



Foreword by Michael Hingson
A Classroom Study Guide

A STUDY GUIDE FOR USING
ALOHA CROSSING
IN THE CLASSROOM

Based on the book written by Pamela Bauer Mueller

This study guide was written by Suzi Hassel
and Leigh O'Connor

Aloha Crossing

ISBN-13: 978-0-9685097-9-1

Piñata Publishing
626 Old Plantation Road
Jekyll Island, GA 31527
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www.pinatapub.com

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

2008 Georgia Author of the Year Pamela Bauer Mueller brings valuable messages about relationships, love, loyalty and acceptance to school groups and civic organizations. Ms. Mueller does considerable research before writing her middle reader/young adult novels. All of her titles have been accepted into the Renaissance Accelerated Reading Program as well as Scholastic's Reading Counts.

Pamela has dreamed of introducing her readers to the history of Georgia's Golden Isles since moving to Georgia. She has now written two historical fiction books featuring local characters. Ms. Mueller was the *2006 Georgia Author of the Year -Children's/Young Adult Literature*, as well as a *2008 Mom's Choice Award* winner and a *2006 Independent Publisher Book Awards Finalist/Multicultural Category* for her first historical novel entitled *Neptune's Honor*.

An Angry Drum Echoed: Mary Musgrove, Queen of the Creeks, is based on the true story of a Creek/Englishwoman who became an emissary and interpreter for General Oglethorpe when he landed in Savannah to found the colony of Georgia. Mary smoothed the path to cooperation between the Indians and the colonists, perhaps single-handedly insuring the survival of colonial Georgia. This title was recently selected as a finalist in the *2007 USA News Best Book Awards/Multicultural* and won the *2008 GA Author of the Year* award for Ms. Mueller.



Ms. Mueller resides on Jekyll Island, Georgia with her husband Michael and two cats, Jasper and Sukey Spice. She was raised in Oregon and graduated from Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon. She worked as a flight attendant for Pan American Airlines before marrying and moving to Mexico City, where she lived for eighteen years, teaching English, modeling and acting. After returning to the United States, Pamela worked for twelve years as a U.S. Customs Inspector. She served six years in San Diego and then was selected for a foreign assignment in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Ms. Bauer Mueller took an early retirement from the U.S. Customs Service to become a full-time author. She and her Mexican cat, Kiska, wrote *The Kiska Trilogy: The Bumpedy Road, Rain City Cats* and *Eight Paws to Georgia*, which encompassed their adventurous living in Mexico, Canada and the United States. Several years ago, Pamela's daughter decided to raise a guide dog puppy, and Pamela eventually depicted this sweet love journey in *Hello, Goodbye, I Love You: The Story of Aloha, A Guide Dog for the Blind*, which was later selected as a *2004 Children's Choice Book* and a *2008 Mom's Choice* book by the International Reading Association.

INTRODUCTION

Before you read the book:

- 1. How many students have read Hello, Goodbye, I Love You? This is to determine if students are familiar with the characters. Have a student give a brief summary of the book.**
- 2. To gain an appreciation for the trusting relationship between guide dogs and their partners, view the video at the link below.**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PP7dqpwPki4&feature=related>

DISCUSSION TOPICS

- 1. Before each chapter read the quote orally and discuss its meaning.**
- 2. Ask the students “why do you think the author chose that particular quote for that particular chapter?”**
- 3. The novel is full of descriptive writing techniques. Discuss the various techniques that make words come alive. (i.e. metaphors, similes, personification) Have the students look for and identify these descriptive statements as they read.**
- 4. Read the Foreword of the book. Discuss Michael Hingson’s story and what his feelings are about being blind and his relationship with his guide dogs.**

Chapters One - Four

Pre-Reading Activities:

- 1. Students will work in partners, one playing the role of the guide dog and the other playing the role of the visually-impaired partner. The “visually impaired” partner will be blindfolded while the “guide dog” gives oral commands and gentle physical re-directions (nudges) to navigate from point A to point B. The students will then switch roles so that both students fully appreciate how difficult being sight-impaired might be. Allow time for discussion following this exercise.**

2. Locate St. Simons Island, Georgia on a map of the United States.

VOCABULARY

1. parallel
2. pedestrian
3. resolutely
4. instinct
5. radical
6. tortuous
7. extraordinary
8. rehabilitation
9. decent
10. tortoise shell

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Challenges that confront a sight-impaired person daily.
 2. Elicit from the students examples of other life-altering events. (i.e. Kimberly Louise's accident causing her blindness)

QUESTIONS

1. Why did Aloha shove Kimberly Louise backwards at the crosswalk?
2. What was Kimberly Louise's first question after the accident?
3. At this point in the story, how long has Kimberly Louise had Aloha as her partner?
4. In your own words, explain how Kimberly Louise lost her sight.
5. What kind of dog is Aloha?
6. What part did Diego Escobar play in Aloha becoming a guide dog?
7. What does "aloha" mean?
8. Locate Oregon on a map of the United States. On what coast is it located?
9. Identify the inner conflict that Kimberly Louise is experiencing.
10. What did Kimberly Louise allow Aloha to do that she was not allowed to do during her training.

Post-Reading Activity:

- 1. Describe the picture below using vivid adjectives so that a sight-impaired person could get a good mental image of the live oak trees draped in Spanish moss.**



- 2. Using an assortment of very colorful pictures from magazines, allow students to practice giving verbal descriptions of the pictures to the class.**

Chapters Five – Eight

Pre-Reading Activity:

- 1. Using any popular online travel site, find the total cost of a round trip ticket from Portland, Oregon to Jacksonville, Florida. Is it a direct flight, if not how many stops will the plane make, and where?**

VOCABULARY

1. enthusiastic
2. synthetic
3. Braille
4. famished
5. accommodate
6. subtle
7. lax
8. reenactment
9. inquisitive
10. bemoaned
11. tenacity
12. contentment
13. contemptuous
14. suspicious

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Ask the students how many of them have flown in an airplane and where they went.
2. During what months is hurricane season on the Atlantic Coast?

QUESTIONS

1. Why was Diego so enthusiastic about traveling alone to see Miss Kimberly and Aloha?
2. How would you feel about traveling across the United States all by yourself?
3. According to Kimberly Louise, how long has it been since a hurricane hit southeastern Georgia?
4. How was Kimberly Louise able to purchase Diego's airplane tickets?
5. Kimberly Louise remarks that she needs to get her "blue sweater" before going out for lunch with Mimi. As a blind woman, how is she able to distinguish one color from another?
6. In what year was Darien's Fort King George built?
7. For whom was the fort named?
8. On a flight to Atlanta to visit her grandchildren, what did Kimberly Louise catch Aloha doing?

9. Why do you think Kimberly Louise didn't "spank" Aloha?
10. How does the clock face correspond with the arrangement of food on Kimberly Louise's plate?
11. "Aloha sensed that Kimberly Louise was in a terrible mood." What signals might you pick up from someone in a terrible mood?
12. Aloha and David both attempted to lift Kimberly Louise's spirits. What are some things you have tried to do to help improve someone's mood?
13. When David talks about the redwood trees holding one another up during high winds, what is he trying to teach Kimberly Louise?
14. What is the literary term for such a comparison?
15. How did the story told to Kimberly Louise by her grandfather change her life forever?

Post-Reading Activities:

1. Research the Scottish Highlanders and their part in building Darien, Georgia.

Chapters Nine - Twelve

Pre-Reading Activity:

1. Diego takes a trolley tour of St. Simons Island and learns the story of Neptune Small. Conduct Internet research to learn more information about Neptune's life.

VOCABULARY

- | | |
|---------------|------------------------------|
| 1. semicircle | 6. careened |
| 2. dignity | 7. <i>ven aca muchachita</i> |
| 3. provisions | 8. incredulous |
| 4. flanks | 9. antebellum |
| 5. cavernous | |

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Kimberly Louise lives in a house described in the style of Mediterranean architecture. What are the characteristics of Mediterranean architecture?
2. The British General Oglethorpe and how he founded Georgia.

QUESTIONS

1. “Then a roar like that of ten lions rolled out over the blue Pacific.” What literary term is given to a comparison using “like”?
2. When asked if he still had the dog, Grandpa didn’t answer and looked away. What can you infer from Grandpa’s response?
3. Aloha knew Diego had arrived before anyone else saw him. How do you suppose she knew?
4. How did Aloha respond when Diego called out to her in Spanish?
5. When Kimberly Louise mentions the marina, what is Aloha’s reaction?

Post-Reading Activities:

1. Using the internet site below, read more about the St. Simons Island Trolley.

<http://www.stsimonstours.com/>

2. Draw your interpretation of the scene in the airport when Diego and Aloha are re-united.

Chapters Thirteen - Sixteen

Pre-Reading Activity:

1. Research the wildlife indigenous to the Okefenokee Swamp. Create a brochure complete with illustrations and captions. Make your brochure as colorful and appealing as possible.

VOCABULARY

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. tandem | 7. exquisite |
| 2. panoramic | 8. pungent |
| 3. clamor | 9. pensive |
| 4. gnarled | 10. remnants |
| 5. excursion | 11. cumbersome |
| 6. tannic acid | 12. manifestation |

DISCUSSION TOPICS

- 1. The weather terms, barometric pressure and scud clouds are mentioned. What do these terms mean?**
- 2. Driftwood is commonly found on the beaches of southeast Georgia's barrier islands. What is driftwood?**
- 3. How erosion and weathering play a part in forming swamps like the Okefenokee.**
- 4. Look at a climate map to determine the climate region in which Georgia lies. What are the characteristics of this particular region?**
- 5. Do you think you could read something written in Braille?**

QUESTIONS

- 1. What energy source warms the Earth's oceans?**
- 2. What does the word *Okefenokee* mean in Choctaw?**
- 3. Why is the water in the Okefenokee Swamp tea-colored?**
- 4. How was the Okefenokee Swam formed?**
- 5. Why is the system that enables the visually-impaired to read called Braille?**
- 6. Diego asked Miss Kimberly Louise, "What is the third eye?" Explain her answer in your own words.**

7. What clues did Diego, Aloha and Kimberly Louise get that there had been a sudden change in the weather?
8. Upon returning to the house, they learn that a tropical storm is moving from the southwest and appears to be turning east. A tropical storm is a pre-cursor to what type of meteorological event?
9. On page 94, the author “Lightning scribbled on the dark clouds that had buried St. Simons Island.” What literary term would you assign to this statement?
10. What preparations were recommended in light of the approaching storm?

Post-Reading Activity:

1. Take a tour of your school and look for signs written for sighted people and the sight-impaired. Based on what you learned in Chapter Fifteen about the arrangement of the six dots in the Braille system, close your eyes and attempt to “read” one of the signs using only your fingers.

Chapters Seventeen -Twenty

Pre-Reading Activities;

1. Kimberly Louise and Diego are experiencing a tropical storm that may soon be classified as a hurricane. Conduct some research to find out the different categories of hurricanes. What determines a hurricane’s category?
2. Locate some information on the Canebreak rattlesnake. Research what should be done in the event of a rattlesnake bite.

VOCABULARY

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. evacuation | 9. concur |
| 2. voluntary | 10. mimic |
| 3. mandatory | 11. verbalize |

4. apprehensive
5. deluge
6. compassionate
7. mesmerized
8. surreal

12. visualize
13. meager
14. inundation
15. recoil
16. hyperventilate

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Have you ever had to evacuate your home for a hurricane? Discuss what preparations you had to take care of before you left home. Where did you go? Who went with you? Did you have any pets to take along?
2. Do you have any pets that are afraid of thunder or other loud noises? Are you ever uneasy during thunder storms?
3. What kind of shrub is a palmetto? Have you ever seen one? Would you want one slapping against your skin?
4. There is a quote at the top of page 105. Read it orally and discuss what it is saying.

QUESTIONS

1. On page 100, the author writes, “Rolling thunder crashed and moaned.” What literary term would you use to describe this statement?
2. What happens to Aloha that prompts her to pull her leash from Diego and run away?
3. How did Miss Kimberly Louise react when Diego told her that Aloha had run off?
4. What makes Kimberly Louise think that Diego knows about hurricanes?
5. What does it mean to visualize something?
6. How does Diego describe thunder?
7. What is the origin of the word hurricane?
8. The Torras Causeway is the road with bridges that connects St. Simons Island to the mainland of Brunswick, Georgia. What does Mimi tell Kimberly Louise about the causeway?
9. Kimberly Louise and Diego were going to wait out the storm in the second story of her house. What did they take upstairs with them?

10. What does Kimberly Louise suggest she and Diego do to keep their mind off the storm and Aloha?

11. After Miss Kimberly Louise is bitten by a rattlesnake, Diego knows he must keep her calm. What will keeping her calm prevent?

12. What was the yellow-green fluid oozing from the snakebite?

Post-Reading Activities:

1. In your own words, write a paragraph explaining everything that has happened to Diego in this section of the book. (Ch. 17-20). Be as descriptive as possible so the reader will actually feel and be able to visualize what Diego is experiencing.

2. Illustrate at least one of the events described in the paragraph you wrote in #1 above.

Chapter Twenty-One - Twenty-Four

Pre-Reading Activity:

1. Research to find out what the back wall of a hurricane's eye is.

VOCABULARY

1. relentless

2. delirium

3. devoured

4. precarious

5. deliberate

6. bewildered

7. tentative

8. rambunctious

9. amphitheatre

10. resonance

11. incredulous

12. saturated

14. oppressive

DISCUSSION TOPIC

1. Discuss the difference between current, tides and undertow.

QUESTIONS

- 1. How many hours did Kimberly Louise sleep after being bitten by the rattlesnake?**
- 2. When Diego first goes outside after the hurricane, what does he see?**
- 3. When Diego senses that “the world’s biggest machine of destruction” was centered around him, what is he referring to?**
- 4. What does Kimberly Louise say the hurricane sounds like to her?**
- 5. What game, other than cards, did the three play while waiting out the storm?**
- 6. What was the prize to be?**
- 7. Aloha ends up on another island. What is the name of that island and who is the man who took her in?**
- 8. What small inner conflict is happening to the man who takes Aloha into his home?**
- 9. The man tells Aloha, “I lost my own best buddy last year.” Who was he talking about?**

Post-Reading Activities:

- 1. Research the internet and see if you can find any videos of hurricanes that reached 200 mile per hour.**
- 2. Chapter Twenty-One tells of Aloha’s terrifying ordeal during the hurricane until she reaches the safety of land. Retell this portion of the story from Aloha’s point of view.**

Chapters Twenty-Five - Twenty-Eight

Pre-Reading Activity:

- 1. Diego has agreed to pay for his ticket to the Jacksonville Zoo by helping Kimberly Louise clean up after the hurricane. Make a list of some of the possible clean-up jobs he might find himself doing.**

VOCABULARY

1. tremulous
2. desolate
3. propelled
4. ecstatic
5. melancholy
6. aviary
7. dilemma
8. annoyance
9. inquisitive

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. On page 151, Diego thinks that even though Kimberly Louise does not have the use of her eyes, she sees as well as anyone. Why would Diego think that?

QUESTIONS

1. When Steve advises Kimberly Louise that he has Aloha, what is her request?
2. After reassuring his parents that he has survived the hurricane and is fine, who does Diego want to call.
3. Why didn't Mimi's house get as much damage as Kimberly Louise's house?
4. Who won the bet about how much rain fell during the hurricane?
5. How much rain did fall?
6. Where does David tell Diego they will all go on his next visit?
7. Upon returning to Oregon and showing his pictures to his sister, why does Diego become annoyed with her?
8. Diego tells Clara, who is twelve, that her behavior reminds him of someone much younger. Who does Clara remind him of?
9. When Diego doesn't receive the email David had promised him, what does Diego think?
10. When do Kimberly Louise and David plan on getting married?

11. What does Diego reveal to Kimberly Louise and David that he hasn't even asked his parents about?

Post Reading Activities

- 1. Put yourself in Diego's place. Do you agree with his decision to get another puppy to raise as a potential guide dog? In a well written, grammatically correct paragraph explain what choice you would make.**
- 2. Using the resource section in the back of the book, locate the Guide Dog School closest to where you live.**
- 3. Look at all the resources the author used to research the information in her book. This would be a very time-consuming task. Write a short paragraph telling why you believe the author did this before writing the book.**

Extension Activities:

- 1. Research the Choctaw Indians and complete a report. Add a visual aid to your report and present it to the class.**

Aloha Crossing

Descriptive Writing Worksheet

Listed below are several descriptive writing excerpts from the book. In the blank indicate whether the statement is an example of a metaphor (M), simile (S) or personification (P).

On the line below the statement, list what two things are being compared or what non-living object was given life-like characteristics.

____ 1. While flames were eating up the deck...

____ 2. Although no one mentioned Aloha by name, her presence seemed to fill up all the air in the house, touching their hearts like a warm breeze.

____ 3.a hurricane is like a ballerina, ...

____ 4. ...while outside rain slammed into the house like crashing waves.

____ 5. Rolling thunder crashed and moaned.

____ 6. The hurricanes roiling clouds were an avalanche bearing down on her.

____ 7.a lazy early summer wind raised yellow dust.....

_____ **8. Diego thought the little house sounded like the inside of a train tunnel.**

_____ **9. Outside the wind bellowed like a mad animal howling to get in.**

_____ **10. Small birds like stuffed toys were thrown into the water...**

_____ **11. She could feel his anxious eyes shining like a soft heat from a lamp.**

_____ **12. Fingers of lightning jabbed the distant sky.**
