

## The Thing About Luck

By: Cynthia Kadohata

*Activity Level: Advanced*

### PURPOSE

Students will read and explore this chapter book in five sections (would be successful over five sections in a classroom or after school reading program). Students will use close reading techniques, identify character traits, make storyline predictions, broaden vocabulary, and grow empathy for the characters both in and out of the book through their exploration into the language and lives of the characters.

### NEBRASKA STATE EDUCATION CONTENT STANDARDS CONNECTION

#### LA 5.1.5.a, 6.1.6.a

Analyze text to determine author's purpose(s) and describe how author's perspective influences text.

#### LA 5.1.5.g, 6.1.6.g

Use textual evidence to compare and contrast the characteristics that distinguish a variety of literary and informational texts.

#### LA 5.1.6.j, 6.1.6.i

Construct and/or answer literal, inferential, critical, and interpretive questions and support answers with explicit evidence from the text or additional sources.

#### LA 5.2.1.d, 6.2.1.d

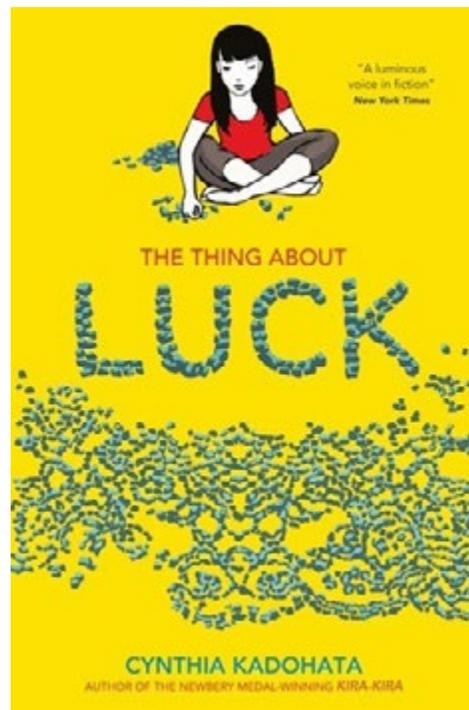
Compose paragraphs with grammatically correct simple, compound, and complex sentences of varying length and complexity.

#### LA 5.2.2b, LA 6.2.2.b

Provide evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection, and research.

### WHAT'S THE CONNECTION TO AGRICULTURE?

The details Kadohata shares in *The Thing About Luck* paint a picture of the logistics of careers in agriculture. From planning a convoy and feeding the crew, to cleaning up the combine and long nights cutting crops, farmers, ag-related business owners, and employees rely on each other for a common goal during wheat harvest. Readers glimpse the momentum and manpower behind a custom wheat harvesting operation, providing exposure to crop production methods, food cost, and the impact agricultural operations have on local, national, and world economies.



## MATERIALS

Required:

- *The Thing About Luck* by Cynthia Kadohata (one book per student)
- Close Reading Techniques anchor chart to be posted in classroom
- Close Reading Annotations anchor chart to be posted in classroom
- Working Journal (provided with this literature guide, one per student)
- Two-sided wide Bookmarks (or ‘Thinkmarks’): Close reading annotations on one side, room for notes on notes side (approximately five (5) per student, print on heavy paper)
- Computer screen, projector, or smartboard for watching a video in Sections Two and Three
- 2-5 index cards per student and marker for Section Five Shared Values activity

Recommended:

- Models of combine, grain cart, bins, semi for Section One
- Wheat grain for students to touch in Section Two

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

### FIELD TRIP

Upon completion of the book, students travel to a grain elevator for a tour if possible.

The tour includes:

- Explaining the size and capacity of the bin and storage area.
- Demonstrating a moisture tester.
- Showing the dumping area to see where trucks unload.
- Students have an opportunity to ask questions about how grain is handled and shipped.
- Students learn why the facility is called an “elevator”.
- Students watch a semi-truck unload.

### Discussion Questions:

- Did the elevator look like you thought it would while you were reading the book?
- Why do elevators require the wheat to be dry in order to store it there?
- How many bushels do you think a semi will haul into the elevator in one load? *A modern semi-truck will hold about 1,000 bushels of wheat.*
- How much does a bushel of wheat weigh? *A bushel of wheat weighs 60 pounds.*
- How many kernels of wheat are in a bushel? *There are about one million kernels of wheat in a bushel.*

### Lesson Extender:

- Arrange for a local farmer to bring a combine to the elevator.
- Allow students to see the mechanical operation of the combine and how it merges many different jobs into one machine.

## Supplemental Social Studies activities:

- Agricultural Transportation (NE AITC activity - Section Two):  
<https://www.nefbfoundation.org/educators/teacher-resources/enriching-activities>
- Teaching Empathy classroom activity (Section Two):  
<http://www.teachthought.com/pedagogy/quick-guide-teaching-empathy-classroom/>
- Food Systems Feed the World (NE AITC – Social Studies):  
<https://www.nefbfoundation.org/educators/teacher-resources/enriching-activities>
- Thank a Farmer or Rancher letters – see Bonus Writing Prompts section at the end for creative writing ideas: <https://www.nefbfoundation.org/educators/get-involved/thank-a-farmer-rancher>

## Supplemental Science activities:

- Edible Plant Parts (NE AITC - Science):  
<https://www.nefbfoundation.org/educators/teacher-resources/enriching-activities>
- The Germinator (NE AITC - Science), germination stages:  
[https://www.nefbfoundation.org/images/FOUNdation/PDFs/Lesson\\_Plans/TheGerminator.pdf](https://www.nefbfoundation.org/images/FOUNdation/PDFs/Lesson_Plans/TheGerminator.pdf)
- Bread in a Bag activity: <http://pbskids.org/zoom/activities/cafe/breadinabag.html>

## COMPANION RESOURCES

### Wheat-specific topical resources:

- Nebraska Wheat Board's publication *Wheat: from field to flour*; a resource on the production of wheat and the science of creating flour:  
<https://nebraskawheat.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/WheatFromFieldToFlour.pdf>
- Wheat Flour Moisture Testing info (Section Three):  
<https://nebraskawheat.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/WheatFlourTestingMethods.pdf>
- Explanation of math of grain measurement (Section Five):  
<http://ks wheat.com/news/2015/07/22/what-does-a-bushel-of-wheat-mean-to-me>

### Supplemental Career resources:

- Agriculture – The Center of an Economic Web (NE AITC – Social Studies)  
<https://www.nefbfoundation.org/educators/teacher-resources/enriching-activities>
- Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources Career toolkit:  
[https://www.education.ne.gov/nce/documents/Toolkit/Ag\\_Food\\_NaturalResources.pdf](https://www.education.ne.gov/nce/documents/Toolkit/Ag_Food_NaturalResources.pdf)

## BONUS CREATIVE WRITING PROMPTS

- You have placed a tracker on a grain of wheat in an effort to find out exactly where it travels before it arrives on someone's plate. After it is cut by the combine header, where does it go and why? Are you surprised to find out its journey? Why or why not?
- Describe what it might feel like to sit on a wheat farmer's porch sipping a cool glass of water during wheat harvest watching the combines travel back and forth across the field. How would your view be different from observing the field during the other seasons and why?

- After many hours of sitting in a combine harvester, what would be your ideal summer meal to nourish you? Would it be meatloaf or a baked lasagna? Soup or tuna sandwiches? Explain your meal in great detail using all five senses to relay your experience. Explain your meal in great detail thinking about the many people that raised and processed your food before it was on your plate.
- Create a conversation between a grain of wheat in the field and a grain of wheat that has been harvested and transported to the grain elevator for storage. What questions would the grain of wheat ask the grain who had been through the harvest? What memories would the harvested grain ask the grain in the field to describe again so he could enjoy thinking about his time in the field and part of the wheat plant?
- The harvest moon is the name given to the final full moon before the fall season officially begins. The moon gives farmers the opportunity to work through the night to harvest their crops. Imagine you are a character from *The Thing About Luck*. Write an introduction for yourself and your job with the Parkers and how the full moon could help you during the night.

## Section One

### Chapter 1

#### BACKGROUND AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION

##### Commercial Agriculture and Custom Harvesting

The main character's family is part of a custom harvesting crew, which is employed to harvest a crop of wheat grains for someone else who planted and grew the wheat plants. Some farmers own equipment like combines, grain carts, and semis to harvest and transport grain from the field to storage, others hire teams of custom harvesters, like the one in this book, to harvest for them.

Usually, the custom harvester business owners own their equipment (combines, semi tractors and trailers, grain carts, pick-ups, etc.).

Farmers involved in commercial agriculture contract with custom harvesters because of the large scale of production of crops. Contracting means entering into a business agreement. Crops from commercial agriculture can be shipped to many different processors, to make food and other products around the country and the world.

#### VOCABULARY

**Emanated** – To flow out, issue, or proceed

**Eradicated** – To remove, to destroy utterly

**Excruciating** – Extremely painful, causing intense suffering

**Harbingers** – Anything that foreshadows a future event, omen, sign

**Implemented** – To fulfill, perform, carry out

**Inadvertently** – Unintentional

**Malaria** – Disease, transferred to the human bloodstream by a mosquito, which occupies and destroys red blood cells

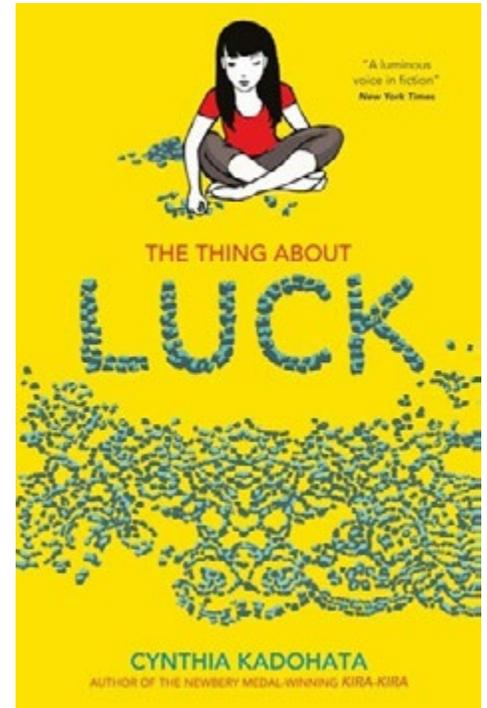
**Mortgage** – A conveyance of an interest of property as security for the repayment of money borrowed

**Proactive** – Tending to initiate change rather than reacting to events

**Psychedelic** – Having vivid colors and complex patterns popularly associated with the visual effects of psychedelic states

**Rogue** – No longer obedient, renegade

**Sagely** – Wise, judicious



## INTEREST APPROACH

Before reading the story, ask the class these pre-reading questions which are topical to the main themes of the book:

- What do you know about luck?
- Describe a time in which a family event upset your regular routine. How did you deal with the situation? Looking back, would you do anything different today?
- Reflect on a time in which you felt used and/or demeaned by a peer. What did you do? If you didn't handle it well, how might you better handle the situation?

## PROCEDURE

1. Pass out *The Thing About Luck* books.
2. Print and pass out copies of the close reading Thinkmarks with space for notes from the story on the front and close reading annotations on the back. Ask the students to observe what questions or thoughts come up as they listen to the first chapter. Ask them to track their interaction with the story using close reading annotations on Thinkmarks.
3. Refer students to the Close Reading Techniques anchor chart to explain the goals for this unit to teach them methods to dig deep into the text they read.
4. Refer students to the Close Reading Annotations anchor chart to provide a common system for noting their reactions to the text.
5. Print and pass out Working Journals, one copy per student. Explain that the Working Journal will be where they find assigned reading, questions for discussion, and assignments.
6. Communicate expectations for the unit study:
  - a. Students can expect to read some together, and some independently.
  - b. Encourage them to come each week ready to discuss. Taking notes on the Thinkmarks will assist discussion.
7. Invite the class to open their Working Journal to the page for Chapter 1. Invite the class to listen and follow along in their books and take notes in the working journal as you read aloud to them. Read Chapter 1 aloud for the class.
  - a. During reading, stop at *p. 3* and discuss – What has the author told us so far? (Characters, Japan, Kansas, Malaria, bad luck)
  - b. Stop reading at *p. 11* and discuss – What new information have we learned? (party) What are some character traits you noticed?
8. Ask for discussion. Questions:
  - a. What is Summer obsessed with?
  - b. Why? Who is telling the story?

9. Instruct the students to read Chapter 2 independently. Demonstrate close reading annotations with points below.
  - a. Reread the bottom of *p. 14* – discuss custom harvesting; if possible, share model combine, grain cart, bins, semi.
  - b. Share background information about commercial agriculture and custom harvesting with the class.
  - c. Ask students to make a prediction and record in accompanying Working Journal: How will Jaz’s meeting-party go?
10. Assign Chapters 2, 3, and 4 to read for next time.
  - a. Instruct students to keep a list of tricky words.
  - b. Task students to write down any questions they have to guide the discussion next week.
  - c. Encourage students to read with a pencil and use Thinkmarks to record words, questions, and close reading annotations with their reactions.

## Section Two

Chapter 2, 3, 4, 5

### BACKGROUND AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION

#### Wheat as a Commercial Crop

Wheat is one of many plants grown commercially for distribution to processors who will turn its grain into food products and other products. At the following link, display images for students of wheat parts and growth stages (pp. 7-8), wheat grain (pp. 10-11), map of U.S. wheat production (p. 12), and products made from wheat (p. 13).

- <https://nebraskawheat.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/WheatFromFieldToFlour.pdf>

### VOCABULARY

**Compiled** – Assemble information from sources (Ch. 5)

**Convoy** – Ship, fleet, group of vehicles etc., accompanied by a protecting escort; Any group of vehicles traveling together (Ch. 5)

**Coveted** – To wish for, especially eagerly (Ch. 4)

**Deet** – A brand of diethyltoluamide (insecticide) (Chs. 2, 4)

**Detachable** – To unfasten and separate, disengage, disunite (Ch. 4)

**Disconcerting** – Upsetting, discomfiting, disturbing to one's composure (Ch. 2)

**Docked** – To cut off the end of, cut short (Ch. 5)

**Extravagant** – Spending money excessively, showy, ostentatious (Ch. 5)

**Logistics** – The detailed planning or organization of large complex operation (Ch. 4)

**Malaria** – Disease, transferred to the human bloodstream by a mosquito, which occupies and destroys red blood cells (Chs. 4, 5)

**Mortgage** – A conveyance of an interest of property as security for the repayment of money borrowed (Ch. 6)

**Paranoid** – Exhibiting undue suspicion or fear (Ch. 4)

**Resignedly** – Submissive, indicative of resignation (Ch. 5)

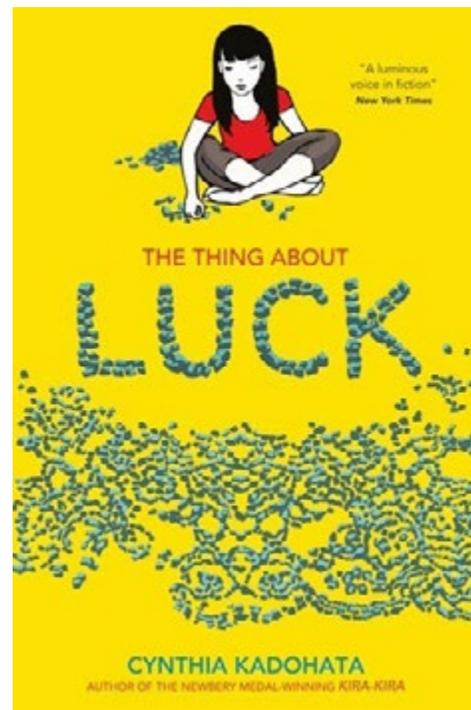
**Sauntered** – To walk with a leisurely gait, stroll (Ch. 4)

**Slathered** – To spread something thickly on (Ch. 4)

**Subsided** – To be quiet, less active (Ch. 5)

**Thermos** – A container lined with an insulating material to keep liquids hot or cold (Ch. 5)

**Voice** – The sound uttered through the mouth of living creatures, especially of human beings in speaking, shouting, singing etc. (Chs. 5, 6)



## INTEREST APPROACH

Watch “Winter Wheat Crop Spotlight” video as a class.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PvbMDD1vGpQ>
- Point out an auger (moving grain from combine to grain cart, moving grain from grain cart to semi-trailer), header (on front of combine for cutting wheat stalks).
- Ask students if they have any questions about what they saw.

## PROCEDURE

1. Prior to class, post sheets for Gallery Walk activity.
2. Begin class time by dividing class into groups of 3-5 students. Ask questions about character development in Chapters 2, 3, and 4:
  - a. What new characters did we meet? Share information about them. (Mel, Jenson, Parkers (*p. 42*), Work Crew (*p. 46*))
  - b. What more did we learn about Jaz? (*pp. 18, 20*)
3. **Gallery Walk for Main Ideas.** Pass out sticky notes to each small group to record answers to further discussion questions for Chapters 2, 3, and 4. Explain that students will post the answers to discussion questions around the room or hallway. Then categorize the answers under: Agriculture, Character, Culture/Diversity, and one additional category. Each small group will suggest a category, and the class will vote on which will be the fourth category for the Gallery Walk. Explain that this is an example of analyzing the text for main ideas and supporting with evidence.
4. Invite small groups to discuss questions and identify evidence from the story. Allow two to three minutes per question. Ask students to write individual answers on sticky notes, being prepared to share with others.
  - a. What motivated Summer to try to befriend Jenson in Chapter 3?
  - b. Why did the author include Jiichan’s story on *p. 29*?
  - c. What more have we learned about what it is like to work for custom harvesters?
  - d. What more has Summer shared with us about harvest time on *pp. 36-40*?
5. Invite teams to discuss and suggest another category title which would be relevant to the discussion of the book, one per group. Announce that they will have two minutes to decide on a suggestion to be shared with the class.
6. Ask each group for its suggestion for the fourth main idea category. Write main idea suggestions from each group on a marker board. Ask class to cast votes by walking up to the marker board and placing a sticky note, one per student, by the individual choices.
7. Once votes are cast and counted, announce winning main idea category and write it on the fourth (blank) main idea sheet and post in classroom or hallway.
8. Ask students to take the evidence answers from the small group questions, and post them under the main idea they each believe it supports best. Answers and categorizations will vary.

9. Thank students for their participation and ask to return to their seats.
10. Pass out fresh Thinkmarks. Read aloud Chapter 5.
  - a. Stop at the top of *p. 59*; What kind of ‘trouble’ has Summer made for Obaachan?
  - b. What do we think this book is starting to be about?
  - c. What are some of Mrs. Parker’s character traits?
11. Ask students to turn to *p. 8* in their Working Journal to make a prediction about something they think will happen in the book. Assign reading Chapters 6, 7, and 8 with annotations on Thinkmark.

## Section Three

Chapter 6, 7, 8

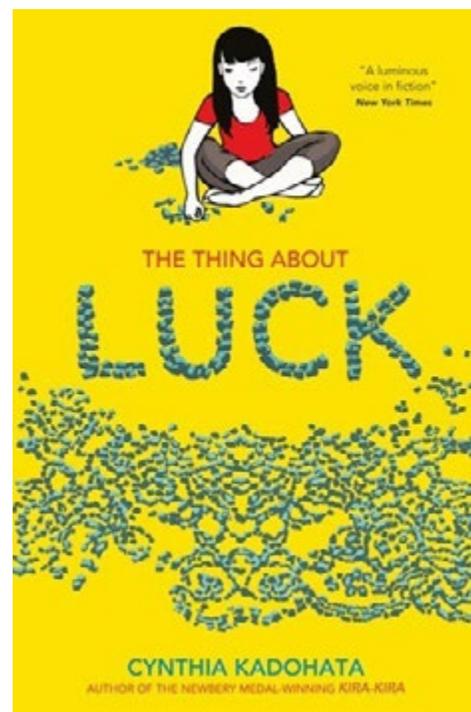
### BACKGROUND AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION

#### Grain Handling and Moisture

Define information about grain measurements and conditions:

Wheat is a plant, the grain of which is ground into flour for bread, pasta, pastry, etc. Like many other grains, wheat is measured in bushels which are a measure of dry goods equal to 64 pints.

The moisture of the grain at harvest time is very important because it is an indicator of grain storability. Wheat or flour with high moisture content (over 14.5%) attracts mold, bacteria, and insects, all of which cause deterioration during storage. Wheat or flour with low moisture content is more stable during storage. Weather conditions can quickly change the moisture content in a grain of wheat, so custom harvesters watch out for rain, high winds, and heat, and do their best to work long hours to get the crop harvested with optimal moisture content. The farmer gets a better price for the grain at optimal moisture. Grain storage and distributors use less energy to 'dry down' wet grain. Grain that is too dry means the farmer gets less revenue on his crop because the grains are thinner and less bountiful.



### VOCABULARY

**Acupuncturists** – A person who practices acupuncture (*Ch. 8*)

**Amber** – Hard translucent fossilized resin (*Ch. 7*)

**Aura** – Distinctive atmosphere or quality that surrounds and seems to be generated by a person, thing, or place (*Ch. 6*)

**Cowered** – To crouch, as in fear or shame (*Ch. 8*)

**Craic** – Fun and entertainment, especially good conversation and company (often preceded by the) (*Ch. 8*)

**Deet** – A brand of diethyltoluamide (insecticide) (*Ch. 6, 7*)

**Deflated** – To depress or reduce (a person's ego, hopes, spirits, etc.) (*Ch. 7*)

**Dengue** – An infectious, eruptive fever of warm climates, usually epidemic, characterized especially by severe joint and muscle pains (*Ch. 7, 8*)

**Deviate** – To depart, or swerve, as from a procedure (*Ch. 7*)

**Eejit** – A Scot or Irish word for idiot (*Ch. 8*)

**Encephalitis** – Inflammation of the substance of the brain (*Ch. 8*)

**Exasperated** – To irritate or provoke to a high degree (*Ch. 6*)

**Furtively** – Sly, shifty, done by stealth (*Ch. 8*)

**Going rogue** – No longer obedient, renegade (*Ch. 7*)

**Gullible** – Easily deceived or cheated (*Ch. 8*)

**Malaria** – Disease, transferred to the human bloodstream by a mosquito, which occupies and destroys red blood cells (*Ch. 7, 8*)

**Micromanage** – To manage or control with excessive attention to minor details (*Ch. 6*)

**Momentum** – Force or speed of movement (*Ch. 7*)

**Monotone** – A vocal utterance in one unvaried tone (*Ch. 7*)

**Mortgage** – A conveyance of an interest of property as security for the repayment of money borrowed (*Ch. 6*)

**Perfectionist** – A person who demands perfection of himself (*Ch. 6*)

**Rogue** – No longer obedient, renegade (*Ch. 7*)

**Samurai** – A member of the hereditary warrior class of feudal Japan (*Ch. 7*)

**Savoring** – To perceive by taste or smell, especially with relish; to give oneself the enjoyment of (*Ch. 8*)

**Shire** – An English breed of a large, strong draft horse having a usually brown or bay coat with white markings (*Ch. 8*)

**Sustain** – To keep up, or keep going; to supply with necessities of life (*Ch. 6*)

**Symmetrical** – Characterized by or exhibiting symmetry; regular in form or arrangement of corresponding parts (*Ch. 6, 8*)

**Tauntingly** – To reproach in a sarcastic, insulting or jeering manner; mock (*Ch. 7*)

**Transformed** – To undergo a change in form, appearance or character (*Ch. 8*)

**Tyrant** – A person in position of authority who uses power oppressively or unjustly (*Ch. 7*)

**Unperturbed** – Not disturbed or troubled (*Ch. 8*)

**Voice** – The sound uttered through the mouth of living creatures, especially of human beings in speaking, shouting, singing etc. (*Ch. 6, 7, 8*)

## INTEREST APPROACH

Watch “2016 Nebraska Wheat Harvest” Video.

• <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xvZBVcAsij8>

- a. Ask students if they notice anything that is mentioned in the book.
  - b. Point out transfer of grain from combine harvester to grain cart to semi (*1:58-2:58*), point out moisture sensor probe (*5:18-5:28*).
  - c. Ask students if they have any questions about what they saw.
- Ask questions from the story. Moisture affects the lifestyle of wheat product consumers because of the effect on food cost.
- a. What factors affected the moisture of the wheat in the story?
  - b. What might happen to Summer’s family if the wheat was too wet?

- c. Where was the wheat tested for moisture in the story?
- d. How did the Parkers transport their crops to the elevator?
- e. What action does the elevator need to take if there is a wet grain delivery? How might that affect the cost of the grain to the purchaser? (The elevator will have to invest time and energy into drying the grain to a temperature that can be safely stored. This will either drive up the cost for the purchaser, or cause the hardship of less profit for the elevator or the farmer.)

## PROCEDURE

1. Begin class by asking students to share what they remember from the four chapters. What was interesting, confusing, exciting, hard words, etc.? Invite students to refer to notes on Thinkmarks to remember what they've read.
2. Invite students to turn to *p. 10* of the Working Journal, a worksheet on making the Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self, and Text-to-World connections from Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8. Invite students to refer to notes on Thinkmarks to remember what they've read. Demonstrate making these connections while discussing with the entire class. Sample topics include:
  - a. What does this phrase on *p. 60* mean? "Your personality hasn't settled in yet."
  - b. What importance does weather have to farming? *pp. 64-65*
  - c. Discuss Mrs. Parker's character traits – detail oriented, controlling, opinionated.
  - d. Discuss finding a grocery store in Chapter 6.
3. Ask students to turn to an elbow partner and discuss more connections to topics from Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8. Invite students to fill in connections on *p. 11* of their Working Journal as they discuss. Encourage students to respond to each other with "I agree..." or "I take exception to...", supporting our opinions with personal Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self, or Text-to-World reactions. Remind students we can refer to notes on Thinkmarks to remember what we've read.

Topics to cover in partner discussion include:

- a. Why does Summer find it hard to believe her grandmother laid with her while she was dying? *p. 79*
  - b. Are there any questions on the harvest information shared? *pp. 86-87*
  - c. What are your thoughts of Robbie, or of embarrassment?
  - d. Discuss 'being a normal person' as mentioned on *pp. 105-106*.
  - e. What jumped out at you during the sausages scene in Chapter 8?
  - f. What did you learn about Robbie's personality on Summer's date with him to the barn? (dishonest – wants to lie about the chickens)
  - g. What is this book starting to be about? (Discrimination or finding oneself/personality)
4. Pass out fresh Thinkmarks. Begin reading Chapter 9 aloud.
  5. Assign reading chapters 9, 10, 11, and 12 with annotating reactions on Thinkmark.

## Section Four

Chapter 9, 10, 11, 12

### BACKGROUND AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION

#### Careers in Agriculture

There are many career areas that can be pursued relating to agriculture, which is often categorized along with food and natural resources, which all must work in harmony for any one of them to be sustainable.

### VOCABULARY

**Aghast** – Filled with horror or shock (*Ch. 12*)

**Banjaxed** – Broken, ruined, shattered (slang) (*Ch. 12*)

**Biotechnology** – Genetic change of microorganisms (*Ch. 12*)

**Conspiracy** – A secret plan by a group to do something unlawful or harmful (*Ch. 10*)

**Deet** – A brand of diethyltoluamide (insecticide) (*Ch. 9*)

**Engrossed** – To occupy completely, as in the mind or attention (*Ch. 9*)

**Exotic** – Strikingly unusual or strange in effect or appearance (*Ch. 11*)

**Gravelly** – Harsh and grating (*Ch. 12*)

**Hygienic** – Healthful, sanitary (*Ch. 12*)

**Interspersed** – To scatter here and there, place at intervals among other things (*Ch. 10*)

**Intuition** – A keen and quick insight; direct perception of truth, independent of any reasoning process (*Ch. 10*)

**Nauseous** – Feeling sick (*Ch. 11*)

**Petulantly** – Showing sudden impatient irritation (*Ch. 12*)

**Remorseful** – Regretful, full of remorse (*Ch. 10*)

**Sagely** – Wise, judicious (*Ch. 11*)

**Tandem** – One following or behind the other (*Ch. 10*)

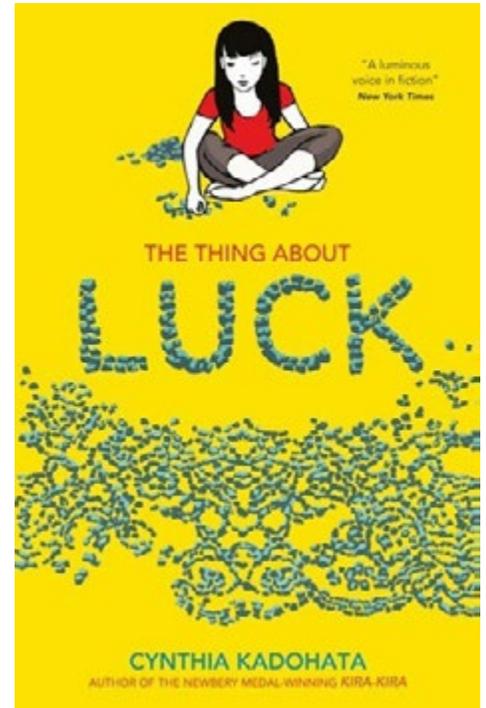
**Voice** – The sound uttered through the mouth of living creatures, especially of human beings in speaking, shouting, singing, etc. (*Ch. 12*)

**Vulnerable** – Capable of or susceptible to being wounded or hurt (*Ch. 12*)

### INTEREST APPROACH

ConAgra is a company based in Omaha, Nebraska, which uses a variety of agricultural products to create food products for consumers through grocery stores and restaurants. Watch ConAgra interview video:

<http://www.nebraskacareerclusters.com/agriculture-food-natural-resources>



## PROCEDURE

1. Announce that the class will discuss in a “Hot Seat” format today, refer to *p. 12* of the Working Journal for more information. Divide students into four groups. Assign a student from each group to be in character first, and explain that the person will answer a question while assuming the role of the character from Chapters 9, 10, 11, and 12. After discussion of that question is finished, the “Hot Seat” student switches with another.

Topics to cover include:

- a. Summer, what did you learn about yourself when you told Obaachan about the chickens? (she does the right thing)
  - b. Summer, what did you learn from reading *A Separate Peace*? Can you connect that lesson to other things Summer has said? (letting personality settle in) *p. 154*
  - c. Obaachan, why were you ashamed of Summer? *pp. 159-160*
  - d. Summer, how were you feeling at the end of Chapter 11? What has caused that feeling? (light hearted; she did the right thing and told Mr. Laskey about Thunder killing the chickens)
  - e. Mr. or Mrs. Parker, what is going on with Jiichan? How did you feel about Jiichan’s sickness?
  - f. Robbie, what did you learn about Summer when she visits you for a second time? (can stand up for herself)
  - g. Mrs. Parker, what did Summer mean when she asked you about being humiliated and proud at the same time? *p. 199*
  - h. Jiichan, when Mrs. Parker comes to check on you, what did you discover about her personality?
2. Invite students back to their seats. Invite them to journal about any of the following questions as an in-class writing assignment, 3-5 sentences, on *p. 13* of the Working Journal.
    - a. Why did the author include Summer’s two journal entries? *pp. 148-149*
    - b. What does the raid cause the crew to do? *p. 171*
    - c. What happened when Summer went to see Robbie? (kiss) *p. 177*
    - d. What does Jaz worry about? How is that like Summer? (future – who they will be) *p. 179*
    - e. What is the lesson from Jiichan’s story? *p. 181*
    - f. Why did the author include the part about “Opinions and Social Pressure,” the article Jiichan gave Summer to read? *p. 184*
  3. Pass out fresh Thinkmarks. Begin reading Chapter 13 aloud. Assign reading Chapters 13, 14, 15, and 16 with annotation reactions on Thinkmarks.

## Section Five

Chapter 13, 14, 15, 16

### BACKGROUND AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION

#### Shared Values

One of the pillars of Agriculture Literacy published by the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture is Shared Values.

### VOCABULARY

**Ampe** – full of nervous energy (*Ch. 14*)

**Apathy** – Lack of interest, enthusiasm, or concern (*Ch. 15*)

**Awning** – A sheet of canvas or other material stretched on a frame and used to keep the sun or rain off a storefront, window, doorway, or deck (*Ch. 15*)

**Banjaxed** – Broken, ruined, shattered (slang) (*Ch. 12, 14*)

**Constellations** – Any of various groups of stars to which, definite names have been given (*Ch. 16*)

**Deet** – A brand of diethyltoluamide (insecticide) (*Ch. 13, 14, 15*)

**Din** – A loud confused noise, continued loud sound (*Ch. 14*)

**Endorphin rush** – Feeling of wellness, caused by exercise, danger, or stress (*Ch. 15*)

**Endorsement** – Approval or sanction (*Ch. 15*)

**Engaged** – Mechanics (or gears of the like) to interlock (*Ch. 13, 14*)

**Entrees** – A dish served as the main course of a meal (*Ch. 15*)

**Exertion** – Vigorous action or effort (*Ch. 15*)

**Fajitas** – Tex-Mex dish with thin strips of meat, served with tortillas and salsa (*Ch. 15*)

**Gasket** – Burst out in anger (slang) (*Ch. 14*)

**Hallucinogenic** – Producing hallucinations (*Ch. 13*)

**Idled** – To operate at a slow speed, disengaged from the load (*Ch. 14, 16*)

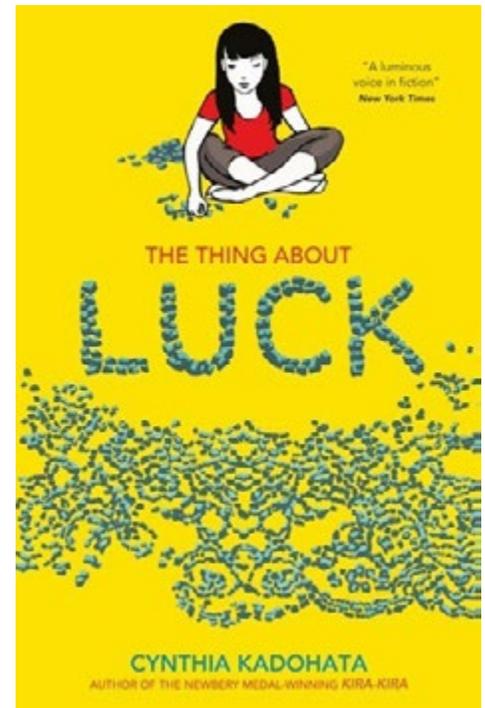
**Intricate** – Complex, hard to make, complicated (*Ch. 15*)

**Lenient** – Agreeably tolerant, permissive, indulgent (*Ch. 16*)

**Malaria** – Disease, transferred to the human bloodstream by a mosquito, which occupies and destroys red blood cells (*Ch. 13, 14, 15, 16*)

**Maximize** – To increase to the greatest possible amount (*Ch. 14*)

**Meditating** – To engage in thought, reflect (*Ch. 13, 15*)



**Mortgage** – A conveyance of an interest of property as security for the repayment of money borrowed (*Ch. 14*)

**Musty** – Having an odor suggestive of mold; outdated (*Ch. 15*)

**Nocturnal** – Active at night (*Ch. 15*)

**Ogre** – Monstrously ugly, cruel, barbarous person (*Ch. 15*)

**Parasites** – An organism that lives on or in an organism of another species, obtaining its nutrients from the body (*Ch. 13*)

**Profusely** – Abundant, in great amount (*Ch. 15*)

**Queasiness** – Inclined to feel nausea, uneasy, squeamish (*Ch. 14*)

**Recommendation** – Representation in favor of a thing, advice (*Ch. 15*)

**Relevance** – Condition of being relevant, or connected with the matter at hand (*Ch. 15*)

**Slathered** – To spread something thickly on (*Ch. 14, 15*)

**Smidgeons** – A very small amount (*Ch. 14*)

**Tandem** – One following or behind the other (*Ch. 16*)

**Terraced** – A raised level with a vertical or sloping front or sides faced with turf, or the like, especially one of a series of levels rising one above the other (*Ch. 14*)

**Thermos** – A container lined with an insulating material to keep liquids hot or cold (*Ch. 13*)

**Trail mix** – A snack food consisting of dried fruit, nuts and seeds (*Ch. 14, 15*)

**Transfer** – To cause to pass from one person to another, as thought, qualities, or power; to imprint, impress or otherwise convey (*Ch. 15*)

**Voice** – The sound uttered through the mouth of living creatures, especially of human beings in speaking, shouting, singing etc. (*Ch. 14, 16*)

## INTEREST APPROACH

### Identify Pairs

- Allow students to pair up, choosing someone with whom they are comfortable.
- Give each student a single index card and marker.

“I don’t like...”

- On a single index card, ask students to complete this statement, “I don’t like it when someone/people...”
- Encourage students to write down 2-5 such statements on separate index cards.

### Exchange Cards

- Once everyone is done writing, exchange all of the cards with your partner.

“I like it...”

- On the back of each index card, write down a statement that will counter your partner’s “I don’t like it...” Statement with, “I like it when someone/people...”
- Be amazed at the partners’ insights into behavior they will truly appreciate in response to their hot-button issues!

## Share Values

- Ask each student to read a statement aloud that begins with “I like it when...”. Take turns reading one statement per team member until all statements are exhausted.

Open up for class discussion: How might this type of activity be useful on a harvest team like the Parker’s? Are shared values important in the relationship between farmers and consumers? What about at ConAgra?

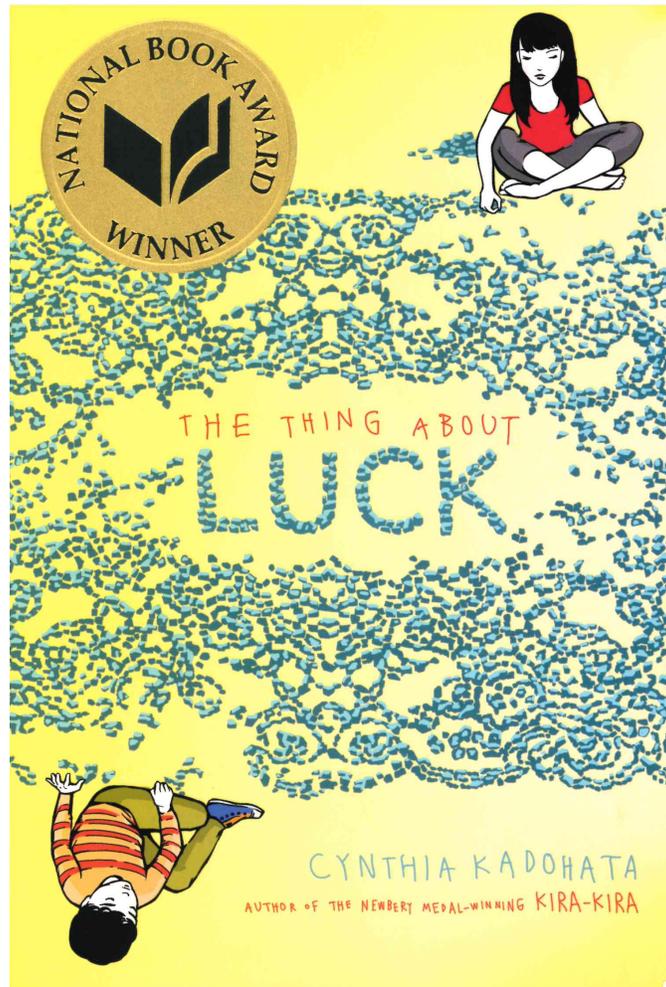
## PROCEDURE

1. Discuss Chapters 13, 14, 15, and 16.
  - a. Moving to Oklahoma – picture on *p. 200*
  - b. What kind of person is the Oklahoma farmer?
  - c. What options is Jiichan weighing at the end of Chapter 13?
  - d. Why does Summer sneak out at night and run the combine? Describe her feelings about this work. What reaction does Mick have and why?
  - e. How does Summer’s view of Mick change throughout the story?
  - f. What do these chapters reveal about Jaz’s character?
  - g. On *pp. 268-269*, Jiichan tells a childhood story. Why does he share that story with his grandkids?
  - h. What events illustrated Summer’s strength of character?
  - i. How has Summer grown by the end of the story? How has her relationship and understanding of her grandparents changed? What about their understanding of her? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
  - j. Why do you think the author titled this book, *The Thing About Luck*?
  - k. What lesson does Summer learn by the end of the story? (You do what you can do.)
2. Explain that students will create Venn diagrams for comparing and contrasting a pair of characters. Write character pair options on a marker board and ask students to choose one pair to write about in their journal:
  - a. Mrs. Parker vs. Obaachan
  - b. Robbie vs. Summer
  - c. Mick vs. Jiichan
  - d. Mr. Parker vs. Oklahoma farmer
3. Direct students to Venn diagram *p. 15* of their Working Journal.

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# \_\_\_\_\_ 's Working Journal

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## Close Reading Skills and Agriculture Appreciation



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# Close Reading

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## A Careful Purposeful Reading Of A Text

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### First Read: Get the Gist



- What's the main idea?
  - Can you summarize the text?
  - What jumps out at you?
  - What questions do you have?
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### Second Read: Dig a Little Deeper



- What text structures and features were used?
  - What is the author's purpose?
  - How does the author feel about the subject?
  - Why did the author use particular words and phrases?
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### Third Read: Put it all Together



- What inferences can you make?
  - How does the author support key points?
  - How does this relate to other texts you've read?
  - How does this relate to your life?
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# Close Reading

## Annotation Marks



- Unfamiliar words or phrases



- I don't understand



- Words or phrases that jump out at you



- Surprising or important parts



- Love this part. It is my favorite.



- I predict...

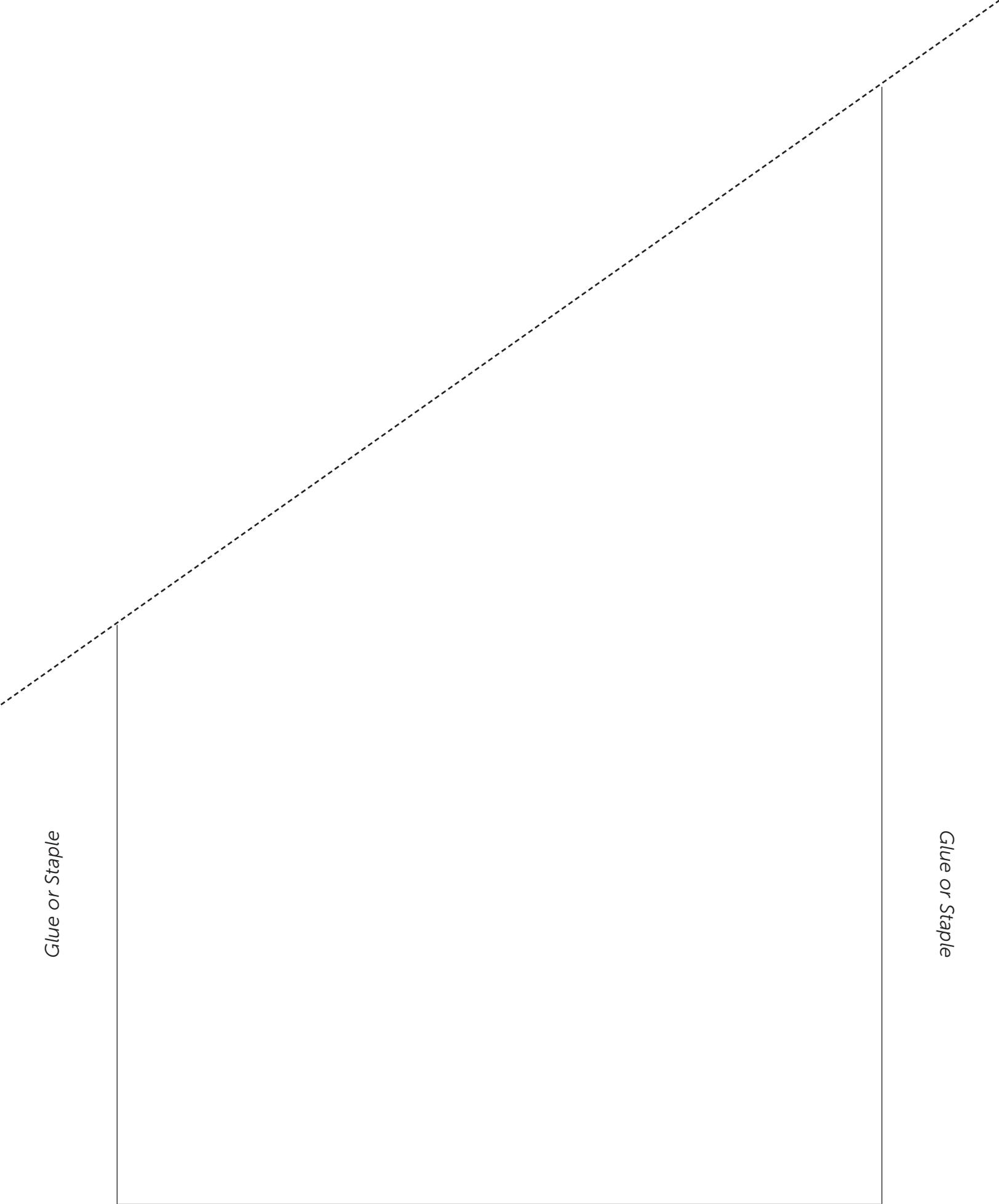


- Connection to self, text, world, or media.  
*"This makes me think of..."*



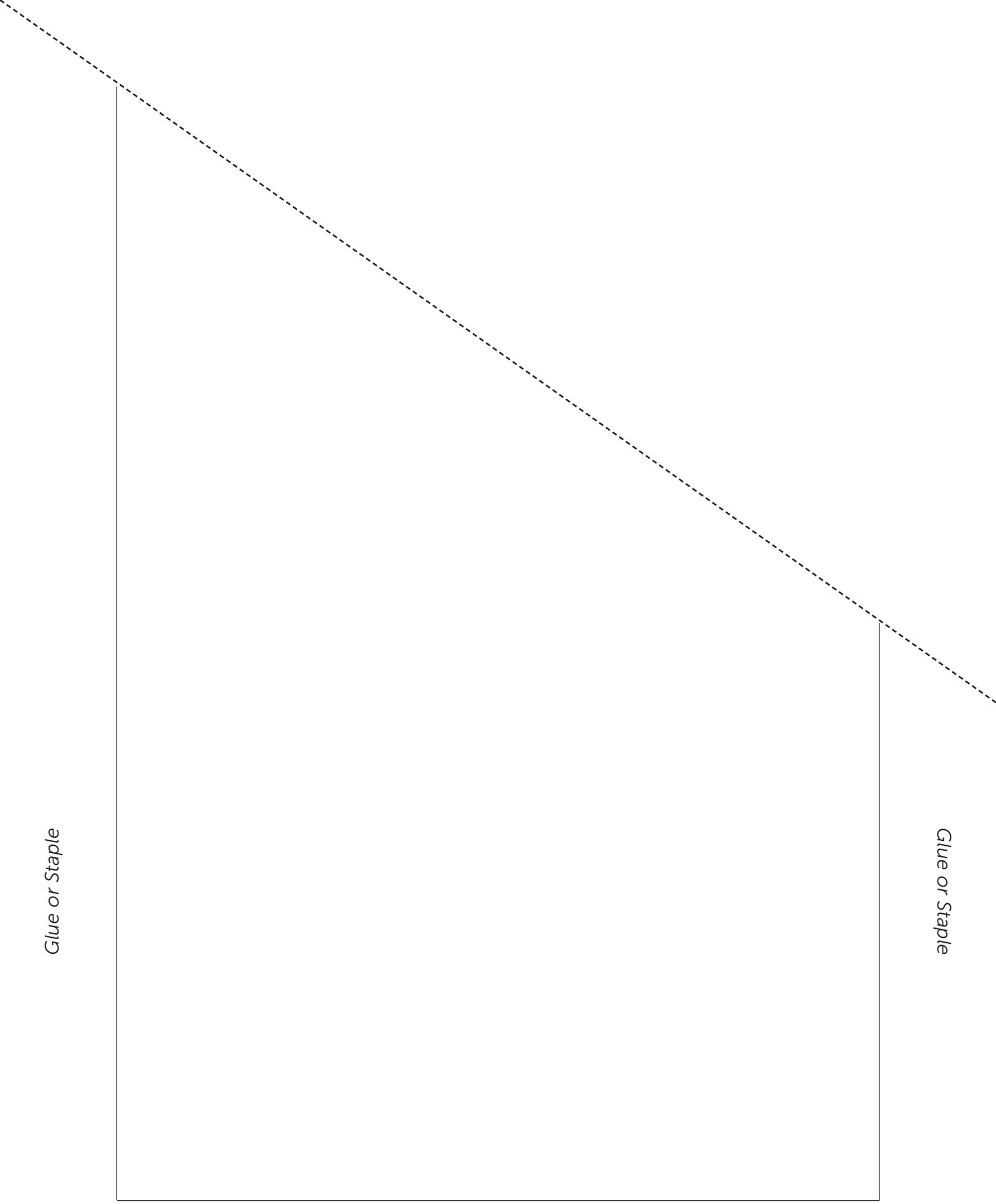
- Main idea, evidence for main idea

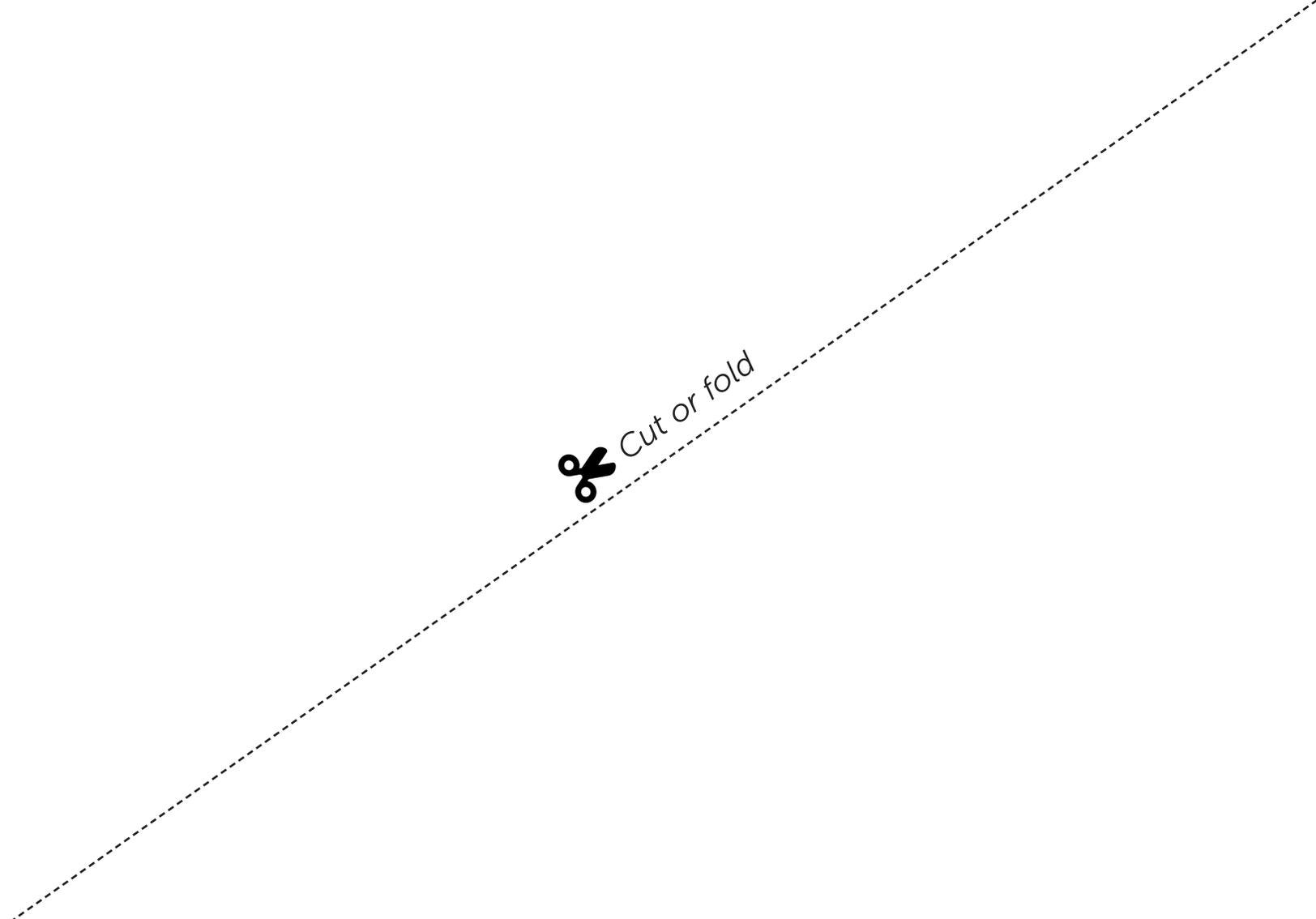
 *Cut or fold*



*Glue or Staple*

*Glue or Staple*





 Cut or fold







# List of Tricky Words



**Write The Words That You Circled From Chapter 2 In This Box**

## Analyzing main ideas

### Small group discussion questions:

- What motivated Summer to try to befriend Jenson in Chapter 3?
- Why did the author include Jiican's story? *Page 29*
- What more have we learned about what it is like to work for custom harvesters?
- What more has Summer shared with us about harvest time? *Pages 36-40*



# Make A Prediction



**Write 3 Predictions On What Will Happen In The Book.**

*First...*

*Next...*

*Finally...*

**Assignment:**

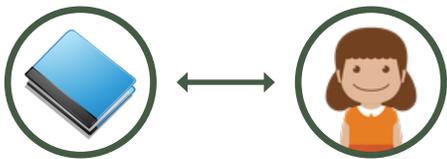
**Read Chapters 6, 7, and 8 with annotations on Thinkmarks.**

# Group Discussion

## Discovering Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self, and Text-to-World connections:

- What does this phrase on page 60 mean? "Your personality hasn't settled in yet."
- What importance does weather have to farming? *Pages 64-65*
- Discuss Mrs. Parker's character traits.
- Discuss finding a grocery store in Chapter 6.

### Text-to-Self



**Connect what you are reading to something from your life.**

- That reminds me of something that happened to me... because...
- An experience I have had like that is... because...
- I feel like that character when... because...

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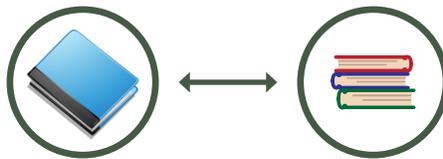
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### Text-to-Text



**Connect what you are reading to another story you have read.**

- That reminds me of a book I read... because...
- This character is like another character... because...
- The author's style of writing is like another author's because...

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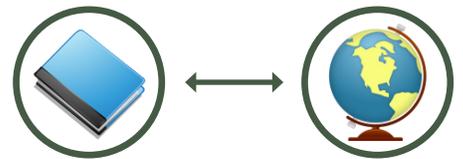
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### Text-to-World



**Connect what you are reading to something from the world.**

- That reminds me of something I heard about... because...
- This text connects to something my mom told me about because...

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# Partner Discussion

## Discovering Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self, and Text-to-World connections:

- Why does Summer find it hard to believe her grandmother laid with her while she was dying? *Page 79*
- Are there any questions on the harvest information shared? *Pages 86-87*
- What are your thoughts of Robbie, or of embarrassment?
- Discuss “being a normal person” as mentioned. *Pages 105-106*
- What jumped out at you during the sausages scene in Ch. 8?
- What did we learn about Robbie’s personality on Summer’s date with him to the barn?
- What is this book starting to be about?

### Text-to-Self

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### Text-to-Text

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### Text-to-World

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### Assignment:

**Read Chapters 10, 11, and 12 with annotations on Thinkmarks.**



# Hot Seat Discussion



## Take turns answering a discussion question in character.

- Summer, what did you learn about yourself when you told Obaachan about the chickens?
- Summer, what did you learn from reading *A Separate Peace*? Can you connect that lesson to other things Summer has said? *Page 154*
- Obaachan, why were you ashamed of Summer? *Pages 159-160*
- Summer, how were you feeling at the end of chapter 11? What has caused that feeling?
- Mr. or Mrs. Parker, what is going on with Jiichan? How did you feel about Jiichan's sickness?
- Robbie, what did you learn about Summer when she visits you for a 2nd time?
- Mrs. Parker, what did Summer mean when she asked you about being humiliated and proud at the same time? *Page 199*
- Jiichan, when Mrs. Parker comes to check on you, what did you discover about her personality?



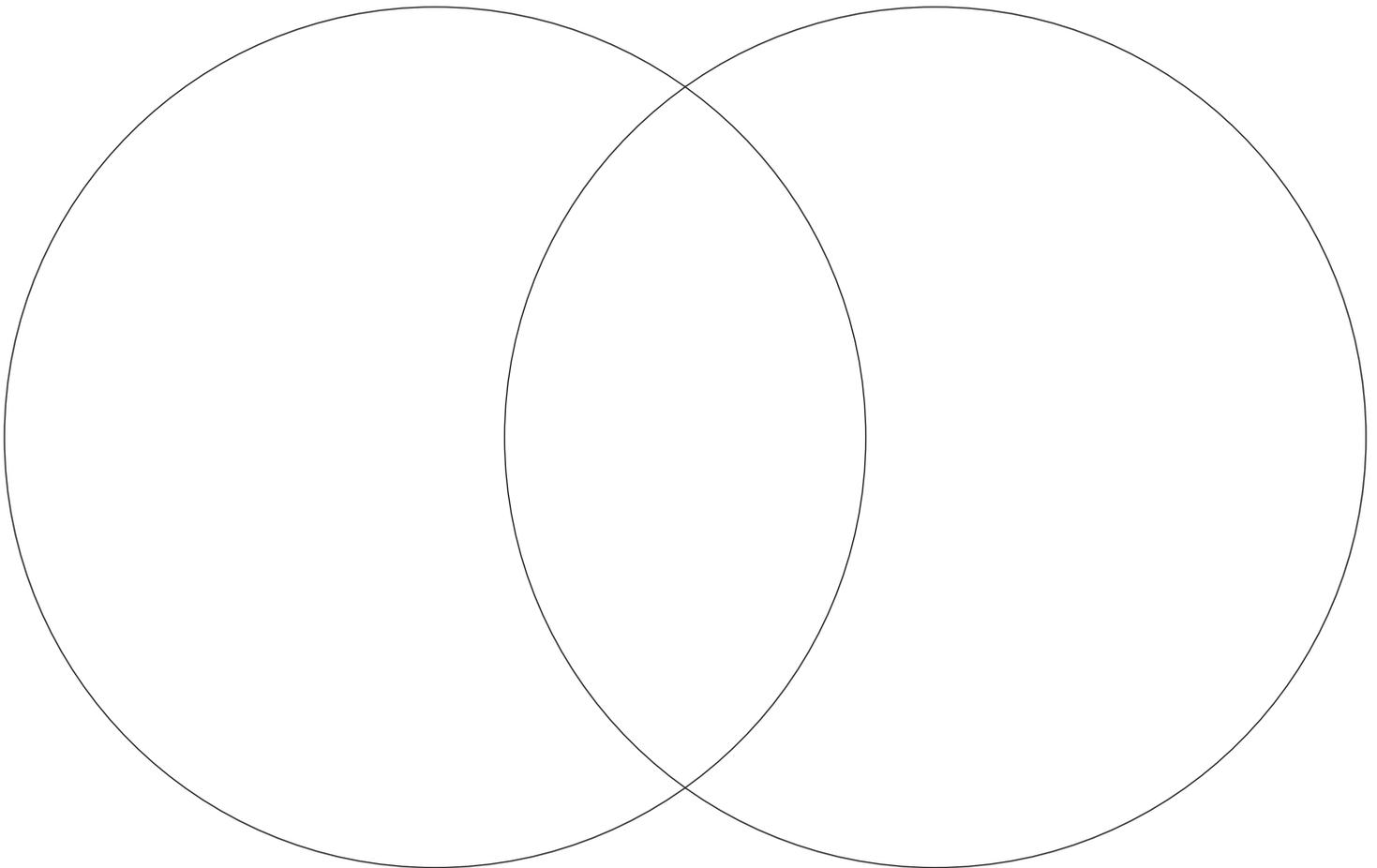
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# Venn Diagram

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**Create a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting a pair of characters.  
Choose one pair to write about:**

- Mrs. Parker vs. Obaachan
- Robbie vs. Summer
- Mick vs. Jiichan
- Mr. Parker vs. Oklahoma farmer



# Thinkmark

# Thinkmark

# Thinkmark

# Thinkmark

# Thinkmark

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Close Reading  
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