Book Backdrops: Connecting Literature and Primary Sources

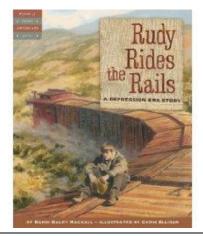
Adapted from Gail Petri, Educational Resource Specialist, Library of Congress http://www.loc.gov/teachers/professionaldevelopment/tpsdirect/pdplanbuilder/

By: Mary Beth Scumaci Date: March 2, 2010

Search Words: Great Depression, Children of the Great Depression, Riding the

Rails, Railroads, Hobos, Hobo Symbols, Factories

Cover Image



Title: Rudy Rides the Rails A Depression Era Story by Dandi Daley Mackall & Illustrated by Chris Ellison

Sleeping Bear Press

ISBN: 978-1-58536-286-8

Summary: The story is about a young boy in the depression era who leaves his family in search of a job so he can send money home to his family. He learns how to ride the rails and survive in the depression. He eventually returns home and carves the cat symbol on his front porch. This symbolizes that the home exhibits kindness to those in need.

Setting: 1932- A poor depression family in Ohio. The young boy rides the rails westward in search of a better life.

Subjects: Riding the Rails, family loyalty, depression era, personal dreams, human survival, working together in times of need, empathy for others.

Primary Source Thumbnail



Library of Congress Bibliographic Information and Book Notes

Title: Two **hobos** walking along railroad tracks, after being put off a train

Collection: George Grantham Bain Collection (Library of Congress)

URL: http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3a50795

Book Note: Rudy encountered many other "Hobos" on his journey to California and back. He had to be careful and learn who he could trust. It was a dangerous journey. His father told him "Look out for you and yours, and nobody else."

Title: Miami bound / Walter Hale photos

Summary: Image from article entitled "**Hobo** women - a new social problem in the South", showing girl on railroad car and her brother boarding.

Collection: LOOK Magazine Photograph Collection (Library of Congress).

URL: LOOK Magazine Photograph Collection (Library of Congress). http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3c27746
Book Note: Rudy had to learn how to ride the rails.



Title: Hobo Symbols Collection Summary: Hobo symbol list.

URL:

http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://vinci.or g/rlv.old/goofy/hobo-

symbols1.gif&imgrefurl=http://vinci.org/rlv.old/goofy/ind K6ex.html&usg=

fHKvn6I7athMsNOyJP7qzPb0=&h=1131&w=1216&sz=44 &hl=en&start=4&um=1&itbs=1&tbnid=KAaCpOFmnNHW FM:&tbnh=140&tbnw=150&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dhob o%2Bsymbols%26um%3D1%26hl%3Den%26lr%3D%26 sa%3DX%26tbs%3Disch:

Book Note: Rudy learned the secret survival language of the hobos. Upon return to his home, he carved the cat symbol on his front porch. The symbol stands for "kindness here."



Title: Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corp., Akron, Ohio **Summary:** Industry during the Great Depression URL: http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/fsac.1a35082 and http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print

Book Note: Rudy LIVED IN Akron, Ohio. The story starts outside of a rubber plant. People were waiting and hopeful that the factory would be hiring. They were not. It was then that Rudy decided he needed to leave home and find a job. There would be one less mouth to feed and he could send money home to his family.



Title: 1941- Synthetic Rubber Mill- BF Goodrich, Akron, Ohio

Summary: This sheet of synthetic rubber coming off the rolling mill at the plant is now ready for drying, B.F. Goodrich Co., Akron, Ohio. Synthetic rubber made by the "ameripol" process is derived from butadiene (a petroleum derivative). In this rolling mill the crumbs of rubber are squeezed dry of excess water and pressed together into the blanket shown here

URL: http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/fsac.1a35068 and

http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print

Book Note: This shows the inside of a rubber factory.