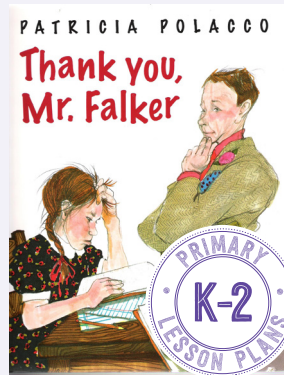


Thank You, Mr. Falker

by Patricia Polacco

Themes

Never Give Up
Determination
Perseverance
Encourage Others



This personal narrative by author Patricia Polacco recounts her early school years. As a child, Patricia struggled to learn to read. It wasn't until she was nearly a teenager that she connected with her teacher, Mr. Falker, who gained her trust and spent countless hours patiently teaching her to read. Today, Ms. Polacco's story shows how important it is to "Never Give Up." Mr. Falker's encouragement and Ms. Polacco's perseverance have resulted in dozens of beautiful books that we can all now enjoy!

Key Vocabulary

Drizzled: *lightly poured over*
Ladle: *a spoon with a little bowl on the end*
Twilight: *time of day when the sky is just barely lit as the sun is setting*
Miracle: *a wonderful or remarkable event or thing*
Torture: *causing pain...sometimes physical, sometimes mental...when something feels too hard to do*
Paragraph: *Several sentences on the same topic*
Odyssey: *a journey or adventure*

Tricky Phrasing

"Have you become a mole?":
small animal that likes to be underground & in the dark
"School was all abuzz":
excitement with everyone whispering or talking about what is happening

Discussion Starters

- 1. Why did grandpa drizzle honey on the book? What did it mean? How did her family feel about reading?**
Family tradition-did it for mother, uncles, brother before her. It was symbolic - The honey is sweet and so is knowledge but knowledge is like the bee that made that sweet honey; you have to chase it through the pages of a book.
- 2. As reading got harder and harder for Trisha she chose to do three things instead of reading. What were they and why do you think she chose each of those things?**
 - 1) *Drawing - because she was good at it*
 - 2) *Sitting and Dreaming - inference...it was easy, she could do it*
 - 3) *Walk with Grandmother - because her grandmother thought she was smart, quick and the dearest thing.*
- 3. Who influenced and encouraged Trisha? How did they influence her?**
Her family, who loved to read books
Kinder friends, who watched her do her magic with the crayons
Mr. Falker (and Miss Plessy), who encouraged her artwork, defended her in front of kids and told them to stop their laughing, believed she could read and helped her step by step learn to read!

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Writing Prompts

Struggles

Write about something you have struggled to learn? How did you feel when you couldn't do it at first? How were you encouraged? What did you do (or can you do) to "never give up" even when it is difficult? How did you feel as you became better at it?

Emotions

Choose any word from the Emotions Word Slide list (printable) and write about a time you felt that way. Include specific descriptions of the event and how it impacted your actions when you felt that way.

Activities

Identifying Changing Emotions

Trisha has many different emotions and feelings throughout the story. Retell the story by going page by page through the book - asking students to choose a word from their Emotions Word Slide that best describes how Trisha is feeling at that moment. Remind them that there isn't just one right answer. Ask "Why" questions and "What makes you think that" questions, encouraging students to find evidence in the text or illustrations to support their responses.

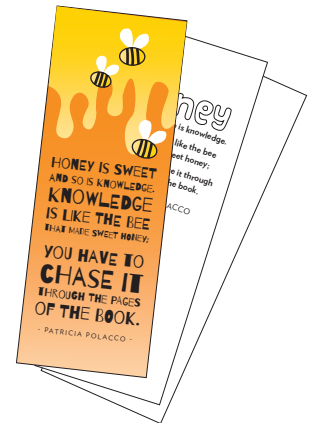
NOTE: *Go through the words on the list to make sure everyone understands each word - allow students to give you their definitions of these words! Encourage them to add their other words too! This is a great list to keep in their writing journals to help with the overuse of words like happy and sad in their writing.*

Bookmark

Use the printable to create inspiring bookmarks that feature the following quote from the book:

"Honey is sweet and so is knowledge. Knowledge is like the bee that made sweet honey; you have to chase it through the pages of the book." - Patricia Polacco

Cut out and color bookmarks. Note: Laminate for extra durability.



PRINTABLE:

Emotion Words Slide

PRINTABLE:

Sweet Bookmarks

Resources

For more info...

Accelerated Reading Quiz: 27677

Author website: www.patriciapolacco.com

Emotion Words Slide

Directions: How is Trisha feeling throughout Patricia Polacco's *Thank You, Mr. Falker*? Cut out the two strips and 'slider' box. Slide the strips through the slots on the slider to reveal one word at a time.



Content

Safe

Happy

Gleeful

Joyous

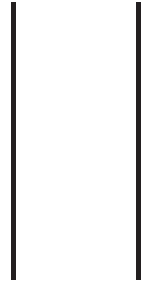
Excited

Thrilled

Hopeful

Encouraged

Thankful



FOLD

Sad

Tearful

Discouraged

Doubtful

Frustrated

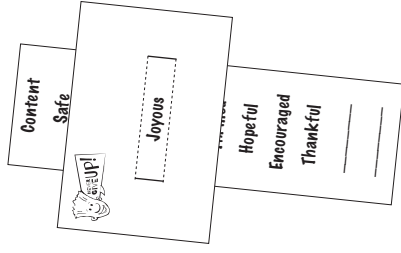
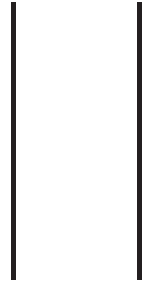
Tortured

Afraid

Terrified

Dumb

Sick



Directions

Create inspiring bookmarks that feature the inspiring quote from the book.

Honey
is sweet
and so is
knowledge.
Knowledge
is like
the bee
that made
sweet
honey;
you have
to chase
it through
the pages
of the
book.

- Patricia Polacco

**HONEY IS SWEET
AND SO IS KNOWLEDGE.
KNOWLEDGE
IS LIKE THE BEE
THAT MADE SWEET HONEY;
YOU HAVE TO
CHASE IT
THROUGH THE PAGES
OF THE BOOK.**

- PATRICIA POLACCO -

Honey
is sweet and so is knowledge.
Knowledge is like the bee
that made sweet honey;
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PATRICIA POLACCO