

Name _____ Date _____

Maniac Magee

Chapters 14–21



Reading Strategy: Listening to Tone

You can probably always tell when your mother is mad at you. She can say, “Oh, I can’t believe you did that,” in a tone that tells you she’s frustrated, but that it doesn’t really matter. But if she were to say those words with a different tone in her voice, you would know you were in big, big trouble. You can feel an author’s tone from the choice of words, the rhythms of the sentences, and the subject matter.

Writing in Your Literature Response Journal

A. Write about one of these topics in your journal. Circle the topic you chose.

1. Jerry Spinelli often sounds very funny and light-hearted in *Maniac Magee*, but have you noticed different tones in his writing? Do other feelings ever poke through the laughter? In which part of the book did you notice this?
2. Repetition—repeating a word or phrase over and over—can make writing more energetic and powerful. Look at how Jerry Spinelli uses repetition in Chapters 15 and 16. Write a paragraph or two using that kind of repetitive phrase. You might use “I love . . .” or “I know . . .” or “I wish . . .” or another phrase of your very own.
3. *Bullies!* In both the East End and the West End, there are bullies. What do you think makes someone a bully? Have you ever had to deal with one? Describe what happened. Have you ever felt like being a bully yourself? Tell why.

B. What were your predictions, questions, observations, and connections as you read? Write about one of them in your journal. Check the response you chose.

Prediction Question Observation Connection

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- * Sometimes an author includes a detail that points to a deeper meaning in the story. In *Beauty and the Beast*, for instance, the beast has a rose in his castle. That rose is symbolic of his heart. When the rose dies, he will die, too. Therefore, the rose is not just a rose.

- * Consider with your group the following three details and think about what else they might be telling you about Maniac Magee. What are they symbolic of?
 1. Maniac's skill at untying knots
 2. how Maniac walks down the middle of the street after he unties the knot
 3. Maniac's running

- * Why does Maniac leave the Beales? Talk together about the different reasons.

Writer's Craft: Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a word that means intentional exaggeration. Lots of writers use hyperbole for effect. In fact, if you've ever been telling a story and decide to make the time you spent stuck on the airplane a little longer and a little scarier, you've used hyperbole, too. By now, you've probably noticed that Jerry Spinelli *loves* hyperbole. What are some examples of hyperbole that you've seen in the book?

