Running Out Of Night

AUTHOR: Sharon Lovejoy
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GENRE: Fiction
LEXILE: 830L

SUMMARY:
A young white girl without a name is treated like a slave by her own father and brothers. When a runaway slave asks her for help, they both decide to run away together. The slave, Zenobia, gives her the name Lark. With Zenobia, she finds other runaway slaves. They are pursued by her father and cruel slave catchers but eventually they find a station on the Underground Railroad. When her friends are recaptured, she sets out to find them, finally standing her ground against the slave-hunters.

BOOKTALK:
Close your eyes. Imagine a dark woods in the summer, crickets singing, leaves rustling, bats and owls swooping. Now imagine that you are running away in the dark with your friends. People are chasing you. Where are they? Where are you? Where are your friends? The night and the dark keep Lark safe, but what happens when she runs out of dark?

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Other books written by the author:
The Little Green Island with a Little Red House

CHALLENGING WORDS
1. achin’ (adjective) pg. 1 dialect for hurting, aching
2. pliered (verb) pg. 1 dialect for using pliers (pliers are a tool for grasping)
3. scrapple (noun) pg. 3 food made from hog’s head, liver and heart boiled, mixed with cornmeal and fried
4. crawdad (noun) pg. 53 crayfish; freshwater crustaceans resembling small lobsters
5. scuppernong (noun) pg. 105 grape vine native to the Carolinas
6. haint (noun) pg. 115 dialect for haunt; ghost, spirit
7. bristled (verb) pg. 159 covered with short sharp hairs
8. niddy-noddy (noun) pg. 177 tool used to make skeins from spun yarn
9. omens (noun) pg. 244 phenomenons that are believed to foretell the future
10. staunch (verb) pg. 265 stop the flow of blood from a wound
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
1. When the girl ran away from the cabin, she took as much food as she could carry. Name two reasons she took the ham.
2. Throughout the story, Lark used many things in nature to distract herself from how hungry she was. What were some of the items she used? Can you think of anything else she could have eaten in the wild?
3. Every chapter begins with a saying about luck. Why was Lark so concerned with luck? Why did she believe so many tales/sayings?
4. Explain how Lark hid in plain sight.
5. What was the Fugitive Slave Act? Why did it make it even harder for slaves?
6. Who was Auntie Theodate? How was she different from every other person Lark had ever met?
7. Explain how Harriet Tubman became important to Lark.
8. Discuss the use of dialect in the story. Does it improve the story or detract from it? Explain your answer.

ACTIVITIES WITH STANDARDS:

Language Arts and Social Studies

- Pick a character other than Lark in the book and write a short story from his/her point of view. For instance, you could write a story about Zenobia, explaining what happened to her leading up to her hiding in Lark’s house. How does Zenobia feel in Lark’s house? Why does she choose to run away with Lark?

  **Language Arts 5.W.3.3** Write narrative compositions in a variety of forms.

  **Language Arts 5.RL.3.2** Describe how a narrator’s or speaker’s point of view influences how events are portrayed.

- In *Running Out of Night*, Lark and Zenobia were assisted by Quaker members of the Underground Railroad. Levi Coffin was a real Hoosier who also assisted slaves along the Underground Railroad. Members of the Underground Railroad in Indiana were breaking the law when they ignored the Fugitive Slave Act, but they did it because they believed the law was wrong.

Divide the class into groups. Have each group either research Levi Coffin, Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, or another prominent abolitionist. Have the groups create a presentation board with a few paragraphs of information about the person, including notable achievements, character traits, a timeline, and an image. Include a list of resources on the back of the presentation.

  **Language Arts 4.W.5** Conduct short research on a topic.

  **Social Studies 4.1.7** Explain the roles of various individuals, groups, and movements in the social conflicts leading to the Civil War.
• Lark has many beliefs about luck. Pick one of your favorite sayings about luck from the beginning of the chapters. Write an essay telling why you think that it is either a practical saying or a silly idea. Include information from other resources in writing your argument.

**Language Arts 4.W.3.1** Write persuasive compositions in a variety of forms.

**RELATED INTERNET SITES:**

*Levi Coffin House* [http://www.waynet.org/levicoffin/default.htm](http://www.waynet.org/levicoffin/default.htm)
Information about Levi Coffin and his role on the Underground Railroad.

Information about heroes in the Underground Railroad movement.

*The Underground Railroad: Escape from Slavery*  
Great resource on the Underground Railroad with an interactive website for kids to explore and ideas for lesson plans for teachers.

**ACTIVITY SHEET CREATED BY:**
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