

A Hare in the Elephant's Trunk

Jan L. Coates

Educators' Guide

Written by Jan L. Coates



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EDUCATORS' GUIDE

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OUTLINE:

Prologue

BOOK I (pre-war life, Duk Padiet) — Pages 5-35, Chapters 1-4

BOOK II (walking) — Pages 35–87, Chapters 5–9

BOOK III (Pinyudo) — Pages 89–148, Chapters 10–15

BOOK IV (Pochalla/Kakuma) — Pages 149-230, Chapters 16-24

BOOK V (leaving Kakuma/Nairobi) — Pages 231–274, Chapters 25–27

INTERVIEWS: Jan Coates, Jacob Akech Deng

GLOSSARY

SONGS: Pages 19, 25, 27, 54, 162, 168, 187, 232, 273

CONVERSATIONS WITH MAMA: Pages 40, 75, 94/95, 103, 131,146, 153, 166, 183, 198, 214, 219, 229, 238, 273, 274

NOTE: Many of these activities/discussions may be conducted in small groups, with an assigned recorder, speaker and moderator, if desired.

PROLOGUE (pp. 1-3)

Although the prologue is only two pages long, a lot of information is packed into those two pages. What do you learn about the characters, tone and setting of the story from reading the prologue?

BOOK I (pp. 5-34)

Jacob is seven years old and living a peaceful life in the Dinka village of Duk Padiet, Sudan when the story begins in 1987. He lives with his mother, grandmother and sisters and spends his time playing with his friend, Oscar, helping his Uncle Daniel care for his cattle, looking after his family's goats and crops, and engaging in storytelling. His goals in life include becoming a champion wrestler, like Uncle Daniel, and becoming a soldier. His mother presents him with a precious gift, a blue Mama stone, which becomes his talisman. She also tells him "wadeng," a Dinka word meaning "look to tomorrow; it will be better," and she expresses her wish that he and Sissy will both one day go to school.

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES:

- Judging from the cover and the title, what do you think the book will be about?
- The circumstances in this book arose as a result of civil war in Sudan. Do you know of other civil wars that have taken place, or are taking place right now in the world? Discuss.
- Find a scale map that includes Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya. Using the map in the book, estimate the number of kilometers from Duk Padiet to Pinyudo, and from Pinyudo to Kakuma, via Pochalla. Finally, estimate the distance from Kakuma to Nairobi.

POST-READING:

- What is a prologue? Why do you think the author chose to begin this book with a prologue?
- ❖ In creating a setting, authors are careful to incorporate all five senses in their writing. Find examples where this author has involved each of the senses in her writing. Discuss how the use of all five senses in her writing allows the reader to become part of the story, even when the story is in an unfamiliar place.
- ❖ Define the word "talisman." In Book I, what does Jacob acquire that becomes his talisman? Do you have something like that in your life?
- Define the Dinka word, "wadeng." Does a similar word or phrase exist in English? Try combining a couple of English words to see if you can invent a word with such a meaning.
- ❖ See if you can figure out a meaning for the Dinka word "cieng." Check the glossary at the back if you're stuck.
- ❖ Begin a character balloon web (attached) showing the characters in this novel, with Jacob at its centre. In point form, indicate the person's importance to the story. Add balloons as new characters are introduced.

OTHER THINKING...

- ➤ The "Big Fish" story is a family story, particular to Jacob's family. Discuss any family stories/legends that may exist in your family. Are such family legends always 100% true, or do they "grow" over time?
- ➤ Discuss the conflict between what Jacob wants to do with his life (at the young age of 7) and his mother's goal for him. Think of a situation in your own life are there things your parents want you to do that you're reluctant to do?
- Discuss similarities between your life and Jacob's life in Sudan. Think of family, home, siblings, activities and food. Create a Venn diagram (attached) or chart showing the similarities and differences between your life and Jacob's in Book I.

BOOK II (pp. 35-87)

In the middle of the night, war arrives in Duk Padiet. Jacob's life will never be the same. He looks frantically for his family amidst the burning ruins of his village. He is found by his older nephew, Monyroor, who pulls him away into the woods. They begin walking in the direction of the rising sun, toward Ethiopia, where Monyroor has heard they will be safe.

Along the way, they meet an elder named Matthew and his granddaughter, Louise. They spend the night in another destroyed village where they meet a small boy named Willy, who is all alone. Willy chooses to stay in the village and wait for his family to return. Jacob, Monyroor, Matthew and Louise continue walking. When they come upon a long centipede of walking boys, they join them and Jacob is reunited with Oscar, who has a badly injured arm, and his know-it-all enemy, Majok, who assures them there will be plenty of food and shelter in Ethiopia. Matthew and Louise are unable to keep up with the group and stay behind.

After many days, the centipede arrives back in Willy's village — they have been walking in circles as there are no points of reference in the desert. Willy joins Jacob, Monyroor and Oscar and they walk for several more weeks. The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) sometimes stops by, recruiting young soldiers, but the boys resist. After more than three months of walking, the boys arrive at the River Gilo, which they must cross to get to Ethiopia. Willy is unable to swim, and Oscar can't swim because of his injured arm.

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES:

- What do you think is about to happen as Book II begins? Why do you think that?
- Did the Book I give you any hints as to the significance of the title, A
 Hare in the Elephant's Trunk? Explain.

POST-READING:

❖ If you were Jacob, would you have run away with Monyroor or would you have stayed to look for your mother, grandmother and sisters? Why?

- ❖ If you were suddenly forced to leave home, but you had just enough time to stuff ten items into your backpack, what ten things would you choose, and why?
- * Read the song that Matthew and the children sing on page 54. Songs are an important part of Dinka culture. Explain this song in terms of this story. Do you know of any similar English songs?
- ❖ A metaphor is a literary device used wherein one object symbolizes another, even though the two objects don't really appear to have much in common. For example, "She was a volcano waiting to blow," is a metaphor. A person isn't really a volcano, but through use of this metaphor, the writer enables the reader to immediately understand the woman's state of mind. Find as many examples of metaphors as you can in Book II.

FURTHER THINKING...

- Describe a time when you were extremely frustrated. Was the situation similar to what the boys would have experienced when they came upon Willy again and realized they had walked in a giant circle? Think of another place in the world where this type of confusion could arise. The boys used the rising sun as a compass; can you think of something else you might use to indicate the direction in which you're walking?
- The boys become family in the course of this story. What characteristics do they show toward each other that would make them seem more like family than just friends (example: loyalty)?
- As a way of maintaining his connection with Mama, Jacob begins to talk to her inside his mind (pages 40 and 74). Imagine yourself in his situation and write a short letter to a significant person in your life.

BOOK III (pp. 89-148)

Jacob figures out that he and Oscar can lock arms and form a spider to travel across the River Gilo together. Willy climbs onto Monyroor's back and they arrive safely in Ethiopia. They are very disappointed as it looks just as desolate as the Sudanese side they left behind.

They arrive at Pinyudo Refugee Camp, which is being hastily assembled by the United Nations to accommodate the walking boys. They work to build shelters, and aid trucks arrive bearing food and clothing. The boys are able to begin attending a tree school with Teacher Matthew, a Dinka man, who presents Jacob with his book of Dinka folktales, inviting him to learn to read the stories.

Jacob becomes a keen student, although he does not want the other boys to know. He also becomes suspicious of Adam and the SPLA soldiers who are supposed to be helping the Sudanese boys. His suspicions are confirmed when he witnesses Teacher Matthew being attacked by Adam during the robbery of a food truck headed for Pinyudo. Jacob begins to believe Matthew, who tells him education is the key to escape violence.

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES:

- What do you predict will happen in Book III? Will the boys make it safely to Ethiopia? What type of life will await them there?
- Do you think all the main characters will be strong enough to survive their ordeal? Why or why not? Do you identify with one of the characters more than the others?
- Have you ever been faced with a situation in which you were as scared as Willy when he realizes he needs to cross the big River Gilo and he is unable to swim? How did you solve your problem? Who helped you?

POST- READING:

* Explain Jacob's conversation with Mama on page 94. To what is he referring when he mentions the stars?

- ❖ There are two African folktales in Book III: the story of the Elephant and the Hare (p. 126), as told by the elder to the boys at school, and Oscar's joke about the King of the Beasts (p. 128). Choose one of them and discuss why it is significant in this book. Do these stories help you understand the title of the book? Explain.
- ❖ What do you think of the soldier, Adam? What is his significance to the story? Write a paragraph describing him. Is he someone you would like to meet? Why or why not?
- ❖ The encounter between Teacher Matthew and Adam takes place in the center of the book — page 136–137. It is an important turning point for Jacob in the story — can you explain why?

FURTHER THINKING...

- ➤ In a conversation with Mama on page 146, Jacob says: "...you would be surprised at how good I am getting at looking after myself. But I am forgetting the smell of groundnut stew cooking, the rustling of Grandmother's wrinkled hands weaving grass, the music of your grinding song..."
 - a) Would your parents/guardians be surprised if you were able to look after yourself as these boys do in such extreme circumstances?
 - b) Think of several things about your home that you would miss if you were plunged into such a circumstance.
- Folktales are often made up to explain natural phenomena. An example is the story Jacob makes up about the elephant trying to steal the honey and being chased by the bees. Forever after, the big elephant is scared of the tiny bees; in reality, elephants are very scared of bees and will run away from their buzzing. Write and illustrate your own folktale to explain something interesting you know about in the natural world.
- Several of the main characters in the novel are described through the use of an animal metaphor. What animal metaphor is used for each of the following: Jacob, Oscar, Willy, Monyroor, Adam? Give examples.

BOOK IV (pp. 149-240)

The boys are chased from Ethiopia due to civil unrest in that country. Oscar is lost in the River Gilo crossing, and Jacob, out of frustration and grief, finally has a physical encounter with Majok. The boys spend a number of rainy weeks in Pochalla, and then begin walking south toward Kenya, where a refugee camp is being built for them. Monyroor is injured during an aerial bomb attack during which Jacob also loses his precious Mama stone. When they arrive at Lokichokio, near the Sudan/Kenya border, Monyroor disappears during the night. He has made the decision to join Adam and the other SPLA soldiers.

Jacob has another encounter with Majok, only this time Jacob remembers Matthew's advice and recites the alphabet rather than fighting with Majok again. Upon arriving in Kakuma Refugee Camp, the boys are finally reunited with Oscar, who miraculously survived the near-drowning in the Gilo crossing. The Lost Boys, as they have become known, continue going to school, although there is no sign of Teacher Matthew. The new teacher, Chol, recognizes Jacob's academic ability, and after Jacob places first in his exams, Chol offers him a job working as a translator.

Eventually, rumors of the school's closure lead some boys to leave Kakuma for boarding schools in Nairobi. Jacob decides he must take his belongings and return to Sudan in hopes of trading them for money to pay for boarding school.

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES:

- Predict what is about to happen as Book IV starts. How would you feel in this situation?
- Discuss the good and bad things about life in Pinyudo Refugee Camp. Can you imagine going to school under a tree and writing with a stick in the dirt?

POST-READING:

❖ There are two Dinka songs the boys sing in Book IV on pages 168 and 187. Choose one of them and explain its significance to the story.

- On page 168, Jacob discovers he has lost his Mama stone, his talisman. The stone is a symbol of Jacob's connection with his old life. Can you explain the significance of him losing it at this point in the story?
- ❖ Why do you think Monyroor decides to join the SPLA soldiers? Would you do the same thing under the circumstances if you were a teenager?
- ❖ Do you admire Jacob for his refusal to fight with Majok a second time after the disappearance of Monyroor? Would you have done the same thing?
- ❖ On page 177, Jacob says: "Anger is like a hungry elephant; the more it is fed, the more it wants to eat." Explain this quote in terms of the elephant metaphor that occurs throughout the book.
- What factors combine to convince Jacob that education is the path to peace, rather than more fighting?

FURTHER THINKING...

- ➤ Does the song the boys sing at the bottom of page 187 remind you of any songs you know? Talk about a song you know that has an important message for young people.
- ➤ Jacob and Majok gradually come to terms with each other. Although they are not actually friends, they at least are no longer enemies and share a thirst for knowledge. If you were Jacob, would you have helped Majok when he feared he was about to lose his sight? Have you ever had an experience when you felt obliged to help somebody you didn't really like? How did you react?
- ➤ In North America, we take libraries for granted. Imagine that you are Jacob, entering a library for the very first time. Write a couple of paragraphs describing your reaction; remember to use all of your senses.

BOOK V (pp. 240-274)

Jacob trades his school bag and clothing for five cones of tobacco, which are then exchanged for five goats, which Jacob finally sells in a market. He returns to Kakuma, cash in hand, and quickly catches a ride to Nairobi.

Once there, he meets a young boy, Jabari, who helps him find a school. Unfortunately, the Headmaster tells Jacob he must have a note from a parent or guardian in order to be enrolled in the school. Jabari then leads Jacob to Mathare Valley where there are many refugees from all over Africa. While watching a wrestling match there, Jacob spots his boyhood hero, Uncle Daniel. Uncle Daniel has given up being a soldier after losing a leg to a landmine. He signs the note of responsibility for Jacob and Jacob returns to Lasier Hill Academy.

Finally, as he lies in bed in the dorm, on the eve of his first day of school, he is able to hear the stars singing over Africa, just as his beloved mother had promised.

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES:

- What do you think will happen to Jacob in the final chapters of this book as he returns to Sudan alone?
- Do you think Jacob will be able to look after himself, apart from his friends? Why or why not?
- If you were Jacob, would you have been brave enough to set out alone, knowing it would be another long, dangerous journey?

POST-READING:

- How does Jacob demonstrate that he is indeed a clever little hare in these chapters?
- ❖ Have you ever been reunited with someone important in your life, with whom you've lost touch? Compare that experience with Jacob's feelings upon finding Uncle Daniel again.

❖ Were you surprised by the ending of the book? Was there a certain point when you began to assume Jacob would not see Mama again? What about Monyroor?

FURTHER THINKING...

- ➤ Why were the walking boys called "The Lost Boys of Sudan?"
- ➤ Why does getting an education become so important for Jacob? Is education important to you? Would it be more important if it was not easily available to you?
- ➤ Read the interviews with the author and Jacob Deng at the back of the book. Use the internet to find out more information about them.
- A term that might be used to describe this type of book is "faction." What do you think this term means? Have you read other books that would also be considered "faction?"
- Are there things you would have done differently if you had written this book? Consider plot, setting, characters, resolution of conflict, point of view, etc.
- ➤ Without conflict, there is no story. What is the central conflict in this book? Draw a graph of the story arc in this novel, showing the various crises as the high parts in the narrative arc. Can you determine through creating the graph what the crucial turning point is for Jacob; the "point of no return"?

CREATIVE PROJECTS:

- Design a board game based on *A Hare in the Elephant's Trunk*. If you picture a Monopoly-style game, perhaps the four corners could be Duk Padiet, Pinyudo Refugee Camp, Kakuma Refugee Camp and Nairobi. You could have a mixture of good and bad events on the squares (example: crocodile attack, go back two squares) and for markers, you might want to use Jacob and his friends.
- Create a PowerPoint about "The Lost Boys of Sudan." Find images on the Internet and blend them with quotes from the book. Find a suitable song to accompany your PowerPoint.
- Research Wadeng Wings of Hope (<u>www.wadeng.org</u>), the charitable foundation Jacob started to raise money to build a school in Duk Padiet. Design a poster to advertise the foundation.
- Write a letter to the author and Jacob. Explain your reactions to the book and review the book. Search for professional reviews of the book online to use as examples (example: *Kirkus Reviews*, *Booklist*, *School Library Journal*, *CM Reviews*).
- Complete the Character Questionnaire (attached) for one of the characters in the novel. Complete a second questionnaire for a new character, created by you, who might fit into this novel. Explain his/her role.
- Choose your favorite scene, or scenes, in the book. Write a detailed dialogue that may have taken place during that scene. Either make a film of your script or give a dramatic presentation in class. You can choose to write it in the style of language you would use, or in the style of language Jacob and his friends use.
- Select a quote from the book and create a work of art (sculpture, painting, drawing, collage, etc.) to illustrate that quote. Incorporate the words of the quote into your creation.

- Choose a part of the book wherein one character had to make a decision; analyze that decision, using the attached Decision Chart. In an essay, talk about whether you would have made the same decision, and the reasons for your decision.
- When the author originally interviewed Jacob Deng, he told her the following: "We cannot choose where we are born, or the life we are born into, but we can choose what to do with the life we are given." Now that you have read the novel based on Jacob's life, discuss this quote as it relates to his life.
- Use the internet to research another area in the world where many people live in a refugee camp. Write a short story about a child living in that refugee camp.
- Design a fundraising event or campaign to help Wadeng Wings of Hope build a school in Sudan. You may want to include a logo, slogan, poster, invitation, and a list of jobs involved in organizing such an event.
- Discuss and give examples from this book of each of the following literary devices: simile, imagery, metaphor, symbolism, alliteration, theme.
- Create two columns with opposite-word headings (examples: hate/love; peace/violence; power/submission; honesty/deceit). Now, find five elements in the novel that fit the descriptive words. Are there more positive or negative elements, or is there a balance?
- Research the issue of child soldiers. In the novel, Monyroor chose to join the soldiers. Do you agree with his decision? Why or why not?
- Create a political cartoon about The Lost Boys of Sudan and the refugee camp experience.
- Write an acrostic poem based on the novel, using the letters in the title
 A HARE IN THE ELEPHANT'S TRUNK.

CHARACTER QUESTIONNAIRE

A HARE IN THE ELEPHANT'S TRUNK Glossary Word Search

UXVKCNQHQGNJGFK MLPRDN HRPP R S 0 P P OMBKTAB C S RSALACNAM \mathbf{R} D LCGINE GK EGAU I ONGUOOYZBKDB \mathbf{N} RCOTU E R K N O K 0 G D A U RKO K 0 A T \mathbf{H} I $\mathbf{A} \mathbf{A} \mathbf{W}$ I 0 0 В X TAB \mathbf{E} \mathbf{E} W LUAKJ A 0 U Q VAVCNWRWAGU Н W UC AVHBAGAEMXO I М WYHCUJCZJU Z W В I U DNACKRYYT Т K ANYOKANNAMYI

ABAAR	ANYOK	CALABASH	CIENG
DINKA	GAAR	HABOOB	KHAWAJA
KISRA	KUDU	LUAK	MANCALA
MANNA	MUTI	SOUK	TOC
TUKUL	WADENG	WECH	

SOLUTION

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K
                A
                     S
             NAMR
          A C
                GAU
                     Ι
                     \mathbf{N}
                    O K
     + K R C O T U +
    DAU+K
                + K O A
               Η
     A A W T + +
                    В
       EWLUAK+
   В
     E
    C
      N
   Н
       + G A +
ANYOKANNAM+
```

(Over, Down, Direction) ABAAR (2, 11, NE) ANYOK(1,15,E)CALABASH(15,2,S)CIENG(2,8,SE) DINKA(13,4,S)GAAR(10,5,N)HABOOB (12, 11, N) KHAWAJA (11,8,SW) KISRA(15,1,SW) KUDU(9,8,NE) LUAK(7,10,E) MANCALA (11,4,W) MANNA(10,15,W)MUTI(9,12,SE) SOUK(2,2,S) TOC (9,7,W) TUKUL(7,9,NW)WADENG(6,10,NW) WECH (6,9,SW)

GRADE 9 ELA OUTCOMES (Nova Scotia): YEARLY PLANNING CHART

(Outcomes marked with a ② can be met through using this educators' guide)

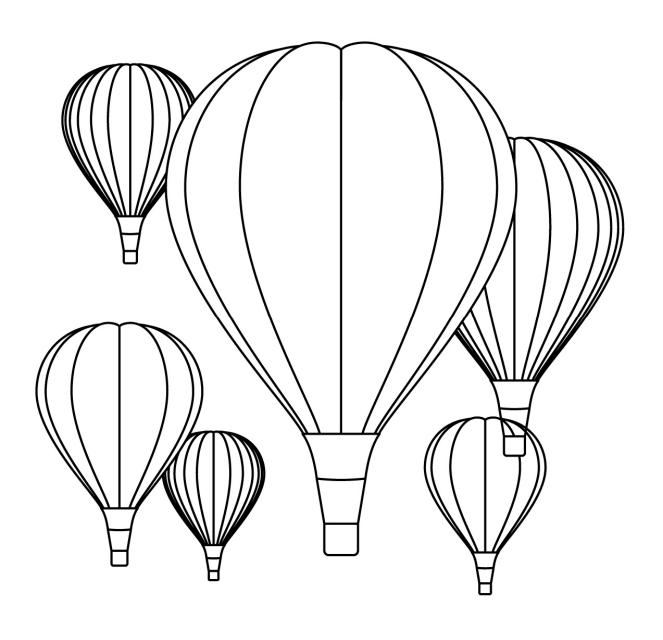
Speaking and Listening									
GCO 1: Uses oral language to learn				GCO 2: Communicates using clear oral communication					
1.1 Reinforces or develops new understanding from what others share	1.2 Asks questions for clarification, for elaboration, to qualify, or to question relevance, accuracy, validity	1.3 Thoughtfully answers questions asked by others in order to clarify or give more information	1.4 Explains and advocates point of view and supports it with evidence from various sources	1.5 Listen critically and determines the effectiveness of the speaker based on accuracy and appropriateness of information	2.1 Contributes to small group and whole group discussions using a variety of strategies	2.2 Uses appropriate vocabulary, sentence structure, tone, speed for the audience	2.3 Gives instructions		
	GCO 2 continued: Communicates using clear oral communication			GCO 3: Interacts with sensitivity and respect					
2.4 Responds to questions and follows complex directions	2.5 Evaluates effectiveness of own and others talk, recognizing the effects of verbal and nonverbal features	2.6 Under- stands how meaning is affected by verbal and non-verbal cues (repeti- tion, eye contact, volume)	3.1 Demonstrates active listening (eye contact, rephrasing, clarifying, extend, refine, summarize)	3.2 Shows respect for others when giving personal opinions	3.3 Recog- nizes values, attitudes, bias, beliefs and preju- dice in spoken language	3.4 Demonstrates awareness of the power of language to influence and manipulate, to reveal values and attitudes	3.5 Knows that different situations require different conventions and uses language appropriate to the situation		

Reading and Viewing									
GCO 4: Reads widely and with unde				h understandir	understanding			GCO 5: Conducts research	
4.1 Selects texts that meet needs and interests	4.2 Reads a variety of texts (fiction, non fiction, media text) from different provinces and countries	4.3 Explains how authors use text features to create meaning and achieve different purposes	4.4 Uses text features to construct meaning	4.5 Reads complex text with greater fluency, confidence, and comprehen- sion due to use of cuing systems	4.6 Independently uses reading strategies (predicting, connecting, questioning, inferring, visualizing, synthesizing)	4.7 Consistently identifies and discusses the kinds of strategies good readers and viewers use	4.8 Reflects on own reading and viewing strategies and makes necessary adjustments	5.1 Identifies relevance in interesting topics or questions for study	5.2 Recognizes the need for additional information to meet learning needs
GCO 5 continued: Conducts research		GCO 6: R perso	-	GCO 7: Reads critica			illy		
5.3 Independently locates information fro a variety of print and non-print sources with speed, accuracy, and confidence	strategies	6.1 Goes beyond initial response to give more thoughtful interpretations by questioning, connecting, evaluating, extending	6.2 Supports personal response to the issues, themes, and situations and gives personal examples or evidence from text with increasing sophistication	7.1 Evaluates print and media texts for bias	7.2 Evaluates the relevance and reliability of content	7.3 Recognizes increasingly complex tools authors use (organization of info, word choice, use of time, imagery, etc.)	7.4 Evaluates the impact that text form, content, and structure have on meaning	7.5 Understands that values and personal experience influences understanding and critical response	7.6 Evaluates the portrayal of culture and reality as portrayed in media text

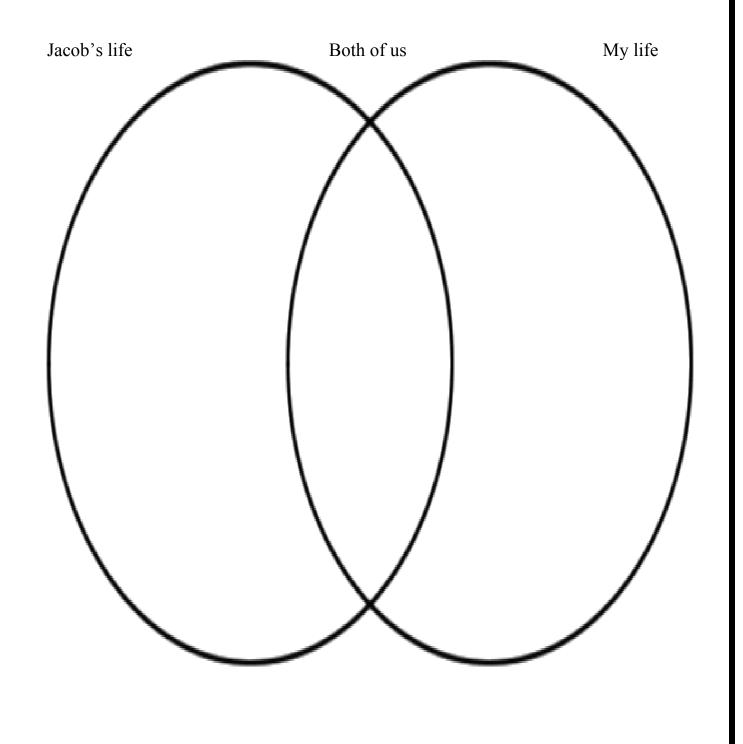
Writing and Representing								
GCO 8: Uses many kinds of writing to think and learn					GCO 9: Creates a variety of texts			
8.1 Uses a range of strategies as a language learner	8.2 Writes for a variety of reasons	8.3 Reflects on writing strategies that help him/her learn or have personal growth as a language learner	8.4 Uses a variety of forms of note making for different purposes and situations	8.5 Uses interesting effects in writing (feelings and thoughts, detail, correct inconsistency, avoid extraneous detail, language choice, vocabulary and phrasing	9.1 Continues to use a variety of forms as well as other art forms	9.2 Considers and crafts writing (content, word choice, style, tone, form, structure, organization) to suit purpose and audience		
GCO 9 continued: Creates a	GCO 9 continued: Creates a variety of texts		10: Produces clear	ng and other representations				
9.3 Experiments with representing ideas in many ways (dialogue, ads, posters)	9.4 Analyzes and assesses feedback about writing and apply it to future drafts	10.1 Consistently uses conventions of written language in final products	10.2 Chooses and applies the appropriate prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and presentation strategies	10.3 Acquires some exposure to various technologies (video, email, word processing, audio tape)	10.4 Shows commitment to crafting writing and other representations	10.5 Collects information from several sources (interview, film, CD, text) and combines in communication		
			☺	☺	©	©		

CHARACTER BALLOONS

(Draw more, if required)



Jacob's life in Duk Padiet, compared to my life in North America:



Choose a scene from the book where one of the characters has to make a decision. Use the chart to fill in the options and factors involved in the decision-making process. Name Date_ Question: Pros Option 1 Cons Option 2 Pros Cons Option Chosen: Possible Outcomes: © Worksheet Library 2 Option Decision Making Chart