

walk two moons study guide

walk two moons study guide offers an in-depth exploration of Sharon Creech's acclaimed novel, providing key insights and comprehensive analysis to enhance understanding and engagement. This study guide delves into the novel's major themes, character development, plot structure, and literary devices, making it an essential resource for students, educators, and literature enthusiasts. By examining the narrative's dual storyline and emotional depth, readers gain a clearer perspective on the protagonist's journey and the novel's broader messages. Additionally, the guide includes discussion questions and thematic breakdowns that facilitate critical thinking and classroom discussion. Whether preparing for exams or seeking to deepen literary appreciation, this walk two moons study guide ensures a thorough grasp of the novel's complexities. The following sections outline the core elements covered in this guide.

- Overview of Walk Two Moons
- Main Characters and Character Analysis
- Themes and Motifs
- Plot Summary and Structure
- Literary Devices and Style
- Discussion Questions

Overview of Walk Two Moons

Walk Two Moons, written by Sharon Creech, is a powerful coming-of-age novel that explores themes of loss, identity, and family through the eyes of 13-year-old Salamanca Tree Hiddle. The story follows Sal as she embarks on a cross-country journey with her grandparents, paralleling the tale of her friend Phoebe Winterbottom. The novel intricately weaves Sal's narrative with the story of her mother's disappearance, creating a poignant exploration of grief and understanding. This section of the walk two moons study guide provides a concise synopsis and contextual background of the novel's setting, narrative style, and significance in young adult literature.

Author Background

Sharon Creech is an acclaimed American author known for her contributions to children's and young adult literature. Her writing often addresses complex emotional themes through accessible language and engaging storytelling. Walk Two Moons, which won the Newbery Medal in 1995, remains one of her most celebrated works.

Historical and Cultural Context

The novel is set in the 1990s and incorporates elements of Native American culture, particularly drawing upon Sal's heritage. Understanding these cultural references enriches readers' appreciation of the novel's depth and the protagonist's identity struggles.

Main Characters and Character Analysis

The characters in *Walk Two Moons* are richly developed, each contributing to the novel's exploration of human emotions and relationships. This section of the *walk two moons* study guide examines the primary and secondary characters, their motivations, growth, and symbolic roles.

Salamanca Tree Hiddle

Sal is the novel's narrator and protagonist, whose journey of self-discovery forms the heart of the story. Her complex emotions regarding her mother's absence and her evolving understanding of family are central to the narrative.

Phoebe Winterbottom

Phoebe serves as a foil to Sal, with her own mysteries and family troubles. Her character adds depth to the themes of perception and reality, as well as the impact of secrets.

Sal's Parents and Grandparents

Sal's parents play crucial roles, especially her mother, whose disappearance drives much of the plot. The grandparents provide stability and wisdom, guiding Sal through her emotional journey.

Themes and Motifs

Understanding the primary themes and recurring motifs in *Walk Two Moons* is essential for a comprehensive study. This section analyzes the novel's exploration of grief, identity, empathy, and the healing power of stories.

Grief and Loss

Grief is the novel's central theme, portrayed through Sal's processing of her mother's departure and death. The story sensitively depicts how different characters cope with loss.

Identity and Self-Discovery

Sal's journey is also one of finding her own identity, particularly through her connection to her Native American heritage and her understanding of family dynamics.

Empathy and Understanding

The title itself refers to the idea of empathy—"walk two moons in someone else's shoes"—highlighting the importance of seeing the world from others' perspectives.

Nature and Journey Motif

The physical journey mirrors the emotional one, with nature imagery and travel symbolizing growth and change.

Plot Summary and Structure

This section provides a detailed summary of *Walk Two Moons*, outlining the dual narrative structure and key plot points. Understanding the novel's pacing and chapter organization is vital for grasping its thematic development.

Dual Narrative Technique

The novel alternates between Sal's present-day road trip and the story of Phoebe's family mystery, creating a layered storytelling approach that enhances suspense and emotional impact.

Key Plot Events

1. Sal's departure on a road trip with her grandparents
2. Introduction to Phoebe and her mysterious experiences
3. Revelations about Sal's mother's fate
4. Sal's emotional growth and acceptance
5. Resolution and return home

Literary Devices and Style

Sharon Creech employs various literary techniques that enrich *Walk Two Moons'* narrative and themes. This section explores the author's use of language, symbolism, and narrative voice.

Symbolism

Symbols such as the moon, the tree, and the road trip represent deeper themes of change, growth, and connection.

Narrative Voice

Sal's first-person narration provides intimacy and authenticity, allowing readers to experience her emotional journey firsthand.

Use of Flashbacks

Flashbacks are used effectively to reveal backstory and deepen character development without disrupting the main narrative.

Discussion Questions

To facilitate critical thinking and class discussions, this *walk two moons* study guide offers thought-provoking questions that cover character motivations, thematic elements, and plot interpretation.

- How does Sal's understanding of her mother change throughout the novel?
- In what ways do Phoebe's experiences complement or contrast with Sal's?
- What role does the journey play in Sal's emotional development?
- How does Sharon Creech use symbolism to enhance the story's themes?
- What is the significance of the novel's title?

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the main themes explored in 'Walk Two Moons' by

Sharon Creech?

The main themes in 'Walk Two Moons' include identity, grief and loss, family relationships, and the journey of self-discovery.

Who is the protagonist of 'Walk Two Moons' and what is her journey about?

The protagonist is Salamanca Tree Hiddle, a thirteen-year-old girl who embarks on a road trip to find her mother, during which she reflects on her own experiences and family history.

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

The title refers to the saying, 'Don't judge a man until you've walked two moons in his moccasins,' emphasizing empathy and understanding others' perspectives, a key message in the novel.

What role does Sal's relationship with her grandparents play in the novel?

Sal's grandparents provide her with love, support, and wisdom, helping her cope with her mother's absence and guiding her through her emotional journey.

How does Sharon Creech use storytelling within the novel?

Creech uses a story-within-a-story technique, as Sal narrates Phoebe's story alongside her own, allowing themes to intertwine and deepen the narrative.

What significant events lead to Sal's emotional growth throughout 'Walk Two Moons'?

Key events include Sal's cross-country trip, learning about her mother's struggles, the tragic revelation about her mother's fate, and understanding Phoebe's family challenges, all contributing to her emotional maturity.

Additional Resources

1. The Watsons Go to Birmingham - 1963 by Christopher Paul Curtis

This historical fiction novel follows the Watson family as they travel from Flint, Michigan, to Birmingham, Alabama, during a pivotal moment in the Civil Rights Movement. Like *Walk Two Moons*, it explores themes of family, identity, and coping with difficult truths. The story combines humor and heartache, providing a rich context for discussions about history and personal growth.

2. Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson

This classic novel centers on the friendship between two children, Jess and Leslie, who create a magical kingdom called Terabithia. It addresses themes of loss, imagination, and coming of age,

similar to the emotional depth found in **Walk Two Moons**. The book is often used in study guides to explore grief and healing through storytelling.

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

This heartwarming story follows a young girl named Opal who adopts a stray dog, Winn-Dixie, and makes new friends in her small town. Themes of loneliness, friendship, and acceptance resonate with those in **Walk Two Moons**. It's a great companion read for understanding character development and community.

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

This novel tells the story of Melody, a girl with cerebral palsy who cannot speak but has a brilliant mind. The book explores themes of empathy, communication, and overcoming obstacles, echoing the emotional insight and personal struggles found in **Walk Two Moons**. It encourages readers to understand different perspectives and challenges.

5. *Holes* by Louis Sachar

A multi-layered story about a boy named Stanley Yelnats who is sent to a juvenile detention camp where he uncovers family secrets and a historical mystery. Like **Walk Two Moons**, it features themes of fate, family history, and self-discovery. The novel's complex plot and character growth make it a popular choice for study guides.

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

Set in the South during the 1960s, this novel follows a young girl named Lily who escapes her troubled home and finds solace with a group of strong women beekeepers. Themes of loss, motherhood, and racial tension align with the emotional and cultural exploration in **Walk Two Moons**. It's a powerful story about healing and identity.

7. *Rules* by Cynthia Lord

This story focuses on a young girl named Catherine who tries to balance her desire for a normal life with having a brother who has autism. The novel deals with family dynamics, acceptance, and personal growth similar to **Walk Two Moons**. It offers insight into understanding differences and compassion.

8. *Flora & Ulysses* by Kate DiCamillo

A whimsical tale about a girl named Flora and a superhero squirrel named Ulysses, blending humor with themes of hope, family, and resilience. The quirky narrative style and emotional depth provide a lighter but meaningful complement to **Walk Two Moons**. It's ideal for discussions about coping with change and friendship.

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

This coming-of-age story follows a boy named Billy and his two hunting dogs in the Ozarks, exploring themes of loyalty, courage, and loss. Like **Walk Two Moons**, it delves into the bonds between humans and animals and the pain and growth that come with loss. The book's emotional resonance makes it a staple for study and reflection.

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