

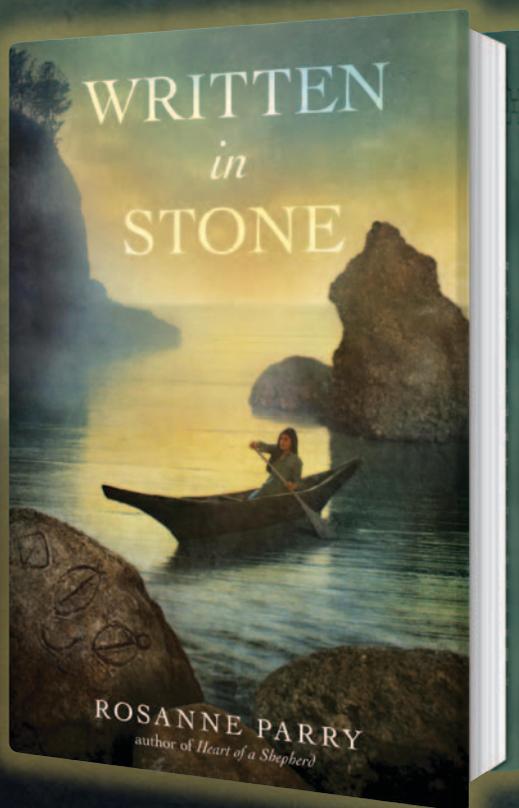
Educator Guide  
**WRITTEN**  
*in*  
**STONE**

Includes  
Connections to  
Common Core  
State  
Standards

**ROSANNE PARRY**

author of *Heart of a Shepherd*

# ABOUT THE BOOK



Grades 4–7 • HC: 978-0-375-86971-6 • GLB: 978-0-375-96971-3 • EL: 978-0-375-98534-8

**S**et in the 1920s on the Makah reservation in the Pacific Northwest, Pearl is still grieving the death of her mother and baby sister five years earlier when her father dies on the last whale hunt of the season. He was a man of honor, a harpooner, who was respected by his people. Now an orphan, Pearl feels torn between tradition and “new ways” as she questions the role of women, seeks ways to display her independence, uses her intuition to expose a phony Indian arts collector, and struggles to preserve her tribes’ stories and skills. At age 89 she tells her story to her great granddaughter, Ruby, who has used the Internet to work out a intricate weaving pattern, something Pearl could never accomplish. Instead, Pearl is a woman of words, and manages to honor her tribe by telling their stories in an Indian newspaper.

# WRITTEN *in* STONE

## QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

What is the role of women in the Makah nation? How does Pearl challenge the traditional role of women?

Pearl says that her people keep only the “honorable customs.” (p. 13) Discuss the customs of the Makah people. What is the “honor” in each of the traditions?

Why does Pearl’s father’s death take the honor out of her name? In what ways does Pearl deserve honor?

Pearl’s grandmother tells her that it isn’t wrong to be angry about her father’s death. How does she give Pearl permission to grieve?

Discuss the loneliness that overtakes Pearl throughout the novel. Susi is alone, but not lonely. What is the difference? Why is Pearl so interested in finding out from Susi what it’s like living alone? Why does Grandma say that it isn’t healthy working alone?

Discuss the many ways that Susi is a role model for Pearl. How does Susi represent a bridge between the old traditions and new ways?

Pearl feels that she has no talent. Aunt Loula thinks that Pearl is smart, but that she doesn’t pay attention. Debate whether the issue is poor self-esteem or simply impatience. Explain Pearl’s quest to find a talent. How does Ruby acquire the talent that Pearl so desperately wanted? Contrast Ruby’s method of learning to weave with

Pearl’s way. What is Pearl’s talent? How does she use her talent to serve her tribe?

Explain what Pearl’s grandmother means when she warns, “Never turn your back on the ocean.” (p. 9) Debate whether Pearl heeds her advice.

Explain the hypocrisy of the Indian Agent and Mr. Glen. How does calling the Indian Agent “The Mustache” reveal Pearl’s disrespect for him? Pearl is very perceptive about Mr. Glen’s motives. What causes her to see what others don’t?

Henry argues with his father about working with Pearl to sell clams to Steamship Liberty. Explain the metaphor: “Had I kicked the pebble that started a landslide?” (p. 72) What is the pebble? What is the landslide?

What is the difference between *prejudice* and *bigotry*? How are the Indians victims of both? How does Mr. Glen cause Pearl to examine her attitude toward white people?

Pearl’s father was considered courageous, brave, and a great leader. How does Pearl display similar qualities?

What are the religious views of the Makah people? How do they honor these views in their daily lives?

*Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration S.L. 6.1, 7.1, 6.2, 7.2, 6.3, 7.3*

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Indian Affairs is the oldest bureau of the Department of Interior. Read about the bureau on the following website: [www.bia.gov](http://www.bia.gov). What is the purpose of the bureau? How does it protect Native Americans? How might the bureau protect tribes from prospectors like Mr. Glen? Write a letter that Pearl might write to the bureau informing them of Mr. Glen and his threat to the Makah nation. *Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading: Informational Text—Integration of Knowledge and Ideas RI 6.8, 7.8; Writing: Text Types and Purposes W. 6.1, 7.1; Production and Distribution of Writing W. 6.4, 7.4*

The Makah people have a whaling treaty with the United States government. Discuss the meaning of *environmental racism*. How does this apply to the Makah people? Read about the issues on the following websites: [www.umich.edu/~snre492/Jones/makah.htm](http://www.umich.edu/~snre492/Jones/makah.htm); [www.cnie.org/NAE/docs/makahfaq.html](http://www.cnie.org/NAE/docs/makahfaq.html). Then have students stage a debate that presents both sides of the issue. *Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading: Informational Text: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas RI. 6.8, 7.8; Speaking & Listening SL. 6.4, 7.4*

Pearl becomes an editor of an Indian newspaper. Write a tribute to Susi that Pearl might publish in the newspaper. Remember to include who, what, when, where, and how.

*Correlates to Common Core Standard Writing: Text Types and Purposes W. 6.3, 7.3.*

Pearl’s grandmother was a great storyteller. Use books in the library or sites on the Internet to locate a Makah story. (e.g. a Raven, Owl, or Bear story) Learn the story and tell it to students in another class. Consider making an appropriate mask to use in the presentation.

*Correlates to Common Core Standard Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge W. 6.8, 7.8; Speaking and Listening: Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas SL. 6.6, 7.6.*

Write a brief essay that explains the title of the book. Instruct students to site scenes from the novel that support their thoughts. *Correlates to Common Core Standard Writing: Text Types and Purposes W. 6.1, 7.1.*



## EXPLORING LITERARY ELEMENTS

**POINT OF VIEW**—Pearl is telling the story to her granddaughter. Rewrite the chapter “A Visit with Susi” from Susi’s point of view. (p. 100) How does changing the point of view alter the story? *Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Craft and Structure RL. 6.6, 7.6; Writing: Text Types and Purposes W.6.3, 7.3.*

**USE OF LANGUAGE**—Parry uses simile in the novel to create certain images. For example, “They sweat rivers of salt with the fever, and then fell to gasping like a drowning person on dry land.” (p. 13) What image does this convey? Find other examples of simile in the novel. Then write a simile that describes Pearl’s loneliness for her mother at the end of the novel when Ruby captures the weaving pattern. *Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Craft and Structure RL 6.4, 7.4; Writing: Text Types and Purposes W. 6.3, 7.3.*

**CHARACTER ANALYSIS**—In small groups, ask students to discuss Pearl’s feelings toward the following characters: Aunt Loula, Ida, Charlie, Grandmother, Grandfather, Henry, Susi, Indian Agent, and Arthur Glen. Ask studentsto write an entry that Pearl might write in her diary that sites specific incidents that

contribute to her opinion about one of the characters. Encourage students to share their writing in class. *Correlates to Common Core Standard Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration SL. 6.1, 7.1; Writing: Text Types and Purposes W. 6.3, 7.3.*

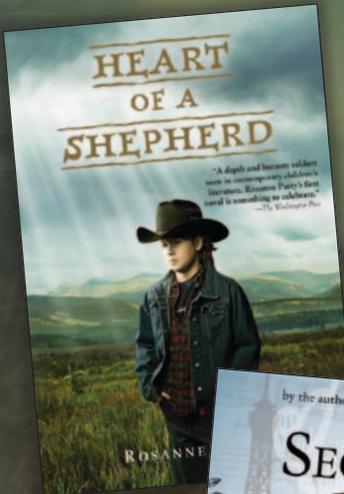
**THEME**—In class, ask students to identify three underlying themes of the story. Then have them use books in the library or sites on the Internet to find a poem that conveys one of the themes. Ask each student to read aloud the poem and share how it relates to the novel. *Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details RL. 6.2, 7.2, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas RL. 6.7, 7.7; Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration SL. 6.1, 7.1, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas SL. 6.4, 7.4.*

**SETTING**—Based on knowledge gained from reading the novel, write a description of the Makah reservation for the Department of Interior. Engage in peer editing for clarity and grammar. *Correlates to Common Core Standard Writing: Production and Distribution of Writing W. 6.4, 7.4, 6.5, 7.5, Research to Build and Present Knowledge W. 6.9, 7.9.*

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**ROSANNE PARRY** became interested in the Makah Indians when she was a teacher in Taholah, Washington, on the Quinault Indian reservation. While there she never met a child who could not tell her a story—usually one with a monster of epic proportions. She became a writer because of the people she came to cherish and the land between the Pacific and the Olympics, where stories seemed to grow out of the earth all around her.

## ALSO BY ROSANNE PARRY



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## INTERNET RESOURCES

This site provides facts for kids about the Makah Indians.

[www.bigorrin.org/makah\\_kids.htm](http://www.bigorrin.org/makah_kids.htm)

This is an online exhibit of Button Blankets at the Burke Museum.  
[collections.burkemuseum.org/ethnology/browse.php?ID=189049](http://collections.burkemuseum.org/ethnology/browse.php?ID=189049)

Prepared by Pat Scales, Children's Literature Consultant, Greenville, SC

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