

Teach Someone To Read

Who Knows What You Will Learn

The first step to becoming a volunteer tutor with Washtenaw Literacy is to attend a one-hour informational session, the ABCs of Washtenaw Literacy. These engaging sessions provide interested folks with all the information they need to get involved. Please visit our website or call (734) 337-3338 to register. We look forward to meeting you!

<https://WashtenawLiteracy.org>



This study guide was created with input from volunteer tutors, mentors and staff in addition to consulting the Penguin Random House study guide.

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/246274/reading-with-patrick-by-michelle-kuo/9780812987140/readers-guide/>

Reading Guide for

Reading with Patrick by Michelle Kuo

provided by



W A S H T E N A W
L I T E R A C Y

OPENS WORLDS.

For almost 50 years we have been empowering adults through improved literacy. Since our founding in 1971, we have served over 20,000 learners and trained and fully supported over 10,000 volunteer tutors. We have experienced first hand building relationships and changing lives.

Mission Statement: Believing that literacy is the foundation for a sustainable community, Washtenaw Literacy provides literacy support, free of charge, to adults through a network of trained tutors. It is our vision to eliminate illiteracy in Washtenaw County.

1) A personal connection with a learner is critical. How does Michelle build that connection with her students? How is it different from student to student?

2) How do you think the story would read differently if written from Patrick's perspective?

3) What changes do you see in Michelle as a teacher from when she arrives in Helena to when she leaves the first time? What differences do you see between Michelle's classroom lessons and those with Patrick when he is in jail?

4) How does literature bridge the inequity and power gaps in Michelle and Patrick's relationship? What other bridges exist?

5) How is reading alone different than reading with others?

6) Michelle feels an ethical responsibility to help Patrick. Why does she think this, and how does Patrick respond? Do you agree that she had this responsibility? Why or why not?

7) The educational system that Michelle describes does not seem to be meeting the needs of the students. In addition to the school system, there are a number of other factors that influence the educational outcome of the students. How do we as individuals, as a community and as a nation address these issues?

8) For all the progress Patrick made, are you surprised that his life is still so hard? Did you expect a sunnier outcome? Why or why not?

9) How does a relationship impact motivation? For most low-literate adults, motivation (or competition for time and attention) can cause many stops and starts leading to slow progress. How can a tutor impact motivation?

10) When Michelle returned to work with Patrick, she focused much of their time on poetry, historic letters and letter writing. Do you think this was the best use of their time together? If you had seven months to work with someone in a similar situation, what you focus on?

11) One of the texts that Michelle has Patrick read is by Frederick Douglass who said that literacy was a means to freedom. Literacy is a key component of the story. What role does it play and is it a means to freedom as Douglass said?

12) Poverty and race play an important role in this book. While Arkansas is no doubt different from Michigan, what similarities do you see in Washtenaw County?

13) Throughout the story, Michelle wants to "make a difference" and is driven by a desire to do good. Does this set her up for failure? When we set out to "help others" or "make a difference" what positives and negatives are the result of this mindset?

14) When Michelle returned to Helena, she found that many of her students had dropped out, had children, had substance abuse problems or were committing crimes. What impact did Michelle ultimately have on her students in the two years she was there teaching? Why do you think this is so?

15) Write your own I am poem. Did you learn anything about yourself? I am, feel, wonder, hear, see, understand, say, dream, try, hope, want, pretend, cry.