



Heartbeat

By Sharon Creech

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Genre: Fictional Poetry

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Sharon Creech



Sharon Creech has written many children's novels and won numerous awards including the Newbery Medal. She was born in Euclid, Ohio near Cleveland and is one of five children. She wanted to be many things when she grew up...a figure skater, painter, singer, Teacher and reporter. Sharon went to college and became a teacher and then later a writer. When Sharon was a child, she visited family every summer in Quincy, Kentucky, where ironically, a lot her stories take place. One story that she has written is really based on her younger years...it was Absolute Normal Chaos!

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*Picture from www.sharoncreech.com

Annotation:

The novel, fictional poetry Heartbeat, focuses on twelve year old Annie and her various emotional issues. Grandfather is experiencing dementia. Mom is pregnant, and her best friend Max is very moody. This is a wonderful story written in free-verse that explores these changes in Annie's life and how the thoughts of a twelve year old girl are interrelated. Annie is a runner, and does it just for the pure feel of freedom. On the contrary, Max is a runner who runs to escape his feelings. What Annie realizes while watching and listening to all of these issues, is how things change over time and how everything she is dealing with fits into her life.

Booktalk:

“Run run run.

That's what twelve-year-old Annie loves to do. When she's barefoot and running, she can hear her heart beating...

Thump-THUMP, thump-THUMP.”

Have you ever found an activity that brings pure feelings of joy? Well, Annie has. She is a runner, but only because of how she feels while doing it. The wind...the feel of the bare earth beneath her feet...this is what running is all about to Annie. She loves the freedom to think about all that is going on in her life. On the contrary, her friend Max, enjoys running to escape his personal problems. The two run in the park together, and Annie has some life-changing things happening in her family. Mom is pregnant, grandpa is experiencing dementia, and Max...hmmm...can Annie cope with all of these changes? Read the fictional poetry book, Heartbeat, by Sharon Creech to find out...

Characters:

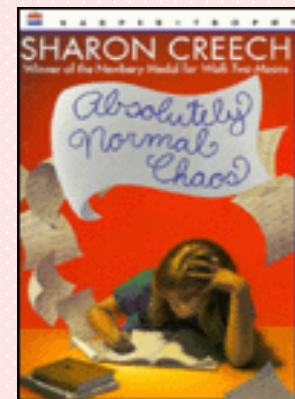
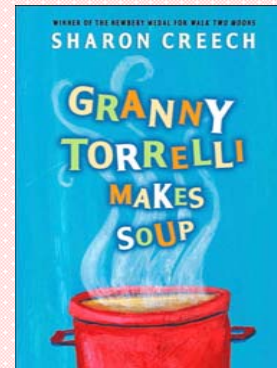
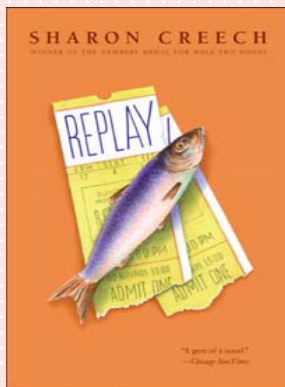
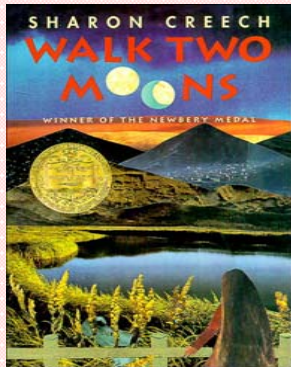
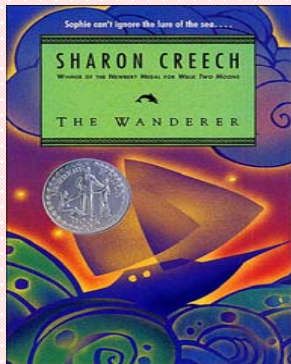
- Annie is a resourceful, twelve year old girl who enjoys running because of the feeling of enjoyment.
- Max is a very moody thirteen year old who feels as if he needs to escape life by running.
- Mom is very caring and has Annie who is twelve, and is now pregnant again.
- Dad is very helpful and takes part in mom's delivery of Joey. He seems to be a good provider for the family.
- Grandpa has dementia and is always asking questions about things he has forgotten. He was a runner as a boy.
- Mrs. Cobber is an older neighbor woman who hires Annie to cut her grass. She is always cherry and very helpful to the family.
- Joey is Annie's new baby brother. He is a jovial baby, and is loved very much by his family.
- Kaylee is a friend of Annie's and is only in the story when Annie is in class. She is very literal and does not have the deep thoughts that Annie does.

Conflict and Conflict Resolution:

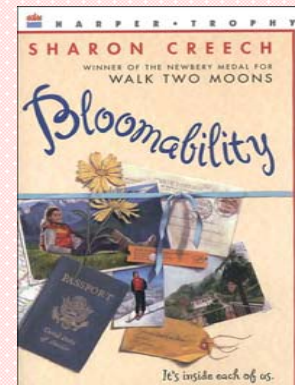
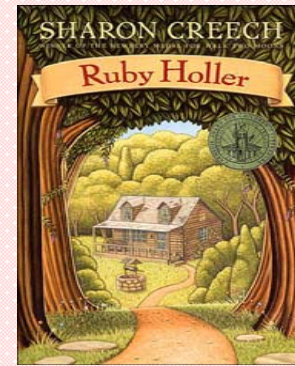
- The conflict in Heartbeat is an internal conflict. Annie is a twelve year old girl whose life is changing quickly. As a pre-teen, she is not comfortable with her grandfather's dementia, her mother's pregnancy and her moody friend Max who sees things differently than she does.

- The conflict is resolved as Annie listens and watches throughout the story and learns that as things change, she is too. The "apple" assignment from her teacher is one of the changing observations that helps Annie realize that as things change, people adapt and grow internally to prepare to flow through life.

If you liked Heartbeat, you'll *love*:



- The Wanderer
- Walk Two Moons
- Ruby Holler
- Replay
- Pleasing the Ghost
- Love That Dog
- Granny Torrelli Makes Soup
- Chasing Redbird
- Bloomability
- Absolute Normal Chaos



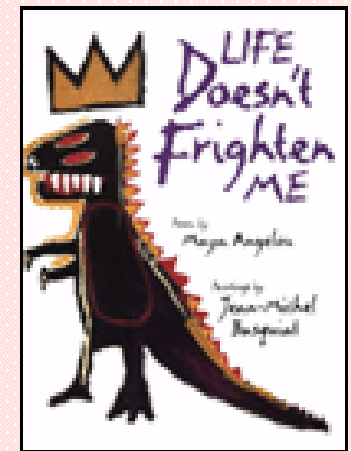
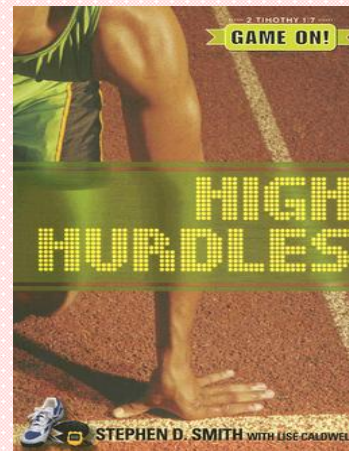
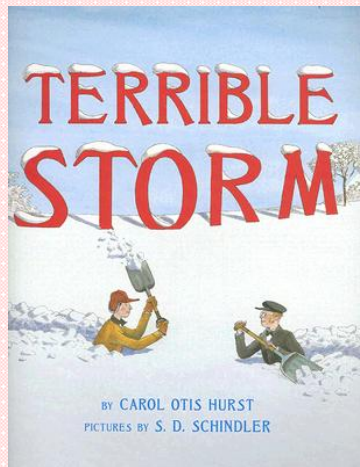
If you like Heartbeat, you'll also *love*:

Terrible Storm by Carol Otis Hurst

Fast Company by Rich Wallace

High Hurdles by Stephen D. Smith

Life Doesn't Frighten Me by Maya Angelou



Interest Level and Reading Level:

- Interest Level: Middle grades fourth through sixth
Ages 9-12 years

- Reading Level: Fifth grade

Read Aloud Passages:

BUT! P.7

Annie had been witnessing her mother
throwing up, and taking lots of naps...

But! My mother did not die.
She does not have a deadly disease.

Instead she has a baby growing
Inside her
Little tiny cells
Multiplying every second

And the queasiness has stopped
And now she feels good---
Like a goddess, she says

And we look at the books
Which show cells
Multiplying
And it seems miraculous
And strange
And sometimes creepy
And I ask her if it feels like an alien
Is inside her
And she says

Sometimes, yes.

THE RACE p.137

Max, Annie's friend is running in his first
track meet...

Round the bend now
He's starting to relax
Looking good
Head up
Chin out
Arms close in

And then he stumbles, trips

And I freeze
Like a statue on the grass
Mouth open
Hand stretched toward Max
As if I could push him
To the finish line.

And in my frozen moment
Max has kicked off his shoes
And I think, *Yay, Max!*

Setting and Point of View:

- The serious, yet funny story, Heartbeat, takes place in the present time 21st century. The season is early spring.
- The story is told in First Person Omniscient. Annie is the narrator, and seems to know everything about all the other characters in the story.

Theme:

The main theme in Heartbeat is relationships.

Relationships in this story all involve Annie. She and Grandpa are best buddies, and share a love for running. Grandpa is her confidant, and they understand each other immensely. Annie is mother's only child...until mom becomes pregnant which troubles Annie and she is not sure what kind of relationship she and her mother will have once the baby is born. Max is Annie's best friend, and has a different "take" on life. Annie shares Grandpa's philosophy of running, which is adopted by Max at the end of the story and one can infer that their relationship will strengthen even more. The title, Heartbeat, draws the reader to the beat of the prose and how it is written by Sharon Creech, as well as also being a very important feeling or rhythm of life.

Across the Curriculum Connections:

Language Arts/Art

Individual Activity:

Find out about different types of poetry using the resources below, and then create your own poem based on something that is important in your life. Draw a picture to portray the meaning of your poem.

<http://coe.west.asu.edu/students/stennille/ST3/poetrywq.htm>

<http://www.kathimitchell.com/poemtypes.html>

This activity is connected to Heartbeat because it is written in free-verse poetry.

Science/Art

Pairs or Small Group:

Using the following websites, research the human life cycle and draw a diagram consisting of the four stages of life.

<http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/on-line/lifecycle/>

http://www.tqny.org/NYC040719/life_cycle.htm

This activity connects to Heartbeat because the different characters in the book are at different stages of life and are experiencing different things.

Additional Online Activities:

- <http://www.education.smarttech.com/ste/en-GB/Ed+Resource/Lesson+activities/SMARTIdeasActivities/Primary/Science/Human+Life+Cycle.htm>
- This activity is to help children learn about the different stages of life. It compares human life and animal life.

- http://www.kidshealth.org/misc_pages/mybody_SW.html
- Check out this website and explore the “Game Closet” to learn about your body. Also, choose an experiment and enjoy!

Literature Circle *Discussion Leader* Role Sheet

The students will be in Literature Circle Groups, and each child will have an assigned role for the assigned section of the book. These are designated before the assigned section for the discussion. This is one of five roles:

- Discussion Director Directions:

Your job is to write at least two questions before, during and after the reading. Remember to write several **FAT** questions that cannot be answered by only yes or no and will generate discussion. You are responsible for keeping your group focused during discussion. You will call on each group member to report on their assigned role as you keep the discussion positive and quiet.

What **FAT** questions do you have before beginning this section?

What **FAT** questions tickled you brain during the reading?

Now that you are done reading, what **FAT** questions do you still have from this section?

Discussion Questions:

Pgs: 1-30

What are footfalls?

What do you think Annie means when she says Max is in training to escape?

Why is Annie's mom queasy? P.7

How do you think Annie feels when Grandpa says, "I don't remember?"

Where did Annie get her talent for running? P.10

Do you think Max is envious of Annie's family?

What do you think Max meant when he said, "These feet are my tickets out of here?"

What is the comparison Annie is making on page 24?

Why does Max want to be a famous athlete?

Pgs: 30-58

What does Max mean when he says that the town is too small?

What do you think Max is running from?

After Annie writes her fears and loves, what does she doubt? P.35

Why does Annie keep referring to the baby as an alien?

How do you think Annie is feeling when she is listening to her grandfather ask the same questions repeatedly?

Is Annie feeling that her whole world is changing?

What does she do when she is running? P.50

Why was the English lesson on "footnotes" ironic to Annie?

What do you think the surprise is that mom has for Annie, dad and grandpa?

How did Annie feel about the realization of the picture content? P.55

Why do you think Grandpa was crying?

Pgs: 59-91

Do you think Annie likes Art class?

What do you think Annie will learn about apples?

Why do you think Miss Freely is having the students draw a picture of the same apple every day?

What was Annie thinking when she heard the heartbeat? P.67

Do you think Annie is getting used to the fact that mom is having a baby? P.72-73

How are Max and Annie different runners?

Discussion Questions:

As Grandpa and Annie are looking at the photo album, what is portrayed in Annie's narration?

How is the "perspective" assignment relating to Annie's life?

What do you think has made Max angry?

For what reason does Annie think Max is mad at her? P.91

Pgs.92-122

What will Annie think of the birthing center?

How did Annie describe how she would feel watching the birth? P.94

How do you think Annie felt when she came home from running and couldn't find her apple?

Did Grandpa mean to take Annie's "Art" apple?

What idea did this "bite" give Annie? P.100

How does Annie approach school assignments and activities?

What is it that is bothering Annie on page 115 as she is running?

What is Annie's teacher, Mr. Wellington calling a "treasure of words?" p.120

How does Annie relate her school lessons to her thoughts?

Pgs:123-155

What do you think Grandpa is yelling for?

Why was the photo of himself as a boy bothering Grandpa? P.125

Why doesn't Annie want to watch Max in the track meet? P.129

How does Annie feel about Grandpa's comment of "kicking the bucket?"

What is Annie's mood as Max trips in the race and Mrs. Cobber tells her the baby is coming?

How does Annie feel in the birthing room? P.145

And after the baby is born? P.154-155

Pgs:156-180

After the birth, do you think Annie's fears will subside?

What thoughts are going through Annie's mind as she holds Joey? P.160

What do you think Max mean when he said he HAD to win that race?

What do you think Grandpa told Max about running?

When Kaylee asks Annie if she likes Max, why doesn't she know what to answer? P.117-178

What is the significance when Grandpa and Joey trace the 100th drawing of the apple seed?

Literature Circle *Vocabulary Leader* Roll Sheet

The students will be in Literature Circle Groups, and each child will have an assigned role for the assigned section of the book. These are designated before the assigned section for the discussion. This is one of five roles:

- Vocabulary Enricher Directions:

Your job is to be on the lookout for especially important, puzzling or unfamiliar words in the reading. Write down the words as you are reading. After reading, look up the words in the dictionary and record the meaning. While there is no set number of words to locate, you should have at least five. When your group meets for discussion, help the members find the words in the book and discuss the meaning. Challenge yourself!

Page # and Paragraph	Word	Definition
1. 115 paragraph 4	flaw-	a defect or fault; imperfection.
2. 120 paragraph 3	plumb-	to investigate thoroughly
3. 121 paragraph 3	resonate-	to resound; echo.
4. 148 paragraph 2	midwife-	a person who is trained to assist women during childbirth
5. 122-paragraph 1	indignant-	feeling or showing anger in response to something considered unjust or unworthy

Indiana Academic Standards: 6th Grade

Reading

- 6.2.4 Clarify an understanding of texts by creating outlines, notes, diagrams, summaries or reports.
- 6.2.5 Follow multiple-step instructions for preparing applications.
- 6.2.8 Identify how an author's choice of words, examples, and reasons are used to persuade the reader of something.
- 6.3.1 Identify different types (genres) of fiction and describe the major characteristics of each form.
- 6.3.4 Define how tone or meaning are conveyed in poetry through word choice, figurative language, sentence structure, line length, punctuation, rhythm, alliteration (repetition of sounds, such as *wild and woolly* or *threatening throngs*), and rhyme.
- 6.3.5 Identify the speaker and recognize the difference between first-person (the narrator tells the story from the "I" perspective) and third-person (the narrator tells the story from an outside perspective) narration.
- 6.3.6 Identify and analyze features of themes conveyed through characters, actions, and images.
- 6.3.8 Critique the believability of characters and the degree to which a plot is believable or realistic.

Indiana Academic Standards: 6th Grade

Science

- 6.1.9 Explain how technologies can influence all living things.
- 6.3.13 Earth and the Processes that Shape It Identify, explain, and discuss some effects human activities, such as the creation of pollution, have on weather and the atmosphere.
- 6.4.4 Recognize and describe that a species comprises all organisms that can mate with one another to produce fertile offspring.
- 6.4.5 Investigate and explain that all living things are composed of cells whose details are usually visible only through a microscope.
- 6.4.11 Describe that human beings have body systems for obtaining and providing energy, defense, reproduction, and the coordination of body functions.
- 6.4.12 Explain that human beings have many similarities and differences and that the similarities make it possible for human beings to reproduce and to donate blood and organs to one another.
- 6.7.1 Describe that a system, such as the human body, is composed of subsystems.

Social Studies

- 6.5.1 Explain the term socialization*, and compare the way people learn the rules and their roles in the groups to which they belong in different cultures and times.

Indiana Academic Standards: 7th Grade

Reading

- 7.1.1 Identify and understand idioms and comparisons — such as analogies, metaphors, and similes — in prose and poetry.
- 7.2.3 Analyze text that uses the cause-and-effect organizational pattern.
Example: Use a comparison chart, such as a T-chart, to illustrate causes and effects.
- 7.2.8 Identify methods (such as repetition of words, biased or incomplete evidence) an author uses to persuade the reader.
- 7.3.1 Discuss the purposes and characteristics of different forms of written text, such as the short story, the novel, the novella, and the essay.
- 7.3.2 Identify events that advance the plot and determine how each event explains past or present action or foreshadows (provides clues to) future action.
- 7.3.3 Analyze characterization as shown through a character's thoughts, words, speech patterns, and actions; the narrator's description; and the thoughts, words, and actions of other characters.
- 7.3.4 Identify and analyze themes — such as bravery, loyalty, friendship, and loneliness — which appear in many different works.
- 7.3.5 Contrast points of view — such as first person, third person, limited and omniscient, and subjective and objective — in a literary text and explain how they affect the overall theme of the work.
- 7.3.8 Analyze the influence of the setting on the problem and its resolution.

Science

- 7.4.2 Describe that all organisms, including the human species*, are part of and depend on two main interconnected global food webs*, the ocean food web and the land food web.
- 7.4.3 Explain how, in sexual reproduction, a single specialized cell from a female merges with a specialized cell from a male and this fertilized egg carries genetic information from each parent and multiplies to form the complete organism.

Indiana Academic Standards: 8th grade

Reading

- 8.2.4 Compare the original text to a summary to determine whether the summary accurately describes the main ideas, includes important details, and conveys the underlying meaning.
- 8.2.9 Make reasonable statements and draw conclusions about a text, supporting them with accurate examples.
- 8.3.1 Determine and articulate the relationship between the purposes and characteristics of different forms of poetry (including ballads, lyrics, couplets, epics, elegies, odes, and sonnets).
- 8.3.4 Analyze the importance of the setting to the mood, tone, or meaning of the text.
- 8.3.8 Contrast points of view — such as first person, third person, third person limited and third person omniscient, and subjective and objective — in narrative text and explain how they affect the overall theme of the work.
- 8.3.9 Analyze the relevance of setting (places, times, customs) to mood, tone, and meaning of text.

Science

- 8.4.1 Differentiate between inherited traits, such as hair color or flower color, and acquired skills, such as manners.
- 8.4.2 Describe that in some organisms, such as yeast or bacteria, all genes* come from a single parent, while in those that have sexes, typically half of the genes come from each parent.
- 8.4.7 Recognize and explain that small genetic differences between parents and offspring can accumulate in successive generations so that descendants are very different from their ancestors.

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All pictures in this presentation
are from www.bn.com



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