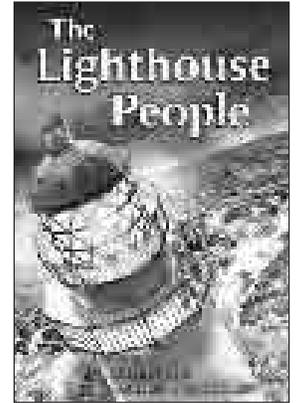


The Lighthouse People

by Susan Paris

illustrated by Denise Durkin



Book Summary

Becca's family have lived and worked at the lighthouse all her life. Now there is talk that the lighthouse will be automated and they will have to leave. This realistic narrative examines themes of dealing with change, working together to overcome difficulties, and the importance of family.

Features of the Book

- Figurative language – similes
- Evocative illustrations
- Emotive language and descriptions
- Comparisons
- Times used as chapter headings

Purpose

The Lighthouse People can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills and understandings:

- S** analysing point of view to form an opinion;
- S** analysing descriptive language;
- S** identifying how science and technology have changed people's lives;
- S** using strategies to make meaning of unknown words.

Investigation Tools

- What's the Background? – From People to Power, page 29
- Looking Closer – The Fresnel Lens, pages 30–31
- Making Connections – Life in Isolation, page 32

The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Analysing point of view to form an opinion
- S** Analysing descriptive language
- S** Identifying how science and technology have changed people's lives

Introducing the text

Ask the students to share what they know about lighthouses.

- *What are lighthouses? What are they for?*
- *How do they work?*

Distribute the books. Ask the students to study the cover and the title page and read the blurb on the back.

- *What might this book tell us about lighthouses?*
- *Would you like to live in a lighthouse?*
- *What would be the challenges of living there? Why might someone enjoy it?*
- *Why do you think the girl on the title page looks sad?*

Reading and discussing the text

- Read to the end of page 10. Identify the problem in the story and how the characters feel about it.
- Why was Becca sad?
- How do the other family members feel?
- Locate the words and phrases that show the characters' emotions and inner thoughts. (on edge, page 3; grim, page 5; picking at the tablecloth, page 5; my dinner churned in my stomach, page 6; protested, page 6; wasn't looking at anyone, page 10)
- How would you respond if your family had to move?

Discuss the concept of automation. Ask the students to consider the automation of lighthouses from different perspectives.

- What might it mean to each of the characters?
- What could it mean to the coast guard? To the captains of ships?

Ask the students to compare the different perspectives and to form an opinion about what should happen to the lighthouse and the family. Invite them to provide reasons for their opinion.

The students can now read to the end of the story.

- As you read the rest of the story, think about how automation might have changed the outcome.

Ask the students to look at the chapter headings.

- Why might the author have titled the chapters this way? (to make it seem like a diary entry; to show the importance of time)
- How does it create a sense of drama or urgency? (creates a sense that the family might be “running out of time”)

Ask the students to read “From People to Power” on page 29.

- What are good things about new technology?
- What has been lost?

Help the students to think about other professions that have been changed or eliminated because of technology (typists, delivery people, typesetters, blacksmiths, coal miners, production workers).

Ask them to make connections with the situation in this story. They can use the Making Connections investigation tool on page 93 to record their ideas.

Revisiting the Text

The activities below can be used immediately after the guided reading lesson, during later reading sessions as mini-lessons, or as independent activities.

S Analysing descriptive language

Ask the students to reread Becca's description of the generator shed on page 19, then write a description of a place that is special to them. Encourage them to use language that creates images and suggests “mood” or feeling.

S Using strategies to make meaning of unknown words

Ask the students to use context, association, and substitution to help them interpret the meanings of the following words: grim, generator (page 5); debris (page 12); tight smile (page 19); indignant (page 20); horizon (page 26); navigate (page 29); lens (page 30); and isolation (page 32).

S Identifying how science and technology have changed people's lives

Ask the students to work in teams to investigate how certain activities (listed on the blackline master on page 75) have changed as a result of new technology. Provide them with research tools such as encyclopedias, books, and the Internet to assist their investigation.