



Deborah Hopkinson, Into The Firestorm, 2006, Yearling Div. Random House Children's Books

About the Author:

She was born in Lowell, Mass. She now lives and works full time as Director of Foundation Relations at Oregon State University Foundation. Deborah Hopkinson researched the 1906 earthquake and fire in San Francisco to write this story. Her characters are based on real life accounts from books and articles that she read about what actually happened. She has received many awards for her books. Some of the awards she has received are the 1994 International Reading Association Award, Parent's Choice Silver Honor, Golden Kite Honor, Washington State Book Award, and the Jane Addams Children's Book Award. Some other books she has written are Apples To Oregon, The Klondike Kid, Sweet Clara, Who Was Charles Darwin, From Slave to Soldier, A Packet of Seeds.

Contact her at: deborahhopkinson@yahoo.com

Annotation: How many of you have ever lived through an earthquake? Would you consider yourself to be brave? This book is about a young man's experiences in a new town where he knows no one. Suddenly, there is an earthquake and a city wide fire. He is asked to help strangers and a dog get to safety. Do you think you might be scared? You learn through reading this book how he deals with saving his friends, the dog and himself.

Genre: historical fiction

Point of View: Third person

Theme: Into The Firestorm suggests the theme of the story is the characters struggle to overcome adversity.

Conflict: External- struggle between the characters and an outside force (nature) with San Francisco suffers a major earthquake and as a result fires start to burn and soon become out of control. The main character is new to town and knows no one. It is his struggle to save a newly found friend's dog, and a pregnant mother and her young child. They combine forces to survive the fires of 1906 by working together to get to safety. The dog that the main character is in charge of keeping safe runs back to the burning part of town to look for his owner. The young man must go back to try and save the dog.

Conflict Resolution: The conflict is resolved in the end of the book when the fires are put out. The characters find their way to safety and the dog is found safe and

the owner returns and is reunited with the dog and his new friend who was left in charge to watch the dog. The mother has her new baby and is healthy.

Characters:

Nicholas Dray- A twelve year old young man who is the main character.

Mr. Pat Patterson: The older gentleman who takes Nick in as an apprentice.

Shakespeare: Mr. Patterson's dog. Mr. Patterson calls him "Shake" for short.

Annie Sheridan: young girl

Mrs. Sheridan: Annie's mother who is pregnant.

Ed Lind- accountant and town leader

Setting: San Francisco, California in 1906

IL is 3-6 and RL is 4.5

Book Talk:

How many of you would know what to do if we had an earthquake here in Indiana? If you were 12 years old and had no family, would you know how to move to a new town far away and start a new life? In the year of 1906, this was not unusual for a young boy to travel long distances to new cities to find work. A young boy who is about your age, moves to a new town because he has no family. He only has a dream of making a new life in San Francisco. Right after he arrives, he finds a job sitting for a man's dog and looking after his business for several days, when the city is hit with an earthquake. It destroys the city, but not the desire of the young boy to stay and make a new life somehow in San Francisco.

Discussion questions:

Pre- What would you do if you were living on your own and you were only 12 years old? What kind of job could you find and do to earn money to live?

During- Do you think that Nick is brave? Do you think he is capable of leading himself, Shake, Mrs. Sheridan and Annie to safety? What qualities have you read about Nick so far that would make you think he is capable?

Post- Do you think this is a realistic description of what happens during a major earthquake and fire? Do you still think Nick acted bravely? Tell us why you think this about his character.

Chapter questions:

Chpt 1 pg 3 What three things are Nick good at doing and where does he come from? Pg 4 Describe the policeman who chases Nick.

Chpt 2 pg 9 What job did he do before he came to San Francisco?

Pg 11 Who is Gran? What does she give Nick when she dies?

Chpt 3 pg15 Who is Tommy? Who is Miss Reedy?

Chpt 4 pg 21 What does Tommy give to Nick? What does Nick give to Tommy?

Chpt 5 pg 27 Who is Annie and what does .."of the North Star" mean?

Chpt 6 pg 39 Paris of the Pacific refers to what? Where did Nick learn this ?

Chpt 7 pg 41 What sort of business does Mr. Patterson have and how does Nick convince Mr. Pat to give him a job? What special, shiny objects does Nick recognize?

Pg 47 What does 100 pounds mean to Nick? Why was this so important to him?

Chpt 8 pg 57 Mr. Pat makes a comment about Nick's character. What does he say he has an appreciation for? What does Mr. Pat give to Nick?

Chpt 9 pg 72 Something unseen and unexpected happens to Shake and Nick. What is it? Pg 73 What does Nick feel like that is being tossed around on an open sea?

Chpt 10 pg 80 A police officer gives Nick some advice. What is this advice?

Pg 86 How did the fires start?

Chpt 11 pg 91 Annie asks Nick to do something for her. What does she ask him to do?

Pg 96 Describe what happened to Mrs. Sheridan.

Chpt 12 pg 98 What items does Annie want Nick to get for her? Why are these items important?

Chpt 13 pg 105 What was dynamite used for?

Pg 106 Tommy was the first real friend that Nick made. What happened to Tommy after the quake hit?

Chpt 14 pg 113 What kind of items did Nick bring back from Tommy in Chinatown?

Pg 118 Nick felt he failed his Gran somehow. Why is he not willing to leave Annie and Mrs. Sheridan behind?

Chpt 15 pg 125 Where are they headed? What happens when they reach Union Square?

Pg 134 Who tells them to head to Golden Gate Park? Nick has given this policeman a funny name. What is it? Why?

Chpt 16 pg 137 What is Annie in charge of keeping safe?

Pg 139 They start walking, but stop to rest and fall asleep. Where are they and who runs away in the night?

Chpt 17 pg 143 What keeps chasing them? Pg 147. What is it that Annie has forgotten?

Chpt 18 pg 155 Nick finds help when they finally reach Golden Gate Park. What is the place called where they find Mrs. Sheridan some help?

Chpt 19 pg 157 Nick has to leave Annie and her mom to do something. Why does he leave? What does he say to Annie? What does he give her for reassurance?

Chpt 20 pg 162 When he gets back to Jackson St., what does he find? Pg 163 Who did the soldier think Nick was and what did he do?

Chpt 21 pg 168 After Nick finds Shake, who tries to stop him from leaving the street? Who comes to Nick's rescue? pg 172 What did Mr. Patterson want the reporter to do?

Chpt 22 pg 176 What good news did Nick receive when he woke up on Saturday.

Pg 177 What special thing is Mr. Pat missing?

Chpt 23 pg 183 Why did Nick head back to Golden Gate Park?

Pg 186 Annie had saved something special. What was it she saved and who was it for?

Language:

Pg 3 astonishment- surprised and able to believe

Pg 9 sharecrop- to farm land that belongs to someone else.

Pg 10 toddle- walk unsteadily

Pg 35 persistence- to stick to doing something until you have an answer

Pg 42 calligraphy- fancy writing

Pg 43 guffaw- a kind of laugh

Pg 53 haunches – dogs back legs

Pg56 fruition-when something is fulfilled, like finishing your homework

Pg 57 exquisite- very beautiful

Pg 57 luminous- shiny

Pg 61 skittering- moving quickly

Pg 73 wringing- twisting of cloth

Pg 125 reprimanded- to scold

Pg 127 commemorate- a memorial to remember something special that happened.

Pg 140 devouring- eating up like you are starving

Pg 155 makeshift hospital- a temporary building set up to function as a hospital

Pg 160 menacing place- threatening place

Pg 169 stampeding soldiers- a large group of soldiers running toward you

Pg 170 bucket brigade- a line of people moving buckets in certain directions

Pg171 doused –to drench with water

Ind. Standards met by content:

English/Language: 3.3.1; 4.3.2,4.3.3,4.3.4; 5.3.1,5.3.2,5.3.3,5.3.4,5.4.1

Social Studies 3.1.5,3.1.6,3.2.1,3.2.4,3.4.2, 4.4.1,5.5.1,5.5.2

Anticipation Statements:

Would you agree or disagree that a boy of 12 yrs of age should live in an orphanage?

Would you agree or disagree that an earthquake could destroy a whole city in several days?

Would you agree or disagree that it is possible for a boy of 12 to help save a whole city?

Would you agree or disagree that animals can sense human things like the return of their owners even after a city is destroyed by earthquake and fires?

Read-Alouds

Pg 38 This is important because it describes the reasons why he came to San Francisco and why he has chosen to stay.

Pg 44..”how do we know where we belong”...This is important because it tells us that maybe we chose something or someplace because we have a hope or dream in our heart. Sometimes this is all we have to base our decisions on.

Pg 54 a description of Nick's character. This is important because it gives us an insight to what kind of person Nick is.

Read Alikes:

The Fighting Ground by Avi. A thirteen year old boy goes off to war and discovers his inner struggles as well as the struggles of war.

Nora Ryan's Song by Patricia Reilly Giff. Ireland's potato blight attacks a twelve year old girl and her family. Nora's courage and ingenuity help her and her family.

Klondike Kid Deborah Hopkinson. A boy searches for his uncle during the gold rush.

Subject Area Connections:

Science- A research project/inquiry of earthquakes over the last 100 years in North America and China.

Ind Standards- 3.6.3,3.6.5: 4.6.3,4.6.4, 5.3.12

Math- measurement. Create lessons for measuring inches to feet to miles. Ind. Standards 3.5.2; 4.5.1,4.5.2; 5.7.1-5.7.8

English/Language Arts- Writing of research for earthquake inquiry

Ind Standards – 3.2.2,3.2.8: 4.2.1,4.2.8: 5.2.1, 5.2.2,5.2.3

Resources for lessons-

Earthquakes for Kids- USGS website for teachers use.

<http://earthquake.usgs.gov/learning/kids> - this site has games, worksheets and information.

Other sources for earthquake information on an historical level are:

www.sfmuseum.org/1096/89html

www.zpub.com/sf/history/1906earth.html

www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/sfeg.htm

Social Studies – to investigate an emergency plan for our city and to make a map of our city resources incase of an emergency.

To further investigate Indiana's emergency preparedness:

Emergency Management Agency-

<http://www.indygov.org/eGov/City/DPS/EMA/home.htm>

Book Activities: The Indiana Standards are listed above.

Spelling- Using the words from the book, create a crossword puzzle or word search using the definitions of each vocabulary word selected from the book list.

Earthquake study- Our goal is to compare the San Francisco earthquake of 1906 with the one in 1989. Using a large piece of paper (4ft x6ft) we will record information found at the websites listed above and looking through books from the library. We will compare what the buildings looked like, read first hand accounts of what it must have been like to live through it, and study how the city handled both emergencies. We can photo copy some pictures to add a visual

component to our piece. The class would be divided into cooperative groups and be directed to a particular place on the Internet or a specific book to research.

Supplies; Large piece of paper- Butcher block paper 4x6 ft. for creating the earthquake comparison.

Bibliography

iLibrary

Hopkinson.com

Internet for all the above websites on earthquakes and Indiana Standards.

The ideas for the book activities came from me. I did not use any other resources than I have listed above.