

Homeless Bird

Kelly Davidson and Natasha Cooper – School not available

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| Grade Level (Req.): 6th-8th grade | Content Area (Req.): World Geography, Science, Mathematics, English/Reading, Music | Unit (Opt.): |
| Connections to Other Disciplines (Opt.): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science: Examine the animals mentioned in the story. Research the ecosystems and biomes of northern India. • Math: Population pyramids for various regions in India – is there an absence of females? Compare pyramids to those from other countries or regions. Explore the value of the rupee. • Music: When comparing contrasting urban and rural areas, imagine the sounds Koly could hear in each. Research Indian music and instruments. • Life Skills: Look up and create an Indian meal. Can they find recipes for specific items mentioned in the story? | | |
| Time Frame (Req.): 3-4 weeks | Goal (Req.): To use literature to learn about geography. | |
| | Objective (Req.): Students will use “Homeless Bird” to identify Indian geography and culture. Students will define vocabulary from the text. Students will locate important geographical places. | |
| Materials Needed (Req.): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline maps of India • Homeless Bird Journal and Graphic Organizer • Compare and Contrast Handouts • Wall maps and/or laminated desk maps of India; set of world atlases • Set of Homeless Bird by Gloria Whelen or one copy for teacher to read aloud • Squares of white paper to serve as quilt blocks; colored pencils, markers, and/or crayons • Vocabulary and Discussion questions | New Vocabulary (Opt.): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • | |
| Anticipatory Set/Introduction [Inquiry Question is required] (Req.): How does fiction describe India’s geography and culture? | | |
| Instructional Sequence/Procedure (Req.): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using an outline map of India, have the students locate and label the places mentioned in the story, “Homeless Bird”, set in India, these include: Delhi, Ganges River, Varanasi, Yamuna River, Vrindavan 2. Instruct the students to also check that their maps contain the important features of a map, such as the title, key, symbols, color, compass, and scale. 3. Pass out copies of “Homeless Bird” to students or read to the class from one copy. This is the story of Koly, a young girl in India whose parents arrange for her to marry a boy who is sick with tuberculosis. His family actually wants the dowry money so that they can take him to the holy waters of the Ganges River in hopes of curing him. Unfortunately, he dies and Koly is a widow. | | |

The story tells how she overcomes poverty and unhappiness.

4. Give the students copies of the graphic organizer and "Homeless Bird" Journal on which to record geographical, cultural, and vocabulary information presented in the story.
5. Have the students form reading/discussion groups, ideally of four students each. As each chapter is read, students should record appropriate vocabulary definitions and answers discussion questions. In addition, after each chapter in "Homeless Bird", each person in the group chooses one of the four perspectives (economic, geographic, historical or political) to incorporate when discussing the information that they have read. Using the graphic organizer, students write notes about the chapter from that particular perspective in social studies. If the students have not have prior experiences with reading for content perspectives, the teacher may want to discuss the process prior to beginning the reading/discussion groups. As they discuss the information, students continue to make notes on their own graphic organizer.
6. One theme throughout "Homeless Bird" is the embroidery work that Koly does. After each chapter, have each group turn in one quilt block portraying their favorite scene from the chapter. Quilt blocks should be neat and colored.
7. Give students time to examine maps of India. Koly lived in three unnamed villages throughout the story. Once before she was married, once she had married, and third at the end. Using their imaginations and clues from the text (how long Koly traveled, the terrain, farming practices, etc.) students should locate and label the three villages. Remember, a number of different answers will be correct. Students should then map out the path of Koly on their India maps.
8. Allow students to use their journal, graphic organizer, and map to compare and contrast rural regions and urban regions in the story. Have them think about Koly's opinions, the opinions of others, weather, activities, along with items from the resources mentioned above. Each student will need to turn in one compare and contrast handout.
9. Upon completing the book, all journals will be due. Also, have students combine and refine their graphic organizers. Provide students with a new copy of the graphic organizer, one per group, and instruct the group to write the main ideas on it. This copy is to be turned in for evaluation. Have each group present their ideas in a class discussion.
10. Beyond the Classroom: Have each students create a quilt block about his/her life. Display the blocks like a quilt for a class quilt decoration.
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Formative Evaluation (Req.): Class Participation

Assessment (Req.): Each student will develop a project to show what he/she has learned about India from "Homeless Bird". Several opinions are: Multimedia Presentation, Internet Field Trip, Diorama, Illustrated Book, Pop-Up Book. Obviously, the possibilities are endless. Use projects that you and your students can get excited about. Topics for individual projects could be: trains, music, quilts, fabrics, widows, cinema, arranged marriages, dowry system, caste system, weddings, funerals, Hinduism, regional food, child labor, Ganges, Krishna, etc. Other considerations: "Homeless Bird" Journal, Graphic Organizer,

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| | Compare and Contrast Handout, "Homeless Bird" Map. |
| <p>Iowa Core Curriculum Standards Used (Req.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geography, grade 6-8: Understand the use of geographic tools to locate and analyze information about people, places, and environments. • Geography, grade 6-8: Understand how geographic and human characteristics create culture and define regions. • • • • • • • | |
| <p>Common Core Curriculum Standards Used (Opt.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Standards for Literature, grade 6-12: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama develop over the course of a text and interact. • Speaking and Listening, grade 6-12: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacher-led) with diverse partners on specific grade level topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. • • • | |
| <p>NGS Standards Used (Req.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective • The physical and human characteristics of places • How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions • • • • • • • | |
| <p>Five Themes of Geography Used (Req.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location • Place • Movement • • | <p>School District Standards and Benchmarks (Opt.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • |
| <p>21st Century Universal Constructs (Opt.): Creativity, Collaboration</p> | |
| <p>Other Disciplinary Standards (Opt.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • | |

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Other Essential Information (Opt.):

Other Resources (Opt.):

- Michigan Schools: SCoPE – http://www.michigan.gov/scope/0%2C1607%2C7-155-13497_13503_13507-44026--%2C00.html
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Homeless Bird

by Kelly Davidson and Natasha Cooper

Chapter One Vocabulary

1. Sari
2. Tamarind Tree
3. Turmeric
4. Cinnamon
5. Cumin
6. Lotus
7. Brahman
8. Auspicious
9. Namaskar
10. Sandalwood Paste
11. Vermilion
12. Red Tikka Mark
13. Kohl
14. Kautuka
15. Choi
16. Petticoat
17. Marigold

Chapter One Discussion Questions

1. How old is Koly when the story begins?
2. How does Koly's father make a living?
3. How does Koly's mom get money for the family?
4. Explain the symbolic meaning of the lotus pod that Koly's mother embroiders on her Sari.
5. Explain what Koly constructs for her own dowry.
6. What does Koly's family have to sell to get enough money for the dowry and how does this hurt the family?
7. Describe, in addition to the money, the jewelry that is used for the dowry.
8. How do they decide the date and time of the wedding?
9. Why were Koly's parents pleased that the wedding would take the place at Hari's home?
10. What did Koly take with her to her marriage?
11. Explain how Koly described the Mehta's house.
12. How does Koly greet Mrs. Mehta?
13. Koly wants to see her future husband but his mother says she will not be able to. Koly is concerned she will not love him. How does Koly's mother respond?
14. What do they say will happen if the wedding doesn't take place at the assigned time?
15. Explain what Koly and Hari wear at the wedding.
16. How does the wedding ceremony end?
17. What food is cooked at the reception?
18. Why does Koly not get a coconut cake the day of her wedding?

19. What does Koly do with her silver earrings?

Chapter Two Vocabulary

1. Sass
2. Varanasi
3. Ganges River
4. Chandra
5. Sassur
6. Pyre
7. Charpoy
8. Neem Tree

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Chapter Two Discussion Questions

1. What does Mr. Mehta do for a living?
2. Explain the household tasks that Koly performs on a daily basis.
3. What do people bring Hari while he is sick?
4. Why are they going to take Hari to Varanasi?
5. Why does Hari think he will be lucky if he dies in Varanasi?
6. What does Chandra tell Koly about why the family allowed Hari to marry despite his sickness?
7. Why does Koly worry about becoming a widow?
8. How does Hari use his sickness as an advantage towards his parents?
9. Explain why killing a cow is a terrible deed in India.
10. Why does the healer (Bhagat) sprinkle leaves of the neem tree on Hari?

Chapter Three Vocabulary

1. Darshan
2. Wallahs
3. Rickshaw
4. Dal
5. Chapati
6. Camphor
7. Pilgrimage
8. Golden Temple of Vishvanath
9. Saffron
10. Sadhus
11. Ghat
12. Puja
13. Jains
14. Sikhs

Chapter Three Discussion Questions

1. What does Chandra have to do in order to share in the sight of the Ganges?
2. Why does Koly think the many urns on the train were inauspicious?
3. Why does Sassur give money to the beggars?
4. What does Koly notice about the streets in Varanasi?
5. What does Hari become amazed at when they enter Varanasi?
6. Mr. Lal gives Hari a small jug of water. What does Hari do and why is this significant?
7. What do they rub on Hari's chest?
8. What does Koly notice about the surroundings as they make their pilgrimage to the Golden Temple?
9. What does Koly notice about the inside of the temple?
10. What does Koly describe is happening along the water's edge?
11. How does Hari's condition change after floating in the Ganges?
12. What did they do to Hari's body after death?
13. What do they believe the scattering of Hari's ashes over the Ganges will do?
14. Why does Sass purchase a white cotton sari for Koly?

Chapter Four Vocabulary

1. Dung cakes
2. Holi celebration
3. Bandicoot
4. Monsoon
5. Krishna's birthday
6. Rabindranath Tagore
7. Gataka
8. Untouchables

Chapter Four Discussion Questions

1. How were things different at home after Hari's death?
2. What does Sass tell Koly about the untouchables?
3. What does Koly begin to do in order to comfort herself?
4. How does Koly learn how to read?
5. Describe what Koly daydreams about.
6. How does Koly explain the results of the monsoons?
7. Why would Koly make sure she never spilled salt?
8. What is Koly's favorite poem about?

Chapter Five Vocabulary

1. Tali
2. Pooris
3. Chutney

4. Sitar

Chapter Five Discussion Questions

1. What job does Chandra's future husband have?
2. How does Chandra respond when Koly asks her if she loves her future husband?
3. Why is Koly not able to help Chandra prepare for her wedding day?
4. Explain the food at the wedding celebration.

Chapter Six Pre-Reading Question

1. Is there something that has always been there for you? Something that can always cheer you up? (pet, toy, song, place, etc.) Explain your answer.

Chapter Six Vocabulary

1. Chula
2. Kurta Pajama
3. Maa
4. Baap
5. Shrine
6. Pariah
7. Bandicoot
8. Mynah Bird
9. Widow Sari

Chapter Six Discussion Questions

1. List the daily chores that Koly does now that Hari and Chandra are gone.
2. How did the dog and bandicoot help Koly?
3. Why can't Koly obtain her pension herself?

Chapter Seven Vocabulary

1. Ghee
2. Rupee
3. Muslin
4. Bangle
5. Okra
6. Impudent

Chapter Seven Discussion Questions

1. When Chandra returns home, what changes in her does Koly notice right away? Changes she learns of later?
2. List the funeral customs mentioned in the description of Sassur's funeral. What does each mean or stand for?
3. Name the items that Sass sold to the moneylender.
4. What caused Koly to give up her silver earrings? Why was this so significant?
5. What would it take for you to give up your "silver earrings" or item worth the most to you?
6. Why was the letter from Sass's brother so important?
7. What 'treat' did Sass have in mind for Koly on their way to Delhi?
8. Sass's demand for the rickshaw driver to "take us to the temple" was absurd. Why?
9. Describe Koly's reaction to the city once she had waited at the temple.
10. Koly was left with 47 rupees. Approximately how much is this in American dollars?
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Chapter Eight Vocabulary

1. Lord Krishna
2. Pittance
3. Govindji
4. Piety
5. Mustard Oil
6. Yamuna Rive
7. Curd
8. Tunic

Chapter Eight Discussion Questions

1. How does the elderly woman help Koly?
2. In your own words, retell the elderly woman's story.
3. Why does Koly resist contacting her family?
4. Koly is still unable to obtain her pension. Why?
5. Describe how Koly shows greed.
6. Why do you think Koly fears the man in the red shirt?
7. The rickshaw driver tells Koly that he cannot demand more money. In your own words, explain why.

Chapter Nine Vocabulary

1. Shikanji
2. Peepul Tree
3. Jasmine

Chapter Nine Discussion Questions

1. Mr. Govind gets very upset when jasmine flowers are delivered. Why?
2. Explain how Koly helped solve this dilemma.
3. Describe how Tamu and Koly eventually get their own bangles.
4. Why can't Raji read?
5. Why is Koly return favor to Raji so important?
6. Explain why the temple is called the "Hill of Govardham".
7. According to the widows, they have two opposing views of the wealthy woman that comes to visit them. Explain each view.

Chapter Ten Vocabulary

1. Phul Khana
2. Salwar Kameez
3. Skein
4. Deft(ly)
5. Bhang
6. Lassi
7. Tabla

Chapter Ten Discussion Questions

1. What new experiences does Koly have while traveling with Mrs. Devi?
2. Describe the events that lead to Mrs. Devi funding a widow house.
3. Why does Koly decide to stitch a heron?
4. Koly said that working was great because she was paid to do what she loved best, embroider. What type of job would mean this much to you? Why?
5. How does Koly end up getting Maa Kamala to let her go to Mala's house?
6. What about Mala's house does Koly find exciting?
7. What does she find scary or frightening?

Chapter Eleven Discussion Questions

1. Name three crops that Raji planted at his farm.
2. Why does Raji say he wants to marry Koly?
3. What reasons does Koly give for begin an unworthy bride?
4. Describe Raji's letters to Koly. What type of things does he tell her about?
5. What important items does Koly put on her fourth quilt? Why?
6. Raji quotes in one of his letters, "He who plants a tree will have his reward". What does this mean to you?
7. At the end of the story, Koly plans to embroider a sari for Mrs. Devi with something from a Tagore poem. She chooses the homeless bird. How does the themes of homeless bird relate to Koly's life?

Compare and Contrast

| | Attributes | Urban | Rural |
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| Attribute 1 | | | |
| Attribute 2 | | | |
| Attribute 3 | | | |
| Attribute 4 | | | |
| Attribute 5 | | | |

Graphic Organizer for *Homeless Bird*

| Chapter | Economic | Geographic | Political | Historical |
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