

TEACHER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Middle Grade - Discussion Questions

INTRODUCTION:

~ COVER ~ TITLE PAGE ~ BACK COVER ~

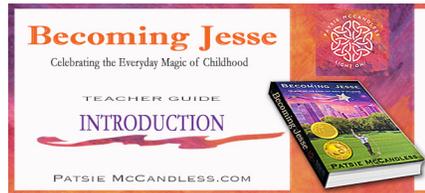
COVER:

Becoming Jesse

1. How can you tell if Jesse is a boy or a girl? (*A girl's name is spelled Jessie. A boy's name is spelled Jesse.*)
2. So, this picture is most likely the little boy named Jesse. What is he doing?
3. What is his string attached to? It is a very large size star. Do you think Stars or Star Light may play a part in his story?
4. What time of day do you think it is?
5. Where is he? (*This is an iconic picture of Central Park Lawn with the trees + city buildings in background. Find a photo of this.*
[https://duckduckgo.com/?q=image+central+park+new+york&t=h &iar=images&iax=images&ia=images&iai=https%3A%2F%2Fcdn.britannica.com%2F71%2F189171-050-B4A7DA05%2FCentral-Park-New-York-City.jpg](https://duckduckgo.com/?q=image+central+park+new+york&t=h&iar=images&iax=images&ia=images&iai=https%3A%2F%2Fcdn.britannica.com%2F71%2F189171-050-B4A7DA05%2FCentral-Park-New-York-City.jpg))
6. What is Jesse wearing?
7. How do his clothes imply a certain time period? (*The story takes place back in the 1950s*)

~ PatsieMcCandless.com ~ *Becoming Jesse* ~ TEACHER GUIDE ~

~ INTRODUCTION ~



8. Let's look at the Subtitle: **Celebrating the Everyday Magic of Childhood:**

- What do you know of Magic? (*Harry Potter? – Wands and potions? – Magic tricks?*)
- What do you think the author means by “Everyday Magic”? (*The little and big things that bless your life every day: like finding a dime on the sidewalk – getting an extra recess – going to a lake in the summertime – having your mom or dad read you your favorite story*)

9. The author is Patsie McCandless

- Her last name sounds like...? (*It might be Celtic, of Irish derivation. Do any of you have Irish in your family?*)
- What do you know of Irish legends and myths? (*Leprechaun – Magic – Tricks – Pot of Gold at end of Rainbow*)

10. What are the Awards on the cover? (*Mom's Choice + Family Choice Awards*)

- Do you know why they are given? (*To recognize the creativity and extraordinary imagination in a family classic novel that enriches the lifestyles of children and families, making a positive impact on both parents and children.*)
- From the title, what do you think may be special for children and families in this book?

TITLE PAGE:

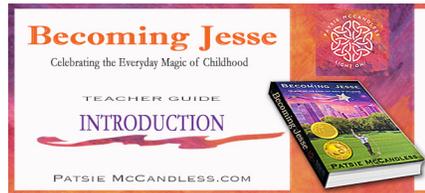
We see the Title and Author again.

Look at the bottom of the page. There is a **symbol** there.



It is very intricate.

- How would you describe it?



- What meaning could it have?



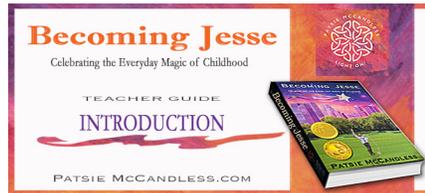
- Do you know what this symbol is called? (A Celtic Knot, or the “Triquetra”: which means “three-cornered”, and the symbol is composed of three interwoven arcs. The line is unbroken and never-ending and is said to represent many things, such as unity, protection, strength and everlasting life. Perhaps this will be a part of Jesse’s story.)

Light On Publications – I wonder if this name has something to do with the Star Light we saw on the cover?

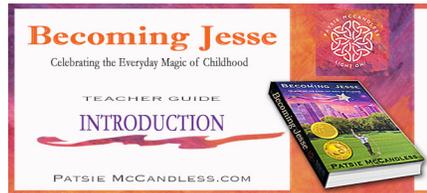
BACK COVER:

Here, we find some answers to our questions.

- Jesse is born in 1947 (So, today - 2021- he would be how old? 74! Yes, as old as your grandparents!) Can you think of your grandfather as a little boy?



- He is born an orphan. Do we know other characters who are orphans? (*Harry Potter, Mowgli, Cinderella, Anne of Green Gables, Peter Pan, Oliver Twist, Heidi, Snow White, Huckleberry Finn*)
- Most orphans have a hard life. What kind of life does Jesse have? (*Wonderlush, filled with his everyday magic.*) Doesn't that make you want to know more about his kind of Magic?
- There is a mystery in Jesse's life. What is it? (*The riddles his secretive mother has left behind, and he discovers he has a mysterious "disappeared" grandmother. No one knows a thing about her.*) What do riddles encourage? (*Solutions: we want to know the answer to the puzzle.*)
- Jesse "springs into a quest" to find his 'disappeared' grandmother. What is a quest? (*a search or hunt; or, like Sir Galahad from King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, a quest can be an expedition, adventure or a journey*)
Do you recall other characters who were on a quest? (*In Charlotte's Web: Fern wanted to save Wilbur; Wilbur wanted to live; Charlotte also wanted to save Wilbur.*) (*In The BFG: Sophie wanted to free herself and capture the giants.*) (*Harry Potter: Harry and his friends wanted to solve the mystery of Voldemort, presented in each book*)
- Jesse also faces danger and an unexpected grief. What does the author say about real magic helping Jesse? (*Real magic works in mysterious ways. It is spiraling through Jesse's days and nights. Leaving stardust clues. Waiting ... for Jesse's Light.*) It sounds like we can look for Jesse's magic every day.



- What do other people say about **Becoming Jesse** that may help us as we read through Jesse’s story? (see below)
- “*Becoming Jesse* is a radiantly magical story... inspirational... with a very profound message, because it’s really about becoming the magic in you.”
 - *Jack Canfield, co-author of Chicken Soup for the Soul and The Success Principles*
- “Starlight, Starbright — Patsie McCandless captures the real Magic in her family classic novel, *Becoming Jesse*. Her colorful, illuminating characters take us on an enchanted journey of self-discovery.”
 - *Sallie W. Boyles, VIE Magazine*
- “Sometimes we lose sight of the Light in our lives. *Becoming Jesse* re-ignites our belief in our Light – our highest and best selves, taking us on a very personal journey through Jesse’s adventures, fun, surprises, and discoveries. Here is the power of Love and Light in a timeless story for all ages, to soothe and renew our spirits — our Magic — every day.”
 - *Wendy H. Brant, Moderator, United Nations 20th Anniversary Forum: World Creativity & Innovation*

Let’s begin! Let’s put our Light On! And find the Magic in **Becoming Jesse**!