Sisters

AUTHOR: Raina Telgemeier
PUBLISHER: Graphix, an imprint of Scholastic, Inc.
COPYRIGHT DATE: 2014
GENRE: Graphic Novel, Autobiography
LEXILE: 290L

SUMMARY:
Sisters is an autobiographical graphic novel. The book contains two story lines. The main story takes place the summer before Raina is to start high school. The family is taking a road trip from San Francisco to Colorado Springs to visit family. The family van’s lack of air conditioning, the absence of her father, and the presence of her siblings are enough for Raina to retreat beneath her headphones.

The second story line is a flashback of Raina’s younger years. She was excited to hear about having a baby sister, but Amara is nothing like she had expected. As the years go by, Amara’s mood-swings make it hard for Raina to have a “normal” relationship with her sister.

BOOKTALK:
The summer before high school, Raina’s family embarks on a road trip for a family reunion. This trip is anything but normal. Raina’s father is staying home and will fly out later, her sister is on the edge of crazy and her brother is, you know, a typical little brother. Her only hope is that she has enough batteries for her Walkman.

AUTHOR’S NAME: Raina Telgemeier

Author’s Website: http://goraina.com/

Other books written by the author:
Smile
Drama
Baby-sitters Club Graphic Novels, #1-4
X-Men: Misfits
CHALLENGING WORDS

especially (p. 3) – (adv.) more than usually
immortal (p. 11) – (adj.) not capable of dying
clamoring (p. 26) – (v.) to become loudly insistent
anatomy (p. 28) – (n.) the parts that form a living being
thicket (p. 37) – (n.) a group of bushes or small trees that grow close together
delicate (p. 55) – (adj.) easily broken or damaged
elapse (p. 63) – (v.) to pass by
luxurious (p. 68) – (adj.) very comfortable and expensive
altitude (p. 104) – (n.) the height of something (such as an airplane) above sea level
terrarium (p. 144) – (n.) a usually transparent enclosure for keeping and raising plants or small animals indoors
edible (p. 144) – (v.) fit to be eaten
mortified (p. 193) – (v.) to cause (someone) to feel embarrassed and foolish

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. On page three, Amara upsets Raina by mentioning “the incident.” How do you think this will affect the road trip?

2. When Raina’s Walkman runs out of batteries, she must decide on how best to spend her $5. If you were Raina, for what reason would you choose to use your money - to buy the batteries or to buy snacks for the rest of the trip?

3. Raina is excited to see her cousin, Lindsey, but is surprised by how much she has changed over the years. Have you ever been excited about an event but were disappointed with the results? What happened?

4. The return trip from Colorado Springs to San Francisco takes a turn for the worse when they experience a flat tire. While their mother is out getting help, “the incident” forces the girls to work together. How does this change the remainder of the trip?

5. At times, Raina regrets wishing for a little sister but she appreciates Amara after their trip. Have you ever felt this way about a sibling? What has he/she done to change your feelings?

ACTIVITIES WITH STANDARDS:

Language Arts:

- Use the graphic story starter from http://www.scholastic.com/raina/sisters/pdfs/Finish_the_Story.pdf. Focus on dialogue between each character. Show how each character will respond to the event outside the van through speech or thought bubbles.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.3.B Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.
Social Studies:

- Using a map of the United States, identify the fifty states and their capitals. (Google Images has a multitude of printable or blank maps to use. This links to a worksheet with a list of states and capitals to write in a blank: http://www.education.com/worksheets/article/50-state-capitals/) Search for state nicknames using a print source or a website such as:
  - http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0854968.html

Explain how these nicknames describe the culture of the state.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7** Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

Others:

- Use a software or online program such as http://marvel.com/games/play/34/create_your_own_comic to create a comic book page in the style of Raina Telgemeier’s books. The page should be a memoir and reflect a specific event in your life.

**Indiana Academic Standards for Visual Arts 4.6.2** Create artwork that communicates personal ideas, experiences, or emotions.

**RELATED INTERNET SITES:**

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SsEXPhq0aIU Book ad, narrated by Raina Telgemeier. The images are all from the book. 30 seconds.
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iqy49S48tEQ Also a book ad, but one focusing on the author while she’s talking about the book. 1 minute 35 seconds.

**ACTIVITY SHEET CREATED BY:**
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