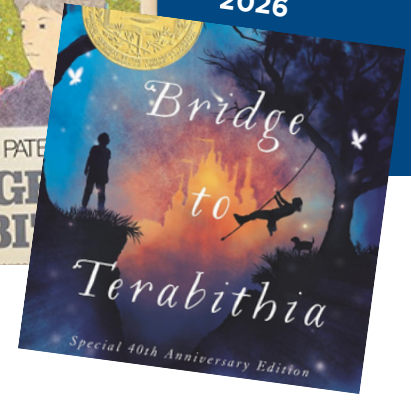




Bridge to Terabithia

Discussion Guide

GRADES 4 - 7

Before Reading: to activate schema, build background knowledge, and set a purpose.

- Have students complete the [Anticipation Guide](#) to prepare for understanding and connecting with the deeper themes and messages of the story.
- Frontload vocabulary with the [Vocabulary Guide](#).

During Reading: to engage students, check for understanding, and make connections.

Chapters 1 - 3

- Jess practices running all summer to be the fastest in fifth grade. What does that goal tell you about what he wants from his classmates?
- When Leslie beats the boys, how is Jess's reaction different from everyone else's? What does that difference reveal about him?
- Find evidence of how Jess feels misunderstood at home, especially about his drawing.

Chapters 4 - 7

- Why do Jess and Leslie need a place "just for us"? What does Terabithia give each of them that their real lives don't?
- Leslie brings imagination and books; Jess knows the woods. How do their differences make Terabithia work?
- When the creek floods and Jess is afraid to cross, what does that fear show about who he is at this point in the story?

Chapters 8 - 11

- On the "perfect day" at the Smithsonian, why does Jess go with Miss Edmunds instead of inviting Leslie? Why does that choice matter so much afterward?
- When Jess hears what happened to Leslie, he says "No!" and runs. His actions, not his words, tell you what he's feeling. What is it?
- Jess says he hates Leslie for leaving and hates himself too. Why can grief make a person feel both at once?

Chapters 12 - 13

- What does Jess's father say to him after Leslie's death, and how does it change the way Jess sees himself?
- Why does Jess build a real bridge into Terabithia and bring May Belle across as its new queen? What has he learned from Leslie?
- The book is called Bridge to Terabithia. Name two different things the bridge stands for by the end.



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After Reading: to summarize, question, and reflect.

- What is the most important thing Leslie gave Jess? Support your answer with evidence from the story.
- Using [RIF's The Influences on a Character](#), have students consider all the influences on Jess and the difference between the first day of school till now.
- Using [RIF's Figurative Language Graphic Organizer](#), have students find and identify the different types of figurative language used throughout the text along with the author's intention.

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more about the topic by reading other books with similar themes, structure, characters, or content.