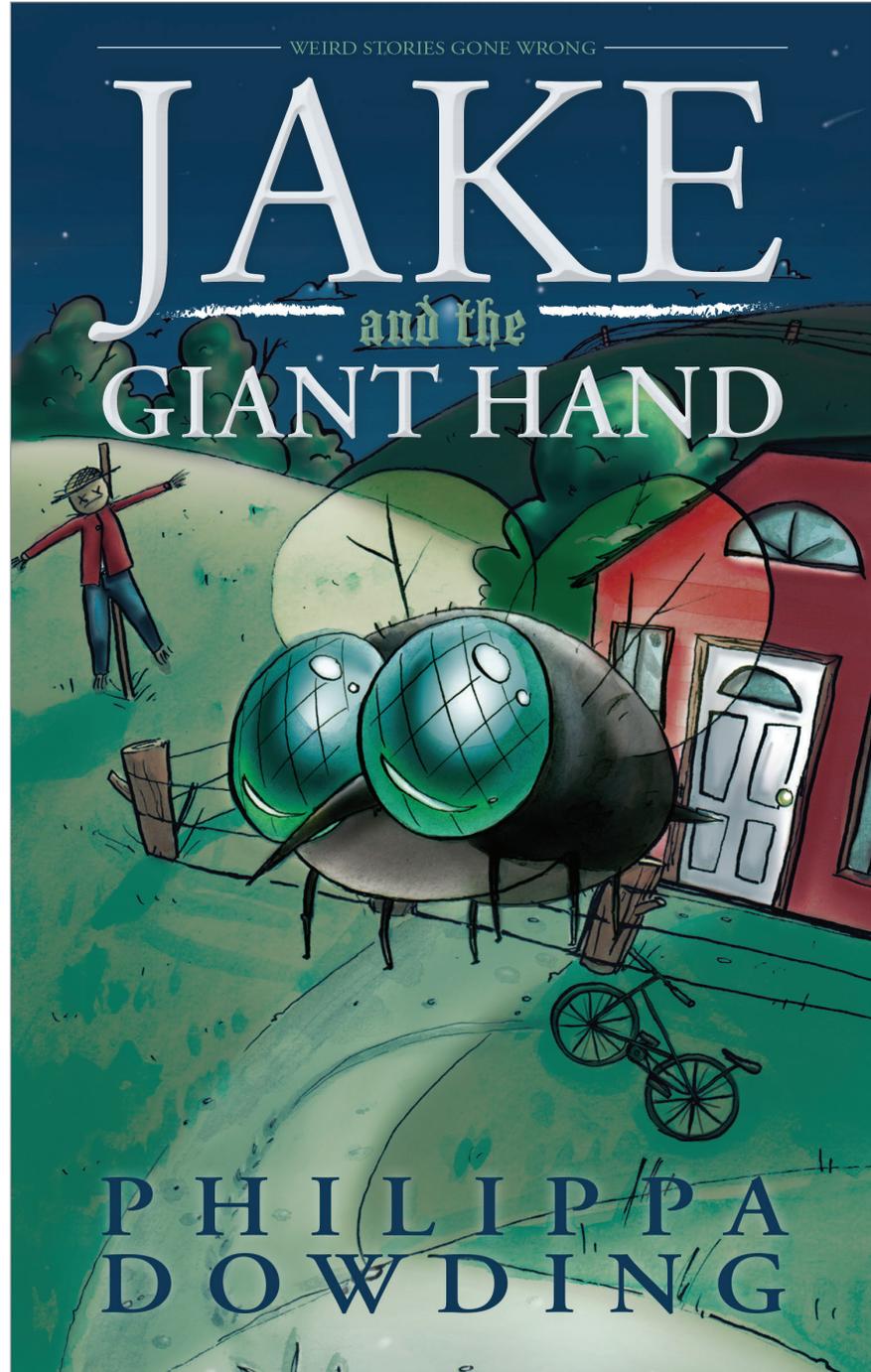


TEACHERS' GUIDE



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I. OVERVIEW

BOOK SUMMARY

Jake spends every summer on his grandpa’s farm. But this year, things are a little weird. First, there are huge flies everywhere. Second, Grandpa is acting kind of funny. And third, Jake’s friend Kate keeps trying to scare him with creepy stories. Last year’s tale about the swamp creature was bad enough, but this year’s story about a hand that someone found in a farmer’s field is even worse. And it wasn’t just any hand, either. It was a giant’s hand!

It might just be the creepiest story of all. It can’t be real. Can it?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Philippa Dowding is an award-winning copywriter, poet and children’s author. Her books in the Lost Gargoyle series were shortlisted for the Diamond Willow, Hackmatack, and Silver Birch awards, and *The Gargoyle at the Gates* was named a White Raven Book 2013 by the International Youth Library in Munich. Philippa lives in Toronto.

A NOTE TO TEACHERS

Jake and the Giant Hand by Philippa Dowding offers students and teachers an opportunity to engage with curriculum while reading and enjoying this spooky story about Jake, a curious, active boy who experiences many interesting and challenging to understand events while visiting his grandpa’s farm on his summer vacation. Through the reading of this novel, students in grades three, four and five are able to engage in several activities that can enhance their learning in the areas of reading and writing. The book would work particularly well as a read aloud novel study, especially for the younger students.

Starting with the prologue, or “hook,” the reader is constantly wondering what will happen next. There are several cliff hangers which are good pause points that encourage readers to return to the story as quickly as possible.

On page 48, the Ouija Board is mentioned. The Ouija Board has been controversial over time and teachers are encouraged to consider how they would respond to questions about this, should they arise.

There are also several points in the story worthy of a guided discussion as they are reached. These refer to the author's expressed ideas of truth, lies, weird things, and different kinds of stories. Some examples:

- p. 8 "But just because things are a little odd or strange or unbelievable, doesn't always make them untrue. Truth is an odd thing; one person's truth can be another person's lie. That's the most important thing to remember about this story: sometimes things that seem like lies are actually true. And sometimes you can never tell."
- p. 26 "Jake's grandpa told stories A LOT. Which is another way of saying he told lies."
- p. 27 "So you never really knew for sure what was true and what wasn't when it came to Jake's grandpa."
- p. 43 "Sometimes weird things just happen. There doesn't always have to be a reason, or proof, for something weird to happen."
- p. 57 "Something weird was happening. And possibly something quite interesting."
- p. 120 "Just remember, there are different kinds of stories. Some are true and some are lies and some are in-between. You have to decide for yourself what's true...and what isn't. And for what it's worth, I'm not sure what I believe myself."

The ideas presented in this Teacher Resource Guide are intended for the consideration of teachers who may use the novel in their practice with students. It is not intended that this guide be used in a step by step fashion, but rather, that teachers choose the assignments that best support their particular approach and the learning needs of their students. Included are a variety of activities that are appropriate for students with diverse learning abilities and that can be used as presented, or modified by the teacher to span the different levels of learning as documented in Bloom's taxonomy.

II. SETTING THE PURPOSE: PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

Prior to reading, it is interesting to predict what the story might be about. The process of prediction can engage the reader throughout the reading of the text, but especially at the beginning it can help to capture the enthusiasm and excitement of the reader to continue the story. In the case of *Jake and the Giant Hand*, the following are some possibilities for prediction and helping the reader to set a purpose for reading. The questions and activities may be addressed as whole class discussions, small group or individual work.

1. Consider the title. What does the title *Jake and the Giant Hand* make you think the book will be about?
2. Look at the front cover. What does the illustration tell you that would help you to know what the book might be about?
3. Read the back cover. Based on this, what ideas do you think will be explored in this story? What have others said about this story? What did you learn about the author?
4. Read the prologue, pages 7-9, titled "This Part is (Mostly) True." Based on what you have learned from the front and back covers of the book, and from reading the prologue, start working on a KWLS chart to discuss expectations, questions and predictions for this book. At this time, students complete only the first two columns of the chart. Let the students know they will be returning to the chart at the end of the study to see if their questions were answered, to discuss what they learned, and to detail what questions they would still like answered.

This activity can be worked on by the class as a whole, by small groups, or by individuals. If worked on individually or in small groups, there should be an opportunity to share in some way with the larger group.

Students might want to learn, for example, the significance of the large fly on the front cover of the book. They may want to know why the title includes the "giant hand" and what that has to do with the story. They may wonder about Kate's creepy stories. After reading the prologue, they may wonder what all of this has to do with the book title.

What I Know	What I Would Like to Know	What I Learned	What I Would Still Like to Know

III. EXPLORING THE TEXT

1. CHAPTER QUESTIONS

Many incidents occur throughout the story *Jake and the Giant Hand*. The following chapter questions have been developed to assist the reader in situating and organizing these happenings. The questions are intended for this purpose only and not to elicit higher order thinking or responses, for which other activities in the guide may be found.

Prologue “This Part is (Mostly) True”

- When you read the prologue why do you think this story may be spooky?
- Who is the character mentioned in the prologue?
- What happened to the character in the prologue?

Chapters One to Three

- Where is Jake going with his grandpa and Gus the dog?
- What is Jake worried about as he starts to help Grandpa with the food preparations?
- What memories did Jake and his grandpa have about Kate’s stories from last summer?

Chapters Four to Six

- Why do you think Grandpa insisted that Jake take Gus with him for the sleepover?
- What things frightened Jake as he approached and entered the cabin in the woods?
- What was it about Kate’s story that frightened Jake?
- Why do you think Grandpa came to the cabin during the storytelling?

Chapters Seven to Nine

- What were Jake’s three bad dreams after Kate finished telling her spooky stories?
- What happened to Jake when Grandpa went to the barn to get Maggie?
- Why do you think Grandpa filled the post hole?
- What do you think happened to Grandpa right after Jake came up from the post hole?

Chapters Ten to Twelve

- Who did Jake meet in the library and what did he learn while he was there?
- When Jake went fishing with Chris and Kate, what did he learn about the librarian, Mrs. Cody?
- How did Grandpa explain things when Jake asked him about the giant hand?

Chapters Thirteen to Fifteen

- What did Jake, Chris and Kate learn during their library research trip?
- When Grandpa went shopping and left Jake alone at the homestead, what happened?
- What happened to Grandpa when he returned and how did he explain it?
- What did Jake learn when he went down the post hole for the second time?

Chapters Sixteen to Eighteen

- How did Grandpa try to divert Jake's attention when Jake asked about the cloud of flies and the white rock?
- Which part of Jake's library research was news to Grandpa?
- What was revealed to Jake when Grandpa sent him to the fourth cold room on the left?

Epilogue ("This Part is also (Mostly) True")

- What happened to Jake when he grew up?
- What was interesting or mysterious about Jake's adult life?

Crossword Puzzle Clues

Across

1. walk by dragging one's foot along without lifting them fully from the ground (p. 122)
2. causing repulsion or horror (p. 35)
3. preparations of fruits, vegetables, and sugar, often sealed for long-term storage (p. 58)
4. a very large quantity of something (p. 129)
5. the time period before there were written records (p. 118)
6. a house, especially a farmhouse, and outbuildings (p. 15)
7. serious (p. 75)
8. a collection of historical documents or records (p. 111)
9. title (p. 92)

Down

1. crooked (p. 68)
2. an unpleasant feeling of fear or unease (p. 38)
3. spoken with sudden, involuntary pauses and a tendency to repeat the initial letters of words (p. 46)
4. belonging to the very distant past (p. 118)
5. changed direction from one position to another (p. 11)
6. running, but not moving, as in a car (p. 23)
7. sit, lean or fall, heavily or limply (p. 101)
8. having a stale, mouldy or damp smell (p. 20)
9. a partial or total loss of memory (p. 127)
10. unconvincingly weak (p. 47)

WORDS IN CONTEXT (CONTEXT CLUES)

Being able to decide on the definition of a word from the context (the examination of the parts of the sentence or sentences surrounding the word) is one way to determine meaning.

Below are ten sentences from *Jake and the Giant Hand*. The page number on which each appears is in parentheses following the sentence. Read each sentence, and then, using the context of the underlined word, make an educated guess about the meaning of the word. Following completion of the exercise, discuss as a class, using a dictionary as required.

1. "And Mabel Cody is a lovely lady, great friends with your grandma and me for years, but she gets the kids all riled up with those ghost walks every summer." (p.84)

riled means _____

2. "No more crazy made-up gibberish about a giant hand." (p. 101)

gibberish means _____

3. "He was probably lost in hound-dog dreams about chasing rabbits. His whole body twitched." (p. 37)

twitched means _____

4. "A terrible reek that made them gag." (p. 40)

reek means _____

5. "His grandpa looked so eager that Jake relented." (p. 61)

relented means _____

6. "Residents should contact the local constabulary if they see any sign of Mrs. Fingles." (p.73)

constabulary means _____

7. "He had a glint in his eye." (p. 111)

glint means _____

8. "Yeah, thanks Grandpa, I...I forgot too," Jake stammered. (p. 46)

stammered means _____

9. "He could see a tiny bit of the picture and read a little bit of the caption." (p. 92)

caption means _____

10. "It took a lot of coaxing with dog treats." (p. 32)

coaxing means _____

3. PLOT DEVELOPMENT/STORY WRITING

An important part of story writing is the ability to organize one's ideas. Some questions to help inspire a discussion about plot include the following:

- What is it that makes this story happen? (Problem/ Beginning)
- Complications. What events make the story more complex? (Middle)
- What is the most dramatic and revealing or turning point of the story? (Climax)
- What is the part after the climax, where the drama subsides, and the problem is solved? (Falling Action or Conclusion)

After reading *Jake and the Giant Hand*, first use the following graphic organizer to work with the class to collect and organize information about the story. (See plot map on the page following.)

Following this class exercise, engage the students in collecting and organizing information for their own story, based on the headlines of articles Jake and his friends saw in the archives in the library (p. 91). Once the information is collected and organized, the students will be ready to write their own stories! You may use the plot map after the one on the following page.

"Giant hail stone kills McGready horse: 1912"

"Frequent fog patches cause panic among local pigs: 1907"

"Record-breaking pumpkin owner dies eating pumpkin pie: 1897"

"Famous blueberry jam poisons dozens at fall fair: 1921"

"Local honey producer drowns in honey vat: 1917"

"Circles found in dust bowl crops:1932"

"Farmer claims four-ton boulder in his field mysteriously moved 300 feet overnight: 1930"

"Family hears spectral train on long-abandoned track: 1918"

"Fournette ghost walks highway looking for lost dog:1912"

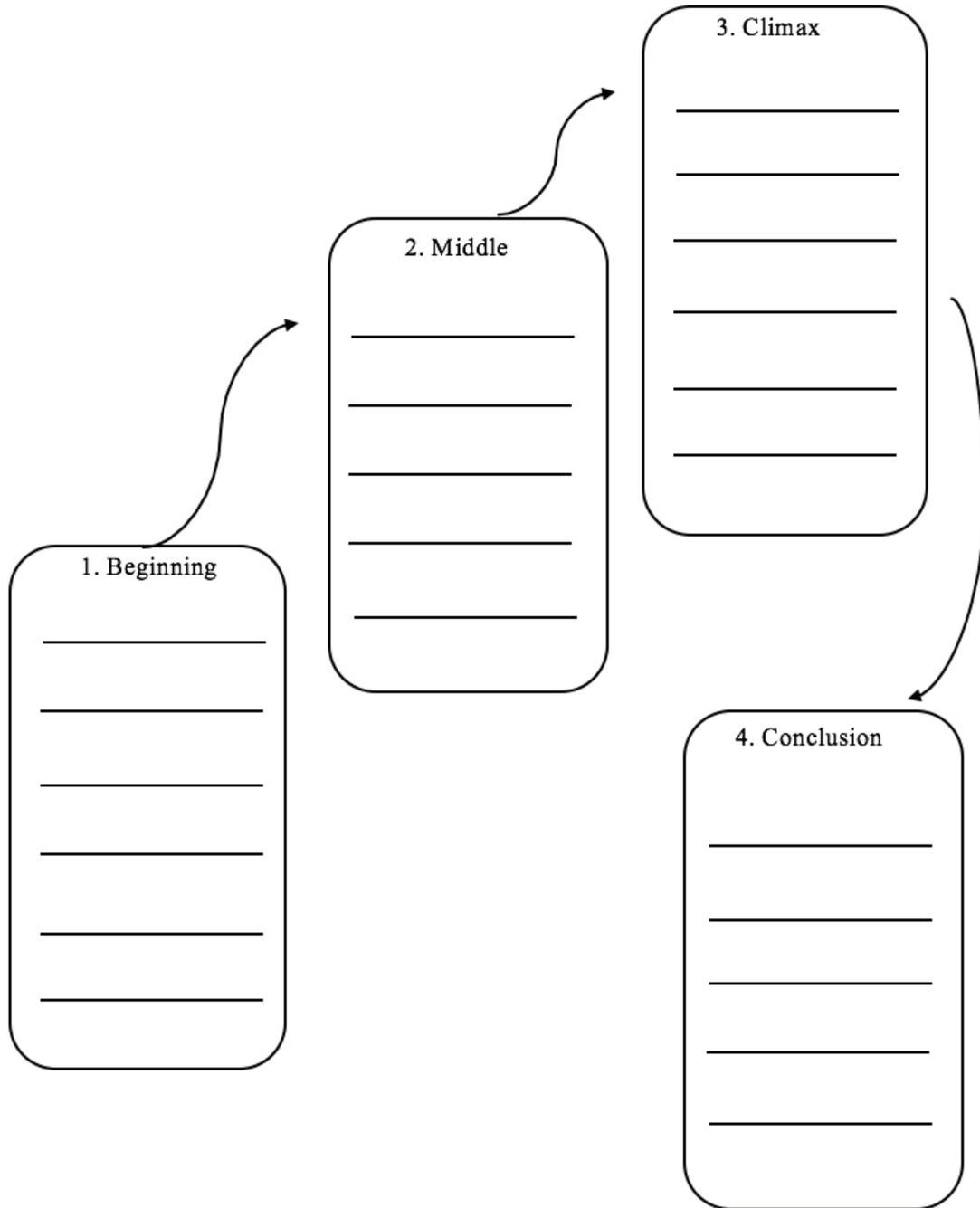
"Mysterious maze and local girl vanish into thin air: 1913"

PLOT MAP

Title: *Jake and The Giant Hand*

Author: Philippa Dowding

Characters: _____

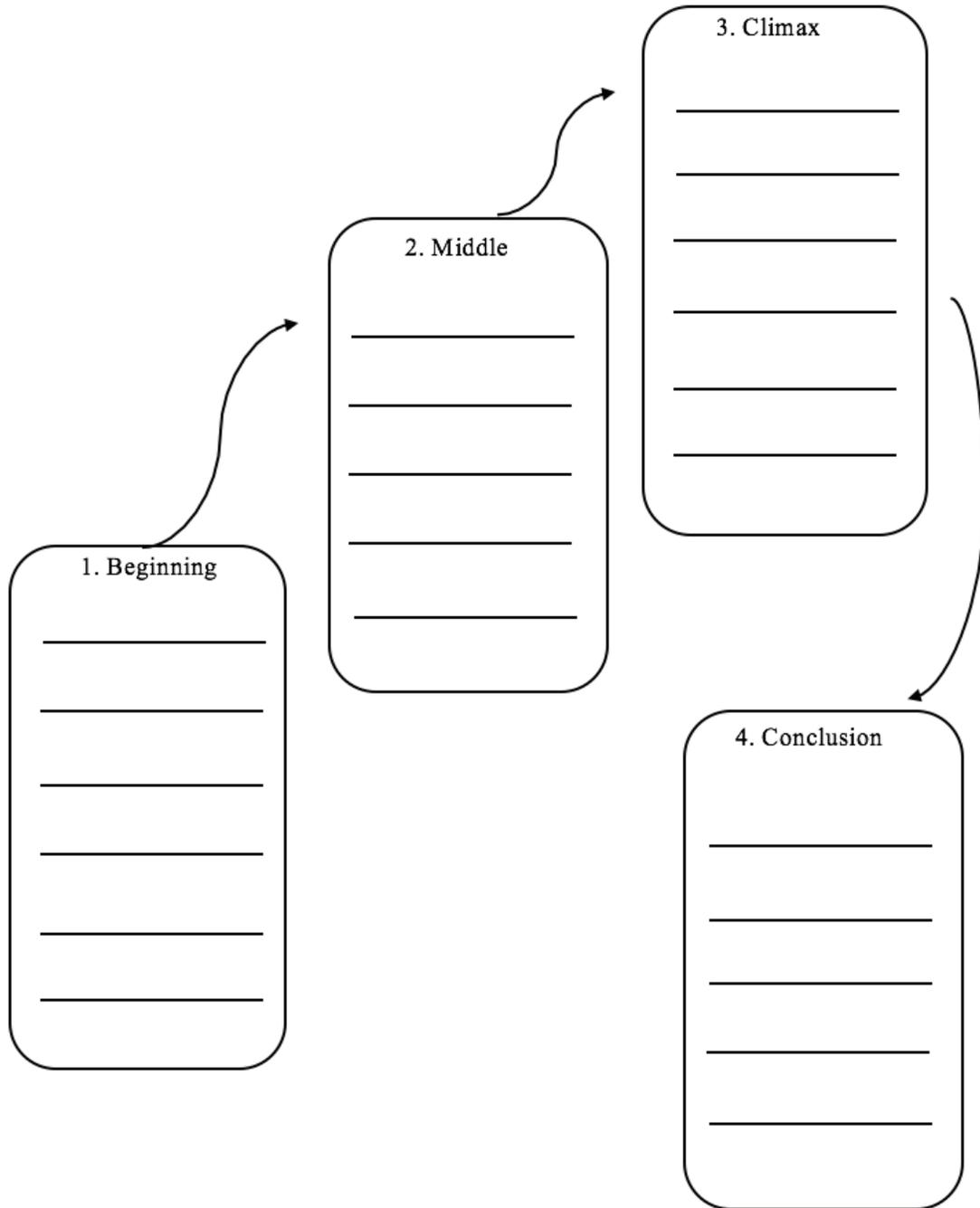


PLOT MAP

Title: _____

Author: _____

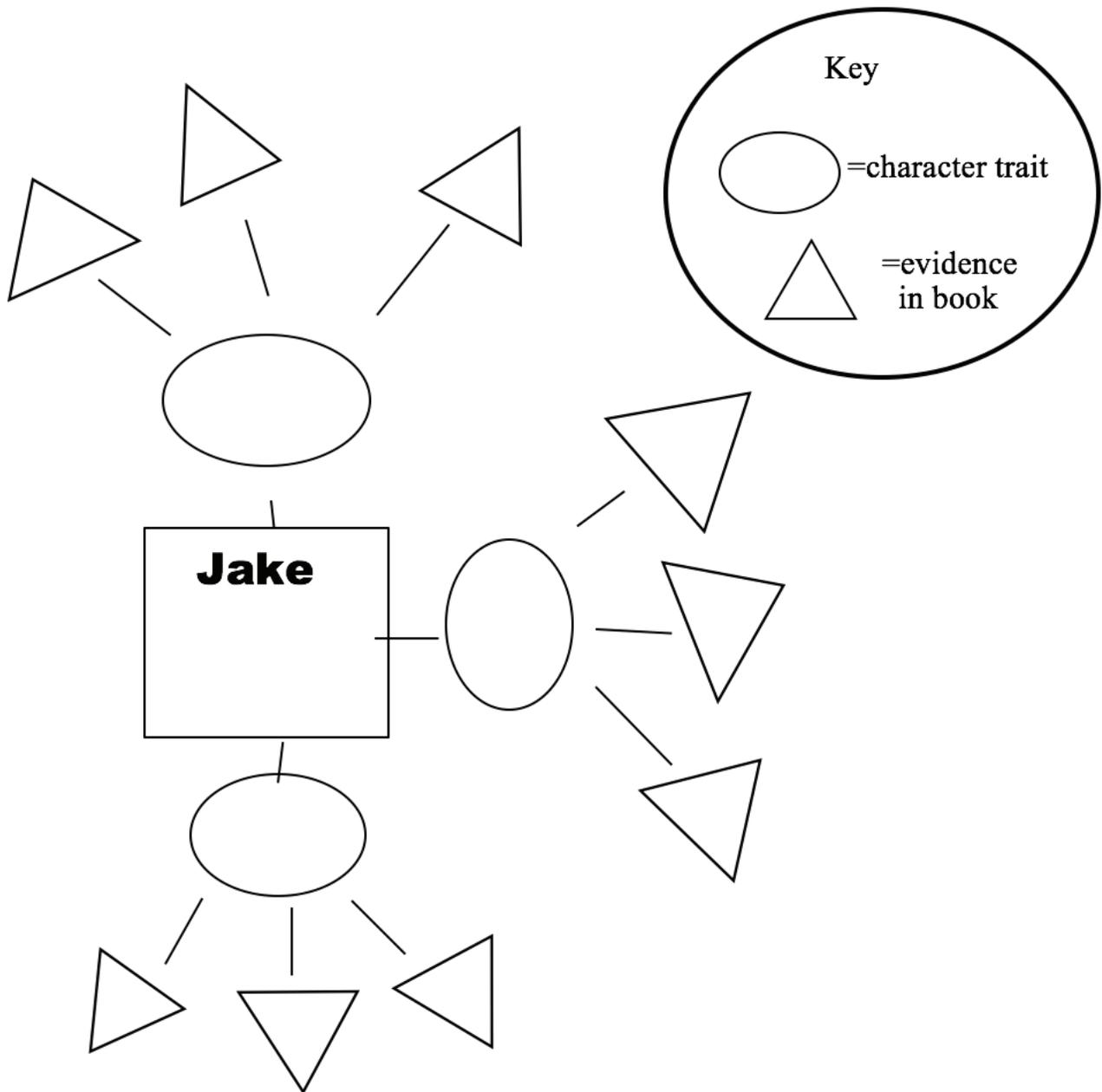
Characters: _____



4. CHARACTER STUDY

CHARACTER SKETCH

Jake is the main character in *Jake and the Giant Hand*, and we learn quite a lot about him throughout the story. Students can use the graphic organizer below to collect information about Jake and can then go on to write a character sketch. It is important that students learn to give evidence from the story for their assertions and this organizer helps them to collect that in visual form.



INTERVIEW

Grandpa is one of the main characters in *Jake and the Giant Hand*. But many things about Grandpa are not explained throughout the story. In groups of two, develop five questions you would like to ask Grandpa. Then write the answers you think Grandpa would give to your questions. All of this is to be based on what you have learned about Grandpa and how he acts in the story. But, as there are things we do not know about Grandpa from the story, your interview development can include some “educated guesses” about what Grandpa’s answers might be. Present your interview to the class, with one person being Grandpa and the other being the interviewer.

5. SETTING

Philippa Dowding describes a number of settings in this story. She uses strong evocative terms and phrases to paint a picture in the reader's mind.

In this activity, it is suggested that students do some sketching of these various settings as they read the novel. A number of descriptive passages are highlighted below, and, for each, students can be asked to sketch the described location.

Teachers might use this opportunity to offer students some instruction on sketching and/or on keeping a sketch journal.

- page 13 "Jake looked out the window. It was dark out there in the fields and trees. Every once in a while, he could see a kitchen far back in a field, with a light on. Someone was having dinner in a farmhouse. But everything else was black, much darker than in the city, where Jake lived with his mom."
- page 15 "Beside the door was a water pump with a horse head carved out of the top. Jake ran his hand over the smooth old wood of the horse's head. It was handmade by a soldier who was going off to the First World War. It was an interesting water pump, definitely one of a kind."
- page 20 "Jake snapped on the light. The couch and tv were down there, and the weird little "cold rooms." They were small rooms all around the outside of the farmhouse basement wall. They were cold and damp, because they were basically outside the house, underground."
- page 21 "He rode off down the lane with his knees almost touching his chin, whistling as loud as he could, weaving across the gravel. It was late morning and soft sunshine filtered through the leaves. The lane was lined by big oak trees, and there were meadows on both sides with wandering cows."
- page 22 "Kate had long, dark hair and freckles. Chris was blond and tall. For twins, they couldn't look more different."
- page 52 "BUZZZ!" Jake squealed. A huge fly smashed right into the side of his head."
- page 63 "The post hole Jake and his grandpa just dug was deep. And DARK. Jae was stuck in the hole, head down. All his weight rested on one hand stretched above his head."
- page 65 "Gus was a big, strong old dog, and he didn't let go until he saw Jake's face pop out of the hole. Jake rolled onto the grass, gasping, and looked up into the blue sky."
- page 65 "Gus's lolling tongue reached down and licked his face. Jake didn't even mind. He threw his arms around the old dog's neck."
- page 70 "The town Jake's grandpa lived near was a sleepy little place most of the time, but in late summer the main street was filled with tourists. People strolled down the pretty boulevard eating homemade ice cream and buying farm antiques. Every afternoon in August, musicians played on a bandstand at the middle of the park."
- page 123 "He flicked the light switch and the bulb slowly flickered to life. The shelves were empty. The dirt floor was cold and damp. It took a moment for Jake's eyes to adjust to the dim light...something gleamed out of the dark. Something dull and yellow. Jake gasped. A golden circle was leaning up against the wall of the cold room. It filled the room from floor to ceiling. The circle was taller than Jake's head and wider than his arms spread out. It was a huge, heavy golden circle. It practically took up the entire room."

IV. RESPONDING TO AND REFLECTING ON THE TEXT

1. RESPONSES AND RESPONSE JOURNALING

Students respond to different parts of the book, either on their own, as a dialogue journal with the teacher or a classmate, or in class discussions. The ideas for these responses are posed as questions for the students to consider. The questions encourage students to go beyond recalling events in the story to demonstrate higher levels of thinking about what they have read. Some of these responses could take place during the reading of the book, and some might best take place following the reading. For each written response, the teacher might consider a class discussion prior to the writing activity so that students could have some ideas as to how to begin their responses. In the case of dialogue journaling, students should write back and forth to a partner as in a conversation and base their writing on the particular question assigned by the teacher, commenting on the other student's ideas and posing further questions or offering possible answers.

- Jake spends part of every summer at his grandpa's farm and he seems to like this time. There are things he likes about the farm and things he does not particularly like. Talk about a time you have spent with a grandparent or other older person in your life. Describe this time in detail and what you enjoyed.
- Grandpa's dog Gus was important in this story. In fact, he saved Jake's life when Jake got stuck head first in the post hole. Write about a special pet you have had or one you may know about. Discuss how pets can make a positive difference in a person's life. If you do not have or have not had a pet, please use your imagination for this response.
- On page 57, we read the following: "Something weird was happening. And possibly something quite interesting." What do you think these two sentences tell us about Jake and how he is approaching the incidents that are happening during his visit to Grandpa's farm? Do they reveal anything about Jake that maybe you did not know before? Is it possible to be nervous about something at the same time as you are very interested in it?
- The swamp is mentioned many times in this story. How do you feel every time the swamp is mentioned? Why do you think the author keeps mentioning the swamp? How do you think Jake feels about the swamp and why do you think he feels this way?
- We hear about giant flies several times in the story. Discuss your thoughts about why the flies were always present. Do you think they were in Jake's imagination? Do you think Grandpa really got trapped in a cloud of flies? What is your explanation for all of this and why do you think this?
- When Jake found the golden ring, what did you think? Was that a good ending for the story or would you have liked to learn more about it? If you had written this story, how would you have ended it?
- The author completed the book with an epilogue, titled "This Part Is Also (Mostly) True..." How did you feel when you learned what happened to Jake as a grownup? What parts of this part of the story do you think were true? What parts did you think might not be true?

2. RETURNING TO PREDICTIONS

After reading the story to page 124, complete the third column of the KWLS chart. At this point, students discuss and record what they have learned by reading the story and their discussions, etc.

Students then read the epilogue, pp 125- 129: “This Part Is Also (Mostly) True”

In some ways, the author leaves some questions unanswered at the end of the story. The students’ task is to then discuss and record their ideas about what they would still like to know. This should provide a good class discussion and then students can record their own thoughts.

What I Know	What I Would Like to Know	What I Learned	What I Would Still Like to Know

V. EXTENDING THE TEXT

1. RESEARCH

A number of possibilities for further research are presented throughout the story. Students could research one of these and present their findings to the class in the form of posters or illustrations. The information would enhance understanding of the story. Here are a few ideas:

- Homestead (mentioned on page 15)
- Swamp (mentioned throughout)
- Augur (mentioned on page 61)
- Bagpipes (mentioned on page 71)
- Cicadas (mentioned on page 117)

2. CULMINATING ACTIVITY

It can be fun and instructive to have a culminating activity for a novel study. In the following suggestion, a game and food from the novel are suggested for this culminating activity.

The game of backgammon is mentioned in the story. Teach the students to play backgammon and have them give it a try for this special event. Borrow some backgammon board games. There are easy to follow instructions for the game available on the internet.

When he stayed overnight at the cabin with the twins, Jake and the twins made smores. This would be a good snack to make with students for the special event. Here is a way to make smores using a stove:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place graham crackers on a cookie sheet. Top each with chocolate pieces and a large marshmallow. Bake three to five minutes until marshmallows are puffed and golden brown. Remove from oven and top with another graham cracker, pressing down a little so as to make a sandwich. Serve and eat while still warm.