

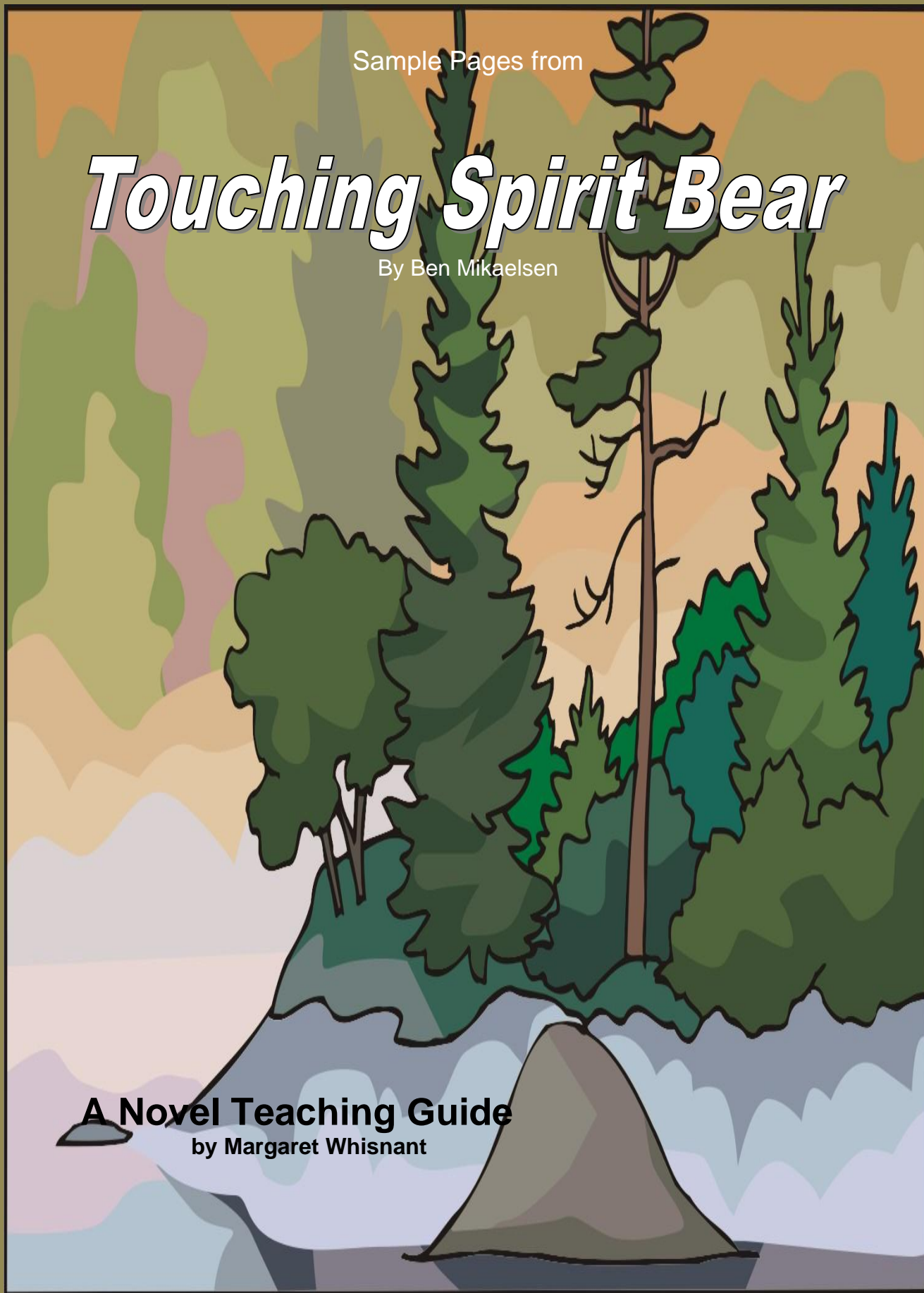
Sample Pages from

Touching Spirit Bear

By Ben Mikaelson

A Novel Teaching Guide

by Margaret Whisnant



Cole Matthews,
fifteen years old

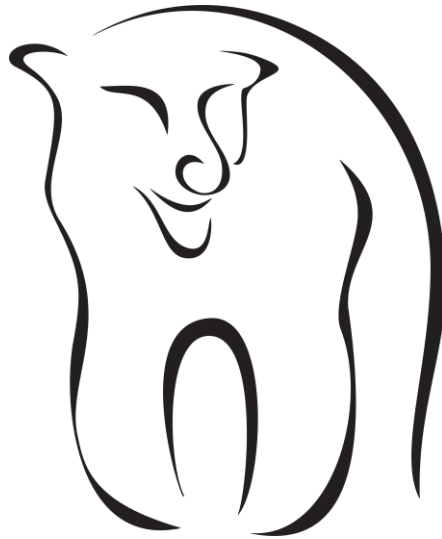
chooses banishment to an island off the coast of southeast Alaska
as an alternative to jail.

Cole is no fool.
He will play the game, escape from the island,
and never be seen again,

not by Garvey, his youth probation officer,
not by Edwin, the Tlingit elder who built the island shelter for him,
not by his alcoholic, abusive father,
not by his drinking wimp of a mother,

not by Peter Driscall,
the boy he beat to a pulp for ratting on him.

But something gets in Cole's way.



A large white bear,

a Spirit Bear,
by its fearless presence, brings Cole's anger to a boil
and his life to a standstill.

Reaching out to the thing that is killing him,
Touching Spirit Bear,
Cole begins to live.

Touching Spirit Bear by Ben Mikaelson
A Novel Teaching Pack by Margaret Whisnant

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Goals

To . . .

- Offer a teaching guide with a full spectrum of learning experiences that flow from **basic knowledge** to **higher-level thinking skills**.
- Provide **classroom-ready** materials that **motivate** and **instruct**.
- Create **novel-specific activities** that require careful reading, help develop comprehension skills, and challenge the thinking process.
- Accommodate a wide variety of student **ability** and **interest**.
- **Support teachers** by providing a practical teaching resource that saves preparation time.
- Include **cross-curricula activities** as an integral part of the novel study.
- Provide fully developed materials easily aligned to US **Common Core** and **State Standards** for language arts.

The Seven Components. . .

1. Summaries

Written in present tense, the detailed chapter-by-chapter summaries cover important points of the plot, character motivation and development, and story clues. For quick reference, the summaries are presented in bulleted format. These synopses are a valuable resource for

*quickly becoming familiar with a title when time is limited,
managing a reading program that involves multiple titles/reading groups,
and refreshing memory when using a novel from year to year.*

2. Before You Read

In this component, the focus is on sparking student interest. Each teaching pack includes open-ended questions that can be used as **independent activities**, **whole-group/small-group discussions**, or **research topics** and at least one **bulletin board idea**.

In some cases, activities in the **Think, Write, Create** component also involve the creation of a bulletin board or classroom display.

3. Vocabulary

One of the many advantages of literature-based reading instruction is the opportunity to observe vocabulary in action! It is this circumstance that drives the vocabulary portion of the novel teaching packs. The activities in this section are designed to be used **before** reading, so that the words will be familiar when encountered in the story.

Word Choices. . .

The words lifted from the novel for focused study are chosen based on one or more of the following criteria:

<i>their level of difficulty</i>	<i>their frequency of use in children's literature</i>
<i>their importance in comprehending the story</i>	<i>their value as useful composition vocabulary</i>
<i>the probability that they will be encountered across the curriculum</i>	<i>unique meanings, spellings, pronunciation, etc.</i>

Word Lists and Definitions. . .

For teacher convenience and reference, both a compiled alphabetized word list and story-order word lists with definitions are included. Page numbers for the selected vocabulary are given so that each word can be spotted easily and studied in context. For clarity, the definitions are paraphrased to match the word's tense, number, part of speech, etc. rather than cross referenced as in a standard dictionary. The major resource of this information is www.dictionary.com.

Dictionary Activities. . .

Long word lists are divided into chapter sets of workable numbers and presented as **Dictionary Digs**—sometimes given a slightly different name to correspond with the theme of the novel. In this introductory

stage, students use a dictionary to answer a series of multiple choice questions about word meanings, usage, unique characteristics, etc.

Using the Words. . .

Other activities, which pull terms from the lists in random order, lead students through a variety of word studies which include

sentence usage

word forms

synonyms and antonyms

anagrams

categories

word-groups/connections

word types (acronyms, onomatopoeia, etc.)

scrambled sentences

analogies

whole-class/group games

etymologies

Note: Some of these varieties, but not all, are found in each Teaching Pack.

4. Assessment

The **two sections** in this portion of the teaching pack offer a wealth of materials designed to build a strong **foundation** for student progression to higher level thinking skills. The operative phrase is **basic comprehension**.

Short Answer Questions

Short answer questions for each chapter (or groups of chapters) are the first assessment tools. The items encourage and check for careful, *factual* reading. The questions are in *sequence* with the pages they cover, but they are **not** specifically designed to call attention to plot construction or other story elements.

The short answer questions can be used as

student reading guides

pop quizzes

homework

discussion group guides

conferencing with individual students

Objective Tests

The objective tests have multiple functions. In addition to their obvious application, they also serve as tools that can *improve **comprehension skills** by providing practice in understanding plot structure and recognizing important story elements.*

Rationale:

Focus on the Plot. . .

Whether they are aware of their ability or not, all good readers sense the **rhythm** of the **connected** events that compose the plot of a novel, and consequently **comprehend** the story. They are in tune with cause and effect, behavior and consequence, sequence—the heartbeat of the narrative.

This “plot rhythm” forms the framework for the objective tests. The chain of events that tell the story have been pulled from the novel and reformatted into a series of sequenced questions, none of which require **interpretation**. They are intended to **draw student attention to the fact that something happened**, not to what the incident means. That comes later.

In addition to their testing function, teachers may use the pages to strengthen their students’ ability to

Summarize: With only the questions as a guide, have students write a summary of the chapter.

Report the News: Ask your students to write a newspaper article based on the events identified in a set of questions and the *who, what, when, where, why* elements. Some information needed to complete this assignment may be located in previous chapters.

Twist the Plot: Choose one or two questions from each chapter and change its answer—true to false, no to yes, etc.—to demonstrate how changing a single (or several) events would (or would not) change the story. This process can be used to help students become proficient in distinguishing major plot movers from minor story details.

The Characters. . .

Questions that identify a character’s personality and/or motivation are purposely and carefully included with the plot movers. Again, the questions do not require **interpretation**. They simply establish that someone did or said something—knowledge that is invaluable when character analysis is required.

Implied Meaning and Story Clues. . .

The objective tests include items that establish the existence of story components carrying **implied meaning**. **Story clues** that foreshadow future events also appear as questions. At this point in the novel study, as before, **interpretation** is not the goal. **Awareness of the facts** is the target.

Developing/Improving Listening Skills. . .

Listening skills are rightfully included on every list of competency goals. Rather than always requiring students to answer test questions on a printed page, why not surprise them occasionally by doing the test orally and meeting competency goals at the same time?

Discussion Guide Capability. . .

The objective tests are helpful discussion guides. Use individual items on these pages to draw student attention to sequence, cause and effect, story clues (foreshadowing), character traits, recognizing and interpreting implied meanings, etc. These “thinking out loud” sessions are an **important building block** for the next learning phase.

5. Think, Write, Create

In this section, students pack up what they already know about the novel and go exploring into its every nook and cranny. Some activities require the simplest interpretation or application, while others will challenge the most proficient thinkers.

Rationale:

Guidelines. . .

Most of the items in this section are based on the skills presented in the ***Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Bloom’s Taxonomy)***. There are two reasons for this choice. First, it mirrors the Novel Teaching Pack’s primary purpose of building a variety of sophisticated thinking skills on a foundation of basic knowledge. Second, in following the taxonomy guidelines, activities that correlate with the **Common Core** and **State Standards** for language arts emerge automatically.

Organization. . .

Chapter-specific activities are grouped and presented according to their corresponding sets of **Short Answer Questions** and **Objective Test** page(s). Having led students through the basics for each chapter (or selected section), teachers may shop in this section for in-depth activities that optimize student understanding and interest and address specific **educational standards**. Armed with a firm **factual grasp** of each successive chapter, students are more likely to anticipate, embrace, and enjoy the next section. By repeating the process, students are also mastering concepts and intricacies connected to the **whole** novel.

The **Whole Book Activities**, as their name indicates, require a grasp of the theme(s), characters, implications, etc. as they apply to the full novel. These pages are a teacher’s smorgasbord of culminating possibilities. In some cases, the choices are outgrowths of concepts that students have dealt with in a previous activity. In others, students are encouraged to look at the novel from a new angle.

Levels of Difficulty. . .

A broad spectrum of **difficulty levels** to accommodate the needs of individual students, including the gifted, is an integral part of **Think, Write, Create**. However, **all** items from this section are intended to **challenge** and **sharpen** thinking abilities.

Activities. . .

Every novel teaching pack includes activities that require students to choose and use precise, appropriate, and meaningful **vocabulary**. These exercises involve choosing a group of words to describe a character’s personality or behavior. The following example is from ***Charlotte’s Web***.

Eight-year-old Fern cried and begged her father not to destroy the runt pig. She sealed the little animal’s fate by asking her father if he would have killed her if she had been born very small.

- Which **two** of the following words do you think **best** describe the way Fern’s father behaved during this episode? Explain your choice. Include the definitions of the words you selected in your answer.

<i>practical</i>	<i>sensitive</i>	<i>loving</i>	<i>cruel</i>	<i>considerate</i>
<i>realistic</i>	<i>flexible</i>	<i>callous</i>	<i>compassionate</i>	<i>logical</i>

- Choose **two** words from the list below that you believe **best** describe Fern’s behavior. Explain why they are the appropriate words. Use the definitions of your choices as part of your explanation.

<i>impulsive</i>	<i>compassionate</i>	<i>assertive</i>	<i>tender-hearted</i>	<i>hysterical</i>
<i>undisciplined</i>	<i>naive</i>	<i>juvenile</i>	<i>humane</i>	<i>empathetic</i>

In each case students work with a given collection of terms, all of which can be correctly applied to the character(s) in question. However, the individual words have various strengths of meaning. It is the student’s

task to analyze both the character's behavior and the words, make choices, and then cite events from the story to support his/her selection.

Teachers may opt to narrow the choices to fewer words, choose words for individual students, divide the class into groups and offer a specific set of words to each group, or use the assignment as it is written.

Other items in this section challenge students to . . .

*write for self-expression, for communication, and
for entertainment
form opinions and theories
cite "evidence" from the story to support their
explanations and opinions
connect personal experience to story situations
become familiar with and identify literary elements
analyze story characters and events
make predictions based on given facts*

*think about social issues
create drawings, diagrams, photos, maps,
models, recordings, films, etc.
imagine
categorize
engage in research and data gathering
recognize and perceive story theme(s)
understand point of view*

Cross Curricula. . .

Think, Write, Create takes full advantage of opportunities to connect both major themes and the smallest story detail to other realms of the curriculum. In **Charlotte's Web**, for example, students may apply their calculation skills to a page of "Spider Math." In the **Holes** teaching pack students are challenged to create a game that utilizes a saved group of Camp Green Lake's holes.

Options, options, and more options. . .

Think, Write, Create is purposely bulging at the seams to give teachers **pick-and-choose options** for

<i>individualizing assignments</i>	<i>homework</i>
<i>group work</i>	<i>short-term and long-term projects</i>
<i>whole class activities</i>	<i>differentiating assignments</i>
<i>capitalizing on student interest</i>	<i>implementing Common Core Standards</i>

6. Graphic Organizers

Ideas for the graphic organizers are pulled from the chapter or whole book activities and expanded into a writing assignment. Priority is given to those topics that allow a student to relate personal experiences, make choices, empathize with a story character, and/or imagine.

Structure. . .

The organizers do not repeat a set pattern of circles, squares, lines, etc., prescribed for a particular type of writing. Each one is tailored to a **specific idea** pulled from the novel. **Structured directions** for organizing the topic support the student so that **writing** is the major focus.

Non-writing Organizers. . .

Sometimes, students are enticed to stretch their imaginations by filling out "forms" or writing "diary entries." One graphic organizer from **Hatchet**, for example, allows students to assume the persona of the pilot who rescued Brian by writing three entries into his log—the day before the rescue, the day of the rescue, and the day after the rescue. In the **Holes** Novel Teaching Pack, students become detectives and conduct a "background check" on Mr. Sir, recording their findings on the provided "official form." In these cases, composition skills take a back seat to **imagination**, **empathy**, and **pure enjoyment**.

7. Answer Keys

Keys for **all items that require a specific answer** are included in this section. When appropriate, **suggested answers** for open-ended activities are also added.

A final note from the author. . .

It is my personal wish that when the last page has been read, the last activity completed, and the last idea discussed, at least one of your students will ask, "What are we going to read next?"

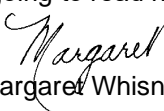

Margaret Whisnant

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Notes about the Real Spirit Bear

Photo from [Kitasso Spirit Bear Conservatory](http://www.kitassospiritbearconservatory.com)
www.spiritbear.com

The spirit bear is neither a spirit nor a figment of author Ben Mikaelson's imagination. It is a real animal. As a matter of fact, National Geographic estimates that there are between 400-1000+ of them in existence.

The spirit bear, or more properly, the Kermode bear, is a subspecies of the American Black Bear that populates the central and northern coast of British Columbia, Canada. The animal's unusual coloration is a result of a recessive gene in the population. On certain islands of the Great Bear Rainforest, as many as one in ten cubs is born with white or cream-colored coats. In other locations, the ratio is one in every 40 to 100. Not an albino, the spirit bear typically has a brown nose and brown eyes. It is neither a polar bear nor one of the blonde brown bears of Alaska's ABC Islands. It is a one-of-a-kind animal with its own trinomial name—*Ursus americanus kermodei*.

Because of its ghostly appearance, the spirit bear has long been protected and revered by the Canadian First Nations and American Indians who share its territory. Hunting the bear is strictly forbidden in British Columbia, and great care was taken years ago to hide its existence from fur traders. These facts have contributed to its successful and continued survival. In addition to the coastal regions, spirit bear sightings have been documented in the northeast region of British Columbia and as far east as the US state of Minnesota.

The spirit bear, like most black bears, begins life as a half pound cub and grows into a 150-300 pound adult that measures four to six feet from nose tip to tail tip. In predictable bear fashion, it is an omnivore, eating a variety of plants, berries, nuts, fruits, roots, insects, deer, carrion (dead animals), and spawning salmon. Researchers have recently discovered that the spirit bear's white coat gives it an advantage when it goes fishing because it is less visible to its prey.

Except for females with cubs, spirit bears are solitary creatures. They can live for more than 25 years in the wild.

According to Native American legend, the spirit bear's coloration is a reminder of times past. The master of the universe created one white bear for every ten black bears as a reminder of hardships during the ice age when snow, glaciers, and bitter cold engulfed the world. The spirit bear also symbolizes wisdom, peace, and harmony.

Chapter Summaries

Part One Touching Spirit Bear

Chapter 1

- It is September when handcuffed Cole Matthews sits in the skiff on his way to the island where he has agreed to live alone for a year to avoid going to jail in Minneapolis.
- Two men are in the skiff with Cole. Garvey, a Tlingit Indian parole officer from Minneapolis, has escorted the violent juvenile offender to the Alaskan Tlingit village of Drake. Edwin, the other man, is a Tlingit elder who helped arrange Cole's banishment. He has built the shelter and prepared the island where Cole will stay.
- Cole doesn't trust either man. He can't tell what Edwin is thinking and he knows Garvey is not afraid of him.
- Upon their first meeting in Drake, Edwin had forced Cole to remove his clothing and wear it inside out to show humility and shame for his banishment. Cole had smirked as he obeyed.
- Cole is a baby-faced fifteen-year-old, who has been in trouble with the law half his life. He is not a Tlingit Indian. He is not sorry for what he has done. Banishment is just another game, a way to avoid jail.
- Cole hates Edwin and his dull stare. He spits so the wind carries the saliva back to land on Edwin. The elder casually wipes his shirt and again fixes his eyes on Cole.
- The Elder has a fearless air about him, but Cole knows he has to be afraid of something. Everybody is afraid of something.
- Cole thinks of the people at home, their fake concern for him, and the times he has been "referred," a term he now understands to mean "getting rid of" him. He has dealt with dozens of police stations and counselors, a psychologist, several detention centers, and two residential treatment centers. Each time he has been warned that this is his last chance. His send-off to the island has been no different.
- Cole has no intention of honoring his contract with Circle Justice. He is not going to spend a year of his life trapped on a remote Alaskan island.
- Cole would have gotten away with breaking into the hardware store and trashing the place had he not bragged about it at school. Someone had ratted on him, and he had been arrested.
- Cole had caught up with Peter Driscall, the ninth grader who turned him in. He had beaten the boy viciously one afternoon in the school parking lot.
- The beating had landed Cole in a detention center. If Peter Driscall had fought back instead of just taking it, Cole figures he would not have been in this situation.
- Before their divorce, Cole's parents, with money, connections, and a reputation to protect, have always come to his rescue. But this time, because of his past record and the violence of his attack on Peter Driscall, Cole's parents have not been able to get him freed. He is being held while prosecutors try to transfer his case to adult court. He will be sent to prison if convicted as an adult.
- Cole can't believe his parents have let this happen to him. He hates them, his scared Barbie doll mother and his bullheaded drinker of a father.
- He ignores his parents when they visit him. Finally they stop coming. Even his lawyer quits coming by except for legal requirements.
- Only Garvey, the youth probation officer, insists on visiting almost daily, but Cole resents the intrusion. Garvey has an angle that Cole cannot figure out, and he does not need a friend or a baby-sitter.
- During one visit Garvey asks Cole if he would consider applying for Circle Justice, a type of healing justice which has been practiced by native cultures for thousands of years.
- Cole is not an Indian, but Garvey explains that being a Native American is not required to love, forgive, and heal. The purpose of Circle Justice is to heal, not punish.
- Cole ducks when Garvey smiles and claps him on the back. He hates being touched. Except to hit him, nobody ever touches Cole.

Vocabulary Lists with Definitions

In Book Order

Set One: Chapter 1-Chapter 4 (Twenty-seven Words)

- defiantly** In a manner indicating bold resistance, rebellion, or challenge, as toward authority or an opposing force; insolently; obstinately. (p. 3)
- omen** An event, or a perceived event, that is believed to be a sign of the coming of a good or evil event or circumstance; harbinger; indication. (p. 3)
- banishment** The state of being expelled to a country or place by authoritative decree; the act of being condemned to exile. (p. 3)
- steely** Resembling steel, as in color, strength, or hardness. (p. 4)
- humility** The state or condition of being humble; a lack of false pride; having a modest opinion or estimate of one's own importance, rank, etc.; modesty; meekness. (p. 4)
- smirked** Smiled in an offensive, self-satisfied manner; sneered. (p. 4, 18)
- feigned** Pretended; gave the false appearance of; imitated so as to deceive; made-up or fictitious; faked. (p. 5, 15)
- wincing** Drew back or tensed the body as from pain or from a blow; flinched; grimaced. (p. 14)
- shrouded** Cut off from sight; shielded, protected, or concealed. (p. 16)
- moseyed** Moved in a slow, relaxed or leisurely manner; sauntered; ambled; dilly-dallied. (p. 16)
- brandished** Displayed boldly as in an attempt to impress; waved menacingly, such as a weapon; flaunted; gestured; flashed. (p. 20)
- smoldering** Burning with little smoke and no flame; showing signs of repressed anger or hatred; seething; churning. (p. 24)
- venomous** Poisonous; hateful; spiteful; malicious; hostile; able to inflict a poisonous bite, sting, or wound. (p. 24)
- inferno** A very intense or uncontrolled fire; a place of pain and turmoil. (p. 25)
- sullenly** In a manner that shows irritation or ill humor by a gloomy silence or reserve; cheerlessly; moodily; bad-temperedly; crossly; stubbornly. (p. 26, 30)
- ricocheted** Rebounded or deflected at least once from a surface; (from Old French *give-and-take*) boomeranged; bounced back; kicked back. (p. 30)
- billowing** Swelling, **surging**, or undulating in a mass, as of smoke or sound; swelling out or bulging, as a sail; rippling; ballooning. (p. 30)
- devoured** Destroyed, consumed, or wasted; ate greedily; took in eagerly; preyed upon voraciously; absorbed; ingested; gobbled; fed upon; feasted upon. (p. 30)
- searing** Charring, scorching, or burning the surface of; causing to dry up and wither; browning; singeing. (p. 30)
- surged** Moved forward in a strong, wavelike rush; rose as if by a heaving or swelling force; **billowed**. (p. 30)
- engulfed** Swallowed up or overwhelmed as if by overflowing and enclosing; buried; drowned; consumed; immersed. (p. 30)
- ultimate** The last in a series; maximum; highest; final; greatest; the point beyond which further progress is impossible. (p. 32)
- subside** To become quiet, less active, or less violent; to sink to a low or lower level; die down; abate; diminish; ease off. (p. 31)
- manic** In a state of madness; in a state of excessive excitement or enthusiasm; exhibiting violent, abnormal behavior. (p. 31)
- frigid** Very cold; frosty; without warmth or feeling, as a reaction to a suggestion or remark; stiff and formal, as a greeting. (p. 32)
- clammy** Disagreeably moist, cold, and sticky to the touch; damp and unpleasant. (p. 37)
- obligations** Social, legal, or moral requirements that compel one to follow or to avoid a particular course of action; duties; responsibilities; requirements. (p. 38)

Dictionary Digs

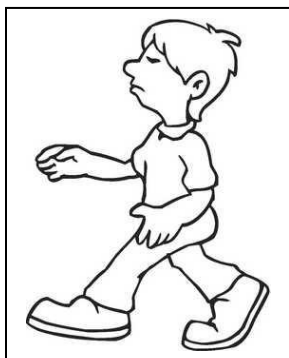
Set One

Chapter 1—Chapter 4

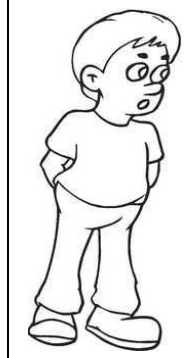
Use your favorite dictionary to find correct answers to the following questions about some important words from Chapters 1 through 4. Write the **letter** of your answer choice in the blank before each number.

- _____ 1. If a person **winned**, the *most likely* reason is that he/she (A) was trying to convince someone of something that was not true, (B) felt pain, (C) was confused or puzzled.
- _____ 2. A **venomous** remark is (A) a joke shared between friends, (B) twisted, (C) spiteful.
- _____ 3. The situation *least likely* to be described as **frigid** is (A) a friendly handshake, (B) a snowy day, (C) an indifferent stare from a new person you have just met.
- _____ 4. An *antonym* of **sullenly** is (A) broodingly, (B) cynically, (C) vivaciously.
- _____ 5. Which word can be substituted for **billowing** in the following sentence without changing its meaning?
*White clouds were **billowing** into the sky like smoke from a huge chimney.*
(A) swelling, (B) shriveling, (C) disappearing
- _____ 6. The object *most likely* to have **ricocheted** off a wall is a (A) bat in flight, (B) dandelion seed floating in the wind, (C) bullet fired carelessly from a gun.
- _____ 7. Which of the following cartoons *best* represents the correct meaning of the word **manic**?

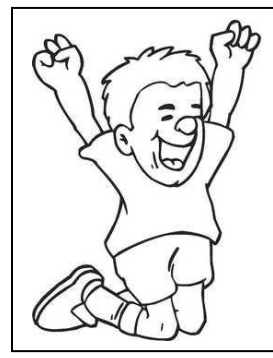
(A)



(B)



(C)



- _____ 8. **Banishment** is a type of punishment that involves (A) being forced to live outside one's country or home, (B) limitations on travel and movement within one's country, (C) temporary confinement in a facility other than a prison or jail.
- _____ 9. The word that is **not** a *synonym* for **engulfed** is (A) immersed, (B) excavated, (C) consumed.
- _____ 10. To say that someone's hands are **clammy** means that they are (A) shaped like clams, (B) cold and damp with sweat, (C) clasped tightly together like two clam shells.
- _____ 11. **Searing** is a good word to use to describe (A) extreme heat that is causing plants to wither, (B) the flight of a bird of prey, such as an eagle, (C) a cooking process that involves both steaming and baking.
- _____ 12. From the three possible answers, choose the word that can be substituted for **moseyed** in the following sentence so that it is changed to an *opposite* meaning.
*The children's baton team **moseyed** along in the parade between the high school marching band and the cheerleading squad.*
(A) ambled, (B) galloped, (C) dilly-dallied

Word Connections

Five words in each of the following sets are connected in some way, but one word just doesn't fit in. Identify the misfit term by circling it. Then write a word or phrase in the blank to explain how the others are related. Words in **bold print** are from the story.



EXAMPLE: **rank**
 rancid
 repugnant
 fragrant
 rotten
 noxious

stinky (smelly, bad smell, etc.)

1. **cowered**
crouched
recoiled
attack
cringe
tremble

2. **frigid**
Arctic
hypothermia
polar
Siberia
tropical

3. **devoured**
gorged
gluttonous
ravenous
savored
frenzy

4. **haggard**
pummeled
manic
charred
clammy
stubborn

5. **monotonous**
fascinating
droned
uninteresting
humdrum
repetitious

6. moon
orbs
eyes
bubbles
horizon
baseball

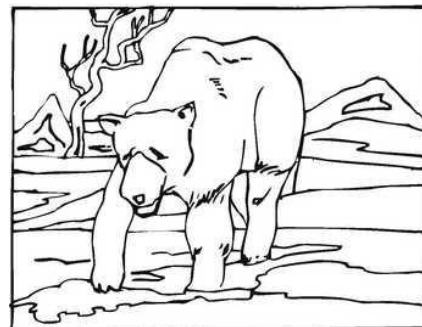
7. **inferno**
smoldering
blaze
furnace
bonfire
ignite

8. innocuous
treacherous
hazardous
vulnerable
looming
lurking

Figures of Speech

(Part One: Chapter 1—Chapter 8)

Following are some passages from **Touching Spirit Bear**, each one featuring a figure of speech. Use the definitions and samples below as a reference to answer the questions about the excerpts. Write the **letters** of the correct answers in the blanks before the items.



Simile: A simile compares two things using the words *like* or *as*.

Before he has his morning coffee, Dad is as grouchy as a sleepy bear.

Metaphor: A metaphor says that a person or thing is something other than what it really is. Metaphors make comparisons or suggest similarities between two unlike things without using the words *like* or *as*.

Before his first cup of morning coffee, Dad is a bear.

Personification: Personification is a figure of speech in which nonhuman objects, organisms, or events are given human characteristics.

A blizzard howled through the trees for hours.

Hyperbole: A hyperbole uses exaggeration or overstatement for emphasis.

There must be a million cars parked at the mall.

- _____ 1. *He (Garvey) was built like a bulldog with lazy eyes.* (p. 3)
The figure of speech illustrated in this sentence is (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) personification, (D) a hyperbole.
- _____ 2. *He (Edwin) stared forward with a steely patience, like a wolf waiting.* (p. 4)
The above simile compares (A) Edwin's stare to a wolf stalking prey, (B) Edwin's posture to a wolf, (C) Edwin's patience to a stalking wolf, (D) a wolf to a stare.
- _____ 3. *Cole nodded obediently, like a little puppy that would follow every rule and jump through the hoop.* (p. 16)
Which of the following changes the simile in the above sentence to a metaphor?
(A) Cole nodded obediently, like a willing little puppy.
(B) Cole was an obedient little puppy that would follow every rule and jump through the hoop.
(C) Like a little puppy, Cole nodded obediently and promised to jump through every hoop.
(D) Cole nodded obediently like a little puppy jumping through the hoop.
- _____ 4. *"This island is covered with Devil's Club. Don't grab it or hundreds of tiny thistles will infect your hands and make them swell up like sausages."* (p. 17)
Which phrase from this passage is the figure of speech? (A) covered with Devil's Club, (B) hundreds of tiny thistles, (C) infect your hands, (D) like sausages.
- _____ 5. *One afternoon, after he had refused to do the schoolwork they brought to him, his television privileges had been revoked. Cole purposely isolated himself in his room, sitting sullenly. His anger smoldered like a lit fuse.* (p. 22)
The best interpretation of the bold print sentence above is Cole was (A) shouting and cursing, (B) really angry, but holding it in, (C) doing his homework, (D) waiting for the guards to leave the room before he exploded in anger.
- _____ 6. *The stuffy room felt like a furnace.* (p. 28)
Which of the following is a hyperbole based on the meaning of the above simile?
(A) The stuffy room was extremely hot. (B) The stuffy room was on fire. (C) The stuffy room was a million degrees. (D) The stuffy room was like an oven.

Short Answer Questions

Chapter 1

1. Why was Cole Matthews handcuffed and riding in a skiff?
2. What did Edwin, the Tlingit elder, order Cole to do when the two met at the dock in Drake?
3. What was Cole's attitude about his banishment to the island?
4. How old was Cole?
5. What had been Cole's relationship with Peter Driscoll before he gave the ninth grader a vicious beating for ratting on him?
6. In the past, how had Cole been able to go free and get out of the trouble he had been in?
7. What frightening possibility did Cole face after his attack on Peter Driscoll?
8. Where did Cole learn about Circle Justice?
9. How was Circle Justice different from regular justice?
10. Why did Cole go for the idea of Circle Justice?

Chapter 2

1. Why did Cole resent the shelter that Edwin had built and the gear inside it?
2. What warnings did Edwin give Cole about the animals on the island?
3. What was special about the pure white Spirit Bear that lived off the coast of British Columbia?
4. After Edwin and Garvey left the island, what would be Cole's next scheduled contact with people?
5. What were the conditions for Cole's accepting Garvey's gift of the atóow?
6. How did Cole handle the Circle committee that interviewed him as a candidate for Circle Justice?
7. What were Cole's plans once he was on the island?
8. Describe Cole's fit of rage at having his television privileges taken away for not doing his schoolwork.
9. What did Garvey say about Cole when he saw the condition of his cell after the fit of rage?
10. What happened to the shelter?



Part One

Touching Spirit Bear

Chapter 1
Pages 3-13

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank to the left.

- _____ 1. Cole Matthews was riding in a skiff on his way to an island in Southeast Alaska where he would (A) live for two years with Tlingit Indians, (B) live alone for a year, (C) be part of a survival camp led by Tlingit Indians.
- _____ 2. Cole's ride to the island took place in (A) September, (B) October, (C) November.
- _____ 3. Cole was from (A) Minneapolis, (B) St Cloud, (C) Annapolis.
- _____ 4. Cole didn't trust Garvey, the Indian parole officer, because he didn't trust anyone who (A) pretended to be his friend, (B) was connected to the justice system, (C) wasn't afraid of him.
- _____ 5. Which of the following was **not** true of Edwin, the Tlingit elder? He (A) built the shelter and made preparations on the island where Cole was to stay, (B) smirked at Cole, and brought a new fear to the boy, (C) forced Cole to wear his clothes inside out to show humility and shame.
- _____ 6. Cole was (A) 13 years old, (B) 15 years old, (C) 16 years old.
- _____ 7. Everyone thought Cole was going to the island because he was sorry for what he had done and wanted to make things right, but he (A) was only looking for a chance to get away from school and his parents, (B) saw the situation as another referral to get rid of him, (C) had agreed to the banishment to escape going to jail, and he had no intention of honoring the contract.
- _____ 8. When Cole purposely spit into the wind so that the saliva would be carried back to him, Edwin (A) calmly wiped the slime from his shirt and continued to stare at Cole, (B) leapt forward in the boat and struck Cole in the back with his fist, (C) threatened to beat Cole as soon as they made land.
- _____ 9. Cole felt that the people back home were (A) giving him the best chance he had ever had to turn his life around, (B) gutless and didn't really care what happened to him, (C) trying to make his life as miserable as possible.
- _____ 10. By the time he was arrested for robbing and trashing a hardware store, Cole (A) had already been in trouble with the law for half his life, (B) had never been in trouble with the law, (C) was only guilty of hanging out with the wrong crowd.
- _____ 11. Cole had viciously beaten Peter Driscall because the boy (A) threatened to rat on him and several of his friends, (B) constantly taunted him about his appearance, his parents, and his record, (C) ratted on him to the police.



Chapter 2
Pages 14-25



Write either **True** or **False** in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. Approaching the island, Cole was secretly grateful for the one-room shelter that Edwin had built there several weeks earlier.
- _____ 2. Cole didn't like it when Garvey called him Champ.
- _____ 3. Cole intended to do whatever the Circle committee required and then bring the game to a screeching halt when he reached the island.
- _____ 4. Edwin and Garvey removed Cole's handcuffs long enough for him to help unload the boat and store the supplies in the hut.
- _____ 5. When Cole threatened to kill any bear that made its den beside the stream where he would get fresh water, Edwin warned that the animals felt the same way about Cole.
- _____ 6. Edwin spoke of a special black bear that lived off the coast of British Columbia, a pure white Spirit Bear with more pride, dignity, and honor than most people,
- _____ 7. Edwin warned Cole that whatever he did to the animals, he did to himself.
- _____ 8. Edwin suggested that Cole read the book that was with the supplies to learn what was safe to eat.
- _____ 9. Once Edwin and Garvey left the island, it would be several months before they returned to check on Cole.
- _____ 10. Years before, Edwin had been brought to the island when his spirit got lost.
- _____ 11. Edwin cautioned that anger would keep Cole lost, but he could find himself on the island if he searched.
- _____ 12. Garvey's conditions for giving his atóow to Cole was that Cole must care for it and someday pass it on to someone else he trusted.
- _____ 13. Blue-and-red images of a totem pole were woven into the atóow.
- _____ 14. Cole had been so successful working his con job on the Circle committee that none of its members had suspected he was not sincere in his wish to change.
- _____ 15. When the boat carrying Garvey and Edwin disappeared from view, the terror of being left alone brought tears to Cole's eyes.
- _____ 16. During a fit of rage in his detention cell, Cole had turned over his bed and pounded on the walls until his knuckles and the walls were bloody.
- _____ 17. When he came into Cole's cell after his fit of rage, Garvey said he was tired of being around someone who blamed the world for all his problems.
- _____ 18. As he neared the shelter with his rage growing, Cole took the blanket Garvey had given to him and flung it to the ground.
- _____ 19. Inside the cabin, Cole ripped open boxes looking for the book on plants that Edwin had mentioned.
- _____ 20. While trying to light his lantern, Cole accidentally started a fire that destroyed the shelter and everything inside.

Chapter 3
Pages 26-33

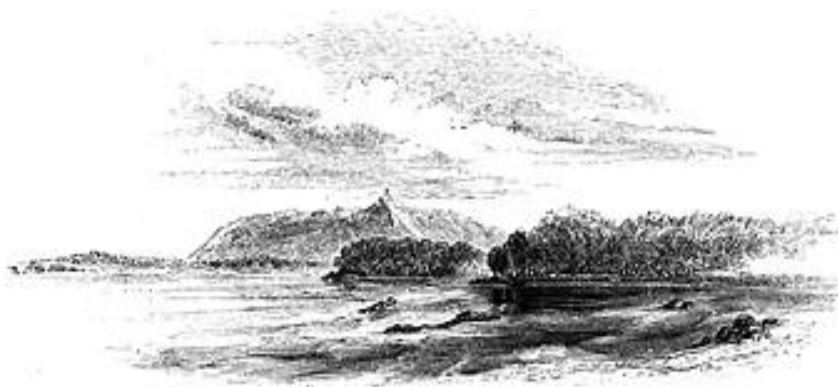
Write either **Yes** or **No** in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. Did Cole feel fear and sorrow as he watched the shelter and its contents burn?
- _____ 2. When Garvey had asked the boy what it was that he didn't like about his life, did Cole name his divorced parents who didn't care about him?
- _____ 3. To Cole, did it seem that his drunken parents believed he was not good enough and wouldn't be happy until he was dead?
- _____ 4. Did both of Cole's parents beat him over and over during their drinking binges?
- _____ 5. Was Garvey forced to admit that he knew nothing of what it was like to be beaten and to live in a bad dream?
- _____ 6. Did Garvey take salt, flour, eggs, baking soda, a bottle of water, sugar, butter, and molasses from the paper bag he had brought with him and lay them out on the small cement table in Cole's room?
- _____ 7. Did Cole use the word *gross* to describe the way the individual grocery items tasted?
- _____ 8. Had Garvey used the ingredients he had laid out on the table to bake the cake that Cole ate and liked?
- _____ 9. After Garvey left, had Cole sat down on his bed and tried to figure out what the man was attempting to prove with his trick about the ingredients and the cake?
- _____ 10. As he laughed uncontrollably at the burning shelter, was Cole mocking the loneliness and the abuse that were the ingredients of his life?
- _____ 11. To Cole, was being left alone and unwanted on the island a hurt worse than his father's fists and belt and his mother's never caring?
- _____ 12. Did Cole pick up the atóow from the ground and toss it into a grove of trees just behind the burning shelter?
- _____ 13. Was Cole a strong swimmer?
- _____ 14. Had Cole's father actually praised his son's swimming abilities on those rare occasions he managed to show up at a competition?
- _____ 15. Did Cole plan to swim from island to island, stopping at each one, until he was picked up by a passing boat and taken to the mainland?
- _____ 16. Once he was back on the mainland, did Cole intend to hunt down every person who had wronged him and get revenge?
- _____ 17. When he entered the water, was Cole fully dressed except for his shoes?
- _____ 18. Was the water colder than Cole had expected?
- _____ 19. Had Garvey said that Peter, who could be a part of Cole's Hearing Circle if he wanted, would not heal until he forgave Cole?
- _____ 20. Had Garvey called Cole *Chump* when he warned that forgiving wasn't forgetting?



Chapter 4—Chapter 5

Pages 34-46



freezing to death
the public library
Cole's lawyer
the burned shelter's ashes
He was alone with himself.

wellness
Peter Driscall
Circle Justice
a feather

regret
Cole's mother
Cole's father
the incoming tide
a hunting knife blade


stand up
the white bear
Peter Driscall's lawyer
the at.óow

From the list above, choose the name, word, phrase, or sentence that matches each of the clues below and write it in the blank to the left. **All answers** will be used at least once. **Some answers** will be **used more than once**.

- _____ 1. Cole felt a stinging on his legs and chest because he had dragged himself forward and had collapsed on top of these.
- _____ 2. After it disappeared, Cole swore he would kill it if he ever saw it again.
- _____ 3. She had told the people at the Hearing Circle that Cole was too dangerous not to be isolated, and Cole hated her.
- _____ 4. This force stopped Cole's planned escape from the island by pushing him back into the bay and then to shore.
- _____ 5. Back on the island, Cole was too exhausted and weak to do this.
- _____ 6. Lying belly down in the darkness, this realization came to Cole.
- _____ 7. Cole knew he had to get out of the bay's icy water and back on land to avoid this.
- _____ 8. Cole found it in some tall grass where it lay untouched by the flames of the burning shelter.
- _____ 9. The Keeper said it was not an easy way out, and it was often much harder than the punishment of jail.
- _____ 10. It stood on the shoreline, as motionless as a statue, facing Cole.
- _____ 11. At the Hearing Circle, this person suggested that Cole be put on parole and released into the custody of one of his parents.
- _____ 12. Cole exploded when this person said he and Cole's mother had devoted their lives to him.

Whole Book Test

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank to the left of each item.

- 
- _____ 1. The Island where Cole Matthews agreed to live for a year was located (A) in the middle of a huge lake in Minnesota, (B) off the coast of Alaska, (C) just inside the Canadian border near the mouth of a large river, (D) off the coast of Nova Scotia.
 - _____ 2. Cole was (A) 14 years old, (B) 15 years old, (C) 16 years old, (D) 17 years old.
 - _____ 3. Cole's banishment to the island was the result of (A) his failed attempt to rob a hardware store, (B) his long record of truancy, petty theft, and assault, (C) chronic truancy and running away from home (D) the violent beating he gave Peter Driscall for ratting on him.
 - _____ 4. In the past, Cole had been (A) in trouble at school, but never with the law, (B) in many police stations, several detention centers, and two residential treatment centers, (C) able to avoid getting caught for most of the petty crimes he had committed. (D) a good kid.
 - _____ 5. Which of the following was **not** true of Cole's parents? (A) They were divorced. (B) Mr. Matthews was an alcoholic, and he beat Cole. (C) Cole's strong-willed mother constantly argued and fought with his father, (D) They had always hired a lawyer to help him get out of trouble.
 - _____ 6. Cole agreed to get involved in Circle Justice because he (A) didn't want to be tried as an adult and sent to jail, (B) thought it sounded more like fun than punishment, (C) enjoyed being alone, especially outdoors, (D) was a little afraid of Garvey.
 - _____ 7. The purpose of Circle Justice was to (A) heal, not to punish, (B) isolate offenders and force them to deal with their thoughts, (C) create suffering for the offender and peace for the victim, (D) bring the offender back to his beginnings.
 - _____ 8. The atóow that Garvey handed Cole (A) was a plain brown blanket that had been woven by a Tlingit healer, (B) was made totally from strands of animal hair, (C) had images of bears woven into the fabric from corner to corner, (D) was entrusted into Cole's care to be passed on later to someone he trusted.
 - _____ 9. Garvey was (A) Cole's youth probation officer and the person who suggested Circle Justice as an alternative to jail, (B) a counselor at the detention center where Cole had been held for the past several months, (C) a Tlingit elder who read about Cole in a newspaper and became interested in his case, (D) Cole's court-appointed attorney.
 - _____ 10. Shortly after being left alone on the island, Cole (A) had a frightening encounter with a large bear, (B) burned the shelter and everything in it, (C) became violently ill after eating wild berries that he found growing near the stream, (D) discovered a cave where he thought he might hide from Garvey and Edwin.
 - _____ 11. Cole's plan to escape by swimming from island to island to the mainland failed because (A) the water was near freezing, and his body went totally numb almost immediately, (B) there were several large whales feeding in the bay, (C) the nearest island was farther away that it appeared, and he didn't have the strength to reach it., (D) the incoming tide kept him from reaching the bay and pushed him back to shore.
 - _____ 12. When he first saw the Spirit Bear, Cole was filled with rage because (A) he did not want to share his island with a stupid bear, (B) the animal stared at him and it showed no fear, (C) it seemed to be looking down on Cole in disgust, (D) Garvey and Edwin had left him to face an animal that could easily kill him.

Think, Write, Create

Chapter-by-Chapter

Chapter 1

Which of the two men riding in the skiff with Cole do you think has the best understanding of his attitude and his intentions? Which man cares more about Cole's future? Use facts from the story to explain and support your answers.

Important facts about Cole's past are included in the first chapter. Use this information and some speculative thinking to explain why

Cole's problems with the law were chronic.

Cole hated his parents.

Cole's parents were divorced.

Cole had no feelings of remorse for injuring Peter Driscoll.

Cole thought of Circle Justice as a game he could play.

Cole hated to be touched.

Cole didn't trust people who were not afraid of him.

Cole thought all the concern for him was false.

The author wrote *Overhead, a gray-matted sky hung like a bad omen.*

- Based on the foreshadowing planted by the author, predict the general nature of Cole's immediate future.
 - Does it seem that the author is predicting doom for Cole, or is he letting the reader know that Cole is in for a struggle? Explain your answer.
-

Chapter 2

Cole thought of the shelter and the boxes of supplies as just another payout by his father and other people who pretended to take care of him when they hadn't done anything.

- In what way(s) has Cole's father "bought" his son's problems, just as Cole suspected?
- What facts from the story can you offer to prove that Cole's parents actually were concerned about what happened to him?
- Who would you name as someone with a genuine interest in Cole's future? Was there more than one person? Give facts to support your answers.

Cole didn't trust Garvey because the man obviously wasn't afraid of him.

- What evidence can you find in the story to prove that Garvey had a clear understanding of Cole and his games?
- Do you think Cole was afraid of Garvey? Explain your thinking.

Think, Write, Create Whole Book

Cole needed all of the following in order to heal:

someone to believe in him
the cake analogy
Circle Justice
the island
rescue from the bear attack
a second chance on the island
learning that all of life is a hotdog
building his own shelter
the soaking pool
the ancestor rock
a link to the outside while he was on the island
understanding his anger
his totem
making it possible for Peter to come to the island

- Which items on the above list were gifts from Garvey?
 - Which were gifts from Edwin?
 - Explain how Garvey and Edwin often worked as a team to see that Cole had the necessary resources and information.
-

In many novels, the setting is simply the place where the characters live and an inconsequential backdrop for the plot, but the setting of ***Touching Spirit Bear*** is a critical story element—virtually a fourth main character working in partnership with Cole, Garvey, and Edwin.

Explain how the island

- forced Cole to stop and face his problems
- taught Cole about forces that he could not control
- provided the means for Cole to gain a perspective of his life and its meaning
- brought healing
- was better for Cole than jail and crucial to his recovery

Use your responses to the above prompts to write a composition about **Cole and the Island**.
(See **Graphic Organizer # 8: Cole and the Island**)

If you could choose an island—anywhere in the world—as your personal getaway, which one would it be? Money and travel expense are no object.

- Explain why this island would be good for you.
 - Would you go alone or take somebody along? Add details to explain how your choice of islands and your answer to this question are related.
 - After Cole leaves his island, do you think he would benefit from a visit to your spot? How about Peter? Add details to your answers.
-

The Collective Ancestor Rock

Generations of Cole's ancestors, Edwin explained, had struggled, made mistakes, learned, and passed their experiences on to the next generation. The ancestor rock represented Cole's forefathers and the circumstances they had handed to him. Each person, like Cole, has an ancestor rock. The same is true of whole groups of people, even whole civilizations.

Inventions such as the printing press, automobiles, and the internet are all examples of things that came into our lives from our ancestors. As Edwin pointed out, our predecessors send problems as well. Today's environmental issues, for instance, are the results of past mistakes that also affect present behavior.

Use the first space below to enter ten positive inventions or conditions that young people your age have inherited from your collective ancestors. Make a short note as to why each one is important in today's world. In the second space, identify five problems from the past that your generation will need to solve. Add a word or two to explain why they must be solved. In the final space, list five accomplishments or discoveries that you would like for your generation to pass along.

Convert your notes into a composition about ***The Collective Ancestor Rock***.

Ten Positives from the Collective Ancestor Rock

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |



Five Ancestor Rock Problems to Solve

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | |
| 3. | 5. |

Five Ancestor Rock Accomplishments to Pass Along

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | |