***ORLEANS***

by Sherri L. Smith

**Louisiana Teen Readers’ Choice Nominee 2016**

**Grades 9-12**

*Submitted by Allison Stevens, Student*

*LSU School of Library and Information Science, Baton Rouge, LA*

**Title:** *Orleans*

**Author:** Sherri L. Smith

**Publisher:** Speak, an imprint of Penguin Group

**Pages:** 324

**SUMMARY**

Fen de la Guerre lives in what used to be New Orleans. After several huge hurricanes and a blood disease called the Delta Fever ravaged the South Louisiana/South Mississippi area, a wall was built to quarantine the area and its inhabitants from the rest of the United States. When Fen’s tribe, the O positives, are attacked one night and the tribe leader is killed, she must do whatever it takes to get the leader’s newborn baby over the wall to safety before the baby’s blood becomes infected by the disease. Along the way she meets Daniel, a scientist who entered the Delta illegally from the Outer States, and he may turn out to be more helpful than she thinks.

**AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY**

Sherri L. Smith has done a lot of interesting things. She has lived in many places, including Chicago, Staten Island, Washington D.C., San Francisco, and Los Angeles, and she has worked in animation, movies, comic books, and construction. Since the publication of her first novel in 2002, she has enjoyed spending her time writing and often travels cross-country to spend time with her readers in their schools. She currently lives with her partner in Los Angeles.

 Biographical information taken from the author’s website at

<http://www.sherrilsmith.com/about_main.htm>

Accessed October 4, 2014.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Author’s website http://www.sherrilsmith.com/index.htm.

**OTHER TITLES BY AUTHOR**

*Flygirl* (2009)

*Hot, Sour, Salty, Sweet* (2008)

*Sparrow* (2006)

*Lucy the Giant* (2002)

**RELATED TITLES**

*Ship Breaker* by Paolo Bacigalupi

*The Elephant Mountains* by Scott Ely

*Inhuman* by Kat Falls

*Legend* by Marie Lu

*Winter’s Bone* by Daniel Woodrell

**CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS**

**History:**

Have students practice map reading skills by having them match areas of the Gulf of Mexico and the city of New Orleans to maps. Then examine multiple historical maps of the Gulf of Mexico region of the United States and discuss the reasons for various geographical changes that have taken place.

**Art:**

Have students draw or paint on old black and white photographs of New Orleans to reflect the descriptions of the areas in the book, including areas which are described as overgrown with plants, demolished, underwater, etc.

**Biology:**

* Have students play the Blood Typing Game from Nobelprize.org and discuss what the differences between blood types mean as well as the consequences of transfusions with the wrong blood type: <http://www.nobelprize.org/educational/medicine/bloodtypinggame/index.html>
* Mini Medical School – Hematology lab available from the Science and Health Education Partnership: http://seplessons.ucsf.edu/node/2798. This two-class lesson plan instructs students about blood’s functions and components and then allows them to use their new knowledge to diagnose blood disorders based on lab results and patient histories.
* A lesson plan created by Discovery Education called Understanding Viruses could be tied to the Delta Fever virus in the book. Students will learn what viruses are, how they work, and how they can be engineered to solve human health problems.<http://www.discoveryeducation.com/teachers/free-lesson-plans/understanding-viruses.cfm>

**Language Arts:**

* Analyze the change in point of view between Daniel’s third person narration and Fen’s first person narration and discuss how the difference affects their emotional connection to the characters in the story. Compare and contrast with other YA novels that have multiple perspectives.
* Have students plan and create a hurricane evaluation plan for their family. Invite them to think about things such as where they might go, how many people would be going with them, what sort of transportation options they have, and what important documents and other items would need to be taken with them.

**Vocabulary:**

 Quarantine

 Replenish

 Jalopies

 Noxious

 Anemia

 Genocide

 Moldering

 Treacherous

 Enormity

 Successive

 Hermetically

 Altercation

 Transfusion

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Technology plays a big role in Daniel’s survival. How does his knowledge of and access to current and old technology affect the outcome of the story?
2. In many ways, the Delta provides a culture shock for Daniel. What are some of the differences between cultural norms in the Delta and the Outer States? What things does he have to adjust to, and how does he make this adjustment?
3. Was the United States right or wrong to quarantine the Delta and build the wall? Provide evidence from the text for your conclusion. How else could the government have handled that situation? Support your suggestion with evidence from the text.
4. How is the reaction to Delta Fever similar to and different from the reaction to the current Ebola scare?
5. Do some research on the Mr. Go project in Louisiana. In what ways does Mr. Go in *Orleans* symbolize the effects of the Mr. Go project on the Delta?
6. Was Fen’s accent and vocabulary easy for you to understand? What role do you think your Louisiana background had in your ability to figure out what she meant?
7. How does the difference in point of view (Fen in 1st person, Daniel in 3rd person) affect your feelings about the characters? Explain with examples from the text.
8. How does the description of the setting change the feel of the story? How do Daniel’s descriptions differ from Fen’s, and what does this say about his perspective?

**RELATED WEBSITES**

**Sherri L. Smith School Visits**

<http://sherrilsmith.com/contact_main.htm>

Contact information for scheduling school visits with Sherri L. Smith

***Orleans: Carnivale* Short Story**

<http://yareview.net/2013/02/orleans-carnivale/>

A short story by Sherri L. Smith that takes place 9 months prior to the events in Orleans

**NOAA’s National Hurricane Center**

<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>

Current and past weather data, preparation information, and emergency response for hurricanes

**Center for Disease Control and Prevention**

<http://www.cdc.gov/>

Information about current health issues and awareness resources