



One Crazy Summer

Exam 2 - Emmie Evans

Agency – The characters' ability to do something, the power they have over their own lives

Typical Case Prototype (TCP) – What you would expect from a children's book, one that confirms your assumptions (adults are strong and caring, offer guidance to children, age over experience)

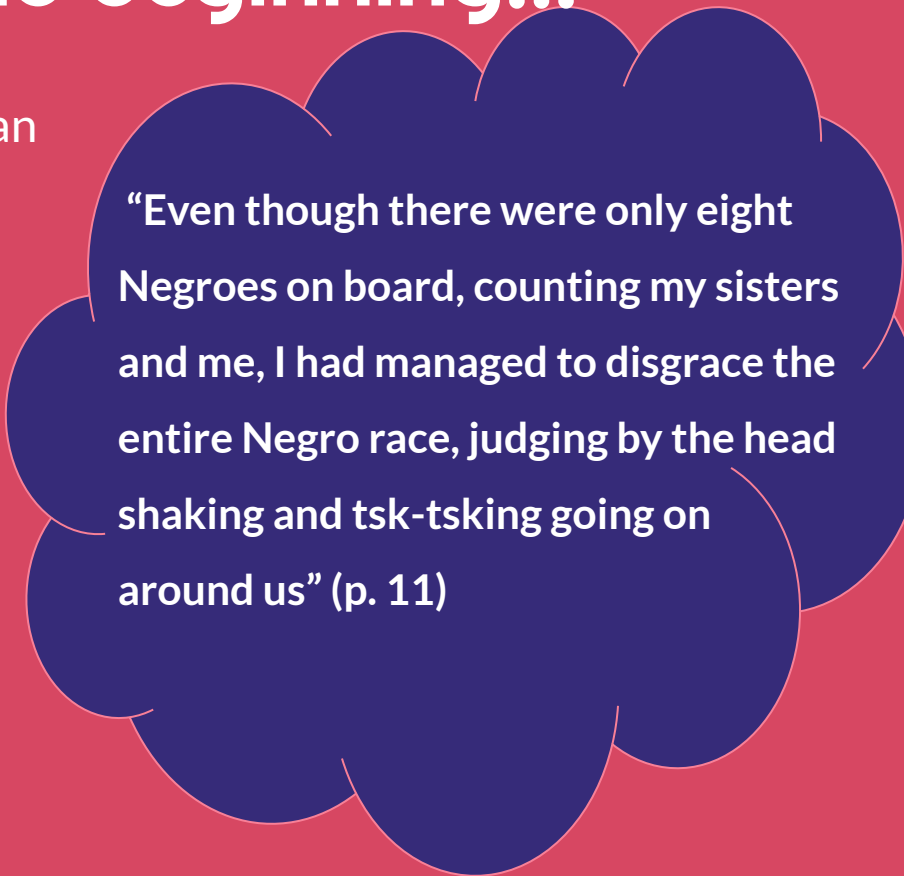
Agency and TCP in the beginning...

The sisters are already given more agency than one would expect when on the plane

- by themselves
- flying across the country
- no cellphones
- little info about their mother

Defies Typical Case Prototype

- don't have a guardian with them telling them how to act
- trusted enough by Pa and Big Ma to act responsibly



“Even though there were only eight Negroes on board, counting my sisters and me, I had managed to disgrace the entire Negro race, judging by the head shaking and tsk-tsking going on around us” (p. 11)

Cecile

Girls ask for dinner, Cecile tells them to go get it from around the corner with the money Pa had given them, when they say it's for fun things like Disneyland, Cecile laughs and says “Is Tinker Bell going to feed you?” (p. 31)

AGENCY

The girls are expected to provide for themselves despite being young. Food is within walking distance so why shouldn't they be able to go get it?

DEFIES TCP

Moms are expected to be nurturing and loving, make 3 course meal, would never let their children walk alone at night

Cecile

Cecile expects them to entertain themselves all day, doing whatever they please
“Don’t kill yourself to get back here. Stay out till sundown” (p.60)

AGENCY

Freedom to explore, not limited to doing “kid” things

Live like adults in the sense that they don’t have to check in with someone for approval or worry about getting into trouble

DEFIES TCP

Discover the People’s Center, site for the Black Panthers Movement

Normally an adult would swoop in and shoo them away from such “real world” stuff, tell them to go play in the yard or something

Child characters in a typical case book are often portrayed as simple, innocent, unaware of adult world

Delphine

Understands complexity of her relationship with her mom Cecile

- “Mother is a statement of fact. Cecile Johnson-mammal birthgiver, alive, an abandoner- is our mother. Mommy gets up to give you a glass of water in the middle of the night. We don’t have one of those. We have a statement of fact” (p. 14)

Aware of racial stereotypes that dictate society

- White people treating them like aliens
 - ◆ On the plane, the white woman was “gawking at us like we were on display at the zoo” (p. 15)
 - ◆ “Instead of taking pictures of all the Chinese people and the temples and dragons, they pointed their cameras at us. Vonetta started to pose movie-star style with one hand behind her head and the other on her slim hip.” (p. 162-163)

Delphine – Awareness cont.

Only ever heard that Black Panthers were militant and dangerous, the opposite of what her experience with them was like

- “I’d never seen the Black Panthers making breakfast on the news. But then, beating eggs never makes the evening news” (p. 64)

Police brutality

- “I was tall for my age. No one would think I was just a girl going on twelve. The police who patrolled the Center could be chasing someone, burst in, shoot first, and ask questions later” (p. 128).

Agency and TCP in the end...

Defies TCP

- Fern, the youngest, knows something that no one else does, reveals that Crazy Kelvin is working with the police
- Cecile never turns into the mother they want/need, no sweet goodbye, no confession of regret, all she said was “Go on” (p. 214)

Crazy Kelvin says ‘Off the pig’

Crazy Kelvin slaps everyone five

The policeman pats Crazy Kelvin on the back

The policeman says, ‘Good puppy’

Crazy Kelvin says, ‘Arf. Arf.

Arf, arf, arf, arf.

Because I saw the policeman pat your back

Crazy Kelvin

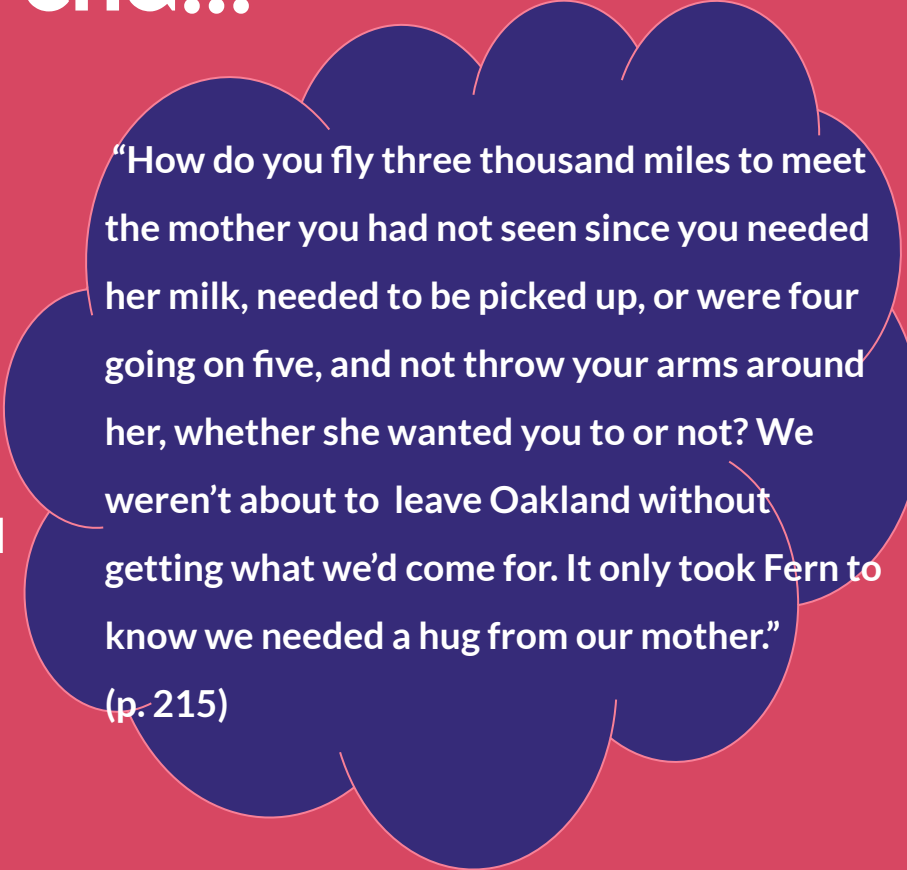
Surely did.

(p. 198 - 199)

Agency and TCP in the end...

Agency

- Grew during their stay with their mom
 - Able to explore
 - Provide for themselves
 - Grow intellectually
- Most of their newfound agency maintained for the future
 - Limited by rules and check ins with Pa
 - Expectations from Big Ma



“How do you fly three thousand miles to meet the mother you had not seen since you needed her milk, needed to be picked up, or were four going on five, and not throw your arms around her, whether she wanted you to or not? We weren’t about to leave Oakland without getting what we’d come for. It only took Fern to know we needed a hug from our mother.”
(p. 215)