

A Classroom Guide for

***The Santa Cruz Mountain Boys:
The Bookmark***

Grades 5-8

Based on the novel written by G. Hardy

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guide is to assist the classroom teacher or literary resource teacher in promoting critical thinking skills and improving comprehension skills in the reader. The pace of the story is fast with few tangents or sidebars. The author formatted the story to carry a fast pace and maintain the interest of the target audience, reluctant reader boys.

A web site has been developed to further assist the classroom teachers and literacy instructors. The web site was designed to be user friendly with printable activities and well as mini-posters for your students use. An online survey has also been created in order to receive feedback from teachers and students.

About the Author

G. Hardy was born into an Army family in El Paso, Texas. He spent most of his childhood in a suburb of Washington, D.C., before moving to Morgantown, West Virginia to pursue a business degree with an emphasis in German studies at West Virginia University.

After spending some time on active duty with the United States Army, he moved to Colorado where he earned his Colorado Teachers License and earned a Masters Degree in Education from Regis University.

Hardy currently teaches at Holmes Middle School in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He resides in Colorado Springs with his wife and children.

The Santa Cruz Mountain Boys is the third book written by Gary Hardy. His goal for writing is to provide life lessons with an entertaining format which teaches kids the values of honesty, loyalty, respect, and perseverance.

The Santa Cruz Mountain Boys
The Bookmark

PLOT SUMMARY

The setting is in the Santa Cruz Mountains of northern California, near the San Francisco Bay Area. The main character, Ricky Cardenez, is a Mexican-American teen that has grown up longing for the father that he never had the chance to know. Ricky's father, Ricardo (Rico) Cardenez Sr., was a firefighter who lost his life saving others during the worst flood of the century in Redwood Valley, California.

Ricky has many characteristics similar to his fathers. Helping others is one of his characteristics, which places him in peril with the middle school bullies. Ricky comes to the defense of the middle school weakling, which becomes the cause for Ricky himself to be bullied at school. Ricky endures the harassment by choosing not to fight. Though he is quite capable of defending himself, he honors a promise to his mother to not fight. She urged him to "smart" his way out of bad situations, just the way that his father did.

Just when he is at his wits end, being harassed by the bullies more than ever, a mysterious old man appears. The man gives Ricky a bookmark that was fashioned from an angel's feather. It's not just any ordinary bookmark though, it's living. The man, named Redhorse, tells Ricky that the bookmark has magical powers that will allow him to adventure in and become a part of any book where the bookmark is placed.

Ricky accepts the gift from the old man. At first, Ricky doesn't believe the old man's claim of the bookmark's power, until he accidentally uses the bookmark to go into his California History book. Startled by the first bookmark adventure, Ricky convinces his friend Jordi (the middle school weakling), to go on an adventure with him. Ricky partly hopes to have fun with the bookmark, but also wants another witness to the bookmark's power.

Ricky and Jordi travel into a couple different books together. After traveling before school one morning, Ricky and Jordi show up late for school. On their way into school, they are intercepted by the bullies. Yet again, Bo, the leader of the bullies,

threatens to throw Ricky and Jordi in the school dumpster. Ricky's tolerance for the bullying is about to peak. He manages to avoid fighting one more time, but his resistance is weakening. Ricky and Jordi leave the bullies and head into school.

Ricky and Jordi complete the school day without any further incidences. After school, they meet by the lockers and walk outside the school building on their way home. As they begin their walk home, the bullies approach them. The bullies continue the harassment from earlier, yet meet resistance from both Ricky and Jordi. Upon threatening to throw Ricky and his bag in his locker, Jordi tells the bullies about the bookmark. Naturally the bullies don't believe Jordi's story of a magic bookmark. To the annoyance of Ricky, Jordi presses on in telling the bullies about the bookmark. Ricky reminds Jordi that Redhorse warned of foolishness with the bookmark. Jordi challenges the bullies to take an adventure with the bookmark and they accept. Ricky resists until Bo calls him a mamma's boy. Ricky agrees to let one of them adventure with he and Jordi. They choose to adventure into the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. Zach, one of the bullies, does not follow Ricky's directions and gets captured by the giant.

Ricky sends Jordi out of the adventure to find help in order to rescue Zach. Bo goes back in the story with Jordi, and together with Ricky; they rescue Zach as a team. While rescuing Zach though, Ricky gets captured by the giant. Bo and Zach try to leave Ricky behind until Jordi reminds Bo that Ricky sacrificed himself for Bo's friend. What Jordi says, triggers something in Bo's memory to go back with Jordi and rescue Ricky.

After going back in to rescue Ricky, Bo single-handedly takes on the giant in order to rescue Ricky. After they leave the adventure, Ricky asks Bo why he came back to help. Bo tells Jordi and Ricky, that it was because a brave firefighter once sacrificed himself to save Bo and his mom during the great Redwood Valley flood. This is the moment where Ricky, Jordi, and Bo realize that it was actually Ricky's father who died while saving Bo. Bo's shock and remorse for mistreating Ricky and Jordi is overflowing. Together, they come up with the idea to use Rico's old journal in order for Ricky to meet him. Ricky decides that if he can't ever have his dad, he could at least use the bookmark to meet his father. They attempt to go into his journal and meet Rico as a seven year old on a playground at school. They are struck by the realization that they can use the bookmark for endeavors like this.

Soon after, Ricky gets the notion to use the bookmark and journal to go back in time to the Redwood City flood and rescue Rico. They plan to glue the newspaper article about the flood and Rico's death into the journal. They hope that once the article is a permanent fixture in the journal, it can be used to adventure into the flood.

Ricky, Jordi, and Bo team up for one last adventure. After acquiring and preparing the new rescue equipment, they go back in time to the flood. At the flood, Ricky offers to let Rico use the special equipment. Rico is too focused on the rescue to take the time to put on new equipment. As Rico bounds into the floodwaters only repeating history, Ricky puts the rescue equipment on and goes after him. Rico delivers the mother and newborn to the helicopter's rescue basket in the nick of time. Soon after, he and Ricky are again sent into the floodwaters as the car washes away. Together they hang on to Ricky's rescue line until they are dragged by truck out of the waters.

After leaving the flood adventure, Ricky, Jordi, and Bo wait at home to find out if they re-wrote history and saved Rico in the flood. As their curiosity peaked, the three boys saw Rico's truck pull into the driveway. Ricky dashed out to meet the truck and hug the father he always wanted to know.

Strap on your seatbelt and join the exciting adventures with Ricky, Jordi, and Bo, the modern day knights known as the Santa Cruz Mountain Boys!

Chapter Summaries

The Ultimate Sacrifice: A firefighter Rico Cardenez dies while attempting to rescue a pregnant lady in the worst flood in California History. Rico's wife was pregnant with their first child(a boy). She is forced to raise the child alone.

1) **Bully Trouble:** Rico's son, Ricky, has very similar traits of his father. He gets hassled by the bullies in school after coming to the rescue of the school weakling. The harassment increases until Ricky is almost at his wits end. Though tired and frustrated from the bullying, Ricky loyalty to his friend remains true.

2) **Sticks and Stones:** Jordi is the school weakling. A nice kid lacking in stature who finds himself on the receiving end of bullying. Jordi and Ricky discuss the bullying situation and how they wish it could all go away. Ricky tells Jordi that he is on the verge of giving in to the bullies and fighting them. Jordi thanks Ricky for the daily price of friendship in protecting him. Ricky reminds Jordi that real friends look out for each other. Ricky and Jordi both jest about how they wish they could magically make the bullying go away.

As their teacher enters the classroom, they prepare for a history presentation on an everyday hero. Jordi convinces Ricky that they should both volunteer to be the first to perform the presentation.

On his way to the front of the class, Bo(who is also in the same history class with Ricky and Jordi) shouts out and is removed from class. The Santa Cruz Mountain Boys is the self appointed nickname of the gang of bullies in school. Bo, Zach, and Matt, are the guys that spend the bulk of their school days to skipping class, stirring up trouble, and harassing Ricky and Jordi.

3) **Everyday Heroes:** The bulk of this chapter focuses on the details presented by the history teacher Mrs. Sinton on the everyday hero's presentations. She asks for volunteers and is pleased to announce that Ricky wrote the best paper in the class. Ricky now feels very self-conscious and sinks deep in his seat as Mrs. Sinton raves about his project.

4) **Joe Vierra's Raiders:** Jordi presents his report to the class on a military hero. The hero's name is Joe Vierra, the leader of an Army unit that fought in Europe in World War II. Joe Vierra and his unit, nicknamed the Santa Cruz Mountain Boys defeated the Nazi's in the small town of Pizzutti, Italy.

5) **The Forgotten Hero:** Ricky's presentation is on the Forgotten Hero, the firefighter's that have died in the line of duty. He places pictures of various firefighters on the board to be viewed by other students during his presentation. He never mentions that his father is a forgotten hero.

Upon completion of his presentation, Mrs. Sinton is moved to tears and leads a class discussion on the forgotten hero's. She halts the presentations and assigns the students to write a letter to a Forgotten Hero.

As class lets out, Ricky and Jordi walk out of the room and Jordi is tripped by Bo. Ricky steps on Bo's hand and prepare's for a fight until Mrs. Sinton steps in and sends Bo to the office.

6) **Ricky's Letter:** After school, Ricky goes to the library to complete his homework. He writes a letter to his forgotten hero, his father. As he writes the letter, he finally comes to terms with the fact that his father did the right thing. Ricky mentions in the letter that he now understands that father didn't really choose the lady in the flood over him. Ricky thanks his father for being a hero that he is so proud of.

7) **A Helper:** After writing the letter, Ricky begins the long lonely walk home. As he gets outside and turns the corner at the back of the school, he is suddenly tripped off his feet by Bo and the SCMB(Santa Cruz Mountain Boys).

Ricky is dazed and stunned from hitting his head on the dumpster. He helplessly watches as Bo throws his backpack in the dumpster. A mysterious stranger appears which scares off the bullies. The man helps Ricky get to his feet and pulls Ricky's bag out of the dumpster. He takes Ricky inside the school and gives Ricky an eagle feather that he claims is magic. He explains to Ricky that when used properly, the feather can be used as a magic bookmark. The bookmark can allow him to travel into any book where the bookmark is placed.

Ricky politely thanks the old man for the bookmark and leaves the school headed toward his home. As Ricky walks home, he thinks about the old man and the bookmark and wonders if the whole story could actually be true.

8) **The Angel of Peace:** Redhorse tells Ricky the story of the feather's origin. He tells Ricky that the feather was given to a peasant over a thousand years ago in the lands now known as Mexico. An angel of peace visited in the middle of the night. The angel gave the peasant stern warnings about a threat to him and his villagers. The angel left the feather as a sign of his visit and promised that if the peasant heeded the warnings and followed his guidance, no harm would come to him. After telling Ricky about the living angel's feather, Redhorse presents Ricky with it. Redhorse transfers the feather to Ricky and pronounces him to be the 'carrier'. Redhorse tells Ricky that he is now the carrier of the feather's power.

Redhorse explains to Ricky that the angel promised to protect the peasant and honor his descendants for generations to come. He expresses to Ricky that the feather has been passed down through generations for over a thousand years. Ricky is skeptical and confused at the thought of holding a thousand year old living feather in his hand that was given to his ancestors from an angel of God. He tells Redhorse thank you and goes home.

9) **The Adventure Begins:** After Ricky gets home from school he does his normal routine of chores and then homework. While sitting down to do his homework, Ricky's

curiosity about the mysterious feather grows. Ricky stifles his curiosity about the feather until his dog Gunner sniffs and scratches and becomes overwhelmed with fear of the feather. Ricky is surprised at his dog's fear and takes the bookmark out of the bag and lays it on top of his history book. Feeling ridiculously silly about the whole situation, Ricky begins to mock the old Native American man and the feather. He places the feather in the middle of his history book, and closes it. He ceremoniously holds the book with the feather in the air and shouts that he wants to become part of the book.

The next thing Ricky realizes is that he was knocked off of his feet by an explosion. The explosion was caused by a Nazi hand grenade that was meant for an American Soldier named Joe Vierra. Joe helps Ricky get up off the floor and introduces himself. Ricky suddenly realizes that he is actually in his California History book. He is now living what he has read about in history class. As Ricky and Joe introduce themselves, they are suddenly discovered and taken prisoner by a German soldier. The German soldier does not speak English, which helps Joe recruit Ricky's assistance in pushing the button on a fuse that is connected to explosives meant to destroy a Nazi weapons bunker.

Ricky discretely pushes the button on the switch and blows up the bunker. Joe informs Ricky that they need to quickly get out of the area before the whole place explodes. Joe sneaks back to his troops while Ricky leaves in the opposite direction. Ricky decides to exit the situation and follow Redhorse's advice in trying to return home. Ricky instantly exits the book and finds himself back home sitting on his backyard deck. He is spooked by the experience and throw the book and bookmark away from his reach.

10) **How do you know when you're crazy?** After discovering that the magic bookmark is real, Ricky hops on his bike headed to school to find Redhorse. When Ricky reached the school he was greeted by locked doors and nobody around. He would have to wait until school the next day to talk with Redhorse.

The shock of the whole experience leads Ricky to wonder if he is losing his mind. He wonders how a magic bookmark could be real? He considers telling the authorities about the bookmark but realizes that noone would likely believe him. He figures that the person most likely to believe him would be his friend Jordi. Ricky decides that Jordi would be the only person he would share the secret with.

Though he is content with talking to Jordi about it the next day, Ricky still wonders if he might be losing his mind.

During dinner, Ricky makes a flippant comment to his mother. He asks her if people see any signs before they go crazy. Her natural motherly instinct is to question if he is using drugs or is involved in something illegal. Ricky assures his mother that he is okay, but something strange happened at school and it is making him question his sanity. His mother asks him what is bothering him, but he pleads with her not to make him tell.

She assures him that she trusts him enough to let her know if he needs her help. He promises to let her know if he gets in a situation that he can't handle.

Ricky can't stop thinking about the bookmark and all of the possibilities that it may present. He has a hard time sleeping that night because of all the excitement with the bookmark.

11) **Jordi Wakes Up:** Though he has a bad nights sleep, Ricky leaves for school earlier than normal. He goes to Jordi's house and wakes Jordi up by telling the story of the magic bookmark. He reminds Jordi that they asked for some type of magic and that now they have it. Jordi rolls over and tries to go back to sleep. Jordi tells Ricky to stop trying to fool him, but is assured that Ricky is telling the truth.

Ricky begs Jordi to get dressed so they can use the magic bookmark on an adventure. After giving up on sleep, Jordi tells Ricky to go downstairs and wait while Jordi gets ready for school. After coming downstairs, Ricky has Jordi choose the story out of a childrens' fairy tale collection. Feeling insulted by being offered a childrens story, Jordi chooses the Three Pigs. Ricky explains the process of adventuring as Jordi listens in a mocking way.

The two boys count to three and open their eyes. Jordi is shocked to learn that he is looking a talking pig in the eyes. He is dazed and confused as he sees the big bad wolf stalking the home.

Somewhat freaked out at the situation, Jordi requests that they go back home. Ricky obliges him and they exit the book. Shocked and excited at the opportunity, Jordi asks Ricky if they can go on one more adventure. Ricky hesitates at first, but soon is convinced to make one more adventure.

12) **THE MAX BROADWATER EXPERIENCE:** The Max Broadwater Experience is a biography about a teenage boys experience with racism and discrimination in the 1940's. Though Ricky agreed to adventure one more time, he is very concerned about getting stuck in one of the adventures. He reminds Jordi that he doesn't know if there is a time limit on the bookmark. He tries to convince Jordi that they should just wait until they can talk to Redhorse about it.

Jordi expresses to Ricky that he really wants to meet Max Broadwater and help him at a crucial period in his life. The two boys travel back to the 1940's where some white kids are playing ball. The ball field was a white's only field. No matter how much Max pleaded with them to let him play ball they wouldn't let him until Jordi negotiated a secret bet. Jordi bet the white kids one hundred dollars that he, Ricky, and Max would beat the team of seven white kids in the game. After making the bet with the biggest of the white kids, Jordi told Ricky about the game and bet.

Ricky was furious with Jordi as they still didn't know if there was a time limit on the bookmark adventures. Ricky was still afraid of getting stuck in a book. Jordi convinced Ricky that they needed to help Max in his time of need. Jordi reminded Ricky that he had always made the right decision to help someone in his or her time of need.

Ricky finally agrees to play the ball game with hesitation. Max, Ricky, and Jordi won the game 7-2. Max played an incredible game and made three single-handed triple plays. Max and one of the white kids named Jackson Dean met after the game.

Jackson apologized for not letting Max play and promised that it would never happen again. They grow up to be lifelong friends and actually make it to the major leagues.

After the game, Ricky and Jordi head back home. When they get there, Ricky affirms to Jordi that they did the right thing in helping Max. Ricky tells Jordi that it took a lot of guts to stand firm in his beliefs.

13) **Late for school:** After returning from their adventure, Ricky and Jordi sit awed and dazed at their experience. Though they are late for school, they are tired from the early morning ball game with Max Broadwater.

They decide to find Redhorse and get more information about the bookmark. In particular, they want to know if there are any special conditions that go along with the bookmark.

On their approach to school they are met by Bo and the bullies. The bullies threaten to throw Ricky and Jordi in the dumpster. Ricky stands his ground. Bo tells Ricky that they will get him in the dumpsters after school.

14) **Questions:** Ricky and Jordi sneak around school while trying to be seen by teachers or faculty because they are extremely late to school. When they find Redhorse, Ricky finally gets to clear up some of the concerns about the bookmark. Redhorse tells Ricky that there are no time limits on the bookmark and that anyone can adventure with Ricky. Redhorse does warn them again about the type of adventure they take. He also warns them to be careful whom they take on their adventures. Redhorse again warns Ricky about dark hearts, meaning people who could make the adventure dangerous by their behavior. The boys head to class after meeting with Redhorse. Before they split up, Jordi reminds Ricky to not let the bookmark out of his sight.

15) **The Challenge:** After school, the boys again meet up with and are challenged by Bo and the bullies. Bo postures himself to try throwing Ricky and his bag in the dumpster. Jordi, who is feeling pumped up from the Max Broadwater Experience gets in Bo's face and threatens to throw Bo and his buddies in the dumpster if they touch Ricky's backpack. At first, Bo is taken aback at Jordi's newfound courage. Jordi and Ricky stand their ground.

Bo's curiosity about something valuable being in the backpack grows. Jordi tells Bo that Ricky has something in his backpack that would make them run home screaming like little babies. Bo continues to push Jordi's buttons until Jordi finally tells them that Ricky has a magic bookmark.

Bo doesn't believe Jordi, but Jordi persists in telling the bullies about the bookmark. Ricky grows frustrated at Jordi for being so irresponsible. Ricky reminds Jordi of the warnings given by Redhorse. Jordi is passed the point of no return. His years of frustration and bullying surface all at once. Jordi challenges Bo and the bullies to adventure with the magic bookmark.

Ricky's frustration develops into anger at Jordi. Bo senses Ricky's frustration and begins pushing Ricky's buttons. Ricky's anger causes him to give in and allow one person to adventure with he and Jordi. Bo selects Zach to adventure. The disbelieving Zach chooses the story of Jack and the Beanstalk to adventure in.

Ricky and Jordi give Zach instructions on how to adventure safely. Zach doesn't adhere to the rules and is captured by the Giant in the story. Though Jordi wants to leave

Zach behind for not following their guidance, Ricky tells Jordi to use the bookmark to get Bo in order for them to rescue Zach.

16) **Teamwork:** Bo returns to the story only to find out that the magic bookmark is real. He is shocked to hear Zach's screams as he is really trapped by the giant. Ricky tells Bo and Jordi that his plan to rescue Zach is based on using the golden egg to hit the giant and cause him to drop Zach. Ricky hopes that some of the tips given him by Max Broadwater will help him make a good connection on the giant's head. After the giant drops Zach, all four boys plan to meet and exit the adventure. Ricky hits the giant well enough, but Zach's ankle gets hurt after the giant drops him. Ricky diverts the giant enough for Zach to get away, but the giant captures Ricky as a result.

Much to his surprise, Jordi, Zach and Bo leave Ricky in the adventure and return to the library. Jordi calls Bo a sissy and reminds Bo that Ricky sacrificed himself for Bo's friend. Something about what Jordi said triggered Bo to go back and help rescue Ricky.

When Bo and Jordi return, Ricky tells them that the giant has him in the kitchen. They have no rescue plan until Bo uses his cigarettes to light the giant's shoes and socks on fire. As the giant's shoes go up in flames, he drops Ricky and they escape.

Ricky thanks Bo for coming back to help him when they get back to the library. Ricky asks Bo why he decided to come back and help. Bo answers by telling Ricky and Jordi how his mom was rescued by a firefighter in the Redwood City flood who sacrificed his life for them. Ricky shocks Bo and Jordi by telling them that the firefighter was his father.

Bo apologizes and begs for Ricky's forgiveness. Ricky forgives Bo and thanks him again for rescuing Ricky.

An awkward moment ensues as the three wonder where they will go from there. Bo apologizes to Jordi and promises to never harass him again. Jordi accepts Bo's apology with some reservation. The three begin to part company when Jordi comments that he is going home to take a nap. Ricky and Bo affirm that they couldn't sleep now if they tried. Jordi makes a flippant comment that if the adventures didn't tire him out, the story of Ricky's dad did. Ricky is suddenly overcome with the notion that he might be able to use the story of his dad to accomplish a lifelong dream of his. Ricky tells the guys that maybe they can use his dad's journal to adventure in and meet Rico. The three race to Ricky's house to get the journal and adventure one more time.

17) **The Journal:** When they get to Ricky's house, he finds his dad's life journal. They quickly scan through it to find a page to adventure in. They decide on a page that refers to bullying. They begin the adventure on a playground where two boys were bullying seven-year-old Rico. The boys, Kevin and Tommy were harassing Rico for not speaking English well. Ricky comes to the rescue. He offers for Rico to keep his special baseball cards. He also offers to allow Rico to share the cards with Kevin and Tommy if they agree to help him with English and not harass him anymore. Rico, Tommy, and Kevin become friends on that playground.

18) **Lifebook:** After the adventure on the playground, Ricky realizes that they can bring things out of their adventures as well as leave them in. The golden egg and ball cards give him the notion that maybe he, Jordi, and Bo could return to the flood and actually rescue Rico and change history. He ponders the idea of taking something into the Redwood City flood that would help Rico survive. All three agree to take on jobs for the next adventure. Ricky's task is to meet with Redhorse and find out if they can change history without hurting anyone. Bo has the task of going to the firehouse to learn if there are any new pieces of equipment that they might use to rescue Rico. Jordi's task is to surf the internet and thoroughly research the flood.

19) **At the Firehouse:** Bo approaches the firehouse sheepishly and meets with the fire captain. Bo tells the captain that he is doing research for a school report on the great flood. The captain becomes teary eyed and tells Bo the story of the flood. He informs Bo that he was at the flood and lost his best friend, Rico. The captain tells Bo about Rico and how they met on the playground as friends. Bo realizes that the captain is Kevin. The captain tells Bo that they now use a special bracket-pulley during their rescues. He tells Bo that the pulley was used in World War II by some American soldiers. One of the soldiers gave him the pulley after the flood.

20) **The Winds of time:** Ricky meets with Redhorse to find out if they could use the bookmark to go back to the flood and rescue Rico. Redhorse informs Ricky that they are in a special window where the winds of time are blowing twice. Ricky again asks if he rescues his father that he won't affect the future too much. Redhorse answers him by telling him that the story of life is much greater than one event.

21) **Making history:** After completing their tasks, the three boys get together at Ricky's house to plan and conduct their next mission. At Ricky's house, Bo tells he and Jordi that the Captain is one of the boys from the playground so long ago. Bo gives Ricky the pulley that the Captain loaned him. He tells Ricky that the Captain said that the pulley would have ensured Rico's survival. Jordi confirms his internet research and agrees that the pulley is the best tool for the rescue. Ricky tells the guys that he spoke with Redhorse and received the go ahead in rescuing his father.

22) **The Flood Revisited:** The boys return to the flood and are amazed at how powerful the storm actually is. They find Rico and Kevin, as Rico is about to enter the water on his way to rescue the lady in the car. Ricky runs over to Rico and offers the creek pulley. Rico refuses the pulley as he is afraid that there is not enough time to get geared up. He is afraid that the car will wash out before he gets there.

Rico enters the water and is followed by Ricky who is strapped in with the creek pulley. By the time Ricky gets to the car, the baby has already been delivered. Rico is shocked to see Ricky at the car, but uses his assistance to get her and the baby safely out of the car.

As soon as the chopper arrives, Ricky and Rico get the lady and baby safely in the rescue basket. The chopper takes the mother and child away while Ricky and Rico plan the next step. Ricky hooks Rico up to the creek pulley just in time as the car washes out. They are pulled to safety. As soon as they are out of the water, Rico recognizes Ricky as

they guy who helped him on the playground many years ago. Rico asks if Ricky is a guardian angel. Ricky promises to explain it to him later, referring to if and when Rico makes it home from the flood. The three boys bid Rico farewell and head back home.

23) **Rico Returns:** After the boys return home from the adventure, they sit in awe of the experience. They question each other about what will happen next. They come up with the idea to call the firehouse to see if Rico is there. They are notified that he is no longer there as they see him pull in the driveway at home. Ricky and Rico run to each other and embrace in a never before father/son bear hug. Ricky introduces Rico to Bo and Jordi and explains how they used the bookmark to rescue him. He is confused but accepts their story as they show him the original newspaper clipping of Rico's death in the flood.

24) **Loose Ends:** Excited about having the father that he never knew, Ricky and Rico go to the school to meet up with Redhorse. Ricky wants Redhorse to meet his father and find out what to do with the bookmark. When they get to the building managers office, Redhorse is nowhere to be found. Ricky asks the head building manager where they can find Redhorse. Mr. Scott, the building manager is confused and tells Ricky that he doesn't have an assistant. Perplexed about the situation, Mr. Scott hands Ricky an envelope with Ricky's name on it. Mr. Scott tells Ricky that the envelope was sitting on his desk when he arrived to school.

Ricky and Rico leave the building headed for home. After getting home, Ricky runs to his bedroom and opens the envelope to find a letter from Redhorse. The letter from Redhorse congratulates Ricky on making good choices and helping people. Redhorse also mentions that the Winds of Time continue to blow. Ricky wonders if he can still with the bookmark. Redhorse also confuses Ricky by writing that he is a helper for the great maker.

Upon encouragement from his father, Ricky and Rico plan to bury the feather in a nearby Indian reservation in the coming days.

25) **New Horizons:** This chapter ties up loose ends. It discusses the changes that each boy experience in their own lives. The change that Ricky experiences is having the father that he always wanted. He and his dad have been spending lots of time together. Partly to make up for lost time, but also to fill Rico in on some of the details that he is still not remembering. Rico's memory continues to be flooded with details from the thirteen years.

Jordi's major life change is to finally be able to enjoy school without the fear of being bullied. He also gets to now enjoy his locker. The principal even allows Jordi to keep a boombox in his locker to make up for lost time. Jordi enjoys the newfound friendship with Bo.

The most significant change for Bo is that he has real, true friends that he can depend on. He is also no longer in search of trouble on a daily basis. Bo confides in Jordi that he caused so much trouble as a result of anger issues that stemmed from his parents divorce. Bo again apologizes to Jordi for all of the suffering that he caused and promised to cover Jordi's back forevermore. Jordi affirmed to Bo that he can count on Jordi and Ricky through any issues that arise.

Bo wonders hypothetically if the bookmark adventures are truly over. He really enjoys being one of the “good guys” and wants to continue helping people. Jordi also hopes to continue the adventures, but reminds Bo that Ricky and Rico need some time to be father and son for the time being. They decide to wait a couple weeks or so to discuss continuing the adventures with Ricky.

Pre-Reading Activities and Discussion Questions

- 1) Writing Prompt: Imagine someone gave you a magic bookmark. What book would you choose?
- 2) Vocabulary: 1) gullable 2) wash-out 3) safe zone
- 3) Discussion Questions: Have you ever seen anyone risk their own safety to help another person?
- 4) Have you ever seen someone bullied?
- 5) Have you ever been bullied?
- 6) Why do you think some people are bullies?
- 7) How do people become bullies?
- 8) What are strategies to deal with bullies?

Sections

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Chapters 6-8

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Chapters 9-12

Section 4
Chapters 13-17

Section 5
Chapters 18-22

Section 6
Chapters 23-25

Section 1

Quiz

Chapters 1-3

1) Why was Ricky bullied? _____

2) T or F: Everyday hero's don't always know that they are hero's. _____

3) What item did Ricky carry in his pocket for good luck? _____

4) What did Bo and his gang call themselves? _____

5) What happened to Rico during the flood? _____

6) T or F: Jordi carried a briefcase instead of a backpack. Why? _____

7) T or F: Jordi's real name is Nellis Franklin Jordan. _____

8) What is a wash-out? _____

7) What happened to Rico's safety line? _____

10) Why did Rico feel that they needed to hurry to the wash-out? _____

Thinking Activity

If you were to retell these chapters to a friend, think about the ten most important events that occurred in these chapters.

- 1) Write them down in a column.
- 2) After listing the events, prioritize them from 1-10 according to which you find the most important.

Have students share and discuss their findings.

Modes of Writing

Descriptive writing activity

- 1) Imagine that you are a firefighter called to the rescue scene. Write a paragraph or two describing the call, the scene, the rescue, the storm.

Persuasive Writing Activity

- 1) Write a paragraph or two convincing fellow students to band together in standing up to bullies.

Integrating the Arts into Curriculum

1) Drawing:

Draw a picture of how you would imagine one scene in the chapters would appear. After drawing the pictures, list the characters, setting, and explain the significance as well as your interpretation of the scene.

2) Role Playing:

Organize the students into small groups of two to four students. Have them plan, organize, and conduct two-minute skits that demonstrate ways to deal with bullies.

Section 2

Quiz

Chapters 6-8

- 1) T or F: Joe Vierra's Raiders were soldiers in World War II. _____
- 2) What is the name of the helper? _____
- 3) Who is the forgotten hero? _____
- 4) Who did Ricky write the letter to? _____
- 5) How did Ricky's backpack end up in the dumpster? _____

- 6) What did the old man give Ricky? _____

- 7) How many years has the bookmark been around?(approx) _____
- 8) What did the angel of peace leave as a sign for the peasant? _____

- 9) T or F: The holocaust is a historical event in which the Jews were persecuted by the Nazis in Germany. _____
- 10) Why was Bo not a part of the classroom presentations? _____

Writing Activities

- 1) Discuss the word, “hero” with your students. Have the students explain what it means to be a true hero as compared to what popular culture glamorizes as heroes.

- 2) Have the students list as many hero’s (by name if possible) in two minutes. After listing the hero’s, have the students choose one and write a thank you letter to that hero. After completing the letters have students share and discuss the similarities and differences between the various heroes chosen. Do the students see any common traits surface?

Thinking Activity

Have students create a reverse quiz. A reverse quiz is a quiz in which the students create and write the quiz questions, 5-10 questions, depending on the student. The teacher chooses one question from each student's quiz and uses those questions on a final oral quiz.

Modes of Writing

1) Narrative: Instruct the students recall the story of Joe Vierra's raiders also known as the Santa Cruz Mountain Boys. Have the students write a historical documentary narrative about the Santa Cruz Mountain Boys.

2) Expository: Have students explain their interpretation of the following lifeskills: Persistence, loyalty, perseverance, patience, kindness.....

3) Have the students write a paragraph describing Joe Vierra, the leader of the Santa Cruz Mountain Boys

Character Traits

Have the students list five characters from the story and list at least four character traits for each. Hint for students: All characters in stories have traits which define them. I.e. behaviors, words, thoughts, feelings, and actions.

1)
CHARACTER: _____

DEFINING
TRAITS: _____

2)
CHARACTER: _____

DEFINING
TRAITS: _____

3)
CHARACTER: _____

DEFINING
TRAITS: _____

4)
CHARACTER: _____

DEFINING
TRAITS: _____

5)
CHARACTER: _____

DEFINING
TRAITS: _____

Section 3

Quiz

Chapters 9-16

- 1) T or F: The angel's feather had been passed down for over a thousand years?__
- 2) T or F: Ricky's first reaction to the feather was he thought it was a trick being played on him by someone. _____
- 3) What happened when Ricky first put the feather in his history book and mocked the old man? _____

- 4) Write one adjective that describes Ricky and explain why you chose that adjective. _____

- 5) Why is the bookmark called a "living bookmark"? _____

- 6) T or F: Joe Vierra's Raiders were also known as the Santa Cruz Mountain Boys. _____
- 7) How many adventures did Ricky take by himself? _____
- 8) What book did Ricky take Jordi into for Jordi's first bookmark adventure? _____

- 9) Who is Max Broadwater? _____

- 10) What bet did Jordi make with the white kids for them to allow Max Broadwater to play ball? _____

Writing Activity

Descriptive Writing

1) Have the students imagine that they are Ricky. Ask them to write a very vivid paragraph about their first experience with the bookmark. Encourage students to utilize the five senses in expressing what they would feel, smell, see, taste, and hear.

Narrative Writing

2) Have the students imagine that they have been given a living bookmark. Instruct them to create their own chapter about their first adventure. Please remind students that book chapter lengths vary within a book, as well as from book to book.

Thinking Activity

Discuss fact and opinion with your students. Have them list seven facts and seven opinions from chapters 9-12.

Hint: A fact is something that is concrete and can be proven. Example: The car is red.(A car's color can be proven)

Opinion: That car is worthless.(The worth of the car depends on the individual person evaluating it. One person's trash is sometimes another person's treasure.

1) Fact: _____

Opinion: _____

2) Fact: _____

Opinion: _____

3) Fact: _____

Opinion: _____

4) Fact: _____

Opinion: _____

5) Fact: _____

Opinion: _____

6) Fact: _____

Opinion: _____

7) Fact: _____

Opinion: _____

Create a Word Find

1) Have the students choose twenty key words from the chapters they have read thus far. After choosing the key words from the section, have the students create a word find using the words.

Art Integration within the curriculum

Provide the students a piece of paper and have them draw their interpretation of one of Ricky's journal experiences. After completing the picture have the students title it and write a brief description of the scene.

Student Interview

SKITS

Instruct the students to role play in pairs. One student will act as a news reporter and the other is a character from the story. Provide the students 5-10 minutes to prepare their skits. After preparing the skits, have the students perform their skits in front of each other.

Section 4

Quiz

Chapters 13-17

- 1) What are the names of the three bullies? _____

- 2) Who told the bullies about the bookmark? _____

- 3) Which bully adventures first? _____

- 4) What happened when Ricky and Jordi took the bully on the adventure? _____

- 5) What warning did Redhorse heed to Ricky about using the bookmark? _____

- 6) What did Redhorse mean when he mentioned foolish hearts? _____

- 7) What happened to the bully in the adventure? _____

- 8) What reason did Ricky give Jordi for not abandoning the bully in the ill-fated adventure? _____

- 9) What item did Jordi take out of the Jack and the Beanstalk adventure? _____

- 10) What did Bo do to the giant in order to rescue Ricky in the adventure? _____

Writing Activity

NARRATIVE WRITING:

- 1) Have the students write a story about your own bookmark adventure. Hint: Remind students that narrative/story writing must have a beginning, middle, and an end.

DIALOGUE AND PERSUASIVE WRITING:

- 2) Write a dialogue about your conversation with a good friend. You are attempting to persuade the friend to believe that you have a magic bookmark. Hint: Remind students that dialogue writing is a conversation and incorporates quotations. Use the example below or provide your own example of dialogue for your students to use as a guide.

Thinking Activity

1) Discuss the meaning of racism and segregation with the students. Lead a classroom discussion on how life would be different if segregation existed today.

2) Encourage students to think back to the Max Broadwater Experience. Have them create a T-chart listing the similarities and differences between the present and the 1940's.

Crossword Puzzle

Have the students create a crossword puzzle from the words listed below, or think of their own list of words from the chapters. Encourage students to use 10-15 words for this exercise.

- 1) Colored
- 2) Segregation
- 3) Broadwater
- 4) Bookmark
- 5) Crop-chopper
- 6) safe-zone
- 7) hooked-up
- 8) patriotic
- 9) Cardenez
- 10) Redhorse

Integrating Art into the Curriculum

Marketing and advertising

Have students design a poster similar to the types of posters they see used in advertising movies. Instruct the students that they need to design a persuasive poster will cause kids to want to see the movie.

Social Studies

CURRENT EVENTS

Discuss some of the thematic elements included in *The Santa Cruz Mountain Boys*. List the thematic elements you and the students think of on the board. Have the students look through old magazines and newspaper to find articles or stories that deal with these issues. After choosing the story or article, have the students write a one paragraph summary on it using the: who, what, when, where, and how format. After writing the summary, have the students create a list of the similarities and differences between the thematic elements of the book and article or story they chose.

Section 5

Quiz

Chapters 18-22

1) What does the term lifebook mean? _____

2) T or F: Our life experiences are sometimes referred to as the chapters in our lifebook. _____

3) Why did Ricky want to change or re-write Rico's lifebook? _____

4) Who did Bo speak with at the Firehouse? _____

5) What was the significance of the person at the Firehouse? _____

6) What did the firefighter want to flip a quarter at the flood? _____

7) What are the winds of time? _____

8) How do the three boys make history? _____

9) What were Ricky's actions at the flood? _____

10) Who did Rico think that Ricky was after they were rescued at the flood? _____

Writing Activity

Have the students create a booklet with several sheets of paper. Instruct the students to create their own journal, one similar to Rico's with paragraph entries on significant events in their lives. This writing activity is a great opportunity for the individual student to express their identity to their teachers.

Create a Timeline

- 1) Have students create a timeline based on ten significant events in the book.
- 2) Have students create a timeline based on significant events in their lives. Encourage them to list at least one event for each year of their life.

Thinking Activity

Discuss the section in the story about the Lifebook. Have the students create a table of contents, title, and the chapters that would be included in their lifebook. After completing the information, have a round table discussion with the class on the various chapter headings that they chose for themselves. (Hint: Please allow students to refer back to the timeline or journal activity to assist them.)

Section 6

Quiz

Chapters 23-25

1) What happened to the journal after the flood? _____

2) How did Ricky learn that they actually changed history? _____

3) Who did Rico say was one of his greatest heroes as a child? _____

4) What happened when Ricky and Rico went to the school to thank Redhorse? _____

5) What did Redhorse leave for Ricky? _____

6) Who did Redhorse say he actually was? _____

7) What do you think Redhorse meant by, "Enjoy your breeze from the winds of time?" _____

8) What does Ricky decide to do with the feather after returning from the flood? _____

9) How did Jordi's life change as a result of the bookmark adventures? _____

10) What was the main reason for Bo to vent his anger on Jordi? _____

Writing Activity

Expository Writing

The last chapter in the book discusses Bo's newfound interest in being a "good guy" and helping people. The author leads the reader to believe that the bookmark adventures won't end after rescuing Rico. Guide your students through a discussion based on making inferences and drawing conclusions around that premise. Encourage your students to share what they think the next bookmark adventures will be. Also, remind your students about the hint in the last paragraph of the book. "A picture, a note, and a small jar of pocket change would be the impetus for Bo to convince Ricky to continue the adventures.

After discussing what your students think will happen in the continuing adventures, have them write an expository paragraph or two explaining what they would do if they had a chance to use the bookmark to help people.

Critical Thinking Activity

Cause and Effect

Lead a round table discussion with your students about the effects of helping people with the bookmark. Encourage them to think “out of the box” in regards to what affect they could impose on someone’s life with something such as the bookmark.

Encourage them to think about how they might change someone’s lifebook. In changing or re-arranging someone’s lifebook, who else might be affected by their generosity.

After introducing and leading the discussion on this activity, have them jot down brainstorming notes of the effect and impact their generosity would have on people.

Integrating Art into the Curriculum

Provide students with an envelope and two blank sheets of paper. Explain to them that they will be creating a “miraculous feather”. They are to draw what they picture the feather would look like and cut it out. They may fringe the feather with scissors as well to make them more realistic.

After designing and cutting out the feather, have the students use the other sheet of paper to write a note to the person that they would like to use the feather to help. Have the students explain the feather’s power and how to use it.

After completing the note, instruct the students to seal the feather in the envelope with the letter and address it.

APPENDIX A

Spelling List

- 1) Epiphany
- 2) Racism
- 3) Segregation
- 4) Rescue
- 5) Helicopter
- 6) Pregnant
- 7) Firefighter
- 8) Mumbling
- 9) Enveloped
- 10) Obnoxious
- 11) Grimaced
- 12) Holocaust
- 13) Forgotten
- 14) Messenger
- 15) Peasant
- 16) Ancestor
- 17) Descendant
- 18) Gimmick
- 19) Adventure
- 20) Booby-trap
- 21) Bookmark
- 22) Ceremonious
- 23) Nazi
- 24) Synagogue
- 25) Briefcase
- 26) Apologized
- 27) Ignorance
- 28) Carrier
- 29) Pulley
- 30) Chopper

APPENDIX B
Vocabulary Words

- 1) Holocaust
- 2) Segregation
- 3) Wash-out
- 4) Safe-zone
- 5) Prejudice
- 6) Ignorance
- 7) Epiphany
- 8) Visualize
- 9) Teamwork
- 10) Loyalty
- 11) Bullying
- 12) Colored
- 13) Inner-City
- 14) Frustration
- 15) Sentimental
- 16) Foolish
- 17) Messenger
- 18) Mortality
- 19) Dispatch
- 20) Haphazard

APPENDIX C Vocabulary Activities

1) Play the “I am/ Who is” vocabulary game. This is a wonderfully interactive game which draws and requires attentiveness from all students participating. The set up for the game is relatively simple. The teacher writes a vocabulary word on the top of a 3 X 5 index card and a definition for a different word on the bottom half of the card. Each student must have at least one card to ensure full participation. Please refer to the example below.

CARD 1

CARD 2

<p>This card will only have the vocabulary definition.</p> <p>Definition: The color that is most often associated with the sky.</p>	<p>Vocabulary Word: BLUE</p> <p>Definition: The color which is most often associated with healthy plants, trees, leaves and other vegetation.</p>
---	---

- 2) Create fill in the blank sentences with the vocabulary word list at the top of the page.
- 3) Words of the Day: Write the words on the board and have students use dictionaries to find the meaning of the words. Have the students share and discuss the meanings.
- 4) Write vocabulary words on the board and have the students write as many synonyms as they can think of.
- 5) Word hunt: Have students look the vocabulary words up in the thesaurus and write down as many as they can within a specified time. Have students share and discuss their results.
- 6) Vocabulary Bee: In addition to spelling each word correctly, the participants must define the words correctly as well.
- 7) Have the students create a word find using the vocabulary words from the story. Puzzles may be duplicated in order to be shared with the entire class.
- 8) Have the students create a crossword puzzle using vocabulary words from the story.
- 9) Word hunt: Divide the class into team and have the students find the vocabulary in the book. Once they find the word, have them identify the location and the definition in context of the story.
- 10) Clue’s game: Have a student give clues about a vocabulary word. The student who guesses correctly gets to give the next clue.

APPENDIX D

Character Analysis

NAME: _____

CHARACTER: _____

1) I imagine the character's physical appearance to be: _____

2) The character displays personality traits such as: (Hint: story character usually demonstrate or provide personality trait evidence such as behavior, words, thoughts, actions, feelings.)

3) Does the character take on a major role in the story? _____

4) What is the character's role in the story? _____

5) What is the major problem or challenge that this character experiences in the story? _____

6) How is the character's problem resolved? _____

7) How does problem resolution affect this character? _____

8) What does this character accomplish as a result of the problem resolution? _____

APPENDIX F

Venn Diagram

Please use the Venn diagram below to distinguish similarities and differences between yourself and a character in the book.

Use the Venn Diagram box below to identify the similarities and differences between yourself and a character in the book.

Name of character: _____

<p><u>Similarities</u></p>	<p><u>Differences</u></p>
-----------------------------------	----------------------------------

APPENDIX G

Cause & Effect

Please use the space below to complete the examples of cause and effect from the story. After completing the examples below, create three of your own examples of cause and effect.

1) When Jordi and Bo were attempting to rescue Ricky, Bo put lit cigarettes in the giant's socks.

Cause: _____

Effect: _____

2) In the original flood scene, Rico goes into the flood without being "hooked up" with the lifeline.

Cause: _____

Effect: _____

3)
Example: _____

Cause: _____

Effect: _____

4)
Example: _____

Cause: _____

Effect: _____

APPENDIX H

Teacher Survey

1) Is The Santa Cruz Mountain Boys a novel that you believe middle school boys would be drawn to reading?

Why? _____

2) Do you believe that you can incorporate this book and teacher's guide in your classroom? _____

3) What thematic elements did you encounter while reading this book? _____

4) What are the strengths of this book and teacher's guide? _____

5) Are there any limitations in this book? If yes, please explain. _____

6) Do you believe that a free web site with down-loadable materials would be an asset for teachers in using this book as a literary unit? _____

7) What recommendations do you have for improving this novel and teacher's guide? _____

8) Do you believe that students would like to utilize a web site on the Santa Cruz Mountain Boys if free pictures, mini-posters, and contact with the author were available to them?

APPENDIX I

The Santa Cruz Mountain Boys Student Survey

1) How was the pace of the book?(steady, slow at first...) _____

2) What did you like about the book? _____

3) If you had a favorite part, what was it and why? _____

4) What type of cover illustration would you recommend for the book? _____

5) If you could change anything about the book, what would it be? _____

6) How does this book compare to other books you've read? Better? Worse? Same?
Etc. _____

7) Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why _____

8) What type of audience do you think is best suited for this book? _____

9) What life lessons or life skills can be learned from this book? Why? _____

10) What type of illustrations do you think would make this book more interesting? _____

11) Would you have any interest in reading more books in this series? _____

12) Could you relate to any of the characters in the book? Do you have similar traits or experiences? _____

13) My favorite character in the book is _____

14) One funny memory from the book is _____

15) Was there any part of the book that had an unexpected twist? _____

16) The most memorable part of the book for me is _____

17) My favorite character and I share similar traits. They are _____

18) If I could use a magic bookmark, the book I would adventure in would be _____

19) Why would you choose this book? _____

20) The Santa Cruz Mountain Boys was better or worse than I expected? Please explain_

APPENDIX J

Answer Key to Section Quizzes

Section 1: Answers vary: 1) Ricky defends the school weakling in confronting the bullies. 2) True 3) A lucky rabbits foot 4) The Santa Cruz Mountain Boys 5) He drowned after rescuing a pregnant lady and her baby. 6) True-It was the only thing that protected his school stuff. 7) True 8) An area that has been flooded or overrun with water. 9) Ricky gave the safety line to the pregnant lady. 10) Rico thought that the lady's car would wash away.

Section 2: Answers vary: 1) True 2) Redhorse 3) Firefighters and police officers who died in the line of duty. 4) His father, Rico. 5) The bullies tripped him and threw the backpack in the dumpster. 6) A living bookmark, An angel's feather, A magic bookmark. 7) One thousand years. 8) An angel's feather 9) True 10) He was kicked out of class for being disruptive.

Section 3: Answers vary: 1) True 2) True 3) He unexpectedly became a part of his history book. He went into his history book. 4) Adjectives vary: honest, loyal, kind etc... 5) It was called a living bookmark because when it is used the person or persons actually get to live the book. 6) True 7) Ricky took one adventure by himself. 8) *The Three Little Pigs* 9) Max Broadwater is the black kid from Chicago who Ricky and Jordi played ball with in the 1940's adventure. 10) Jordi bet the white kids \$100.00 that he, Ricky, and Max would beat the seven white kids in a pick-up game.

Section 4: Answers vary: 1) Bo, Matt, and Zach 2) Jordi told the bullies about the bookmark 3) Zach adventures first 4) Zach went to the wrong place. He visualized something different than what Ricky instructed him to. Zach was captured by the giant. 5) Redhorse warned Ricky to not used the bookmark for selfishness and greed. 6) Foolish hearts was Redhorse's description of people using the bookmark for the wrong purposes. Haphazard and wreckless adventures is what Redhorse meant. 7) The bully was captured by the giant. 8) He told Jordi that he couldn't abandon Zach because his dad didn't abandon people when all was at stake. 9) Jordi brought the golden egg out of the adventure. 10) Bo placed lit cigarettes in the giant's socks and shoes. The giant's socks caught on fire and he dropped Ricky.

Section 5: Answers vary: 1) The term lifebook refers to a person's life story. The unwritten book of someone's life. 2) True 3) Ricky wanted to change history and

actually rescue Rico in the flood. 4) Bo spoke with the fire captain whose name is Kevin O' Malley. 5) Kevin was Rico's partner in the flood. Kevin was also one of the bullies on the playground when Ricky, Jordi, and Bo adventure into Rico's journal. 6) They usually flipped a quarter to see who had to perform the rescue. 7) The winds of time is what Redhorse refers to when he tells Ricky that he can use the bookmark to go back in time and rescue his father. 8) The three boys make history by going back in time to the flood and rescue Rico. 9) Ricky unsuccessfully tried to get Rico to use the new rescue line. Rico was in too much of a hurry and entered the water with only one ill-fated line. Ricky ran upstream and leaped into the water. He got to the car and assisted Rico in the rescue. Ricky gave Rico a rescue line in the 'nick of time' as the car washed out. They were pulled ashore by Kevin. 10) Rico thought or wondered if Ricky was some sort of guardian angel.

Section 6: Answers vary: 1) The journal flickered and vanished from thin air as the boys watched. The boys assumed that the winds of time were blowing. 2) He called the firehouse and was told by Kevin that Rico was on his way home. Ricky saw Rico's truck pull in the driveway as Kevin gave him the news. 3) Max Broadwater 4) Redhorse wasn't there. The building manager told them that he had never heard of a man named Redhorse or had an assistant manager. 5) Redhorse left an envelope/letter on the building manager's desk with Ricky's name on it. 6) Redhorse wrote to Ricky that he was actually a helper for the great maker. Ricky wondered if this meant some type of an angel. 7) Opinions will vary: Redhorse was encouraging Ricky to enjoy his new life experience with his father. 8) Ricky and Rico decide to retire the feather until they receive word from Redhorse on what to do with it. 9) Jordi's life changed drastically. He was safe at school, not bullied anymore, got to use his locker, and had two new best friends. 10) Bo vented his anger on Jordi because he was frustrated at his parents' separation and divorce. Bullying was the only aspect of his life that he controlled.