

Julie

by

Jean Craighead George

Book Information

Jean Craighead George, Julie
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Book Level: 5.0
Interest Level: MG

Julie returns to live with her father and finds she must make choices between the old and the new in this sequel to Julie of the Wolves.

Award: State Award

Topics: Animals, Wolves; Emotions, Love; Family Life, Fathers; People, Eskimos; Recommended Reading, California Recommended Lit., English, 6-8

Main Characters

Amarog the wolf who saved Julie and whose spirit gives her courage to go on

Ellen Kapugen's white wife who gives birth to Kapugen's son

Julie Edwards a young Eskimo woman who must confront a difficult problem when she returns to her father's house after surviving alone in the wilderness with wolves; also called Miyax

Kapu the leader of the wolf pack Julie is trying to protect

Kapugen Julie's Eskimo father, who must choose between the Eskimo way and the white man's way

Peter Sugluk the adopted son of Kapugen's business partner, who falls in love with Julie, but understands her need to protect the wolves

Vocabulary

maklaks boots

gussack white person

permafrost the permanently frozen layer of ground

qivit musk oxen hair used to make clothing

uminmaks musk oxen

Synopsis

Julie Edwards, also known by her Eskimo name, Miyax, returns to her father after surviving alone in the Alaskan wilderness with the help of a wolf pack. Her father, Kapugen, welcomes home with great joy the daughter he thought was dead. Julie is somewhat surprised to learn her father has married a white woman while she was gone.

Julie learns quickly from her father that the future of their village is in jeopardy because the caribou have not returned for a second straight year. The villagers have been forced to seek alternate ways to keep their economy alive.

Kapugen has invested in a small herd of musk oxen and hopes to make a living selling the hair of the oxen, which is woven into cloth. A major problem arises when Julie's wolves attack and kill one of Kapugen's musk oxen. Julie knows they will do it again unless she can lead them to a place where they can find food. Kapugen has promised to shoot them if he sees them near the oxen's pen.

Julie asks for one last chance to lead them away, and Kapugen agrees. She embarks on a long journey to find the wolves. She does so, wins their trust, and leads them to a land where the moose live. She then returns to the village, but still worries that the wolves will return.

Ellen helps Kapugen realize that nature must be allowed to take its course. Kapugen then turns his musk oxen out of their pen, where the wolves could hunt them. Although it is a risk, Kapugen knows in his heart that it is a risk he must take.

Open-Ended Questions

Use these open-ended questions as the basis for class discussions, student presentations, or extended writing assignments.

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Initial Understanding

While discussing his heritage with Julie, Peter says, "Nations make borders, cultures do not." What did he mean?

Cultures can't be contained within prescribed boundaries. People's habits and the way they live their lives--their culture--can be the same as the people's in a neighboring country. The bonds of culture, as Peter saw it, were stronger than the ties that bind countrymen.

Literary Analysis

If the wolves in this story represent, or symbolize, nature, what do the caribou represent?

The caribou represent the balance that must exist in nature for an environment to function. Life for the Eskimos, as well as the wolves, was thrown off balance because the caribou had failed to return. Their eventual return at the end signals that, at least for the time being, a normal lifestyle will resume for the people of Kangik.

Inferential Comprehension

In this story, Julie tries her best to protect the wolves, and thus preserve the natural order of the wilderness. How would this story be different if Julie had decided that the Minnesota law was the order that should be followed?

The Minnesota law was followed by Kapugen because he had been forced to follow the white man's ways in order to make a living. Without Julie's insistence that the old ways should be preserved, the rest of the story would probably chronicle Kapugen's efforts to further become more like the white man. He would in a sense be "selling his soul" in order to survive economically. It would probably cause Kapugen great sorrow to have to live in this way. In this scenario, Julie would probably still try to single-handedly protect the wolves as she had.

Constructing Meaning

According to Peter, the Eskimo language has no words for thank you. "A person gives to please himself; that requires no thanks." Do you think this belief would work in our society?

What is not mentioned in this statement is the way Eskimos communicate with their eyes. If an Eskimo is grateful, it could be seen in his eyes. There are ways to say thank you without words. In our culture, the custom is to express one's gratitude with words. It would take a long time for people to make that kind of change.

Teachable Skills

Recognizing Plot The characters in this story are Eskimos who in part still follow traditional Eskimo ways. One tradition they follow is dressing in the furs of the animals they hunt. In today's society, wearing real animal furs as clothing is looked down upon and even protested. Conduct a debate with a partner in which you take opposing views on using animal furs as clothing. Present your debate to your class, and poll the students to discover which side of the issue they support.

Understanding Hist./Cultural Factors

Historically, Eskimos have relied on caribou to sustain their lives. Although fictitious, this story does point out how easily a people's survival can be jeopardized by fluctuations in the primary source of their livelihood. In today's world, the shrinking quantities of many of the world's fish have negatively impacted the commercial fishing industry. Research this problem and present several measures being taken to solve it.

Comparing and Contrasting Wolves are a central part of this story. Julie views wolves as fitting into, rightfully belonging in and being vital to the Arctic world. In today's world, not everyone would share her view. Do research on the reintroduction of wolves into Yellowstone National Park. Write a short report giving an update of the status of this project and present the viewpoints of those in favor of it and those against it.

Understanding the Main Idea The main idea of

Literacy Skills Teacher's Guide for

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Julie involves wolves and their dynamic impact on the Arctic food chain. Create a food chain using the animals found in your area. Then remove one kind of animal from your chain and tell how the rest of the chain would be affected.