Hound Dog True

AUTHOR: Linda Urban
PUBLISHER: Harcourt Children’s Book
COPYRIGHT DATE: 2011

GENRE: Contemporary Realistic Fiction

SUMMARY: Mattie has moved several times in her elementary career, and now she has to start 5th grade in another new school. With the worries of new friends, she is glad she has Uncle Potluck to follow around as he works as the school janitor. Mattie is convinced that he will allow her to become his apprentice, and so she keeps a journal of all the custodial wisdom that he gives. Her mother persuades her to have a sleepover with Quincy, a neighbor girl who Mattie is not interested in becoming friends. Her world comes crashing down when she is the cause of an accident with her Uncle Potluck and becomes locked in the principal’s office! That experience and her friendship with Quincy help Mattie learn that “you can’t have brave without scared”. She overcomes her fears and does a very brave thing on the first day of school.

BOOKTALK: A new school means making new friends, and Mattie has had her fair share of doing that in her life. She now has to start a new school in 5th grade! Luckily, her Uncle Potluck works as the custodian. One day while helping her uncle, Mattie comes up with a brilliant idea. If she shows Uncle Potluck what a great helper she can be, maybe he will make her a “Custodial Apprentice” and she can spend lunchtime and recesses with him. In her notebook, she begins writing down custodial wisdoms (tips) and work reminders. She is determined to become a custodial apprentice, but is it for the right reasons? And then some things happen that change Mattie’s plan and maybe even her outlook on the new school year...but you’ll have to read Hound Dog True to see what happens! Mattie is a shy soon-to-be 5th grader getting ready to start a new school. Again. Seems like she and her mom move around a lot.

AUTHOR’S BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH: Linda Urban

Linda Urban was born in Detroit, Michigan and tried different talents, but she was best at writing. She worked at a bookstore in California where she learned to become a better writer. Her most famous book is A Crooked Kind of Perfect.

http://lindaurbanbooks.com/about/

Other books written by the author:
A Crooked Kind of Perfect
Mouse was Mad
CHALLENGING WORDS (...due to pronunciation, spelling and/or defining):

p. 1 singe
p. 3 illumination
p. 7 traitorous
p. 11 apprentice
p. 13 jostle
p. 20 skittish
p. 32 endeavors, posterity, eloquence
p. 35 solitary pursuit
p. 36 gourmands
p. 61 piccolo
p. 64 scrutiny
p. 75 imminent demise, infiltrating
p. 76 initiative
p. 81 impeccable, visage, propriety
p. 83 dexterity, finesse
p. 84 fatigued
p. 85 commences
p. 87 resolving
p. 91 consequences
p. 118 caulk
p. 129 ponder
p. 130 prognostication, keen, discerning

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. (Chp 5) How would you respond to Star if you were Mattie hiding in the coatroom?
2. (Chp. 20) What do you think Mattie is thinking and feeling when she was locked in the principal’s office?
3. Name some experiences you have had that you “couldn’t have brave without scared”.
4. Discuss how the friendship of Mattie and Quincy developed.
5. What kinds of things does Mattie write about in her notebook?
6. How does Uncle Potluck get hurt? Whose fault is it?
7. Would you consider Mattie and Quincy to be friends? Why or why not?
8. How has Mattie changed by the end of Hound Dog True?
9. What does "hound dog true" mean? Which character uses this phrase?

ACTIVITIES with COMMON CORE STANDARDS:

Language Arts:

1. Choose a family member to follow for a week. Keep a journal of their “wisdom” in the career or housework that he or she does. Write a presentation
of the job description based on this information and present it to the class using the public speaking rubric.

4.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5.W.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
6.SL.4 Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

2. Interview an adult about his/her job. Also read about the job on the Occupational Outlook Handbook website. Come up with 10 "Wisdom Tips" related to their line of work. Make a list of these tips to present to the class.

4.W.2, 5.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
6.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
4.W.4, 5.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
6.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
4.SL.4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.
5.SL.4 Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.
6.SL.4 Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

LIFE SKILLS: Courage, Friendship, Trustworthiness, Caring

RELATED INTERNET SITES:

If you are interested in journaling, check out this website where you can print out all types of journal paper!
http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/journals_for_kids.htm
http://www.bls.gov/ooh/

How to Help Kids Make Friends: Research-Based Tips
http://www.parentingscience.com/kids-make-friends.html