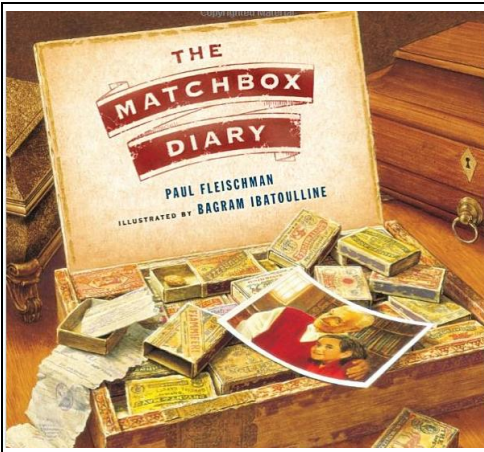


PICTURE BOOK EXTENDER: Read-Alouds Aligned to Common Core

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The Matchbox Diary

By Paul Fleischman
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Grades 1- 4

SUMMARY OF BOOK:

A little girl is visiting her great-grandfather at his bookstore and a box full of matchboxes sparks her curiosity. The collection of matchboxes gets her great-grandfather talking about his journey from Italy to the United States when he was a little boy in 1916. He could not read and write, so this became the diary of his immigration and of his first years in America while he was getting settled with his family. This narrative story is written entirely in dialogue between the little girl and her great-grandfather. They become closer in the present by sharing the past.

Grade 3 Discussion Questions

RL.3.7 Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story.

Before reading the story, have students look at pages 1 and 2. Ask them to tell you what they notice about the picture. After reading the story, have them look at the pages again and add to what they know about great-grandfather? Do you notice anything else in the illustration after reading the story?

Stop after page 27 and have students look at page 28 and ask students to look at the picture on page 28, what do you think great-grandfather is thinking about? Why do you think that he is thinking that?

At the end of the story, have students look at the last page. What is the great-granddaughter holding and why?

RL.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

Why did great-grandfather create this diary of matchboxes? Why did he stop keeping a diary this way? What are other ways that people may record events without writing them down?

What did each item mean to great-grandfather? The olive pit, the noodle, the bottle cap, hairpin, the medallion, the sunflower seeds, the empty box, the fishbone, the scraps of newspaper, the tooth, the ticket, the coal, the lead letters? How did these things make the main characters feel about each other at the end of the story and why do you think they felt that way?

RL.3.3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events

Describe how the characters' relationship changed from the beginning of the story to the end of the story. What did the author write to let you know that it changed?

Grade 3 Activities

RL. 3.9 Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.

Read *The Keeping Quilt* by Patricia Polacco another story about a family remembering their immigration with items. Compare and contrast the way the characters felt about each item that helped them remember. Then have students create and share their own memory box that will help them remember important events, people, places, and experiences in their lives.

W.3.7 Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

Great-grandfather came from Italy to the United States and had to go through a health check on Ellis Island. Choose one of these things to research. He talked about the buttonhook and how it was a horrible experience, research what it was used for and what it looked like. Use this website

<http://www.searlecanada.org/volturno/volturno22.html>. Or research his job of typesetting in the 1920s using a website like this one http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linotype_machine.