

# Literacy Skills Teacher's Guide for Philip Hall Likes Me. I Reckon Maybe. by Bette Greene

## Book Information

Bette Greene, Philip Hall Likes Me. I Reckon Maybe.

Quiz Number: 131

Dell, 1975

ISBN 0-440-45755-6; LCCN

135 Pages

Book Level: 5.0

Interest Level: MG

Young Beth loves Philip, but that doesn't mean she is averse to competing with him.

**Award:** NCTE Notable Children's Books in the Language Arts; Newbery Honor

**Topics:** Community Life, School; Emotions, Love; Interpersonal Relationships, Friendship; People, African American; READNOW - Demco Media Turtleback Books, Demco Media - Read Now Grades 6-8

## Main Characters

Anne (Annie) Beth's older sister

Benjamin Beth's baby brother

Elizabeth Lorraine Lambert (Beth) the main character; an intelligent twelve-year-old African-American girl

Luther Beth's older brother

Mama and Pa Lambert Beth's parents

Philip Hall Beth's friend and classmate

## Vocabulary

**huaraches** sandals

**illumination** light

**rhinitis** runny nose

## Synopsis

This is the story of one year in the life of an African-American girl who lives on a farm in Arkansas with her mother, father, older sister Anne, and older brother Luther (and later, new baby brother Benjamin). Elizabeth Lorraine Lambert (Beth) is eleven years old at the start of the book and twelve years old at the end. Her family raises turkeys and pigs. The boy that Beth likes, Philip,

lives next door on a dairy farm.

Each of the seven chapters deals with a different event in her life, beginning with events at school and not receiving an invitation to a friend's birthday party, and continuing through solving the mystery of disappearing turkeys, dealing with the disappointment of not being able to have a dog, trying to earn money to go to college, standing up for what's right when she's sold faulty merchandise, rescuing an injured friend, and winning a blue ribbon at the county fair.

Throughout the book, Beth deals with issues involving family, peer pressure, friendship, doing your best, doing what's right, forgiving, and dealing with disappointment.

Written with some Southern dialect included, the book is interesting and easy to read.

## Open-Ended Questions

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

### Initial Understanding

What made Beth walk up the mountain in search of Philip when no one seemed to be interested in her thoughts of where Philip had gone?

*Beth knew Philip well and knew how he thought. Since he was talking about being King of the Mountain while on the bus, she knew that he had probably gone up the mountain to prove he was King of the Mountain. Her friendship with and concern for Philip made her continue to search for him and help him back to the picnic even after she was exhausted and felt as if she couldn't go on.*

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## Literary Analysis

Beth's thoughts and feelings about Philip change frequently during their many adventures. Choose one chapter from the book and describe how her thoughts and feelings change with the events.

*Answers will vary, but most will include descriptions of Beth's attraction to Philip and her frustration with his changing behavior (acting like her friend and then ignoring or insulting her).*

## Inferential Comprehension

At the beginning of the book, Beth wonders if she has been letting Philip be number one because she is afraid he won't like her if she is number one. How do we know Beth decides to do her best even if it means beating Philip?

*During the calf-raising contest, Beth is hoping to win and doing her best to make that happen.*

## Constructing Meaning

Which chapter of the book did you enjoy the most? Why?

*Answers will vary, but should all be supported with the student's reasons for choosing that particular chapter.*

## Teachable Skills

**Recognizing Setting** Beth's home was in Pochontas, Arkansas. The area she lived in is described as being in the country, not too far from some mountains. Her family raised turkeys and pigs; their neighbors had a dairy farm. Have the students gather information about Arkansas. What is the climate? What are the main industries? What is the population, and what percentage of that population is rural? The students can write individual reports about Arkansas or you can divide the class into groups and assign each group a different aspect of Arkansas life to research and present to the class.

**Drawing Conclusions** Sometimes Philip told or showed Beth she was his friend, and sometimes

he ignored her or insulted her. Have the students go through the book and make a list of times when Philip acted as if he liked Beth and a list of the times he acted as if he didn't like her. Have them review the lists and draw a conclusion. Did Philip consider Beth a good friend?

**Understanding Sequence** At the end of the book, we know Philip and Beth are going to the square dance together, but we don't know what happens at the dance. Do they win the contest? Do the other kids tease them? Do they have another disagreement? At the beginning of the book, Philip and Beth are already neighbors and classmates. But this book does not tell us how long ago they met, how they met, or if they liked each other right away. Sometimes authors will write a sequel or a prequel to a book. There are many possibilities for a sequel or prequel to this book. Have the students write a three or four page prequel or sequel to *Philip Hall Likes Me. I Reckon Maybe.*

**Identifying Reading Strategies** After reading *Philip Hall Likes Me. I Reckon Maybe.*, the student should have a fairly good idea how Beth and Philip react to different situations. Beth is smart and determined and likes to gather information (i.e. her research on dogs), solve puzzles (i.e. Why are turkeys missing?), and take action (i.e. picketing Mr. Putterham's store, finding Philip, etc.). Philip is also smart and likes to take action (i.e. picketing Mr. Putterham's store, climbing the mountain, having a relay race, etc.), but is also very concerned with his image (being afraid of being called a sissy, claiming to be King of the Mountain, etc.). Have the students write the first half of a paragraph or two describing a scene with Philip and Beth. Then have the students exchange papers and try to complete each paragraph based on the first half of the paragraph.