

PATHFINDERS

RELUCTANT READERS

NO NAME

Award Winning Author

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Teacher Summary: *No Name*

The story begins with the mother of Bobby Byington, a Choctaw teen, leaving her husband and son. Buck Byington, Bobby's father, is abusive and has substance abuse problems. Bobby plans to stay out of his father's way in order to avoid trouble. Bobby turns to his favorite pastime, basketball, and spends most of his time at the ball court near his house. He has dreams of someday being a great basketball star.

The morning after Bobby's mother leaves, his father wakes up in a bad mood and begins yelling at Bobby. Accidentally, a glass of orange juice shatters, and Bobby's dad is cut. Fearing the worst, Bobby runs out the door and keeps on running.

Bobby gets away from his father, but he is injured and needs a place to hide. He eventually finds a hole in his own back yard. With determination and imagination, he is able to camouflage the hole and make it livable.

Other characters in the story include a fellow basketball player, Cherokee teen Johnny Mackey, and Faye, the girl next door. Mr. Robinson—a friend of Bobby's father, a history teacher at Bobby's school, and the school's basketball coach—is also a character in the story. Mr. Robinson discovers Bobby's backyard "home" but does not tell Bobby's father.

Without Bobby's father's knowledge, Mr. Robinson begins to spend time with Bobby and is able to tell him about his father's past. Mr. Robinson hopes this knowledge will help Bobby understand his father's actions. In order to help Bobby with his situation, Mr. Robinson tells him the traditional Choctaw tale "No Name."

After a time, Bobby's father decides to leave a trap for his son. He puts a sandwich on the back porch and waits for Bobby to come for it. He catches Bobby, but instead of scaring him, he tells his son that things are going to change around the house. Bobby is afraid to believe him, but when Buck gives Bobby the okay to be on the school basketball team, Bobby decides to give his dad a chance.

The story culminates with a big basketball game. Bobby is the star player and is disappointed that his father did not make it to the game. At the end of the game, his Dad finally shows up, but he is drunk and verbally abusive. Bobby is mad and hurt by his father's actions. When his Dad takes off in his truck, Bobby borrows a friend's car and chases after his father.

A car accident results in Bobby's car crashing into a lake. When Bobby regains consciousness, he is in a hospital bed. He realizes that he almost crossed over to the other side but decided to return to this life.

Bobby's father is frantic with worry and knows that the accident was caused by his actions. Bobby's mother is also by his bedside. After coming fully awake, Bobby is glad to be alive. He knows how close he came to dying and he finds it in his heart to forgive his dad. His mother is happy to tell her son she is returning home and that they will once again be a family living all together.

Vocabulary List: *No Name*

The definitions below define the vocabulary words as they are used in *No Name*.

1. **rebound** – *verb* - to gain possession of a basketball off the backboard or rim

He was always there to *rebound* the ball and put it in the basket.

2. **shatter** – *verb* - to break or burst suddenly into pieces

A glass will *shatter* when it lands on the hard floor.

3. **sinkholes** – *noun* - a hole formed in soluble rock or a natural depression in a land surface

He drove his car through the field that had *sinkholes*.

4. **sprain** – *noun* - a painful wrenching or laceration of the ligaments of a joint

Johnny had had an ankle sprain before, so he knew what to expect.

5. **junkyard** – *noun* - a yard or lot that is used to store junk, such as scrap metal or resalable car parts

If you look hard enough you'll find old treasures in a *junkyard*.

6. **camouflage** – *noun* - Coloring, texture, and/or patterns that conceal something by making it appear to be part of the natural surroundings

The leaves were the *camouflage* covering the entrance.

7. **throb** - *verb* - to pulsate, as with pain

My ankle was *throbbing* with pain.

8. **muffle** – *verb* - to deaden a sound

I can *muffle* my voice with my hand.

9. **ceremony** – *noun* - a formal act or ritual, the details of which are often set by custom or tradition

As the *ceremony* came to an end, everyone was silent.

10. **boulder** – *noun* - a large rock that stands alone and is rounded or worn.

The cave entrance was blocked by a *boulder*.

11. **normal** – *adjective* - usual; regular; common; typical

We all want *normal* lives.

12. **uninvited** – *adverb* - not having been invited

They showed up to the party *uninvited*.

13. **official** – *adjective* - appointed, authorized, or approved

I was an *official* member of the team.

14. **clench** – *verb* - to grasp or grip tightly

His fists *clench* when he is angry.

15. **deserve** – *verb* - to be worthy of, qualified for, or have a claim to reward or punishment

He did not *deserve* the whipping his Dad gave him.

16. **flinch** – *verb* - to recoil, as from something unpleasant or difficult; shrink

If he reaches for me I'm sure I will *flinch*.

17. **malfunction** – *noun* - a failure to function properly

I opened my mouth to say something, but my brain had a *malfunction*.

18. **yakoke** - The Choctaw word for “thank you.”

19. **hoke** - The Choctaw word for “okay.”

20. **pashofa** - The Choctaw word for “corn soup.”

No Name
Vocabulary Test

Name _____

Date _____

Directions:

Place the number of the vocabulary word next to the correct definition.

_____ to break or burst suddenly into pieces

_____ Choctaw word for “corn soup”

_____ to grasp or grip tightly

_____ a painful wrenching or laceration of the ligaments of a joint

_____ Coloring, texture, and/or patterns that conceal something by making it appear to be part of the natural surroundings

_____ to recoil, as from something unpleasant or difficult; shrink

_____ to deaden a sound

_____ usual; regular; common; typical

_____ not having been invited

_____ hole formed in soluble rock or a natural depression in a land surface

_____ gain possession of a basketball off the backboard or rim

_____ appointed, authorized, or approved

_____ Choctaw word for “thank you”

_____ to be worthy of, qualified for, or have a claim to reward or punishment

_____ a formal act or ritual, the details of which are often set by custom or tradition

_____ a failure to function properly

_____ a large rock that stands alone and is rounded or worn

_____ Choctaw word for “okay”

_____ to pulsate, as with pain

_____ a yard or lot that is used to store junk, such as scrap metal or resalable car parts

1. rebound
2. shatter
3. sinkholes
4. sprain
5. junkyard
6. camouflage
7. throb
8. muffle
9. ceremony
10. boulder
11. normal
12. uninvited
13. official
14. clench
15. deserve
16. flinch
17. malfunction
18. yakoke
19. hoke
20. pashofa

No Name: Connecting to the Text

Plot and Character

The events in Bobby's life seem out-of-control. Gather in groups of four students each and brainstorm to list the major events in Bobby's life. Place the events in order of when they happened. Each student should choose four consecutive events and place them on a timeline. The timeline can include drawings that depict the events.

Underline four important consecutive events on the timeline and write a report answering the following questions:

1. Look at each of the four consecutive events; choose one and explain the impact it had on Bobby's life.
2. Look at each of the four events. Which do you think was the hardest for Bobby to deal with? Why?
3. Add two positive events to the timeline you created. How could these events change Bobby's day?

Language Arts

Creative Writing

Background:

Living with an abusive parent or guardian can be very frightening. It is especially frightening when you think you do not have anyone to turn to for help.

Choose one of the topics below to write about:

1. It is a quiet evening at home. A teen is watching a favorite show on TV. A father enters the house, and right away the teen can tell he has been drinking.
Suggestions -
Without seeing him, how did the teen know the dad had been drinking?
Is the teen mad, scared, or feeling another emotion?
What does the teen do? Run and hide or face the dad?
2. Place yourself in this event: Your mom and dad are arguing. You know they have been drinking and the fight is only going to get worse. You just want to get away from the yelling. What do you do?

3. Just like Bobby, you need to get out of the house for a little while. You decide to camp in your backyard.

What sounds do you hear?

What does it smell like?

Are you afraid, lonely, or mad?

Do you miss your comfortable bed?

4. Poetry/Rap

Write a poem or rap about Bobby's emotional reaction to his situation. Poems must be a minimum of 4 stanzas with 4 lines in each stanza.

Using a Three-Part Thesis for Creative Writing

Background:

For many children, there is a time in their lives when they consider running away from home. For this assignment, you will use your creativity to write a story using a three-part thesis.

Choose one directed writing assignment:

1. Use the outline to write a three-part thesis. Topic: Your home life, social life and school are very frustrating.

A three-part thesis has **five** paragraphs.

Paragraph 1 Introduction

Paragraph 2 Topic #1 – my brother is driving me crazy

Paragraph 3 Topic #2 – my friends think I'm too shy

Paragraph 4 Topic #3 – I'm failing math

Paragraph 5 Closing - summary

Paragraph #1 – Introduction: The last sentence of the introductory paragraph should include the three facts: my brother is driving me crazy, my friends think I'm too shy, and I'm failing math.

Example: These are just three reasons why my life seems out of control. My brother is driving me crazy, my friends think I'm too shy, and I'm failing math.

Paragraph #2 this paragraph is **ONLY** about how your brother is driving you crazy. The words *my brother is driving me crazy* must be in the topic (first) sentence of the paragraph.

Paragraph #3 this paragraph is **ONLY** about your friends thinking you are too shy. The words friends and shy must be in the topic (first) sentence of the paragraph.

Paragraph #4 this paragraph is ONLY about failing math. The words failing and math must be in the topic (first) sentence of the paragraph.

Paragraph #5 – Closing: You can think of this as the summary paragraph or a recap. Just be sure to stick to the three topics in your paper. DO NOT bring in other, unrelated topics.

2. Use three topics to describe how you deal with stress.
 - a. For an example I will use music, TV, and friends

A three-part thesis has **five** paragraphs.

Paragraph 1 Introduction

Paragraph 2 Topic #1 – music helps me deal with stress

Paragraph 3 Topic #2 – television helps me deal with stress

Paragraph 4 Topic #3 – my friends help me deal with stress

Paragraph 5 Closing - summary

Paragraph #1 – Introduction: The last sentence of the introductory paragraph should include the three facts, music, TV and friends.

Example of last sentence in into paragraph: When I am totally stressed I have three things I can turn to: music, television, and my friends.

Paragraph #2 this paragraph is ONLY about how music helps you deal with stress. The word music must be in the topic (first) sentence of the paragraph.

Paragraph #3 this paragraph is ONLY about how television helps you deal with stress. The word television must be in the topic (first) sentence of the paragraph.

Paragraph #3 this paragraph is ONLY about the way your friends help you deal with stress. The word friends must be in the topic (first) sentence of the paragraph.

Paragraph #4 – Closing: You can think of this as the summary paragraph or a recap. Just be sure to stick to the three topics in your paper. DO NOT bring in other, unrelated topics.

Directed Writing –

Interview

Alcoholism and drug abuse are problems in many families. Unfortunately, children bear the brunt of abuse. In many communities there is help if children know where to look. Do some research in your community to find organizations that help children at risk for being abused. Look on the Internet for sites that offer help to abused children.

Interview an individual who works for an organization that helps children. Prepare a set of questions to ask. The more questions you ask, the more information you will have to include in a written report.

Suggestions: History of organization
How did you become involved in helping children?
How do you help children?
Where you ever abused as a child?
How do kids get the help they need?

Use the individual's answers to prepare a report describing the organization and the person you interviewed.

Art

1. Use your imagination to create a piece of art that expresses an emotion, or a combination of emotions, expressed in the story.

2. Visit teen art websites to find ideas, and create a piece about Bobby and his father.

www.pinterest.com/paradigmmalibu/art-therapy-for-teens

www.moma.org/learn/teens/online

www.pbs.org/inthemix/shows/show_nativeamericanteens.html

Suggestion: In an oral report, explain to your classmates your inspiration and the meaning of your work of art.

Drama

Use an excerpt from the book to recreate and act out a scene.

Suggestions:

Chapter 3 – Begin on the last paragraph on page 11, which starts, “*the next morning.*” Continue into chapter 3, page 14, when Bobby runs out of the kitchen.

Chapter 12 – Begin on page 79 with “*knock, knock,*” and the entrance of Carolina Faye. End at the bottom of page 83.

Chapter 15 – Begin at the bottom of page 105, with Bobby calling Johnny. End at the bottom of page 111.

Research project:

Many children in America are exposed to or suffer abuse. Using the Internet, gather statistics that you can express in a bar graph.

1. Nationwide, how many children were removed from their homes and placed in foster care in 1990, 2000, and 2010?
2. What three states have the highest percentage of child-abuse cases?
3. Nationwide, what is the number of abused children by race (white, African-American, Asian, American Indian, Hispanic)?

No Name

Tim Tingle

1. Why does Billy's father dislike Billy's friend Johnny?
 - a. He is Cherokee.
 - b. He thinks he is a bad influence.
 - c. He is Choctaw.
 - d. His father is a white man.

2. What cut both Billy and his father?
 - a. A broken window
 - b. A broken mirror
 - c. A pair of scissors
 - d. A broken glass of juice

3. What perfect addition for his new home did Billy find in the junkyard?
 - a. A large piece of carpet
 - b. A camouflage plastic tarp
 - c. Plywood scraps
 - d. A solid wooden door

4. Where did Billy usually meet his friends?
 - a. Basketball court
 - b. City park
 - c. Street corner
 - d. Parking lot

5. What does Johnny tell Billy the hole needs?
 - a. To be cleared of bugs
 - b. An air hole
 - c. A waterproof roof
 - d. More camouflage

6. Who tells Billy the story of a boy with no name?
 - a. His mother
 - b. Johnny
 - c. Mr. Robison
 - d. Carolina Faye

7. What is Mr. Robison's occupation?
 - a. Track coach and history teacher
 - b. Track coach and English teacher
 - c. Basketball coach and history teacher
 - d. High school principal and coach

8. What does Carolina Faye give Billy?
 - a. Flashlight
 - b. Cell phone
 - c. Drinking water
 - d. Cupcakes

9. What did Billy's father leave him as a peace offering?
 - a. New basketball
 - b. Sandwich
 - c. Video game
 - d. Bag of food

10. Where did Billy end up when he followed his father?
 - a. His father's favorite bar
 - b. Home
 - c. A lake
 - d. The basketball court

No Name – Answer Key

Tim Tingle

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