



THE GREAT FIRE

Post-Reading Response Prompts

After reading *The Great Fire*, choose five of the following prompts to respond to.

A.	What environmental factors caused the fire to ignite and spread quickly?
B.	How did Chicago’s architecture contribute to the fire's quick spread?
C.	Describe Claire Innes. Who was she, what happened to her during the fire, and how did she reunite with her family?
D.	Editor-in-chief Horace White often used poetic language to describe what he witnessed during the fire. Find <u>three</u> examples of White’s poetic language in the book. What is the impact of Horace White’s words?
E.	Readers of <i>The Great Fire</i> experience the tragedy from multiple points of view, including from the perspectives of Alexander Frear, Horace White, and Claire Innes. Why do you think the author does this? Choose <u>one</u> perspective and explain why their account is important to the story.
F.	Shortly after the fire, the people of Chicago began to restore and improve their city. However, some residents had a difficult time rebuilding their homes and neighborhoods. Why was this? Cite <u>two</u> examples from the text to support your answer.
G.	One of the themes in the book is determination in the face of great tragedy. Find <u>two</u> specific examples from the story that illustrate this theme.
H.	After the Great Chicago Fire, Mrs. O’Leary was blamed for what happened, even though she was asleep when the fire began. Why do you think she was unfairly blamed? What other individuals or groups were unfairly blamed for the fire?
I.	Author Jim Murphy researched personal accounts from survivors to craft a story of panic and destruction while also sharing examples of people’s courage. Who shows courage in this story? Choose <u>one</u> survivor and find <u>one</u> direct quote from the story to support your claim.
J.	Compare the hand-drawn images with the photographs in the book. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using each type of visual to help readers understand the Great Fire of 1871?