

STEPHANIE MORRILL

EDUCATOR'S
GUIDE

*within
these
lines*

TORN APART BY WAR.

HELD TOGETHER BY HOPE.

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

Grade Level: 7 & Up

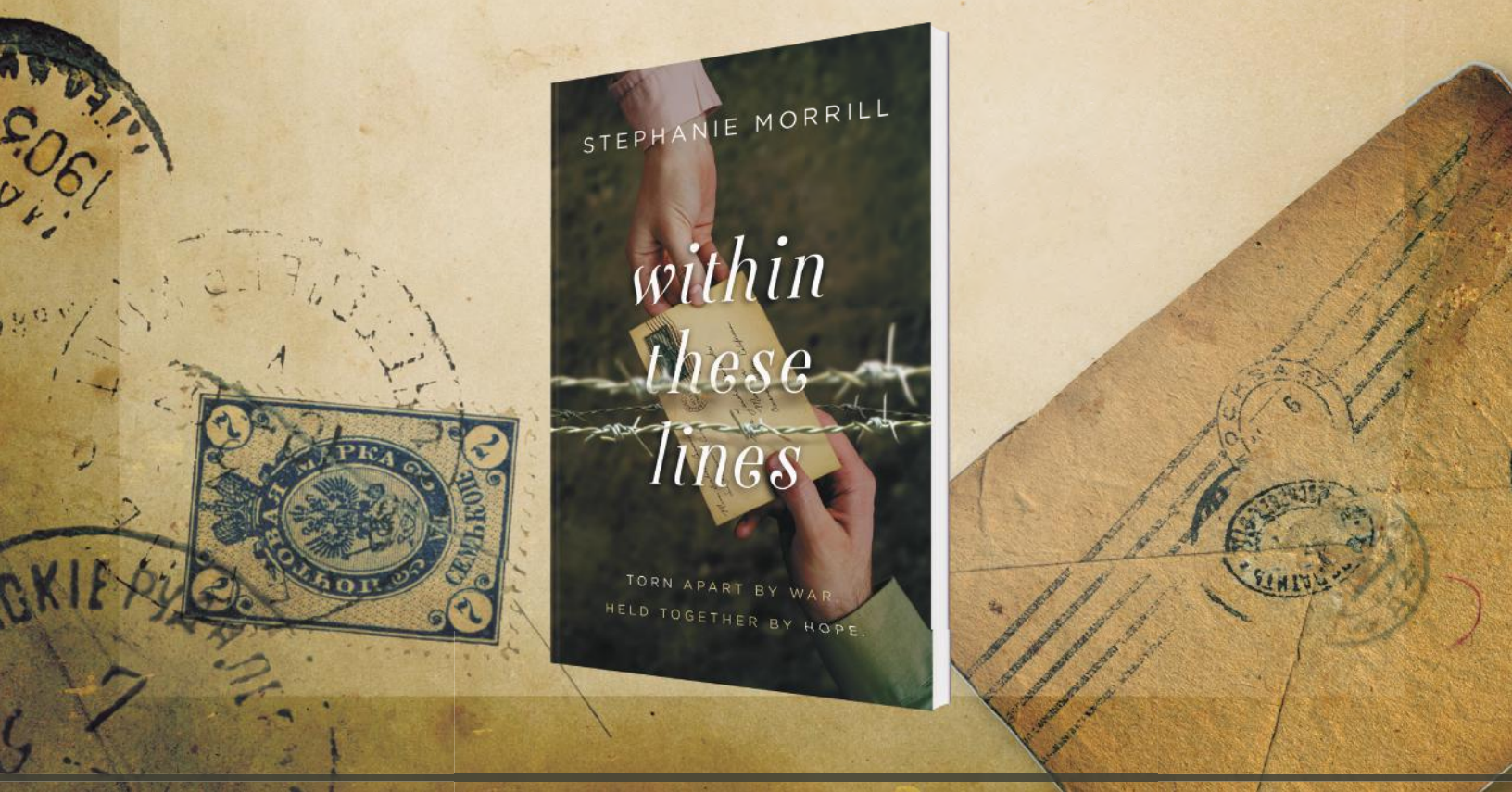
Within These Lines

BY STEPHANIE MORRILL
Educator Guide by Sylvia Vardell



Stephanie Morrill lives in Overland Park, Kansas, with her husband and three kids. She is the author of The Reinvention of Skylar Hoyt series, Go Teen Writers: How to Turn Your First Draft into a Published Book, and the Ellie Sweet series. She enjoys encouraging and teaching teen writers on her blog, GoTeenWriters.com.

To connect with Stephanie and read samples of her books check out StephanieMorrill.com.



Within These Lines

BY STEPHANIE MORRILL
Educator Guide by Sylvia Vardell

SUMMARY (FROM BLINK)

“Evalina Cassano’s life in an Italian-American family living in San Francisco in 1941 is quiet and ordinary until she falls in love with Taichi Hamasaki, the son of Japanese immigrants. Despite the scandal it would cause and that inter-racial marriage is illegal in California, Evalina and Taichi vow they will find a way to be together. But anti-Japanese feelings erupt across the country after the attack on Pearl Harbor, and Taichi and his family are forced to give up their farm and move to an internment camp.

Degrading treatment makes life at Manzanar Relocation Center difficult. Taichi’s only connection to the outside world is treasured letters from Evalina. Feeling that the only action she can take to help Taichi is to speak out against injustice, Evalina becomes increasingly vocal at school and at home. Meanwhile, inside Manzanar, fighting between different Japanese-American factions arises. Taichi begins to doubt he will ever leave the camp alive.

With tensions running high and their freedom on the line, Evalina and Taichi must hold true to their ideals and believe in their love to make a way back to each other against unbelievable odds.”

BACKGROUND BUILDING

To set the stage for reading this novel, identify the time frame (1942-1950) for the story’s setting as well as the place and geographical location (primarily in California). Talk about what was going on in the world at this time (the attack on Pearl Harbor and the U.S. involvement in World War II) and locate San Francisco, California on a map. Challenge students to visualize a time when our country was at war, most young people were enlisting to serve in the armed forces, and people were fearful of those who looked like the enemy in Japan. In addition, people relied on radio or newspapers to know what was happening around the world (no TV) and on letter writing to communicate with loved ones far away (no cell phones). This provides a context for visualizing the events of this story.

CHARACTERS AND CHARACTERIZATION

A good place to begin in thinking about a good book is by considering the characters whose lives and conflicts drive the story. It can be helpful to identify the main characters of the story and learn their names (and name meanings). Talk about the names of each of the major characters and the cultural heritage of each, particularly as the story moves along and you learn more about each one.

As students read, encourage them to visualize each of the main characters and talk about what they might look like, their cultural heritage, what language they speak, how they feel about the story events, and what dreams or goals they each have. Work together to draw character sketches or find magazine or web-based images that could represent these characters.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.3; 8.3; 9-10.3; 11-12.3

CAST OF MAIN CHARACTERS

- Evalina Cassano
- Evalina’s parents
- Taichi Hamasaki
- Taichi’s parents
- Aiko, Taichi’s older sister
- Gia LaRocca, Evalina’s friend
- Tony Esposito, Evalina’s friend and former boyfriend
- Diego Medina, Taichi’s friend
- Mr. and Mrs. Bishop and daughter, Grace (friend of Evalina)
- James Kanito, Taichi’s friend in the internment camp

Cast of Main Characters

- Evalina Cassano
- Evalina’s parents
- Taichi Hamasaki
- Taichi’s parents
- Aiko, Taichi’s older sister
- Gia LaRocca, Evalina’s friend
- Tony Esposito, Evalina’s friend and former boyfriend

Within These Lines

BY STEPHANIE MORRILL
Educator Guide by Sylvia Vardell

- Diego Medina, Taichi's friend
- Mr. and Mrs. Bishop and daughter, Grace (friend of Evalina)
- James Kanito, Taichi's friend in the internment camp

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS FOR DISCUSSION

As students read or listen to you read aloud *Within These Lines*, invite them to consider the relationships, conflicts, and surprises in the story. Ask open-ended questions that motivate them to dig deep and challenge them to find textual evidence in excerpts or passages that support their opinions or analysis. Which seem conclusive, which seem tentative, and which may be open-ended or uncertain?

POSSIBLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS INCLUDE:

1. How does Taichi feel about the attack on Pearl Harbor?
2. Why is a love relationship between Evalina and Taichi considered wrong and even illegal?
3. Which would be more challenging, fighting a brutal war as a soldier or being held captive in an internment camp against your will?
4. How do you support a friend who is dating someone who is not good for her or him?
5. How does Evalina's Italian heritage affect her view of the world?
6. Gia says "You can't help who your family is" (p. 59), but she is also quick to judge others based on their family and cultural heritage. How can both those views be held at the same time?
7. What are some of the ways in which characters protest what is happening?
8. What evidence of racism and discrimination are apparent in their San Francisco community **before** the Japanese are removed from their homes?
9. What's the difference between being an evacuee versus being a prisoner?
10. The prejudice that Taichi, his family, and other Japanese Americans experience is at the heart of this story, but sexism toward women is also very prevalent. What examples of this can you find in this novel?
11. Why are some characters appalled at the treatment of their Japanese American neighbors and others support their evacuation? Why do some speak up and protest and others stay silent?
12. Evalina is shocked when the local newspaper reports on the evacuation of the Japanese as an "outing," calling it propaganda. How can we assess whether what we're reading and hearing is real or "fake" news?
13. How are conditions in the camp at Manzanar different than expected? How does Evalina learn about those conditions?
14. When Evalina discovers Taichi has been guarded in his letters to her, she wonders, "What aren't you telling me?" (p. 133). Why is he avoiding telling her the truth about life in the internment camp? Is it ever okay to lie?
15. How do Evalina and Taichi change over the course of the novel? What are their biggest sources of conflict? Where do they find support for their situation? How do their own parents surprise them?
16. If your government is treating you as a threat, do you prove your loyalty by being compliant or protest by seeking justice? Taichi says "I keep thinking that if we really did fight the evacuation they would only point to it as proof that we're disloyal" (p. 67). Is dissension unpatriotic? Why or why not?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.1; 8.1 9-10.1; 11-12.1
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1.A; 8.1.A; 9-10.1.A; 11-12.1

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

Grade Level: 7 & Up

Within These Lines

BY STEPHANIE MORRILL

Educator Guide by Sylvia Vardell

LANGUAGE VOCABULARY

In any work of literature, we can encounter new vocabulary or familiar words used in new ways. Students can log their own list of new words, use context to guess at meaning, and/or consider those on the list below. Which of these words (or phrases) are new to students? Talk about these words (and any other new words encountered) and their use in context and possible multiple meanings, and how these word choices impact the tone of the book. There are even words in Japanese, Italian, as well as the lingo of the military (e.g., “mess hall”) incorporated within this novel. Challenge students to use some of these words in everyday speech. Possible vocabulary words showcased throughout the book include:

1. “Carpe Diem!” p. 9
2. family heirloom p. 14
3. sinister p. 14
4. reallocated p. 25
5. alien and non-alien p. 30
6. Caucasian p. 71
7. atrocious p. 87
8. gnocchi p. 90
9. delusional p. 92
10. typhoid, diphtheria, tetanus p. 99
11. latrine. 104
12. stench p. 104
13. urinal p. 107
14. linguine p. 115
15. mess kit p. 120
16. despicable p. 139
17. formidable p. 139
18. incarcerated p. 165
19. mouthpiece p. 172
20. corroborate p. 180
21. meander p. 196
22. loiter p. 196
23. inquisitively p. 215
24. untainted p. 221
25. stool pigeon p. 233
26. rhetoric p. 233
27. camouflage p. 247

28. “Buongiorno” p. 255
29. marginalized p. 257
30. due process p. 269
31. scapegoat p. 277
32. macabre p. 288
33. vigil p. 289

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.4; 8.4; 9-10.4; 11-12.4

JAPANESE LANGUAGE

In addition, some Japanese words and phrases are used in this novel and usually translated or explained in context. It may be helpful to identify and discuss these and use digital tools (like Google Translate) to hear how they should be pronounced. This includes:

1. “Shikata ga nai” p. 14
2. “Issei” p. 26
3. samurai p. 56
4. “mochi” p. 67
5. “Nisei” p. 218

Why might it be important to include Japanese words in this novel? Some Japanese American characters speak and understand Japanese and others do not. How is this important in the story?

WORDS AND EUPHEMISMS

The author highlights several ways in which words are used by characters, the government, or news outlets to persuade or obfuscate. In the story, newspapers and pamphlets present information in ways that may be unclear or skewed to a certain point of view. For example, the camps are called “internment” camps, rather than “concentration” camps. And in the novel, Aiko says, “We will be prisoners, not evacuees” (p. 55). What other examples of this use of language can students find in the story?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.5.C; 8.5.C; 9-10.5.B; 11-12.5.B

POINT OF VIEW

This novel unfolds in a first person narrative with alternating points of view, sometimes from Evalina’s perspective and sometimes from Taichi’s. Try reading

Within These Lines

BY STEPHANIE MORRILL

Educator Guide by Sylvia Vardell

a few excerpts aloud using female voices for Evalina's chapters and male voices for Taichi's. Talk about how these changing perspectives affect your understanding of the story. Why might the author have chosen this approach?
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.6; 8.6; 9-10.6; 11-12.6

PROPAGANDA

Everyone has a distinct point of view as this novel unfolds and each relies on a variety of sources for information—personal experience, rumors, letters, government documents, and newspapers. Evalina soon realizes that even newspapers have an agenda as they represent the evacuation of Japanese Americans in overly positive ways. Discuss why news outlets might be biased or misleading—then and now. Whose agenda or point of view is being promoted and why? How does a concerned citizen sift through information to deduce the truth?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.3; 8.3; 9-10.3; 11-12.3

WRITING

The act of writing is an important part of this novel. Characters write letters to one another and even write editorials for the local newspaper. They rely on printed matter such as newspapers and pamphlets for important information. How is that the same and different from how we communicate, gather information, and express our opinions today? What do you glean from each source? What might be missing? Are there current issues that students might want to tackle by writing letters or editorials themselves? Coach them on how to go about writing in this form. Consult the author's collaborative website, GoTeenWriters.com for guidance and inspiration. Evalina even goes beyond writing to volunteering and social activism, delivering care packages at the Tanforan Assembly Center. What causes might students get involved in locally?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1.B; 8.1.B; 9-10.1; 11-12.1

THEMES

Throughout this novel characters comment on what is happening around them, about what is right and wrong,

and about how they should respond. They raise important questions related to political, cultural, and gender issues. Challenge students to identify a line, phrase, or passage that is pivotal to the story or especially meaningful to them and talk about why. What is explicitly stated and what do they infer? How might some of these signal the themes of the book? Possible examples include:

- “This is heartbreak waiting to happen.” p. 18
- “We always knew our road would be a rough one.” p. 27
- “the theoretical risk to our safety is worth the sacrifice of their actual freedom” p. 44
- “Sometimes you have to be honest with people, even if you know it's going to hurt them.” p. 57
- “This is a bad path for our country to travel down” p. 65
- “If we could all feel the empathy that you do, (Evalina), our world would be a much more beautiful place.” p. 65
- “This is an injustice. An embarrassment for a country that prides itself on freedom and equality” p. 77
- “How wonderful that you care about what's going on in our country, even when it doesn't directly impact you.” p. 118
- “That strange sensation where you know a lot about a person, but you don't really know the person.” p. 130
- “Countries are run by men. Men are fallible.” p. 158
- “This isn't politics, it's people.... I will not be silent. I will not let this go.” p. 176
- “This is the first day of the life you are choosing.” p. 220
- “Sometimes loving another person feels like the most painful thing there is.” p. 238

Within These Lines

BY STEPHANIE MORRILL
Educator Guide by Sylvia Vardell

- “When someone yells, we cover our ears. But when someone whispers, we strain to hear them.” p. 270
- “As if having grandparents that were born in another country somehow strips away my right to question the decisions my government is making.” p. 287
- “Can’t I feel grateful for the freedoms of my country, as well as voice my opinions about errors in judgment that I see? Isn’t my right to do so part of what makes our country great?” p. 287
- “I was just too angry to stay quiet. That counts as bravery, I think.” p. 329
- “...sometimes we do the right thing, and it kicks us in the teeth just as hard as if we’d done the wrong.” p. 333
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY RL. 7.2; 8.2; 9-10.2; 11-12.2

CONNECTIONS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

To provide additional context, it might be helpful to explore the historical background for this novel further. Collaborate with the history or social studies teacher to discuss the historical context for this novel and talk about how people of various backgrounds were treated, what role culture and gender played in their struggles, and how they were able to prevail. Students unfamiliar with Mussolini and Hitler may need additional information about their positions as world leaders during this time. The author provides additional background information in her “About the History” note and refers to an informative podcast (*Stuff You Missed in History Class*) and several recommended books:

- *Farewell to Manzanar* by Jeannie Wakatsiki Houston and James D. Houston
- *Dear Miss Breed* by Joanne Oppenheim
- *Looking Like the Enemy* by Mary Matsuda Gruenewald
A helpful librarian can suggest additional works of

nonfiction, fiction, and poetry to supplement this historical study including these works told from the “insider” perspective:

- *Dust of Eden* by Mariko Nagai
- *Journey to Topaz* and *Journey Home* both by Yoshiko Uchida
- *Weedflower* by Cynthia Kadohata
Students may also want to learn more about Japanese culture and the contributions of Japanese Americans to our society. Consult reference tools such as *Japanese Americans: The History and Culture of a People* edited by Jonathan H. X. Lee.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1.C; 8.1.C; 9-10.1.C; 11-12.1.C

JACKDAWS

Historical photos and documents can also help provide a context for understanding this novel. One resource is a jackdaw of facsimiles of primary source documents available at Jackdaw.com, specifically this collection: “Japanese-American Internment: Life in the Camps.” This includes photographs of several different camps engaged in varying activities like playing football, life in the barracks, and agricultural activities. Students can discuss whether these are authentic representations or staged photos designed to sugarcoat the truth.
<https://www.jackdaw.com/p-492-japanese-american-internment-life-in-the-camps.aspx>

RELATED WEBSITES

And if you’re looking for additional online resources to help you study this period, this period in history, and social justice issues in our country, there are many helpful tools available, including:

MANZANAR NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

<https://www.nps.gov/manz/index.htm>

This government website features extensive information about Manzanar including primary documents, historic

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

Grade Level: 7 & Up

Within These Lines

BY STEPHANIE MORRILL

Educator Guide by Sylvia Vardell

photographs, and oral histories along with curriculum materials and lesson plans

NATIONAL ARCHIVES: JAPANESE RELOCATION AND INTERNMENT

<https://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/military/japanese-internment.html>

This extensive site provides links to primary documents, newspaper outlets, photographs and visuals, testimonials, documentary films, lesson plans, and more.

JARDA: THE JAPANESE AMERICAN RELOCATION DIGITAL ARCHIVE

<https://calisphere.org/exhibitions/t11/jarda/>

"A single point of entry to materials held by California institutions on the subject of Japanese American relocation and incarceration during World War II" in digitized form.

This guide is created by Sylvia Vardell, Professor in the School of Library and Information Studies at Texas Woman's University and a recipient of the ALA Scholastic Library Publishing Award. She maintains the PoetryforChildren blog, writes a poetry column for ALA's BOOK LINKS, magazine and co-edits the POETRY FRIDAY ANTHOLOGY series with author Janet Wong.