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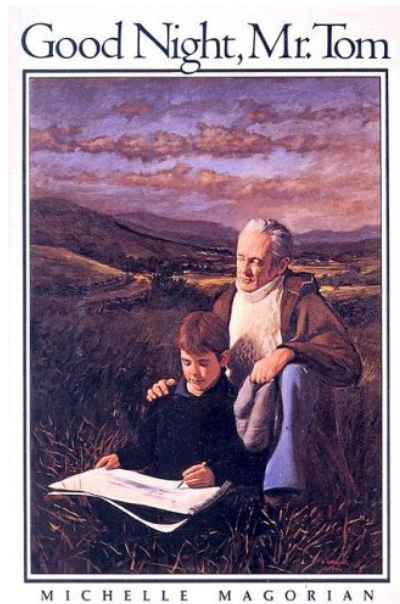
REFLECTION

This project was not the easiest one to begin. The first thing hindering my abilities to complete this project is that I am not an English teacher. The other aspect is that I am not the most creative individual on this side of the classroom desks. I really wanted to design something that had not been created before, but my ideas are limited by my lack of imagination. This is also the first time I have created a project based on a book I have read since grade school when we had to complete book reports.

At first I had to re-read some of the chapters to decide on what themes I thought were present throughout the entire book. During this process I created a spreadsheet of possible themes. From there I narrowed it down to those that I could find suitable pictures to represent my thoughts regarding each theme.

I do wish that I would have started this project as I was reading because it would have made the process a little easier, especially when it came to deciding on what pictures to include in each stamp.

Overall, I enjoyed this project because it showed me something new that could be done instead of the old book reports that we had to create as a child. This is something that I can take back to my fellow teachers and introduce them to, even though I cannot use it in my classroom, I'm sure they will be glad to have a new lesson to use in their classrooms.



DESCRIPTION OF STAMPS

GOOD NIGHT, MR. TOM

By Michelle Magorian

THEME #1: CARING

This is the theme that I appreciated the most throughout this entire book. The majority of the caring is shown from Tom to Will in many ways. I really think that Tom went out on a limb to rescue Will from his mother. Who knows what would have happened to him if Tom did not show up on time. The fact that Tom risked his own life by taking Will from the hospital in London shows how much he cared. There were also signs of caring throughout Little Weirworld from each of the community members. They were all concerned about Will and all of the children.

The pictures used here represent the caring hands of the people of the community. The quote is from Harold Kushner an American clergyman shows how caring not only affects others but also yourself in a positive way.

THEME #2: CHILD ABUSE

This theme was the most disturbing aspect of this book. As I began reading I really did not believe I was going to like it because of this theme. As a teacher we have a soft side for all children whether we know them or not. This goes for Will as well, I felt like I knew him like a student of my own after listening to all his mother had put him through. This also has a connection to the caring theme because when Tom was first introduced to Will there were many times when Will thought he was going to be abused. Tom was very sensitive to all of Will issues including the things his mother told him were wrong. Things like sleeping in a bed and asking questions, we all take for granted but Will was afraid to do these things because of his abusive mother.

The pictures used here represent a child's emotional struggle during the time they are being abused. We also have to remember that abuse is not only physical but emotional as well. The quote is from Pete Domenici an American politician shows us that the abuse is something that is done on the innocent who cannot even defend themselves.

THEME #3: WAR

I am not a historian so I only understood the basic facts of World War II. This book also allows us to see what it was like to live during this time period through different perspectives. The first being through Will's eyes and how it allowed him to be introduced to Tom, second through Zach and how his parents were so heavily involved with the caring of the sick in London, and third through Tom how he volunteered to perform fire watch duty after Will had arrived.

The pictures in this stamp are depictions of the time period during World War II, the bottom one especially; it is a soldier watching for firefights in the London sky. The quote from Winston Churchill depicts the feeling of patriotism through London during this time period when everyone was willing to lend a hand for the good of the country. Even someone like Tom who seemed to be very self-centered after his wife had died, but opened up when Will arrived from London.

THEME #4: NATURE VS NURTURE

This is an underlying theme that I found after I finished reading this book. As adults it is our responsibility to care for children, keep them safe, and make sure they grow up with values and respect. This might not always be the job for the child's natural parents to instill. Sometimes it takes someone other than a mother or father to see what is best for the child, like Tom has done for Will. The nurturing relationship that Tom and Will had brought out the best in both of them by enabling them to open up to one another and share their feelings. This theme is something that can bring forth great debate among many different groups of people such as politicians, educators, parents, and the court systems. Hopefully in the end everyone can keep in mind that the children are the ones who should come first.

These pictures are the best I could find to depict a family raising their child as opposed to children living in foster care or adoption, like Will eventually did at the end of the book. This quote from Joe Manchin, an American politician, represents what many of us as teachers feel. Children always deserve a positive role model, sometimes their natural parents are always the best suited to do the job.