

An Instructional Manual to accompany Natalie Babbitt's «Tuck Everlasting»

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This manual is meant to facilitate philosophical discussion concerning the children's fantasy novel *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt (1975, Farrar, Straus & Girous, Inc.). The discussion plans and exercises are written for intermediate aged students but, with modification, can be used with older students. The novel is full of «big ideas» and not all of them are addressed by this manual. Nor will all the ideas in the manual come up in discussions. As always, the teacher knows best what the students need and what works best for their class. Some of the discussion plans and exercises were strongly influenced by the work of Matthew Lipman. Those include the exercises on Connections, Names, Believing, Resentment, Friends, Gifts, Yourself, and Real/Unreal. His ideas were too intriguing not to build on.

PROLOGUE

Connections; Wheels

Three events and the people involved, described in the prologue, become connected in the story. This connection is likened to a wheel, with the hub being all important (p.4).

Discussion: Connections

1. Think of two things that are connected in some way. Explain how they are connected.
2. Are people connected? Who? How?
3. Is it a good thing to be connected? It is desirable to be always connected?
4. Are there other things people can be connected to?
5. Can you be unconnected?
6. Do physical things connect us?
7. Can thoughts be connected?
8. Are events connected?
9. Are the past, present, and future connected?

Exercise: Connections

Divide the discussion group into two teams. The first person on the first team will make a statement beginning with, «I'm thinking of...» The blank can be filled in with anything. The first person on the second team will say what that thing makes him/her think of. (Example: «I'm thinking of summer.» «I'm thinking of swimming.») The second person on the first team will then say what (s)he is thinking because of what the preceding person said. Play proceeds down the line until three people on one team cannot make a connection and must pass. The other team wins.

Play another round of the game, but this time each person must tell why they made the connection. (Example: «I'm thinking of a tree.» «I'm thinking of a bookcase, because it is made of wood and wood comes from trees.»)

Exercise: Connections

Can these ideas be connected to one another? Explain how and why you made each connection.

Relatives	love	oxygen
earth	pets	
care	water	babies
fish	school	
space	abuse	society

Exercise: Analogies

An analogy compares two sets of objects or ideas by finding the relationship between the members. Analogies force us to make connections between ideas by finding a relationship between two things that might not have obvious commonalities. For example, when completing the analogy

Blindness is to vision
as deafness is to **hearing**.

the first relationship must be determined before the second can be completed. After explaining analogies to the students, complete the following:

1. Fish is to water as bird is to-- ____
2. Heat is to flame as ____ is to ice
3. Bark is to dog as ____ is to cow
4. Coat is to person as blanket is to ____
5. Gold is to jewelry as ____ is to blue jeans.
6. Inventor is to inventions as composer is to ____
7. E-I-E-I-0 is to Old MacDonald as Fe Fi Fo Fum is to ____
8. Superman is to Lois Lane as Batman is to ____

Answer Key:

1. air; 2. cold; 3. moo; 4. bed; 5. denim; 6. music; 7. the Giant from «Jack and the Beanstalk»;
8. Robin (partner) or Catwoman (girlfriend).

Exercise: Analogies

Have the students write their own analogies. Their answer key should state how the connection was made.

Discussion: Wheels

1. The author names a ferris wheel and the solar system as two examples of wheels (p.4). What are other examples?
2. The author says the hub of the wheel holds everything together. What is the hub in each of the examples you came up with?
3. What forces are associated with a wheel? What functions?
4. What are cycles?
5. How are wheels and cycles alike? Different?
6. Can we be part of a wheel? A cycle?
7. Does a wheel have a beginning and ending point? Does a cycle?
8. What happens when a wheel, or cycle, is interrupted? When the hub is disturbed?
9. Can a wheel be unbalanced? Every kind of wheel? Can a cycle?

Exercise: Wheels

Brainstorm or research kinds and uses of wheels. Another group will do the same for cycles (examples: life cycles, the water cycle). Create a Venn diagram of the two, showing how they are alike and different.

CHAPTER ONE

Personification, Ownership, Foreshadowing, Wisdom, Appearance, Concealment

The author used personification, attributing non-human things with human qualities, in describing the setting of the story. The road «ambled, seemed to pause,» and «had reason to think where it was going.» (p.5) The grass was «cut painfully to the quick» and the fence «said `move on'.» (p. 6)

Discussion: Personification

1. What reasons might the author have for making the things in the story have thoughts and feelings?
2. Can things have thoughts and feelings?
3. Do humans have thoughts and feelings? Can they not have thoughts and feelings?
4. Are animals things? Do animals have thoughts and feelings? The same as humans?
5. Is it O.K. to treat things as if they had thoughts and feelings?
6. Are humans sometimes treated like things? How? Why?

Exercise: Humans treated as things

Decide whether the person in the following scenarios is being treated like a human or as a thing (or both).

1. A classmate asks his older sister to come to lunch to show off how pretty she is.
2. A group of girls invites a really smart classmate to join them in studying for a test, but doesn't ask her to have lunch with them.
3. A boy goes steady with a girl because she is popular.
4. A boy goes steady with a girl because they have a lot in common.
5. A student compliments the teacher to make the teacher like him better.
6. A student brings cookies for the class to celebrate her birthday.

The author used foreshadowing in Chapter One, telling something about important events in the story before they occurred. Only the jailhouse and gallows were called important, and the village was said to not matter. (p.6)

Discussion: Foreshadowing

1. The author tells us what things will be important to the story, and which things will not be important. Are there ways that we can know in life which things are important and which are not?
2. Are there important and unimportant things in life?

3. What are the degrees of importance?
4. Does the degree of importance change over time?
5. What things are very important now? Will they be as important in ten years? In twenty years?
6. What things will never lose their importance? Why?
7. Why are different things important to you than are important to your parents? Your older sibling? A baby?
8. Does the amount of money you have change the importance of things?
9. What things would you consider important to everyone?
10. Can you use your list of important things to foreshadow your future? Someone else's future?

The house had a «touch-me-not» appearance, the woods a «sleeping, otherworld appearance that made you want to speak in whispers.» (P. 6)

Discussion: Appearance

1. The author says that the appearance of some places led to certain feelings. Have you been in or seen a place that made an impression like that?
2. Fast food places are set up to make the customer eat quickly, while the better restaurants are set up to make the customer want to take their time. Compare the appearance of a McDonalds and a nice restaurant.
3. What places make you happy? Sad? Excited? Nervous? Quiet?
4. What is about those places that make you **feel the** way you do?
5. Can places themselves be sad? Excited? Nervous? Quiet?
6. Do those places affect everyone the same way they do you?

Exercise: Appearance

Put students in groups by feelings, and have them develop a list of places that elicit that feeling. Each group should choose one place from their list and write a detailed description of that place and why they think its appearance elicits that particular feeling.

Alternate plan: Have students individually describe a place that elicits a strong feeling in them. When finished, put all the students with the same feeling in a group and then have them compare the places that evoked that feeling.

«Ownership of land is an odd thing when you come to think of it,» says the author. Also, «Nothing ever seems interesting when it belongs to you - only when it doesn't.» (p. 7)

Discussion: Ownership

1. Can a person own land?
2. When you buy land, do you purchase ...the water on the land? What if it's a pond? A river? The fish?
...the minerals?
...the fruit on the trees? Fruit hanging over the fence?
...the squirrels? The birds?
3. What are the responsibilities of ownership?
4. What other things can a person own?
5. Can a thing own a person?
6. Can a man own a dog?
7. Does a parent own her child?
8. Do you own your ideas?
9. Do you own yourself? Your life? Can anyone else own you?

Exercise: Ownership

Place a check beside the things you think can be owned. Explain your choices.

- a pencil
- a classroom
- a pet
- a child
- money
- a sister
- a boyfriend / girlfriend
- friendship
- love
- beauty
- a wild animal
- a plot of land
- a tree
- time
- electricity
- information
- music

__a story an idea

The cows who trod out the road were called wise for avoiding the wood, but not wise enough to know they possessed wisdom. (p. 8)

Discussion: Wisdom

1. Are wisdom and smartness the same thing?
2. What examples can you give of being wise? How are they different from being smart?
3. What is a wise guy? A smart guy?
4. Can you be wise and not know it?
5. Is it always good to be wise? Is it always good to be smart?
6. Can you be wise sometimes and unwise at other times?
7. Are wisdom and smartness valued differently? Is one better than the other?
8. Are there more wise people or smart people?
9. Can you be wise, but not smart? Can you be smart, but not wise?

10. Sandra Carey said, «Never mistake knowledge for wisdom. One helps you make a living; the other helps you make a life.» What do you think she meant?

Exercise: Wisdom

Make two lists, one of people who are known for being smart, and the other of people who are known for being wise. Try to determine the criteria that put the people on each list. Someone had piled pebbles to conceal the spring in the woods. (P. 8)

Discussion: Concealment

1. What things do people hide?
2. Why do people hide things?
3. Can you hide things from yourself?
4. Do hidden things always stay hidden?
5. What things should be hidden? What things should not be hidden?
6. Is hiding something honest?

Exercise: Concealment

Decide whether it is right, wrong, or neither right nor wrong to hide each of the following.

Object

presents **Right Wrong Neither**

feelings **Right Wrong Neither**

fear **Right Wrong Neither**

love **Right Wrong Neither**

money **Right Wrong Neither**

yourself **Right Wrong Neither**

food **Right Wrong Neither**

ideas **Right Wrong Neither**

someone else's

possession **Right Wrong Neither**

CHAPTER TWO

Memory, Dreams, Appearance/Reflection

Mae states that the villagers won't remember her, they never have before. (p.10)

Discussion: Memory

(See Chapter Twenty-One for more discussion questions)

1. Why do we remember some things and not others?
2. What is a memory?
3. What makes us remember things?
4. If something is memorized, is it a memory?
5. Why can't we remember when we were born?
6. What makes some memories vivid? Some indistinct?
7. Where do memories stay when we're not thinking about them?
8. If you lose your memory, where does it go?
9. If you can't remember something, where is the information?
10. Can people share memories? Are they the same memory?
11. Why can some people remember certain things and others can't?

Exercise: Memory

Pull out your earliest memory. Describe everything about it that you can. Use all the senses to help you write your description. Put a star beside the sense that seems the strongest to you.

The sense of smell is associated with many of our earliest memories. Think of a smell that brings to mind a memory of when you were small. What other senses are involved in the event?

Tuck dreams of being in heaven and never having heard of Treegap. He calls this dream «the good one.»

Mae tells him, «It's no use having that dream. Nothing's going to change.»

Tuck replies, «I can't help what I dream.» (p.9-10)

Discussion: Dreams

1. What is a dream?
2. Are dreams real? Imaginary? Memories?
3. Why do we dream?
4. Are there good dreams and bad dreams? Are all bad dreams nightmares?
5. Are nightmares the same as dreams?
6. Can we help what we dream?
7. Can we dream something on purpose?
8. Can we re-enter a dream?
9. Where do dreams go when we wake up?
10. Can people share a dream?
11. Are daydreams the same as night dreams?
12. What does it mean for someone to have a dreamy expression?
13. What did Martin Luther King, Jr. mean when he said, «I have a dream.»
14. What is a dream home? A dream vacation? The girl of my dreams?

The Tucks had all looked «exactly the same for eighty-seven years.» Mae's reflection no longer interested her. (p.12)

Discussion: Appearance/Reflection

1. Why do people look in mirrors?

2. If your appearance never changed, would you still be interested in seeing it?
3. What does your reflection tell you? Tell about you?
4. Is your reflection really you?
5. Do you see yourself the way everyone else sees you?
6. If no one could see, would appearance matter? What would matter?
7. Is the old saying «clothes make the man» true?
8. What does «beauty is in the eye of the beholder» mean?
9. Is beauty only skin deep?
10. Can appearance deceive?

Exercise: Appearance

Find a picture of a person's face, with the face turned directly toward the camera. Using a mirror without a frame, place the mirror on the centerline of the face, so that one side is reflected forming an image of the face that is half picture, half mirror reflection. Compare this image with the original. Now move the mirror to double the other side of the face. Compare this new image with the other two. What differences do you see? Try this with a picture of yourself.

CHAPTER THREE**Freedom, Making a difference in the world, Names, Politeness**

Winnie longs to be by herself for a change, to do something: that is all hers. Winnie decides to run away. (p.14-15)

Discussion: Freedom

1. Why do people want to be free?
2. What does it mean to be free?
3. Are you free when you are by yourself?
4. Can you be free when you are with others?
5. Do you have to run away to be free?
6. Does freedom mean different things to different people?
7. Can two people be in the same situation and one be free and the other not be free?
8. Do you have to always be free from something, or can you be free to do something.
9. Who has the power to keep you from being free?
10. Does your degree of freedom depend on your age? Your gender? Your money? Your abilities? Your imagination?

11. Is it possible to be imprisoned and still be free?

12. Can you do things for other people and still be free? If all you can do is things for other people, can you be free?

13. Do laws make us less free?

14. Do parents and teachers make us less free? 15. How do we feel or express freedom? How do we know when we are free?

Exercise: Freedom

Put a check by the statements that you agree with. Explain to your group why you agree. Put an X by the statements you disagree with. Explain to your group why you disagree.

- We are free if no one tells us what to do.
- We are free if we have no rules.
- We are free if we make up our own rules.
- We are free if we think we are free.
- We are free if we can be ourselves.
- We are free even if we are the only one who thinks so.
- We are free if we are very smart.
- We would be free if we were the only people on the earth.

Winnie wants to do something «that would make some kind of difference in the world.» (p.15)

Discussion: Making a difference in the world

1. What do you think Winnie means by making a difference in the world?
2. Can a child make a difference?
3. Does a difference have to be big?
4. Is it important to make a difference? Why?
5. What motivates people to make a difference?
6. Are all differences desirable?
7. Can a difference be good for some and bad for others?
8. Simone de Beauvoir said, «One's life has value so long as one attributes value to the life of others, by means of love, friendship, indignation and compassion.» Is this a way of making a difference in the world?

Exercise: Making a difference in the world

Make a list of people who have made a difference in the world. Then decide whether those differences were mostly good or mostly bad. Explain your answers.

Winnie thinks it would be nice to have a new name, «one that's not all worn out from being called so much.» (p.16)

Discussion: Names

1. Is your name who you are?
2. If you are named after someone, do you share the name, or is it yours?
3. Are you called by more than one name?
4. Are you called different names by different people?
5. What would it be like to not have a name? To not be able to remember your name?
6. What would happen if you were given another name?
7. If you had someone else's name, what would happen? What if it were your best friend's name?
A famous person's name?
8. Could we give things, like animals and objects, new names whenever we felt like it?
9. Could we give ourselves new names whenever we felt like it?
10. Can you give your name away? Sell it? Buy a new one?

Winnie answers her mother in an exasperated cry, but then changes her answer to the expected polite reply. (p.16)

Discussion: Politeness

1. Why are there rules for polite behavior?
2. What are the consequences for not following those rules?
3. Why do some people not follow the rules?
4. Is it always necessary to follow the rules?
5. Is it always a good thing to follow the rules?
6. Do the rules apply to some people and not to others?
7. Are there benefits to being polite? Drawbacks?
8. Are your rules the same as everyone else's?
9. What happens when people's rules don't match?

Exercise: Politeness

Make a list of all the rules of being polite that you can think of. Compare your list with five other people's lists. You may change your list as needed, but make sure they are really your rules. Explain any of your rules that others do not understand.

CHAPTER FOUR

Strangers, Intuition, Exaggeration

The author chose to introduce a main character as simply a stranger. We never learned his name, and his apparel set him apart from the villagers. Later in the chapter, Winnie's grandmother was suspicious of him because of his yellow suit. (p.17, p.19)

Discussion: Strangers

1. What is a stranger?
2. Is a stranger always a person?
3. Is someone a stranger simply because they are strange?
4. When are you a stranger?
5. Is it good, bad, or neither one to be a stranger?
6. Are your relatives ever strangers?
7. Are your friends ever strangers?
8. Can you be a stranger to yourself?
9. Are newborn babies strangers?

Exercise: Strangers

Put an X beside the following descriptions that you think are strangers. Explain your answers to your group.

- A boy your best friend introduces to you
- A cousin you have never met before
- Your grandmother who you have not seen in ten years
- Your baby brother
- The lady who sprays you with perfume at the mall
- Your favorite character on T. V
- The mailman
- Someone you have heard a lot about, but never met
- A person you communicate with on the Internet
- The President of the United States
- Someone you see and talk to every day, but whose name you don't know.

Something about the stranger reminded Winnie of funeral ribbons. She looked closer, but could not find anything obviously wrong. (p.18)

Discussion: Intuition

1. Have you ever felt something about someone or some situation?
2. What is intuition?
3. Who has intuition? Does everyone have intuition?
4. Are intuitions always true?
5. Why do people have intuitions?
6. Would it be good to know in advance if something was good or bad?
7. What is meant by «woman's intuition»?

Winnie told the stranger that her family had lived here forever. (p.18)

Discussion: Exaggeration

1. Why do people exaggerate?
2. Do we ever make things seem smaller or less than they are? Larger or more?
3. Is it ever wrong to exaggerate? Right to exaggerate?
4. Is exaggeration the same thing as lying?
5. Can exaggeration lead to rewards? To trouble?

Exercise: Exaggeration

Decide if exaggerating the following would be right, wrong, or neither in each case.

- __your skills level on the soccer field
- __your capacity for eating pancakes
- __the number of girls (boys) you have kissed
- __the amount of money you get for allowance
- __the grade you made on your last Social Studies test
- __how much you love your mother
- __how popular you are
- __how big your house is
- __your I. Q.
- __how tall you are

CHAPTER FIVE

Silence, Cowardice, Fear, Believing, Danger, Resentment

The cottage was described as being full of silence. (p. 22)

Discussion: Silence

1. How would you define silence?
2. Is silence a something or the lack of something?
3. What does «silence is golden» mean?
4. Does silence have a meaning?
5. Do silent and quiet mean the same thing?
6. Can a silence be spooky? Beautiful? Full of something?
7. Is it sometimes hard to be silent? Sometimes easy to be silent?
8. Can something have a message and still be silent?
9. Can something not be silent and not have a message?
10. Are there different kinds of silence? If there are, can these different silences mean different things?

Exercise: Silence

Play the recording «The Sounds of Silence» by Simon and Garfunkle. What definition of silence do you think the artists were using?

Winnie had «another part of her head, the dark part where her oldest fears were housed.» (p. 22)

Discussion: Fear

1. Where does fear come from?
2. Does fear live in your head?
3. Is fear a good thing or a bad thing?
4. Are there times when we should be afraid? Are these times the same for everyone?
5. How do fears change with age?
6. Are some fears imaginary? Are some real? What is the difference?
7. How does fear affect us?
8. Do we have old fears and new fears?

9. Is there a right or wrong way to handle fear?

Winnie was told the world was a dangerous place and she needed protection. (p.22)

Discussion: Danger

1. Is the world a dangerous place? Explain your answer.
2. Where does danger come from?
3. Are some situations naturally dangerous, or do we make them dangerous?
4. Can we be protected from all dangers?
5. Can things be dangerous? Can people be dangerous? Can we be a danger to ourselves
6. If we don't think something is dangerous, is it?
7. If we think something is dangerous, is it?
8. Does your age help determine whether something is dangerous?
9. Can an idea be dangerous? An emotion? An attitude?
10. Can something be good and dangerous at the same time?
11. Does your attitude toward something make it more or less dangerous?
12. Are all dangers physical?

Exercise: Danger

In your group, make five lists. One list should be things that are dangerous for infants and small children. The second list, things dangerous to elementary age children. The third, things that are dangerous for teenagers. The fourth, things that are dangerous for adults. The fifth, things dangerous to old people.

Look for the dangers that are common to all the lists. Decide how you would protect people from these dangers.

Winnie did not want the toad to think of her as a coward. (p. 23)

Discussion: Cowardice

1. What does it mean to be a coward?
2. Are a coward and a sissy the same thing?
3. Are cowardice and bravery antonyms?
4. Is cowardice ever a good thing? A bad thing?
5. Why do cowards hide their cowardice? How do they hide it?

6. Can a coward be a hero?
7. What is the difference between being careful and being a coward?
8. Is it cowardice to avoid danger?

Exercise: Cowardice

In groups, role play a situation that would show bravery or cowardice. Role play it both ways, and then discuss the differences.

When Winnie was discovered watching Jesse, she was «embarrassed and, because of that, resentful.» (p.26)

Winnie was «able to believe in this because she needed to.» (p. 23)

Discussion: Believing

1. What does it mean to believe?
2. Can you know something without believing it?
3. Can you believe something without knowing it?
4. Can you believe something you doubt?
5. Can you doubt something you believe?
6. Can you understand something without believing it?
7. Can you believe something without understanding it?
8. Can you believe something that isn't true?
9. Can you believe something just because you need to?
10. What evidence do you need to believe something?
11. What makes you believe that you are now wearing clothes?
12. What evidence makes you think the earth is in orbit around the sun?
13. What would make you believe something that no one else believed in?

Exercise: Believing

Decide which of the following you believe in. List your reasons for believing in them.

Gravity

Santa Claus
Elves

The Internet

The Loch Ness Monster

Virtual Reality

Love

Elvis

Pictures on the T. V. news

Discussion: Resentment

1. When do you feel resentment?
2. Do you resent it when someone cuts in front of you in line?
3. Do you resent it if someone tells you you're wrong, even when you know you're wrong?
4. Do you resent it when the teacher catches you not following the rules?
5. What is the difference between resentment and anger?
6. Are there times when it's right to be resentful?
7. How are embarrassment and resentment connected? Anger and resentment?

CHAPTER SIX

Emergencies, Bad people, Planning, Familiar things, Possessions

While being kidnapped, Winnie's «heart was pounding and her backbone felt like a pipe full of cold running water,» yet «her head was fiercely calm.» On seeing the man in the yellow suit and «presented at once with choices, Winnie's mind perversely went blank.» (p. 32-33)

Discussion: Emergencies

1. What is an emergency?
2. How do we react to an emergency?
3. Can an Emergency Room handle all emergencies?
4. Is an emergency for one person an emergency for everyone?
5. Do all people react the same way to emergencies?
6. Are an emergency and an accident the same thing?
7. Are all emergencies physical?
8. Are emergencies always bad? Are there good emergencies?

Exercise: Emergencies

Which do you consider emergencies? -Having to go to the bathroom

-A pregnant woman delivering her baby

- A doctor going to the hospital to help deliver a baby
- A doctor late to an appointment
- Your computer crashing
- Failing a math test
- A soccer player being injured
- A tree falling on your house
- The electricity going off
- The battery in your watch dying
- Your pet dying

Mae tells Winnie, «We're not bad people, truly we're not,» after kidnapping her. (p.34)

Discussion: Bad people

1. Are there bad people?
2. What makes a person bad? What makes a person good?
3. Can a person be all bad? All good?
4. Can a bad person do good things? Can a good person do bad things?
5. Do bad people think they're bad?
6. Do people agree on what is good and what is bad?
7. Can someone think they are doing something good and it really be bad?
8. Can someone do something bad with good intentions?
9. Can you do something good and have it turn out bad?
10. Can you do something bad and have it turn out good?
11. If someone does something bad to you, but it turns out good, have they really done something bad?

Exercise: Bad people

Explain how the following actions could be both good and bad.

- Giving away money
- Giving away food
- Helping a handicapped person
- Fixing something that is broken
- Planting a tree
- Stealing

- Hitting someone
- Paying for something

Miles states, «We ought to've had some better plan than this.» (p.34)

Discussion: Planning

1. What does planning entail?
2. Do all things need to be planned?
3. Is it good to plan everything?
4. What things require planning? What things don't require planning?
5. Are some things better unplanned?
6. Why do some people plan and others do not?
7. Do plans always help? Do plans sometimes not help?

Exercise: Planning

Make a list of things that should be planned. Make a list of things that should not be planned. Compare your lists with the others in your group.

The music from the music box stops Winnie's crying. «It was like a ribbon tying her to familiar things.» (p.35)

Discussion: Familiar things

1. What makes something a familiar thing?
2. Are familiar things important? Why or why not?
3. Do people need familiar things?
4. How do people react to unfamiliar things?
5. Do familiar things have to be things? What else can they be?

Exercise: Familiar things

Find something in the classroom that is a familiar thing.
Bring a familiar thing with you to school from home.
Compare the two things, describing what they have in common.
Compare your familiar things with those of your classmates.

Winnie inspected the music box and thought, «No one who owned a thing like this could be too disagreeable.» (p.36)

Discussion: Possessions

1. Do our possessions show our character?
2. Can an agreeable person own something ugly? Can a disagreeable person own something beautiful?
3. Can a powerful person own little? Can a person with little power own much?
4. Does the quality of our possessions show the quality of our character?
5. If someone owns a lot of toys, does that make him a playful person?
6. If someone owns no toys, does that make him a dull person?
7. Can an illiterate person own books?
8. Is there any THING that, when owned, shows a person's character?
9. Can a person possess something other than things?
10. If a person possesses a certain set of beliefs, does that help explain his character?
11. If a person has a particular talent, will that affect his character?

CHAPTER SEVEN**Difference, Change, Eternity/Forever, Fountain of youth**

Twenty years after drinking from the spring, none of the Tucks had grown any older. Other people thought of the Devil, witchcraft, and black magic. The Tucks said there was «something terribly wrong.» (p.39)

Discussion: Difference

1. Why are people different?
2. Why do people so often see difference as bad?
3. Can difference be a positive thing? A negative thing?
4. Can difference lead to prejudice? Can it lead to anything else?
5. What do people mean when they say, «He's different.»

The Tucks «figured it'd be very bad if everyone knowed about that spring.» (p.41)

Exercise: Difference

Make a list of the ways that people can be different from one another. Rate these ways of being different on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being unimportant and 10 being very important.

The Tucks described themselves as changeless. (p. 40)

Discussion: Change

1. Is change good? Is change bad?
2. What can change?
3. Are there things that can't change?
4. Can people change? Can people not change?
5. Can we stop change from happening?
6. We can change our minds. Can we change our thoughts? Can we change our memories? Can we change our attitudes? Can we change our emotions?
7. Can we change other people?

Discussion: Forever/Eternity

1. How long is forever? Eternity? Are eternity and forever the same thing?
2. When did forever begin?
3. Is there an end to eternity?
4. Where does this year fit on the time line of eternity?
5. Can anything last forever?
6. If the earth no longer existed, would time keep going?
7. If time ends, what happens to things that last forever?

The Tucks figured out that they would live forever. (p. 41)

Discussion: Fountain of Youth

1. People have looked for a fountain of youth for thousands of years. What makes a fountain of youth appealing?
2. Would staying young be appealing to everyone?
3. At what age should a fountain of youth stop the aging process?
4. Why would a fountain of youth be a bad thing? How could it be a good thing?
5. What would be the consequences if everyone used a fountain of youth?
6. Is it important to have people of all ages? Why or why not?
7. If you never aged, would you keep learning? Would you be smarter? More wise?

Exercise: Fountain of Youth

Decide, with your group, what the criteria should be for people drinking from a fountain of youth. At what age should they drink? What other things should be taken into consideration? Develop an application to be filled out by those wanting a drink. Be sure to state any problems the person may encounter after drinking the water.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Fairy tales, fables, and legends; Truth; Secrets; What does it mean to be childlike? What does it mean to be important? Showing off, Friends

Winnie did not believe in fairy tales, yet her grandmother believed in the elf music. (p. 42)

Discussion: Fairy Tales, Fables, and Legends

1. What are some of the fairy tales, fables, and legends that we are familiar with?
2. How do we learn these stories? Are they told as true stories?
3. Is it right or wrong to disbelieve these stories? Is it right or wrong to believe these stories?
4. Is there truth in these stories?
5. Do we need proof or evidence to believe something?
6. Are there things that you believe without any proof?
7. What things do you need proven before you believe them?
8. Is all evidence valid? Is some more valid than others?

Exercise: Evidence

Decide if there is enough evidence to warrant belief in each of the following situations.

- I know Joe loves me because he said so.
- I know Toe is a space alien because he said so.
- I know there is a Santa Claus because I saw him at the mall.
- I know the sky is blue because I saw it as I walked here.
- I know Susan has a genius I.Q. because she made an A on the English test.
- I know that rabbits can talk because I saw one talk on T.V. the other night.
- I know computers are fast because mine can add up numbers before I can even get them into my calculator.
- I know it's going to rain because there are clouds in the sky.
- I know that teacher's mean because my sister said so.
- I know I won't like spinach because of its color.
- I know the light is on because the switch is.

- I know the water is hot because steam is coming off the surface.
- I know the water is hot because it is boiling.

Winnie wondered about the truth of the Tucks' story. (p.42)

Discussion: Truth

1. What is the difference between the truth and a lie?
2. Can we always tell the difference between the two?
3. What is a white lie?
4. Is the truth important? Why or why not?
5. What does it mean to be true to someone?
6. Can the truth be relative?
7. Can the truth be true to one person and not true to another?
8. Are there degrees of truth?
9. If you don't believe the truth, is it still true?
10. If you don't know the truth, is it still true?
11. If you are told a lie, and believe it, is it true? 12. Can the truth change?
13. Can something be true without any proof or evidence?
14. Can you lie to yourself?

Mae told Winnie that she now shared their «big, dangerous secret.» (p.43)

Discussion: Secrets

1. Why do we have secrets?
2. Are secrets a good thing or a bad thing?
3. Can a secret be dangerous? Fun? Scary? What other kinds of secrets can there be?
4. Are there big secrets? Little secrets?
5. Why do people have secret clubs?
6. Who should we tell secrets to? Who should we not tell secrets to?
7. Can you share a secret with a friend? With an enemy?
8. How many people can know a secret and it still be a secret?
9. Can you tell yourself a secret?
10. Should secrets always be kept?
11. Are secrets easy to keep?

Exercise: Secrets

With everyone in a circle, one person should think of a «secret» and whisper it to the person directly to his/her right. That person whispers the «secret» to the next person, and so on until the message comes back to the last person in the circle. That person says aloud what (s)he was told. The person that started the «secret» says aloud his/her original statement.

Are the two statements the same? Discuss any differences and how the differences came about.

Winnie thought of the Tucks as gentle and childlike. (p.44)

Discussion: What does it mean to be childlike?

1. What are the differences between a child and an adult?
2. Can a child act like an adult? Can an adult act like a child?
3. Should a child act like an adult? Should an adult act like a child?
4. What is the difference between being childish and being childlike?
5. Is one better than another?

Exercise: Childlikeness

Decide which the following actions best typify childish, childlike, or adult behavior.

Action

1. sucking your thumb

Childish Childlike Adult

2. solving someone's problem

Childish Childlike Adult

3. enjoying a circus

Childish Childlike Adult

4. treating a pet gently

Childish Childlike Adult

5. treating your mother gently

Childish Childlike Adult

6. eating Jello with your fingers

Childish Childlike Adult

7. laughing loudly

Childish Childlike Adult

8. being a good sport when you lose

Childish Childlike Adult

9. trusting everyone

Childish Childlike Adult

10. throwing a temper tantrum

Childish Childlike Adult

11. taking a nap

Childish Childlike Adult

12. liking Disney movies

Childish Childlike Adult

13. saying bad words

Childish Childlike Adult

14. playing sports

Childish Childlike Adult

15. playing computer games

Childish Childlike Adult

The Tucks made Winnie feel special and important. (p.44)

Discussion: What does it mean to be important?

1. What does the word important mean?

2. Can anything be important?

3. What makes something important?

4. What makes someone important?

5. Is everyone important?

6. Is there anyone who is not important to anyone?

7. Is there anyone who is important to everyone?

8. Do you have to feel important to be important? Can you feel important and not be important?

9. Can you be important one day and unimportant the next day?
10. Can you be important to some people and not to others?
11. How important is importance?

Exercise: Importance

Read *The Important Book* by Margaret Wise Brown. Using the book as a model, write about someone in your group. (Example: The important thing about Billy is that he's a good reader. He has brown hair, brown eyes, and a nice smile, but the important thing about Billy is that he's a good reader.)

Jesse showed off for Winnie on their journey. (p.44)

Discussion: Showing off

1. Why do people show off?
2. Is showing off a thing everyone does?
3. Is showing off good? Bad?
4. Is it a compliment to call someone a show-off?
5. Are actors show-offs?
6. Are athletes show-offs?
7. Are acrobats show-offs?
8. Can you show off by doing something you're not good at?
9. Is it showing off to do something that someone has asked you to do?
10. Can you show off if there is no one watching?
11. Can you show off for yourself?

Winnie considered the Tucks her friends. (p.44)

Discussion: Friends

(See Chapter Fifteen for more discussion questions)

1. Who can be your friend?
2. Who cannot be your friend?
3. Can you be friends with someone you never talk to?
4. Can you not be friends with someone you talk to all the time?
5. Can you be friends with someone whose name you do not know?
6. Can you be friends with someone you have never met?

7. Can you be friends with someone of a different age? Someone very old? Someone very young?
8. Can you be friends with your family?
9. Can you be friends with someone you don't like?
10. Can you be friends with someone you are afraid of? With someone who is mean to you?
11. Can you have more than one best friend?
12. Are there people with no friends?
13. Can someone be your friend just because of what you own?
14. What is meant by a «fair weather friend»?
15. How long can/does a friendship last?
16. What do you do with a friend?
17. What do friends do that you don't do with other people? With your family?
18. What do friends talk about? Do all friends talk about the same things?

CHAPTER NINE Time; Gifts

Winnie repeatedly asked, «Are we almost there?» (p.47)

Discussion: Time

1. Why do some things seem to take more time than others?
2. What does «time flies when you're having fun» mean?
3. Do you ever lose track of time?
4. Why are there times when we check the clock every five minutes?
5. Does asking about time make it speed up or slow down?
6. What do people mean when they say «just a minute»?
7. Have you ever traveled into a different time zone? What happens to the hour that you lose?
What can you do with the hour you gain?
8. Do we really save daylight with daylight savings time?
9. What does it mean to turn back the clock?
10. Can you be anywhere in time other than now?

Tuck made Winnie «feel like an unexpected present, wrapped in pretty paper and tied with ribbons.» (p.49)

Discussion: Gifts

1. What makes something a gift?
2. If you give someone something that you don't want to give, is it a gift?

3. If you give someone you don't like something, is it a gift?
4. If you get something from someone you don't like, is it a gift?
5. If you get something you do like, but it's from someone you don't Like, is it a gift?
6. If you get something you don't like, but it's from someone you do like, is it a gift?
7. Can an enemy give you a gift?
8. Does a gift have to be a thing?
9. Can a person be a gift?
10. Can a feeling be a gift?
11. Can a hug be a gift? Even if you don't want it?
12. What is the difference between a gift and a bribe?
13. Does there have to be a special occasion to give a gift?
14. Who gets more out of a gift, the giver or the receiver?
15. Is it better to give or to receive?

CHAPTER TEN

Duty; Knowing yourself, Belonging; Life and living; Blessings and curses

«The Foster women had made a fortress out of duty. Within it, they were indomitable.» (p.50)

Discussion: Duty

1. A duty is something you are expected to do. For example, a doctor's duty is to try to heal people. What duties do you have?
2. What does «the call of duty» mean?
3. Are all things you are expected to do duties? Is being polite to strangers a duty? Making good grades? Cleaning your room?
4. Are your duties the same as your brother's? Your sister's?
5. Do adults and children have different duties? The same duties?
6. Do babies have duties?
7. Can you share a duty?
8. Can a duty be something you are not capable of doing?
9. If you do not accept a duty, are you still responsible for doing it? Can you choose who or what to have a duty toward?
10. What are the consequences of neglecting a duty?
11. Are there different degrees of duty?
12. What would it mean to make a fortress out of duty?

Jesse, according to Mae, didn't seem «too settled in himself.» (p.53)

Discussion: Knowing yourself

1. What things can you know about yourself?
2. Can you not know things about yourself?
3. How do you know who you are?
4. What makes you you?
5. Are you still yourself if you're asleep? Unconscious? Dead?
6. If your appearance changed completely overnight, would you still be you?
7. If everyone that knows you disappeared, would you still be you?
8. Where does «you» come from?
9. Does growing older change who you are?
10. How do people become settled with themselves?

Exercise: Knowing yourself

In your group, decide how much of who you are comes from the following. Give each a percent until you arrive at 100%. For example, if you decide that personality is half of what makes a person who (s)he is, then give it a value of 50%. That would leave you with another 50% to fill with other possibilities.

- Your name
- Your face
- Your clothes
- Your mind
- Your thoughts
- Your personality
- Your parents
- Your actions
- Your feelings
- Your religion
- Your abilities

The Tucks had no friends and never belonged anywhere. Mae said it was enough for her and Tuck to have each other. (p.54)

Discussion: Belonging

1. The author uses the verb to belong to mean «as a member of a group». What groups do people belong to?
2. Why do people belong?
3. How do people belong?
4. Is belonging important? Unimportant? Can the importance change?
5. Are there drawbacks to belonging?
6. Are there drawbacks to not belonging?
7. Can belonging be a good thing? A bad thing?
8. Can you belong if you don't want to?
9. Can you not belong, even if you want to?
10. Can you belong to someone who doesn't want you?
11. Can someone belong to you that you don't want?
12. Can you belong to a group and no one know it?
13. Can you belong to a group and not know it yourself?
14. Can you keep belonging to a group a secret?

Mae told Winnie, «Life's got to be lived, no matter how long or short.» (p.54)

Discussion: Life and living

1. What does Mae mean by «life's got to be lived»?
2. Can life be unlived?
3. What does it mean to be alive?
4. Can you be alive and yet not live?

Exercise: Living

In your group, list the things that make someone alive. Make a second list of those things that show how someone is living life. Compare the two lists and write a paragraph describing the differences.

Mae called their immortality a blessing or a curse. (p.55)

Discussion: Blessings and Curses

1. What is a blessing? What is a curse?
2. Can something be a blessing and a curse?

3. Can something bad be a blessing? Can something good be a curse?
4. Can something be a blessing to one person and a curse to another?
5. Can a curse turn out to be a blessing? A blessing a curse?
6. Can a person be a blessing? A curse?

Exercise: Blessings and Curses

Put a B beside the things you think might be a blessing.

Put a C beside the things you think might be a curse.

Put an E beside the things you think might be either.

__ money beauty cars

__ death

__ high intelligence

__ low intelligence

__ computers

__ disease

__ musical ability

__ old age families

CHAPTER ELEVEN**Rules; Personal things; Answers**

Winnie tried to determine the Tucks' rules for eating. (p.56)

Discussion: Rules

1. Do you have rules for eating? Are the rules different at school and at home?
2. What else do you have rules for?
3. Are there things that have no rules?
4. Who makes most of the rules, you or someone else?
5. Are all rules against something, or are there rules for something?
6. Are there any rules that apply to every person? Just to adults? Just to children?
7. Are there rules that no one follows?
8. If a rule tells you to do something you can't do, does the rule still apply?
9. If a rule tells you to do something you know you shouldn't, does the rule still apply?
10. If there is no one around to make sure you obey the rules, do the rules still apply?

Exercise: Rules

In your group, make a list of the rules you think need to be in place for one of the following:
this classroom

the hallway recess

P. E. class

the bus assemblies

the lunchroom

field trips

Did you have to have any rules for making this list of rules? Share your list with the other group.

Look for any rules that conflict with others. Are your lists longer or shorter than the teacher's? How easy would it be to enforce your rules? Who would you choose to enforce the rules? Could you count on all the students to follow the rules?

Winnie realized that eating was a very personal thing. (p.57)

Discussion: Personal things

1. What things are personal?
2. What makes something personal?
3. Do all people consider the same things to be personal?
4. What is the difference between personal and private?
5. Can something be both personal and private?
6. What does «personal preference» mean?

Exercise: Personal things

Decide if the following things are personal, private, both, or neither.

- your age
- your weight
- your mother's age
- whether you are right or left handed
- the nickname that your friends call you
- the nickname that your family calls you
- what church you go to
- how much money your parents make
- your medical history

- what you had for dinner last night
- how good a reader you are
- your grades on your last report card
- how messy your room is

Tuck told Winnie, «The pond's got answers.» (p.59)

Discussion: Answers

1. Where do we get answers?
2. Do you have to ask a question to get an answer?
3. Who do you trust to give you right answers?
4. Who do you not trust to give you right answers?
5. Can you get answers from something other than a person? Other than a book? Other than a computer?
6. Are answers always obvious?
7. Are answers always easy to find?
8. Can a right answer become a wrong answer?
9. Can a wrong answer become a right answer?
10. Can there be an answer that is always right?
11. Can an answer be neither right nor wrong?
12. Does every question have an answer?
13. If two people disagree on an answer, does one of them have to be wrong?

CHAPTER TWELVE

Life; Life as a wheel; Being outside of life; Death

Tuck described life as «moving, growing, changing, never the same two minutes together.» He said, «Living's heavy work.» (p. 61, 63)

Discussion: Life

1. How would you describe life?
2. What is the difference between living and life?
3. Is living heavy work? Why or why not?
4. Is living harder for some than others? Easier for some than others?
5. Can you make life easier for someone?

6. Can you make life easier for yourself?
7. Can someone make life easier for you?
8. Is life always work? What else can it be?
9. What does it mean to say that someone is «full of life»?

Tuck compared life to a wheel «turning and turning, never stopping.» He described the water cycle as an example. (p.62)

Discussion: Life as a wheel

What do you think Tuck meant when he compared life to a wheel?

Exercise: Life as a wheel

Find a diagram of the water cycle. Copy the water cycle onto your paper, without the labels. With a partner, re-label the cycle, using terms that refer to the life cycle: birth, infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, middle age, old age, death.

Exercise: Life and Living

Tuck uses several «ing» words to describe life and living. He calls life moving, growing, changing, and turning. With a partner, make a list of all the «ing» words you can think of that would describe life and living.

Tuck told Winnie that they, the Tucks, had dropped off the wheel, like rocks beside the road. He said, «you can't call it living, what we got.» (p.64)

Discussion: Being outside of life

1. Are rocks living things?
2. Are rocks outside of life?
3. Can someone be outside of life?
4. Can someone be alive, but you can't call what they have living?

Winnie raged against the thought of her death. (p.63)

Discussion: Death

1. Why does Winnie rage against the thought of her death?
2. What do you think about when you think about death? When you think about your own death?

3. Why do people have different reactions to the topic of death?
4. Is there a right or wrong way to react to death?
5. Is dying fair?
6. Can someone look forward to death?

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Choice of words

«The man in the yellow suit took off his hat and smoothed his hair with long white fingers.»

«The window glowed golden.» (p.66)

Discussion: Choice of words

1. The author used particular words to bring pictures to our minds. «Long white fingers» makes us see the stranger's hands. Why do you think she used the word long? The word white?

2. The window glowed golden» produces another picture. What other things can glow? What other things are golden? What other words could the author have used?

3. How do we choose the words we use?

4. Do we choose words differently for different people? Different occasions?

5. Do we choose words differently when we speak than when we write?

6. Do we ever not choose our words?

7. Are there times when we have no choice?

8. Can words mean one thing to one person and another thing to someone else? What makes the difference?

9. Can our choices get us in trouble? Get us rewarded?

10. Are there words everyone uses? Words no one uses?

11. Are there words no one should use?

12. Should you use words no one else understands? Another language?

Exercise: Choice of words

Look through the first thirteen chapters of Tuck *Everlasting* and find other examples of carefully or skillfully chosen words. If the words bring a picture to mind, illustrate the words. Write a

«plain word» translation for the author's phrase or sentence.

Example: «Mae sat there frowning, a great potato of a woman with a round, sensible face and calm brown eyes.» (p.10)

Plain word translation: Mae sat there frowning. She was a large woman with a round face and brown eyes.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Bad feelings; Criminal behavior; Routines; Purpose of life; Helplessness

Tuck said, of the horse being stolen, «I got a bad feeling about the whole thing.» (p.67)

Discussion: Bad feelings

1. What are bad feelings? Do you have another way of saying «bad feelings?»
2. What causes bad feelings?
3. Are bad feelings always reliable?
4. Are bad feelings always realistic?

Exercise: Bad feelings

Put a check by the situations in which you think «bad feelings» are justified.

- _ Rachel did not study for her geography test. She has a bad feeling about the test.
- _ As the Garcia family put the picnic basket in the car, a drop of rain hit Mr. Garcia on the nose. He has a bad feeling about their trip.
- _ Jon is flying to another state to see his grandmother next week. He saw a plane crash in the movie he saw last night. Jon has a bad feeling about his trip.
- Betty did not study for the last three spelling tests and failed all three of them. She studied every night this week for Friday's test. Betty has a bad feeling about the test.
- _ Kamran's older brother has gone steady with three girls in the last three months. Each one has broken up with him. He has a bad feeling about going steady.
- _ The girls at Nikki's slumber party check on their futures by asking questions of a Ouija board. Nikki has a bad feeling about her future.
- _ The farmer notices that his sheep dog has thicker fur than usual. The farmer has a bad feeling about the coming winter.

Winnie could not go to sleep without her regular bedtime routine. (p.68)

Discussion: Routines

1. What routines do people have?
2. Why do people have routines?

3. Are routines good things? Bad things?
4. What purpose do routines serve?
5. Do routines ever get in the way?
6. How easy is it to change a routine?
7. Are routines more important to some people than others?
8. Can routines cause good feelings? Bad feelings?

Winnie was helpless in her situation. (p.68)

Discussion: Helplessness

1. When are you helpless?
2. Is helplessness a good thing? A bad thing? Neither?
3. What does it mean to say someone is «as helpless as a baby»?
4. How do people react when they are helpless?
5. Can you be helpless and not know it?
6. Can you feel helpless and not be helpless?
7. What does it take to not be helpless?

Winnie decided the Tucks were criminals ... and yet. (1).71)

Discussion: Criminal behavior

1. What is a criminal?
2. Is a criminal a bad person?
3. Can a criminal be a good person?
4. Can someone be a bad person and not be a criminal?
5. Can a person's reason for doing something criminal make the action OK?
6. If doing something criminal will save someone's life, is the action still criminal?
7. If doing something criminal will help a large number of people, and not hurt anyone, is the action still criminal?
8. If a criminal act will not hurt anyone, is it still criminal?
9. If there is no chance of being caught, is a criminal act still criminal?

Tesse told Winnie, «life's to enjoy yourself, isn't it? What else is it good for?» (p.72)

Discussion: Purpose of Life

1. Is life for enjoying yourself?
2. What other reasons do we have for life?
3. Why do people have different reasons?
4. Is one reason for life better than another?
5. Are there any reasons for life that are wrong?
6. Can our reasons for life change? What would cause them to change?
7. If you knew how long you were going to live, would that change your reasons for life?
8. If you knew you would die before you turned twenty, would that change your reasons for life?
9. If you knew you were moving to another country soon, never to return, would that change your reasons for life?

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Friends; Illiteracy; Human worth

The stranger told the Fosters, «We'd be good friends, I think.» (p.74)

Discussion: Friends

(See Chapter Eight for more discussion questions)

1. What is a friend?
2. What is a good friend?
3. What is a best friend?
4. What basis should there be for a friendship?
5. Can you be friends with someone who is doing something bad to you?
6. Does your friend have to do only good things?
7. Can you be friends with someone you don't like?
8. Can you be friends with someone you can't trust?
9. Can you be friends with a stranger? A relative? A fictional character?

The stranger said of the Tucks, «There's no telling what illiterates like that might do.» (p.74)

Discussion: Illiteracy

1. What is illiteracy?
2. Who is an illiterate?

3. Can a smart person be illiterate? A dumb person? An average person?
4. Does being illiterate make someone less of a person?
5. Does being illiterate make someone bad?
6. Does being illiterate make someone stupid?
7. Can someone choose to be illiterate?
8. Are there any benefits to being illiterate?
9. If a group of people has no written language, can they have illiterates?
10. Are there any other ways of being illiterate other than being unable to read?
11. Can someone be a movie illiterate? A computer illiterate? A math illiterate? A religious illiterate?

Exercise: Illiteracy

Make a list of all the different kinds of illiteracy your group can think of. Decide, on a scale of 1-10, how important each kind of illiteracy is to a person's life. Be sure to score reading illiteracy.

The stranger called his blackmail «a simple, clear-cut trade.» (p.75)

Discussion: Human worth

1. Can you trade someone for something?
2. Can you buy or sell someone?
3. How much is a human being worth?
4. Are some people worth more than others?
5. Who determines your worth?
6. Are people more valuable than things? Are there things more valuable than people?
7. When a general sends troops into combat, knowing that some will be killed, is he trading their lives for something? Are the troops trading their lives for something?
8. What is worth trading your life for?

CHAPTER SIXTEEN**Pride; Deterrents**

The Fosters are called the first family - family-proud and land-proud, proud as peacocks. (p.77)

Discussion: Pride

1. There are a lot of definitions of pride. What is yours?
2. What does it mean to be family-proud? Land-proud? Proud as a peacock?
3. What other kinds of pride are there?
4. Can you be proud of yourself? Someone else? Something?

5. Is pride good? Bad? Neither?
6. Are there times when pride is appropriate? Inappropriate?
7. Can pride hurt you? Hurt others?
8. Can pride benefit you? Benefit others?
9. Can you have too much pride? Too little pride?
10. Do we need pride?

Exercise: Pride

List 4-5 things someone can be proud of. For each one tell (1) how it could be beneficial and (2) how it could be harmful.

The constable said that having the gallows kept down trouble. (p.78)

Discussion: Deterrents

1. The constable believed that having the gallows kept down trouble. Do you think he is right or wrong?
2. Does having an electric chair keep criminals from committing crimes?
3. Does having a paddle keep students from breaking rules?
4. Does having a penalty box keep hockey players from breaking the rules?
5. What makes people follow rules?

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN**Real/Unreal; Love; Being useful; Beauty; The natural way**

On waking in the Tucks' house, Winnie felt herself to be unreal. (p.81)

Discussion: Real/Unreal

1. What does it mean to be real?
2. Do real and true mean the same thing?
3. What things are real?
4. What does it mean to be unreal?
5. Do unreal and false mean the same thing? Do unreal and fake mean the same thing?
6. Can something be real to one person and unreal to another? Can something be real to one person and unreal to everyone else in the world?
7. Can a person be unreal?
8. Can something appear real and be unreal?

9. Can something appear unreal and be real?
10. Can something be unreal and true at the same time?
11. Can something be real and a lie at the same time?
12. Are thoughts real? Are emotions real? Are attitudes real?

Exercise: Real/Unreal

Bring an item to class tomorrow that can be either real or unreal. Be ready to defend your choice of items. (Examples: a model airplane, a postcard of a famous painting, a recording of someone's voice.)

Winnie found that she loved the Tucks. (p.83)

Discussion: Love

1. Who can you love?
2. Can you love someone who is not nice? Can you love someone who is not nice to you?
3. Can you love someone you barely know?
4. Can you love someone who is very different from yourself?
5. Can you love someone who is not real?
6. Is it easy to love some people?
7. Is it hard to love some people?
8. What does it mean to «find» love? Can you lose love?

Miles told Winnie, «People got to do something useful if they're going to take up space in the world.» (p. 86-87)

Discussion: Being useful

Do you agree with Miles? Why or why not?

Winnie said the fish they caught was «beautiful, and horrible too.» (p.87)

Discussion: Beauty

1. Can something be beautiful to you and ugly to someone else?
2. Are beautiful and ugly opposites?
3. What does «beauty is in the eye of the beholder» mean?
4. Can something be beautiful and horrible at the same time?
5. Can something be beautiful and pretty at the same time?

Exercise: Beauty

Combine the following terms with beauty and decide what things could be both at the same time. (Example: the fish was beautiful and horrible, the bride was beautiful and pretty.)

- ugly
- frightening
- pleasant
- interesting
- breathtaking
- disgusting
- quiet
- mechanical
- emotional
- bright
- green

Miles told Winnie, «People got to be meat-eaters sometimes, though. It's the natural way. And that means killing things.» (p.88)

Discussion: The natural way

1. What is the natural way?
2. Is there just one natural way?
3. Is it natural to eat meat?
4. Is it natural to kill things to eat?
5. Do we kill plants in order to eat?
6. Is there a way to eat without killing anything?

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN Craziiness

Winnie decided the Tucks perhaps were crazy. (p.91)

Discussion: Craziiness

1. What does it mean to be crazy?
2. Is everyone's definition of crazy the same?
3. Is being crazy bad? Can being crazy be good?

4. Can being crazy help someone? Harm someone?
5. How are crazy people treated by others?
6. Do crazy and insane mean the same thing?
7. There are dozens of terms that people use to mean crazy. Are any of them nice? Hurtful?
8. Does being crazy make someone less intelligent? More intelligent?
9. Can someone be crazy and no one know it?
10. Can someone be crazy and everyone know it?
11. When someone says, «That's a crazy idea» are they calling the person who thought of it crazy?
12. If people can be crazy and ideas can be crazy, what else can be crazy?
13. Can being crazy be a temporary thing? Can it come and go?
14. What can cause someone to be crazy?
15. Can anyone be crazy?

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Devotion; Simplicity; Who deserves things?

The stranger devoted his life to finding out the truth about the family who never grew older. (p.95)

Discussion: Devotion

1. What does it mean to devote your life to something?
2. What things do people devote their lives to?
3. Can you devote your life to another person?
4. Can you devote your life to an idea?
5. Can you devote your life to a thing?
6. Can you devote your life to money?
7. Are some things better than others to devote a life to?
8. Are there some things not worth devoting a life to?
9. Can there be partial devotion?
10. Can there be temporary devotion?

Exercise: Devotion

With your group, decide how a person could devote his/her life to the following:

- money
- a parent

- a child
- a career
- religion
- school
- pleasure
- truth
- hating someone
- duty
- being beautiful
- finding something

The stranger said, «Like all magnificent things, it's very simple.» (p.97)

Discussion: Simplicity

1. What do you think the stranger meant?
2. Name some things that are simple. Are they magnificent?
3. Name some magnificent things. Are they simple?
4. What does it mean for something to be simple?
5. What does the phrase «it's simplicity itself» mean?
6. Do people admire simple things? Do people admire complicated things?
7. When is simplicity not valued?

The stranger wanted to sell the water only to people who deserved it, at a great price. (p.97-98)

Discussion: Who deserves things?

1. Who do you think the stranger meant when he said «people who deserved it»?
2. What makes someone deserving of something?
3. What does the phrase «he got what he deserved» mean?
4. What are «just deserts»?
5. Do you have to earn deserts?
6. Can someone be undeserving?
7. Do people get things they don't deserve?
8. Do people not get things they do deserve?

Exercise: Who deserves things?

Put a check by the following situations in which you think the person got what (s)he deserved. Be ready to defend your decisions.

_ Frankie punched Joe in the mouth. Frankie was sent to the principal's office.

_ Frankie punched Joe in the mouth. All of Frankie's friends cheered.

_ Frankie punched Joe in the mouth. Joe knocked Frankie down and broke his arm.

_ A terrorist bomber was caught and sent back to his country.

_ A woman who helped homeless people for many years was given a plaque to hang on her wall.

_ A burglar is caught with the things she stole, but is not convicted because of a technicality. - The student studied every night for the big geography test and made a 70.

_ The boy mowed a neighbor's yard and was paid \$20.

_ The two brothers took a butcher knife from the kitchen without permission and used it to practice their knife throwing. No one ever knew. ^ The little boy dropped and broke a dish and was spanked.

_ Everyone in the class was rewarded for doing their best on a test, but some of the students did not pass the test.

CHAPTER TWENTY**Envy; Ability**

Tuck looked at the unconscious stranger «as if he were entranced and - yes, envious - like a starving man looking through a window at a banquet.» (p.103)

Discussion: Envy

1. What does it mean to envy something or someone?
2. What are some other words that mean the same thing?
3. What does it mean to be green with envy?
4. What are some things that can be envied?
5. What are some of the things about someone else that can be envied?
6. Why do people envy?
7. Is envy always a bad thing?
8. Can you envy something bad?
9. What are the consequences of envy?

The chapter ends with the sentence «Mae Tuck would not be able to die.» (p.105)

Discussion: Ability

1. What does it mean to be able?
2. What does it mean to not be able?
3. Are there things that every human must do that someone is not able to do?
4. What abilities do all humans have?
5. What abilities can be developed?
6. Should all abilities be developed?
7. What abilities are valued? Not valued?
8. What abilities are valued in school? Not valued in school?

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Memories; Can you lose part of yourself; Ties to others

Rocking in her old chair made Winnie «almost remember something pleasant, something soothing, that would never quite come up to the surface of her mind.» (p.106)

Discussion: Memories

(See Chapter Two for more discussion questions)

1. Can you have a memory of something you can't remember?
2. How far back do our memories go?
3. Can we remember things we've never done?
4. Where do we keep our memories?
5. Are our memories reliable?
6. Can a memory be altered?
7. Does a memory have the same impact as the thing that is remembered?

Winnie's family sensed «that she was different now from what she had been before. As if some part of her had slipped away.» (p.107)

Discussion: Can you lose part of yourself?

1. Can you lose part of yourself?
2. What parts of yourself can you lose?
3. Are there parts of yourself that are meant to be lost?
4. What parts of yourself should not be lost?

5. What does it mean to lose your heart?
6. Does losing part of yourself make you a different person?
7. If you never lost part of yourself, would you remain a child forever?
8. Can you lose a part of yourself that no one can see?
9. Can you lose a part of yourself and not know it?
10. Can you lose a part of yourself and no one else know it?
11. Can losing something be good and bad at the same time?
12. Can you lose a part of yourself and then find it again?

Winnie was tied to her family by ancient, precious threads. New threads now tied her to the Tucks. (p.108)

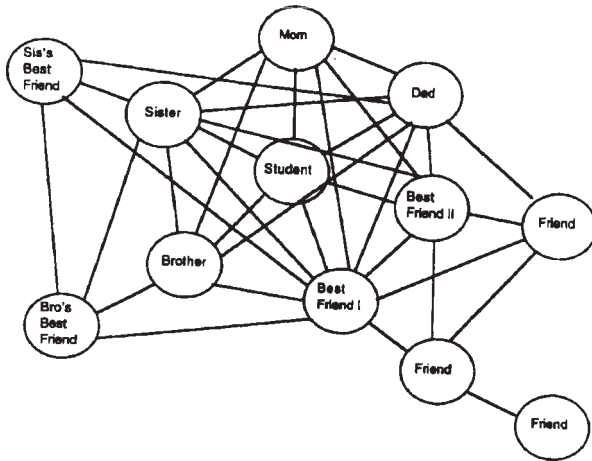
Discussion: Ties to others

1. What ties us to others?
2. June Masters Bacher said, «Love is like a violin. The music may stop now and then, but the strings remain forever.» How is her statement like the author's?
3. Simone Signoret said, «Chains do not hold a marriage together. It is threads, hundreds of tiny threads, which sew people together through the years.» How is her statement like the author's?
4. Are the ties to family different from the ties to friends?
5. Who would you be without any ties to other people?
6. Can you have too many ties?
7. Can you have too few ties?
8. Can there be ties that are good and ties that are bad?
9. Are there ties that are too strong? Too weak?
10. How do we break ties? Are there ties that need to be broken?

Exercise: Ties to others

On a plain piece of paper, put your name in a circle in the middle. Draw a line out from your circle for every member of your immediate family, with a circle for each of their names. Do the same for your best friends. Draw lines to connect each person to all the people they know well, that they are «tied to»... Now draw lines from each person to a new circle with a friend or relative that you have in common. Draw lines to connect these new people to everyone on the paper that they know.

Example:



CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Decisions; What things do we have to do? Anonymous acts

Jesse asked Winnie to drink the water when she turned seventeen and then come to find the Tucks. (p. 114)

Discussion: Decisions

1. What decision should Winme make?
2. How should decisions be made?
3. When should you ask for help in making decisions and when should you make a decision by yourself?
4. What kind of advice do you need to help you make decisions?
5. Are all decisions equal in importance?
6. Can some decisions seem unimportant at the time, but become very important later?
7. Can some decisions seem very important at the time, but later be unimportant?
8. Can unimportant decisions be hard? Can important decisions be easy?

Exercise: Decisions

Decide if each of the following is an important decision or an unimportant decision. Then decide if it would be an easy or hard one to make.

- what flavor ice cream to pick
- who to marry

- whether to cheat on a test or not
- what to get your mother for her birthday
- what size drink to buy at McDonald's a career
- what shoes to wear to school what college to go to whether to buy a dog or not whether to feed the dog or not
- where to go on vacation
- whether to go to Sunday School or not what T.V. show to watch
- what attitude to take toward the teacher what attitude to take toward the police

Winnie sent word to Tuck, «I want to help. I have to help.» (p.115)

Discussion: What things do we *have* to do?

1. What things do we have to do? Why?
2. Does anyone make us do these things?
3. Do we have a choice?
4. What are the consequences of not doing them?

Winnie found a way to make a difference in the world, but no one would know. (p.115)

Discussion: Anonymous Acts

1. Is it possible for someone to make a difference in the world and no one know?
2. Do people do things without anyone knowing?
3. What reasons would a person have for not letting anyone know?
4. Can an anonymous act be good? Bad?
5. Is a good anonymous act a gift? If so, who do you thank?

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

Moral codes; Outcomes

«Winnie had her own strong sense of rightness. (p.118)

Discussion: Moral Codes

1. What makes something right? What makes something wrong?
2. Who tells us what is right and wrong?

3. Can something be right for one person and wrong for another?
4. Are there some things that are wrong for everyone?
5. Should everyone have their own code or should everyone share the same one?
6. If everyone should share the same code, what code should it be? Who would decide?
7. Do different groups have different codes?
8. What happens when your code doesn't match someone else's?
9. What happens when your code tells you something is wrong, but you do it anyway?

Exercise: Moral Codes

In your group, develop a moral code that you think everyone should follow. Compare your code with those of the other groups.

Tuck had told Winnie that drinking the water was «something you don't find out how you feel until afterwards.» (p.119)

Discussion: Outcomes

1. When do you know how things will turn out?
2. When are you not sure how things will turn out?
3. Do you always know how things turn out?
4. Can you think you know how something will turn out, but then you're surprised?
5. Is it possible to not know how you feel about something until it's over?

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR**Trust; Prisons/Cages**

Winnie had to take advantage of her family's trust. (p.121)

Discussion: Trust

1. Who do you trust?
2. Who do you not trust?
3. Why do you trust some people and not others?
4. What exactly is trust? What does it mean to be trustworthy?
5. Are there degrees of trust?
6. Why is trust important?
7. Can you trust things? Feelings? Ideas?

8. How is trust broken?
9. Can trust be rebuilt?

Exercise: Trust

Make a list of people you trust. Beside each name, tell why you trust that person.

Make a list of people you do not trust. Beside each name, tell why you don't trust that person. Also tell under what circumstances you would trust that person again.

Stone walls do not a prison make, Nor iron bars a cage. (p.123)

Discussion: Prisons/Cages

1. What do you think the poem means?
2. Is there a difference between a prison and a cage?
3. What is kept in a prison? In a cage?
4. Can someone be in a prison and not feel imprisoned?
5. Can someone not be in a prison and feel imprisoned?
6. Are freedom and imprisonment antonyms?
7. Are cages always a bad thing?

Exercise: Prisons/Cages

Find the poem that these lines came from. Determine how this poem fits into the story of the Tucks.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE**Does love make wrong things right?**

Winnie explained why she had helped the Tucks: she loved them. (p.130)

Discussion: Does love make wrong things right?

Does love make wrong things right?

Exercise: Does love make wrong things right?

Decide whether the following situations are wrong or right.

• A man's children are starving. He can't find work, so he steals money to buy them food. • A woman's husband is dying. He needs a kidney transplant and has been on the waiting list for a long time. The woman pays someone to move his name to the top of the list.

- A woman's child is very sick, with a rare disease. There is one drug that will help, but the drug store that has the drug is closed for the night and the manager can't be found. The child must have the drug within the next two hours. The woman breaks into the drug store and takes the drug, leaving a note with her name and number on it.

- A young man wants to propose to his girlfriend, but he can't afford the ring she wants. He steals the ring and then proposes.

- A boy's best friend wants to go to the Six Flags, but can't afford a ticket. The boy gives his friend his season pass so he can get in.

- A man's son is shot to death by a robber. The man finds the robber and kills him.

EPILOGUE

Emotions

Tuck had wanted to find Winnie's grave, but was overcome with sadness when he saw it. (p.137-138)

Discussion: Emotions

1. When do you feel emotions?
2. What emotions can you feel?
3. Can you feel more than one emotion at a time?
4. What does the term «mixed emotions» mean?
5. Is it possible to feel no emotions?
6. Some people are described as emotionless. Can this be true?
7. What are «strong emotions»?
8. What is an «emotional moment»?
9. What does it mean to be overcome by an emotion?
10. What is the difference between an emotion and a mood?

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