Navigator

A novel study guide for

Walk Two Moons

by Sharon Creech

Navigator Developer: Joyce VanTassel-Baska

Center for Gifted Education

School of Education

The College of William and Mary
Acknowledgement

Special recognition and appreciation go to Dr. Joyce VanTassel-Baska, whose leadership and vision have inspired this *Navigator* series.
Introduction

This Navigator is a collection of questions and activities intended to support group or independent study of the novel *Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech. It is one of a series of Navigators developed by the Center for Gifted Education at The College of William and Mary as a language arts resource for teachers and students.

Novel studies should encourage advanced readers to develop their skills at analyzing and interpreting literature through structured questions and activities that highlight themes and concepts, literary elements, and real world connections contained within the books. In addition, novel studies are opportunities for students to develop their own vocabulary and writing skills by exploring and emulating the language and style used by authors.

What are the goals of the Navigator?
The Navigator addresses the following learning goals:

- To develop analytical and interpretive skills in literature.
- To develop understanding of selected literary themes.
- To develop linguistic competency through vocabulary and language study.
- To develop skills in written and oral communication.
- To develop higher level thinking and reasoning skills in language arts.
- To develop research skills.

Who is the audience for the Navigator?
This Navigator is intended for readers of *Walk Two Moons*, a novel appropriate for strong readers in the elementary grades. This novel meets many of the criteria identified by Baskin and Harris (1980) for books for gifted readers, including rich, varied, exciting language; open-endedness; complexity, leading to interpretive and evaluative behaviors; and problem solving. The novel also meets criteria identified by Miller-Lachman (1992) as considerations for multicultural literature.

How should the Navigator be used?
The Navigator may be used as an instructional tool by a teacher or as an independent study guide by a student or group of students. The central intent is for teachers to use the Navigator to support a novel study with a group of students, selecting questions and activities to assign as desired, given the context. However, teachers may also choose to make the Navigator available to students at a learning center, with expectations specified for students as to which items they should complete.

The Navigator incorporates several types of questions related to the novel. Some of these, identified as “while you read” questions, are specifically intended to be used for reflection and
prediction as students progress through the novel. Other questions are intended for response after the reader has completed the novel, while still others may be answered either during or after reading. All of the questions on pages 13 - 22 of the Navigator may be used for writing and/or discussion.

Additional activities beyond the discussion and reflection questions appear on pages 23 - 38 of the Navigator. Some of these activities support further development of the language arts skills identified in the goals, while others provide interdisciplinary connections and research applications.

*What are the prerequisites for students using the Navigator?*
Students using the Navigator should be able to complete the novel itself independently and should be familiar with the literary and reasoning terms utilized in questions. In addition, students will be asked to complete activities that utilize several specific teaching/learning models: the Literature Web and the Hamburger Model for Persuasive Writing. If these terms and models are new to students, teachers may wish to conduct mini-lessons on them either prior to or during use of the Navigator. Some guidance for using the teaching models is provided on the following pages.
The Literature Web
The Literature Web is a model designed to guide interpretation of a literature selection by encouraging a reader to connect personal response with particular elements of the text. The web may be completed independently and/or as a tool for discussion. The recommended use is to have students complete the web independently and then share ideas in a small group, followed by a teacher-facilitated debriefing. The web has five components:

- **Key Words**: interesting, unfamiliar, striking, or particularly important words and phrases contained within the text
- **Feelings**: the reader’s feelings, with discussion of specific text details inspiring them; the characters’ feelings; and the feelings the reader infers the author intended to evoke
- **Ideas**: major themes and main ideas of the text; key concepts
- **Images and Symbols**: notable sensory images in the text; “pictures” in the reader’s mind and the text that inspired them; symbols for abstract ideas
- **Structure**: the form and structure of the writing and how they contribute to meaning; may identify such features as use of unusual time sequence in narrative, use of voice, use of figurative language, etc.; style of writing
The Hamburger Model for Persuasive Writing
The Hamburger Model uses the familiar metaphor of a sandwich to help students construct a paragraph or essay. Students begin by stating their point of view on the issue in question (the top bun). They then provide reasons, or evidence, to support their claim; they should try to incorporate at least three supportive reasons (the “patties”). Elaboration on the reasons provides additional detail (the “fixings”). A concluding sentence or paragraph wraps up the sandwich (the bottom bun).
The Vocabulary Web
The Vocabulary Web is a tool for exploring words in depth. It asks students to investigate a single word in detail, finding its definition, synonyms and antonyms, and etymological information. With this information, students then identify “word families,” or other words using the same meaning-based stems as the original word; and they provide an example of the word, which may be a sentence or analogy using the word, a visual or dramatic representation, or another creative form.
In addition to the models discussed here, Navigator developers also used Paul's (1992) Elements of Reasoning in preparing questions and activities. This model for critical thinking emphasizes the following eight elements: issue, purpose, point of view, assumptions, concepts, evidence, inferences, and implications or consequences. Teachers may wish to introduce these terms to students, using a familiar issue such as something being discussed in the school or community; teachers should then encourage the use of the terms and the model in approaching problems and issues.

The Navigator also contains research assignments that are issue-based and connected to the novel. Students should be encouraged to explore multiple points of view and use human and organizational as well as print resources in their investigations of these real-world issues.

Several resources are listed at the end of the Navigator that may be useful to students and teachers in exploring these models further.
Implementing the Navigator

How long does the Navigator take?
Duration of study depends on teacher preference and number of activities and questions assigned.

How does the Navigator address standards for language arts?
The Navigator was designed with an eye to addressing key standards for language arts identified by the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association (1996) as well as standards from several state-level education departments. Specifically, the Navigator reflects standards in the following areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards Emphases</th>
<th>Navigator</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Use of strategies to understand, interpret and evaluate text</td>
<td>- Provides the student with an organizer for interpreting text (the</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literature Web) and guiding questions to support understanding and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>critical analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Use of writing strategies and writing process elements</td>
<td>- Provides writing prompts, a writing model, and emphasis on steps of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>writing process</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Use of spoken and written language for particular audiences and to accomplish</td>
<td>- Incorporates activities for writing and speaking that emphasize</td>
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<tr>
<td>particular purposes</td>
<td>persuasive, reflective, informative, and narrative communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Knowledge of vocabulary, language structure, and language conventions and</td>
<td>- Encourages in-depth word study of advanced vocabulary,</td>
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<tr>
<td>analysis of how they are demonstrated in text</td>
<td>including emphasis on etymology and usage of words</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Research on issues and areas of interest, with emphasis on utilizing a variety of</td>
<td>- Provides several issue-based research assignments for students,</td>
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<tr>
<td>technological and informational resources to gather data, interpret results, and</td>
<td>emphasizing data collection from print, non-print, and human</td>
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<tr>
<td>communicate findings</td>
<td>resources; analysis and synthesis of data; and written and oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>communication of findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Participation as members of literacy communities</td>
<td>- Encourages discussion within and beyond the classroom about the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>specified text and invites similar exploration of other texts</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Emphasis on reading a wide range of literature selections to build understanding</td>
<td>- Encourages in-depth study of the specified text as well as comparisons</td>
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<tr>
<td>of the human experience</td>
<td>to other selected works; suggests specific titles for further reading</td>
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</table>
**How should the Navigator activities be assigned?**
Teachers should specify expectations for students about the number and type of activities and questions to be completed, as well as expectations for quality of work. Teachers may choose to assign Navigator questions and activities using a combination of required and optional items. Several sample organizations of assignments follow.

**Sample 1 (Teacher-led emphasis):**
- Teacher-led discussion of higher-level questions; 1 to 3 questions assigned for journal response
- Required assignments: Literature Web, one persuasive essay, sayings analysis OR concept map, one research assignment
- Choice assignments: student choice of THREE remaining activities
- Oral presentation of one completed piece

**Sample 2 (Small-group emphasis):**
- Small-group discussion of higher-level questions, with 4 to 5 questions completed in writing for teacher review
- *Group* assignments: sayings analysis OR concept map, book or chapter title assignment, one research assignment with group presentation
- *Individual* assignments: Literature Web, persuasive essay OR reactions journal, student choice of TWO remaining activities

**Sample 3 (Individual emphasis):**
- Written responses to student choice of 2 to 3 discussion questions per category
- Required assignments: one research assignment; student choice of THREE additional activities, of which one must be a completed writing piece; oral presentation of one assignment
**How should the Navigator activities be assessed?**

Teachers should assess student progress based on the quality of individual products and achievement toward the goals of the Navigator. Decisions about which activities to require students to complete should be based on how the selected activities support multiple learning goals.

Question responses should be assessed based on demonstration of insight and ability to use text to support inferences. Writing activities should be assessed based on clarity and insight, and may also be assessed for writing style and mechanics as desired. Oral presentations of completed work should be assessed based on coherence, content, and clarity of the presentation. Teachers may provide rubrics for students related to the required assignments or work with students to develop rubrics for assessment.

Completed Navigator activities should be collected into a folder for assessment, and final assessment may include self-evaluation by the student.

The following chart demonstrates how the Navigator activities support the identified goals:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion/Writing Questions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Literature Web</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persuasive Essays</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sayings Analysis</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concept Map</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Poster</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Character Journeys</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Web</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Reviews</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Myth and Symbol Exploration</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grief Research</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Settings Research</td>
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<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theme Comparison</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poetry Book</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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</table>
What additional resources are required to use the Navigator?
Most of the activities in the Navigator require only the novel itself and regular classroom supplies. Vocabulary activities will require the use of a good dictionary, including etymological information on words. Recommended dictionaries include *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* and the *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary*. Interdisciplinary and research activities may require additional supplies and access to library and Internet resources. The *Guide to Teaching a Language Arts Curriculum for High-Ability Learners* (Center for Gifted Education, 1998) provides guidance in the use of the literature, persuasive writing, and vocabulary study models used in the Navigator as well as other guidelines for language arts with high-ability populations.

A listing of additional resources and suggestions for further reading appears at the end of the Navigator.

Technology Integration

Several opportunities for technological connections and development of technical skills are incorporated in the Navigator. Based on the resources available in your classroom or media center, consider the following uses of technology:

- Access to the Internet for research projects. Key websites are listed in the resources section.
- Use of word processing and/or publishing software for writing assignments.
- Use of presentation software for presenting research findings and completed activities.
- Use of Inspiration or similar software for creation of concept maps.
*Synopsis*

*Walk Two Moons* is a book about a young girl named Salamanca whose mother left Kentucky and traveled to Idaho following a family crisis. Sal journeys with her father's parents across country by car to find her mother, telling a story about her friend Phoebe along the way. She returns home after the trip, much wiser for having taken it.
Higher-Level Questions for Discussion and Writing

While You Read...

What is the importance of the notes that Phoebe finds?

How are Phoebe and Salamanca alike? Different?

What meaning does the trip have for her Gram and Gramps?
What could you predict about Ben's role in the book?

How does the idea of *journey* apply in the book?
Exploring the Story

Describe the itinerary for the book. Why does it end where it began?

The book is a story about the lives of Salamanca, Phoebe, and Gram and Gramps. Summarize each story and how they relate to each other.

What character traits in Sal’s mother explain her decision to leave?
What do blackberries represent in the book?

Why are the students' journals in English class important?

Why does the author not reveal what happened to Sal's mother until Sal gets to Lewiston?
Meeting the Characters

Compare and contrast the roles of Mrs. Cadaver and Mrs. Partridge in the book. What purposes do they serve?

What talents does Salamanca exhibit in the book? How might she develop them further?

Describe Phoebe’s best and worst traits. What triggers her acting in the extremes?
How are the two sets of grandparents different in the book? How are these differences reflected in their children?

What enduring characteristics do Gram and Gramps show after 51 years of marriage? How does the author make these characters memorable?

What evidence shows how Sal’s father feels about his wife’s leaving?
Understanding the Ideas

How does the theme of identity and change work in the book? What characters experience changes from beginning to end?

How do the characters cope with the idea of loss in the book? Describe different losses and the different ways the characters deal with them.

The idea of a journey is often to undertake a quest. How does the idea of quest apply in this book? What is being sought? What is found?
How is the combined theme of love and death played out in the book?

How is the concept of hope kept alive in the book? What significance does it play in advancing the plot?

Is Phoebe real, or has Sal imagined her? If she is real, is her whole story real, or is it part of Sal's way of dealing with her own grief? Use evidence from the book to support your answers.
How did Phoebe’s story help Sal? Describe a situation in which another person’s experience helped you to cope with your own problems more effectively.

Think of a time that you acted impulsively. How did the outcome compare to Sal’s driving Gramps’s car to Lewiston?

Which character are you most like? Why?
Have you ever experienced loss in your life? What coping strategies did you use and which character most resembled your way of dealing with it?

What literal journey have you taken that resulted in a deeper understanding of life? Describe this journey.
Differentiated Activities for Gifted Learners

Complete a Literature Web about the novel, or a specific chapter in the novel. Fill in responses to each of the bubbles, using the questions below as a guide.

**Key Words:** What were some words and phrases in the novel that were especially interesting or important?

**Feelings:** What feelings did you have while reading this novel? What feelings did the characters have? How were those feelings expressed?

**Ideas:** What was the main idea or theme of the novel? What other major ideas and concepts were important? What message was the author trying to give about those ideas?

**Images/Symbols:** How did the author use description and imagery in the novel? What sensory images came to your mind? How did the author use symbols?

**Structure:** What type of writing was this? What literary and style elements did the author use? How did the structure of the writing contribute to the meaning of the novel?
Read the following sayings found in the book and explain each one in general and specifically as it applies to the book.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Saying</th>
<th>General Meaning</th>
<th>Specific Meaning in the Book</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t judge a man until you have walked two moons in his moccasins.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Everyone has his own agenda.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>In the course of a lifetime, what does it matter?</td>
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<tr>
<td>You can’t keep the birds of sadness from flying over your head, but you can keep them from nesting in your hair.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Keep a journal of your reactions to Sal’s plight after chapters 6, 14, 24, 35, and 44. How do your feelings toward her change as you continue reading the book?
Use the Hamburger Model as a guide to help you organize your responses to the activities on the following pages.

THE HAMBURGER MODEL FOR PERSUASIVE WRITING
The opening line of the book is "Gramps says that I am a country girl at heart, and that is true." Write a persuasive essay arguing for the truth of that sentence as revealed in the rest of the book. Use the Hamburger Model as a guide, and follow the steps of the writing process to review and revise.
Walk Two Moons has 44 chapters, and each chapter title is carefully chosen and meaningful. Think about the meaning of the titles and how the author uses imagery to appeal to the reader. Choose three chapter titles and write a persuasive essay explaining why you think the author chose them.
Choose three characters from the novel. Think about the real and metaphorical journeys that each of your characters takes. Using presentation software, develop visuals to accompany an oral presentation that tracks your three characters' journeys and compares the experiences and the lessons that each of them gains.
The title of the book is *Walk Two Moons*. To what does the title refer? How does it apply to the story? Develop a poster to demonstrate your understanding and present in class.
Create a concept map about how one of these ideas is explored in the novel: loss, journey, identity, memory, change. Use specific characters and events from the novel to demonstrate how the concept is developed. Then write at least two generalizations you can make about the concept. A sample concept map is started for you below.
Do a “word study” of one or more of the vocabulary words (listed below) from the novel. Find out the definition of the word, synonyms and antonyms, and word stems and origin. Then find at least three other words that use one or more of your word’s stems, and create an example to explain your word (a sentence, an analogy, a visual representation, etc.) Use the Vocabulary Web to organize your responses.

ornery (p. 10)  parched (p. 12)
dignified (p. 14)  defiance (p. 15)
exasperated (p. 16)  parson (p. 43)
prudence (p. 19)  pandemonium (p. 46)
intriguing (p. 60)  accumulated (p. 62)
rummaging (p. 63)  slathered (p. 82)
cavorted (p. 116)  malinger (p. 132)
treacherous (p. 143)  plummeted (p. 150)
careening (p. 150)  tentatively (p. 153)
optimistic (p. 157)  ghastly (p. 192)
omnipotent (p. 201)  nonchalantly (p. 210)
extensively (p. 240)  mischievous (p. 253)
VOCABULARY WEB

WORD:

Source (sentence where you saw the word):

Definition:

Synonyms:

Antonyms:

Example:

Analysis

Part of Speech:

Stems:

Word Families:

Origin:
Read Sharon Creech's *The Wanderer*. Write a book review of each book. Then write a synthesis review in which you discuss the elements of Creech's style that are apparent in both books, and compare the concept of *journey* as it is used in each.

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Read *The Odyssey* by Homer and the poem *Ulysses* by Tennyson. Complete a book review comparing both to *Walk Two Moons*. 

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Both Greco-Roman and Indian symbols are used in the book. What are these allusions, and how do they reflect the philosophy of the two cultures? Conduct research and develop an exhibit to display your findings, using an artifact to demonstrate each major symbol and its meaning.

What mythological characters are used in the book? Describe the purpose of each in general and then specifically as used in the text. Create a comparison chart to depict your findings.
Research the natural settings of the book (i.e., Yellowstone, the Badlands, the Black Hills, Idaho cities). Create an illustrated map of the journey that highlights these sites with descriptions of them and paragraphs persuading people to visit them.

Read the Emily Dickinson poem “I never lost as much but twice…” How is the concept of loss of a loved one in the poem different from or similar to Walk Two Moons? Construct a Venn diagram to reflect your understanding.
Read Sharon Creech's short novel *Love That Dog*. What do you think the two books demonstrate about the author's feelings about poetry? Create your own book of poetry about journeys, including both real and metaphorical ones. Use desktop publishing and graphics software to lay out your book.
Resources

Teacher Resources


For further reading – some other books by Sharon Creech

Absolutely Normal Chaos
Chasing Redbird
Love That Dog
Ruby Holler
The Wanderer

For further reading – some other books you might enjoy

Because of Winn-Dixie by Kate DiCamillo
A Long Way from Chicago by Richard Peck
Missing May by Cynthia Rylant
Homecoming by Cynthia Voigt
D'Aulaires' Book of Greek Myths by Ingri D'Aulaire and Edgar Parin D'Aulaire
Heroes, Gods, and Monsters of Greek Myths by Bernard Evslin
American Indian Myths and Legends by Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz
Anpao: An American Indian Journey by Jamake Highwater
Between Earth and Sky: Legends of Native American Sacred Places by Joseph Bruchac
Useful websites

http://www.sharoncreech.com/ (The author’s website)

http://www.achuka.co.uk/scsg.htm (interview with the author)

http://www.nps.gov/badl/ (Badlands National Park)

http://www.nps.gov/yell/ (Yellowstone National Park)

http://www.nps.gov/moru/ (Mount Rushmore)

http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/blackhills/ (Black Hills National Forest)

http://www.senecaindians.com/ (about the Seneca Indians)

http://www.sni.org/ (Seneca Nation of Indians)

http://classics.mit.edu/Homer/odyssey.html (the text of Homer's Odyssey)

http://nova.bsuvc.bsu.edu/~00mevancamp/litterms.html (webpage on the elements of literature)

http://www.virtualsalt.com/litterms.htm (a glossary of literary terms)

http://www.m-w.com (Merriam-Webster Dictionary site)