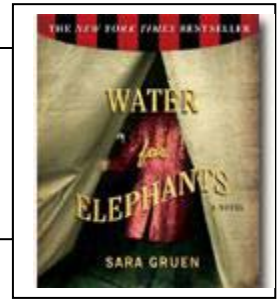




12th Grade Reg. Honors & AP

Water for Elephants by Sara Gruen



Author Bio:

Sara Gruen's first novel, *Riding Lessons*, was published in 2004. She is an animal lover who lives with her husband, three children, five cats, two goats, a dog, and a horse in an environmental community north of Chicago. Many of the characters and incidents in the novel are based on real people and true stories gleaned from her extensive research into the world of traveling circuses of the 1930s. Sara is a Canadian-born dual citizen (Canadian and American) who moved to the States in 1999 for a technical writing job. When she was laid off two years later, instead of looking for another job, she decided to take a gamble on writing fiction full-time. Fortunately, the gamble paid off. Until 2007 she, her husband, three children, two dogs, two cats, three goats, and horse in an environmentalist community in northern Illinois. They now live in Asheville, North Carolina. Her novels to date are *Riding Lessons* (2004) and *Flying Changes* (2005), featuring Annemarie Zimmer; and *Water for Elephants* (2006). *The Ape House* is due to be published in 2009.

http://www.bookbrowse.com/biographies/?author_number=1331&Gruen-biography

Novel Synopsis:

When Jacob Jankowski, recently orphaned and suddenly adrift, jumps onto a passing train, he enters a world of freaks, drifters, and misfits, a second-rate circus struggling to survive during the Great Depression, making one-night stands in town after endless town. A veterinary student who almost earned his degree, Jacob is put in charge of caring for the circus menagerie. It is there that he meets Marlena, the beautiful young star of the equestrian act, who is married to August, the charismatic but twisted animal trainer. He also meets Rosie, an elephant who seems un-trainable until he discovers a way to reach her. Beautifully written, *Water for Elephants* is illuminated by a wonderful sense of time and place. It tells a story of a love between two people that overcomes incredible odds in a world in which even love is a luxury that few can afford.

http://www.bookbrowse.com/reviews/index.cfm?book_number=1826

