

I SURVIVED

BOOK CLUB

Name: _____

I Survived The Great Chicago Fire, 1871



CLOSE-READING QUESTIONS AND CREATIVE WRITING ASSIGNMENT

CLOSE-READING QUESTIONS:

1. At the beginning of the book, why is Oscar on the train from Minnesota to Chicago?

2. What important item does Oscar have in his suitcase? What happens to his suitcase?

3. Why does Oscar run off after he arrives at Palmer House with Mr. Morrow and Mama?

4. What did Papa tell Oscar when they were in the woods after the Castle fire?

5. First, Oscar saves Jennie and Bruno. Later on, how does Jennie save Oscar?

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CLOSE-READING QUESTIONS AND CREATIVE WRITING ASSIGNMENT *(CONTINUED)*

6. As Oscar, Jennie, and Bruno try to make their way north to Palmer House, what kinds of things do they see as a result of the fire?

7. How does Oscar get separated from Jennie and Bruno? What does he do next, and why?

8. What causes the gigantic wave of fire that Oscar sees when he gets to Palmer House?

9. How do Oscar and Mr. Morrow end up in the river together?

10. How do Oscar and Mr. Morrow work together to find Jennie and Bruno at the end of the book?



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ANSWERS

CLOSE-READING QUESTIONS:

1. Oscar is on the train because his mother married a man from Chicago named Mr. Morrow and sold the Minnesota farm where Oscar grew up. Oscar and his mother are now moving to Chicago with Mr. Morrow
2. Oscar has his father's sheriff's badge, a five-pointed silver star, in his suitcase. His suitcase is stolen in the Chicago train station by a group of street kids.
3. Oscar happens to look back at the street before going into the hotel, and he sees the girl with the cap and braids who helped the boys steal his family's suitcases. He runs after her because he desperately wants to get Papa's badge back.
4. Papa told Oscar, "It will take a long time but one day the forest will grow back."
5. After Oscar gets knocked to the floor by a fireball, he tries to crawl out of the house but can't see anything. Jennie yells directions to Oscar so he can find his way out before the house explodes in flames.
6. They see people fleeing, horses driven crazy by the heat and sparks, dogs howling in fear, and rats running for their lives.
7. When Otis punches Oscar in the face, Oscar gets knocked out. When he comes to in the alley, Otis has taken Jennie and Bruno. Oscar runs to Palmer House, realizing that Mr. Morrow—who seems to know everyone in Chicago—could help him find them.
8. Smaller fires have joined together into one monstrous blaze.
9. Oscar and Mr. Morrow decide not to walk across the wooden bridge because it could easily catch fire, and it's also extremely crowded. Instead, they get in a rowboat, but they end up jumping into the river as a flaming ship crashes into them.
10. Oscar describes what Jennie and Bruno look like, and Mr. Morrow—who is an artist—draws a picture of them which is printed in the Chicago Tribune with an ad.

CREATIVE WRITING ASSIGNMENT:

Answers will vary.