Title/Author: *Train to Somewhere* by Eve Bunting

Suggested Time to Spend: 5 Days (Recommendation: two sessions per day, at least 20 minutes per day)

Common Core grade-level ELA/Literacy Standards: RL.1.1, RL.1.2, RL.1.3, RL.1.6, RL.1.7; W.1.1, W.1.8; SL.1.1, SL.1.2; L.1.4

Lesson Objective:

Students will listen to a fictionalized version of events that took place in our history. They will use the domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing to understand the central message of the book, as well as determine the main character’s feelings as the narrative progresses.

Teacher Instructions

**Before the Lesson**

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis below. **Please do not read this to the students**. This is a description to help you prepare to teach the book and be clear about what you want your children to take away from the work.

Big Ideas/Key Understandings/Focusing Question

Sometimes things turn out for the best, even if it wasn’t what you wanted.

“Sometimes what you get turns out to be better than what you wanted in the first place.” (p. 30)

Synopsis

*Train to Somewhere* is a book based on the real Orphan Train that carried homeless children to small towns and farms in the Midwest in the hopes of placing them with caring families. This story tells about Marianne, an orphan, heading west on the Orphan Train with other children to be placed with a family. Marianne desperately hopes that her mother will be waiting for her at one of the train stations since her mother had told her that she would be back to get her once she had made a new life for them in the West. At each stop, Marianne searches for her mother, who is never there. Though other orphans are selected by families, no one shows any interest in Marianne. At the final stop on the route in Somewhere, Iowa, an older couple who had been looking for a boy agree to adopt Marianne. Marianne finally realizes her mother is not going to be waiting for her anywhere. She decides she is ready to begin a new life with the older couple. *For more information, see the Introduction in the front of the book.*

1. Go to the last page of the lesson and review “What Makes this Read-Aloud Complex.” This was created for you as part of the lesson and will give you guidance about what the lesson writers saw as the sources of complexity or key access points for this book. You will of course evaluate text complexity with your own students in mind, and make adjustments to the lesson pacing and even the suggested activities and questions.
2. Read the entire book, adding your own insights to the understandings identified. Also note the stopping points for the text-inspired questions and activities. *Hint: you may want to copy the questions vocabulary words and activities over onto sticky notes so they can be stuck to the right pages for each day’s questions and vocabulary work.*

The Lesson – Questions, Activities, and Tasks

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Questions/Activities/Vocabulary/Tasks** | **Expected Outcome or Response (for each)** |
| **FIRST READING (Day 1):**  Read aloud the entire book with minimal interruptions. Stop to provide word meanings or clarify only when you know the majority of your students will be confused.  The teacher can choose to read the book, or watch a video of the book being read at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=osG-22GvMhA>. | The goal here is for students to enjoy the book, both writing and pictures, and to experience it as a whole. This will give them some context and sense of completion before they dive into examining the parts of the book more carefully. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SECOND READING (Day 2):**  Reread pages 4 – 12.  Stop at the bottom of the indicated pages (unless otherwise noted) to discuss the questions with students.  **Page 4** – stop after reading the first sentence and pose the following questions.  Who is telling the story? How do you know?  If students have difficulty, act out the sentence with someone playing Miss Randolph, Marianne, and Nora. Stress the word “my” when rereading the sentence. | In the first sentence of the book, Miss Randolph addresses or talks to Marianne. It is followed by “…Nora clutches at my hand.” The word “my” indicates that Marianne is the narrator of the story. |
| **Page 4**  An **orphan** is a child whose parents have died or abandoned (left) them. Why are the fourteen orphans boarding the train? What does the conductor mean when he says, “Going for a **placing-out**, are you?” | The orphans are boarding the train to travel west. There are people out west who want children to adopt. When the conductor asks Nora if she is going for a placing-out, he is asking her if she is going west to be adopted. |
| **Show students the illustration on page 5.**  What details does the illustration reinforce from our reading?” | The pictures show the fourteen orphans and the conductor. Boys are carrying trunks onto the train. The orphan children have trunks and bags with them. It looks like they are going on a long journey because they have a lot of bags with them. We can also get an idea of what the train looks like. |
| **Page 7**  Why does Marianne think that Nora will be one of the first children to be adopted? | Marianne thinks that Nora will be one of the first children to be adopted because she is wearing a new coat, her hair twirls in bright ringlets (curls), and she is pretty. |
| Why does Nora want people to believe that she and Marianne are sisters? | Nora does not want to be separated from Marianne. |
| At the end of this page, Marianne says, “*It’s all right*, I tell myself. I slide my fingers into my pocket and touch the softness of the feather. *She’ll be there. She’ll want me*.” What does Marianne mean? | Marianne is thinking about her mother and hoping that she will be at the train station. She is hoping that her mother really wants her and will be coming to get her. |
| How is Marianne feeling at this point in the story? Why? | Marianne is feeling hopeful because she says it is all right. She thinks her mother will be there. Marianne is also feeling sad because she knows that she and Nora may be separated. In the picture, Marianne looks sad and frightened. She might be scared because she is not sure what will happen to her or whether her mother will be at some of the places they are going. |
| **Page 8**  Why did the children have to change back into their old clothes? | The children had to change because they were going to eat and Miss Randolph didn’t want them to get their clothes messy. |
| Why is that important? | Miss Randolph wants the children to keep their clothes clean so that they look nice when the people who might be adopting them come to see them. |
| What does it mean when the author writes, “Clickety-clack, clickety-clee, I’m coming, Mama. Wait for me.” | The “Clickety-clack, clickety-clee” represents the sound of the train on the railroad tracks. Marianne is thinking about her mother and hoping that she will be waiting for her when they get to their destination. |
| **Page 10**  What do the children see when they get off the train at the first stop? | The children see a large crowd of people on the platform. |
| What is the first thing Marianne does when she gets off the train? What does she realize? | The first thing that Marianne does is scan the crowd for her mother, but she realizes she is not there. |
| How does Marianne feel when she realizes her mother is not there? | Marianne is still hopeful that her mother will find her later because the text says, “She probably went farther west, farther than this.” |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Page 12**  Why are the children placed on a stage? How did the townspeople decide which children to select? | Having the children sit on chairs on the stage allowed all of the people to see them well. They were able to look them over to see which ones had the characteristics they were looking for. Some of the townspeople were looking for children who were strong and could help with crops or work within their homes. |
| Reread the 8th paragraph, beginning with, “ ‘Mavis is a dear girl,’ Miss Randolph says… ‘Be good to her.’” Why does Miss Randolph say, “Be good to her.”?  The author says that Miss Randolph has her lips pressed tightly together. Why would Miss Randolph have her lips pressed tightly together?   * In order to help students understand this point, model how Miss Randolph’s face might have looked. * Guide students in a discussion of how their face looks and feels (furrowed brow, tense lips, etc., which turns their face into a frown). This will help them make the connection that Miss Randolph disapproves of the two women (or doesn’t like them) and is worried about Mavis.   Why does Miss Randolph make sure the woman knows that an agent will be visiting the home? | Miss Randolph says that because she is worried that the two women won’t treat Mavis well.  By pressing her lips together, she is showing that she disapproves of the woman taking Mavis and is fearful that she may be mistreated.  Miss Randolph makes sure the woman knows that an agent will be coming to check on Mavis and to make sure Mavis is being treated well. |
| An **agreement** is coming to a mutual arrangement with someone – it is something you both agree to. What are agreement papers? | Agreement papers are the papers that have to be signed when someone takes one of the children. They are papers saying that the adult(s) will take care of the child(ren). They might also be adoption papers. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY 2:**  To help students understand what it might have been like to be a child on the orphan train, share the following resources with students and discuss.  Show students examples of what the interior of a train car in the 1800s might have looked like.  <http://www.vistadome.com/trains/edaville/edaville_coach.jpg>  <http://lesannberry.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Pullman-car-interior-late-1800s.bmp>  Show students pictures of actual train tickets from the early 1900s using the following link.  <http://gal9.piclab.us/key/1920s%20train%20ticket>  <http://williammarylyons.com/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/OrphanTrainWALSHTOWNRev2.212133147.jpg>  Share images of some of the orphan train children. <http://ithappenedhere.pbworks.com/f/1288152260/ALHI126-442x341.png>  <http://www.pcgenweb.com/pcgs/images/pictures/pic_rifenburg.bmp> | The goal here is to provide students with other sources of information that reinforce or validate the information they are learning from the book. Photos help them link to the idea that the events of the story are based on things that really happened a long time ago. They also help students better understand the time era as they look at photos of trains and see photos of the type of dress at the time. |
| **SECOND READING (Day 3):**  Continue rereading from the previous day. Reread pages 14-32.  Stop at the bottom of the indicated pages (unless otherwise noted) to discuss the questions with students. |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity 3**  Tell the students that throughout the text, the author gives clues about how Marianne is feeling. Have examples from the previous day’s reading already charted and review them with students (see first three examples). Continue to add to the chart as you progress through today’s reading. Places where you can add to the chart are indicated on questions below with an asterisk (\*). A completed sample chart can be found under the *Note to Teacher* section.  A list of feeling words can be found on this site:  <http://www.psychpage.com/learning/library/assess/feelings.html> | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Page** | **Marianne’s Feelings** | **Evidence** | | *7* | *ugly* | *“I can see my own long, thin face. I’m not pretty.”* | | *8* | *anxious, hopeful* | *“I’m coming, Mama. Wait for me.”* | | *10* | *disappointed* | *“I can see right away that my mother isn’t here. She probably went farther west, farther than this.”* | | 17 | *sad* | “I’m sniffling, too.”  “I’ve waited so many Christmases.” | | 17 | *hopeful* | “I have to stay free for my mother.” | |
| **Pages 14-17**  How do Marianne and Nora feel about being separated from each other? How do you know? \* | Nora is distraught over being separated from Marianne. She begs the couple to take Marianne, too. She lies to the couple, telling them that she and Marianne are sisters. She is clinging so tightly to Marianne that Marianne has to pry her fingers off her hand. Nora keeps looking back at her as she is led away. Marianne is also upset and sad about being separated from Nora. She is sniffling as Nora is taken away. |
| Why does Nora say, “But it’s better if I’m not taken”?\* | Nora is still hopeful that her mother will be at one of the train stops to get her. |
| What do we know about how and why Marianne came to be in the orphanage? | Her mother took her to the orphanage and told her she was going west to make a new life for them. She promised Marianne that she would come back to get her before Christmas. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Explain what Marianne means when she says, “I’ve waited through so many Christmases.” | She means that she has been waiting for many years for her mother to return. |
| What does the white feather symbolize to Marianne? | The white feather serves as a reminder of her mother because she took it out of her mother’s hair on the last day she saw her. |
| **Page 20**  Reread the first paragraph on page 20. What does the author tell us about the newspapers?  What does the author mean when she writes, “…riding the rails”? | The author tells us that the story of the orphans coming to each town was in all of the newspapers and she gives examples of some of the headlines in those newspapers - “Orphans from St. Christopher’s among those riding the rails” and “Children in need of homes.”  The author is referring to the fact that a train runs on rails, so anyone who is traveling on the train would be “riding the rails.” |
| **Activity 4**  This activity will help students understand how townspeople along the route were made aware of the upcoming arrival of the orphan trains and specifically lends itself to students’ understanding of how the townspeople knew when and where to come and see the children. It leads to helping students understand why Marianne was so certain her mother would be at each stop. In addition, it will reinforce that some of the children may not have been treated kindly by their adoptive parents or guardians (which was discussed previously). Show and read to students various photos of newspaper articles and advertisements announcing the expected arrival of orphans in town who would be available for placement/adoption. Discuss the information contained within, such as expectations for the way the children would be treated (2nd and 4th link), how children could be taken on a trial basis (3rd link), and how descriptions of them were included (1st and 3rd link) in the announcements. | <http://www.nebraskahistory.org/images/sites/mnh/orphan/tekamah.jpg>  <http://www.kansassampler.org/KSamp-admin/8wondershistphotos/l/28.jpg>  <http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/files/2009/03/tecumseh.jpg> |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Pose the question**  Using the information just discussed, why is Marianne sure that her mother will be at one of the stops?\* | She knows that the newspapers have announced that the train will be coming and what orphanage the children were coming from; therefore, she is certain that her mother will be at one of the stops waiting to take her home. |
| **Page 23**  What does the phrase “have a terrible hurt inside” mean? Why does Marianne have “a terrible hurt inside” her?\* | When you have “a terrible hurt inside” it means that your heart hurts, that you feel sad. Marianne feels unwanted. Nobody at any of the train stops has wanted her. She also knows her mother doesn’t want her because she hasn’t been at any of the stops to pick her up. She is beginning to realize her mother won’t be at any of the stops. |
| **Page 24**  Marianne says, “The taste of the sweet milk is still in my throat and it’s making me sick.” Is it the milk that is making her feel sick? Why or why not?\* | No, the milk isn’t making her sick. She is feeling sick and nervous because she is wondering who is prettiest of the remaining children. She doesn’t think she is pretty and she knows no one will want her. She also knows that once again, her mother is not at the station. It’s making her feel sick to her stomach because she is anxious. |
| Why does Miss Randolph have a “sort of begging in her voice” when she talks to the couple? | Marianne is the last orphan and Miss Randolph wants the couple to take her. She is worried that no one will want Marianne at all. We know this because Miss Randolph tries to convince the couple to take Marianne by telling them how good she is with children. |
| **Page 26**  The teacher may want to add a sticker to the map from Activity 1. The train has reached its final destination of Somewhere, Iowa.  Why isn’t Marianne ready to get off the train? How do you know?\* | She is afraid. Her hands are shaking, she pushes herself back into the corner of the seat, and she whispers, “no” when Miss Randolph asks if she is ready. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Page 28**  Is Marianne the type of child the old couple is looking for? What were they hoping for? How do you know?  What does the author tell us about the woman’s face? What does Marianne think this means? | No. We know this because the woman starts to ask if she is the only one left. We know the couple wants a boy because they bring a toy train with them, which tends to be a boy’s toy.  The author says that the woman looks closely at Marianne and that her face changes; it softens. Marianne feels as if the woman understands her and the hurt she feels inside. |
| How do the couple’s feelings regarding Marianne change? | The couple decides they want Marianne after all because they offer her the train and tell her they have brought it for her. |
| How is Marianne feeling at this point in the story?\*  What is the hurt Marianne refers to? | Marianne feels like the woman understands her because of the way she looks at her. She thinks that the woman looks at her like a mother would. She says the woman understands her hurt.  The hurt is the feeling she has because no one wants her and because her mother never came back to get her. |
| **Page 30**  **Crumbling** means collapsing. Why is there a “crumbling” inside of Marianne? What is it that’s crumbling?\*  Why does Marianne give the woman the feather? Why does the author say that the feather has found its place at last? | Marianne feels the hope she had of finding her mother collapsing, or crumbling, within her. It means that she is no longer hopeful. She finally accepts that her mother is not ever going to come back to find her. She is not waiting anywhere for her.  The feather was a symbol for her mother, and this woman is going to become Marianne’s new mother. It is her way of showing that she accepts the woman as her mother. When the woman places the feather in her hat and it looks like it belongs there, it tells us that Marianne has finally found the place where she belongs. |
| **Page 32**  What did Marianne learn? | Sometimes things turn out for the best, even though it is not what you wanted. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **THIRD READING** **(Day 4):**  **Activity 5:**  Deconstruct the following excerpts/sentences to help students understand the text. You may choose to do this at separate times of the day, so as not to overwhelm students. |  |
| **Page 26 – first excerpt**  Tell students that authors deliberately choose specific words to help relay a message or an idea. Write the sentences below on the board or on a chart and reread them with students. Tell students, “Let’s think about what the author is trying to say with these words.” Help students deconstruct the meaning of the text by analyzing the sentences.  *“Somewhere,” the conductor calls. It’s such a strange name. As if it thinks itself important. As if it’s a place surrounded by nowhere.”* | Define the word ***somewhere*** by telling students that somewhere is a word used when you want to talk about a place without saying exactly where you mean. |
| Why does the author say, “As if it thinks itself important”? | It’s a play on words. If something is important, it should be named, but this town isn’t given a specific name, it is just named *Somewhere*. |
| What does the author mean when she says, “As if it’s a place surrounded by nowhere”? | If something is surrounded by nothing, it makes the something more important. So, by saying that *Somewhere* is a place surrounded by nowhere, it makes it more significant and important. |
| So, is *Somewhere* an important place or an unimportant place? What is the author trying to tell us about Somewhere? | *Somewhere* is an important place because it is the place where Marianne will finally feel accepted and find a new family and home.  Point out to students that the author uses the contradiction of the terms somewhere and nowhere to build the importance of the town of Somewhere. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Why did the author call this book *Train to Somewhere*? What is the significance of the author naming the town *Somewhere*? | The author called this book *Train to Somewhere* because the final stop on the route was Somewhere, Iowa. Throughout the story Marianne felt unloved, unwanted, and insignificant (unimportant). By naming the town Somewhere the author makes it seem like it is not really important, but in reality, it is extremely important because that is where Marianne finally feels like she belongs. The name Somewhere could be anywhere. The emphasis is not on the place, but the happiness and acceptance that Marianne finds. |
| **Page 28 – second excerpt**  Focus on the second sentence within this excerpt, helping students deconstruct the sentence and its complicated syntax.  *“Mrs. Book sticks the feather in the band of her droopy hat. It’s funny the way it nestles there, as if it belongs, as if it has found its place at last.”* |  |
| If something **nestles** somewhere, it is in a place that seems safe and sheltered. It gets comfy. It settles in. What is the author telling us about the feather? | The author is telling us that the feather looks like it should be part of the hat and that the feather will be protected or sheltered there. |
| What is the phrase *as if it belongs* referring to? What belongs? Where does it belong? | The phrase is referring to the feather again and it is telling us that the feather looks like a natural part of the hat, like it fits – or belongs. |
| Look at the last clause of the sentence. What does it mean when it says, “*…as if it has found its place at last*”? **What** has found its place? What does *found its place* mean? | The feather has found its place. Found its place means that it belongs. The feather is symbolic of what is happening with Marianne. |
| How are the feather and Marianne alike? | In the story, Marianne, much like the feather has found the place she belongs. She has found the place where she fits, where she will be protected, where she will be safe and loved. |

FINAL DAY WITH THE BOOK - Culminating Task

* How does Marianne change throughout the story? Explain through writing and pictures how Marianne felt at the beginning of the story, the middle of the story, and the end of the story. Then, write a sentence about what Marianne learned. (A recording sheet has been provided for the teacher toward the end of this lesson plan.)
* Possible answers might include:
  + At the beginning of the story, Marianne feels that she if not pretty and that the other children will be chosen before she is. She decides that that is okay, because Marianne is hoping that her mother is going to be at one of the train stations. She is sure that her mother will be coming to get her. Though she is sad about being separated from Nora, she decides that everything will be okay because she is hopeful that her mother will be waiting for her. In the middle of the story, Marianne becomes more anxious because her mother has not been at any of the train stations. She starts to feel unwanted because the townspeople have all chosen other children instead of her. She watches the other children being chosen and given homes, but she tries to hang onto the idea that her mother will be at one of the stations even though she is becoming more uncertain that she will really be there. At the end of the story, Marianne realizes that her mother will not be anywhere. She is sad about not being wanted by her mother, but when she meets the older couple who agree to give her a home, she becomes hopeful that she finally has found a place where she belongs.

Vocabulary

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **These words merit less time and attention**  (They are concrete and easy to explain, or describe events/  processes/ideas/concepts/experiences that are familiar to your students ) | **These words merit more time and attention**  (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, and/or are a part  of a large family of words with related meanings. These words are likely to describe events, ideas, processes or experiences that most of your student will be unfamiliar with) |
| *Page 4*   * **larkspur** – medicine made from the larkspur plant that was typically used to destroy lice and nits in the hair. * **stowaway –** a person who hides in a vehicle to make a journey secretly or without paying * **peak year –** a year when something was at its highest * **coach** – a separate area of a train that carries passengers * **conductor** – a person who travels on a train to help passengers and check tickets * **trunks** – a strong box or case used to take things on a journey, like a suitcase | *Page 4*   * **orphan** – a child whose parents are dead * **placing out** – the process of putting children with families who would care for them * **adopt** – taking a child into your home and legally making them your son or daughter * **spoil** – to prevent something from being successful * **split** – to separate |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **These words merit less time and attention**  (They are concrete and easy to explain, or describe events/  processes/ideas/concepts/experiences that are familiar to your students ) | **These words merit more time and attention**  (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, and/or are a part  of a large family of words with related meanings. These words are likely to describe events, ideas, processes or experiences that most of your student will be unfamiliar with) |
| *Page 8*   * **gliding** – to move silently is a smooth and effortless way * **freight** – a place where goods that are being moved by train are stored * **tenements** – a large, old building divided into a number of apartments | *Page 12*   * **pleasant** – friendly and likeable * **harvest** – a crop that you bring in * **scrawny** – unattractive because of being too thin * **agent** – a person who looks after someone’s affairs * **glares** – to look at someone with an angry expression |
| *Page 10*   * **cor blimey** – an exclamation of surprise (comes from “God blind me”) * **atlas** – a book of maps | *Page 14*   * **trembling** – shaking because of cold or fright * **pry** – the act of separating or opening |
| *Page 14*   * **carriage** – an old-fashioned vehicle pulled by horses | *Page 18*   * **sassy** – disrespectful in a lively, confident way |
| *Page 23*   * **clutches** – to hold something tightly because you are anxious or afraid * **bad tempered** – angry, cranky, crabby | *Page 20*   * **riding the rails** – traveling by train |
| *Page 24*   * **Gingersnaps** – a sugar-coated cookie containing spices like cinnamon, ginger, and cloves * **Missus** – a man’s wife | *Page 24*   * **down in the dumps** – a gloomy, melancholy state of mind |
| *Page 28*   * **stooped** – to stand or walk bent forward * **locomotive** – a large vehicle that pulls a train; the front car on a train | *Page 30*   * **crumbling** – collapsing * **nestles** – to settle into a place that seems safe and sheltered |

Fun Extension Activities for this book and other useful Resources

* View videos that provide additional information about the orphan trains at the following links.

This video (about 4:30 minutes) provides background on the orphan trains.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IsRALN8P2WM>

The beginning narrative on this video provides a quick, excellent narrative about the orphan trains (the first 3 minutes). The latter part of the video is a song about the orphan trains.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=59V0-_pvSpo>

This video (approximately 10 minutes) provides more detailed information on the foster system, with the majority of it devoted to the orphan trains (from approximately 2:37-8:25 of the video)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWTTcNBfaRw>

This video intersperses a musical presentation along with commentary and brief stories about some of the children who rode the Orphan Train.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kexzcq8cXto>

This video is an interview with Idona Swedenberg, the wife of an Orphan Train rider. The most useful portion of the video is from (1:38-3:15 minutes)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7aUTxyAevM>

* Read primary or secondary sources related to the Orphan Trains.

Information about the Sedlacek children, who rode the orphan trains. The website includes direct quotes and information from memoirs.

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~neadoptn/sedlacek.html>

Newspaper articles and other resources related to the Orphan Trains.

<http://www.kancoll.org/articles/orphans/>

Additional book titles, some containing the actual stories of some of the children who were on the orphan trains, are available here.

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~wiorphan/books.html>

Note to Teacher

* Below is a sample of a completed chart that annotates Marianne’s feelings throughout the text. This chart should be completed together as a class as you progress through rereading the book.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Page** | **Marianne’s Feelings** | **Evidence** |
| *7* | *ugly* | *“I can see my own long, thin face. I’m not pretty.”* |
| *8* | *anxious, hopeful* | *“I’m coming, Mama. Wait for me.”* |
| *10* | *disappointed* | *“I can see right away that my mother isn’t here. She probably went farther west, farther than this.”* |
| 17 | *sad* | “I’m sniffling, too.”  “I’ve waited so many Christmases.” |
| 17 | *hopeful* | “I have to stay free for my mother.” |
| 20 | *certain* | “I was sure my mother would be at one of them.” |
| 23 | *confused*  *hurt*  *unwanted* | “I have a terrible hurt inside of me. My mother doesn’t want me. It looks like nobody wants me.” |
| 24 | *nervous*  *anxious* | “The taste of sweet milk is still in my throat and it’s making me sick.” |
| 26 | *Afraid* | “My hands are shaking.”  “I pull myself back into the corner of the seat. ‘No,’ I whisper.” |
| 28 | *hopeful* | “Somehow this woman understands me…somehow she understands the hurt.” |
| 30 | *acceptance* | “There’s a sort of crumbling inside of me. My mother’s not in Somewhere. She’s not waiting here or anywhere.” |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Page** | **Marianne’s Feelings** | **Evidence** |
| 30 | Optimistic  calm  content | “It’s funny the way it nestles there, as if it belongs, as if it has found its place at last.” |
| 32 | optimistic  hopeful | “I’m ready.” |

Note to Teachers

* + Throughout the discussion portions of the lesson guide, teachers may choose to allow students to engage in partner talk before discussing whole group. The use of sentence frames for accountable partner talk may be useful. For example, when posing the question, “Why does Marianne think that Nora will be one of the first children to be adopted?” students could use the following frames with partners:

**Student A:** Marianne believes that Nora will be adopted first because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Student B:** Another reason that Nora will be adopted first is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Each student is responsible for listening and checking the reasonableness of the other student’s answer. In addition, the teacher could post or write the sentence frames on the board for students to refer to.

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Culminating Activity: *Train to Somewhere***

How does Marianne change throughout the story? Explain through writing and pictures how Marianne felt at the beginning of the story, the middle of the story, and the end of the story. Then, write a sentence about what Marianne learned.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Beginning** | **Middle** | **End** |
|  |  |  |

Marianne learned \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**What Makes This Read-Aloud Complex?**

1. **Quantitative Measure**

Go to <http://www.lexile.com/> and enter the title of your read-aloud in the Quick Book Search in the upper right of home page. Most texts will have a Lexile measure in this database.

Most of the texts that we read aloud in K-2 should be in the 2-3 or 4-5 band, more complex than the students can read themselves.

2-3 band 420-820L

4-5 band 740-1010L

440

1. **Qualitative Features**

Consider the four dimensions of text complexity below. For each dimension\*, note specific examples from the text that make it more or less complex.

This book brings attention to the plight of orphan children in the late 1800s to early 1900s. It is based on actual events in history, but is a fictionalized account of those events. This book has multiple layers of meaning. The name of the town *Somewhere* has significance to what is happening with the story. *Somewhere* denotes a special place for the main character, even though its name implies otherwise.

The story is arranged chronologically with good illustration support. The main character, Marianne, has asides that allow the reader to know her thoughts and they give insight into her feelings.

*“Clickety-clack, clickety-clee,*

*I’m coming, Mama. Wait for me.”*

This story contains vocabulary that will likely be unfamiliar to students due to the topic and era. For example, there is vocabulary related to trains (i.e., conductor, coach, platform). One of the orphans in the story speaks in an English accent using unfamiliar vocabulary (“‘Cor blimey!’” Zachary Cummings breathes …”). Other vocabulary was more prevalent during the time era of the story (i.e., larkspur, bonnet).

The story takes place during a different time era (late 1800s to early 1900s) where travel to western rural areas often occurred by train. In addition, students need to understand what it means to be an orphan and how children were placed in homes.

“‘Going for a placing-out, are you?’ the conductor asks Nora.”

**Meaning/Purpose**

**Structure**

**Language**

**Knowledge Demands**

1. **Reader and Task Considerations**

**What will challenge my students most in this text? What supports can I provide?**

There is deeper meaning behind the selection of the name *Somewhere* for the name of the town where Marianne finally finds a home. This abstract concept will be difficult for students to grasp and understand. This will need to be addressed through questioning or by deconstructing some of the sentences from the text to help students determine the multiple layers of meaning. The fact that this takes place in an earlier era in time will be challenging for students. Some of the vocabulary may be unfamiliar to students due to the era. In addition, the fact that this is historical fiction may pose a problem for students. They will have to understand that this is a fictional story, even though it is based on real-life events. Supports could include showing students pictures of the era (trains, dress, settings such as small towns, etc.). For difficult vocabulary that cannot be addressed through context, “fast mapping,” or quickly telling the definition in the context of the initial read will be essential. In addition, students may be challenged by the internal dialogue and thoughts of the main character as it is interspersed with regular narrative. Questions will need to directly address this facet of the text.

**How will this text help my students build knowledge about the world?**

Students will learn about the orphan trains, which were historically used to place children in foster homes with the idea that they would be adopted by families. Students will gain insight into what it means to be an orphan, as well as learn about another family structure – that of an adopted family. They may also build some knowledge about the time era in general – where trains were a major form of travel.

1. **Grade level**

What grade does this book best belong in? First Grade