

sharon creech walk two moons

sharon creech walk two moons stands as a remarkable work in children's literature, capturing the hearts of readers with its poignant storytelling and rich thematic depth. This novel explores themes of family, loss, friendship, and self-discovery through the journey of a young protagonist, making it a staple in middle-grade reading lists. Known for its lyrical prose and compelling narrative structure, Sharon Creech's *Walk Two Moons* has received critical acclaim and numerous awards, resonating with readers and educators alike. This article delves into the book's plot, characters, themes, and its significance in literary education. It also examines the author's background and writing style to provide a comprehensive understanding of why *Walk Two Moons* remains a beloved classic. Following the introduction, a detailed table of contents will guide the exploration of these key aspects.

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Overview of Sharon Creech and *Walk Two Moons*

Sharon Creech is an acclaimed American author known for her contributions to children's and young adult literature. *Walk Two Moons*, published in 1994, is one of her most notable works and won the Newbery Medal, highlighting its excellence in literature for young readers. Creech's background as a poet and educator heavily influences her writing style, which combines poetic language with accessible storytelling. The novel reflects Creech's interest in exploring complex emotional themes through the eyes of young protagonists.

About Sharon Creech

Born in Ohio, Sharon Creech began her career as a poet before transitioning into children's literature. Her works often focus on themes of family, identity, and personal growth, drawing on her own experiences and observations. Creech's writing is characterized by its warmth, humor, and emotional depth, making her a beloved figure in the literary community.

Significance of Walk Two Moons

Walk Two Moons stands out for its unique narrative structure, blending a road trip story with a mystery and emotional exploration. The novel's title is drawn from a Native American proverb emphasizing empathy, which underpins the story's moral lessons. Its recognition through prestigious awards underscores its importance in the canon of children's literature.

Plot Summary of Walk Two Moons

Walk Two Moons follows the journey of thirteen-year-old Salamanca Tree Hiddle as she travels from Ohio to Idaho with her grandparents. Throughout the trip, Salamanca recounts stories of her friend Phoebe Winterbottom and the mysterious disappearance of Phoebe's mother. The narrative weaves together Salamanca's present journey with flashbacks to her own family history, revealing themes of love, loss, and acceptance.

Salamanca's Road Trip

The road trip acts as a physical and emotional journey for Salamanca, providing a framework for her reflections on her mother's absence and her own personal growth. Along the way, Salamanca learns valuable life lessons and comes to terms with her feelings.

Parallel Story of Phoebe Winterbottom

Salamanca's retelling of Phoebe's story adds layers of intrigue and suspense, as Phoebe deals with her mother's sudden disappearance. This subplot highlights themes of fear, hope, and the complexity of family relationships.

Main Characters and Their Development

The novel's strength lies in its well-developed characters, each contributing to the story's emotional resonance. Character growth is a central element, with personal challenges and relationships driving the plot forward.

Salamanca Tree Hiddle

Salamanca, the protagonist, is a complex character grappling with grief and identity. Her introspective nature and resilience provide readers with a relatable and compelling narrator.

Phoebe Winterbottom

Phoebe serves as a foil to Salamanca, her practical and protective demeanor contrasting with Salamanca's emotional vulnerability. Phoebe's story enriches the novel's exploration of family dynamics.

Supporting Characters

The grandparents, Salamanca's father, and other secondary characters provide depth and context, each influencing Salamanca's understanding of her world.

- Salamanca's father - represents stability and change
- Grandparents - symbolize wisdom and tradition
- Mrs. Winterbottom - central to Phoebe's storyline and thematic mystery

Themes and Symbolism in Walk Two Moons

Walk Two Moons addresses several universal themes, making it a rich text for analysis. The novel's symbolism enhances these themes, offering deeper layers of meaning.

Family and Loss

At its core, the novel examines the impact of losing loved ones and the ways families cope with absence and change. Salamanca's journey is as much about healing as it is about discovery.

Identity and Self-Discovery

Salamanca's road trip mirrors her internal quest for identity, encouraging readers to consider how personal history shapes who we become.

Empathy and Understanding

The title's Native American proverb—"Don't judge a man until you've walked two moons in his moccasins"—reflects the novel's emphasis on empathy and seeing the world through others' perspectives.

- The journey as a metaphor for personal growth
- Symbols such as the two moons representing dual perspectives
- Use of storytelling within the story to convey empathy

Literary Style and Narrative Techniques

Sharon Creech's writing style in Walk Two Moons combines poetic language with straightforward narrative, creating an engaging and accessible text. The novel employs various literary techniques that enrich the reading experience.

First-Person Narrative

The story is told from Salamanca's point of view, allowing intimate insight into her thoughts and emotions. This perspective creates a strong connection between reader and protagonist.

Interwoven Storylines

Creech masterfully intertwines Salamanca's road trip with the story of Phoebe's missing mother, using flashbacks and storytelling to build suspense and thematic depth.

Use of Symbolism and Imagery

Throughout the novel, Creech uses vivid imagery and symbols to convey complex emotions and themes, such as the significance of the two moons and the motif of walking.

Impact and Reception of Walk Two Moons

Since its publication, Walk Two Moons has garnered critical praise and a dedicated readership. Its awards and continued presence in educational curricula reflect its lasting impact.

Awards and Honors

The novel received the Newbery Medal in 1995, among other accolades, recognizing its literary merit and appeal to young readers.

Critical Reception

Critics have lauded Creech's ability to address serious themes with sensitivity and humor, making the novel both engaging and thought-provoking.

Reader Response

Readers often connect with Salamanca's voice and the novel's exploration of grief and healing, contributing to its enduring popularity.

Educational Uses of Walk Two Moons

Walk Two Moons is widely used in classrooms for its rich thematic content and relatable characters. It serves as a valuable tool for teaching literature and life lessons.

Curriculum Integration

The novel is commonly included in middle school reading programs, supporting lessons on narrative structure, character analysis, and thematic discussion.

Discussion and Activities

Teachers utilize *Walk Two Moons* to encourage empathy, critical thinking, and creative expression through various classroom activities and discussions.

1. Character role-play and perspective exercises
2. Writing assignments exploring themes of loss and identity
3. Comparative analysis with other coming-of-age novels

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of Sharon Creech's 'Walk Two Moons'?

The main theme of *'Walk Two Moons'* is self-discovery and understanding others through empathy. The story explores the protagonist's journey as she learns to cope with loss and appreciate different perspectives.

Who is the protagonist in 'Walk Two Moons' by Sharon Creech?

The protagonist of *'Walk Two Moons'* is Salvatore 'Sal' Hiddle, a thirteen-year-old girl who embarks on a road trip that leads to personal growth and understanding.

How does the title 'Walk Two Moons' relate to the story's message?

The title *'Walk Two Moons'* refers to the proverb 'Don't judge a man until you've walked two moons in his moccasins,' emphasizing the novel's message about empathy and seeing the world through others' eyes.

What role does Sal's journey play in the novel 'Walk Two Moons'?

Sal's journey in *'Walk Two Moons'* serves as a physical and emotional voyage. It helps her process her mother's disappearance, understand her family's past, and grow emotionally.

How does Sharon Creech use storytelling within 'Walk Two Moons'?

Sharon Creech employs a story-within-a-story technique, where Sal narrates both her present road trip and the tale of her friend Phoebe, intertwining their experiences to highlight themes of loss and acceptance.

What awards has 'Walk Two Moons' by Sharon Creech received?

'Walk Two Moons' won the Newbery Medal in 1995, recognizing it as a distinguished contribution to American children's literature.

Additional Resources

1. *Out of My Mind* by Sharon M. Draper

This novel tells the story of Melody, an 11-year-old girl with cerebral palsy who cannot speak but has a brilliant mind. Like *Walk Two Moons*, it explores themes of empathy, understanding, and the challenges of growing up differently. The story is heartfelt and inspiring, encouraging readers to look beyond appearances and understand others' experiences.

2. *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo

This charming book follows a young girl named Opal who adopts a stray dog, Winn-Dixie, in a small Florida town. It explores themes of friendship, family, and healing from loss, much like *Walk Two Moons*. The narrative is warm and filled with quirky characters that help Opal learn about acceptance and compassion.

3. *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson

A poignant story about friendship and loss, this novel centers on Jess and Leslie, two children who create an imaginary kingdom called Terabithia. The book deals with themes of grief and coping, similar to *Walk Two Moons*. It encourages readers to understand the power of imagination and emotional resilience.

4. *Counting by 7s* by Holly Goldberg Sloan

This novel follows Willow, a highly gifted girl who faces tragedy and must navigate life with the help of new friends. Like *Walk Two Moons*, it explores themes of loss, healing, and the importance of connection. The story is both touching and uplifting, showing how people can come together in difficult times.

5. *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd

Set in the American South during the 1960s, this novel tells the story of Lily Owens, a young girl searching for her mother and her own identity. Themes of family, forgiveness, and self-discovery resonate with those in *Walk Two Moons*. It is a moving coming-of-age story that highlights the importance of understanding one's past.

6. *Flora & Ulysses* by Kate DiCamillo

This humorous and heartwarming book follows Flora, a girl who befriends a squirrel with superpowers. The novel deals with themes of family, friendship, and coping with change, similar to *Walk Two Moons*. Its whimsical tone balances serious topics, making it a delightful read for young readers.

7. *Inside Out and Back Again* by Thanhha Lai

Presented in verse, this story recounts the journey of a young Vietnamese girl and her family as they resettle in America. Themes of identity, adaptation, and family ties align with those in **Walk Two Moons**. It offers a unique perspective on cultural displacement and personal growth.

8. *Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls

This classic novel tells the tale of a boy and his two hunting dogs in the Ozarks, exploring themes of loyalty, love, and loss. Its emotional depth and coming-of-age elements make it resonate with readers of **Walk Two Moons**. The story emphasizes the bonds between humans and animals as well as the pain of growing up.

9. *Harriet the Spy* by Louise Fitzhugh

Harriet is a curious and observant girl who keeps a notebook of her observations about the people around her. The novel explores themes of self-discovery, identity, and the challenges of adolescence, much like **Walk Two Moons**. It offers a candid and sometimes humorous look at growing up and understanding others.

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