

Hiyomi and the Moon Men

by Susan Paris

illustrated by Giles Smith



Book Summary

Hiyomi is curious when she sees the strange-looking men in the forest. They're as tall as the sky, and their faces are paler than the moon. This story describes the Amazon from two very different perspectives.

Features of the Book

- Cultural comparisons
- Descriptive and figurative language
- Parallel story lines
- Different text forms – third-person narrative, journal
- Culturally specific vocabulary – *yano*, *virola*

Purpose

Hiyomi and the Moon Men can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills and understandings:

- S** making inferences;
- S** analysing the writer's craft;
- S** comparing how people from different cultures think about and deal with their environment;
- S** evaluating text structure by comparing text forms and features;
- S** analysing descriptive language.

Investigation Tools

- Digging Deeper – Who Are the Yanomami?, page 29
- What's the Background? – The World's Rainforests, pages 30–31
- Weighing Both Sides – Exploration, page 32

The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Making inferences
- S** Analysing the writer's craft
- S** Comparing how people from different cultures think about and deal with their environment

Introducing the text

Ask the students to examine the cover.

- *Why is the girl hiding?*
- *What can you infer about her?*
- *Who might the men be? How are they different from the girl?*
- *How might the girl be feeling if she has never seen people like this before?*

Read the blurb on the back of the book together.

Explain that the girl on the cover lives in the Amazon rainforest. Ask the students to read “Who Are the Yanomami?” on page 29.

- *How might their way of life be different from ours?*

Ask the students to think about how the new people might change things for the Yanomami as they read the story.

Reading and discussing the text

Ask the students to read chapter 1 and compare the two voices.

- *How did you know when the voice changed?*
- *Why does one voice seem more formal?*
- *What words and phrases does the author use to add suspense to the explorers' situation? (terrible, badly shaken, yells, worried, medicine almost gone, distress)*
- *How does the author connect the two stories? (the yell that Hiyomi heard on page 3)*
- *How does this create suspense?*

Discuss how the author uses a parallel structure to tell the story from two different perspectives.

- *Why would an author use this technique? What does it show that a single story line can't?*
- *What do you think will happen? Will the two stories come together? How?*

Ask the students to read to the end of page 28, noticing how the stories parallel one another.

- *What can you infer about the two main characters?*
- *What do the two stories have in common? (sick people needing medicine, worried characters, curiosity about strangers)*

Ask the students to read “Exploration” on page 32.

- *How might Hiyomi's feelings have been different if she had known how exploration might affect her people?*
- *Do you think she would have helped the sick man?*
- *What can we infer about her character and culture?*

Ask the students to find the place in chapter 2 that shows the explorer's wonder at the rainforest (page 11).

- *How is the explorer's view different from Hiyomi's?*
- *What are some likely effects of the explorers' presence?*
- *What are some potential consequences?*

Give each student a copy of the Weighing Both Sides investigation tool on page 92. Discuss why it might be important to look at something from two perspectives. Ask the students to complete the investigation tool to investigate the story's two perspectives.

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 Evaluating text structure by comparing text forms and features

Remind the students about the parallel story structure. Explore some of the shared elements in the stories.

Ask the students to use the blackline master on page 72 to analyse how the two story lines are developed.

S Analysing descriptive language

Ask the students to make a two-column chart with the headings “Rainforest” and “Emotions”. Have them complete the chart by locating descriptive words and phrases that helped them visualise the environment and make inferences about the characters' emotions.

