



An Orange for Frankie

Based on Patricia Polacco's Book



Money in the Great Depression (50)

Name: _____

In the early 1930's North America experienced the "Great Depression", when many people lost their jobs, and there was little money to spend on anything that was not completely necessary.

Here are some prices for food in the United States in 1932:

Type of Food	Quantity	Cost
Bacon	1 lb	22¢
Eggs	1 dozen	29¢
Oranges	2 dozen	25¢
Sugar	1 lb	5¢
Cornmeal	1 lb	
Flour	1 lb	

The Lowell family included 9 children and 2 adults. If everyone in the family ate as the dog, got an orange on Christmas Eve, about how much money would it cost for the oranges? Explain your thinking!

Colloquial Language in An Orange for Frankie

Name: _____

While English is the language spoken most often in the United States and Canada, there are many ways that words and phrases can be used in different parts of these countries. Often we can tell what part of a country someone is from just from their accents and the words they choose. Colloquial language refers to the casual way people speak to each other in everyday language, and it changes from generation to generation.

In *An Orange for Frankie*, the Stowell family lives in rural Michigan in the early 1930's, and the author lets the characters speak the same way they would have done in that time period and place. Think about the following words and phrases as they were used in the story, and rewrite them in more formal language:

- Yer _____
- aint _____
- Purly _____
- vittles _____
- Fer _____
- if'n it _____
- "they're to home" _____
- "It don't cost us nothin'" _____
- "...all vessed with bottement" _____
- "My heart fair broke..." _____

Think about the words and phrases you and your friends use when you're talking to each other on the playground or another informal situation. Think of at least 3 examples of your own colloquial language that your own grandchildren may not understand 50 or 60 years from now. Write a short definition or explanation of each word.

Word or Phrase	Explanation
My bad	I did something bad.
_____	_____
_____	_____

Frontloading Activities



Frontloading Activities

In order to prepare your students for the themes of *An Orange for Rosa*, you may want to do one or more activities before reading this story. These ideas to help your students gain some background knowledge about hearing this wonderful Christmas story:

1. **Pictures:** I have provided a set of pictures that you could use with groups of students, informing them that the images give hints about the content of the story. Have them discuss the images as they bring them to the content of the story. It will be interesting to see how they connect the hobos riding the railway cars!

2. **Vocabulary Match:** I have provided cards with vocabulary from the story, from the story, as well as definitions. Distribute one card to each student and allow them to circulate to find their "partners". By the end of the activity, students should be standing in pairs, with one student holding the vocabulary word and other the definition. Have each pair read their cards, and have the class decide if the cards match. Encourage their reasoning. Then have students share their ideas with the class about what they think will involve this vocabulary.

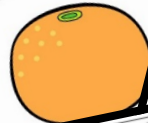
3. **Story Quotations:** I have provided ten quotations from the story. Have students study the quotations and discuss what they might be about. Put students in small groups to read each page of quotations. Give groups time to read each quotation about the story, and then bring the whole class together to share ideas.

4. **Videos:** There are several websites that have videos that can help learn about the Great Depression:

- **Stories from the Great Depression:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TpfY8khj8p4>
- **The Great Depression: History Videos for Kids:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-LS7cLz0p4>



© Coach's Corner



withering

intending to
make someone
feel
embarrassed
plentiful

abundant

clothing that has
been worn so much
that the thread shows

threadbare

feeling sad
about
something

lamenting

a person who wanders
from place to place
with no home or job

hobo

a tree branch

bough

a rough fabric used
mostly for bags

burlap

a person in charge of
an engine

engineer

© Coach's Corner

Story Quotations

"I tell you, Rosa, it was a miracle, that's what it was! A miracle!"

"All's I meant was that the oranges being there would mean Pa's home, safe and sound."

They all gave a gasp.

whistle of the 628 as it chuffed
of their property.

vest. It don't cost us nothin'
folks that could use it."

re was powerful bad

will be for your pa when
spered.

ing something that
who needed it."

he engine with
the horse and
right along with

men got

s called
ames
Charlie.

Activate Prior Knowledge

Writing Activities

Writing Activities



1. Ghost Chapter/Prequel

Many of the "hobos" who rode the railcars had jobs and families before the Great Depression. Write a one-page prequel to An Orange for Frankie, telling the story of the hobo to whom Frankie gave his sweater. What was his life like before the depression? How did he end up riding the rails?

2. Informational Text

Sometimes fictional books that are set in historical times provide some extra information to help readers better understand the time period. Research and write 1 to 2 paragraphs about ONE of the following topics:

- Great Depression
- Holiday celebrations in the 1930's
- Homelessness (or hobos) during the Great Depression

3. Postcard From the Past

Think about the time period after the depression ended, and imagine what might have been changed for the hobo who received Frankie's sweater. Draw a postcard, illustrated on one side and with a short note from the hobo on the back.

During this time period people sometimes had photographs of themselves on postcards, to make them more personal, so you may want to draw a picture of what you think the hobo looks like after the depression for the front of the postcard.

Remember to write an address for Frankie Stowell on the right back of the postcard! We know he lived just outside Lansing, MI. You will have to make up a street address for him.



4. Public Service Announcement

During the 1930's many people thought the hobos roaming around the countryside were lazy, not wanting to work. Do some research about these men, many of whom were actually teenagers, to find out if this was true, and then write a short Public Service Announcement that people of that time period would hear on their radios to help them learn the realities of hobo lives.



Drama Activities

Drama Activities

There are a variety of drama activities that will help your students better understand the feelings and beliefs of the characters in An Orange for Frankie. You may want to stop at key points in the story and have your students engage in role-playing activities such as the ones below!

1. Hotseat: Choose a student to take on the role of Frankie or the hobo. That student stands or sits in front of the class fielding questions from the other students. The person in the "hotseat" must answer in character; that is to say, as the character from the story might have answered. Encourage students to think deeply about the questions they might ask the character. Questions must be about the issues portrayed in the story. You could have different students take on different roles as part of a hotseat strategy, such as Mr. Dunkle, one of the hobos, Frankie's mom, dad, sister or brother.
2. Good Angel, Bad Angel: This role play activity requires three students: one to play Frankie, one for the "good angel" and another for the "bad angel." "Frankie" sits in a chair before the rest of his/her classmates, and the "angels" stand to each side of him. This activity works best at the point in the story when Frankie is looking at the oranges on the mantle, but before he picks one up. "Frankie" tells the angels that he wants to eat his orange right now, and then each angel gives him advice. Frankie responds to each angel's advice in role. Students love this activity, and you can further engage their interest by providing wands or fairy wings from the dollar store for the angels to wear!
3. Minor Character Monologue: There are several minor characters in this story such as Mr. Dunkle, the hobos, and Frankie's siblings. Have students choose one of these roles at the end of the story, and give a monologue about their various roles in the story as well as their reactions to the book. Depending upon the age and abilities of your students, you could either have them write their monologues before performing them, or simply respond to them spontaneously. This activity will help your students to understand that each character's viewpoint is different, and should be appreciated no matter how small their role is in the story.



Understanding Perspectives

Math: Money

Money in the Great Depression



Name: _____

In the early 1930's North America experienced the "Great Depression", when many people lost their jobs, and there was little money to spend on anything that was not completely necessary.

Here are some prices for food in the United States in 1932:

Type of Food	Quantity	Cost
Bacon	1 lb	22¢
Eggs	1 dozen	29¢
Oranges	2 dozen	25¢
Sugar	1 lb	5¢
Cornmeal	1 lb	2¢
Flour	1 lb	4¢

The Lowell family included 9 children and 2 adults. If everyone in the family, as well as the dog, got an orange on Christmas Eve, about how much did Mr. Lowell pay for the oranges? Explain your thinking!

On the first morning Mrs. Stowell cooks breakfast for her own family as well as the railway men, the boys and the hobos. In the story, she sends her children outside with the bacon, eggs, "hoecakes" (pancakes made with cornmeal), molasses and flour. On the first morning in the story, how many people, including the Stowell family, were fed altogether? Show your work.

Use the following questions:

How many pounds of bacon and 4 dozen eggs. How much would that cost?

How many "hoecakes" from cornmeal instead of "pancakes" could you make with the same amount of money?

If you had to eat the same food every day, how much would that cost?

If the Lowell sisters made sure he got to enjoy one of their own oranges and tying them together, how much would that cost?

How much would that cost together?

How much would that cost for Frankie. Have a friend help you.



Comprehension

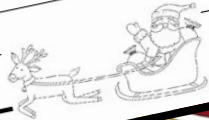
An Orange for Frankie: Comprehension Questions

Name: _____

1. There are nine children in the Stowell family. Put them in order from the oldest to the youngest. (Hint: the first three pages of the story mentions ALL of the children.)

2. What is the main idea of this story? Use information from the text and your own ideas to answer the question.

3. Explain how the beginning of the story and the end of the story are related. How did what happened at the beginning affect Pa's homecoming near the end?



© Coach's Corner

© Coach's Corner

Comprehension Questions: Answers

Stowell family. Put them in order from the oldest to the youngest. (Hint: the first three pages of the story mentions ALL of the children.)

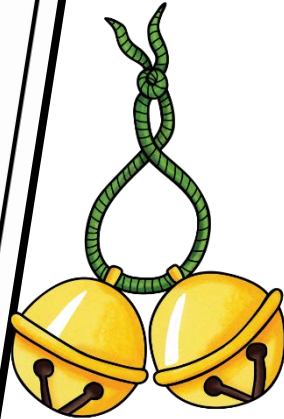
Frankie, Bertha, Altah, Ivah. (Note: Students can go to the back of the book, where the mother's siblings in order.)

Information from the text and your own

Others who have less than you do is the beginning of the book the men from the train, and Frankie the book Frankie's brothers and shows that even if you don't have someone with someone who is not as

If the story are related. How becoming near the end?

help the engineer, Mr. Dunkle gives Mr. Dunkle is kind to the other men.



Answers Provided

Colloquial Language

Colloquial Language in An Orange for Frankie

Name: _____



While English is the language spoken most often in the United States and Canada, there are many ways that words and phrases can be used in different parts of these countries. Often we can tell what part of a country someone is from just from their accents and the words they choose. **Colloquial language** refers to the casual way people speak to each other in everyday language, and it changes from generation to generation.

In An Orange for Frankie, the Stowell family lives in rural Michigan in the early 1930's, and the author lets the characters speak the same way they would have done in that time period and place. Think about the following words and phrases as they were used in the story, and rewrite them in more formal language:

1. Yer _____
2. aint _____
3. Purty _____
4. vittles _____
5. Fer _____
6. if'n it _____
7. "they're to home" _____
8. "It don't cost us nothin'" _____
9. "...all vexed with botherment". _____
10. "My heart fair broke..." _____

Think about the words and phrases you and your friends use when you're talking to each other on the playground or another informal situation. Think of at least 3 examples of your own colloquial language that your own grandchildren may not understand 50 or 60 years from now. Write a short definition or explanation of each example.

Word or Phrase	Explanation
My bad	I did something bad.

