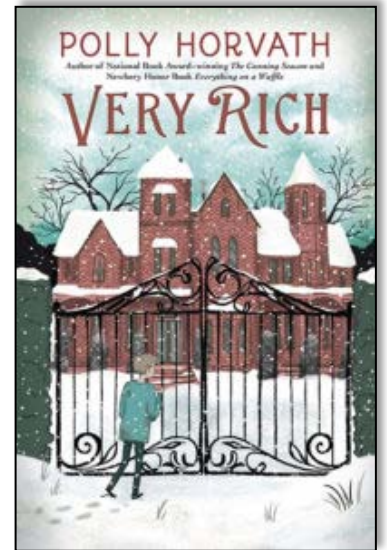


Holiday House EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

VERY RICH

Polly Horvath

What happens when the poorest boy in town inadvertently spends Christmas with the eccentric (and slightly clueless) family of the richest boy in town?



9780823440283 • Ages 10 up • E-book

Language Arts

Questions for Writing and Discussion

CCSS 3-5.SL.1

- Early in the story, Rupert's mother, Mrs. Brown, says to a police officer, "You people are always picking on the poor." Discuss whether or not you think this is a true assumption. Why or why not? (p. 16) **CCSS 3.RI.5; 3.RL.6; 3-5.W.1**
- Much of this story is devoted to the differences between rich people and poor people: where they can live, what they can eat, where they can go, what they can do, etc. Do you think this is fair? Have you noticed any issues or situations in your own community where this difference is evident? Do you think there are steps that can be taken to change things? **CCSS 3.RI.5; 3.RL.6; 3-5.W.1**
- The librarian in the story lived at the Rivers' house, but always hid behind curtains. Why do you think the author included this in the story? **CCSS 3.RI.5**
- On page 99, during Rupert's restaurant adventure, there is mention of a magical "Sparkle Salad." What do you think the ingredients in such a salad would be? Some students might want to create an original drawing of this salad or try the recipe found online at HolidayHouse.com.
- A time machine played a big role in many of the events in this story. If you had access to a time machine, where would you go, or which period of history would you choose to experience? Explain.
- In one of Rupert's adventures, he was transported to the 1970s. From the descriptions in the story, how were things different then than they are now?
- Near the end of the book, Rupert gets a beautiful new suit. Do you think that wearing certain clothes makes a person feel differently? More or less confident? Why or why not? **CCSS 3.RI.5; 3-5.W.1**
- Near the end of the story, Aunt Hazelnut says, "Your circumstances may change, but *you* don't change." What do you think she meant by that? Do you agree with her? Why or why not? (p.183) **CCSS 3.RI.5; 3.RL.6; 3-5.W.1**
- Rupert had many exciting adventures in this story. If you could pick one of these adventures to experience yourself, which one would you pick? Explain why.
- At the end of the story, what did Rupert finally understand about his family? What did he learn about "being his true self"? **CCSS 3-5.RI.1**



Reality vs. Fantasy

Rupert’s adventures were quite amazing. Have students identify which events in the story could have really happened and which could not. Discuss the difference between realistic fiction and fantasy. **CCSS 5.RL.9**

Suspense

The author ends many of the chapters in *Very Rich* with a sentence or two that make the reader want to keep reading to learn more of the story. This is often called a “cliff-hanger.” Ask students to provide some examples of this from the book, and explain the idea of suspense in a story—whether it is read, or viewed as a TV show or a movie. Have students write some examples of cliff-hangers.

Geography

There are many geographical locations mentioned in this book. These provide an opportunity for students to become more familiar with maps. Students can use a World Atlas or a U.S. Atlas to search for these places. It might be fun to use a U.S. map to plot the course that Rupert took on his many adventures. It might also be interesting to use Google Images to see the appearances of these places.

Some places to search include: In the United States—Atlantic Ocean; Cincinnati, OH; Coney Island, NY; Florida; Mendocino, CA; Ohio River; Kentucky; Seattle, WA; Steelville, OH; Washington, D.C.
Outside the United States —Giverny, France; Huambo, Angola

Online Resources

Giverny’s Monet Garden

<http://giverny.org/gardens/fcm/visitgb.htm>

Provides information including many excellent photos of Monet’s Garden.

Coney Island’s Rides and Attractions

<http://coneyislandfunguide.com/rides-and-attractions/>

Provides information and photos of the many rides available at Coney Island.

Coney Island’s Food and Drinks

<http://coneyislandfunguide.com/food-and-drinks/>

Provides information and photos of the food establishments at Coney Island.

Coney Island’s Women Fashion

<https://bellatory.com/fashion-industry/1970s-Fashion>

Provides information and photos of women’s fashions from the 1970s.

Men’s Fashion

fashionbeans.com/article/how-to-wear-mens-1970s-fashion/

Provides descriptions and photos of fashion trends for men in the 1970s.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Polly Horvath has written many books for children including *Everything on a Waffle*, a Newbery Honor; *The Canning Season*, a National Book Award winner; and *The Trolls*, a National Book Award finalist. She lives in British Columbia with her family. Visit her at PollyHorvath.com.

