

Walking Home to Rosie Lee

Written by A. LaFaye

Illustrated by Keith D. Shepherd

Building Background Knowledge

⊗ BEFORE Reading:

Teacher Notes: *What readers know and bring to the page affects how well they will understand what they read as well as the extent to which they will be able to remember and use the new information. BEFORE Reading Strategies help set the tone and prepare the reader for a successful reading experience.*

- o A **book walk** begins with the cover of the book. Invite readers to also notice other important **text features** such as the title, the author and illustrators' names, the blurb inside the book jacket, the publisher, the fact that "proceeds from this book will be donated to the Children's Defense Fund," the title page, the "Author's Note" at the back of the book, the publisher's contact information, and copyright date, summary, author biographies found on the inside of the back flap of the book jacket, and the review, price, and ISBN.
- o Use the **cover** and the **title** of the book, ask students: Chart their answers/predictions to be revisited after the reading;
 - *What do you notice?*
 - *Who is Rosie Lee?*
 - *What may be the setting of this story? How do you know?*
 - *Where is "home?"*
- o Now have students/readers share what they are wondering. What questions do they have? (Chart their questions under "We are wondering..." on the same chart. Explain that we read to find answers to our questions. (See CCSS 2.RL.1, 3.RL.1)
 - *Begin by saying, Well, I am wondering, what is the genre of this book? So, while I read, I'm going to look for clues that help me decide the genre of this book. Write your question on the chart. I also want to know who is telling the story? How do I know? Teacher will think aloud and model looking for clues/evidence from the story as you read.*
- o As you read out loud, continue to write questions/things you are wondering on the class chart. If your question is answered as you read, write the answer on the chart and make students aware that most of our questions are answered when we continue to read. Asking questions and wondering provides a purpose for reading. Our questions give us a reason to continue reading.
- o After questioning, ask students/readers to **predict** what may happen. Based on what they already know, students will complete the following statements:
 - *I think...because...*
 - *I know..., so, I predict that...*

These may be completed as a whole class, within small groups, or with a partner by writing on sentence strips, poster paper, or notebook paper. Discussion is a critical part of preparing students to process and comprehend texts.

(See CCSS 4.RL.1, 5.RL.1).

⊗ **DURING Reading:**

Teacher Notes: Proficient readers use several strategies as they read: questioning, connecting, inferring, visualizing, determining importance, and synthesizing. Locating answers to their **self-generated questions** is one strategy students/readers will use during reading.

- Readers will be expected to make inferences as they read by gathering evidence/facts/quotes from the text to draw conclusions. They will use clues from the author to “read between the lines” (See CCSS 5.RL.1, 6.RL.1).
 - Each student is given three sticky notes on which to write the evidence/clues he or she gathers while reading. Each student’s inference based on his or her sticky note clues is brought and shared with the whole class or small group. The group may discuss and debate the inference, citing their reasons based on evidence from the text.
- Students develop a sense of **Art Awareness** as they select two illustrations from the picture book, noticing what **elements of art: line shape, form, color, space, texture, and value (lights and darks)** the illustrator used to create the mood and enhance the meaning of the text. (Visit <http://art.pppst.com/elements.html> for elements of art lesson plans and ideas.)

Read Aloud: The teacher may choose to only use color and space with younger readers.

⊗ **INDEPENDENT Reading:**

The teacher models the process for the class using one of the illustrations. Then using a different, self-selected illustration from the book, students are expected to complete the chart with a partner. Older students are expected to use information from the chart to write an explanation of how both the author’s and illustrator’s works contributed to the mood of that section of the story.

Picture	Warm Colors	Cold Colors	Words from Story
<i>Smoke</i>	<i>A touch of yellow/orange</i>	<i>Mostly black/gray/purple</i>	<i>“War’s over.”</i>

Use information from this chart to discuss how the **mood** of the story changes.

- Often an illustrator will use their pictures as **symbols** to communicate a message to the reader. Help students identify some of the symbols used by Keith D. Shephard to represent the era of the Civil War and explain the significance of the symbol (e.g. drum, fire, soldiers in uniform, campfire).
 - The _____ is a symbol of _____.
 - The _____ represents _____.
- Students will **journal** content-specific words in their Writer’s Notebooks. In an effort to increase student/reader awareness of the effect of the importance of an **author’s choice**, have them list the words they consider content-specific to this time period and historic situation in American history (e.g. War, government, free/freedom, Master Turner, sold, fields, railroad).
 - Research the Freedmen’s Bureau.
 - Students may be expected to categorize/sort these words into parts of speech as used within the sentence from the book.

⊗ **AFTER Reading:**

Teacher Notes: Reading is the act of constructing meaning from what has been read by using pictures and words. Student should be able to form opinions and make judgments from their reading. After Reading Strategies help ensure that readers have procured meaning from their interaction with the book.

- Have students reread, using both the words and the illustrations, to determine which events and/or words **are personal, social, and/or political.**

Personal Events	Social Events	Political Events
		war
freedom	freedom	freedom
Looking for mama		

Readers will use their completed chart to guide peer discussion within small groups.

- o Have students research one of the following topics: The Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln, African-American soldiers (Confederate or Union), plantations, or another topic approved by the teacher.
 - Students will identify six (6) facts about their self-selected topic and reflect on each fact by writing their opinion of that fact.

FACT	OPINION
1)	1)
2)	2)

- o Revisit the students' lists of content-specific words before asking, "Why are some words NOT specific to the setting (time and place) of *Walking Home to Rosie Lee*?" (*brothers, teacher, school, book...*)
 - Students will choose a specified number of words from their lists of content-specific words to use when writing a summary of the story. By expecting them to use words from the list, the teacher is scaffolding a student's ability to intentionally use specific **vocabulary.**
- o Create an illustration timeline to portray the sequence of main events in the story to include the story's lesson, moral, or message (2.RL.2, 3.RL.3) OR summarize the story by sequencing the story's theme (4.RL.2, 5.RL.2, 6.RL.2), OR sequence and use the historical events which precede the major events in *Walking Home to Rosie Lee* to develop a more coherent understanding of what the "end" of the Civil War meant for many African-American people (6.RIT.7).

Readers will **sketch, draw, or electronically** create pictures to illustrate each main event and add a **caption** for each.

❁ **Research Topics & Extension Ideas:**

(4.W.7, 5.W.7, 6.W.7)

- o Research the **jobs** which were available to freed slaves. (e.g. laying track for the railroad extension or school teachers) *What were others?*
- o Research the “*heroic efforts of an African-American to reunite families torn apart by slavery*”
- o Create a **Reader’s Theater script** using the text as a foundation. Add other dialogue for additional characters.
- o Write about a time when “**strength, love, and determination**” helped you reach a personal goal.
- o Write about a time when you were lost. How did you feel? Who found you? Or did you find your way back to where you belonged?
- o Generate your own questions about [The Children’s Defense Fund](#) and then visit the website to discover the answers. (4.W.3, 5.W.3, 6.W.3)
- o Please visit [The National Museum of African-American Culture](#).

For more information:

Read *From Slavery to Freedom* by John Hope Franklin and Alfred A. Moss, Jr.
YA Novel, *Stella Stands Alone* by A. LaFaye

For student handouts and activity sheets go to www.alafaye.com!



Author:

A. LaFaye has joined with illustrator Keith D. Shepherd to create the beautiful story *Walking Home to Rosie Lee* to open up discussion to young readers about African-American history. She has written many other titles including, *Stella Stands Alone*, *Water Steps*, and *The Keening*. To check out more, please visit www.alafaye.com!



Illustrator:

Keith D. Shepherd is the illustrator for the children's book *Walking Home to Rosie Lee*. Shepherd not only illustrates for books, he is known for his passion for art and design as well. His work has been featured in many museums, galleries, and art competitions. Much of his work celebrates African-American history, which you can view at his site, www.fineartamerica.com!



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