

SO FAR FROM THE BAMBOO GROVE

YOKO KAWASHIMA WATKINS

LIVING LITERATURE SERIES

A PERMA-BOUND PRODUCTION

TEACHER'S GUIDE

GUIDE WRITTEN BY MARY ELLEN SNODGRASS

SYNOPSIS

In 1945, the Kawashimas, a Japanese family, live in Nanam, a town in northeastern Korea fifty miles from the border of China and 150 miles southwest of the Russian port of Vladivostok. As World War II moves threateningly near their home in the bamboo grove, hostility against local Japanese threatens eleven-year-old Yoko, her eighteen-year-old brother Hideyo, her sixteen-year-old sister Ko, and her mother, who heads the family in Mr. Kawashima's absence. On infrequent visits, Yoshio Kawashima, a government official working in Manchuria, China, to the north, helps the family dig a bomb shelter and stock it with emergency supplies of rice and dried fish. In April, Yoko's teacher, Mr. Enomoto, announces that U.S. bombers have leveled Tokyo. From the radio, the Kawashimas learn that the Koreans have created an Anti-Japanese Communist Army.

Following a dance performance for the wounded at a military hospital, Yoko, Ko, and Mother comfort patients. Yoko is repelled by Corporal Matsumura's swathed head, but greets him politely. In May, Matsumura, his scarred face free of bandages, visits the Kawashimas to thank them for their hospital visit. He is especially grateful to "Little One," who wins his heart with her dainty hands and grace. Shortly afterward, to the dismay of the family, Hideyo volunteers for the student army at a time when Japan is losing the war, which started with Tojo's bombing of Pearl Harbor. To protect himself, Hideyo deliberately fails the written entrance exam and is assigned to a munitions factory twenty miles away.

On July 29, the day that Hideyo departs, Corporal Matsumura awakens the family to warn that the Russians are landing. Mother leaves a note for Father to meet them at the Seoul train station and tethers Yoko to her wrist for the family's flight. Before the Kawashimas can depart, four Japanese army police force their way through the front door and demand metal. Mother hands over an ashtray and vase; officers demand her wedding ring, spectacles, and a souvenir paperweight as well. After an officer smashes Mother's glasses, Yoko bites his hand and suffers a kick to the ribs.

Traveling along the river, the Kawashimas dodge Communist forces and arrive at the station, where a letter from Corporal Matsumura convinces the stationmaster to allow them a place in a boxcar among the evacuated wounded. Yoko faints from the fumes in a tunnel; a woman gives birth. Some passengers die along the way; bodies are hurled from the train. To protect the Kawashimas from discovery at Wonsan, 225 miles south, nurses smear them with blood and report that Mother has smallpox so the Communists will think they are Korean evacuees from the hospital. That night, American bombers destroy the train's engines.

A medic warns the Kawashimas that departure on foot may be safer than risking betrayal by people expecting a reward for turning in fleeing Japanese. At 3:00 A.M., Mother, Ko, and

Yoko leave on the long trek south to Seoul. On the eighth day of their walk along the tracks, Ko carries her little sister across a railroad bridge. They camp by the river, cook rice, and rest. Two days later, Communists soldiers threaten to rape Ko. The explosion of a bomb kills the soldiers and deafens Yoko, who is wounded in the ear and chest. On August 9, after a day of rest, Yoko awakens to find Ko dressed in a soldier's uniform and her hair shaved to the scalp. Mother uses an heirloom sword to shave Yoko's head.

Meanwhile, Hideyo works in the factory with friends from Nanam. Communists attack with machine guns, killing some of the young recruits. Hideyo, who hides in a box, observes the slaughter and plays dead. Before the building can be dynamited, he joins Makoto, Shoichi, and Shinzo and exits through the washroom window around noon. By dawn, they reach the Kawashimas' home, which is ransacked. Hideyo discovers Mother's note. At 9:15, he loads supplies and departs. He discovers that the Communists have slaughtered the Lee family, their Korean friends.

Disguised as Koreans, Hideyo and his friends walk south for ten days. Near Tanchon, a hundred miles southwest of Nanam, they learn that on August 15, the Emperor of Japan surrendered to the Allies. The boys work until the end of September helping the Russians dispose of bodies by throwing them into the sea. Then Hideyo separates from his friends and presses on toward Seoul. He climbs a tree to avoid Communist machine-gunners. Starving and numb from the snow, he collapses at the farmhouse of the Kim family.

As Hideyo's mother and sisters continue their journey, Ko proves adept at deception and theft. On August 16, they join Japanese refugees. For two weeks, Dr. Takeda, a friend of Mr. Kawashima, treats Yoko for infection and removes shrapnel from her ear at a hospital tent. By September, the family, subsisting on peelings and scraps from hotel garbage, wait at the train station for Hideyo. To save the girls from Korean rapists, the family carves a message for Hideyo and departs on a freight train. At Pusan, the trio moves to a warehouse by the harbor; ten days later, amid violence erupting among Koreans newly freed of Japanese imperialism, they board a ship for Japan.

Across the Tsushima Strait, the boat docks at Fukuoka, where refugees are housed in an auditorium. By November, Mother realizes that something is wrong at her parents' house. She boards a train for Aomori, but halts at Kyoto to enroll Yoko at the Sagano Girls' School near Atago Mountain and Ko in home economics at Seian University. Yoko, who lives at the station and scavenges garbage, is ridiculed for her ragged appearance. She makes friends with Mr. Naido, the school janitor, who provides her with school supplies salvaged from the trash.

Mother returns from Aomori with bad news — her parents died in the July bombings. Almost immediately, Mother col-

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lapses and dies at the station. The girls have her remains cremated. Mrs. Masuda, whose family owns a clog factory, helps the girls with arrangements and offers them a room. Intrigued by Mother's dying words, Ko rifles her garments and discovers \$100 in yen. She reserves the cash; Yoko earns money for shoes by selling bottles and cans.

On New Year's Day, Yoko visits a shrine to sell handsewn beanbags and discovers that Ko has been shining shoes to earn food money. Yoko spends her shoe money for rice, fish, seaweed, an orange, tea, and a teapot to honor her sister and celebrate the ten-day holiday. They travel to Maizuru to post a note to Hideyo. Yoko enters an essay contest and wins 10,000 yen for a vignette describing the rudeness of snobby girls at Sagano Girls' School. The essay is published in the newspaper and is read by Corporal Matsumura, who comes to visit the girls and offers his help.

After eight months of walking and foraging, Hideyo, who swims the Imjon River across the 38th parallel and dodges Communist bullets to reach the American side, joins refugees on a train. He finds his sisters' note in Maizuru and rejoins them. Six years after the war, Mr. Kawashima returns from a prison camp in Siberia.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born in 1934, Yoko Kawashima Watkins is the youngest of three children born to Saki Kawashima and diplomat Yoshio Kamada Kawashima. Although she grew up in northern Korea, Yoko received traditional cultural training in dance, tea service, and calligraphy. She was only eleven years old when her brother joined the army. Yoko, her sister, and mother were forced to flee Korea for their native Japan. On the way south, shrapnel caused a chest injury and deafness in Watkins's right ear.

Arriving at a Fukouka refugee reception center, the family soon departed and set up makeshift living arrangements in Kyoto, where Yoko enrolled. Her mother journeyed north to Aomori to visit her parents, Tomokichi and Riyo Kawashima. On learning of their deaths, Mrs. Kawashima returned by train and died unexpectedly in the station, leaving Yoko and her sister to survive on the streets. The girls found cheap lodging in a clog factory warehouse.

In 1951, Yoshio Kawashima was released from a prison camp in Siberia and joined his three children in Japan. After the war, Watkins, an honor student, learned English, graduated from Kyoto University, and worked as a translator at a U.S. Air Force base, where she met her husband, Airman Donald Watkins. They lived in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Oregon before settling in New England. The Watkins, who are parents of four grown children and two Taiwanese orphan boys, now ordained Catholic priests, live on Cape Cod in Brewster, Massachusetts. Yoko's sister Ko, who was injured in the 1940s when the clog factory warehouse burned, lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Yoko has worked with prisons and a sanctuary for troubled teens on Guam. An accomplished speaker much in demand in the United States, England, and Guam, she has translated a book for the Missionaries of Charity, headed by Mother Teresa, and is composing a sequel to *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*, to be entitled *My Brother, My Sister and I*. She hopes that North and South Korea will one day be united so she can return to the bamboo grove for a visit.

CRITIC'S CORNER

So Far from the Bamboo Grove (1986) has won Yoko Watkins an ALA Notable Book award, Parents' Choice Award, National Council of Teachers of English Teachers' Choice Book selection, Judy Lopez Memorial Award, and selection as *School Library Journal* Best Book of 1986. In 1988, Watkins was named Japanese-American of the Year by the Iowa City School System; four years later, the Guam legislature commended her for her peace efforts. Watkins' second book, *Tales from the Bamboo Grove* (1992), earned merit for the author's original calligraphy.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To assess survival techniques
2. To outline the historical foundations of enmity between Korea and Japan
3. To evaluate a child's need for food, shelter, discipline, acceptance, and security
4. To explain the autobiographer's purpose in revealing personal details of severe family trauma
5. To define the status of refugees
6. To discuss the effects of snobbery and ridicule
7. To comment on the plight of noncombatants during wartime, especially young women
8. To enumerate oriental customs, such as New Year's celebrations, Buddhism, treatment of guests, and rigorous training for young girls in calligraphy, tea service, and traditional dance
9. To characterize a dilemma

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To explain why Corporal Matsumura aids the Kawashimas
2. To assess animosities between Ko and Yoko
3. To discuss the author's focus on realistic details, such as the concealment of the heirloom sword, slaughter of the Lees, and Hideyo's insistence on joining the youth army
4. To order events which affect the family, especially Mr. Kawashima's work in Manchuria, loss of the savings book, and the landing of Russians in Korea
5. To describe the death and cremation of Mrs. Kawashima
6. To define compassion in crucial scenes, such as the sharing of food scavenged from garbage, assistance to mother and infant in the boxcar, and the dancers' visit to the military hospital
7. To explain why Mother worries more about Hideyo than about her husband
8. To explain how Mr. Naido and Mrs. Masuda assist Yoko
9. To evaluate Yoko's choice of topic for the essay contest

MEANING STUDY

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have a particular meaning in the autobiography. Explain each. Chapter and page numbers are given so that you can note the context from which the item is taken.

1. Through this Mount Fuji paperweight I dreamed of seeing the majestic mountain and imagined the beauty of my homeland. (Chapter 1, p. 4)
(For Yoko, pride in her homeland is summarized in the beauty of Mount Fuji, 70 miles southwest of Tokyo. The last eruption of Fuji, a quiescent volcano, occurred in 1707. A graceful land mass cultivated by farmers, dotted with

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bamboo groves and pine thickets, and capped with snow, the 6,000-foot elevation is encircled by five interconnected lakes, one of which reflects the symmetry of the slope. At this sacred site, especially during July and August, meditators, artists, pilgrims, and poets frequent the slopes to seek inspiration. Vacationers and tourists visit its national preserve, Fumi-Hakone-Izu Park.)

2. This Tojo government attacking Pearl Harbor to start the war was bad enough. (Chapter 1, p. 17)
(Mrs. Kawashima refers to Tojo Hideki (1884-1948), Japan's prime minister who led the country's military in a program of conquest that resulted in the entrance of the United States into World War II. The initial success of the raid on December 7, 1941, against the U.S. naval and air base enhanced Tojo's prestige. By the end of the war, however, the tide had turned so irrevocably against Japan that Tojo was repudiated and ousted in July 1944, then labeled a war criminal the next year. After a military tribunal found him guilty, he was hanged.)
3. They told Mother that the Red Cross had wired ahead for another engine, but there was no telling when it would come. (Chapter 2, p. 40)
(The Red Cross, an international relief organization, was founded by Swiss humanitarian Jean Henri Dunant (1828-1910). It remains independent of political interests and supports humanitarian concerns in 74 nations. An outgrowth of the Geneva Conventions of war, the organization maintains blood banks, trains volunteers in water safety and first aid, helps people communicate with families, and provides food, clothing, shelter, medicine, and rescue for disaster victims. Rules governing relief efforts during wartime forbid the firing on vehicles and shelters marked by the distinctive red cross on a white field.)
4. I heard the Emperor's talk over the radio. (Chapter 3, p. 62)
(In an unprecedented address to his people, Japan's Emperor Hirohito, a peaceloving leader once revered as sacred, was helpless to stop the military complex that impelled Japan to make war on Manchuria and the United States. To his credit, he voiced strong advocacy of the surrender, which ended Japan's involvement on August 15, 1945, a week after the second use of atomic weapons on a Japanese civilian population. When Japan drafted a new constitution the next year, they reduced the Emperor's powers to a ceremonial role.)
5. He was determined to get at least as far as the thirty-eighth parallel, beyond which lay some safety and the hope of meeting his mother and sisters later in Seoul. (Chapter 3, p. 67)
(Hideyo assesses his chances of escape and realizes that he must leave the Hee family and journey farther south across the Imjon River into U.S.-controlled territory. After Japan's surrender to the Allies, Russia and the United States divided the nation along the 38th parallel. By August 15, 1948, the U.S. occupation ceased with the creation of an independent Republic of Korea. In the north, Communist dictators continued to restrict the nation, which in September of 1948 was named the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.)
6. We were wearing Korean Communist Army uniforms—were we seeking political asylum? (Chapter 5, p. 74)
(The seeking of political asylum is a common request from refugees who must flee a dangerous political situation,

such as revolution, religious persecution, or racial purge, and take up residency in another state. The granting of political asylum assures refugees protection and shelter until the dire situation in their homeland abates or until they can reestablish citizenship in another land.)

7. He pulled up a small stool and asked my name. "Kawashima Yoko." (Chapter 5, p. 76)
(Yoko answers the question in Oriental style, giving surname, then given name. Such an arrangement often confuses Americans, who are accustomed to the reverse of names with surname coming last. Thus, the wife of Chiang Kai-shek is properly called Madame Chiang.)
8. A Buddhist monk should practice nothing but love. (Chapter 7, p. 127)
(Buddhism, originating in Nepal in the 5th century B.C., spread to Japan from Korea in the 6th century. Centered at the Golden Pavilion in Kyoto in 1934, the sect at one time was a national religion, but gave way to Shintoism. A significant part of the Buddhist priest's daily function is chanting scripture and reciting prayers for the dead. The Kawashima girls are justly outraged that the priest refuses to pray for their mother's spirit.)
9. Some five hundred night flights of B-29 bombers under the direction of General Curtis LeMay commenced on March 9, 1945. (Notes from the Publisher, p. 179)
(General Curtis Emerson "Iron Pants" LeMay, developer of bombing techniques during World War II and organizer of the Berlin airlift, directed bomb raids against China and the Marianas from 1944-1945. During the onslaught against Japan, LeMay pushed his squadrons to assault 64 cities and recovered most of his planes without incident. The raids were so daring that they allowed low-flying craft to drop leaflets warning the Japanese that their country was nearing its military ebb.)
10. The celebrating Koreans, who had so long awaited independence, gradually learned that the Russians and Americans had agreed upon a period of "trusteeship" for their country, at the wartime conferences at Yalta and Potsdam. (Notes from the Publisher, p. 182)
(At Yalta, the Crimean setting of a meeting of Allied leaders Winston Churchill, Franklin Roosevelt, and Joseph Stalin, a conference held from February 4-12, 1945, granted the Russians Japanese territory, notably Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands and insisted that war criminals like Tojo be punished. The Potsdam meeting, a conference outside Berlin from July 17-August 2, 1945, united Harry Truman, Winston Churchill and his replacement, Clement Atlee, and Joseph Stalin. These leaders tidied up the division of power, forced Japan into unconditional surrender, allowed the Emperor to remain in a diminished role, and ushered in what was later named the Cold War. Rather than grant Korea outright independence, the country was divided into U.S. and Soviet zones of occupation, with the thirty-eighth Parallel as the dividing line. Negotiations to reunite the two zones failed and in 1948 each superpower declared its zone to be an independent republic.)

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 from the autobiography.

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Questions 1 - 5 Literal Level

1. What international events undergird the plot of *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*?

(Much of the plot of the autobiography reflects events of World War II and its aftermath:

December 7, 1941	Tojo attacks Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.
February 4-12, 1945	Allied powers meet at Yalta to discuss how to end World War II.
March 9, 1945	General Curtis LeMay leads bomb strikes against Tokyo.
April 13, 1945	American bombers demolish Tokyo.
July 1945	Americans bomb northern Korea.
July 17- August 2, 1945	Allied powers meet at Potsdam to force Japan into unconditional surrender
July 29, 1945	Russians land in Korea.
August 6, 1945	An American atomic bomb destroys Hiroshima.
August 8, 1945	An American atomic bomb destroys Nagasaki.
August 8, 1945	Russia declares war on Japan.
August 15, 1945	The Japanese Emperor surrenders to the Allies.
September 2, 1945	General Douglas MacArthur orders Japanese soldiers to surrender to either American or Russian troops.
October 1945	Syngman Rhee returns from exile to South Korea.
May 1, 1948	North Korea becomes a Soviet satellite.
August 15, 1948	South Korea becomes an American satellite.)

2. What Japanese and Korean terms are crucial to the story?

(aigo	alas
Asahi	Kyoto's morning paper
bu un cho kyo	good luck in war
fusuma	panel
geta	clogs
hibachi	grill or hearth
kimch'i	spicy Korean pickle
kimono	wide-sleeved robe
koto	stringed instrument similar to a zither or autoharp
miso	bean paste
obi	sash
sayonara	farewell
shamisen	three-stringed banjo
tabi	socks
tatami	woven mat
tofu	soybean curd or cheese
tokonoma	alcove
yen	Japanese currency
Yokaren	student army)

3. How does Hideyo's departure affect his family?

(In the spring of 1945, Mrs. Kawashima copes with an absent husband who makes infrequent visits to help her with the children and to dig an air raid shelter near their home. The stresses of anti-Japanese feeling in northern Korea and ominous news from abroad compound the problems of nightly air raids. When Hideyo announces that

he plans to join the student army, his mother is aghast, her mouth hanging ajar. At first, she insists, "You cannot go, Hideyo!" Hideyo indicates that he has already applied to take the written and physical exams.

Because Hideyo is eighteen, he feels capable of deciding his role in the war, but his mother insists that he wait until his father returns from Manchuria. Hideyo disputes his mother's authority by noting, "Our country needs young soldiers." His mother grows angry; her voice shakes. She breaks into tears at the thought of losing both husband and son.

For days, Hideyo argues with his mother, then lapses into silence. Ko nags him for his rudeness. Hideyo snaps, "Stupid girls. You don't understand a thing." Ko reminds him that in Japanese families the eldest son has the duty of assuming the patriarch's role if the father should die. Hideyo insists that Japan needs young recruits. Ko counters that Japan is pressing the wounded and children into service, a sure sign that they are losing the war. She concludes, "If you join the army I disown you!" Yoko adds, "Me too!" Hideyo responds, "I won't let girls tell me what to do!")

4. Describe the train ride from Nanam.

(Mother quickly gathers children and necessities and hurries into the night along the river road to the train station. With difficulty, they receive permission to join the wounded in a crowded, foul-smelling boxcar. There are cries of pain and much work for the nurses, who deliver a child during the night. Sanitary facilities are reduced to two tubs, one for urine and one for excrement. There is no food for the patients, so Mother orders the children to abstain from eating in front of hungry people.

As the train passes through a tunnel, Yoko faints from the fumes. An infant dies and is tossed from the door. The child's mother leaps to her death. An old woman sips urine to quell her thirst. At Wonsan, an inspection by Korean Communist troops halts the train to search for the Kawashima family. Ko, Yoko, and Mother pose as patients. A nurse declares that Ko is about to give birth and scares off the troops by reporting that Mother has smallpox.

Later in the night, bombs demolish the train's engines at a point 45 miles from Seoul. Patients in the first few cars are evacuated on stretchers. The Red Cross wires for a replacement engine. A medic, who fears treachery, advises Mother to leave on foot and follow the rails south to Seoul. At 3:00 A.M., the trio walk past the train, trying not to look at the burned body of the engineer.)

5. How do the Kawashimas arrive in Japan?

(The three continue their walk south, staying under cover of woods and cooking rice and sleeping when they are able. At riverbanks, they wash in cold water. As marauding Communists menace Ko, a bomb falls and kills the soldiers. Yoko is deafened and hit in the chest. Ko steals corn from a farmer's field and locates a cave where the family can rest. Mother decides that they can travel more safely if they dress in the dead soldiers' uniforms.

The Kawashimas reach Seoul. At news of the surrender, Mother faints. She is revived, and Yoko receives treatment at a Red Cross hospital tent. Two weeks later, they depart from the tent, refuse evacuation in a truck, and wait at the train station for Hideyo. Ko feeds the family with

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garbage from a nearby hotel. The rapes of young girls impel Mother to agree to move to Pusan on Korea's southern coast. Ko and Yoko carve a message for Hideyo on the station post.

In Pusan, the situation grows more perilous as Koreans celebrate freedom from the Japanese Emperor by ravishing young female Japanese. After waiting in line several days, Mother and the girls take passage on a cargo vessel bound for Japan. Following the three-day crossing of the Tsushima Strait, the ship docks at Fukuoka on Japan's southwestern coast, where a refugee committee interviews arrivals.)

Questions 6 - 8 Interpretive Level

6. How do Yoko and Ko differ in their response to adversity? (Ko is an aggressive young woman who lies and deceives in order to avoid trouble and to stay alive. She steals ears of corn from a farmer's field and locates suitable shelter in a cave for her mother and little sister. At the railroad bridge, Ko listens for vibrations to determine if it is safe to cross. When Yoko balks at the crossing, Ko returns to carry her little sister to the other side.

In Kyoto, Ko insists on attending Seian University to study home economics. She continues feeding her sister and mother with peelings and molded bread from garbage cans. After Mother's death, Ko lights the fire at the crematorium. When responsibilities grow too heavy for her, she insists that Yoko learn to light a hibachi, fetch water, and care for herself.

Yoko, who is only eleven years old, hesitates to assert authority and whimpers at deprivations of warmth, food, water, and shelter. In school, Yoko becomes more aggressive. Like Ko, she learns to fight back and to get what she needs by scrounging. At the Kitano shrine where Ko polishes shoes, Yoko sells handsewn beanbags. To extend the family's earnings, she enters an essay contest and wins a dinner and \$100.)

7. Why does the family seem more concerned about Hideyo than about Father?

(Yoko introduces the question of the apparent lack of interest in Father's fate. Because she offers no answer, the reader can only surmise that Mother and Ko worry about Hideyo because he is young and hot-tempered and because he is nearby. With Father so far away, they have little chance of communicating with him or getting further comfort or aid from him. Hideyo becomes male protector of the three Kawashima females and thus more valuable than Father.)

8. What does the refugee situation suggest about the plight of noncombatants?

(In wartime, civilians are expendable. After the Communist army invades Nanam, they slaughter the Lee family, who are Korean. As wandering troops pass Japanese refugees, Hideyo observes that they kill at random and pillage the bodies. A greater danger to noncombatants is the use of bombs against key cities, particularly Tokyo, which is leveled by American B-29s. In order to lessen the Japanese military presence, American forces are willing to kill the innocent. Likewise, American bombers drop powerful atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Within days, this unspeakable devastation leads to the Emperor's sur-

render.

During these scenes of mayhem and random violence, women and children scurry from Red Cross tent to train station, from woods to riverbank to refugee camp, accepting what shelter and assistance they can find, guarding their few belongings from thieves, and eating decaying and moldy food. Disease, injury, hunger, thirst, and terror decimate the survivors. As demonstrated by Mother's graying hair, brandishing the heirloom sword, and abrupt collapse at the Kyoto train station, stress, violence, and sudden death are common occurrences to people who have expended their energies and who have no refuge or hope left.)

Questions 9 and 10 - Critical Level

9. What does Yoko Kawashima Watkins reveal about herself?

(By writing a war memoir in her fifties, Yoko Watkins demonstrates an acceptance of her shortcomings and a rare sensitivity to her childhood behaviors and needs. Her portraiture reveals whining, complaints, fear, insecurity, and immaturity — all of which are a normal part of childhood. In balance, Watkins also delineates a toughening of the central character, who learns to cope with street vending, living in a chill factory room, saving for shoes, warding off predators, and tolerating the sneers of privileged girls at the Sagano Girls' School. By the end of the book, Yoko has grown savvy to much of the world's cruelties and is capable of defending herself while making a life in war-torn Kyoto.)

10. How does *So Far from the Bamboo Grove* compare to other war memoirs?

(The desperation of the Kawashima family reflects similar circumstances in the lives of other autobiographers who reflect on World War II. Like Esther Hautzig, author of *The Endless Steppe*, Yoko and her sister and mother travel by train in a stuffy, unhealthy boxcar without adequate water or sanitary facilities. Both Yoko and Esther return to school under the cloud of prejudice and exclusion. Both girls learn to cut corners, scavenge, bargain, and earn money for handwork.

Yoko also shares some of the sufferings of diarist Anne Frank. Like Anne, Yoko is a member of a hunted group. In Korea, Communist troops invade Japanese homes, killing and pillaging at random. For Anne, the menace is more insidious: the rounding up of Jews for concentration camps and mass slaughter represents one of the most heinous war crimes of the era.)

Questions 11-13 - Creative Level

11. Compose a conversation with a critic in which you discuss your response to *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*. Be specific about your likes and dislikes in young adult nonfiction and your assessment of Yoko Kawashima Watkins's depiction of refugee flight. List detailed scenes which illustrate why Yoko, Hideyo, and Ko must be innovative and bold in order to survive.
12. List moments that indicate that Mrs. Kawashima is wise, thrifty, self-disciplined, worried, compassionate, clever, self-sacrificing, fearful, respectful of her parents, and firm with her children.

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13. Compose an oral report on the fate of Korea and Japan after World War II. Include a map which indicates the results of the Yalta and Potsdam conferences.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Math

1. Collect lines from the novel which disclose passage of time and the relative ages of the characters. Include information from the publisher's notes concerning the history of conflict between Japan and Korea, which dates to the seventeenth century.
2. Compute the distances from Nanam to Manchuria, Vladivostok, Tanchon, Wonsan, Pyongyang, Seoul, and Pusan as well as the distance Mother Kawashima travels from Kyoto to Aomori. Estimate the distance the ship traverses from Pusan over the Tsushima Strait to Fukuoka.
3. Estimate the cost of World War II in terms of lives, casualties, materials, and loss of territory.

Economics

1. Make a chart of yen to dollar values based on data from the book. Create a second chart based on current exchange rates. Also, locate the names of Korean and Chinese currencies.
2. Deliver an oral report on the effects of refugees on a local economy. Include the competition for jobs and housing, crime and disease rates, demand for water and other services, black marketing, and the creation of an underground economy.
3. Compose a paragraph about cremation. Explain why it provides a simple, cheap method of disposing of bodies, especially during wartime.

Social Studies

1. Write a speech honoring the wounded and dead. Comment on the bravery of helpful people and agencies, particularly the Red Cross, those who hid the Japanese to save them from the Communist army, and those who fed, housed, and supplied orphans.
2. Give an overview of the causes of World War II and the involvement of Tojo, Franklin Roosevelt, General Douglas MacArthur, Syngman Rhee, Kim Ku, Kim Kyusik, Emperor Hirohito, and General Curtis LeMay. Name significant events, such as the bombing of northern Korea, Pearl Harbor, Tokyo, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki.

Psychology

1. Discuss the psychological problems faced by maimed and disfigured war veterans like Corporal Matsumura. Suggest possible solutions to their feelings of rejection and isolation, such as jobs, hobbies, letter writing, athletics, music, games, and friendships.
2. Using Mother, Ko, Hideyo, and Yoko as models, create an extended definition of *dilemma*. Explain why dressing in soldier's clothing, shaving heads, dabbling clothing with blood, pretending to suffer smallpox, and speaking in Korean are necessary parts of deceptions that keep the family alive.
3. Research the causes and treatment of stuttering. Why is control of speed a factor in reducing fear and stress?

Cinema

Make a list of dramatic scenes from the novel that would require intense use of lighting, costume, makeup, music, props, and stunts, particularly Yoko's chest and ear wounds, Mother's death in the train station, Hideyo's swim over the Imjon River and the 38th Parallel, Cpl. Matsumura's rescue from a floating log, the bombing of a train, and Yoko and Ko's celebration of the New Year.

Science and Health

1. Explain why Dr. Takeda wants to protect Yoko from colds and infection. Why is a shrapnel wound to the ear dangerous? How might concussion to the eardrum have affected her hearing and balance?
2. Describe how passengers are asphyxiated when a train passes through a tunnel.

Language

1. Discuss why notes to Father and Hideyo are important to the Kawashimas. Why is communication a problem to refugees? How would illiterate refugees communicate with missing kin?
2. Make a report on Japanese calligraphy or brush-writing. Discuss why Corporal Matsumura asks about the character that stands for the name Yoko.

Art and Music

1. Use desktop publishing or other artistic forms to create a poster announcing transportation and free futons for refugees, a newspaper announcement of the essay contest winner and her prizes, a brochure encouraging recycling of metals, cans, and bottles, a warning to Japanese residents of Korea that the Russians have landed, a train schedule from Nanam to Seoul and Pusan, a tourist map of tram stations in Kyoto, and a for sale sign for Yoko's grandparents' property.
2. Select music to delineate the contrast between departure from the bamboo grove and reunion with Hideyo in Kyoto.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Relate the following literary terms to *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*: literary foils, denouement, symbol, simile, flat and round characters, stereotyping, letter, dialogue, conflict, atmosphere, mood, motivation, rising action, climax, falling action, foreword, publisher's note, parallel plot, and tone.
2. Lead a discussion of adult responsibilities to children. Determine why Mr. Naido tries to instill pride in Yoko. Why are insecurity, fear, hunger, cold, torn shoes, wounds, fatigue, infection, deafness, poor vision, threats of violence, and loss of parents significant factors to a timid, sensitive eleven-year-old like Yoko?
3. Write a minor character's diary entry on significant days, particularly Mr. Kim on the arrival of Hideyo, Mrs. Masuda on New Year's Day, Dr. Takeda on the day of the last refugee train to Pusan, Mr. Fukui on hearing of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Mr. Lee after the last departure of Mr. Kawashima to Manchuria, Major Ryu as his hospital is evacuated, and the principal of the Sagano Girls' School following the Emperor's radio announcement of surrender.

SO FAR FROM THE BAMBOO GROVE

4. Contrast the forces which cause World War II. Create a newspaper written from the point of view of school children whose parents, friends, and relatives leave for military jobs near war zones, at refugee camps, or in munitions factories.
5. Compose a theme describing the expectations, limitations, and opportunities for a wounded veteran or refugee. Explain why acceptance is essential to self-esteem. Discuss the use of reconstructive surgery as an aid to recovery. Suggest ways that Yoko can cope with diminished hearing.
6. Draw several outfits and disguises worn by the Kawashima family as they depart Korea. Include shaved heads, rucksacks, blankets, uniforms, bloody shirts, and Yoko's tiny coat.
7. Organize a debate concerning Ko's lies and deceptions. Why do she and Yoko feel they must hide their mother's death from the authorities? Why do they feel entitled to the extra futon?

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. List in chronological order significant events in the war, particularly the bombing of Tokyo, the Russian landing in Korea, evacuation of Japanese refugees from Korea, the Emperor's surrender, the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the division of Korea at the 38th parallel.
2. Make a list of scenes from the autobiography that express contrasting attitudes toward hardship, loyalty, talent, friendship, self-esteem, loss, patriotism, responsibility, deception, respect for elders, and heroism. Next to each, indicate what you think is the author's personal philosophy.
3. Compose brief definitions of maturity and self-reliance as they apply to Hideyo, Ko, and Yoko.
4. List scenes that depict conflict, particularly the train ride out of Nanam, Hideyo's flight from Communist soldiers, Mother's cremation, attendance at the Sagano Girls' School, Ko's annoyance with her little sister, and Yoko's complaints about pain, hunger, and cold.

WATKINS' PUBLISHED WORKS

So Far from the Bamboo Grove, 1986

Tales from the Bamboo Grove, 1992

RELATED READING

Eleanor Allen's *Wartime Children, 1939-1945*

Avi's *The Fighting Ground*

Eleanor Coerr's *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*

Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl

Nance L. Fyson's *Growing Up in the Second World War*

Carol Greene's *Japan*

Esther Hautzig's *The Endless Steppe*

Harry Mazer's *The Last Mission*

Toshi Maruki's *Hiroshima*

Amy Nash's *North Korea*

David E. Newton's *Tokyo*

Patricia Shephard's *South Korea*

G. C. Skipper's *Pearl Harbor*

Elie Wiesel's *Night*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Fusco, Andi Marie, "Oriental Author Recounts Life Story," *Register Citizen* [Torrington, Connecticut], May 23, 1992, 1, 19.

Gosselin, Kenneth R., "Japanese Author Tells Real Tales at School," *Hartford* [Connecticut] *Courant*, April 13, 1992, 4.

Peterson, Mark, "Hardship Taught Her to Endure," *Verona* [Michigan] *Press*, May 17, 1990, 1, 14.

Watt, Anne S., "A Book and a Friendship to Cherish," *Reading Teacher*, May 1989, 712-713.

SO FAR FROM THE BAMBOO GROVE

VOCABULARY TEST

Underline a term to complete each sentence below.

1. As each morning came we searched for a (canteen, treadle, cleat, thicket), and when night came we kept on our journey.
2. Tokyo is a (billow, demolish, stealth, cubicle) of fire.
3. Our belongings were (disowned, cursive, sodden, symmetrical).
4. Ko (grimaced, disfigured, mobilized, seeped) as if in pain.
5. Leaving my small (futon, mess kit, rucksack, kimono) with all the things I had bought by the stairway, I went to the back side of the warehouse . . .
6. . . . Ko had made a small (tabi, hibachi, miso, tofu) with stones.
7. I decided I could take (suspension, all-clear, dehydration, altercation).
8. The Russians, who had (parallels, alcoves, outposts, chemises) close to the Korean border, might at any time join their allies, the United States and England, in the war against Japan.
9. Mother and I were alone and I was practicing my brush-writing before going to my teacher's house for a (squadron, Honshu, vermilion, calligraphy) lesson.
10. I had stood there helpless, fists clenched, (faring, seething, imperial, lacquered), and the iron weight smashing Mother's important lenses released my fury.

SO FAR FROM THE BAMBOO GROVE

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Character Identification (30 points)

Identify the characters described below.

- _____ 1. surrenders on August 15, 1945, days after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
- _____ 2. polishes shoes in the cold outside the Kitano shrine.
- _____ 3. hides in a pine tree from Communist soldiers and observes the machine-gunning of refugees.
- _____ 4. serves six years in a Siberian prison.
- _____ 5. warns the Kawashimas that the Russians are landing in Korea.
- _____ 6. speaks slowly to Mr. Naido.
- _____ 7. washes a new-born infant in urine.
- _____ 8. leaves a savings book under the rice bowl.
- _____ 9. reads Yoko's mail without her permission.
- _____ 10. shows the girls a crematorium near the train station.
- _____ 11. finds a message written on newspaper and pasted up in Maizuru station.
- _____ 12. floats on a log four days until rescued by Americans.
- _____ 13. feeds Hideyo pepper and garlic water.
- _____ 14. travels alone to Aomori.
- _____ 15. removes metal from Yoko's ear.

Part II: Quotation Identification (20 points)

Beside each quotation place the name of the speaker (a) and the person being addressed (b).

- _____ 1a. Rag doll! Aren't you ashamed to come to school like that?
- _____ 1b.

- _____ 2a. Please let me go through all the trash.
- _____ 2b.

- _____ 3a. Your safety is more important than shoes.
- _____ 3b.

- _____ 4a. Stay. Become our boy.
- _____ 4b.

- _____ 5a. That is why you are here — to give them a little happiness.
- _____ 5b.

SO FAR FROM THE BAMBOO GROVE

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Underline an answer to complete each statement below.

1. When (Dr. Takeda, Mr. Ishida, Cpl. Matsumura, Mr. Masuda) comes to dinner, his face is free of bandages.
2. (Yoko, Ko, *koto*, Kyoto) means "to embrace."
3. Mother recognizes that (Yoko needs to study home economics, Father will look for them in Seoul, Ko will be safe once the family gets to Pusan, Hideyo deliberately failed the exam).
4. Ko earns extra money by (peddling beanbags at the Kitano shrine, polishing shoes, building hibachis, selling her grandparents' property).
5. The girls at the school shame Yoko for (stuttering, visiting the furnace room, gathering garbage, entering the essay contest).
6. Before leaving Nanam, Yoko complains of (missing Hideyo, losing her fur coat, earache and deafness, losing sleep during air raids).
7. Hideyo must leave the ammunition factory because (it will be dynamited, Communist soldiers threaten his sisters, he is ordered to dispose of bodies in the sea, the Russians are landing in northern Korea).
8. Ko and Yoko obtain three (canteens, futons, boat tickets, savings books) by concealing the fact that Mother is dead.
9. Communist soldiers are ordered to (hurl the dead baby from the train, cremate Mrs. Kawashima, shave the heads of female refugees, take gold fillings from teeth).
10. Mother chooses to settle in Kyoto because (her parents live there, she was educated there, Father will look for them at the station, the refugee center is nearby).

Part II: Identification (20 points)

Place an X by any statement that is true of Yoko.

- _____ 1. excels in sewing.
- _____ 2. saves money for shoes under Mother's urn.
- _____ 3. lies about stealing ears of corn.
- _____ 4. lights the cremation fire for Mother.
- _____ 5. challenges Mr. Ishida for opening her mail.
- _____ 6. changes her attitude toward Ko's bossiness.
- _____ 7. fears crossing the railroad bridge.
- _____ 8. bites the hand of the man who tries to cheat them at the train station.
- _____ 9. refuses to dance for wounded soldiers at the hospital in Nanam.
- _____ 10. suffers a chest wound from an exploding bomb.

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Part III: Completion (20 points)

Fill in a name or term which completes each of these statements.

1. Father returns from _____ after six years of imprisonment.
2. At the _____ School, Mr. Naido collects paper and pencils for Yoko.
3. Near the _____ shrine, Yoko slips away before Ko sees her.
4. _____, Korea, is close enough to Manchuria for Father to visit his family.
5. The family learns that American bombers have destroyed _____ and Nagasaki shortly before the surrender.
6. Floating like a log on the _____ River, Hideyo crosses the 38th parallel.
7. The Tojo government encouraged the bombing of _____.
8. Mother returns from _____ with news that the grandparents were dead.
9. Cpl. Matsumura takes over his father's factory in _____.
10. Refugees board ship in Pusan, cross the Tsushima Strait, and arrive at the port of _____.

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Choose TWO and answer in complete sentences.

1. Explain how Hideyo endears himself to the Kim family.
2. Discuss how Ko and Yoko cope with Mother's sudden death.
3. Analyze forces that threaten Yoko, including hunger, infection, pain, insecurity, deafness, and fear.

SO FAR FROM THE BAMBOO GROVE

ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY TEST

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1. thicket | 6. hibachi |
| 2. billow | 7. suspension |
| 3. sodden | 8. outposts |
| 4. grimaced | 9. calligraphy |
| 5. rucksack | 10. seething |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Character Identification (30 points)

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Japanese Emperor | 9. Mr. Ishida |
| 2. Ko | 10. Mrs. Masuda |
| 3. Hideyo | 11. Hideyo |
| 4. Mr. Kawashima | 12. Cpl. Matsumura |
| 5. Cpl. Matsumura | 13. Mrs. Kim |
| 6. Yoko | 14. Mrs. Kawashima |
| 7. nurse | 15. Dr. Takeda |
| 8. Mrs. Kawashima | |

Part II: Quotation Identification (20 points)

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| 1a. classmate | 4a. Mr. Kim |
| 1b. Yoko | 4b. Hideyo |
| 2a. Yoko | 5a. Mrs. Kawashima |
| 2b. Mr. Naido | 5b. Yoko |
| 3a. Ko | |
| 3b. Yoko | |

Part III: True/False (20 points)

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

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

1. Cpl. Matsumura
2. Yoko
3. Hideyo deliberately failed the exam
4. polishing shoes
5. gathering garbage
6. losing sleep during air raids
7. it will be dynamited
8. futons
9. take gold fillings from teeth
10. she was educated there

Part II: Identification (20 points)

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

Part III: Completion (20 points)

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Siberia | 6. Imjon |
| 2. Sagano Girls' | 7. Pearl Harbor |
| 3. Kitano | 8. Aomori |
| 4. Nanam | 9. Morioka |
| 5. Hiroshima | 10. Fukuoka |

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.

TEACHER'S NOTES

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