A Guide for Using

Out of the Dust

in the Classroom

Based on the novel by Karen Hesse

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Show What You Know!

Answer the following questions about pages 1–51.

1. How did Billie Jo get her name? What does she look like?

2. Who is Livie? Where is she going?

3. Who is Arley Wanderdale? What does he ask Billie Jo to do?

4. What is Billie Jo’s family’s routine when they sit to eat?

5. What makes Billie Jo feel as “foul as maggoty stew”?

6. What is Ma’s suggestion about what to do when the wheat will not grow?

7. When the rain finally comes down hard and fast, why aren’t the people happy?

8. What is Ma nursing and trying to protect through the drought?

9. What word do all the songs that Billie Jo picks to play with Arley and the Black Mesa Boys contain?

10. Write a one-paragraph summary of the major events that happened in this section. Use the back of this paper.
Apple Recipes

Billie Jo’s mother took care of her apple trees. They were her pride and joy, and they became a symbol of hope in the midst of the dust. Despite the harsh environment, the apple trees bloomed. Billie Jo anxiously anticipated the day when they could use the apples to make pies, sauce, puddings, dumplings, cake, and cobbler. Try some of these old-fashioned recipes for apples.

**Apple Sauce (about three cups)**

- 4 medium cooking apples, peeled, cored
- \( \frac{1}{2} \) cup (120 mL) water
- \( \frac{1}{2} \) cup (120 mL) packed brown sugar or granulated sugar
- ¼ teaspoon (1 mL) cinnamon
- \( \frac{3}{8} \) teaspoon (.5 mL) nutmeg

Cut the apples into fourths. Heat apples and water to boiling over medium heat. Reduce heat and simmer uncovered until tender, five to ten minutes. Stir occasionally to break up apples. Stir in remaining ingredients. Heat to boiling; boil and stir one minute.

**Apple Dumplings**

- Pie pastry for an 8-inch (20 cm) two-crust pie
- 6 baking apples, peeled and cored
- 3 tablespoons (45 mL) raisins
- 3 tablespoons (45 mL) chopped nuts
- 2 cups (480 mL) packed brown sugar
- 1 cup (240 mL) water
- \( \frac{3}{8} \) teaspoon (3.75 mL) cinnamon
- \( \frac{3}{8} \) teaspoon (3.75 mL) nutmeg
- \( \frac{1}{3} \) cup (80 mL) margarine, softened

Heat oven to 425° F (218.3° C). Roll two-thirds of pie pastry into a 14-inch (36 cm) square and cut it into four squares. Roll remaining pastry into a rectangle, 14 x 7 inches (36 x 18 cm), and cut it into two squares. Place an apple on each square. Mix the raisins and nuts and fill each apple with the mixture. Moisten the corners of the pastry squares. Bring two opposite corners up over apple and pinch. Repeat with the remaining corners, pinching the edges of the pastry to seal. Place dumplings in ungreased baking dish. Combine the brown sugar and water and heat it to boiling. Carefully pour it around the dumplings. Bake, spooning the brown sugar and water mixture over the dumplings two or three times, until the crust is golden and apples are tender (about 40 minutes). Serve with whipped cream, if desired.

**Apple Crisp**

- 4 cups (960 mL) peeled, sliced, tart apples
- \( \frac{2}{3} \) to \( \frac{3}{4} \) cup (160 to 180 mL) packed brown sugar
- \( \frac{1}{2} \) cup (120 mL) flour
- \( \frac{1}{2} \) cup (120 mL) oatmeal
- ¾ teaspoon (3.75 mL) cinnamon
- ¾ teaspoon (3.75 mL) nutmeg
- \( \frac{1}{3} \) cup (80 mL) margarine, softened

Heat oven to 375° F (190.5° C). Arrange apples in greased square pan. Mix remaining ingredients; sprinkle over apples. Bake until topping is golden brown and apples are tender, about 30 minutes. Serve warm, if desired, with whipped cream or ice cream.

**Extensions**

- What is your favorite kind of apple? Research to find out how many different types of apples there are and where they come from. What are some of your favorite apple recipes?
- How nutritious are apples? Research to learn the benefits of eating apples.
Creative Problem Solving

Each of us has problems to deal with on a daily basis. Some of them are more difficult to solve than others and require using resources like time, money, family members, skills, or experience. Often these resources are limited or nonexistent, making the solution more difficult.

This was a common experience during the Depression. Many people were without food to feed their families, without jobs to earn money, far from family they could turn to for help, and without the skills to care for their families in this time of need. It was critical for people to become more creative at solving their problems. Listed below are some problems that need solving. Work with a group to come up with some creative solutions to these problems. Ask one member of your group to record your answers. When finished, meet together as a class to share these creative solutions.

- It is Thanksgiving Day and you have a lot of company visiting to eat the big dinner at your home. Halfway through the preparations of dinner, a water pipe breaks and water begins shooting everywhere. The water has to be turned off. What do you do on this holiday with a house full of guests?

- You have plans to go and watch a movie tonight. You have made arrangements for many friends to come with you. As you get ready to walk out the door, your mom reminds you that you had promised another family that you would baby-sit for them tonight. What do you do?

- You got in a fight with your best friend. He thinks that you do not like him as much anymore. He tells you that you are always hanging out with somebody else. You explain to your friend that this is not true. You promise to meet him after school today to hang out together. After school you are invited to play basketball with a popular group of students. You are excited. You forget all about your promise to your friend until you see him walking into the gym two hours later. What do you do?

- You are sitting down with your family for a discussion about family problems. You are informed that your dad has just been laid off from his job. This is just three weeks before the last payment of your fee to attend Space Camp in the summer is due. You have been planning this trip for months. What do you do?

- You are excited to be invited on a trip with friends to see the Grand Canyon. When you get home, you realize that your parents have already planned a family trip to see your dying grandfather that same weekend. What do you do?
Startling Statistics

Use the line graph below to help answer the questions at the bottom of the page.

Unemployment During the Depression

1. What is the title of the graph? In what year were the greatest number of people unemployed? In what year during the Depression was the number of unemployed people the lowest? What event signaled the beginning of the Depression? When did it occur? ____________________________________________

2. In which two years were there approximately the same number of unemployed people? About how many people were unemployed in those years? ____________________________________________________________

3. What is the average rate of unemployment for the years shown on the graph? ________________

4. How many Americans were unemployed in 1936? 1937? 1938? ___________________________

5. What do you think was happening in 1937 to cause the number of unemployed to decrease? What do you think caused unemployment to increase in 1938? Use a separate piece of paper or the back of this page to give your answer.

6. Use the information from the graph above to create a bar graph on a separate piece of paper. In your opinion, which graph best displays the information?

Bonus: In what year did President Roosevelt begin his New Deal? Did it have an immediate effect on unemployment? ____________________________________________________________

Extension: Research various New Deal programs and the years in which they took effect. Compare the years of the programs to information on the graph. Can you draw any conclusions about which programs were most effective in ending unemployment?