

# ORPHAN TRAIN RIDERS

Amanda Zieba



THREE HISTORICAL FICTION STORIES FOR CHILDREN

ORPHAN TRAIN RIDERS:  
CHARLES CHRISTMAS GIFT  
UNIT STUDY

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## ORPHAN TRAIN RIDERS: 3 HISTORICAL FICTION STORIES

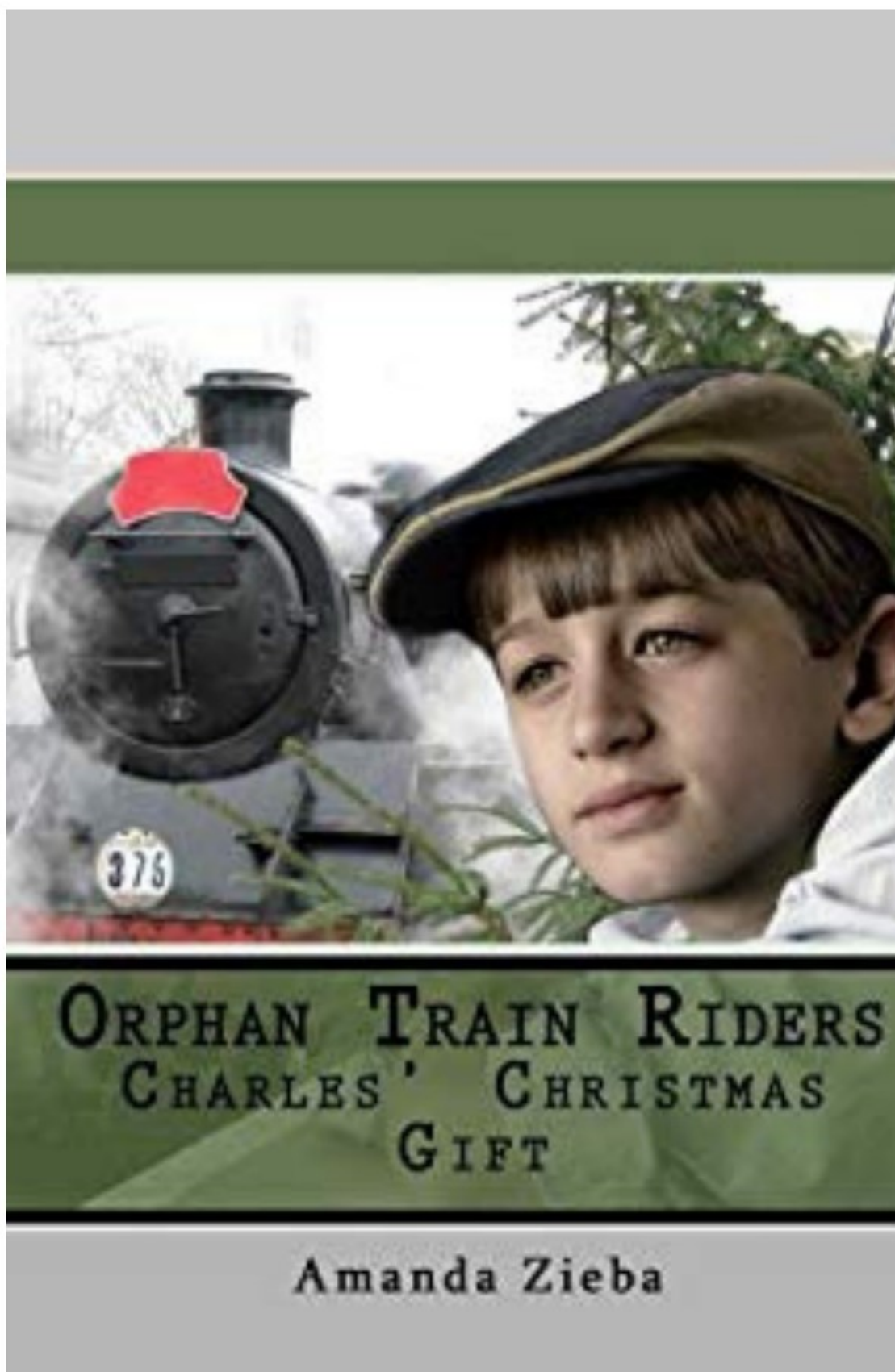
**Dear Teacher friend,**

I am so excited for you and your students to start traveling on the rails with Charles, Joanna and William. In addition to the great story you are about to read, I also want to share with you engaging lessons to use along side the text. These vocabulary worksheets, journal writes, and quizzes will bring the text to life and help your students practice foundational literacy skills.

I hope that these prepared materials will make your life in the classroom a bit easier as well as a bit more interesting for your students! Thank you for your purchase. I hope we have the opportunity to work together again in the future.

Happy Teaching,

**Amanda Zieba**



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Teachers Pay Teachers: Word Nerd



**Orphan Train Riders: Charles Christmas Gift**

1. On a piece of paper write the word and its definition. .

recognize

attempt

reveal

familiar

foyer

abundant

anxious

cling

surly

fragrant

2. Then create flashcards using a thesaurus, with the vocabulary word on the front side and a synonym for the word on the back side

3. Alphabetize your flashcards

4. Sort your flashcards into three piles, noun, verbs and adjectives.

5. Select two words and write a sentence that includes both.

## Orphan Train Riders: Charles Christmas Gift

### True or False

Write T if a statement is TRUE and F if a statement is False.

1. \_\_\_\_ Charles had many siblings that he talked about frequently.
2. \_\_\_\_ Charles was adopted at the first stop in Springville, Iowa.
3. \_\_\_\_ Many siblings who rode the train were adopted together by the same family.

### Multiple Choice

Write A, B,C or D in the answer space to indicate your choice for the best answer.

1. \_\_\_\_ Why did Anne move to New York?
  - a. She wanted to become an actress.
  - b. She was trying to earn money for her family.
  - c. She hated Canada.
  - d. She was going to work for the Children's Aid Society.
2. \_\_\_\_ Charles mother left him ...
  - a. a lot of money and books.
  - b. a large trunk full of family antiques.
  - c. a small bundle with a letter, newspaper article and a few coins.
  - d. a special blanket
3. \_\_\_\_ What state is Charles adopted in?
  - a. New York
  - b. Iowa
  - c. Nebraska
  - d. Colorado

## Orphan Train Riders: Charles Christmas Gift

### COMPREHENSION ACTIVITIES

#### Short Answer

Using the knowledge gained from the story, fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

1. While they were riding on the train, Anne taught the children about farms, specifically an animal called a \_\_\_\_\_ that they might see in their new home.
2. The children rode on a train called the Pullman car that had \_\_\_\_\_ you could pull down and use at night.
3. Towns people met at \_\_\_\_\_ or movie theaters to see the children that were available for adoption.

#### Fact or Opinion

Write F if the statement is a FACT and O if the statement is an OPINION.

1. \_\_\_\_ Charles is the smartest boy on the train because he taught himself to read.
2. \_\_\_\_ Charles had many ways of keeping his mother's memory alive.
3. \_\_\_\_ Traveling on the train was fun and exciting for everyone.

#### Questions and Answers

Answer in complete sentences.

1. Who chaperoned the children on the orphan train?
2. What did Lily ask St. Nicholas to bring her for Christmas?
3. Why did Georgie get so upset after their first stop?
4. How did Charles have the bravery to talk to Papa John and Mama Ellen for the first time?

## Orphan Train Riders: Charles Christmas Gift

### COMPREHENSION ACTIVITIES

#### Cause and Effect

Complete the below statements by telling what caused the effect.

1. Charles' mama left him at the lodging house so

\_\_\_\_\_.

2. Anne asked Mr. Trott if she could stay with the group so

\_\_\_\_\_.

3. Charles made Papa John a red hat so

\_\_\_\_\_.

Complete the below statements by telling the effect of the cause.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ because his mother died.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ because Anne patiently  
read him the letter many times.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ because the children saw  
the town beautifully decorated for Christmas.

#### Sequence of Events

Put the events in chronological order by numbering them from 1 to 6.

\_\_\_\_\_ Charles is adopted by Papa John and Mama Ellen

\_\_\_\_\_ Charles mother dies.

\_\_\_\_\_ Georgie and Lily refuse to split up and do not come with the children to  
meet the first set of grown ups.

\_\_\_\_\_ Anne, Charles and the other children discuss Christmas traditions.

\_\_\_\_\_ Charles is not adopted in Lincoln, Nebraska.

\_\_\_\_\_ Charles celebrates a wonderful Christmas with his new family.

#### Creative Writing

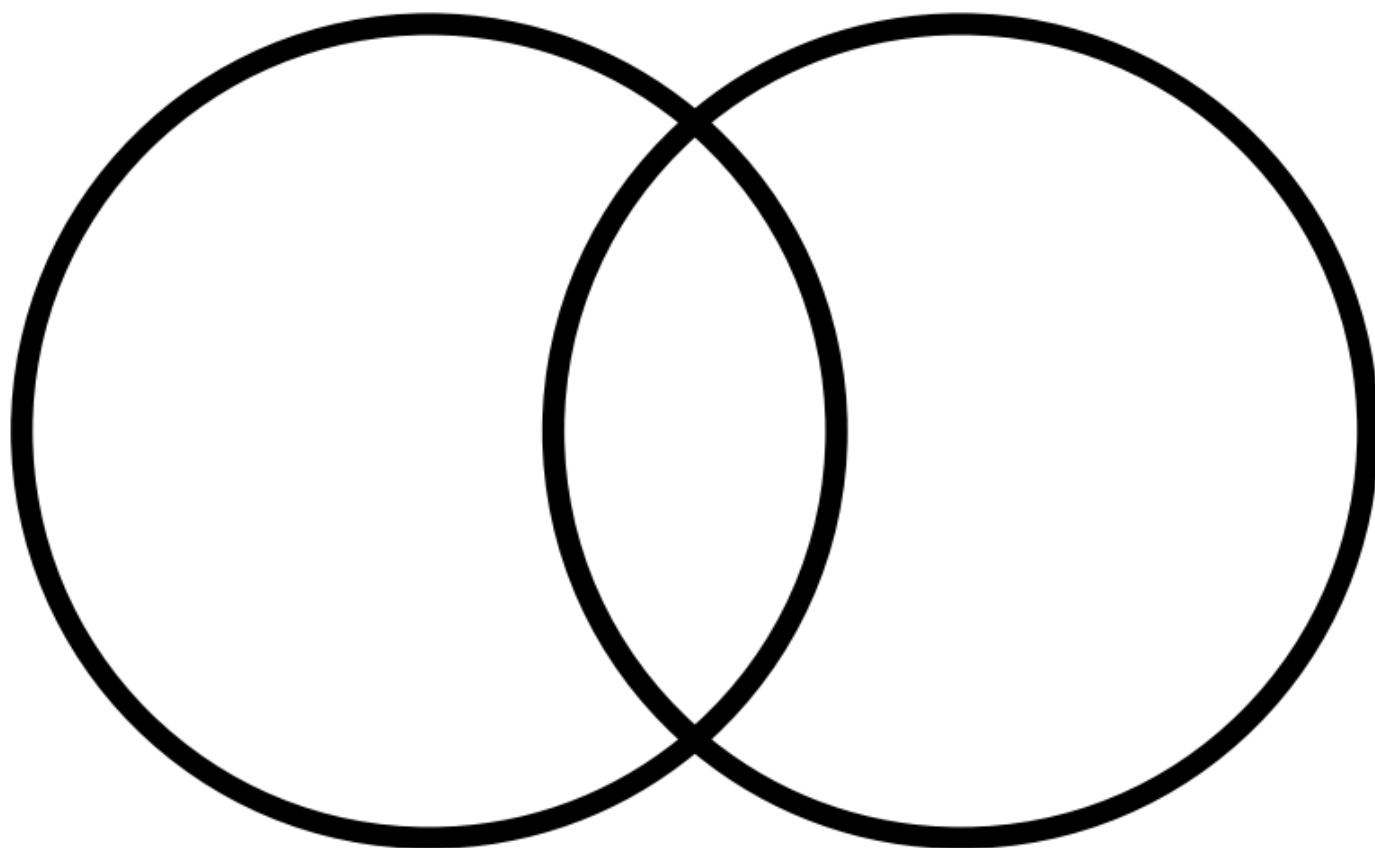
Pretend you are Georgie, Lily or Marguerite and write  
a letter to Anne in Canada telling her about your  
new life. Remember to use correct letter format.



## Orphan Train Riders: Charles Christmas Gift

### Compare and Contrast

Using books or the internet research Christmas traditions around the world. Discover how people of different cultures and in different parts of the world celebrate this time of year. What foods do they eat? What clothes do they wear? What songs do they sing? How do they decorate their house? Using a Venn Diagram, compare and contrast two countries' Christmas celebrations.



## Orphan Train Riders: Charles Christmas Gift

### Poster

Choose one of the train stops (Springville, Iowa; Lincoln, Nebraska; or Colorado Springs, Colorado) and make a poster attempting to attract new citizens to live there. What good qualities of the cit would you promote? You could share information about the town as it currently is, or as it was in 1900.

### Drawing

Draw a picture of Papa John reading the nativity story to Charles, Mama Ellen and their company as they sit around the Christmas tree on Christmas Eve.

### Create a Christmas Train!

Create a train Christmas ornament using candy, ribbon and a hot glue gun. This will most likely not be edible, but instead, a fun memory of the book and holiday.

1. For the body of the train, start by stacking 2 packs of gum (long 5 piece packages work well!) Fast with hot glue gun.
2. Add peppermint circles or Lifesavers for the wheels.
3. On the front of the train, glue a Hershey kiss upside down as the smokestack.
4. Small individually wrapped chocolates can be glued on the top/back of the stacked gum packages for the conductor's cab.
5. Add a ribbon to the top/back fo the ornament so that you can hang it.

**\*\* Feel free to alter or embellish this design as you choose. Have fun!**

# A N S W E R K E Y

## True and False

1. T 2. F 3. F

## Multiple Choice

1. B 2. C 3. A

## Fill in the Blank/Short Answer

1. cow 2. beds 3. churches

## Fact or Opinion

1. O 2. F 3. O

## Complete sentence answers.

1. Mr. Trott 2. A Tea Set 3. They thought they were going to be separated. 4. He touched his Mama's letter in his pocket.

## Cause and Effect

1. She had arranged for someone to take him to the orphan train. 2. She could help him take care of the children, especially Charles, 3. that Mama Ellen would be able to see him in the field from far away. 1. Charles rode the orphan train 2. Charles learned to read 3. The children were hopeful again

## Sequencing

5 - Charles is adopted by Papa John and Mama Ellen

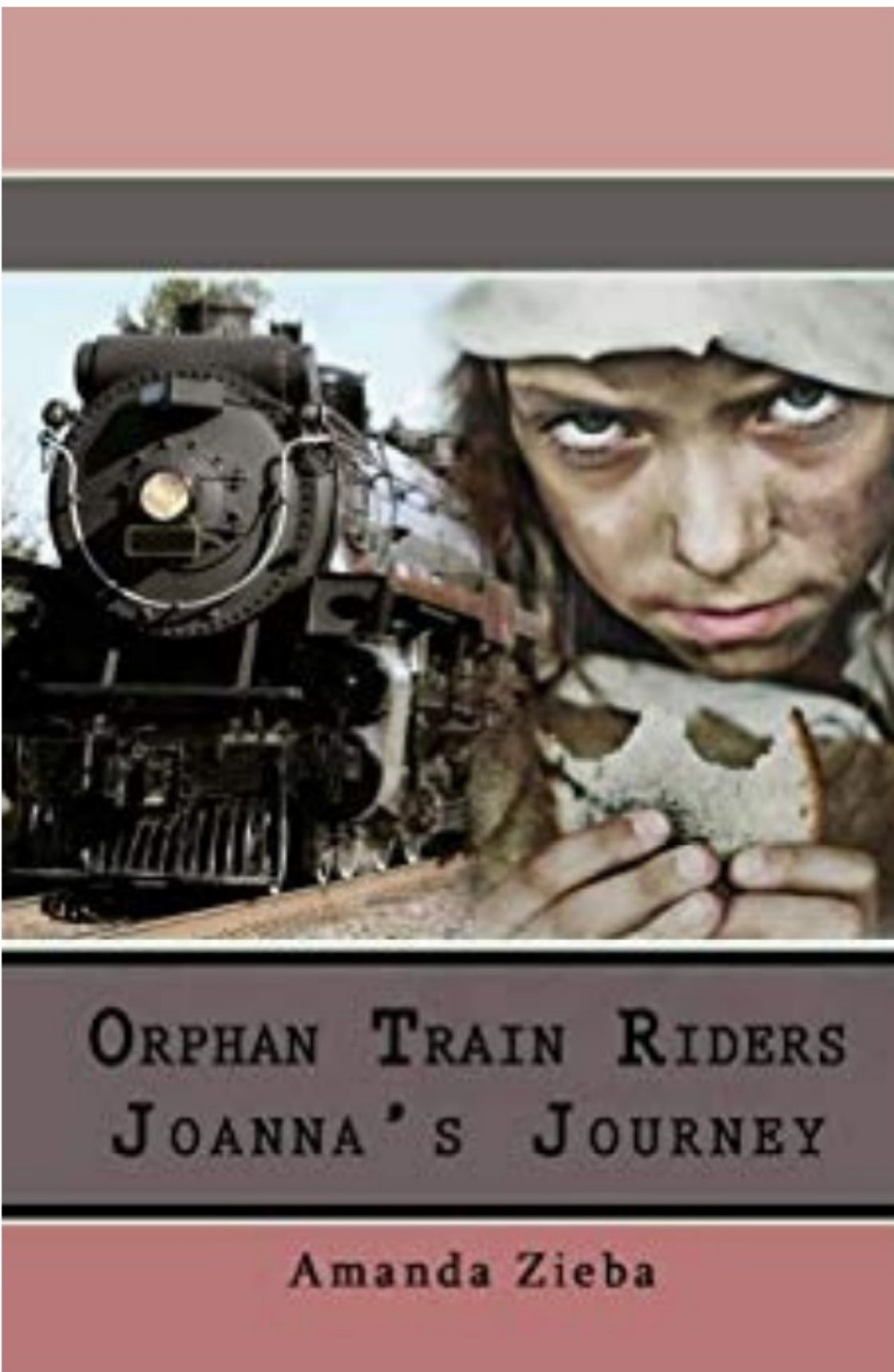
1 - Charles mother dies.

2 - Georgie and Lily refuse to split up and do not come with the children to meet the first set of grown ups.

4 - Anne, Charles and the other children discuss Christmas traditions.

3 - Charles is not adopted in Lincoln, Nebraska.

6 - Charles celebrates a wonderful Christmas with his new family.



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Teachers Pay Teachers: Word Nerd



## Orphan Train Riders: Joanna's Journey

### V O C A B U L A R Y

1. On a piece of paper write the word and its definition. .

vendor  
reluctantly  
maliciously  
appalled  
rarely  
poultry  
tentatively  
savagely  
apprenticeship  
congregation

2. Then think about a situation a person might act this way, or a place in which the item might be seen. Try to use different examples than the ones used in the story.

3. Pick out all of the emotion words from the list and draw an emoji face to match each one.

4. Select one vocabulary word from the list above to complete the sentences below.

Joanna \_\_\_\_\_ stepped onto the train, unsure if it was a wise choice.

Mr. Swan said that \_\_\_\_\_ did children not find happy families.

Even today, New York City streets are packed with food \_\_\_\_\_ selling great food for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

When visiting a farm you may see cows, pigs, \_\_\_\_\_, horses and other animals.

## Orphan Train Riders: Joanna's Journey

### COMPREHENSION A C T I V I T I E S

#### True or False

Write T if a statement is TRUE and F if a statement is False.

1. \_\_\_\_ Joanna is a thief.
2. \_\_\_\_ Mr. Swan and his wife Ms. Hattie have lived in New York all their lives.
3. \_\_\_\_ Joanna has many strong memories of her biological parents.

#### Multiple Choice

Write A, B,C or D in the answer space to indicate your choice for the best answer.

1. \_\_\_\_ Joanna is adopted by a family in the state of...?
  - a. New York
  - b. Oklahoma
  - c. Iowa
  - d. Nebraska
2. \_\_\_\_ Before Mr. Swan worked for the Children's Aid Society, he had a job as...
  - a. Pastor
  - b. Railroad Conductor
  - c. Farmer
  - d. Banker
3. \_\_\_\_ One job Joanna wanted to take over in Henry's house was...?
  - a. cleaning
  - b. corn planting
  - c. wood chopping
  - d. cooking

## Orphan Train Riders: Joanna's Journey

### COMPREHENSION ACTIVITIES

**Answer these questions with complete sentences.**

1. Who was Joanna running from at the beginning of the story?
2. What convinced Henry that Joanna was supposed to be apart of their family?
3. Where was Joanna living before she got on the orphan train?
4. When was the first orphan train sent out?
5. Why did Janie get upset when Henry first brought Joanna home?
6. How did Mr. Brace attempt to take care of the many poor children in New York City?

### Fact or Opinion

Write F if the statement is a FACT and O if the statement is an OPINION.

1. \_\_\_\_ Henry is a cruel man.
2. \_\_\_\_ Janie always wanted a sister.
3. \_\_\_\_ Joanna is learning to sew.

### Creative Writing

The author of this book often uses alliteration to make her writing sound interesting. Alliteration is the repetition of an initial consonant sound. For example, the title: Joanna's Journey uses alliteration as does the sentence from the last page. She was shaken from her thoughts by the shrill sounds of the steam engine whistle. Try writing your own alliterative phrases using the below topics and letter.

B - bananas and bubble gum \_\_\_\_\_

T - tunnels and turtles \_\_\_\_\_

W - wishes and winking \_\_\_\_\_

Your choice! \_\_\_\_\_

## Orphan Train Riders: Joanna's Journey

### Sequence of Events

Put the events in chronological order by numbering them from 1 to 6.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. Swan returns to Iowa one year later.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Henry takes Joanna to his house.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Joanna steals bread in New York City.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. Swan explains the history of the orphan trains to Joanna.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The parents Joanna hope for adopt a baby instead.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Joanna and Janie cook a delicious dinner together.

### Research

Using books or the internet look up orphanages in 1900 to gain a better understanding of what Joanna's childhood was like. Write a diary entry as if you were a child living in an orphanage at that time.

### Map Skills

Print a blank map of the United States and then follow the steps below.

1. Label the following cities: New York City, NY; Des Moines, IA; Lincoln, Nebraska and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
2. Draw a line connecting all four cities and then draw hash marks on that line to make them look like train tracks.
3. Write start near the first city of Joanna's journey and end near the end of her journey.
4. Mark your hometown on the map.
5. Color each state along the train tracks a different color.
6. Draw a compass on your map. Include the four cardinal directions.
7. Create a legend or key to explain any symbols you used on your map.
8. Label the map: Orphan Train Route.



## Orphan Train Riders: Joanna's Journey

### Poster

Make a billboard advertisement for the Orphan Trains attempting to convince people of their benefits.

### Drawing

Draw a picture of Joanna and Ruthie sitting together quietly, looking out the window of the train.

### Play Time!

Find a few friends, classmates or siblings to practice and perform this play form of Joanna's Journey! No need to memorize the lines. Just read them! No need to worry about props or sets or costumes either. Just use your voice to tell the story. Reader's theaters are a fun way earn curriculum content while practicing fluency! **(Script on following pages)**

## Joanna's Journey: A Reader's Theater

### Characters

Narrator 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Narrator 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Joanna: \_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Swan: \_\_\_\_\_

Henry: \_\_\_\_\_

Janie: \_\_\_\_\_

Narrator 1: We would like to welcome you to our performance of Joanna's Journey, a story by Amanda Zieba about a girl and her ride on the orphan train.

Narrator 2: Scene 1

Narrator 1: Joanna was running. She'd stolen some bread and if she slowed down for even a second, the city patrol man behind her would catch her and take her to jail. Again.

Narrator 2: She dodged a trash bin, hurdled a stack of crates holding squawking poultry and continued to run down the busy street, the bread clutched tight in her fist. Finally she ducked into a building and sat down on a bench.

Narrator 1: When she caught her breath and looked up, she was surprised to see the room was full. And everyone was staring at her.

Mr. Swan: Glad you could make it. We leave for the train in a few minutes and had just one spot left. It looks like you're the girl to fill it. What's your name?

Joanna: Joanna.

Narrator 2: Joanna figured that whatever was happening here was a better alternative to a night in jail, so she hid her confusion along with the stolen bread in her hand.

Narrator 1: As the man promised, the group departed a few minutes later. They walked to the train station in a neat quiet line.

Narrator 2: The train station was massive and crowded with people. Joanna looked around nervously afraid the patrol man might still find her. She hung near the back of the group, watched carefully and followed closely to the other children as they loaded the train.

Narrator 1: She jumped a little when the man in charge sat down next to her.

Mr. Swan: I know it can be a bit nerve wracking, but you are making the right choice. You missed my introduction back there at the Children's Aid Society. My name is Mr. Swan and my wife, Ms. Hattie and I will be traveling with you until you are adopted by a new family. We will be stopping in Iowa, Nebraska and if necessary Oklahoma.

Joanna: Why would somebody want me?

Mr. Swan: Some people aren't able to have children of their own, and this is a great opportunity for them to have a family. Also, many people out West live on farms and need more children to help with the many chores.

Joanna: Sounds kind of heartless if you ask me. Taking kids away from the only place they've ever known.

Mr. Swan: You see that baby over there that Ms. Hattie is holding? It was left on a subway last week. It was brought to us and now we are bringing it to a family who wants a baby.

Joanna: I suppose it could work.

Mr. Swan: It has in the past.

Joanna: So that's where we're headed now.

Mr. Swan: Yes

Joanna: But I don't have any of my things.

Mr. Swan: That's alright. We will provide you with a few things... a clean set of clothes to wear when we arrive at the first stop and a little food along the way. You won't need much else. Your new family should provide most everything you need.

Narrator 2: Then the man got up and moved on to talk to the other children. While Joanna sat staring out the window in a bad mood. But A small part of her dared to hope for someone who would actually care about her.

Narrator 1: Scene 2

Narrator 2: Joanna began to worry as the train moved away from New York City. She had a hundred questions racing through her brain. Her worrying was interrupted by a loud grumbling from her stomach.

Narrator 1: She reached in her pocket and pulled out her stolen bread from this morning. With a sneaky glance she took a lightening quick bite. She was over halfway through the bread when she realized she was being watched.

Narrator 2: She stared back at the big dark eyes and then she sighed. She motioned the little face over and made room for the girl on the seat next to her. Together they finished up the scrap of food and then silently watch the landscape blur outside window.

Narrator 1: After an hour or so, the little girl fell asleep, her head resting on Joanna's shoulder. Joanna watched her sweet face as she slept and jealously thought that she would have no trouble finding a family to love her.

Mr. Swan: Looks like you made a new friend.

Joanna: Friend? I fed her. That's all she wanted.

Mr. Swan: Well, friends help each other. So it looks like little Ruthie has made a friend anyhow.

Narrator 1: Joanna looked at the sleeping child and then back out the window. Joanna didn't usually talk to strangers, but for some reason, she trusted this man. Before she knew it, questions came tumbling out of her mouth.

Joanna: So who are you? Why are you helping us? Are there really families out there that want us?

Mr. Swan: Since we have the time, can I tell you a story?

Joanna: Yes.

Narrator 2: Scene 3



Mr. Swan: Once upon a time, there was a man names Charles Loring Brace. It made him very sad to see the difficult and terrible lives of the children in New York City. He decided that something had to be done to help them. He thought that if these poor children could get an education and a good family to care for them that they might be able to one day get a good job and lead happy, successful lives.

Joanna: How did he think he was going to do that?

Mr. Swan: Mr. Brace started by opening affordable lodging houses for newsboys, schools, lunch programs, daycares and even free medical programs. But his biggest idea has been the orphan trains. In 1854 he sent the very first orphan train, just like the one you are one now, to Michigan. Within a week all forty-six orphans had a new family. Because the trip was so successful, he sent more orphan trains full of kids needing new families.

Joanna: How did Mr. Brace k now that the new families would be any better than the old ones? Most kids that I know all have bad parents.

Mr. Swan: I'll tell you how I know. Ms. Hattie and I, we used to live in Nebraska. I was a pastor there and one day we got word that an orphan train was coming to our very own town. It was my job to spread the word and boy did people come a runnin'. The day before the train arrived, I talked to all of those people one by one and I only let the good ones come back. I'm sure the same thing happened yesterday at the places where we'll be stopping. Now, since our own children are grown, Ms. Hattie and I travel around the country, making sure everyone who wants a good family gets one.

Joanna: Honest?

Mr. Swan: Honest. Alright, how about since I told you my story, you tell me yours.

Joanna: It's not as good and happy one as yours. Are you sure you want to hear it?

Mr. Swan: Yes mam.

Joanna: Do you promise not to turn me over to the city patrol? Even if you hear something bad?

Mr. Swan: I promise.

Joanna: Well, I lived in the Memorial Home for Girls for most of my life. I mean, I can't remember much before that.

I do know that my daddy went to fight in the Civil War, but he never did come back. We never got word if he deserted... or... worse. My Momma sorta fell to pieces after that. She was sick a whole lot and we couldn't afford medicine. Last I saw her she dropped me off at a neighbor's house saying she'd be back in a few hours. After a few weeks, when she didn't come back, the neighbor took me to the orphanage. The orphanage was fine, but we were always hungry. They kick you out when you turn fourteen. Nice birthday present huh. Some girls lied about their age so they could stay longer, but me, I've always been tall, so they never would've believed me. I got a job at a hotel for a while, but I got caught eating the leftovers on a breakfast tray and they fired me. Since then I've been living on the streets, selling flowers when I can find 'em, stealing when I can't. That's what I was doin' when I ran into your building and now here I am.

Mr. Swan: We'll find you a better life Joanna.

Joanna: I'd like to believe you Mr., but I'm not sure I can."

Narrator 1: Scene 4

Narrator 2: The train arrived in Iowa and Mr. Swan marched the children to a church.

Narrator 1: Joanna stood on the makeshift stage and forced herself to look out at the growing crowd of people. She couldn't believe all of these couples wanted a child, and a dirty poor child at that.

Narrator 2: Mr. Swan stepped up in front of everyone and welcomed the people to what he hoped would be a happy event. He explained the procedure to follow if they found a child they wanted to adopt and then stepped off to the side, giving full view of the children once again.

Narrator 1: Joanna had picked out the perfect parents from the crowd, but they quickly selected a baby.

Narrator 2: Joanna was very upset. She started to cry but quickly stopped. She wiped the tears from her eyes and when she opened them again she was shocked to see a tall bearded man standing in front of her.

Henry: How old are you?

Joanna: 15, my name is-

Henry: Have you ever had a job before?

Joanna: Yes sir, I once worked at a hotel. Cleaning and helping in the kitchen some.

Henry: Good. Do you have siblings?

Joanna: Not anymore. They died when they were babies.

Henry: Did you care for them?

Joanna: Yes sir, best I knew how, but nothing can't stop them from getting sick, and we didn't have any money for medicine.

Henry: Where are your parents?

Joanna: I don't know sir. Probably dead.

Henry: Why are you here?

Joanna: I don't have anywhere else to go.

Henry: Fine. You'll do. Come with me to see the man.

Joanna: My name is Joanna

Narrator 1: The man stopped and turned and really looked at her for the first time. He almost smiled, but then he walked away from her toward Mr. Swan.

Narrator 2: Joanna wasn't sure if she wanted to go with him, but she was even less sure that someone else would choose her.

Narrator 1: Joanna stood to the side while the man and Mr. Swan filled out the paperwork. Joanna almost wished Mr. Swan would forbid him to take her, but in the end he let her go.

Mr. Swan: Best of luck Joanna. We'll be back in a year to check in on you.

Narrator 2: On the way home she learned that his name was Henry and that he had 3 children. He didn't mention a wife. He lived and worked on a farm, growing corn, like most Iowans and raising a handful of animals as well. He and Jeremy, his oldest child, would take care of that. The inside chores would be hers to manage.

Narrator 1: Besides that little information, the ride was silent. Other than his questions back at the church, he didn't ask anything about her or her life.



Narrator 1: (Continued) The wagon, pulled by two draft horses, bumped along the road through the late afternoon sun and Joanna began to wonder if she had made a big mistake by ever stepping foot on that train.

Narrator 2: Scene 5

Narrator 1: Joanna stepped into a dirty home. She saw stacks of dirty dishes, piles of clothing on the floor and finally a soot covered face leaning over the wood burning stove.

Janie: I'm sorry Pa, Jeremy showed me how before he went out to the barn, but I guess I messed it up."

Henry: Nah, nothing hurt Janie. It'll be fine.

Janie: Who's that?

Henry: Oh, yeah, her. That's.... ah, Jo...

Joanna: Joanna.

Henry: Right, she's come to help us.

Janie: That's a girl!

Joanna: Hey! You don't much look like one right now either!

Henry: Enough! The two of you!

Janie: But Pa, how is she supposed to help us when she can't even look after herself?

Narrator 2: Joanna rarely backed down from a fight, but she had to admit that the girl made a good point. A piercing cry shocked them all into silence.

Janie: Ugh, now you've done it.

Narrator 1: Janie walked to a cradle and picked up a baby.

Henry: Janie! Take care of Johnny. And you, whatever your name is, clean up this mess. I'm heading to the barn to help Jeremy.

Narrator 2: He left the house slamming the door behind him causing baby Johnny to begin wailing anew.

Narrator 1: Scene 6

Narrator 2: Joanna lay on the floor covered by a thin blanket next to Johnny's cradle. Every muscle she had ached. It had been a month since Henry had first brought her here. She had quit calling it home.



Narrator 1: (Continued) The wagon, pulled by two draft horses, bumped along the road through the late afternoon sun and Joanna began to wonder if she had made a big mistake by ever stepping foot on that train.

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Narrator 1: That first night she had hauled bucket after bucket of water and set the dishes and dirty clothes to soaking. She swept the floors and shook out the rugs. She choked down a pitiful meal of overcooked bean stew and burnt corn bread.

Narrator 2: Then she laid on the floor and fell fast asleep. Unfortunately baby Johnny woke up a few hours later and Henry quickly informed her that taking care of him in the middle of the night was also part of her job.

Narrator 1: The following days were much the same. Wash, haul wood, sweep, make a fire, scrub, feed Johnny, and wash some more

Narrator 2: With working hard during the day and getting up with baby Johnny in the night, she was so tired.

Joanna: Will Mr. Swan really come back in a year to check on me? Henry didn't want another daughter, he wanted a servant.

Janie: He wasn't always like this you know.

Joanna: Oh! Janie, you scared me. I didn't know anyone else was inside. Besides Johnny I mean.

Janie: Well I am. And I want you to know, he wasn't always like this, only since my mama died.

Joanna: I'm sorry. I had wondered about her, but was afraid to ask.

Janie: She died when Johnny was born.

Narrator 1: Janie picked up a towel and offered to dry the dishes while she talked to Joanna.

Janie: Before that, he was wonderful... calm, strong... and then after, just broken. Things got pretty out of hand as you can see. Taking care of 3 kids and running a farm is a lot to do. Me and Jeremy, we try to help, but we're still just kids. I saw the flyer for the orphan trains at church. I'm the one that made him go and get you."

Narrator 2: Joanna listened patiently without interrupting. She was thankful to have some help and some family history.

Janie: When he came back that first night and I first laid eyes on your rumpled clothes and messy hair... I was so upset. I didn't see how you were going to help fix our situation.

Janie: (continued) And then, he worked you so hard, and Johnny cried so much and Jeremy and I just ignored you.

I was sure you were going to run away. But you didn't, you're still here.

Joanna: I am. Though some days I'm not sure why."

Janie: I'd like you to stay. You might not see it, but it's been better since you've been here. And... I've always wanted a sister. Together, we can do this. We can put my family back together."

Narrator 1: Joanna smiled for the first time since arriving in Iowa. She nodded once, afraid that if she spoke she would cry.

Narrator 2: Together the girls finished the dishes and then Janie helped Joanna wash and braid her hair, the way Janie's momma had taught her. Janie even dug out one of her momma's aprons for Joanna to wear while they started preparing dinner.

Narrator 1: When Henry and Jeremy came in from the barn that evening they were greeted by the delicious smells of cooking dinner. Henry stopped short in the doorway to take in the scene.

Narrator 2: Johnny was playing happily on the floor. The house was clean and the two girls were chatting as they set the table for dinner. Joanna was clean, with her hair off her face, wearing his wife's apron. Without saying a word he turned and stomped back the way he had come.

Narrator 1: Scene 7

Narrator 2: Joanna followed in Henry's angry footsteps. She found him chopping wood in a corner of the barn.

Joanna: Somehow, I don't really think this is what Mr. Brace had in mind.

Henry: Who?

Joanna: Mr. Brace! The man who started the orphan trains! I don't think that adopting them out to moody overworking farmers was what he had in mind!

Henry: No, I s'pose you're right.

Narrator 1: Joanna had expected an argument, or worse. She was surprised he was talking to her calmly.

Henry: Here's how I figure it. You got nothing and nobody. And all I got is this farm and household that I can't manage by myself.



Henry: (continued) We both wanted a whole and perfect family but somehow ended up with each other and those three kids in there. So, the way I see it, we've got a couple options. We can cut our losses, head our separate ways and do our best on our own. Or, you can accept my apology and we can start fresh, together. Whadya say?

Narrator 2: Joanna stared at him and thought about his question for a long time. Henry almost stood up to go, thinking their relationship was a lost cause.

Joanna: Wait! I'll stay, if a few things change.

Henry: I'm listening.

Joanna: Well for starters we take turns with Johnny at night.

Henry: Sounds fair. I'd like to add that you don't wear my wife's clothes. We can get you some new ones next time we go to town instead, but from now on, even if Janie says it's okay, you leave them be.

Joanna: And from now on, I'll do the cooking.

Henry: Deal.

Narrator 1: Joanna stuck out her hand out to seal the deal with a handshake.

Henry walked toward her, put his arm around her shoulder and steered her out of the barn and back toward the house.

Henry: You know, from the moment you shouted your name at me in that church, I knew you were meant to be a part of this family.

Joanna: Really? Why?

Henry: My wife, she wanted all of our kids to have J names... Jeremy, Janie, Johnny and now, Joanna.

All Cast Members: The end!



# A N S W E R K E Y

## Vocabulary Fill in the Blank

1. reluctantly 2. rarely 3. vendors 4. poultry

## True and False

1. T 2. F 3. F

## Multiple Choice

1. C 2. A 3. D

## Fact or Opinion

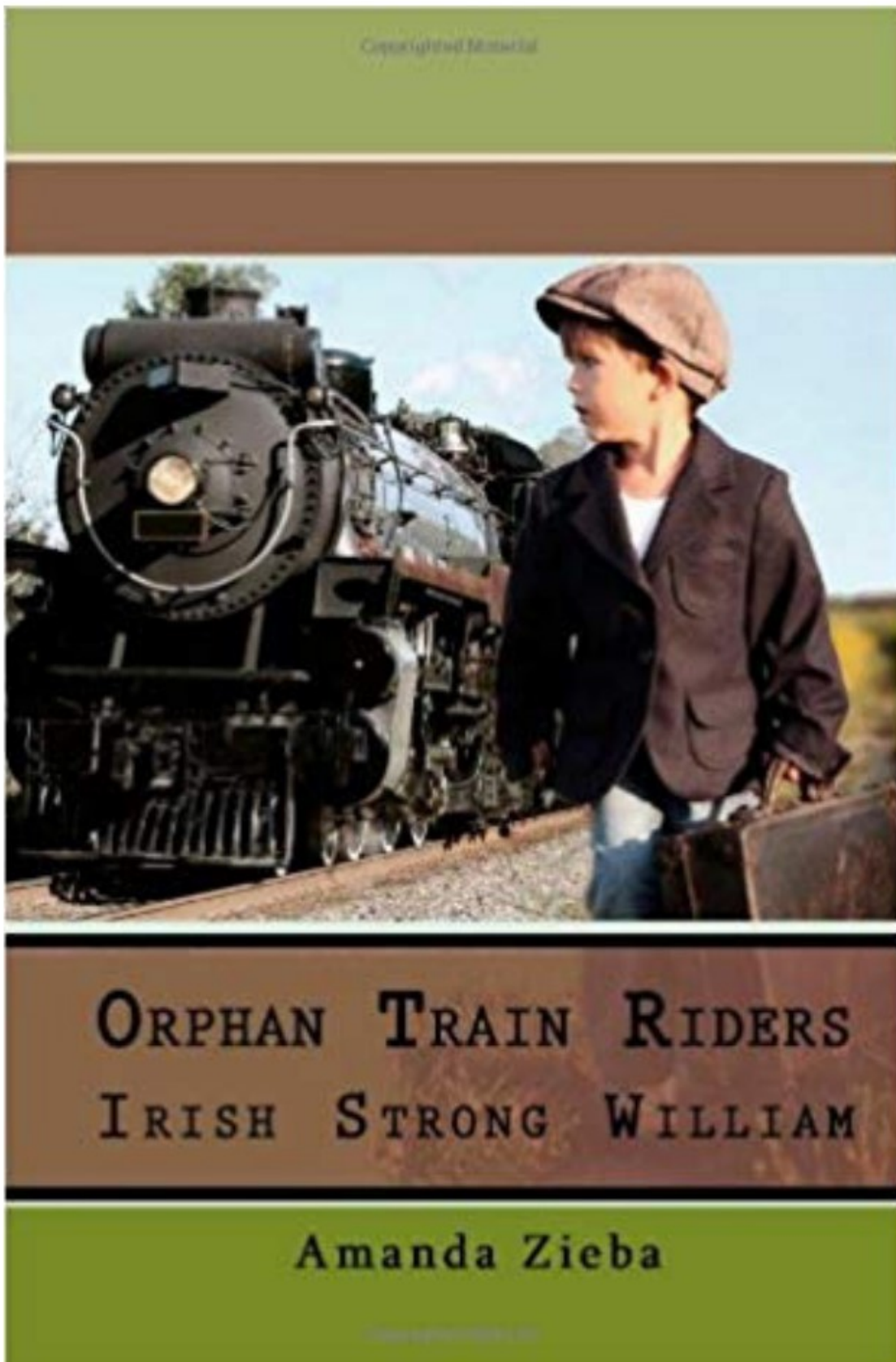
1. O 2. F 3. F

## Complete sentence answers.

1. a city patrol man 2. Joanna started with J, just like all of the other children's names... just the way Henry's wife would have wanted it. 3. On the streets of New York City 4. 1854 5. Janie did not think Joanna would be able to help, base on her appearance. 6. He opened many different programs to help poor children in New York including lodging houses, lunch programs and the orphan trains.

## Sequencing

- 6 - Mr. Swan returns to Iowa one year later.
- 4 - Henry takes Joanna to his house.
- 1 - Joanna steals bread in New York City.
- 2 - Mr. Swan explains the history of the Orphan Trains to Joanna.
- 3 - The parents Joanna hopes for adopt a baby instead.
- 5 - Joanna and Janie cook a delicious dinner for the family.



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Teachers Pay Teachers: Word Nerd

**Orphan Train Riders: Irish Strong William**

1. On a piece of paper write the word and its definition. .

immigrant

mantra

clutch

pastry

vendor

victim

denied

sooth

curse

auditorium

2. Then create flashcards using a thesaurus, with the vocabulary word on the front side and a synonym for the word on the back side

3. Alphabetize your flashcards

4. Sort your flashcards into three piles, noun, verbs and adjectives.

5. Select two words and write a sentence that includes both.

## Orphan Train Riders: Irish Strong William

### COMPREHENSION A C T I V I T I E S

#### True or False

Write T if a statement is TRUE and F if a statement is False.

1. \_\_\_\_ At Ellis Island, everyone was let into America, no matter what.
2. \_\_\_\_ It was very difficult for immigrants to make a good living in America.
3. \_\_\_\_ William had to leave everyone in his family behind as he entered America.

#### Multiple Choice

Write A, B,C or D in the answer space to indicate your choice for the best answer.

1. \_\_\_\_ William was adopted in the state of...?
  - a. New York
  - b. Skibereen, Ireland
  - c. Indiana
  - d. Massachusetts
2. \_\_\_\_ Why was William's dad not allowed to come into America?
  - a. He was Irish.
  - b. He had tuberculosis.
  - c. He had small pox.
  - d. He had yellow fever.
3. \_\_\_\_ How did William and Shane get breakfast once they ran out of money?
  - a. They begged a vendor for some milk and a croissant.
  - b. They didn't eat until they got to the Children's Aid Society.
  - c. They stole from a pastry cart.
  - d. They didn't eat breakfast; they went hungry.



## Orphan Train Riders: Irish Strong William

### COMPREHENSION A C T I V I T I E S

#### Journal Questions

Think about your answer to each question and then write out your thoughts in complete sentences.

1. Leaving home can be scary. William had to travel very far away from his home. Tell about a time when you were far away from home and how you felt.
2. Both Da and Shane believed that everything would be better in America. Why do you think they kept talking and talking about America. Did that help in anyway?
3. The children traveling on the orphan train were often bored on the very long ride from New York to their new homes. Without technology, how would you have entertained yourself on the train ride?
4. If you were William and given the choice, would you go back to Ireland with your father, or into America with Shane? Explain your choice with at least two reasons.
5. Even though Shane made some bad choices, William continued to trust and follow him. Why do you think William continued to believe in Shane?
6. Do you think Mr. McCully was helping or hurting William when he asked the crowd about Irish families in Indiana? Explain your thought process.
7. William used a motto or a mantra to help him stay brave in tough times. What do you do to keep hope alive and stay strong when you feel alone or scared?
8. Do you think Shane was a good friend to William? Why or why not? Tell about a time when you were a good friend to someone.
9. Would William have had a better life if he had just stayed in Ireland? Use details from the story to support your answer.
10. Do you think Mr. McCully would have helped Shane and William if they were not Irish? Explain your answer with at least two reasons.

## Orphan Train Riders: Irish Strong William

### COMPREHENSION ACTIVITIES

#### Map Work

Using a map and the mileage scale measure the distance William traveled to get to his new home in Norfolk, Massachusetts.

Distance #1: Dublin, Ireland to New York City = \_\_\_\_\_ miles

Distance #2: New York City to Indianapolis, IN = \_\_\_\_\_ miles

Distance #3: Indianapolis, IN to Norfolk, MA = \_\_\_\_\_ miles

\_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ Total Miles

#### Fact or Opinion

Write F if the statement is a FACT and O if the statement is an OPINION.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ William stayed Irish Strong.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Shane was a criminal.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Officer Sullivan did the right thing by taking the boys to the Children's Aid Society.

#### Questions and Answers

Answer in complete sentences.

1. Who was traveling alone to America?
2. Where did Da and Hugh go instead of America?
3. When did Shane begin to be mean to William?
4. Why were Shane and William split up once they got to the Children's Aid Society?
5. How did Da expect to make a living in America?

## Orphan Train Riders: Irish Strong William

### Figurative Language

In every language there are figurative phrases that mean something completely different than what they literally say. For example, if we say, "It's raining cats and dogs!" there aren't really cats and dogs falling from the sky. We just mean that it is raining really, really hard.

In this story there are several Irish phrases that use figurative language. Read each phrase and try to decide what it really means. Use context clues from the story to help you.

1. May the cat eat you and the devil eat the cat.

---

2. A good run is better than a bad stand.

---

3. A good laugh and a long sleep are the best cures in the doctor's book.

---

4. Away with the fairies!

---

### Sequence of Events

Put the Irishmen and Irishwomen in order according to when they helped William in the story. Number 1 to 5.

\_\_\_\_\_ Officer Sullivan

\_\_\_\_\_ Da

\_\_\_\_\_ Mr. McCully

\_\_\_\_\_ Bridget

\_\_\_\_\_ Shane

**Orphan Train Riders: Irish Strong William****Creative Writing**

Pretend you are William and write a letter response to Shane telling him about your new life in Norfolk. Remember to appropriately date your letter and use correct friendly letter format.

**Poster**

Create a poster advertising the benefits of the Children's Aid Society. Why would a kid want to go to this organization for help? How can they help children in need?

**Drawing**

Re-read the part of chapter 2 when the policeman makes Shane return the stolen milk to the vendor. Then draw a picture of this scene including the policeman, Shane, the milk vendor and William. Put special emphasis into how each character is feeling and show that emotion on the faces in your drawing.

**Creative Arts**

Create a menu for Brandon's Pub. List food items and prices for appetizers, entrees, drinks and dessert. use fun lettering, pictures of food and be creative. To go above and beyond, research favorite Irish dishes and include them in your menu. When you are finished, let your family order items and then make them together.



# A N S W E R K E Y

## True and False

1. F 2. T 3. T

## Multiple Choice

1. D 2. B 3. C

## Fill in the Blank/Short Answer

1. cow 2. beds 3. churches

## Fact or Opinion

1. O 2. F 3. O

## Complete sentence answers.

1. Shane 2. Back to Ireland, to William's grandmother's house 3. After he lost William's father's money 4. Shane was going to farm school and William was traveling on the orphan train right away 5. He was going to make money being a canal builder.

## Figurative Phrases

1. May the cat eat you and the devil eat the cat: a curse meaning "forget you!"
2. A good run is better than a bad stand: it is better to try than to do nothing.
3. A good laugh and a long sleep are the best cures in the doctor's book: try to stay positive and things will be better in the morning.
4. Away with the fairies: That's crazy!

## Sequencing

- 3 - Officer Sullivan  
1 - Da  
4 - Mr. McCully  
5 - Bridget  
2 - Shane

THANK  
YOU!!

Thank you so much for purchasing this product! I hope it was a fun and useful addition to your reading experience.

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Happy reading, happy writing, happy teaching!  
~ The Word Nerd, Amanda Zieba



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