

Realistic
Fiction



Saving Snowdrop

by Diana Noonan
illustrated by Alfie Gallagher

Mc
Graw
Hill

PAIRED
READ

Poetry

STRATEGIES & SKILLS

Comprehension

Strategy: Reread

Skill: Theme

Vocabulary

gobble, individuality,

mist, roots

Vocabulary Strategy

Metaphors

Word Count: 2,547



Education

Copyright © The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written consent of The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., including, but not limited to, network storage or transmission, or broadcast for distance learning.

Send all inquiries to:
McGraw-Hill Education
Two Penn Plaza
New York, New York 10121

ISBN: 978-0-02-118924-3
MHID: 0-02-118924-2

Printed in the United States.

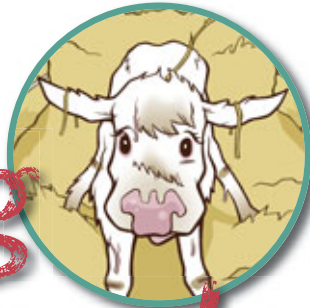
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 QLM 15 14 13 12 11 10

A



Essential Question

What shapes a person's identity?



Saving Snowdrop

by Diana Noonan

illustrated by Alfie Gallagher

Chapter 1

Flying to the Rescue.....2

Chapter 2

Rise and Shine6

Chapter 3

Second Chance9

Respond to Reading.....16

PAIRED READ

I Can Do It!.....17

Focus on Literary Elements.....20

Chapter 1

Flying to the Rescue

“Five hours,” groaned Chloe, exasperated at the thought of sitting in the car for that long. It was too horrible to even contemplate. Uncle Benjamin just smiled.

“You’re the one who wanted to come with me on this trip,” he reminded her. “Take a look out the window at those beautiful mountains.”

Chloe sighed. The mountains went on forever, along with field after field of grass. How was she going to manage hours of doing nothing but looking out the window? “I do want to meet my cousins,” she said, “and I really want to spend a week on a farm, but *five hours!*”

“Just think of all those cute animals you’ll get to be around,” said her uncle. “Isn’t that worth all the traveling?”

Chloe had to admit that she couldn’t wait to help out with the farm animals, especially because her cousins often e-mailed with adventurous stories about riding their horses. Chloe didn’t have any pets at home because her parents said it wasn’t fair to keep them in an apartment building.

“You know, Uncle Benjamin,” she said, “the only farm animals I’ve ever touched are the ones in the petting zoo in Astonville.” She looked at the photo of the dog she kept on her cell phone. “How much longer?” she asked.



“Hours,” replied her uncle. “You know, I *could* tell you a story that would help pass the time.”

“Is it a good one?” Chloe asked.

“It’s a true tale about how one animal changed my life forever,” he said. “Does that sound entertaining enough?” Chloe nodded. Her uncle was a vet, and in Chloe’s family, his animal stories were famous.

“It was the first weekend of spring break,” began her uncle. “Your mom—”

“Call her Chelsea,” said Chloe, “because in the story, she’s really your sister.”

“Okay,” replied Uncle Benjamin. “Chelsea and I were both in junior high. Mom and Dad both worked, and Chelsea and I were looking forward to attending the art class Mom had enrolled us in. Then one evening, the phone rang and all our plans changed.” Uncle Benjamin paused. Chloe liked the way he always did that when he told stories because it made them more exciting.

“It was Grandma,” he replied at last. “Grandpa had been in an accident on the tractor and had broken his leg. Grandma was desperate because there was no help available and spring was the busiest time of the year on the farm. She wanted us all to fly south to help out, but Mom and Dad couldn’t get any time off work.”

“So what happened?” asked Chloe, her curiosity aroused.

“They sent Chelsea and me,” replied her uncle. “Two city kids who’d never been on a farm before suddenly had to be farm hands for two whole weeks.”

“You hadn’t visited their farm before?” asked Chloe.

Uncle Benjamin shook his head. “Our grandparents’ roots were in farming, but we always vacationed with them at a beach house halfway between their place and ours. So the farm was going to be a whole new experience. The problem was the more Mom and Dad told us about what to expect, the more we didn’t want to go.”

“And was it that bad?” Chloe asked.

“Do you mean was it bad cleaning the chicken coop?” said her uncle. “Or are you asking about mucking out the pig pens, or about having to get up at six every morning to gobble down our breakfast and then start the chores?”

Chloe giggled.

“It was dreadfully dire,” said her uncle, grimacing. “We didn’t think things could get worse, but unfortunately, we were wrong. One morning Grandma announced that we had a new assignment—taking care of Snowdrop.”

He did the pausing thing again while Chloe waited.

“Snowdrop was a tiny calf. She’d been born during the night, and her mother had rejected her. Grandma said she’d have to be fed with a bottle every four hours, day and night. Grandma couldn’t do it because she was working all day on the tractor. During the night, she was up and down helping Grandpa turn over in bed.”

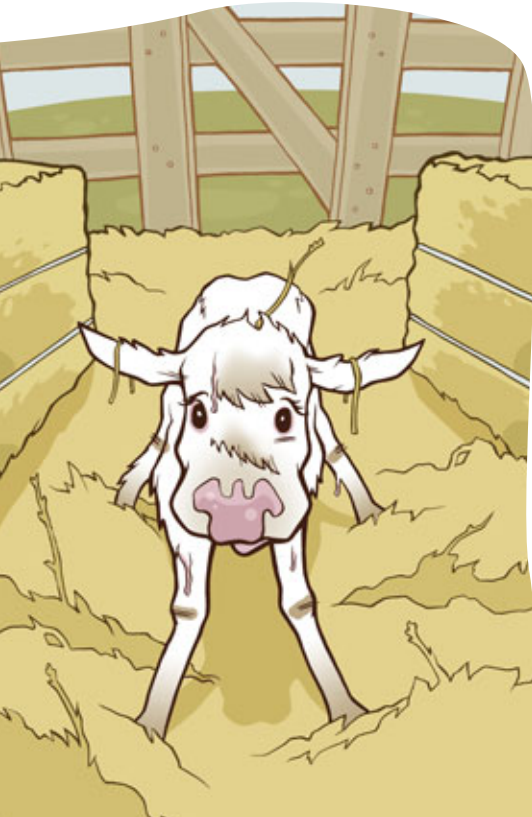
“So you and Mom were the ones who had to feed Snowdrop?” guessed Chloe.

Uncle Benjamin nodded. “We fed her day *and* night.

It would have been okay if Snowdrop had actually wanted to feed, but she’d kind of made up her mind that she didn’t want to live.”

“And did she survive?” asked Chloe.

“The question you should really be asking,” said her uncle, “is how did Chelsea and I manage to survive? We’d never been so exhausted in our whole lives!”



Chapter 2

Rise and Shine

Chloe wanted to know more, but her uncle was pulling in to a gas station. By the time he'd filled the car with gas, she was desperate to know what had happened to Snowdrop.

"Like I said," her uncle told her, "it's me and Chelsea you should be concerned about. The first thing we had to get used to was touching a calf that hadn't been cleaned by its mother.

"Snowdrop wasn't pure white like the flower Grandma had named her after—at least, not at first. To begin with, she was covered in this gunk that was like dried egg. All the other calves were fluffy because their mothers had cleaned them. Snowdrop did not look good. Still, we had to feed her, so we just got on with it."

"Which involved *what* exactly?" asked Chloe.

"Twice a day, morning and night, we had to mix this gloopy milk powder in two big buckets. It would never dissolve properly, and by the time we'd finished mixing, we were covered in the stuff. There never seemed to be time to change our clothes because we were so busy with all our other chores, so the milk kind of dried on us and smelled terrible."

“Yuck!” said Chloe, wrinkling her nose. “That sounds disgusting.”

“It took two of us to feed Snowdrop because she wouldn’t even hold up her head. When we put the bottle in her mouth, the milk just poured down her chin because she wouldn’t suck,” her uncle continued. “We couldn’t force it down her throat because she’d choke, so we had to be patient and just let it slowly trickle in. It took an hour to feed her.”

“It sounds awful,” said Chloe.

“The first night of feeding was actually fun,” said Uncle Benjamin. “Grandma set two alarms for us—one went off at midnight and the other at four in the morning. We put coats on over our pajamas and went outside, shining our flashlights through the mist that had come up from the river. It stopped being fun when we had to do it all over again the next morning, plus our other chores, and then do it all again the next night.”

“I’m yawning just thinking about it,” said Chloe.

“We were yawning nonstop,” said her uncle, “which is why I decided to move into the barn to sleep. That way, at least I didn’t have to get out of bed to feed Snowdrop. We’d cleaned her up by then, so she was fluffy enough to sleep next to, and we kept each other warm.”



“You sound as though you’d grown pretty attached to her,” said Chloe.

“Well, that’s the strange thing,” said her uncle. “Eventually I got to like her quite a lot.” He stopped, but it wasn’t a pause to make the story more exciting. Chloe could tell he was thinking deeply about something.

“But I liked Snowdrop in a different way from how Grandma liked the farm animals. The animals were always part of the farm, and she took care of them because she was good to all her animals, but also because that was how she made her living—by raising them and then selling them. I got to like Snowdrop because she depended on me and trusted me to take care of her.”

“You mean you bonded with her?” offered Chloe.

“Yes, Snowdrop and I did bond,” replied Uncle Benjamin thoughtfully. “That’s a great way to describe how it was.”

Chloe let out the breath she’d been holding. This was a good story.

“The weird thing is,” said her uncle, “I didn’t realize just how much we’d bonded until the night of the big storm.”

Chapter 3

Second Chance

“Back then, weather forecasts weren’t as accurate as they are now,” continued Chloe’s uncle. “So the first warning we got that there was a serious storm on the way happened when the wind blew up really strong. Grandma said she hadn’t seen the wind so ferocious in years. She told us we had to secure everything and make sure the animals were safely in the barn.

“Grandpa was really worried, but he had his leg in a cast, so all he could do was give us advice. While Grandma went out to tie things down, Grandpa sent Chelsea and me out to take the goats into the barn and lock the chickens up. The cows in the barn were getting very agitated. Their intuition was telling them just how severe the storm was going to get.

“With all the rushing around, I’d forgotten that I’d left Snowdrop’s pen open earlier so that she could wander around outside in the yard.”



“Could she walk by then?” Chloe asked.

“Oh, sure. She’d gotten really strong in the space of just a few days. As soon as I started sleeping in the barn, she decided she could drink a bottle of milk in just a few minutes.”

“So *was* she outside in the yard?”

“No, she wasn’t. The gate to the yard had blown open, and Snowdrop had vanished. It had started to rain, and it wasn’t just ordinary rain, it was these huge drops that pelted down.”

“So did you go and look for her?” asked Chloe.

“We sure did,” he replied. “At least, Grandma and I did while Chelsea stayed behind with Grandpa. The storm had become a monster, and Grandma was worried that Chelsea might get blown off her feet if she was outside.”

“Did you find Snowdrop?” asked Chloe anxiously.

“Yes, but it took us a long time—almost an hour—and by then, she was wet and cold. In fact, she had hypothermia, and she was huddled in some bushes, too weak to walk.”



“We didn’t know how we were going to get her back to the barn,” Chloe’s uncle continued. “Grandma didn’t think she could lift her, and she said it was too dangerous to drive the tractor across the field.”

“What did you do?” Chloe asked, worried.

“Well, I looked at Snowdrop, and I knew right then that there was no way I was leaving her where she was. I don’t know where I summoned the strength from, but I managed to pick her up. Grandma helped me lift Snowdrop onto my shoulders, and I staggered back across the field with her.”





Uncle Benjamin sighed. “It was really difficult. The ground was sopping wet, and my boots kept sinking into the ground while the wind just got wilder and wilder. Once or twice, it almost blew me right over, even though Grandma was walking in front to block some of the wind’s force. It took us forever to make it back to the house.”

“And was Snowdrop okay?” asked Chloe anxiously.

“She was chilled to the bone. I said I’d lie beside her in the barn to warm her up, but Grandma and Grandpa insisted it was too dangerous to be outside the house. They were afraid the roof might blow off the barn.

“So that night, Snowdrop slept inside the house in front of the fire. I slept beside her, and I remember waking up at around four in the morning and hearing her snuffle for her bottle. When I fixed one for her, she drank it down in just a few slurps. Hearing her drink was the best sound ever.”

Chloe was so relieved that Snowdrop had survived.

“The rest of our time on the farm raced by after that, and when it was time to leave, Snowdrop was skipping around the yard like all the other little calves. She hadn’t lost her individuality, though. She was still the cutest of all the calves, and she recognized me and came for her bottle when she was called.

“The best part was that when she grew up, Grandma and Grandpa didn’t sell her like they did all the other calves. They kept her on the farm so she could have her own calves, and whenever I went to stay, I got to see her.”

“You went back to the farm?”

“Absolutely! Every spring vacation, I was there. Wild horses wouldn’t have kept me away. Not your mom, though. Chelsea didn’t like the farm.”

“She cares about animals, though,” said Chloe. “That’s why she works as a receptionist at the animal welfare center.”

“I guess we have a love of animals in our blood,” said her uncle.

“So was Snowdrop the animal that changed your life forever?” asked Chloe.

“She certainly was.” Chloe’s uncle smiled thoughtfully.



“When I applied for college, I decided to be a vet, and I *know* it was because of my experience of taking care of Snowdrop. Those two weeks on my grandparents’ farm taught me that I wasn’t just good at caring for animals like Grandma was, I also bonded with them in a special way. It’s still the same—whenever an animal needs my help, I don’t just care *for* it, I care *about* it.”

“Maybe I’ll have a life-changing experience while I’m on the farm,” Chloe said, getting excited.

“Maybe you’ll have the pig pens to muck out,” laughed her uncle, “or manure to spread on the garden.”

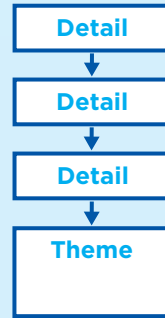
“That could never change my life forever,” said Chloe.

“You never know,” said her uncle with a smile. “You just never know.”

Respond to Reading

Summarize

Summarize how animals are important to Chloe's family in *Saving Snowdrop*. Details from your graphic organizer may help.



Text Evidence

1. What features of this story tell you it's realistic fiction?
GENRE
2. Why did Chloe's uncle decide to become a vet?
THEME
3. Chloe's uncle says on page 10 that "The storm had become a monster." What does this metaphor mean?
METAPHORS
4. Write about the things from the story that shape Chloe's identity. Use details from the story in your answer. **WRITE ABOUT READING**

Compare Texts

Read a poem about some events that shaped the narrator's life.

I Can Do It!

End-of-year school awards night,
the air buzzes with excitement.
A sea of parents hush their voices,
our tummies tingle, our hearts pound,
the year plays fast-forward
through our minds.

Will our names be called?
The school choir sings,
the trophies stand at attention.
Students proudly cross the stage,
and then *my* name is called!
“Rosa enters *every* running race,”
says the principal.
“That deserves an award!”



“Does it?” I ask myself.
Running is so much easier
than struggling to the surface of an icy lake with
your little brother in your arms.
After that, nothing is hard!

“Rosa’s not a stage star,”
says the principal,
“but she acts a part in every play.
That deserves an award!”

“Does it?” I ask myself.
Stage fright is nothing
when you’ve fought to stay afloat
in deep, black winter water.

“Rosa leads a busy life,”
says the principal,
“but she’s always there for others.
That deserves an award!”

“Does it?” I ask myself.
It’s not as hard as
encouraging your family
to keep clinging to a dying boat.

“The trophy for all-around achievement
goes to ... Rosa!” says the principal.
I can see Mom smiling,
but she and I both know
that my biggest achievement
was staying alive when
our sailboat overturned in icy water.
After that, anything else is easy!



Make Connections

The narrator compares the award with real events in her life. How did these events shape the person she is now? **ESSENTIAL QUESTION**

Compare Chloe’s uncle’s life-changing experience in *Saving Snowdrop* with that of the narrator in *I Can Do It!* **TEXT TO TEXT**

Focus on Literary Elements

Alliteration People often think of alliteration as the opposite of rhyme. Rhyming words have the same ending sound, but alliterative words have the same beginning sound. Alliteration isn't just for poetry. Authors use alliteration in stories to help words flow. Alliteration is also fun to use in dialogue when characters are being funny or playful.

Read and Find On page 5, Chloe's uncle describes his experiences on the farm as "dreadfully dire." The author could have written that the experience was "extremely awful," but using the words *dreadfully dire* connects them through alliteration. On page 13, the wind got "wilder and wilder." The author could have said that the wind got stronger and stronger, but the word *wilder* connects to the word *wind* in a way that sounds pleasing to the reader.

Your Turn

Write a menu for a picnic using alliteration. For example, you might bring "pleasing peanut butter sandwiches" or "lickable lollipops" for a final treat. Be creative with your menu. Share your marvelous menu with the class. Use your menu to help you write a short alliterative story about a family or a group of friends who go on a picnic together.

Literature Circles

Fiction

Thinkmark

Characters

Who are the main characters in *Saving Snowdrop*?

Describe Chloe. What is she like?

Setting

Where did the events in *Saving Snowdrop* take place?

When did they take place?

Sequence of Events

What happened first, then, next, and finally in *Saving Snowdrop*?

Conclusions

What conclusions can you draw about the kinds of things that shape a person's identity?

Make Connections

What connections can you make to the poem? Have you ever experienced an event that changed your life? How was it similar to and different from the poem?

Finding My Place

GR V • Benchmark 60 • Lexile TK

Grade 4 • Unit 6 Week 5

www.mheonline.com

The **McGraw-Hill** Companies

ISBN-13 978-0-02-118924-3

MHID 0-02-118924-2

EAN

9 780021 189243 99701 4



Education