

KAYA

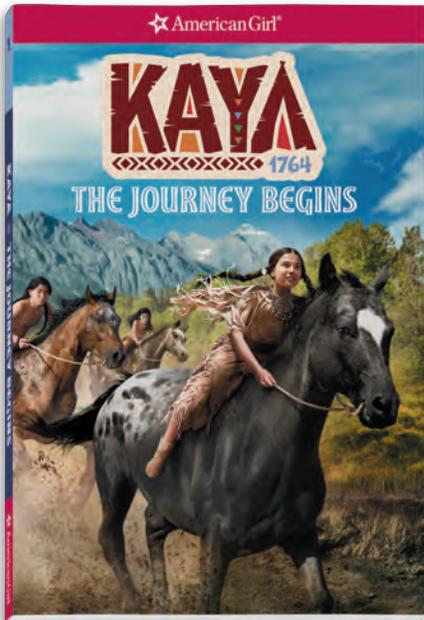
1764



A Teacher's Guide to

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

*A story about growing up
in the Nez Perce tribe*



About the Book

Growing up in the Northwest in 1764, Kaya is like most Nimíipuu* (Nez Perce) girls her age. She's adventurous, loves and respects animals and the earth, and relies on her close-knit community for strength and guidance. She enjoys riding Steps High, the horse that she is patiently training, and she looks forward to the day when Steps High will be ready to join in races. When enemies raid Kaya's village and steal the horses, Kaya disobeys her mother's orders to follow her into hiding and runs after Steps High instead. She and Speaking Rain, Kaya's blind adopted sister, are captured and held in enemy territory, where they meet Two Hawks, a boy captured from the Salish* tribe. Kaya and Two Hawks speak different languages, but they manage to communicate enough to plan an escape. Although Kaya can hardly bear to leave Speaking Rain behind, she knows that their only hope of being reunited with their family is for Kaya to find her people and eventually return to rescue her sister. (Lexile measure: 730L)

* See glossary (p. 92) for pronunciation.

About This Guide

Kaya's story is set during a time in American history that many elementary school students have yet to study. The layered discussion questions ask students to think deeply about the themes of family and friendship, and what it means to accept responsibility and to be courageous when faced with hard challenges. There are natural connections to the language arts, social studies, and science curricula. This guide encourages students to be careful readers without diminishing the pleasure they gain from reading. It is recommended that students read the entire book before engaging in a detailed study of the novel.

The Common Core Standards

Common Core Standards are applied to the discussion and activities to aid schools that use the standards. A key to the standards referenced is provided at the end of the guide. Schools that don't use the standards can simply ignore them and recognize that the guide supports a quality reading program.

Pre-Reading Activity

Ask students to read "Inside Kaya's World" (p. 98-103) to introduce them to the Nimíipuu (today known as the Nez Perce) and the way they lived. As a class, discuss the expectations for Nimíipuu children. Think about the statement, "Kaya's classroom was the world around her." (p. 100) Then have students develop a course of study for Nimíipuu children. Instruct students to write a paragraph that describes the various subjects. For example, they might describe a class called "Markings of Dangerous Animals." Allow time in class for students to share what they have written.

Correlates to Common Core Standards in Language Arts in Reading Informational Text: Key Ideas & Details RI. 3-4.1; Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 2-5.2; Speaking & Listening: Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas SL. 2-5.4.

Thematic Connections

Family

Think about how Kaya defines her family. Who is a part of it? Is it the same as or different from how she would define her tribe? What is her relationship with her siblings? Kaya's family adopted Speaking Rain after her parents died. In what ways does Kaya treat Speaking Rain like a sister by birth? Explain what Kaya likes about spending time with her grandparents and other relatives. Discuss the role of the elderly in Kaya's family, citing examples from the text. Describe Kaya's special relationship with Aalah, her grandmother.

Friendship

How do Kaya and Two Hawks become friends when they don't speak the same language? Why does Kaya decide to trust Two Hawks with her plan to escape from the enemy camp? What is their relationship like after they escape? How do they help each other? Why does Kaya decide to help Two Hawks avoid the cougar instead of protecting herself?

Responsibility

Kaya is responsible for caring for her twin brothers and watching after Speaking Rain. Discuss how Kaya sometimes has trouble remembering her duties. What are the consequences? Explain what Whipwoman means when she says, "A magpie that thinks only of itself would have given the boys better care than Kaya did!" (p. 19) How does the nickname "Magpie" remind Kaya of her failure to be responsible? How does Kaya come to terms with her nickname? Describe times in the novel when Kaya demonstrates responsibility. How is she rewarded in the end?

Courage

Cite examples from the novel to show that Kaya is a courageous girl. Locate scenes in the novel where she almost loses her courage. When does she show the most courage? How does Speaking Rain comfort Kaya when she is at her lowest point after the enemy takes the girls captive? Discuss the courage it takes for Kaya to escape and leave Speaking Rain behind. How do you show courage?

Trust

Kaya wants to be a girl whom others can trust. How does she prove this when she saves Speaking Rain from the rushing waters? Debate whether rescuing Speaking Rain causes the other children to see Kaya as trustworthy. Kaya's father tells her that Steps High trusts her. Fox Tail says, "You were racing like wildfire, Kaya." (p. 36) What is significant about Fox Tail calling her by her real name?

Growing Up

Aalah tells Kaya that she is growing up and will soon go on her vision quest. Discuss the purpose of the vision quest for adolescent Nimíipuu. Discuss evidence at the end of the novel that Kaya is in the first stages of growing up.

Correlates to Common Core Standards in Language Arts in Reading Literature: Key Ideas & Details RL. 2.1, RL. 2.3, RL. 3-4.1, RL. 3-4.3; Craft & Structure RL. 2-4.5, RL. 2-4.6; Integration of Knowledge & Ideas RL. 2-4.7, RL. 2-4.9; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 2-4.1; Knowledge of Language L. 2-4.3; Speaking & Listening: Comprehension & Collaboration SL. 2-4.1, SL. 2-4.2, SL. 2-4.3; Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas SL. 2-5.4.

Curriculum Connections

Language Arts

Explain what Kaya's mother means when she says, "Our actions speak for us. Our deeds show our worth." (p. 2) Have students locate a scene in the novel where Kaya shows an understanding of what her mother means. Then have students write a new scene in which Kaya performs a deed that shows her worth.

Correlates to Common Core Standards in Language Arts in Reading Literature: Key Ideas & Details RL. 3-4.1, RL. 3-4.3; Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 2-4.3.

A *simile* is a figure of speech in which two things are compared, often using *like* or *as*. Kaya describes how fast her horse can run in the following simile: "She glides over the ground like the shadow of an eagle." (p. 6) Find other examples of simile in the novel. Then ask students to write a simile that describes Kaya's feelings when she escapes from enemy raiders without her sister.

Correlates to Common Core Standards in Language Arts in Language: Vocabulary Acquisition & Use L. 3-4.5.

The novel is written in the third person. Ask students to select a section in chapter 12, "Escape!" and rewrite it in the first person from Kaya's or Two Hawks's point of view. How does changing the point of view change the story? Allow time for students to share their writing in class.

Correlates to Common Core Standards in Language Arts in Reading Literature: Craft & Structure RL. 2-4.6; Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 2-4.3.

Social Studies

Kaya's story reveals the daily lives and culture of the Nimíipuu. Ask students to list at least five things they learned from the novel about one of the following topics: food, gender roles, spirituality, transport, and trade.

Then have students visit the exhibit of the Nez Perce Museum Collection at nps.gov/museum/exhibits/nepe/index.html. Have students select one object from each category and write a brief description that explains what the object says about the way the Nimíipuu lived.

Correlates to Common Core Standards in Language Arts in Reading Informational Text: Integration of Knowledge & Ideas RI. 2-5.7; Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 2-5.2.

Have students identify on a map the area where the Nimíipuu lived when Kaya was growing up in 1764. Where is Nez Perce land today? The following web page details the original area of the Nimíipuu and the current size and location of their reservation: critfc.org/member_tribes_over-view/nez-perce-tribe.

Correlates to Common Core Standards in Language Arts in Reading Informational Text: Integration of Knowledge & Ideas RI. 2-5.7.

To Soar Like An Eagle is the chief of Kaya's people. Chief Joseph presided over the Nez Perce tribe many years after Kaya's time. Use library or Internet resources to find out why Chief Joseph was so famous. The following sites are helpful: biography.com/political-figure/chief-joseph and historylink.org/File/8975. Have students write a tribute to Chief Joseph that Nez Perce people today may read on the anniversary of his death. Post the tributes on the school's website or around school for Native American Heritage Month (November).

Correlates to Common Core Standards in Language Arts in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 2-5.2; Production & Distribution of Writing W. 2-4.6; Research to Build & Present Knowledge W. 2-4.7.

Science

Ask students to take notes about the way Kaya and Two Hawks use nature to help them survive. This should include information about food, water, shelter, and navigation. Then have students use their notes to write a science magazine article titled “Kaya and Two Hawks: How They Read Nature and Survived.”

Correlates to Common Core Standards in Language Arts in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 2-5.2; Research to Build & Present Knowledge W. 2-4.8.

Drama

Legends like the ones Kaya’s elders tell are part of Nimípuu oral tradition. Divide students into small groups and ask them to read a Nez Perce legend from the following website: www.native-languages.org/nez-legends.htm. Then have them dramatize the legend in class. A narrator may be used.

Correlates to Common Core Standards in Language Arts in Reading Literature: Integration of Knowledge & Ideas RL. 2-4.7; Language: Knowledge of Language L. 2-4.3.

Vocabulary/Use of Language

The vocabulary in the novel isn’t difficult, but students should be encouraged to jot down unfamiliar words and define them using clues from the context. Such words may include *travois* (p. 3), *lathering* (p. 9), *cunning* (p. 11), *confident* (p. 14), *kouse roots* (p. 22), *dismay* (p. 27), *parfleches* (p. 31), *withers* (p. 35), *provisions* (p. 39), *tumult* (p. 46), *glades* (p. 53), *lashed* (p. 66), *shrouded* (p. 67), *sullen* (p. 74), and *sniggle* (p. 78).

Correlates to Common Core Standards in Language Arts in Reading Literature: Craft & Structure RL. 2-4.4; Language: Vocabulary Acquisition & Use L. 2-4.4.

Online Resources

- www.americanindian.si.edu/nk360
The National Museum of the American Indian presents information tailored to educators.
- www.fs.usda.gov/npnht/
This U.S. Forest Service website offers information about the Nez Perce National Historic Trail.
- www.nezperce.org
This is the official website of the Nez Perce Tribe.



About the Author

When Janet Shaw was a girl, she and her brother liked to act out stories, especially ones about sword fights and wild horses. As an adult, she became a poet and author. Today, she lives in North Carolina with her husband and dog. While writing about Kaya, she worked closely with an advisory board of experts and Nez Perce elders to be sure that Kaya’s stories are accurate.

More Stories About Kaya

- *Smoke on the Wind*—Find out what happens after *The Journey Begins*. (Lexile measure: 830L)

Key to Common Core Standards Referenced in This Guide

Reading Literature

Key Ideas & Details

RL. 2.1—Ask and answer such question words as *who, what, where, when, why,* and *how* to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

RL. 2.3—Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

RL. 3-4.1—Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

RL. 3-4.3—Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.

Craft & Structure

RL. 2-4.4—Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text.

RL. 2-4.5—Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.

RL. 2-4.6—Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.

Integration of Knowledge & Ideas

RL. 2-4.7—Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.

RL. 2-4.9—Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events.

Reading Informational Text

Integration of Knowledge & Ideas

RI. 2-5.7—Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

Key Ideas & Details

RI. 3-4.1—Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

Language

Conventions of Standard English

L. 2-4.1—Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Knowledge of Language

L. 2-4.3—Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

Vocabulary Acquisition & Use

L. 2-4.4—Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade-level reading and content.

L. 3-4.5—Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meaning.

Speaking & Listening

Comprehension & Collaboration

SL. 2-4.1—Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade-level topics and texts with peers and adults in small and large groups.

SL. 2-4.2—Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

SL. 2-4.3—Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas

SL. 2-5.4—Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.

Writing

Text Types & Purposes

W. 2-5.2—Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

W. 2-4.3—Write narratives that recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events; include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings; use temporal words to signal event order; and provide a sense of closure.

Production & Distribution of Writing

W. 2-4.6—With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one page in a single sitting.

Research to Build & Present Knowledge

W. 2-4.7—Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

W. 2-4.8—Recall relevant information from experience or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.

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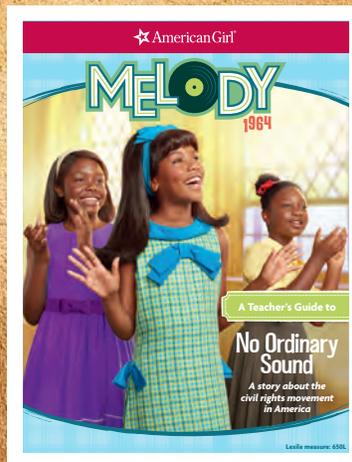
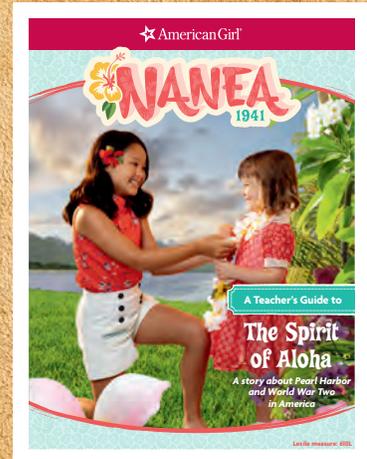
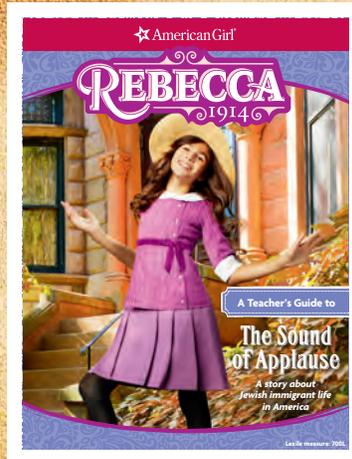
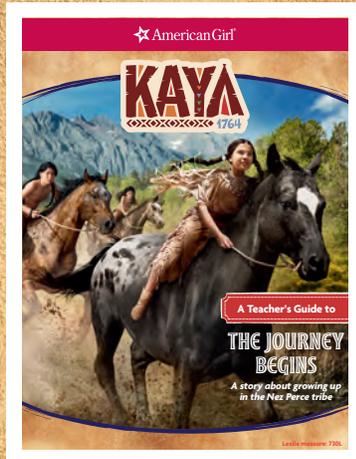
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Characters That Teach

American Girl's line of historical fiction for middle-grade readers was originally conceived and developed by a former classroom teacher. These books and characters are grounded in thorough historical research and bring history to life for children.

Each historical character's story helps readers make connections. Girls and boys can explore the past, find their place in the present, and think about the possibilities the future can bring. They will see how a young person can stand up for what he or she cares about most: helping others, protecting the earth, and overcoming injustice. Through these stories, young readers will discover how staying true to their own beliefs helps define *their* character.

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