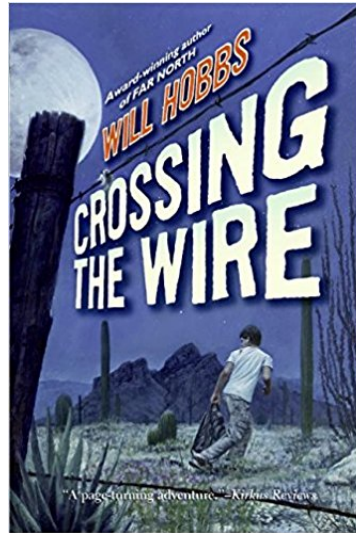


Crossing the Wire



ISBN-13	978-0060741402
ISBN-10	0-06-074140-6
Author	Will Hobbs
Publisher	HarperTrophy
Copyright	2006
Lexile	670L
Genre	Realistic fiction
Synopsis	Driven by hunger and responsibility for his family, Victor Flores embarks on a dangerous journey from Mexico to the United States. Having no money to pay smugglers, Victor has to make it on his own and survive where many have been injured or killed.
Themes	Immigration and Migration; Resilience

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Crossing the Wire, Day 1



Analyze the key paragraph.

P. 7

"I felt queasy. Rico had grown up knowing he was supposed to stay home, nearby, like his sister in Silao. If he did well at the technical school, he would be able to get a job where his brother-in-law worked, putting together the Suburbans at the General Motors plant."

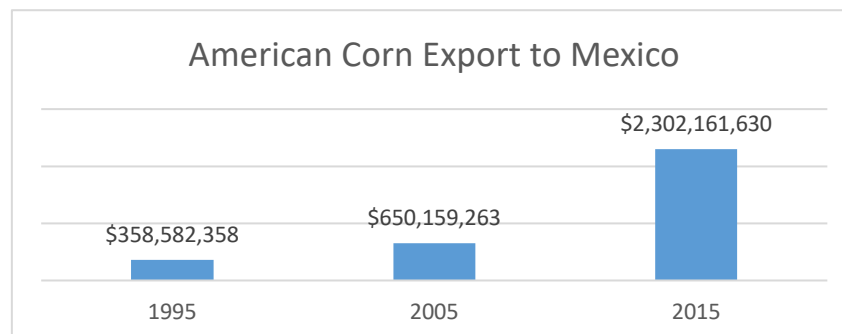
Instructions

1. Highlight the sentence that conveys Victor's feelings. Write in your own words how Victor felt.
2. Create a two-column table. On the right side write what Rico was supposed to do. On the left side, write what he wanted to do.

Write a short product based on today's prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Write a paragraph describing the informational graph, below. Connect it to the following quote (p. 16):

At the time of last summer's disappointment, I tried to get Rico's father to explain why the prices kept going down every year. "Here is the reason," Senor River said with his voice beginning to tremble. "All over Mexico, people are buying less and less of our own corn for cornmeal. American corn is cheaper."



Source: United States Department of Agriculture

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Crossing the Wire, Day 2



Analyze the key paragraph.

P. 35

"It's the song of my tierra... I looked around at the mojadados surrounding me and found that I was not the only one dabbing at tears. Under the bill of his black baseball cap, even the eyes of the rough-looking loco across the aisle looked moist."

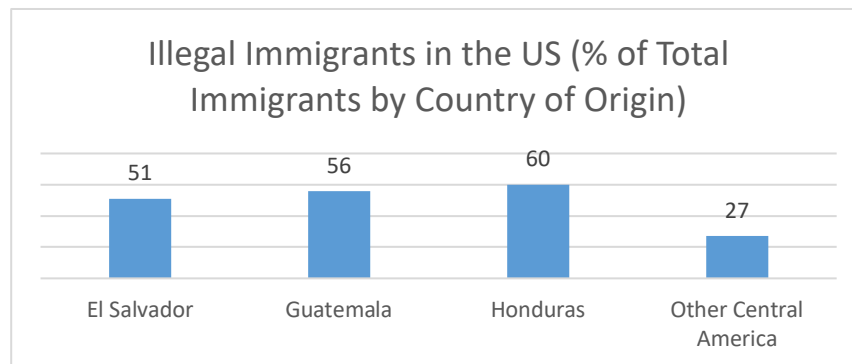
Instructions

1. Highlight the sentence that conveys Victor's feelings. Write in your own words how Victor felt.
2. Why did the people on the bus feel emotional when they listened the song about their homeland (Tierra in Spanish)?

Write a short product based on today's prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Write a paragraph describing the informational graph, below. Connect it to the following quote (pp. 37-38):

"Who are they looking for?" "Guatemalans, Hondurans, Salvadorans, Nicaraguans, South Americans—anybody who doesn't have the proper documents to be in Mexico." "Why do they care?" "It makes the Americans happy."



Source: Pew Research Center, 2015

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Crossing the Wire, Day 3



Analyze the key paragraph.

P. 66

“Below the hills, the tall metal border wall, topped with barbed wire, was bathed in stadium lights from one end of the city to the other. On the American side, a strip of bare ground was patrolled by green-and-white trucks that Julio said were the Border Patrol.”

Instructions

1. Highlight the words and phrases that make the border sound scary or unapproachable.
2. Write about Victor ability to observe details. So far, how did this ability save his life?

Write a short product based on today's prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Connect the friendship between Victor and Julio to this unit's theme: Kindness Requires Empathy. How did telling each other their life stories helped the boys form a friendship? Write one or two paragraphs. Use at least one quote from the book.

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Crossing the Wire, Day 4



Analyze the key paragraph.

P. 92

“Don’t be sorry for me, or for yourself, either, when the bad things happen. You have to stay strong for your family. You have to be a man.”

Instructions

1. Why did Miguel give this advice to Victor?
2. In your opinion, is it a good advice?

Write a short product based on today’s prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Connect today’s reading to the unit’s theme: Kindness Requires Empathy. In what ways are Victor’s conversations with Miguel different than the conversations he used to have with Julio?

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Crossing the Wire, Day 5



Analyze the key paragraph.

P. 97

“In the States, it’s possible to start from the ground and reach the top of the tree. In Mexico, if you are born poor, there are no branches within reach, and the trunk is coated with lard.

My friend—his name is Ricco—was born poor, yet his father built him a ladder. Until a couple of weeks ago, he was in school in Silao. He could have learned a trade and got a good job, yet he ran away to the States.

Who’s to blame him? In El Norte, there’s a lot more fruit on the tree...”

Instructions

1. Analyze the metaphor of the tree. How does the image of the tree help understand the feelings of helplessness of the poor in Mexico?
2. According to this conversation, there are two main factors that affect people’s ability to find a good job. What are they?

Write a short product based on today’s prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Connect today’s reading to the unit’s theme: Kindness Requires Empathy. In what ways did Miguel show kindness to Victor?

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Crossing the Wire, Day 6



Analyze the key paragraph.

P. 126

“The green shirts had nothing to say. We were walked to one last gate, which was padlocked. It was opened, and we filed through. I watched the gate close behind me, heard the lock click shut. The high metal wall ran as far as I could see. It was a strange feeling being locked inside your own country.”

Instructions

1. Highlight the words that indicate what Victor saw, heard, and felt.
2. Answer: Why did Victor compare Mexico to jail in this paragraph?

Write a short product based on today's prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Connect today's reading to the unit's theme: Kindness Requires Empathy. In what ways did Miguel show kindness to Victor?

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Crossing the Wire, Day 7



Analyze the key paragraph.

P. 152

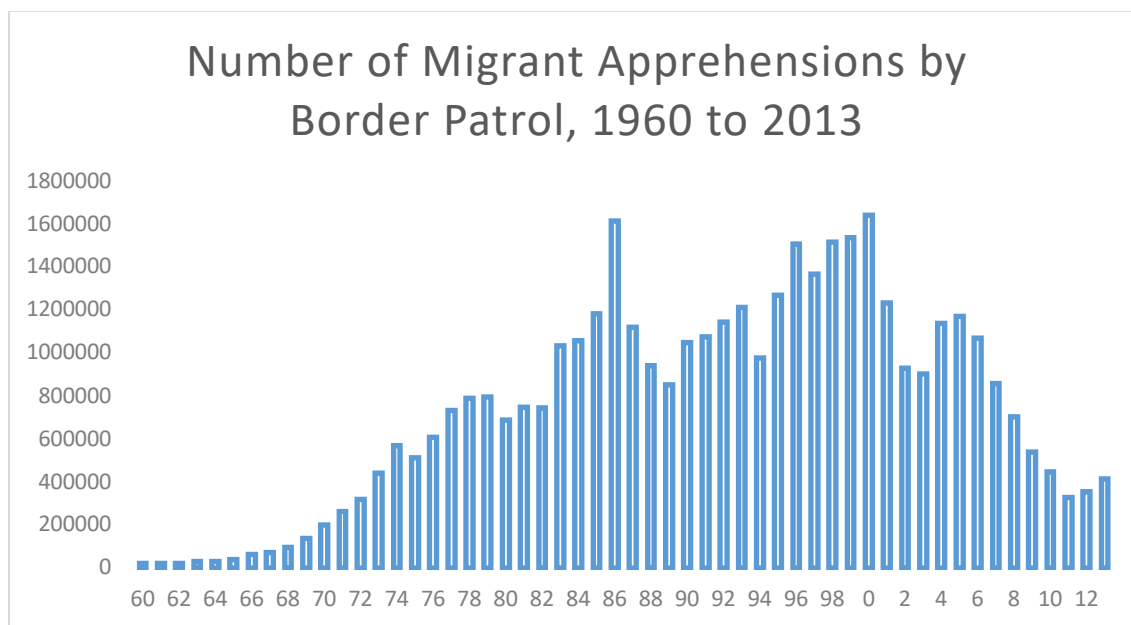
“I told myself to remember that millions of wets, including Rico’s father and mine, had been at the mercy of coyotes. Still, it was impossible not to loathe Jara. For such a vile person to sport El Christo Rey on his chest, this was a terrible sin.”

Instructions

1. Highlight the words that indicate Victor’s feelings.
2. Answer: Why was disturbing about Jara’s tattoo?

Write a short product based on today’s prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Review the informational graph, below. Write one or two paragraphs describing trends of years and comparing immigration in 2004 and 2005 (the time this book was written) to other years. Read the author’s note on page 2015. Why did the number of migrants decline in 2001 and 2002? Based on the reasons that drove Victor to the US, why did the number of migrants rise in 2004?



Source: www.WOLA.org

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Crossing the Wire, Day 8



Analyze the key paragraph.

P. 179

“I do a job that needs to be done,” Torre replied, “I enforce the law. Yes, we do all we can do to slow the flood of illegals, but I also save many lives. And we catch some dangerous criminals. Listen, I can’t stand here and argue with you. My head hurts bad, and my partner is dead. The air went out of Rico’s anger.”

Instructions

Create a table that contrasts Torre’s job responsibilities that Rico agrees and disagrees with.

Write a short product based on today’s prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Connect today’s reading to the unit’s theme, Kindness Requires Empathy. How did Victor and Rico show kindness to the patrolman?

Character-Based Literacy Program Writing Prompts

Crossing the Wire, Day 9



Analyze the key paragraph.

P. 214

“Rico’s journey home was going to be straight as an arrow. My journey in search of work would take me in all directions across the United States, always looking over my shoulder. All I knew was, I had to survive here, so that my family would survive at home. It might be many long years before I saw them again.”

Instructions

Answer: How did Victor see his future years in the United States? In your opinion, how did he feel about his future?

Write a short product based on today’s prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Connect today’s reading to the unit’s theme, Kindness Requires Empathy. How did Dave Hanson show kindness to Victor and Rico? Why was he kind to them? How can the story of Victor and Rico inspire kindness in more people?