Stella By Starlight

AUTHOR: Sharon M. Draper  
PUBLISHER: Atheneum Books for Young Readers  
COPYRIGHT: January 6, 2015  
GENRE: Historical Fiction  
SETTING: The setting is Bumblebee, North Carolina, 1932.

SUMMARY:
The year is 1932, in the small town of Bumblebee, North Carolina. Stella must learn the lessons of prejudice and segregation.

BOOK TALK:
What was that burning on the other side of the pond? Stella and her younger brother crept through the grass and watched as nine white-robed figures danced around a burning cross. It was the Klan, the Ku Klux Klan, and they were not far from their home. Being African-American in small town Bumblebee, North Carolina meant life was not easy for families, but the presence of the Klan smelled of danger. Join Stella, JoJo, and their close knit community as they navigate the events of a daily life that includes contests, voter registration, rattlesnakes, bullies, and love - all in the fall of 1932.

BOOK TRAILER:  
http://videos.simonandschuster.net/sharon-draper-on-stella-by-starlight/4000688377001 from Simon and Schuster

AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH:

AUTHOR'S NAME: Sharon M. Draper  
Author’s Website: http://www.sharondraper.com  
Other books written by the author:  
Out of My Mind (2010)  
The Battle of Jericho (2003)  
Tears of a Tiger (1994)  
Copper Sun (2006)  
Romiette and Julio (1999)  
Panic (2013)  
Little Sister is Not My Name (2009)  
(Sharon Draper has written several more books.)
Similar Books/Books with a Similar Theme:

Picture Books:
Eleanor Sisulu: The Day Gogo Went to Vote
Winter, Jonah: Lillian’s Right To Vote; A Celebration of the Voting Rights Act of 1965

Novels
Priscilla Cummings: Saving Grace
Mildred Taylor: Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry
Mildred Taylor: Let the Circle Be Unbroken

Discussion Questions:

1. The novel opens with a powerful description of a fire burning in the woods in the middle of the night. How does this capture the reader’s attention? What predictions can the reader make about Stella? About Jojo? About what might happen in their town? (Chapter One)

2. Describe Stella’s walk to school and the children who live nearby that walked with her. Cite evidence from the text that assists you in learning about their community from this description. (Chapter 5)

3. After the families share supper, the men began to banter with exaggerated analogies. Can you share or create an exaggerated analogy about the weather or an experience you have had? (Chapter 12 - 14)

4. Describe the voting registration. How do you think Stella felt throughout the ordeal? What do you think she learned from that experience?

5. Do you think Stella is a hero? Explain. How does she feel about what she did? How does the community show their pride?

6. Describe both the negatives and the positives that happened as a result of the Ku Klux Klan’s attack on Tony. Describe Stella’s feelings. (Chapter 37 - 38)
7. What problems does Paulette face at home? What is surprising about Paulette’s revelations? (Chapter 46)

More questions can be found at http://sharondraper.com/bookdetail.asp?id=74

**ACTIVITIES WITH STANDARDS:**

**Social Studies**

- **Indiana Bicentennial Event Activity**
  Oral traditions/storytelling were important to the early settlers and residents of Indiana. Have students think of their own stories about Indiana. This could be through a visit to a state park, to a relative’s home or to a museum, etc. Have students write about their experience and then create a storyboard from their writings. Storyboard examples and templates may be found at https://filemanager-abcopen.s3.amazonaws.com/110-percent/pdf/ABCOpen_110_CreatingStoryboard2.pdf
  Next, break students into small groups and have students take turns filming each other telling the stories. The episodes may then be edited together to share with your class, another class, or presented to the school or local library.

  **Social Studies - 7.W.3.2** Write informative compositions in a variety of forms that – Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition and classification; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

- **Voter Registration**
  Discuss with students all of the environments in which they might have a vote in their lifetime: these could include classrooms, clubs, Student Council, Boy or Girl Scouts, church, and--when they reach 18--local, state, and federal elections. If possible, have someone from the Voter Registration Office visit and discuss requirements for voting in Indiana. In Stella By Starlight, Stella and her classmates have to write an opinion essay. They have a choice for this activity. Your students are then to write an opinion essay on why or why not they should become active voters when they reach adulthood.

  **Social Studies 6-8.LH.5.1:** Write arguments focused on discipline- specific content.

  **Language Arts: Writing**
6.W.3.1 Write arguments in a variety of forms that
Introduce claim(s), using strategies such as textual analysis,
comparison/contrast, and cause/effect.

Use an organizational structure to group related ideas that support the argument.

Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

Establish and maintain a consistent style and tone appropriate to purpose and audience.

Use appropriate transitions that enhance the progression of the text and clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.

Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

- **Photographing History - Voting Rights**
  Subject headings that are useful when searching voting rights included **suffrage**, **civil rights movement**, **Great Depression**, and **North Carolina**.
  If you desire to make this assignment more local, then use pictures of Hoosiers voting from Indiana Memory https://digital.library.in.gov. Search key words such as **voting**, **civil rights**, or **suffrage**. Students could write a summary of their findings.

  Library of Congress Analysis tool, http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Primary_Source_Analysis_Tool.pdf, may be used in analyzing the images.

  **Social Studies: 6-8.LH.4.1:** Integrate visual information (e.g., **charts**, **graphs**, **photographs**, **videos**, or **maps**) with other information in print and digital texts.
Language Arts: Media Literacy 6.ML.1 Critically analyze information found in electronic, print, and mass media used to inform, persuade, entertain, and transmit culture.

- Constitution Day
  As an activity for this event, read Chapter 22, pages 132-146, and then discuss how voting is an essential act of participation in your country’s government.

Social Studies: Synthesis and Connection of Ideas
7.RN.4.1 Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims, noting instances of bias and stereotyping.

RELATED INTERNET SITES:

* Congressional Moments on the App Store - iTunes - Apple
* Congressional Moments: http://tpscongress.org/ – The Civil Rights Segment
* Video of Sharon Draper sharing her story - http://authors.simonandschuster.com/Sharon-M-Draper/706340

Challenging Words
traitorous (p. 2)
furtive (p. 7)
ponderously (p.70)
constitution (p.76)
poll tax (p. 76)
unalienable (p. 136)
tribunal (p. 138)
ominously (p. 172)
doused (p. 184)
adversity (p. 192)
sheepishly (p.196)
chastised (p. 203)
stifle (p. 214)
adrenaline (p. 298)