

NOVEL GUIDE C.2 – Boston Jane

Although author

Jennifer L. Holm was reared in Pennsylvania, her family's roots are deep in the Finnish community of Naselle, Washington. After graduating from a Pennsylvania college, Ms. Holm moved to New York City where she was a producer of television commercials and music videos. Ms. Holm's first book, *Our Only May Amelia*, was roughly based on her family history. Ms. Holm was given a copy of a family diary, and *Our Only May Amelia* was born. The book won the 2000 Newberry Honor award. *Boston Jane* is part of a planned trilogy and is set on the shores of what is now Willapa Bay.

The journey begins...

Leaf through the book and look at the chapter titles. Do they give a hint about the conditions or the events that the story relates? Can you figure out where the storyline leads by reading these chapter headings?

A place of interest in the book is on the shores of Shoalwater Bay. Before beginning the book, look at a map of the state of Washington. Look for Willapa Bay in the southwest corner of the state. This region was originally known as Shoalwater Bay and it was home to many Native American tribes, including the Chinooks.

Charting the course...

While you are reading *Boston Jane*, write down words in the story that are new or unfamiliar to you. Many are old fashioned or out of date. Others are Indian jargon. Try and learn the meaning of the words from the context or look them up in a dictionary. Keep a list of the Indian jargon. You will use the words to make a puzzle.

A theme that runs through the story is Jane's desire to be a lady. At the center of her desire is a book on etiquette. As you read the story, keep track of the problems that develop because of her emphasis on this book of etiquette. Visually represent these problems. This representation can take the form of a bubble or flow chart.

Journey's end...

After finishing the book, review the problems that developed because Jane emphasized the teachings of *The Young Lady's Confidante*. Look at the bubble or flow chart that you created while reading. Which of the problems created by Jane's desire to be a lady would still be considered a problem today? Which are customs of the past? Pick three of the problems from your list, and write a five-paragraph essay telling why these customs would not be considered proper etiquette today.

