

Discovery Guide

By
Sandra Markle

TUMBLEHOME
learning

About the Book

Twelve-year-old Gus, spooked by storms and still mourning his older brother's death, dreads spending the summer with his Aunt Willie on a Florida wildlife refuge. But soon he's drawn into a hunt for pirate treasure and an attempt to save wild animals—including an elusive panther—from local poachers. With the help of a feisty girl and a zany sculptor, Gus regains his courage and a sense of his place in the world.

Common Core Connection

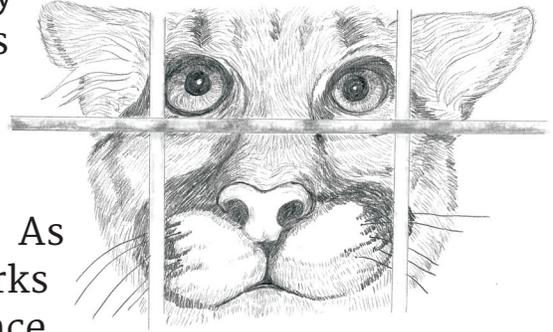
This guide is aligned with selected Common Core State Standards. To support instruction, also reference your grade level-specific Common Core State Standards.

Before Reading

- You are about to read about a summer experience that changed a boy's life by helping him deal with something very difficult. Have you ever had to face something that was very hard for you? Was there something that helped you understand that, while you couldn't change it, you could live with it? Write two paragraphs sharing what you had to face. Then tell what helped you. Or write two paragraphs about something hard you're facing now. And tell how you are trying to live with it. (*Writing: Text Types and Purposes: W. 4.3*)
- You are about to meet a cast of human characters and a cast of animal characters. Get ready to make a list of each. As you read, you'll find one human that's the main character. That's the one who causes the action or is at the center of it. Put a check mark next to that human. You'll find two animals that are key to what happens to the main character. Underline each of them. Be prepared to list at least six words that describe the area around the old house that's the main setting for this story. (*Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: RL. 4.3*)

While Reading

1. The pictures in the story are key to what's happening at each point. As you're reading, pick three pictures that catch your eye as you come to them. Before you read that page, use the picture to predict what is happening. As you read, think about how the text works with the picture to help you experience what is happening. (*Reading Literature: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: RL. 4.7*)

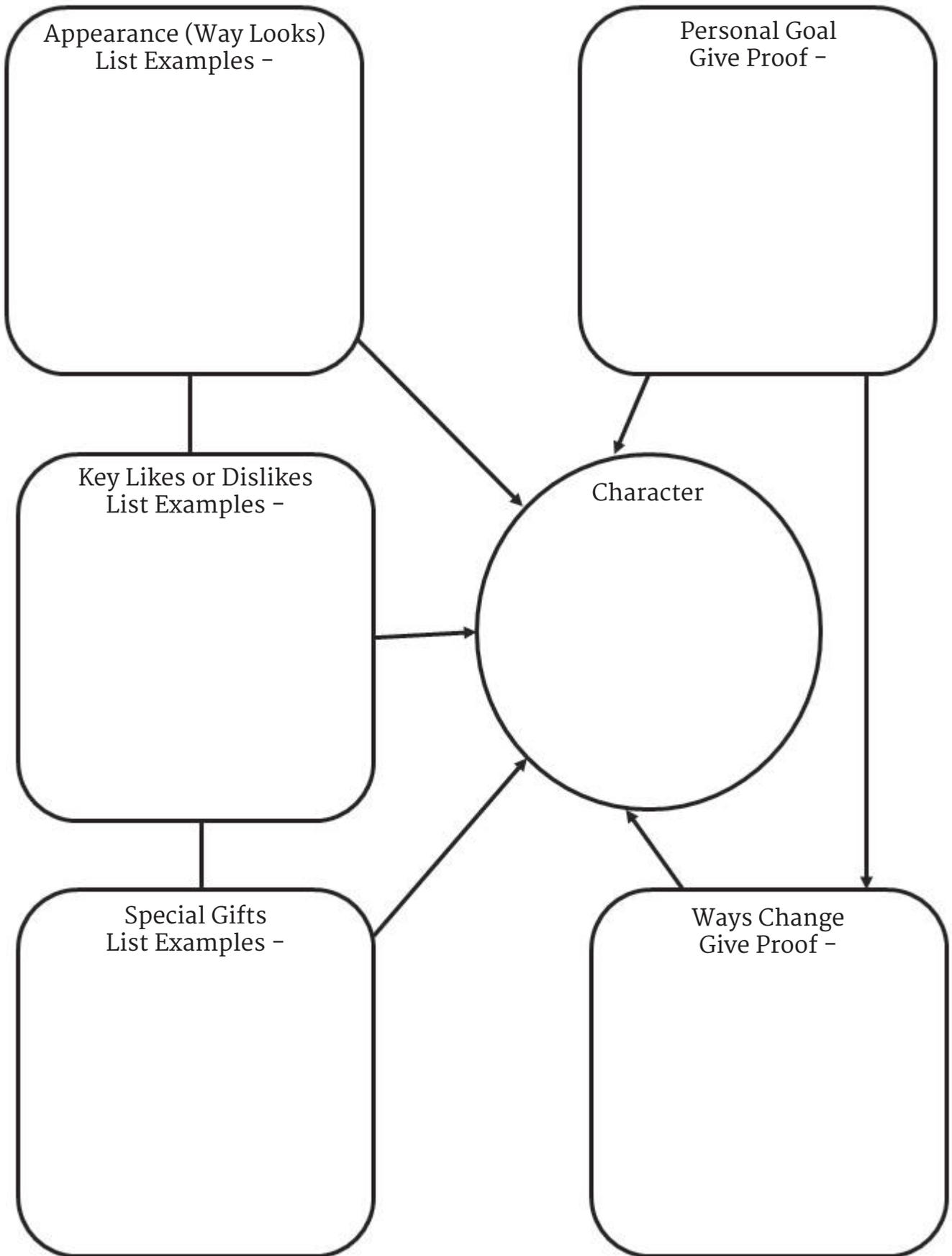


2. Pick at least one spot in the story where, even though there wasn't a picture, you could clearly see the action in your mind. Draw a picture or write a paragraph describing what you imagined. Share examples from the text that helped shape your vision. (*Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: RL. 4.1*)

3. Fiona isn't the main character but the story wouldn't be the same without her. Share three examples from the story where she's key to what happens. (*Writing: Text Types and Purposes: W. 4.1B*)

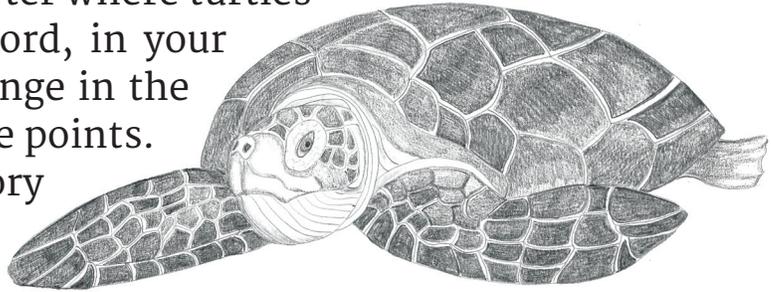
4. Coop isn't the main character either but the story wouldn't be the same without him. Share three quotes of something he says that are key to the story. (*Writing: Text Types and Purposes: W. 4.2B*)

5. Getting to know characters in a story is like getting to know people you meet. Even though you may not like everyone, there are certain things you learn about them. Make a diagram like this to help you discover how each of these characters was developed: Gus, Fiona, Coop and Dirk.



* NOTE: Proof can be a quote (something the character said) or the page number where you discovered this proof.

6. Throughout the story, loggerhead turtles are story changers, meaning the action alters because they're in the scene. As you read, make a chart to list each chapter where turtles play a role in the story. Record, in your opinion, if there is a key change in the action for Gus at each of those points. List any examples from the story that support your opinion. (Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: RL. 4.1)

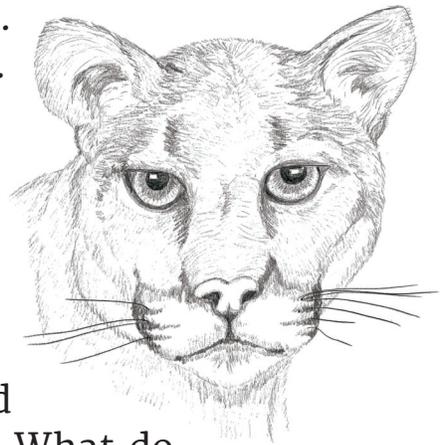


Chapter with Turtles	Gus Action Change Yes/No	How Action Changed or Stayed the Same

7. Throughout the story, Coop makes root beer floats to make people feel better. Describe in detail, the first time he does that. Tell who needs to feel better? And why? (*Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: RL. 4.3*)

8. At the beginning of the story, Gus learns his aunt's home may have a spirit living in it. How does this theme effect what happens in Chapter Twelve? What surprise does it add to Chapter Thirty? (*Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: RL. 4.2*)

9. Compare the Pinders' point of view about the Florida panthers being on the island with how Gus and Aunt Willie feel. Divide into groups to debate these different viewpoints. Half should defend the Pinders' point of view. Half how Gus and Aunt Willie feel about this issue. (*Reading Literature: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: RL. 4.9*)



10. Throughout the story, even though we learn he's good at it, Gus refuses to play the guitar. Think about the events that led Gus to that decision (the cause and effect). What do you think changes at the end of the story that makes him decide to play the guitar again? Support your answer with details from the story. (*Reading Literature: Craft and Structure: RL. 3.3*)

11. Write an email to someone telling them what was your favorite part of the story. Share why you think they'd also like to read Gasparilla's Gold. (*Writing: Production and Distribution of Writing: W. 4.4*)

x

To

Subject



Discovery Connections

- **Who Was Here?**

Check the footprints in the Reader's Club at the end of the book to know what animals left their prints at the end of each of these chapters:

Chapter One

Chapter Two

Chapter Five

Chapter Six

Chapter Ten

Chapter Eleven

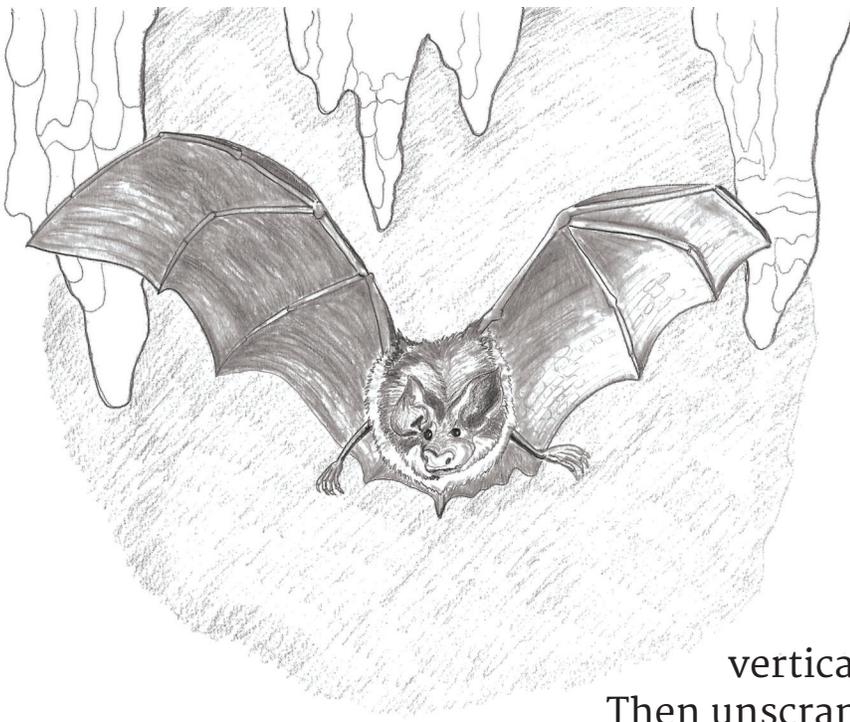
Chapter Fifteen

Chapter Twenty-One

Also check each of those chapters to discover what part that animal played in the story. (*Reading Literature: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: RL. 4.7*)

- **Wild Story**

Pick your favorite animal that appears in the story. Learn a little bit about its life in the Reader's Club. Next, look in books and online to discover even more. Then write a short story or article that shares something special about this animal's life. (*Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge: W. 4.7*)



• **Animal Search**

Find each of these animals in the word search.

panther, pelican, raccoon, bat, turtle, alligator, coyote, skunk, deer and boar.

The words may be vertical, horizontal or diagonal. Then unscramble the capital letters to solve this riddle.

What game does a Florida panther always play when it's hungry?

A l l i g a t o r w a c
z c o y o T e d x t v r
b e w p b o a r o u p a
a d e e r s n a u r q c
t g o l f m k o p t b C
u h i i y j o u k l a o
b s b C o p j g n e c o
m u x a n h p w a k d n
o y b n p a n t H e r a

Just For Fun!

- **Paper Fliers**

Like Gus in Chapter Nineteen, you can fold your own origami (folded paper) bird and send it soaring. Check out the step-by-step instructions on these two websites:

Wiki How To Fold A Paper Crane

<http://www.wikihow.com/Fold-a-Paper-Crane>

Origami Crane Folding Instructions

<http://www.oberlin.edu/amam/asia/crane/documents/crane-folding-directions.pdf>

- **Logo Time**

In Chapter Thirty, the Daniel Hart Wildlife Shelter is launched. Put your imagination to work and design a logo (a symbol) that's just right for the Shelter. Make it something that will work well on the sign Coop will create. And something that can be used on the Shelter's website.

- **News From The Shelter**

Pretend you're helping out at the Daniel Hart Wildlife Shelter. Write a short blog entry about taking care of one of the animals you met in the story.

- **What Happened Next?**

Make up a short story about what happened to Gus the day after the ending you read.



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More About The Author—Sandra Markle

Sandra Markle lives in Sarasota, Florida where she feels lucky to spend lots of time both writing and being outdoors appreciating wildlife.



She is the author of more than 200 non-fiction books for children including her New York Times highly acclaimed *Toad Weather* (Peachtree Publishers) and the American Association for the Advancement of Science's Prize for Excellence winner *The Case of the Vanishing Golden Frogs* (Millbrook/Lerner Publishing). Her books have been on many Best Books of the Year lists. Her best-selling *What If You Had!?* series, including *What If You Had Animal Teeth!?* and *What If You Had Animal Ears!?* (Scholastic) has earned numerous awards, including the Parent's Choice Award Recommended Seal. *Gasparilla's Gold* is her first middle grade novel.

For more information, visit

WRITE ON: Sandra Markle <http://sandra-markle.blogspot.com/>

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