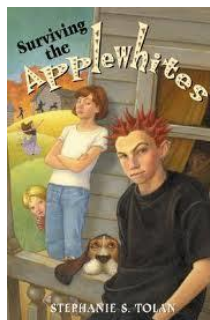


Surviving the Applewhites



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 Genre Realistic Fiction

Synopsis Jake Semple is infamous for misbehaving, and it is rumored that he got kicked out of his last school because he burnt it to the ground. Jake's last option is to be home schooled with by an eccentric family. The Applewhites welcomes him in to their eclectic mix and Jake continues to struggle to find his way.

Themes Ingenuity
 Protagonist Male

Note Over the years, these books have been published in multiple editions. The page numbers in your book may be different than the ones on the lesson plan.

More Information www.scu.edu/character

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 1



Key Paragraph

Page 11:

Lucille Applewhite, the frizzy-haired blond poet whose idea all this was, ran down the porch steps, one hand over her heart. “You might have murdered him already, yelling and chasing him like that. He’s probably lying in a heap under a bush somewhere, drawing his last breath.”

The author is beginning to describe the setting of the book. Referring to the key paragraph (above), think about the type of place the Applewhites live in. What kind of tone is she setting at the Applewhite’s home? How does it differ from the place that Jake is used to? Using the key paragraph and other examples from the text, write an explanatory paragraph that examines the setting of Jack’s old life and compares it with his new home at the Applewhite’s. Use transition words (i.e. also, however, then) to clarify your ideas.

Ask students to draw a picture and write a few sentences about the place that they call home. Questions for reflection: What does your home look like? Who shares the home with you? How do you feel at home? How would you feel if you had to move to a new home unexpectedly?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 2



Key Paragraph

Page 16:

E.D. didn't know how she could be born an Applewhite. She wasn't anything at all like the rest of them...Applewhites were enormously talented. She was not. Applewhites thrived on chaos. E.D. wanted organization and sense. Applewhites loved spontaneity. E.D. wanted a schedule and a plan she could count on. Applewhites craved freedom. E.D. wanted structure.

Before you begin writing, brainstorm: How do you interact with your family members? Are you like or unlike them or somewhere in between? Think about the situation that E.D. finds herself in.

Drawing on experience from your own life, think about a piece of advice you could give her. Write a 1-2 paragraph letter to E.D. that gives her your own advice on how to live with her chaotic family. When you are done with your letter, revise and strengthen it so that your writing is clear and logical. Be sure to include a strong introduction and conclusion to your letter.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 3



Key Paragraph

Page 27:

All the way across one wall was a banner that read EDUCATION IS AN ADVENTUROUS QUEST FOR THE MEANING OF LIFE, INVOLVING AN ABILITY TO THINK THINGS THROUGH. Z. Applewhite. Jake didn't think anyone in any school he'd ever been to would have agreed with that definition.

Do you agree with this definition of education? Why or why not? What should education be? Using the internet, conduct a scholarly search for an article about education in the U.S. to gain more information. Then, write a 2 informative paragraphs (using both the book and the article you researched to provide facts) about what education looks like in America, and what you think it should look like. Post your writing on an online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Docs, etc.) and share the link with your class.

Imagine you are asked to create an inspirational banner for a school hallway that deals with education. What would your banner say? What images or pictures would you include? Create a banner that includes both words and images. Be prepared to share your work with the class tomorrow.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 4



Key Paragraph

Page 43:

“This is your last chance,” she’d said. But people had been saying stuff like that to him all his life. They hadn’t really meant it. Did they this time? Did he dare take the chance?

Page 44:

Jake’s stomach rumbled as he thought over his alternatives. He thought of the banner in the schoolroom—“the ability to think things through.” Applewhites or Juvie. Applewhites or Juvie. It wasn’t hard to think through things this time. The choice was clear. One way or another, he was going to have to make this work.

Before you begin writing, brainstorm: When Jake decides to make it work at the Applewhites, in what way is he living out the theme of the quarter, Integrity Requires Wholeness? Do you think he is used to making choices with integrity? Why or why not? Write an explanatory paragraph that provides reasons for your choice - use evidence from the text to help explain your point. When you have finished writing, revise your work and strengthen it by making sure it is cohesive and has an introduction, conclusion and appropriate transitions.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 5



Key Paragraph

Page 47:

He was telling the really bad kid story. It wasn't true, but it was no more of an exaggeration, he thought, than the story that everybody else told. Nobody had ever believed that it had all been an accident.

In today's reading Jake insists that he is not a kid, but is a teenager instead. Before you begin writing, plan: make a list of things that characterize children as 'kids' and adolescents as 'teenagers.' Then, write an explanatory paragraph in which you explain whether or not Jake acts more like a kid or a teenager. Provide examples from the text. Be sure to provide a counterargument to your view, as well as appropriate transitions and a conclusion.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 6



Key Paragraph

Page 65:

“That’s the Achilles heel of the whole Applewhite clan,” Zedediah said. “If there’s a singing gene, we don’t have it. Applewhites don’t sing.”

Before you begin writing, brainstorm: Do you think this could be foreshadowing? If so, who in the story might sing? And how would that impact the story and Jake’s life if he was the one who met that special need? How does it feel when we are needed for our unique talent? Write an explanatory paragraph that predicts what you think will happen in the story. Use evidence from the text to support your predictions and explain why you are making your prediction.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 7



Key Paragraph

Page 74:

So he (Jake) went into the kitchen and looked through the cupboards till he found a box of Cheerios and two bowls. “You can eat with me,” he told Destiny, who was singing “Pop Goes the Weasel” now, “but after that, you have to go up to the house and get dressed. You don’t want to spend the day in pajamas.”

Before you begin writing, brainstorm: In what way do you think having a younger brother or sister would be helpful for Jake? Do you think that would help him be more responsible? Do you have any siblings that remind you of either Jake or Destiny? Write an explanatory paragraph in which you explain that having a younger sibling is either helpful or hurtful to Jake’s growth. How has he been able to show integrity? Be sure to provide a conclusion and appropriate transition words in your writing. Revise your work when you are done.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 8



Key Paragraph

Page 87:

The overwhelming impulse to boot the dog out into the hall vanished. Jake reached down and rubbed the dog behind his ears. There. That proved it. The Jake he knew, the Jake he had always been, was disappearing. And there was nothing—nobody—to put in his place.

When people get so used to being a certain way, they don't know how to be any other way. How is Jake beginning to change by being at the Applewhites? Think back over the entire book so far and think of 2-3 examples to support Jake's change. Write an explanatory paragraph about Jake's change - has it happened all at once or over time? Make sure you maintain a formal tone in your writing. When you have finished writing, allow a peer to read it and give you feedback. Then, revise your work to strengthen it and improve cohesion.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 9



Key Paragraph

Page 98:

He didn't know the show, really, but he knew the music. By now there wasn't anybody at Wit's End who didn't know every word to every single song. Randolph had asked where Jake had learned to sing. The weird thing was that until this very moment, he hadn't even known he could. Not really. Magnificent, Randolph Applewhite had called his voice. Magnificent.

In what way is this feedback really exciting for Jake? Has anyone ever thought he had talent in anything? What difference does it make when someone believes in you? Do you think Jake has ever been called 'magnificent' before? Write a 1-2 paragraph essay explaining the reasons why positive feedback is so important to motivate people. Use the book for examples. Be sure to use appropriate transitions and maintain a formal tone throughout your writing.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 10



Key Paragraph

Page 108:

Rolf, the part Jake had read for, was a messenger boy who was in love with the oldest von Trapp daughter. By the end of the play he had joined the SS, which was the Nazi security force, and was helping the Germans look for the von Trapps to keep them from escaping. It was Rolf who, because of his love for Liesl, let the family get away.

What lessons can you predict Jake might learn from playing the role of Rolf in the play? What are the similarities between Jake and the character Rolf? Before you begin writing: Make a list of similarities and differences. Then, using this list, write an informational paragraph that showcases the similarities and differences between Jake and Rolf. In your conclusion, write a 1-sentence prediction about how Jake will change as a result of being in the play. When you have finished your writing, upload it to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Docs, etc).

Choose one character from *The Sound of Music* to compare yourself to. Make a list of similarities and differences for you and that character. Bring your list to class and be prepared to share.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 11



Key Paragraph

Page 117:

As E.D. slipped into sleep later, she was glad she didn't have anything to do with her father's show. She was beginning to have a strong premonition of catastrophe.

Can you make some predictions based on E.D.'s premonition? Write one paragraph about what you think will happen as a result of the nontraditional casting of *The Sound of Music*. Then, write a 1-paragraph explanatory paragraph that gives reasons for why you think the story will unfold the way you predicted it. Make sure you use evidence from the text to support your opinions. Share your ideas with a peer and get their feedback. Taking this into account, revise your work.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 12



Key Paragraph

Pages 137-138:

“Don’t need you? Didn’t you hear me say my stage manager quit? Of course I need you—more than anyone. There’s nobody else in this family even remotely organized enough to handle the job! There’s no time for Shakespeare now! There’s work to be done.”

What do you think a stage manager does and why would E.D. be good at it? In what way is this an example that every member of a team is valuable? Write a paragraph that explains why E.D. would be a good stage manager. Use evidence from the text to support your opinion. Be sure to use at least one quotation in your paragraph. Also, make sure that your paragraph has a strong beginning, middle, and end.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 13



Key Paragraph

Pages 141-142:

It was an education in itself to watch Govindaswami in the kitchen. “Passion,” he would say to Jake and Destiny as he moved around the room, chopping and stirring and tasting. “Passion is necessary to all of life. All of life. Meditating, working, cooking, eating. Especially eating.”

Do you agree with Govindaswami? What is he passionate about? What are you passionate about? In what way does being committed to something make it that much more special? Write an explanatory paragraph in which you explain either why or why not Govindaswami’s words are true or not. Make sure you use examples from your own life as well as from the text to support your opinion. Use appropriate transitions as well as a formal tone throughout. When you are finished writing, upload your work to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Docs) and share the link with your classmates so that they can read your work and give you feedback.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 14



Key Paragraph

Page 158:

“Don’t worry, “ E.D. said. “We’ll be finished eating long before it’s ready to fly. It takes ages and ages. You’d get bored waiting.”

“Do you promise it’s going to be a butterfly?”

“I promise.”

Destiny turned to Jake. “Do you promise?”

“I promise.”

How are Jake and E.D. working together in this moment? What is the importance of both of them promising it will be okay to Destiny? Write an explanatory paragraph that elaborates on how Jake has started to act with integrity. Remember, integrity requires wholeness. Use 2-3 examples from the book that show how Jake has begun to act with integrity since staying with the Applewhites. Who has helped him on his journey? Make sure you maintain a formal tone throughout your writing.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 15



Key Paragraph

Page 172:

Jake felt his stomach clench. No! It could not all be over. Enough bad things had happened to him this year! He was going to do this. He was going to play Rolf.

What importance does the role of Rolf have for Jake? Using the internet, research the character Rolf. Taking the information the book as well as your online search, write an informational paragraph about Rolf's character, his role in *The Sound of Music*, and the character values he shows. When you have finished writing, go over your work to edit and revise it.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 16



Key Paragraph

Page 180:

If they could, Jeremy wouldn't have to give up his television career. The network people might like the story even better this way—art struggling against impossible odds. Today was Friday, October tenth. The original opening had been set for the 24th. Two weeks away. Fourteen days. E.D. went to find her father.

In what ways has E.D. always been a problem solver? How does keeping the show alive show a level of commitment and integrity? Have you ever solved a problem no one else was able to solve? Write an informative paragraph in which you inform the reader about a time you solved a problem. Introduce the problem you had to solve. What steps did you take in order to find a solution? Make sure your writing is clear and detailed. When you are done with your writing, upload your finished product to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Docs., etc.)

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 17



Key Paragraph

Page 189:

The fourth wall she had reserved for clippings and Internet printouts from the local newspapers. The story kept changing shape. At first it had been about her father and Mrs. Montrose. Then Jake got to be in the middle of it. One local weekly told how working on the show was turning a delinquent around...

How can the press turn things around? What have some of them done with the truth? What are the potential consequences? Write an explanatory newspaper article that advertises the production. Make sure you are using the third-person point of view in your writing. Describe the setting of the production and the atmosphere, then go into detail to describe what the play will be about. Also, examine the actors. Make a prediction about how you think the show will do. When you are done, revise your writing to strengthen it.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 18



Key Paragraph

Page 200:

Jake grabbed E.D.'s and Destiny's hands, and the three of them bolted for the schoolroom. They slammed the door behind them and sank onto the floor with laughter.

Describe in what way Jake and E.D.'s relationship has grown. How are they honoring one another now?

Pretend you are an anchorman or woman. Conduct an interview of Jake; write 5 questions to ask him and write a 1- paragraph informational response that Jake might give to each question. When you have finished, interview a partner in class and see how their answers compare to the ones you have written.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 19



Key Paragraph

Page 209:

Already she could see in her mind's eye the scene as the Mother Abbess began singing the final reprise of "Climb Ev'ry Mountain," the other nuns joining in and lighting the way for the von Trapps to begin their climb over the Austrian Alps into Switzerland and freedom. She felt almost as excited as if she were helping the real family escape from the Nazis.

What did E.D. do to save the show and help the audience really understand the story? Why do you think that made her feel like she was helping the real von Trapps? Write an explanatory paragraph that examines and explains E.D.'s decisions in this section of the book. How was she helpful to others? Was she acting with integrity? Use examples from the text to support your explanation. Use transitions when necessary and provide a strong conclusion. Revise your work when you are done to strengthen it.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Day 20



Key Paragraph

Page 216:

"I don't know," Jake said. "What color do you think?"

"Blond," Destiny said. "Like mine."

Jake shrugged. "I think maybe brown. Like mine."

Describe how throughout the novel Jake has come to accept himself, understand who he really is, what he values and what he is passionate about. How has his life become much more whole since staying with the Applewhites? Write an argumentative paragraph in which you claim that staying with the Applewhites has changed Jake for the better. Use examples from the story, as well as from your own life. Make sure you provide a strong introduction, transitions, and a conclusion in your writing.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Surviving the Applewhites, Final Project



Ask students to write a 5-paragraph essay that thoroughly explains why the theme of this unit: integrity requires wholeness was picked for this story. Students will include an introductory paragraph that explains the topic of their essay as well as a concluding paragraph that summarizes the ideas presented in their writing. The 3 body paragraphs must include strong evidence as well as a formal tone. Allow students to draw on their own lives for inspiration, as well as the story. Students must use at least 2 outside sources to help them construct their play, but all sources must be cited accurately.

Also a short 1-2 sentence that explains why each source is credible or not will be required. Students will be able to upload their writing projects to the online forum of their choice (Blog, Google Docs.) and share the link with their classmates. Classmates are encouraged to read and revise at least one of their peers writing and bring feedback to class. Students will take this feedback into account before writing a final version of their plays. Students' writing is expected to include appropriate language, and must be school-appropriate.