

Bridge to terabithia essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

He loves to paint and draw, but he knows that this label feels him a "sissy" in most eyes, particularly his father. As Katherine Paterson said "Jess dreads the way some people drink whiskey." enjoyed reading about Jesses conflict between his masculinity and effeminacy. With his family stretched so tight by poverty he has little chance to really explore his own identity during this crucial period of adolescence. He is determined to win in doing something masculine that will rid the undesired label of "sissy" or "Girl" in the eyes of his father and schoolmates which will allow him to shine in his own right.

He practices each morning, always dreaming of his upcoming victory. However, when the races come around at recess, a new girl, Leslie Burke, who just moved next door to Jess, boldly crosses to the boys' side of the playground and beats everyone. Many would think that it was a gloomy beginning to the story, but Jess and Leslie become friends fast. I enjoyed how Jess and Leslie's friendship blossomed and developed, Their imaginative minds were admirable.

They built a secret fantasy sylvan cross the creek in the woods, called Terrestrial, where they play all the time.

There they forget the rest of the world, such as the kids at school or Jesses family. The time they spend in Terrestrial seems to strengthen them for these struggles of everyday life. It is there that they map out a plan of revenge on the school bully when she starts May Belle's Twenties, and it is there that they discuss Jesses feelings of insecurity when Leslie begins to draw closer to her father.

Leslie introduces Jess to the world of imagination and creativity, telling him stories of literature such as *Moby-Dick* and *Hamlet*.

All of this also strengthens Jess's artistic talent and ability, as Leslie supports his ambition. But most of the time they play games invented by themselves, and beating intruders on Terabithia territory, praying to the spirits of the grove to end a long spell of rain, and numerous other fantasies. These very fantasies are the reason for which their friendship strengthens so quickly. I enjoyed their youthful creativity and ironic once.

However, Jess and Leslie's friendship, though centered in Terabithia, is not limited to Terabithia.

They see each other at school, where they take a lot of teasing for their friendship, but by now that sort of teasing has lost the power to hurt Jess, and Leslie has never been particularly bothered by what others think. At home, they celebrate holidays together, such as Christmas, when Jess gives Leslie a puppy and she gives him an expensive art set to develop his artistic talent. Easter, when Leslie goes to church for the first time with Jess. Leslie is impressed by the beauty of the story of Christ.

Jess and his little sister May Belle are convinced that nonbelievers such as Leslie are doomed to hell, and find the whole experience disturbing.

Nevertheless, Jess and Leslie remain the best of friends and Jess finds a purpose in his life through Leslie's company that he's never had before. One day the music teacher at school, Miss Edmunds, who Jess has had a crush on, invites him to spend a day with her touring the art galleries in

Washington. This trip expands his mind and makes him feel that he is special, a feeling he has only had with Lisle's company. Jess had a perfect day.

But when he returns home he is informed of some ever vegetating news.

News that overwhelms him with desolation. The very girl who gave him the purpose and confidence he had been searching for, had drowned in the creek that morning trying to swing into Terabithia on the rope that they always used. Katherine Paterson captures his pain and confusion by saying "She had tricked him. She had made him leave his old self behind and come into her world, and then before he was really at home in it but too late to go back, she had left him starved, tree-like, an astronaut wandering about on the moon.

Alone.

At first, he does not see how he is to go on—Leslie had raised him to new heights as the king of Terabithia, and now he feels that without her, he has no choice but to revert to the old Jess, fearful and insecure. But as he comes to his senses and begins to accept the tragedy that has so suddenly struck him, he realizes "Now it was time for him to move out. She was not there, so he must go for both of them. It was up to him to pay back to the world in bravery and caring what Leslie had loaned him in vision and strength.

When Leslie came of O'Hare into Jess's life she brought something special with her. That something special is exactly what Jess holds on to, keeping her alive. While he realizes that he can only keep Lisle's memory, and his newfound self alive by continuing the fantasy of Terabithia. He has

been forced to mature and leave his childhood in Terabithia with the memory of Leslie. However, his sister May Belle is still a child, and deserves the enchanted childhood only available to her in Terabithia.

So he does not let the kingdom die with its queen.