



Refuge Cove

Lesley Choyce

Reading level: 3.2

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AR Quiz # 62996

Book Summary

After the death of his father, Greg and his mother move from Toronto to Deep Cove, a small town on the Newfoundland coast. Greg loves to sail, and they both plan to live a quiet life. On his first trip out, however, Greg runs into an iceberg, capsizes his boat, and nearly freezes to death. When he is rescued by Harold, an old man who loves the ocean and lives in Deep Cove, Harold teaches Greg the idiosyncrasies of the coast and sailing in the ocean. On his next trip out, Greg assumes the role of lifesaver when he finds a family of refugees from Southeast Asia trying to reach the shore. With his help they make it to land where the people of Deep Cove “adopt” the family as they help them adjust to life in Canada.

Prereading Idea

Ask students to locate Toronto and the coast of Newfoundland on a map of Canada. Then ask them to investigate the climate, the economy and the culture of the small towns along the coast.

Connecting to the World—Writing and Research Ideas

- Greg raced his Laser sailboat on lakes in Ontario, but Harold explained that the North Atlantic was no place for a boat like Greg's. Ask students to investigate Laser sailboats and their sailing specifications. What makes them unfit for sailing in the ocean? Have students write a short description of a Laser sailboat and either draw or print a picture. Display their work in the classroom.
- As far as the reader knows, Tamara is Greg's first love. With a partner, have students find the passages where he shares his feelings for her and write them down. Then, ask students to write a love poem to Tamara from Greg, possibly a found poem using the phrases and sayings that the author used. Ask students to share their poems with the class.

Connecting to the Text—Elements of the Novel***Theme***

Sometimes we must help others to help ourselves, and Greg and his mother exemplify this in their actions. Ask students to determine how helping Tamara's family enriched their lives and then to write a thesis statement based on this premise. Have students depict the events that support the thesis in a cartoon strip, concluding the strip with a statement of the thesis. Encourage students to use humor and originality in their depictions.

Conflict

The author of *Refuge Cove* uses all three major types of conflict: man against man, man against nature, and man against himself. In groups of three, ask students to find an example of each type in the story and write it down. Then ask them to identify a conflict in their community or life that would fall into each category. Have students prepare a collage of images on poster board that depicts a specific type of conflict. They can share their collages with the class.

Point of View

Several times there is a near mishap at sea. Greg hits an iceberg; Greg and Tamara's family are almost caught by the Coast Guard; Harold and Greg rescue Tamara's family in a storm. Ask students to choose one of these incidents, and as a reporter, write a newspaper account of the specifics of the adventure. Have students include eyewitness accounts and statements to incorporate additional points of view. Students can share their stories with the class.

Setting

The setting often helps create the mood of a story and can become a major contributor to the story's total effect. Ask students to justify how the setting in *Refuge Cove* could be considered a character. Have students use personification to bring the cove to life, and write one of the incidents of the story as told by the cove. To prepare for class reading, have students add sound effects such as seagulls and waves to enhance their stories.

Connecting to the Students—Discussion Questions

1. Why did Greg feel that the death of his father was not the same as the death of Harold's father (ch. 2)? Do you agree with his reasoning? Why or why not?
2. What was Greg's motivation for helping Tamara and her family? Use passages from the book to support your opinion.
3. Would you agree with Greg that he and his mother were refugees, "in a new place and cut off from the past," (ch. 7)? Why or why not?
4. Tamara and her family choose to stay in Deep Cove, where they have friends, instead of going to the city where they would be with people from their own country. Why do you think they made this choice?
5. What do you think Greg's father meant by the advice, "...never fight against the wind. Find its strength and make it work for you," (ch. 12).

Writer's Craft

Vocabulary Enrichment

Have students locate the words below in the text and then look them up in a thesaurus to find synonyms.

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| Humiliated | (ch. 2) | Rationally | (ch. 6) |
| Hulking | (ch. 2) | Lurched | (ch. 11) |
| Receding | (ch. 3) | Frothing | (ch. 12) |
| Logical | (ch. 4) | | |

Ask students how the meaning of the sentence changes with different synonyms. Then have students go back into a piece they are writing and locate multiple synonyms for ten of their word choices. Working with a partner, have students decide if their original word or one of their synonyms is the best word choice.

Author Biography

Lesley Choyce teaches part-time at Dalhousie University, runs Pottersfield Press and has written adult and young adult books, including fiction, nonfiction and poetry. His YA novels center on a variety of topics and issues from the popular—skateboarding, surfing and rock bands—to the controversial—racism, environmental issues and organ transplants.