

Name _____

Date _____



Free Verse by Sarah Dooley

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.



Read Aloud Video

Which cover do you like better? Why?
Teachers - find the Cover Comparison worksheet in the 2022 FCF pack!

What's It About?

When her brother Michael dies in a fire, Sasha Harless has no one left and nowhere to turn. He'd been her caretaker since their mother ran off and their father died in the mines. And before his accident, Michael made Sasha promise him that she would leave Caboose, West Virginia for a better life someday. Now, she's in foster care, feeling more stuck and broken than ever. Trying to cope with her brother's death, Sasha returns to school and is introduced to poetry and finds it's a new way to express herself when spoken words just won't do. She even discovers family she didn't know she had, including a younger Mikey Harless, who's just as broken as she is. But just as she's settling into her new life, tragedy strikes the mine her cousin works in. While fearing the worst, Sasha takes Mikey and finally makes her escape. But will running from Caboose really fix the pain in Sasha's life, or will she have to discover a new way to heal?

Free Verse was the 2012 winner of the Phyllis Naylor Working Writer Fellowship through the PEN American Center.

AR Reading Level: 4.7

Who Wrote It?

Sarah Dooley has lived in an assortment of small West Virginia towns, each of which she grew to love. Sarah is a former special education teacher who now provides treatment to children with autism. She lives in Huntington, West Virginia, where she inadvertently collects cats. She's a 2006 graduate of Marshall University and has written 4 middle grade books.



Photo by John McCoy

Lexile Level: 740L

I want to read this book: YES / NO



WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.