

# **Literature Unit – Hokey Pokey by Jerry Spinelli**

This unit provides an array of experiences. Common Core Standards are addressed throughout the novel study.

- Vocabulary and Context Clues
- Before, During, and After Reading Activities
- Discussion questions
- Story elements
- Figurative language
- Literary devices
- Writing opportunities
- Writer’s Craft lessons
- Connections to Life Skills/Personal Growth, Art and Social Studies/Science

Includes:

- Teacher instructions
- Student pages
- Activities
- Answer Keys

Grades 5-7

## **Teacher Instructions**

THIS LESSON CONTAINS:

- Teacher instructions
- Before, During and After Reading activities
- Student pages
- Answer keys

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Student copies of novel
- Chart paper
- Computer access (for several activities)

## **NOTES...**

### **ON READING**

Begin the book as a whole class, reading aloud and pausing to reflect, clarify and discuss as needed. Spinelli's writing requires the use of inference and may be confusing to students at first. Work through the first few chapters together before releasing students to read in small groups or on their own. Model the process of "thinking aloud" to understand and use clues to figure out the references, characters, setting and action. Reading can move from read aloud to small group, partners, and then individual as appropriate for your students. Also consider a mixture of groupings to differentiate for students' needs.

As much as you want students to love the book, dive in and voraciously read, it is beneficial if you all reach the end of the novel at the same time.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

The discussion questions, activities and journal responses help build the foundation for the After-Reading Activities. Discussion questions do not include basic comprehension checks at the literal level. They are meant to work with a deeper understanding of the text and thinking skills.

### **ACTIVITIES**

There are more activities after each reading section in the beginning of the novel. You can move some to later points if necessary. The time required will depend on your students' prior experience with the skills. As the novel progresses, reading sections are longer, skills work lessens and there are more writing opportunities to make connections. The skills previously taught need to be carried forward and revisited. The character charts and figurative language chart should be growing throughout the novel. (Sound devices are included as figurative language in this unit. Terminology differs among many but these forms are generally included as such.) The many writer's craft notes and questions will help the students look at the novel through the eyes of a writer and bring awareness that carries over and serves to develop their own writing skills.

### **WRITER'S CRAFT**

Spinelli has great fun with language. A few of the features to discuss as you encounter them:

- Made-up compound words – discuss compound vs. affixes, these words often use various types of figurative language
- Sentence length – short and long controls speed of the storytelling (will return to this as the end of the text)
- Names – Snotsippers, Gappergums and more. Fun!
- More features of the Writer's Craft will be discussed throughout and after completing the novel.

Helpful items to have available:

List of character traits for students

Another class chart to have going is one where students can note amazing sentences that they find.

Mentor sentence ideas are drawn from the books of Jeff Anderson (<http://www.writeguy.net>) – great to have as a reference.

### **BEFORE-READING:**

1. Open with a whole class discussion. Make a T-chart on chart paper (or electronically and print) to record student responses.

- What would your life be like without adults? Pros/cons

2. Then move to a small group discussion:

- What is the perfect kids world?
- Generate a list of things/places in this ideal kids' land.

Students should create a list as a group before sharing with the class. Return to these later as you read the novel to see if they have listed some of the same ideas that the author has used.

3. Meet the Author - <http://www.jerryspinelli.com> Explore his website. Read through the FAQs and his Bio. [whole or small group]

- What do you think you have in common with him?
- What sense can you get of his personality?
- What do you think it would be like to hang out with him for a day?

At the end of book – return to the author website. What tidbits appeared in the novel?

### **WORD WORK**

During read alouds use the think aloud strategy to help students understand unfamiliar words. “Inside/Outside”, looking inside at word parts and outside at context, will help with many words. While most of our vocabulary is built through using context, explicit instruction with vocabulary and word parts is also an important part of moving new words from a general understanding into the realm of “owning” the word and being able to use it in one’s own expression.

Following is a list of vocabulary words to teach with the novel. These words were chosen due to repeated use within the novel or because of their general usefulness and word power. They are divided into three sets, each one to be the focus for about a week. Depending upon students’ level and needs, you may choose to add or delete from these lists.

In addition to the word lists, this unit includes a student page to practice use of context clues to figure out the meaning of unknown words. The list of words used is included below. You may want to demonstrate the strategy with several of the words as you encounter them in the book in class and leave the rest for student practice. These words tend to be less useful or common so will offer genuine practice with this skill.

**SET 1** – beginning to page 71

1. page 12 monumental,
2. page 14-churn
3. page 21 veer
4. page 24 barren
5. page 30 mount (n)
6. page 30 parched
7. page 35 smirks
8. page 36 posse
9. page 39 runt
10. page 53 pandemonium
11. page 54 mortified
12. page 65 dismissively

**SET 2** – page 72-154

1. page 73 winced
2. page 73 delirious
3. page 82 mulls
4. page 94 frenzy
5. page 113 sullen
6. page 117 pervade
7. page 143 atrocities
8. page 143 reverent/reverence (206)
9. page 144 disinter
10. page 154 perceive
11. page 154 mesmerize

**SET 3** – pages 164-end

1. page 180 provoke
2. page 183 compelled
3. page 206 speculation
4. page 206 controversy
5. page 213 unsavvy
6. page 213 arrogance
7. page 223 penetrate
8. page 233 desecrated
9. page 237 encapsulated
10. page 262 bogs,
11. page 262 contorted
12. page 263 receding

## **CONTEXT CLUES** – student page “Use the Clues”

1. p. 12 homing in on
2. p. 13 tinged
3. p. 31 emitting
4. p. 33 flouncing
5. p. 34 dovetailing
6. p. 41 ditch (slang)
7. p. 54 disperse
8. p. 81 futile
9. p. 115 façade
10. p. 156 befuddlement
11. p. 175 flummoxed
12. p. 200 cowering

## **Extension Opportunities for prefix lessons or reviews:**

Teach/review *dis* prefix:

- p.30 dismount
- p. 65 dismissive
- p. 144 disinter

Teach/review *de* prefix:

- p. 109 de happen
- p. 110 de loop,
- p. 155 de capitating,
- p. 233 de secrete

Teach/review *counter* prefix:

- p. 210 counterpoke, countersneer

## **DURING READING - ACTIVITY GUIDE**

### **Introduce Vocabulary Set 1 –**

Review words with brief activities daily prior to assessing mastery as appropriate to student needs.

### **Let's begin reading!**

As you get started (page by page):

- What do you think the title means?
- Initial quotes – what do you think they mean?
- “What is Hokey Pokey?” Think about the four answers to the question and watch for them in the book.
- Map – explore the places together

## **Read pages 3-10 (Read Aloud & Think Aloud)**

### Night

p3 – Use think aloud strategy to help students infer that the stars are playing in the sky.

### Today

Read aloud first to get a general understanding of what is happening.

The Reader meets Jack, the main character.

Conflict is introduced – girl stole his bike

### **WRITER'S CRAFT:**

Reread the same pages to look deeper – read as a writer. Ask, “What kinds of things do you notice from these first two chapters about how the author writes?”

- Students will probably notice that the author has made up words, but if not, help to bring it to their attention. Begin a class list of author's made up words – (moonmoonlaugh, snowfireball, highnight, starborn, Scramjet, plumspun, sneakerskiis, dropflopping, hoprocks) What do they notice about these words? (compound) This is a great spot to review what compound words are. Some actual compound words in this section are: ponytail, baseball, thistledown, dreamland.

**Class chart:**  
Writer's Craft  
- Author's  
made up  
words

- Ask, “Does it create a problem for the reader's comprehension when the author makes up words?” (Compounds are usually easily understood)
- “Why do you think he does this?”
- “Keep an eye out for these as you read, and when you notice interesting examples, add them to the chart.”
- Notice the great images the author creates – (we will come back to these as figurative language) For now, appreciate them and contrast them to the average everyday way we might say them.
  - P7 - the bubble from the stars landing on Jack's nose and whispering to him – what does this mean? (vs. He heard a message.)
  - P9 – “the thump of the sun bumping the underside of the horizon” (vs. The sun was coming up.)

### **FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE:**

- Introduce onomatopoeia. Decide how much you need to do based on your students' knowledge of this sound device.
- There are a number of songs entitled “Onomatopoeia”. Some versions that are fun for the classroom are by Mindy Bauer (also You Tube video), Funky Mama, Allister and the Nightlight, Peter McCory (very young kids), possibly Todd Rungren.
- There are also resources available on Teacher Tube:
  - scene from Batman TV show (fight scene with comic type sound words )  
[http://www1.teachertube.com/viewVideo.php?title=1960s Batman Fight Scene Onomatopoeia&video\\_id=96878](http://www1.teachertube.com/viewVideo.php?title=1960s_Batman_Fight_Scene_Onomatopoeia&video_id=96878)

- This visual shows only sound words  
[http://teachertube.com/viewVideo.php?title=onomatopoeia&video\\_id=197424](http://teachertube.com/viewVideo.php?title=onomatopoeia&video_id=197424)
- Student page - understand, examine, and practice onomatopoeia

## **Read pages 11-20 (Read Aloud & Think Aloud)**

Continue reading aloud and discussing as a whole group.

### A Small Brown Bird

The beginning sentence may confuse students as there is no subject. Model clarification using the think aloud process. Students should discover that the subject is at the end of page 10. Here is another instance when the end of one chapter begins the next, as Night led into Jack.

### Destroyer

“I wonder what...” and make predictions:

- What kind of character is he?
- What does “Today is the day” mean?
- Why does he need a clothespin?

### Gorilla Hill

- What are some qualities of friendship that you see here?
- Why do you think there is a conflict between this boy and this girl?

Students should notice the onomatopoeia. Enjoy the sensory language and visualize the scene.

## **STORY ELEMENTS**

### • Setting

What do you know about this place? (You may want to refer back to the map as the locations are named in this chapter.)

What is different? How is it different from your world? (Dreams become a physical thing. From where they sleep it appears they don't have homes and families.)

### • Characters:

Students have now met Jack, Dusty, LaJo and Destroyer. Start the character charts either as a whole class on chart paper, or use student pages with the wheels. Start to record notes about the characters as you learn more about them through their actions and speech. Demonstrate how to identify character traits by using textual evidence.

**Class or student charts: characters**

## **FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE**

### • Alliteration

Introduce alliteration if your students are not familiar with it. Use the student page to look at examples, consider why a writer chooses to use alliteration and practice using it.

## WRITER'S CRAFT

Mentor Sentence: Using a mentor sentence can inspire students to push themselves into more advanced writing techniques. By examining the author's sentence and then using it as a model, students will surprise themselves with what they can do. Initially, use more of the original sentence and have them change pieces of it. As they gain confidence, they will use the sentence structure and features and be able to create an entirely new sentence. (If you prefer a simpler sentence or have specific conventions or grammar elements that you want to do with your class, then just choose a different sentence that displays the features you want to work with.)

- Display the sentence on the board. Ask the students to examine it and tell you what they notice about it. After you have done this a few times, they will notice many things. Initially, they may need to be “steered.” Work with whatever they give you.

Page 20 – “Stunned, silent, the boys begin their grim descent.”

- Some things to notice are:
  - Beginning capital, ending period
  - Commas – Ask, “How/why are they used?”
  - Alliteration – there are 2 examples in this sentence
  - The words telling how (stunned, silent) are in the beginning. “Why?” We might usually say it “The boys are stunned and silent as they begin their grim descent.” They should realize that there is a dramatic effect putting them first.
  - Possible vocabulary to notice/discuss: grim, descent
- Once you have examined the sentence, it's time to use it as a model. You can choose which features you would like them to include. You might ask them to write a sentence about someone going somewhere and use two words telling how they are going in the beginning of the sentence. Adding alliteration would be excellent.
- First, guide them through the process by writing one as a class. Work with the elements that you would like them to use.
- Then, give the students a few minutes to create their sentence. If any are struggling, give them a frame such as “\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, the boys begin \_\_\_\_\_.”
- Monitor and check as each one finishes their sentence. If commas are missing, prompt them to add them. Share some of the sentences and celebrate the amazing writing.

- It is beneficial to go ahead and do a short piece of writing immediately after practicing with a mentor sentence. Provide a journal prompt, do a quick write or use with another piece of writing. After writing, have students check to see if they have used the construction/sentence feature they practiced. If not, they should revise or add to include it.
- In future pieces of writing, watch for and celebrate students' use of this construction. Also look for opportunities where students might revise for this.

## **Read 21-33 (continue read aloud)**

### Jubilee

In this chapter you meet the girl. It begins with references to the bike with *herd* and *beast*. Students should infer that the bikes are like horses in this place. "Did you ever pretend your bike was a horse?"

To help them with these references throughout the book, generate a list of words that refer to horses. (These are words appear later in the novel: mustang, nag, stallion, mount, saddle, bridle, steed, stirrup, buck, bronc, trot, gallop, canter, flanks, mare, roping, lasso, thoroughbred.)

### Amigos

This chapter's confrontation between Jack and his friends provides a deeper understanding of the characters. Add to the charts.

### Destroyer

This chapter returns to Destroyer. Refer back to page 13-14 if needed.

This chapter provides more information on setting. If you would like to bring in irony, use the reference to the bulldozer scoop as a cradle.

- "What do you think Destroyer is talking about when he refers to 'The Worst Thing That Ever Happened'?"
- "How is this chapter both hysterical and heartbreaking?"

### Jack

More great character info.

## **WORD WORK / WRITER'S CRAFT:**

There are many made up words in this chapter, including hyphenated compound words. It's a good time to mention that some compounds take that form.

## **LITERARY DEVICE:**

Flashback p29 – Introduce the term if students are unfamiliar with it.

"How do you know that this happened previously?" ("He remembers..." and verb tense changes.)

"What is the author's purpose for including the flashback?"

### STORY ELEMENTS:

Character – Add Jubilee to the character chart. Add information about the Amigos and Destroyer.

### FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE:

Simile: Introduce similes if students are unfamiliar with them.

- Use the student page to practice.
- Start a class chart and encourage students to add examples of figurative language from the novel to share with the class.

Class chart:  
Figurative  
language

### **Read pp34-43: (option to change to small group/partner reading )**

Encourage students to discuss and ask each other when confused or when they find something interesting.

### Amigos

Several of the names of age groups (Snotsippers) are humorous, and more made up compounds.

### LaJo

### LITERARY DEVICE:

- Foreshadowing (p39) This is a very obvious example of foreshadowing. Introduce it if your students are unfamiliar with it. Why does an author use it?

### STORY ELEMENTS:

- Setting: As LaJo gives the Newbie a tour of Hokey Pokey, he names and explains the purpose of some of the places.

### Jubilee

Here is an example of a one-word chapter.

After reading, discuss:

- Predict: What did LaJo see? What could it mean?
- Discuss how some of the places fill the needs that children have.
- Who do you think made the rules of the land? Why?
- Why do you think there is a law that says you have to mentor a Newbie who lands at your feet outside Tattooer?
- What is the purpose of the one word chapter?
- What have you learned about Dusty and LaJo? Add to the character chart.

### WRITING: Journal Response

Do you feel you have a personal responsibility to care for younger children? Why or why not? How do you do it?

## **Read 44-53 (partner read)**

### Destroyer

The reader finds out why Destroyer behaves the way he does. Students should recognize the use of flashback.

- Why does the author include this?
- Does this make you feel differently about the character?

### Jack

The character Kiki is introduced. Add information about Jack that you see from his interaction with Kiki.

### Jubilee

- What is her relationship to the other girls? (same as Jack's – leader)

## **FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE:**

Continue to record examples of figurative language that students identify.

## **STORY ELEMENTS**

Character: Add to charts

## **LITERARY DEVICES:**

### Narrative Point of View

Then use each of the three chapters in this section to examine the point of view. The author does something interesting here that you won't find in most books. Read the first few pages of each chapter and ask students to identify which type of narrative point of view the author uses. Watch for key words, such as *he/she* to indicate 3<sup>rd</sup> person, and also watch for instances of the author revealing what the characters are thinking or feeling to indicate objective, limited or omniscient. They will find that in each chapter, it is 3<sup>rd</sup> person limited as the reader learns the feelings and thoughts of the character named in the chapter title. Consider the effects of this format on the reader. Why might the author choose to do this?

Which viewpoint would you consider the book as a whole? (3<sup>rd</sup> omniscient)

## **Read 54-71 (partner read)**

### Destroyer

- What do you think the author is saying about fear?
- Why is the "exploder" different than the play weapons the other kids use?
- Why does he go to Snuggle Stop?

### LaJo

Reader finds out what he saw at the tracks with Jack. Check previous predictions.

### Jubilee

More setting information. Also her relationship with Albert tells about Jubilee.

## Jack

P67-68 “Suddenly he stops – that sound again. He turns. ‘Who whistled?’ They look at him like he’s goofy.”

- What’s happening? (He hears a whistle that others don’t hear. This is a more obscure example of foreshadowing.)
- How is Jack changing?

## **STORY ELEMENTS**

Conflict – Teach the types of conflict if your students are not familiar with them. Choose a method that works for your classroom. Here are a few links to You Tube videos. (always view first to make sure link is working and content has not been altered) There are many resources on the web.

- Teacher narrated video explaining the types with examples and questions to connect to students. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsflXsx8lQI>
  - man vs society <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RSO9paxHf8>
  - man vs. nature <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-hiWgSZUZNO>
  - man vs. self  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKGcR2Cnd9w&NR=1&feature=endscreen>
- Activity: Post 4 pieces of chart paper, each with a title of a film that students are likely to have seen, in the corners of the room. Have students go to one of the corners to a movie that they have seen. With the group that forms there, students identify the types of conflicts in the movie and list them on the chart paper. Share with the class when completed.
  - Find examples from story.
    - man vs man – (Jack and Jubilee)
    - man vs society – (Destroyer vs other kids)
    - man vs nature – (Henry vs stinky sock pile, later can recognize maturation process and Jack but not apparent at this point)
    - man vs self – (Jubilee’s choice between her brother and the bike, Jack’s changing, LaJo’s struggle to look at himself, fears of each character)

## **FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE**

Metaphor: Introduce this form of figurative language if your students are not familiar with it. Contrast it with similes. Use the student page to help them understand the difference between similes and metaphors. Students work in small groups to locate the metaphors on pages 55, 66, and 71, and explain what they mean.

## **VOCABULARY:**

- SET 1 Vocabulary assessment is desired
- Introduce new vocabulary from SET 2

## **Read 72-86 (choose format)**

### Jubilee

#### Amigos

- This chapter is intense and emotional. How does the author achieve that?
- What do you think the eyeball tattoo means?
- How do you know that the two have a deep friendship?

Add to the character charts.

#### Destroyer

Inside his mind, reader sees the fear he creates. Also should see that he imagines he has a group of lion friends. What does it show about him?

#### Jack

- Reader meets Lopez. Why do you think that Jack plays with the little girl but hates the big girl?
- Something inside of Jack is changing. What kind of conflict is this?
- What do you think the train reference is about?

### **WRITER'S CRAFT:**

Mentor Sentence: Display the sentence and, as before, ask students to read it over several times and consider what is special or what they notice about this sentence. Follow the procedure laid out for the previous mentor sentence.

“His tattoo, the open eye, identical to that of every other kid in Hokey Pokey, is down to a couple of eyelashes and a gray smudge where the sharp dime of the eyeball used to be.” (p. 86)

Things to notice:

- Interrupter phrases that identify and elaborate on the item before them (tattoo) are set off by commas.
- Capitals for proper noun
- Descriptive details, image of dime

As before, do an imitation using the format of the mentor sentence as a class. Then ask students to try one on their own. Share and celebrate!

Another option - If you want to teach dialogue punctuation, you might want to use this sentence: “Look,” he says, stuffing excitement into his voice, “*puppies!*” (p. 41) This skill will be used in the narrative in the After Reading Activities.

## **Read 87-103**

### Amigos

Shows the friendship of the 3 boys. The author uses great detail and creates a very visual scene by describing the body language of Dusty and LaJo as they talk.

- Reread and examine their body language. What does it reveal?

### Jubilee/Jack chapters alternate

Jack deals with his inner conflict alone. Jubilee is confronted by her friend, Ana Mae.

- What is Jubilee's conflict?

## **WRITING:** Journal Response - Friendship

"This is what Jubilee loves most about bestfriendship: when something great happens to one, it happens to both." P92

Do you agree with this? Is the opposite also true – that when something awful happens to one, it happens to both? Have you ever experienced either of these? Describe a time that something like this happened to you.

## **FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE**

Personification – If students are not familiar with it, introduce it. Student page provides examples and practice.

## **Read 104- 120**

### Destroyer

- How does he choose his targets? Why?

### Jack

- Why is The Kid pointing at him?
- What do you think Jack understands when he shouts, "NOOOOOOOO!"?

### Jubilee/Jack/Jubilee

- What do you think is in the Forbidden Hut?
- Why do you think Jubilee suddenly decided to try to break into it?

### Jack/Amigos

- Jack makes several decisions to bring his life back to normal. What were they?
- How do you explain LaJo's behavior?

Update the character charts.

Add figurative language to the chart as students notice examples.

## **Read 121-140**

### Destroyer/Jubilee

- Compare and contrast the conflicts of Destroyer and Jubilee.

### **WRITING:** Journal Response

Write about a time when you had an inner dialogue like Destroyer did when he wanted to take the bike but was afraid.

## **Read 141-163**

### Jack

- What do you think it means when Jack cannot control Scramjet?

### Jubilee

### Hokey Pokey Man

### Jack

### Amigos

### The Story

On page 162 it says, “Though little kids are horrified at the way The Story ends, at the same time they love it. It satisfies something deep inside them. If they had to use a word they might say *delicious*. But in fact it sweetens them beyond the belly, beyond the reach even of the Hokey Pokey Man.”

- How does The Story both horrify and satisfy the little kids?

### **FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE:**

Extension: Depending on student level you may want to also teach - hyperbole (examples in the novel can be found on pages 162,143,141, 25, 273)

- Assonance and Consonance – student page “Listen to the Writing” provided. This is for older or more advanced students. The page practices identifying all 4 sound devices covered.
- Activity: With a partner, students create a word cloud using figurative language. Use <http://www.wordle.net/> or a similar site.

Students should choose a topic such as “snow” or “the 4<sup>th</sup> of July,” something that will inspire use of figurative language. Follow the instructions on the site to create the topic word/phrase much larger than the other words. Also check instructions for how to keep the words of the phrases together in one line. Then create the cloud using words or phrases that use similes, metaphors, personification, onomatopoeia, alliteration, (hyperbole, assonance, consonance) related to the topic. This is a fun way for students to practice and an easy way for teachers to evaluate their ability to use these devices. Just set your requirements as to number of items, etc. as appropriate to your students.

- Differentiation: A simpler version would be to assign a single type of figurative language to be used.

### **VOCABULARY:**

- SET 2 Vocabulary assessment if desired
- Introduce new vocabulary from SET 3

## **Read p164-182**

### Amigos

In this chapter, the parts of The Story that the Big Kids hear are revealed and LaJo is able to match it up with what is happening to Jack.

### Jack

Jack is seeing the world with new eyes and does not engage Jubilee when she provokes him.

- How is he changing?

### Jubilee

- How do you think the bike got “there”?
- Why is Ana Mae panicked?

### Kiki

- Why does Jack decide to change their routine and scold him?
- What does this chapter say about the nature of love?

### Jack

Students should recognize the flashback on page180.

### **WRITING** - Journal Response:

At the end of the chapter, p182, Jack “knows that she has shaped his life, given him something to grow against.”

Do you think that having a challenge such as this makes us grow into better people? What are some examples from real life?

Continue to add examples that students have found to the figurative language chart.

## **Read 183-203**

### Ana Mae

- Why do you think she is scared of the Amigos?

### Jubilee

- What is she afraid of?

### Lopez/ Albert, Destroyer

- What role does Jack play with the little kids?
- What does he do for them?
- Why is Jubilee angry after he helps Albert?

### **WRITING** - Opinion

State and support your opinion in response to the quote.

(p203) “If you believe it, it happens. If you don’t, it doesn’t. When you believe him, you put your own power in his hands.”

Do you think this is true? Support your answer with real life experiences.

### **Read 204-223**

#### Jack

- Where does play cross the line into serious? Why?
- What character traits does Jack display here? (playfulness, self-control, etc)
- How is it that Jack knows everything and at the same time knows nothing?

#### Amigos

- Why is it OK for Jack to know he’s leaving but not the others? (p212)

#### Jack

- What character changes do you see in the last 3 chapters? Record them along with evidence in the character charts.

### **WRITER’S CRAFT**

Mentor Sentence - Display the sentence and, as before, ask students to read it over several times and consider what is special or what they notice about this sentence. Use the same procedure as earlier.

“They find the herd milling in the shadow of the Plains’ only tree, a black jagged monstrosity clawing at the sky like upchucked evil.” (p212)

Things to notice in this sentence:

- plural possessive,
- a description of the tree at the end of the sentence following the comma (adjective clause),
- metaphor,
- simile,
- great descriptive words.

As before, use the sentence as a model to write a similar sentence as a class first.

“What can we describe? What could it be compared to? What images and describing words could we use?” [They find the \_\_\_\_ (doing something) (where - you could use the

shadow idea), describe the place or object with an adjective clause following a comma to end the sentence. Use either a metaphor or a simile.] As before, using more from the model provides scaffolding for those who need it.

Then ask students to try to write a sentence of their own. Decide how much you want to focus on – such as “Write your own sentence using a describing/adjective clause at the end of the sentence and create an image using a metaphor or simile in your image.” Partners could provide ideas and help. Help them through the process; making sure the comma is used. Share and applaud any great metaphors or similes.

## **Read 224-250**

### Amigos, Girl/Jubilee

#### **WRITER’S CRAFT:**

P229-230 has a different style of writing. What do you notice? What effect does it have? (short sentences and fragments, slow motion effect shows the dazed state of mind, character changing. Kind of reverence for girl and groundhog.)

### Amigos

- Why do you think that it is so hard for Dusty and LaJo to accept the idea of Jack leaving?
- Great metaphor at the end on p232 – Can you create a similar one?

### Jack

- Why do you think Jubilee releases Jack?

### Pockets

- Why do you think Jack gave away his treasures?

### Jack, Jubilee

- How are they different towards one another? Look at what they do and say.
- How and why has their relationship changed?
- P243-244 Every time the flower patch is mentioned previously, the flowers are trampled without notice. Now when Jack sees it, he notices one last flower. He marvels at it and decides to leave it standing. What does this mean?
- Jack and Jubilee’s conversation seems to alternate between serious and humorous – why? Is this true to life?

#### **STORY ELEMENTS:**

##### Conflict and Character

Compare and contrast the ways several characters react to Jack leaving. What does it show about each one? How does conflict change a person? Add traits to the character charts.

## **Read 251-264**

### Jack

- Why does Jack feel the need to ride up Gorilla Hill? (notice this happens at night when no one sees him, so it is not to impress others)

### LaJo

- In this chapter, LaJo does a number of things “for no good reason.” What do you think the reason is?

### Train

**WRITING** - Journal response (or Discussion):

Jack is both excited and terrified. We have all felt this way at some time in our lives. Write about/discuss how you deal with or have dealt with these mixed feelings to help yourself get through an experience.

## **Read 265-end**

### Not Hokey Pokey/Tomorrow/Jack

Students will enjoy reading this chapter!

- How many connections to Hokey Pokey can be found in this chapter?

### Hokey Pokey/Night

References to constellations appear again.

- What is the purpose of this seemingly crazy chapter?

### Today/Jubilee

The story ends as it started....

- Is this a satisfying ending? Why or why not?
- On Page 163, the author writes, “The Story ends not with a period, but with a question mark. It’s as if there’s an ending beyond the ending...” How does this compare to the author’s story?

**VOCABULARY** assessment SET 3 if desired

## **AFTER-READING ACTIVITIES**

Choose from the following to complete your novel study.

### **STORY ELEMENTS:**

Characterization – student page – round/flat, dynamic/static characters

### **THEMES**

Discuss some possible themes. Themes are statements or messages from the author that could apply to anyone, anywhere, anytime. Some topics to consider in making

theme statements are: fear (32, 55-56, 196-203, 221-223), childhood, bullies, friendship, growing up, belief as power, reverence, and responsibility.

Students should work in theme groups to find support from the text as to the development of that theme in the novel. Present the theme statement and evidence to the class.

### **LITERARY DEVICES - Symbolism:**

Explore the meaning of some of these ideas. Small groups can choose one to examine and share their interpretation with the class. Their ideas should be supported by examples in the text. Some page references are provided.

- shadows 151, 192, 205, 219, 249, 250
- thunder and Mountains 107, 192, 171, 263
- bikes (consider fossil, herd, role in novel)
- little brown bird 11, 13, 86, 105, 228, 250
- eye tattoo
- importance of names 203, 252, 254
- circles 192, 248

### **DRAMATIZATION**

Choose a favorite scene/chapter to dramatize (small group).

### **WRITER'S CRAFT – things to discuss....**

- What “rules” (conventions of writing) has the author broken in the writing of this book? (Non-words, incomplete sentences, one word chapter, etc) Is that OK? What effect does it have on you as a reader?
- Short sentences vs. long sentences: Reread the chapter entitled “Gorilla Hill” on pages 18-20. Notice how the author uses sentence length to speed up and slow down the action. Long sentences flow faster and speed up the action. Short sentences use many periods that stop and slow down the action. How does this affect the reader?
- Chapter endings flow into the next chapter: Look at how some of the ending thoughts continue into the next chapter. Also notice how some of the chapter titles are actually the subject of the first sentence of the chapter.
- The author uses present tense verbs to tell the story, with the exception of the flashbacks. Pull several novels from the bookshelf – what verb tense is used to tell the story? (most use past) Change an action paragraph from present to past tense – what effect does it have? [grammar – verb practice]
- Look at Spinelli’s use of vivid verbs, images, dialect, etc. Ask students what they liked most about his writing style.
- Look for figurative Language in the “Not Hokey Pokey” chapter. How does this compare to the Hokey Pokey chapters?

## WRITING OPPORTUNITIES:

- Character sketch
- Informational Essay –  
What is involved in becoming mature? Responsibility? Losing fears? Reverence? Values changing? Caring for others? Courage?  
Examine the question using the characters and model the format and writing of an informational essay. Then students write an informational essay on this question with examples from life to support their ideas.
- Personal narrative: Write about a time when something happened in your life that caused you to move on mentally and emotionally, to grow up a little. Think about what challenge you faced and how it affected you.  
(Consider making one or two previous features from mentor sentences “targeted writing skills.”)
- Poetry  
Reverence – moments like the one with the ground hog and Jack looking at the flower. Examine an object with “new eyes.” Write a free verse poem. Use made up compound words and figurative language. (206, 227, 229-230) (An excellent resource for poetry is Nancy Atwell’s Naming the World.)

## EXTENSIONS:

Science/Social Studies:

Constellations – what are they? What is their origin? Purpose? Cultural differences? Choose one idea to explore and report on.

Life skills/Personal growth:

Do you think kids need challenges? New research shows that “grit” is a major trait of successful people. What is grit? How do you develop it? Do you have it?

Self-control, optimism, and curiosity are other traits of successful people.

<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~duckwort/> This site has some questionnaires that you may choose to use for students to self evaluate. It also has the character report card that KIPP schools are using to evaluate students on the character traits that have been shown to be important for success in life. This offers another opportunity for self-evaluation if your school does not do something similar.

You might consider sharing an excerpt from How Children Succeed by Tough if appropriate for your students’ comprehension level. It would be valuable to explore this idea and have students come up with their own projects or goals.

## Student Assessment

Here are some possible ideas to choose from. You could also pull items from the After-Reading Activities. If possible, provide options and allow some student choice within your parameters that will satisfy your objectives.

1. Theme: Write a theme statement and support it with several examples from the text.
2. Characterization: Create a “map” which shows the journey of one of the characters through the story. Mark different points on the map (conflicts) which cause the character to change. Map his/her traits as they develop and change through the story.
3. Figurative Language – Identify the types of figurative language used. Create a list from their class poster of examples they have found in the novel for them to identify.
3. Art/Descriptive writing: Draw your monster from your dream. Include color and details. Write a description of your monster. Be sure to use at least 3 different kinds of figurative language.
4. Art/Setting: Draw one of the places in Hokey Pokey – Why is this an essential part of childhood? How does it meet the needs of a child? Create a new place in Hokey Pokey and explain its meaningful connection to childhood. (see p115-117 tattooer for an example)
5. Creative writing with fictional narrative elements:  
Reread pp 7-10. Look at the kinds of plot elements that appear in this chapter. Knowing what you do about the character Jubilee, finish the chapter entitled “Jubilee.” Include a conflict, character actions, setting (where does she go?). Also, write using present tense, use dialogue and description. Choose some other features from the Writer’s Craft discussions.
6. Textual Evidence: The author indicates that Jubilee will be leaving Hokey Pokey. Who do you think will be next to leave after Jubilee? What evidence do you have for your choice? Consider Jack’s behavior and the traits he developed as a sign of maturity. Which other character do you think is developing these traits? Support your choice with evidence from the text.
7. Textual Evidence: How is the “hatred” Jack and Jubilee had different than Destroyer’s? How is it the same? Organize your ideas on a Venn Diagram. Write a compare/contrast paragraph using textual evidence to support your ideas.