey is surprised to see Mary Alice dancing with Ray Veech in the vintage costumes from the attic. On Saturday, Mrs. Weidenbach parades her old father as a Civil War veteran and oldest citizen. On the back of the float carrying Mary Alice and Joey is Uncle Grady and Grandma dressed in a fringed, cut-velvet gown. A sign indicates that Grady is 13 years older than Mrs. Weidenbach's father. The two old men fight in the streets. On the trip home, Mary Alice is not surprised to find the kitten in the picnic hamper.

The Troop Train: In 1942, 22-year-old Joey departs from Fort Sheridan on his way to basic training before flight school and service in the Army Air Corps. The troop train departs an hour late and is detained an hour at Joliet. Grandma waves from her door.

TIME LINE

- 1842** Nov. 4 Abraham Lincoln marries Mary Todd.
- 1846-48** United States is at war with Mexico.
- 1858** Lincoln debates slavery issues with Stephen A. Douglas.
- 1861** July 21 Confederate forces defeat the Union army at Bull Run (Manassas).
- 1862** April 6-7 Union army defeats the Confederates at Shiloh.
- 1863** July 4 Union forces under General Grant capture Vicksburg.
- 1870** John D. Rockefeller incorporates Standard Oil.
- 1871** Oct. 8 The Chicago Fire kills 120 and destroys 18,000 homes.
- 1874** Frances Willard becomes secretary of the Women's Christian Temperance Union.
- 1914** August World War I begins.
- 1917** Tom Mix begins making western movies.
- April** United States enters World War I.
- 1918** Nov. 11 Armistice ends World War I.

- 1919** The cartoon strip *Little Orphan Annie* goes into production.
- 1920** Joey Dowdel is born.
Jan. 16 The 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution outlaws alcohol.
- 1922** Mary Alice Dowdel is born.
- 1929-33** Herbert Hoover is president of the United States.
- 1929** Feb. 14 Al Capone's men, dressed as policemen, gun down seven rival gang members in Chicago.
Oct. 24 The Stock Market crash precipitates the Great Depression.
- 1931** Bela Lugosi stars in *Dracula*.
- 1933** Franklin Delano Roosevelt becomes president.
- 1934** Shirley Temple appears in her first starring role.
- 1941** Dec. 7 The United States enters World War II after the Japanese attack Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.
- 1942** Joey departs from Fort Sheridan on his way to boot camp before entering the Army Air Corps.

RICHARD PECK'S LIFE

Richard Wayne Peck and his popular fiction have remained close to his Midwestern roots. Born April 5, 1934, in Decatur, Illinois, he was the son of dietitian Virginia Gray and Wayne Morris Peck, a merchant. He credits his mother's reading to him with initiating a love of writing. He nurtured the creative urge with hours of radio broadcasts, which he expanded into mental pictures of plots and characters. After a positive, encouraging grade school education, which included Latin courses, he studied for a year at Exeter University and attended DePauw University on scholarship. Military service preceded attendance at Southern Illinois University, where he served on the English faculty as an instructor.

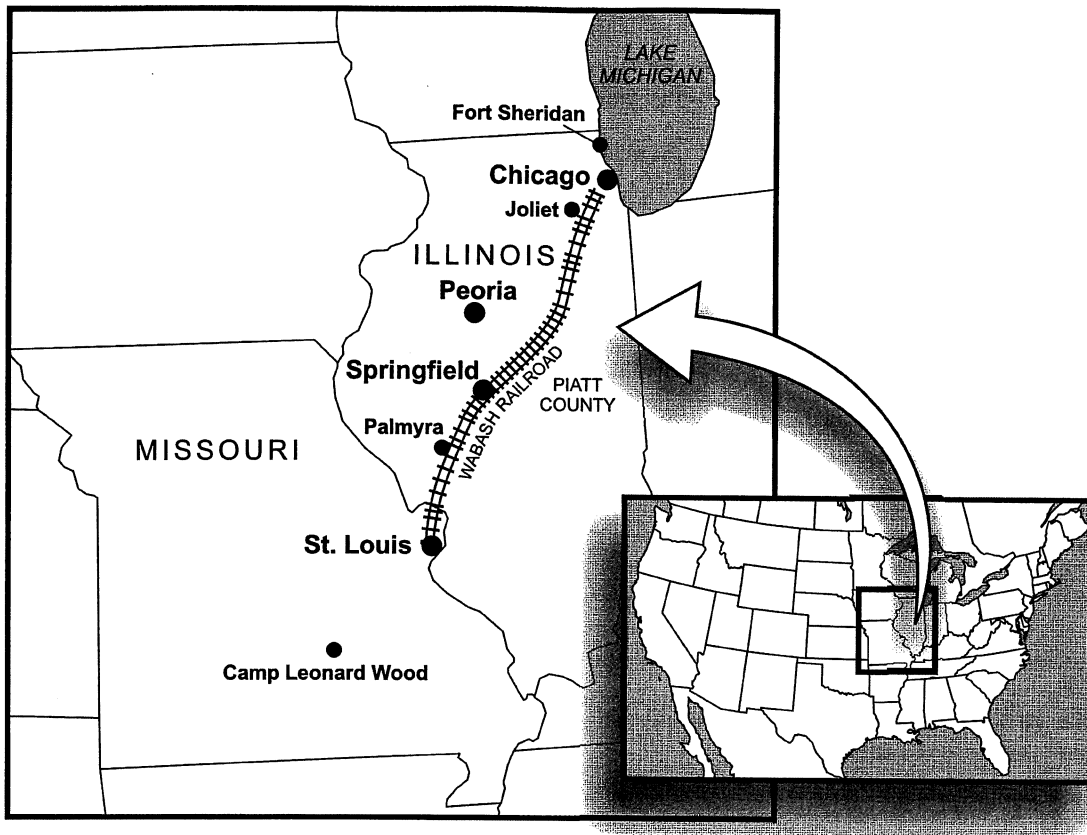
Before settling on a career in fiction, Peck ghost-wrote sermons for army chaplains and taught high school English at Glenbrook North High School in Northbrook, Illinois, but left the classroom discouraged by teen problems. After a stint teaching in a New York City junior high school and editing textbooks for Scott, Foresman plus post-graduate work at Washington University, he set out to write fiction for young readers. As a professional, he learned from other contemporary writers for youth, especially the realism of Robert Cormier and the craft of Chris Crutcher.

In addition to major works of fiction, Peck has edited poetry anthologies and has written and edited poems and articles for *Saturday Review of Literature* and the *Chicago Tribune*. He produced an architecture column for the *New York Times* and articles for *American Libraries*, *PTA*, and *Parents* plus short stories, essay compendia, and adults' and children's books. He has lectured on cruise ships and at Oxford University and regularly addresses professional conferences and visits with readers in schools and libraries. "The Ghost Belonged to Me" was the source of a teleplay, "Child of Glass," presented in 1977 on *The Wonderful World of Disney*. Peck donated his private papers and manuscripts to the library of the University of Southern Mississippi as part of the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection, one of North America's leading research centers in the field of children's literature.

CRITIC'S CORNER

Critics applaud Peck for his 18 novels, which tackle such complex subjects as human resilience, conformity and peer pressure, school library censorship, and freedom of speech. His expertise extends to horror, mystery, the occult, social

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commentary, history, satire, verse, and realism. He has advised school teachers and librarians to battle the narrow minds that seek to control the choice of literary works offered to young readers. He earned respect for his first novel, *Don't Look and It Won't Hurt* (1972). In 1975, the Friends of American Writers honored him for *The Ghost Belonged to Me*. *Close Enough to Touch* (1981) and *Father Figure* (1981) won ALA Best Book for Young Adults.

Peck has garnered National Council of Teachers of English/ALAN Award, ALA Notable and ALA Best Books for Young Adults listings, Outstanding Books of the Year by the *New York Times*, the Mystery Writers of America Edgar Allan Poe Award, and the 1990 Margaret A. Edwards Award for *Are You in the House Alone?*, *Father Figure*, *The Ghost Belonged to Me*, *Ghosts I Have Been*, *Secrets of the Shopping Mall*, and *Remembering the Good Times*. In 1998, Peck earned a Newbery Honor Book Award for *A Long Way from Chicago*, an unusual handling of sequential events through a series of seven interlinking short stories. Critics compare its off-beat humor and warmth to Gary Paulsen's *Harris and Me: A Summer Remembered* (1993). Peck recently earned the 2001 Newbery Award for *A Year Down Yonder*, which also reprised Grandma Dowdel, Joey, and Mary Alice as characters.

OTHER BOOKS BY RICHARD PECK

Amanda/Miranda (1980)
Anonymously Yours (1995)
Are You in the House Alone? (1976)
Bel-Air Bambi and the Mall Rats (1993)
Blossom Culp and the Sleep of Death (1986)

Close Enough to Touch (1981)
Don't Look and It Won't Hurt (1972)
The Dreadful Future of Blossom Culp (1983)
Dreamland Lake (1990)
Father Figure (1978)
The Ghost Belonged to Me (1975)
Ghosts I Have Been (1977)
Great Interactive Dream Machine (1996)
The Last Safe Place on Earth (1996)
Leap into Reality: Essays for Now (1972)
Lost in Cyberspace (1995)
Monster Night at Grandma's House (1977)
Old Town (1965)
Pictures That Storm Inside My Head (1976)
Princess Ashley (1987)
Remembering the Good Times (1985)
Representing Super Doll (1974)
Secrets of the Shopping Mall (1979)
Strays Like Us (1998)
This Family of Women (1983)
Those Summer Girls I Never Met (1988)
Through a Brief Darkness (1973)
Unfinished Portrait of Jessica (1991)
Voices after Midnight (1989)
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GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the values of an agrarian Midwestern community
2. To account for hard times during the Great Depression
3. To interpret relationships among neighbors
4. To explain the impact of the railroad on communities
5. To discuss the themes of tyranny, deception, and petty crime
6. To explain the historic background
7. To analyze family relationships and influences
8. To describe attitudes toward elopement
9. To express types of humor
10. To list events caused by greed, suspicion, and snobbery

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To explain how Grandma shows compassion
2. To analyze Grandma's styles of competition
3. To summarize the value of the attic
4. To account for changes in the grandchildren
5. To summarize Grandma's trickery and manipulation
6. To predict how war will affect Joey
7. To express local antipathies and prejudice revealed at the talent show and centennial parade
8. To discuss the implications of widowhood and homelessness
9. To describe the roles of the sheriff, banker, and mechanic
10. To analyze the means by which Grandma maintains her home and feeds the grandchildren during hard times

LITERARY TERMS AND APPLICATIONS

For a better understanding of Richard Peck's style, present the following terms and applications:

humor a gentle, affirmative emphasis on human nature, foibles, and idiosyncrasies, for example, greed, meddling, and talkativeness among Grandma's neighbors. Peck identifies characters with humorous names, as with Shotgun Cheatham (cheat 'em), who escapes an insulting write-up by the nosy citified stringer, and Mrs. Wilhelmina Weidenbach

(wide in back), the self-glorifying banker's wife and local social leader.

irony an implied discrepancy between what is said or done and what is meant, as found in Grandma's implications to the stringer on the life of Shotgun Cheatham and Effie's incarceration in the state insane asylum and in Grandma's sardonic comment on the ingratitude of people to the bank that forecloses on their home mortgages and reclaims the property, turning the former owners into the street.

literary foil a character who serves as an opposite or as a standard by which another character is matched. In contrast to the rabbit Effie Wilcox, the wily grandmother is a suitable match for the venal, grasping banker as well as to the sheriff, Cowgills, Stubbs, and Eubanks. Seemingly countrified and helpless as a lone widow, she refuses to be outfoxed, victimized, or manipulated.

realism a re-creation of life in theme, plot, setting, mood, and characterization. In the background of a humorous novel, Peck places the real concerns of the 1930s by depicting homeless men riding the rails and living in the wild. Grandma's willingness to oppose the sheriff's policy of ousting drifters is obvious in her capturing catfish in an illegal trap, frying them with potatoes and onions for a late-night dinner, and serving plates with bottles of homemade beer. Her gift, humble and homemade, expects no thanks.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SETTING

The annual departure southwest from Chicago is the heart of Richard Peck's novel. Joey and Mary Alice, two citified children, have a lot to learn about coping. From their widowed paternal grandmother, they discover the connection between food and gardening and between saving fat and making soap in a wash pot. Her willingness to visit Aunt Puss Chapman and tolerate her ornery disposition teaches them about the plight of the poor and elderly living far from town without access to friends and neighbors. Grandma's quick-wittedness allows her to thwart a snake dropping into the rowboat as deftly as her capture of the Cowgill brothers and her blackmail of the local banker.

Within the town, Grandma's relationship with nosy and troublesome neighbors illustrates to the grandchildren the value of privacy and compassion in a small locale where people tend to know each other's business. Apparently uninvolved in local matters, she manages to help the homeless drifters who ride the rails and gather at the edge of town beyond the reach of Sheriff O. B. Dickerson. Her willingness to honor the passing of a friendless old man turns into humor when a passing stringer tries to wring news out of the old man's tattered life. The departure of a pair of young lovers on the evening train illustrates that the grandchildren have not only learned from their grandmother, but that they practice her off-beat altruism.

Essential to a sense of place in the story is the connection between Illinois heartland and American history. The author pairs the foreclosure on a widow's house with the area's pride in Abraham Lincoln, who once debated Stephen Douglas on the spot. Among family, the recovery of a churn and vintage attire from Grandma's attic connects the children with their deceased grandfather and Grandma's wedding day. Another concept of local pride is honoring war heroes, including Civil War and Mexican War veterans who appear in the centennial parade. By extension, the author connects Joey on his way to World War II with his country grandma, who

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stands at the front door and waves into the night as the passing Wabash Blue Bird carries him into the next wave of history.

CROSS-CURRICULAR SOURCES

Novels

Joan Bauer, *Hope Was Here*

Ray Bradbury, *Dandelion Wine* and *Something Wicked This Way Comes*

Irene Hunt, *No Promises in the Wind*

Gary Paulsen, *Harris and Me*

Charles Portis, *True Grit*

Jessamyn West, *Friendly Persuasion*, *Collected Stories of Jessamyn West*, and *Except for Me and Thee*

Lawrence Yep, *Dragonwings*

Play

Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse, *Life with Father*

Poetry

Carl Sandburg, "On the Road"

Ernest Thayer, *Casey at the Bat*

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Harvey

Old Yeller

Something Wicked This Way Comes

True Grit

THEMES AND MOTIFS

A study of the central issues and situations in *A Long Way from Chicago* should include these aspects:

Themes

- family
- generations
- Great Depression
- coping
- social isolation
- justice
- competition
- love

Motifs

- weathering an economic downturn
- countering vandalism
- assuming the role of rescuer
- preserving a family's past

MEANING STUDY

Below are significant words, phrases, or sentences from the novel. Explain each in context. Titles and page numbers pinpoint each entry so that you can re-read the passage in which it appears.

1. One sent in a stringer to nose around The Coffee Pot Cafe for a human-interest story since it was August, a slow month for news. ("Shotgun Cheatham's Last Night Above Ground," p. 5)
(A stringer is a freelance writer for a newspaper, magazine, news service, or other regular publication. Payment is by the inch of printed copy or by the article or column rather than a salary and expenses. Thus, independent writers have to generate interesting articles in order to earn a living. A common form of feature writing is human interest, a story or article that lacks the immediacy of news, but draws people's attention by appealing to sentiment or curiosity.)
2. The city had such an evil reputation that the Thompson submachine gun was better known as a "Chicago type-writer." ("Shotgun Cheatham's Last Night Above Ground," p. 3)
(The .45 caliber firearm, named for inventor John Taliaferro Thompson, was a post-World War I automatic weapon embraced by the underworld and the FBI at the height of Prohibition Era crime.)
3. She's brought a book called *The Hidden Staircase* by Carolyn Keene. ("The Mouse in the Milk," p. 26)
(The 147 young adult mysteries credited to the pseudonym Carolyn Keene were actually written by a number of contributors to the series. Launched by Edward Stratemeyer, the Nancy Drew mysteries paralleled the success of the Bobbsey Twins, the Hardy Boys, and Tom Swift, all children's works published by the Stratemeyer Syndicate.)
4. It was still Hoovering over us, as people said. ("A One-Woman Crime Wave," p. 37)
(President Herbert Hoover earned most of the credit for the Great Depression, although he was not totally at fault for the nation's weak economic response to the Stock Market Crash of 1929. Shantytowns carried the unpleasant name "Hoovervilles," another insult to the president in office at the height of the economic slump.)
5. Then she sent me for the card table I'd used for my jigsaw puzzle of Charles A. Lindbergh. ("A One-Woman Crime Wave," p. 55)
(Charles Augustus Lindbergh became a national hero after safely landing his plane, the "Spirit of St. Louis," following the first one-man flight over the Atlantic Ocean overnight from New York to Paris on May 20-21, 1927.)
6. This crackbrained rumor that Dillinger is still alive is doing our business no good. ("Things with Wings," p. 115)
(Bank robber John Dillinger terrorized bank officials during a 13 month spree of armed robberies and automobile escapes. His career ended in death on July 22, 1934, outside Chicago's Biograph Theatre, where law officers gunned him down. Because of his use of state lines as a means of eluding capture, the Federal Bureau of Investigation increased in power and range to chase criminals from state to state.)
7. Also, we needed to use the Terraplane 8, which was strictly forbidden under an agreement with the Hudson Motor Car company. ("Things with Wings," p. 118)
(Founded in 1909 by Howard Coffin, Joseph L. Hudson, Roy Chapin, and George W. Dunham, the makers of

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Hudson autos were one of the first manufacturers to produce closed models. They introduced the first balanced crankshaft and the all-steel body. In 1932, they introduced the Essex-Terraplane, assembled in plants in Belgium, England, and Canada. Production ended in 1929. After a success in airplane part manufacture, the company sold out to American Motors Corporation, who produced Hudsons from 1955 until 1957.)

8. We both assumed an air of weary worldliness as we climbed down off the Wabash Blue Bird one last time. ("Centennial Summer," p. 121)
(To better serve the markets of Chicago and St. Louis, the Midwest's foremost frontier city, the Wabash rail line entered service on November 8, 1838, the first railroad locomotive ever operated in Illinois. In 1879, the line merged with other railways to form a vast Midwestern network.)
9. In old suit boxes under the eaves we found folded clothes that went back before the Great War, way back. ("Centennial Summer," p. 123)
(World War I earned the name "Great War" for its involvement of so many nations on a huge combat map. When a second great war began in 1939, the numbering system altered "Great War" to "World War I.")
10. I put it in the crook of my arm, like we were an old tintype picture in a fancy frame. ("Centennial Summer," p. 126)
(A tintype was a photo taken from exposed tin or iron plate and processed with a highly flammable blend of ether and alcohol. A common pose was the newlywed couple, who sought a likeness of themselves to preserve for their children and grandchildren.)

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 with quotations from the novel.

Motivation

1. Why do the children to enjoy summer visits?
(The Dowdel children come to Grandma's house without enthusiasm and wonder if their parents are dumping them while they fish in Wisconsin. When the children discover her ability to trick and deceive other people, they join in her escapades. They observe her kindness to hungry drifters, a homeless widow, and an oppressed cafe worker and her gesture to the memory of Shotgun Cheatham. They learn from her the type of altruism that doesn't demand thanks or community recognition. Her plain lifestyle seems less important than her witty comebacks against the venality, snobbery, and cruelty of local people. Mary Alice in particular takes on Grandma's verbal quirks and acquires her craftiness.)

Setting

2. Describe the town.
(The children spend summers in a small Illinois town set on the Wabash rail line from Chicago to St. Louis. Characters include the sheriff, bank owner, Otis the bank messenger, a waitress and cafe owner, a Civil War veteran, Boshear the undertaker, and the homeless. Episodes involve Grandma and the children with the Cowgill dairy operation, Weidenbach's bank, a rummage sale, and the county fair, where Grandma maneuvers her pie to second place. Beyond the setting, Joey rides

in a biplane far above the fair-goers below and drives with Ray Veech and Grandma in a Hudson Terraplane 8 into the countryside of Platt County, where rural sounds seem more worthy than dance music from a radio broadcast set at Chicago's Palmer House Hotel.

Incidental to the story are the United Brethren Church, Moore's Store, Stubbs's insurance agency, the Holy Rollers's church, the Coffee Pot Cafe in the old saloon building, and the Illinois Power and Light Company. During the 1935 centennial celebration, citizens and the Ladies' Hospitality Committee involve themselves in the oldest settler contest and in a parade noting area history. Dracula, the Bela Lugosi movie in the park and the talent contest offer more opportunities for character interaction. More important is the depot, where Vandalia and Junior Stubbs elude their parents and elope on the 8:17 P. M. train while Joey distracts onlookers in the guise of the ghost brakeman, a local legend.)

Character Development

3. How does Grandma trick the stringer?
(Grandma's indirect vindication of Shotgun Cheatham, an unfortunate victim, begins with her dislike of nosy people. To ward off the intruder in "citified clothes and a stiff straw hat," she determines to halt his horselaugh at local "hayseeds and no-'count country people." After the children pass on Effie Wilcox's rumors about the old dead man, Grandma meets the reporter at the door and invites him in. Instead of fighting charges that the deceased was a gunslinger, she invents a valiant war record at Shiloh and Vicksburg and adds that he sold his war medals and donated the proceeds to war widows and orphans.

Grandma has the undertaker bring Shotgun's remains to her front room for viewing at an open house. At the all-night ritual, she shares her homemade bottled beer with the reporter and welcomes even nosy Effie Wilcox. After midnight, the cat's disturbance of the gauze cover terrifies the reporter and Mrs. Wilcox. Grandma uses the opportunity to address the corpse and to shoot the coffin with her shotgun. The event ends nosy questions from the reporter at the same time it "fleshed out her reputation and gave people new reason to leave her in peace.")

Historical Milieu

4. How does the novel reflect on American history?
(Peck animates the story with details of the 1920s and 1930s. Such commentary as hobos marking fences to indicate kind residents, Thompson submachine guns in Chicago, Dillinger's flight in a Hudson Terraplane and his death at the Biograph Theater, the Wabash Blue Bird, Charles Lindbergh's flight in the "Spirit of St. Louis," and barn-storming biplanes at country fairs establishes the tenor of the period and the incidents that people read in the newspaper. Background from the Jesse James crime spree, Great Chicago Fire, Mexican War, Great War, the rise of John Deere and John D. Rockefeller, and major battles of the Civil War ground the family in the mainstream of America's rise from frontier times into the modern era. Mention of a churn, black iron stove, tintype, bustles, soap-making, privies, an all-night watch over a corpse, milk delivery in glass bottles, and other period details center Grandma in the rural Illinois community.)

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Theme

5. How does Grandma express charity and love for others? *(Grandma lacks outward tenderness and sympathy in her attempt to keep her life private. Unhampered by the opinions and behaviors of outsiders, she continues serving and cooking for Aunt Puss Chapman, the elderly rural woman for whom Grandma once worked as a hired girl. For Shotgun Cheatham, Grandma deflects rumors that besmirch his memory. For Vandalia Eubanks, she conspires with Joey to help the girl elope with Junior Stubbs against the objections of both the Eubanks and Stubbs families.)*

Grandma's outward display of love and concern are obvious in her generosity. She removes catfish from her illegal fish trap and serves them along with homemade beer and fried onions and potatoes to homeless men living at the town's edge on the Wabash right-of-way. For her grandchildren, she acquires a biplane ride for Joey at the fair, a bustled dress for Mary Alice, and two-dollar bills for both children in a time when cash is scarce. Her most obvious gesture of good will is the recovery of Effie Wilcox's house. Even though the old woman is obnoxious and gossippy, Grandma intends to outwit the snob-by banker and his wife by turning their own greed against them and blackmailing Weidenbach into giving Effie her house free and clear.)

Interpretation

6. Why does the story close with a glimpse of Joey in adulthood?

(Joey and Mary Alice gain a strong background in common labor and neighborliness from Grandma. The honor of veterans from the Civil War, Mexican War, and Great War suggests the public adulation for local men who risked their lives to fight for their country. In adulthood, Joey follows the pattern by joining the army at Fort Sheridan and traveling by train to Camp Leonard Wood for basic training before entering the Army Air Corps.)

To show her support for her grown grandson, Grandma lights up the whole house and waits for the long-delayed train to express her love and farewell. The brief vignette rounds out the characterization of Grandma, a complex character given to whims and deceptions. Without artifice, she declares to the neighborhood her hospitality to a grandson who spent summers in her care. The lighted windows glow like the warm heart that has cherished the children without sentimentality.)

Conflict

7. Why does Grandma cheat at the pie-baking contest? *(Grandma's intent to win a blue ribbon for the community appears to ennoble her own skills rather than to defend the town from a total loss of wins at the 1932 county fair. The arduous preparations of making crusts, picking and washing gooseberries, and baking pies according to a variety of recipes indicate that Grandma is herself competitive. Her response to seeing Rupert Pennypacker and his mother at the fair is a genuine fear of losing.)*
- At the contest, Grandma switches identification cards on the two lattice-top pies to assure her a win over "The best home-baker in the state of Illinois." The stone face of Grandma during lunch gives no indication of the switch that allowed Rupert Pennypacker to win the blue ribbon. A bold lie about his win in sausage and head-*

cheese assures Joey of a ride in Bernie Buchanan's biplane. Her confession about the switched card allows her a moment of glory for baking the best pie, even if it was misidentified.)

Atmosphere

8. How does Peck increase the tension after the exploded mailbox? *(Grandma's intent to find justice from the Cowgills causes her to behave strangely. Her lie about visiting Cousin Leota Shrewsbury and the refusal to turn on lights prove that she expects the vandals who tipped over the privy and destroyed the mailbox to return for more mischief. The children are immediately aware that Grandma has formulated a vengeful plan against the Cowgills.)*

By having Grandma load the shotgun and hurl a cherry bomb at the Cowgill brothers, Peck shows her ability to deal with destructive delinquents. After the boys stand shaken and fearful under her double-barrel Winchester in the kitchen and Joey hurries out to summon their parents, her ruse of trapping a mouse and dropping it in the milk bears fruit. By forcing Cowgill to buy her a new mailbox and by threatening to ruin his dairy's reputation, Grandma maneuvers him into punishing his sons with a strop. The tension returns to humor at the end as sounds of wailing from the Cowgill boys satisfies Grandma's demand for justice.)

Author Purpose

9. Why does the novel appeal to readers? *(Peck departs from the usual sentimental image of grandchildren visiting their grandmothers by depicting an able widow who has no intention of being a victim in old age. He proves that the knowledgeable Chicago children have much to learn from a countrified old lady by showing her killing a snake with one snap of her hands and refusing to be cowed by a corrupt sheriff. Readers can easily enjoy the language play that causes Mary Alice to adopt the dry one-liners for which Grandma is famous. By the end of the novel, both children, enriched by Grandma's charity and exotic behaviors, return to Chicago and its crime-ridden reputation with a new understanding of altruism and passive aggression. The loving scene at the end of the book spells out in actions the affectionate bond that Grandma never states in words.)*

Structure

10. How does the novel imitate the short story? *(Peck sets up the novel as though it were seven individual stories begun with a prologue and ended with a vignette. However, to interlink events, he creates a series of annual visits from 1929 to 1935, when the Dowdel children learn more about their doughty grandma. Each episode is a stand-alone story, complete with beginning, middle, and conclusion. However, beyond the single story lies the development of Effie Wilcox as the victim of Weidenbach's bank and the Weidenbachs as heartless exploiters of the Depression. By adding Grandma's efforts to help Vandalia, Aunt Puss Chapman, the memory of Shotgun Cheatham, and wandering hobos, Peck makes each part contribute more than one story's events to the overall image of Grandma as a kind-hearted rescuer of the downtrodden and neglected.)*

HOW LANGUAGE WORKS

The gradual evolution of Grandma's character depends in

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part on her terse aphorisms and commentary on trickery.

1. After besting the Cowgill family, Grandma has need for one word, "Justice" and a nod toward Grandpa Dowdel's razor strop.
2. In the episode involving the catfish dinner, Grandma offers stronger wording to Sheriff O. B. Dickerson. When he accuses her of running a soup kitchen without a license from the Board of Health, she retorts, "Go look it up, O. B. . . . See if there's a law against feeding the hungry." The final fillip is her repetition of their scurrilous song, "The night that Paddy Murphy died."
3. The tight-lipped rejoinders return in the 1932 episode, when Joey wonders if she switched the card. She admits, "I did."
4. The beginning of Grandma's reward for keeping her grandchildren comes in the ghost episode, in which both Mary Alice and Joey begin displaying trickery. To Mary Alice, Grandma refers to the felonious "puppy" and adds, "You can call it Skipper." To Joey, the bogus ghost, she asks, "Get everything squared away?"
5. A revealing remark on the ride from town in the Hudson Terraplane 8 expresses Grandma's respect for rural values over a noisy radio broadcast of dance music from the Empire Room of the Palmer House Hotel. She commands, "Shut it off . . . Let's listen to the country." Beyond the plot, Peck seems to state his own belief in the citizens, who are more valuable than cars or radios.
6. Grandma's influence is firmly in practice as Mary Alice and Joey return one last summer to Chicago aboard the Wabash Blue Bird. To his question about Mother letting her keep the kitten, Mary Alice asks, "How do you know she's not?"

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Art and Music

1. Compile an illustrated notebook of details that make the story real.
2. Sketch a logo for the Wabash Blue Bird. Add a motto to establish its importance to the state of Illinois and the whole Midwestern economy.
3. Select mood music for a stage version of the novel. Cover the waltz scene at the talent show, traveling music for a row on Salt Creek and elopement on the Wabash Blue Bird, macabre melodies for a showing of *Dracula* and the visitation of the ghost brakeman, and intense background for two old veterans fighting in the street. For the parade, play recordings of "The Stars and Stripes Forever" and post on the chalkboard the accomplishments of John Philip Sousa, the March King.

Cinema

View films with settings and characters and situations approximating the style of humor in *A Long Way from Chicago*. Compare the movies' settings, themes, and dialogue to those of Peck's novel. Comment on the importance of timing and implication to Grandma's manipulations of other people, including Idella Eubanks, the reporter, the Cowgills, Effie Wilcox, Mrs. and Mrs. Weidenbach, Sheriff Dickerson, and Merle Stubbs.

Education

1. Propose curriculum for a class to teach the background of events mentioned in the novel.

2. List proof that the children learn from their summers with Grandma, particularly their understanding of homelessness, hunger, old age, snobbery, young love, media exploitation, competition, and delinquency.

Geography and Culture

1. Create a mural or web site of Illinois cities that affect the story, including Joliet, Peoria, and Palmyra. Explain why life in Piatt County bears little resemblance to Chicago in the 1920s and 1930s. Mention privies, town festivals, soap-making, the Rod and Gun Club, and rural law enforcement as examples.
2. Make a bulletin board of events that would enhance a centennial celebration. Include activities for small children, such as Shirley Temple and Tom Mix movies in the park, face painting, stilt-walking, pet contests, tap dancing, and clowns.

History and Social Studies

1. Discuss with a small group how Grandma shows that widowhood has been hard on her. Express her best memories of marriage to Grandpa.
2. Report orally on Joey's involvement in World War II. Explain why Grandma would light the whole house and wave at the passing train as he left Fort Sheridan to enter boot camp before flight training.
3. Divide the class into small groups to brainstorm ways to help elderly people living far from town, such as carrying meals, performing housework and do-it-yourself projects, and bringing a pet kitten as a gift.
4. Sketch the front and back of a two-dollar bill. Give the history of the bill and facts about its circulation. Why do people collect silver dollars, Susan B. Anthony dollars, quarters with state emblems, and two-dollar bills?
5. Based on your understanding of the novel, lead a panel discussion of the effects of foreclosure, lost homes, intolerance of the poor, juvenile delinquency involving explosives, and the sheriff's suspicion on the citizens of Piatt County, Illinois. Support your opinions with facts from the novel, especially Grandma's late night catfish supper and the return of Effie's home.

Law

1. Read aloud state laws governing the rights of adults to keep firearms and to marry whomever and whenever they choose. Explain why Idella and the Stubbs family protest Junior's pursuit of Vandalia.
2. Explain with stick figures the ramifications of temperance and Prohibition, how Al Capone initiated the St. Valentine's Day Massacre, and why John Dillinger was gunned down at the Biograph Theater.
3. Summarize reasons why blowing up a mailbox violates federal law.

Religion

Summarize how pentecostal worshippers acquired the name "Holy Rollers."

Science and Health

1. Compose an informational poster on embalming and rigor mortis. Explain why people fear sounds coming from a coffin.
2. Outline a recipe for making soap. Explain why Grandma chooses to work outdoors for the lengthy cooking and hardening process.

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3. Read aloud a recipe for berry pie. Explain how the balance of sugar to water affects the consistency of the finished pie.

Speech and Drama

1. Organize a discussion of mortgage foreclosure. Account for Grandma's anger at banks for mistreating people during the Great Depression.
2. Compose an oral tour guide of Illinois. Express the importance of the Wabash River, St. Valentine's Day Massacre, Wabash Railroad, Abraham Lincoln, organized crime, Women's Christian Temperance Union, John Deere, and Prohibition to state history.
3. Outline a speech celebrating the Illinois centennial. Characterize the high points of state history, especially its contribution to republicanism and the preservation of the Union. Stress the state's role during the Civil War and to the preservation of Lincolniana.
4. Draw stage settings for a dramatization of Grandma's most unusual deeds. Supply sketches of costumes and props.
5. Create a storyboard account of the centennial parade. Show Grandma's slow progress toward defeating Mrs. Weidenbach. Account for the fight between the old men rather than between Grandma and Mrs. Weidenbach.

Psychology

1. Describe aloud the ways that Grandma manipulates and deceives people.
2. Characterize Grandma's moral integrity, courage, daring, and civic influence. Summarize the personal traits that strengthen her role as a neighbor, friend, defender of the helpless, widow, and role model.
3. Write an encyclopedia entry on the Wabash Railroad. Add details that explain how railway service between Chicago and St. Louis strengthened the economy and social structure of Illinois and why the train is called the Blue Bird.

Language Arts

1. List terms that need more explanation. Make flash cards illustrating each.
2. Explain why manufacturers named cars Locomobiles, Terraplanes, and Hupmobiles. List names of biplanes like that flown by Bernie Buchanan. Compare them to the "Spirit of St. Louis."
3. Prepare a speech contrasting examples of humor. Explain why Grandma's weight, outfits, costume for the centennial parade, shotgun and cherry bomb, outrageous lies, trickery, and refusals to be mistreated make her a funny character.
4. Read aloud from other humorous or historical works such as Gary Paulsen's *Harris and Me*, O. Henry's "The Ransom of Red Chief," or Charles Portis's *True Grit*. Explain how conversations can be funny and serious at the same time, for example, Sheriff Dickerson's threat against Grandma for running a soup kitchen without a license and Grandma's admission that she is blackmailing Weidenbach into giving back Effie Wilcox's house.
5. Explain in a theme the significance of the title *A Long Way from Chicago*, particularly as it applies to the rural location of Grandma's house. Propose other titles that explain why the children learn so much from Grandma

and local events when they spend the summer in Piatt County.

6. Write a paragraph in which you explain the role of a minor character, such as Ray Veech, Idella Eubanks, Effie Wilcox, Mr. Weidenbach, Ernie Cowgill, Shotgun Cheatham, Earl T. Askew, Rupert Pennypacker and his mother, Otis, Junior Stubbs, or Aunt Mae and Uncle Grady Griswold. Determine which characters respect Grandma and why they do so.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. List examples of disruption and violence in the lives of the characters, for example, Idella's demand for Vandalia's money.
2. Compile a list of actions and statements that demonstrate Grandma's clever tricks.
3. Compose a scene in which Joey returns from World War II to visit Grandma. Account for changes in the nation since his last summer visit to Grandma's house.
4. Make a character list and explain the character flaws of each.
5. Summarize historical details that impinge on the story.

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VOCABULARY TEST

Complete each of the following sentences with an appropriate synonym for the term in parentheses from the list below. You will have answers left over when you finish.

bluff	galvanized	locks	scanning	strop
bogus	gasolier	ragtime	scrapple	sweatband
bootlegger	gloat	recommenced	settee	tick
flue	gunnysack	reconciled	stiff	valise
forecloses	larceny	scandalized	stocking cap	visors

1. I'd grown to the age of nine, and my sister May Alice was seven, and we'd yet to see a (corpse) _____.
2. With a powerful arm, Grandma swung Mrs. Wilcox's bulging (suitcase) _____ aboard, then a picnic hamper.
3. His name's lettered in on the (liner) _____.
4. They're (phony) _____. I could have the law on you.
5. She had the oars in the (brackets) _____, and they pulled the water with hardly a ripple.
6. Though she didn't (boast) _____, she looked satisfied.
7. From the (sofa) _____ Mary Alice made some tiny, terrified sound.
8. You never saw anybody looking as (outraged) _____ as Grandma was at these old birds in their union suits and less.
9. We tied up there, and now we were out of the boat, climbing a (bank) _____.
10. I just slept up there. Had a bed (mattress) _____ with straw in it and changed it every spring.
11. It was afternoon before we sat down at the dining-room table under a cobwebby (lamp) _____.
12. That's what we call (theft) _____, Mrs. Dowdel.
13. It (settled) _____ us some to our trips to visit her.
14. My bread-and-butter pickles have taken the blue ribbon every year since the fair (restarted) _____ after the Great War.
15. The bank (demands payment) _____ on people's farms and throws them off their land, and they don't even appreciate it.

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COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Quotation Identification (30 points)

Match each of the following quotations from the novel with its speaker. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left. Some of the answers will be used more than once and some not at all.

- | | | | | |
|----------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| A. Joey | D. Merle Stubbs | G. Mrs. Weidenbach | J. Vandalia | M. stringer |
| B. Ernie | E. Junior Stubbs | H. Mary Alice | K. Effie Wilcox | N. Mr. Cowgill |
| C. Ray | F. Grandma | I. Weidenbach | L. Idella Eubanks | O. O. B. Dickerson |

- _____ 1. She was seen comin' in this house. That girl done brought her.
- _____ 2. You should have seen how Grandma grabbed it up by its tail and snapped it just once and broke its neck.
- _____ 3. It's the make Dillinger drove to outrun the cops. But, hey, you'd know that.
- _____ 4. I thought it was me and Dowdel on our wedding day.
- _____ 5. I'm going door-to-door, ma'am. You know how you ladies love to talk.
- _____ 6. My boys aren't broke out with brains, you know.
- _____ 7. We don't want to feed these loafers.
- _____ 8. And quite unfairly, people blame the bankers.
- _____ 9. They come by my place and wrenched up my you-know-what by the posts and flung it all over the yard.
- _____ 10. Don't touch it. It's awful. It's got living things in it.
- _____ 11. Killed a brakeman on the freight train and both engineers.
- _____ 12. He's lost all his judgment and wants to marry a Eubanks.
- _____ 13. There ain't such things as vampires, are there?
- _____ 14. I need two bucks bad.
- _____ 15. I'll look like Broshear the undertaker in that stuff.

Part II: True/False (20 points)

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

- _____ 1. Grandma sews her own centennial costume from cut-velvet fringed curtains.
- _____ 2. Joey fears that Grandma will drown the kitten in Salt Creek.
- _____ 3. Dickerson has no evidence against Grandma because the drifters eat it all.
- _____ 4. The Wabash rail line causes the death of the brakeman, two engineers, and Grandma's cat.
- _____ 5. Grandma visits Aunt Mae and Uncle Grady Griswold twice a week to cook and clean the kitchen.
- _____ 6. The sheriff recognizes the boat as Grandma rows past the men's club.
- _____ 7. Mary Alice refuses to teach Ray Veech to waltz.
- _____ 8. Grandma's prize money buys Joey driving lessons in a Hudson Terraplane 8.
- _____ 9. The gauze over the pine coffin falls away as the cat jumps onto the corpse.
- _____ 10. Grandma waves at the troop train, which was hours late passing through town.

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Part III: Completion (20 points)

Fill in the blanks below with a word or phrase which completes the sentence. Place your answer in the space provided at left.

1. Joey, aged 9, and Mary Alice, two years younger, take the Chicago-St. Louis _____ to their grandmother's house in Piatt County in central _____.
2. Mrs. Weidenbach carries an expanded rumor of _____'s war record at the battle of _____.
3. Grandma loads her shotgun as she complains to the delivery boy, _____, of a _____ in her milk.
4. Grandma takes the children fishing on posted land belonging to the Piatt County _____ & Gun Club, where male members cavort in _____ suits.
5. Grandma waves a _____ at _____ and demands a ride in his plane.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Describe how local people celebrate the centennial.
2. Explain why Weidenbach wants to keep Effie Wilcox's house.
3. Discuss Grandma's countrified habits.
4. Account for the impact of Chicago crime on the public.
5. Summarize events that precede the elopement.

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COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Select the phrase that completes each of the following sentences. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left.

- _____ 1. Both children close their windows
 - A. to stifle the mewing from the cobhouse.
 - B. before looking for wedding clothes in the trunk.
 - C. after seeing *Dracula*, a vampire movie starring Bela Lugosi.
 - D. because they see the gauze move over the coffin.
- _____ 2. Grady wears
 - A. a beard for the centennial contest.
 - B. a uniform from the Mexican War.
 - C. Grandpa Dowdel's bowler hat and string tie.
 - D. his union suit dangerously low.
- _____ 3. Aunt Puss Chapman recalls
 - A. the wreck that killed the brakeman.
 - B. her hired girl from long ago.
 - C. the foreclosure on Effie's house.
 - D. songs from the Rod and Gun Club on Salt Creek.
- _____ 4. The children decide
 - A. not to tell their father about the fish trap.
 - B. to name the kitten Skipper.
 - C. that they will steal Idella Eubanks's ladder.
 - D. on a price for the quilt initialed M. T. L.
- _____ 5. Weidenbach agrees
 - A. that Effie deserves ownership of her house.
 - B. the state should build an historical museum to honor Abraham Lincoln.
 - C. on a fair price for the monogrammed stovepipe hat.
 - D. to give the children two-dollar bills.
- _____ 6. Grandma sets the card table
 - A. beyond the city limits.
 - B. near a wash pot of soap, which she slices with a butcher knife.
 - C. where she can load the shotgun and watch for intruders.
 - D. alongside Pennypacker's gooseberry pie.
- _____ 7. Joey departs from Fort Sheridan
 - A. to the Great War.
 - B. on the Chicago-Joliet train.
 - C. dressed in Grandpa's coat and carrying a lantern.
 - D. for basic training at Camp Leonard Wood.
- _____ 8. Grandma claims to have
 - A. a valuable butter churn.
 - B. items belonging to Mary Todd Lincoln.
 - C. ears like an Indian scout.
 - D. enough homemade beer for all the drifters at the town's edge.
- _____ 9. Joey questions Grandma about
 - A. Grady Griswold's age.
 - B. the legality of the fish trap in Salt Creek.
 - C. Mary Alice's secret dancing lessons.
 - D. the recipe for soap.
- _____ 10. Grandma accompanies the children to the station
 - A. to keep them safe from drifters.
 - B. to calm their fear of ghosts.
 - C. when Effie returns to town.
 - D. to watch the parade.

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Part II: Matching (30 points)

Match the following descriptions with names of characters from the list below. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left. You will use some answers more than once and some not at all.

- | | | | | |
|----------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| A. Joey | D. Merle Stubbs | G. Mrs. Weidenbach | J. Vandalia | M. stringer |
| B. Ernie | E. Junior Stubbs | H. Mary Alice | K. Effie Wilcox | N. Mr. Cowgill |
| C. Ray | F. Grandma | I. Weidenbach | L. Idella Eubanks | O. O. B. Dickerson |

- _____ 1. Tries to enlist Grandma into the Ladies's Hospitality Committee's preparations for the centennial celebration
- _____ 2. Dresses like a ghost
- _____ 3. Reconsiders a deal with John Deere
- _____ 4. Demands a new iron mailbox
- _____ 5. Writes to Vandalia
- _____ 6. Sits by the Cowgills in church
- _____ 7. Doesn't expect thanks for a catfish dinner
- _____ 8. Wants to halt an elopement
- _____ 9. Fears Pennypacker's cooking expertise
- _____ 10. Demands Vandalia's pay
- _____ 11. Tap dances like Shirley Temple
- _____ 12. Doesn't fear the cherry bomb
- _____ 13. Goes to jail
- _____ 14. Wants a human interest story
- _____ 15. Falls from the upper window to the snowball bushes

Part III: Short Answer (20 points)

Supply a word or phrase in answer to the following questions. Place your response in the blank provided at left.

- _____ 1. Who claims to be busy canning tomatoes?
- _____ 2. What famous dead man did the children want to see?
- _____ 3. Where is Dearborn Station?
- _____ 4. Whom does Grandma pretend to defend from the trauma of seeing men in union suits?
- _____ 5. What job did Grandma perform in her youth?
- _____ 6. How much water does Grandma claim to add to her pies?
- _____ 7. Who begins to talk like Grandma?
- _____ 8. In what year do the summer visits begin?
- _____ 9. What great disaster occurred about the time of the train wreck?
- _____ 10. What does Grandma use to bait the fish trap?

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

- 1. Explain how Grandma gets Cowgill to punish his sons.
- 2. Summarize preparations for Vandalia's elopement.
- 3. Describe examples of Grandma's trickery.
- 4. Summarize the hardships of the Great Depression.
- 5. Describe the children's chores and activities during summer visits.

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ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY TEST

- | | | |
|--------------|----------------|----------------------|
| 1. stiff | 6. gloat | 11. gasolier |
| 2. valise | 7. settee | 12. larceny |
| 3. sweatband | 8. scandalized | 13. reconciled |
| 4. bogus | 9. bluff | 14. recom-
menced |
| 5. locks | 10. mattress | 15. forecloses |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Quotation Identification (30 points)

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. L | 6. N | 11. F |
| 2. H | 7. O | 12. D |
| 3. C | 8. G | 13. H |
| 4. F | 9. K | 14. A |
| 5. M | 10. H | 15. A |

Part II: True/False (20 points)

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

Part III: Completion (20 points)

1. train, Illinois
2. Shotgun Cheatham, Bull Run
3. Ernie Cowgill, mouse
4. Rod, union
5. blue ribbon, Barnie Buchanan

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. C | 6. A |
| 2. B | 7. D |
| 3. B | 8. C |
| 4. A | 9. A |
| 5. D | 10. C |

Part II: Matching (30 points)

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. G | 6. K | 11. H |
| 2. A | 7. F | 12. B |
| 3. I | 8. D | 13. B |
| 4. F | 9. F | 14. M |
| 5. E | 10. L | 15. L |

Part III: Short Answer (20 points)

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Grandma | 6. mouthful |
| 2. Dillinger | 7. Mary Alice |
| 3. Chicago | 8. 1929 |
| 4. Mary Alice | 9. Chicago Fire |
| 5. hired girl | 10. cheese |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary



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