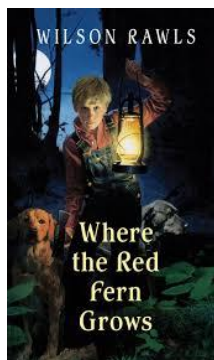


Where the Red Fern Grows



ISBN-10	0-440-41267-6
ISBN-13	978-0-440-41267-0
Author	Rawls, Wilson
Publisher	Doubleday
Copyright	1961
Lexile	700L
Genre	Children's literature
Synopsis	Billy Coleman, a boy growing up in the Ozarks of Oklahoma, is desperate for his own hunting dogs. He scrimps and saves to make his dream a reality, and his investment pays off when he and his dogs Old Dan and Lil' Ann win the top prize at the annual raccoon hunting contest!
Themes	Will power, God and spirituality, Sacrifice, Love beyond loyalty, Family
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

Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 1



Key Paragraph

Page 14:

Although the old hound had no way of knowing it, he had stirred memories, and what priceless treasures they were. Memories of my boyhood days, an old K.C. Baking Powder can, and two little red hounds. Memories of a wonderful love, unselfish devotion, and death in its saddest form.

The author is foreshadowing the events of the story.

Define the term foreshadow.

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you support or oppose the use of this literary technique in the story. Introduce your claim. Acknowledge the opposing viewpoint. Support your claim with logical evidence and reasoned and relevant evidence. Use words and phrases to create cohesion. Provide a concluding statement, which supports your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 2



Key Paragraph

Page 23:

“He’s almost eleven now, and I’m going to let him help me in the fields this summer. That will put the muscles back on him.”

I thought this was wonderful. I’d finally grown up to be a man. I was going to help Papa with the farm.”

Billy is asked to help with the farm at age 11. What responsibilities did you have at 11? How was your life like or unlike Billy’s? What were your dreams? Worries? Do you think it is right and just for an 11-year-old child to have the responsibilities of farm work?

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you support or oppose the work Billy will be asked to do. Introduce your claim with clear reasons. Acknowledge the opposing claim. Organize your reasons logically. Support your claims with relevant evidence and cite credible sources. Use words phrases and clauses to create cohesion. Maintain formal writing style. Provide a concluding statement, which supports your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 3



Key Paragraph

Page 24:

But on that day, I found the greatest of treasures, a sportsman's magazine, discarded by the campers. It was a real treasure for a country boy. Because of that magazine, my entire life changed.

Some events seem to have more impact than others. Have you ever had an event happen that changed your life? What was it and what did it lead to? How did finding this magazine impact Billy's life and his plans?

Billy claims that finding the magazine had a profound impact and change on his life. Do you agree or disagree. Write a one-paragraph argument in which you support or oppose Billy and his claim. Use logical reasoning and relevant evidence to support your claim. Use words or phrases to create cohesion in your writing. Provide a concluding statement, which supports your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 4



Key Paragraph

Page 34:

Then I saw something else. The sun was just right, and the plate glass was a perfect mirror. I saw the full reflection of myself for the first time in my life.

What do you think it would be like to not see your full reflection until you are 12 years old? Do you think that would be liberating or difficult?

Write an argument in which you defend the above claim, introduce your claim and acknowledge the counterclaim. Organize your reasons to support your viewpoint logically. Use reasons and relevant evidence to support your claim. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion. Maintain formal style. Conclude with a statement, which defends your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 5



Key Paragraph

Page 44:

I saw an outraged look come over the marshal's face. Reaching up, he pushed his hat back. He glanced up and down the street. I heard him mutter, "There's not a one in that bunch with that kind of grit."

What does the marshal mean when he says this? Billy originally did not have dogs and his family could not afford them. He saved for two years and made it happen. In what way do his actions fit the theme 'change requires effort'? In this case, he wasn't changing bad habits, but he was adopting good habits. Think about a good habit you would like to adopt.

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you introduce the good habit you would like to adopt. Describe the habit or change you want to make and what you are going to do to adopt it in your life. Explain to your reader why this habit is important and how it will make your life more productive. Introduce your claim and your counterclaim. Support your claim with relevant evidence. Insert clauses, transitions, and phrases to create cohesion. Establish and maintain formal style. Conclude with a statement, which supports your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 6



Key Paragraph

Page 53:

From the stove where she was heating salt water for my feet, Mama said in a low voice, "I'll pray every day and night for that day to come. I don't want you children to grow up without an education, not even knowing what a bottle of soda pop is, or ever seeing the inside of a schoolhouse. I don't think I could stand that..."

Can education only be obtained in school? What is the difference between formal and informal education? Which has more value? What do you think of Mama's ideas? If you lived in the country do you think you'd want your children to go to a formal school and would teaching them at home be enough?

Write an argument in which you defend mama and her ideals of having her children live in town and have an education? Introduce your claim. Acknowledge the opposing claim organize your reasons logically and with flow. Support your claim with relevant evidence from credible sources. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion. Provide a concluding statement, which supports your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 7



Key Paragraph

Page 64:

A sorrowful look came over Papa's face as he ran his fingers through the soft, yellow hair. "Billy," he said, "I want you to take a hammer and pull the nails from every one of those traps. It's summertime now and their fur isn't any good. Besides, I don't think this is very sportsmanlike. The coon doesn't have a chance. It's all right this time. You needed this one, but from now on I want you to catch them with your dogs. That way they have a fifty-fifty chance."

"I will, Papa," I said. "That's what I intended to do."

In what ways does this show a human animal relationship that is filled with respect? Why is it important to respect the animals and nature that surrounds you? Do you agree with father that Billy should remove the traps and give the animals a chance?

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you defend Billy's first catch of the coon and argue that he should remove the traps. Write a claim. Acknowledge the counterclaims and opposing viewpoints. Give evidence to support your viewpoint. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion in your writing. Provide a concluding statement to support your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 8



Key Paragraph

Page 77:

“Well, all right,” he said. “If that’s the way you want it, I’m for it even if it is only an agreement between you and your dogs. If a man’s word isn’t any good, he’s no good himself.”

Billy wanted to keep cutting the tree down. What would happen with the trust and relationship with his dogs if he did not keep his end of the bargain? Who do you know and trust that keeps his or her word? What does that mean to you? Can people count on you to keep your word?

Billy’s father states, “If a man’s word isn’t any good, he’s no good himself.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Write a one-paragraph argument in which you support or oppose Billy’s father. Introduce your claim. Acknowledge the counterclaim. Support your claim with logical reasons and relevant evidence. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create flow and cohesion. Provide a concluding statement that supports your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 9



Key Paragraph

Page 82:

...about this tree-chopping of yours, I think it's all right. In fact, I think it would be a good thing if all young boys had to cut down a big tree like that once in their life. It does something for them. It gives them determination and will power. That's a good thing for a man to have...

Have you ever had a time in your life that you were driven by determination and will power? What did that feel like?

Do you agree with Grandpa's statement about boys needing to chop a tree to learn determination? **Write a one-paragraph argument in which you agree or oppose Grandfather's viewpoint. Introduce your claim and acknowledge the opposing claim. Support your claim with logical reasons and relevant evidence using accurate and credible sources. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and to clarify relationships among claims. Provide a concluding statement, which supports your claims.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 10



Key Paragraph

Page 86:

Old Dan hadn't been alone when he had gone back to the tree. She too had gone along. There was no doubt that in the early morning she had come home to get me.

There was a lump in my throat as I said, "I'm sorry, little girl, I should've known."

Sometimes we make inaccurate assumptions about things or people. What inaccurate assumption did Billy make about Little Ann? What really happened? Have you ever made an inaccurate assumption? Define assumption?

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you agree or oppose with the merits of assuming things. Use this as an opportunity to define assume. Introduce your claim and acknowledge a counterclaim. Use words phrases and cohesions and clarify the relationships among claims. Establish and maintain a formal style. Provide a concluding statement in which you support your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 11



Key Paragraph

Page 99:

There he was. I didn't know what to do. I couldn't cut the tree down and I was afraid to climb it for fear I would scare the coon into jumping out. If he did, Old Dan would jump, too, and break his legs.

Billy solves a lot of problems while hunting.

List a few other times he had to think through the situation clearly to solve a problem. Do you think he shows maturity and logic in his thinking?

Write an argument in which you defend his ability to reason. Introduce your claim and acknowledge a counterclaim. Organize your reasons clearly and logically. Support your claim using relevant evidence and sources. Use words and phrases to create cohesion. Provide a concluding statement, which supports your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 12



Key Paragraph

Page 106:

At the edge of the water stood a large sycamore. I got behind it, anything to blot out that heartbreaking scene. Little Ann, thinking I had deserted her, started crying. I couldn't stand it.

I opened my mouth to call Old Dan. I wanted to tell him to come on and we'd go home as there was nothing we could do. The words just wouldn't come out...

Do you think this part of the chapter is realistic? If you were the author would you have had Billy give up at this point? What does the author gain by adding that at this juncture of the story?

Write an argument in which you agree or oppose the author's technique. Write your claim and acknowledge the counterclaim. Organize your reasons logically. Support your claim with relevant evidence, using credible sources. Use words phrases and clauses to create cohesions. Provide a concluding statement to support your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 13



Key Paragraph

Page 114:

I told Rubin I didn't want to bet, but I was pretty sure my dogs could tree the ghost coon. Rainie butted in again, "What's the matter? You 'yellow'?"

How does Rainier try to get Billy to say yes to the hunt? Does calling someone 'yellow' or scared do the trick? Would you fall for that if you really didn't want to do something? Grandfather calls the bet and gives Billy the money. Do you think that grandfather was acting responsibly to contribute to the hunt/bet?

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you agree or oppose grandfather's actions. Write a claim and acknowledge the counterclaim. Give reasons and relevant evidence to support your viewpoint. Use transitions and clauses to create cohesion in your writing. Conclude with a statement, which supports your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 14



Key Paragraph

Page 134:

I felt much better after paying my respects to Rubin. Everything looked brighter, and I didn't have that funny feeling any more.

Why is it important to 'pay our respects' when someone dies? What does that expression mean to you? Are you paying respect to the living or to the dead?

Write a one-paragraph argument to support your claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Introduce your claim and acknowledge the opposing claim. Organize the reasons and evidence logically. Support your claims with relevant evidence and logical reasoning. Use credible sources. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify relationships. Provide a concluding statement to support your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 15



Key Paragraph

Page 143:

In the midst of all the excitement, *my little sister*, not saying a word, climbed down from her chair...

"Silly, you don't put banty eggs in a gold cup," *the oldest one said*.

All throughout the novel the author refers to Billy's sisters by other descriptors like "the oldest one" or "the youngest one" instead of their names. What impact or effect does this have on the reader? How would your impression of his sisters change if their names were Sally, Sarah and Sabrina for instance? How do names in general influence our interpretation of a character?

Write an argument in which you support or oppose the need for names or descriptions of the characters. Introduce your claim and acknowledge the opposing claim. Organize your reasons logically. Support your claim with relevant evidence. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesions and clarify the relationships. Conclude with a statement, which supports your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 16



Key Paragraph

Page 151:

Rubbing the sleep from his eyes, he said, "You heard two screech owls. Why, that's nothing... You're thinking of the bad-luck superstition. There's nothing to that; nothing at all.

Do you think the author is foreshadowing anything by mentioning this? Or is he just trying to raise the level of suspense? Do you believe in superstitions?

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you confirm or dispel the value of superstitions. Introduce your claim and acknowledge the opposing viewpoint. Organize the evidence logically. Support your reasons with logical evidence and reasons. Use words and phrases to create cohesion. Provide a concluding statement, which supports your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 17



Key Paragraph

Page 168:

Old Dan was standing perfectly still, with eyes closed and head hanging down. Little Ann was licking at his cut and bleeding ears. “She always does that,” I said. “If you watch, when she gets down with him, he’ll do the same for her.”

“Silly, you don’t put banty eggs in a gold cup,” *the oldest one said.*

What kind of relationship Ann and Dan have with one another? What can we learn from them as dogs that could be applied to our human interactions?

Write an argument in which you support or oppose better interactions between people. Introduce your claim and acknowledge the opposing claim. Organize your reasons logically. Support your claim with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, and credible sources. Use words and phrases to create cohesion and to clarify relationships in your writing. Provide a concluding statement, which supports your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 18



Key Paragraph

Page 174

“Fellows, no dog is worth the lives of three men.”

The judge, papa, and grandfather are ready to give up and get out of the storm. Billy knows his dogs will not give up and will die if he does not find them and he wants to continue on. Can you justify his actions?

Write an argument in which you support the judge or Billy. Write an argument in which you support your claim with clear, reasoned, and relevant evidence. Introduce your claim. Acknowledge the opposing viewpoint and organize your reasons logically. Support your claim with relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrate an understanding of the topic. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify relationships. Provide a concluding statement that follows form and supports the argument.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 19



Key Paragraph

195

“There is a little good in all evil.”

During the fight with the mountain lion Billy thinks of a time his ax was covered in blood when Rubin died. What is he referring to that there is good in evil? Do you agree with that statement? Is it important to find good when bad is occurring?

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you agree with the statement “There is good in all evil.” Introduce your claim and acknowledge the alternate viewpoint. Organize your thoughts and reasons logically. Support your claim with logical reasoning and relevant evidence using accurate and credible sources. Use words and phrases to create cohesion. Provide a concluding statement, which flows from and supports your argument.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt
Where the Red Fern Grows, Day 20



Key Paragraph

Page 201:

“You were worth it, old friend, and a thousand times over. In my heart I knew that there in the grave lay man’s best friend.”

In what way were the dogs Billy’s best friends? What can we learn from them about what it means to love and be loyal? What can we learn from Billy about persistence and working hard toward a goal?

Do you agree with the statement, “dog’s are man’s best friend”.

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you agree or oppose the above statement. Write your claim. Acknowledge the opposing viewpoint. Use examples from the reading and from credible sources to support your claim. Use logic and reason to support your claim. Use transitions and phrases to create cohesion. Conclude with a statement, which supports your claim.