

# Fair Weather

Recommended for Grades 5-8

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## **Book Summary: Fair Weather**

1893. Rosie and her siblings are invited by their mysterious Aunt Euterpe to visit her and see the Chicago World's Fair. Initially their mother is dubious but she sends them to visit in order to get Lottie award from her boyfriend, whom mother considers a drifter and grifter. The visit bodes ominous from the start when Granddad appoints himself their chaperone and they are thrust into high society. Aunt Euterpe loses her cook and her dignity as Rosie, Lottie and Granddad attempt to help her out.

## **[SPOILER]**

While Aunt Euterpe's intention was to educate the children through the World Fair, she is changed herself when Rosie and Lottie insist she stop wearing mourning clothes. In the Buffalo Bill show, Granddad surprises them all when he turns out to be an old friend of Buffalo Bill and Aunt Euterpe is singled out as the luckiest woman when she is given a bouquet of roses in front of the entire audience. She makes the acquaintance of a famous singer, Lillian Russell, and receives her first calling card the day after. The calling card turns out to be from Everett Evan's family. At the party, Lottie is reunited with Everett and Rosie thinks about how clever her sister really is.

## **Author Biography: Richard Peck**

Richard Peck was born April 10, 1934 in Decatur, Illinois. He earned his Bachelor's in English from DePauw University and a Master's degree from Southern Illinois University. After college, he was drafted into the army as a Chaplain's Assistant and served in Germany. When he returned, he became a middle and high school teacher until 1971 when he began to write. Since his first book in 1972, he has written a book nearly every year. He has won several awards for his books including the Newbery Medal, the Edgar Allen Poe Award and the Scott O'Dell Award. He currently lives in New York and continues to write, travel and work as an adjunct professor at Louisiana State University.



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## Discussion Questions: Fair Weather

1. Buster teases Rosie with a dead squirrel to see if she is becoming skittish and ladylike. How was his method effective? How would you do it differently if you were Buster?
2. Why does Mama not want to go to Chicago? If you were Rosie or Buster, would you want to go to the fair? Why or why not?
3. Rosie insists Mama will let them go to Chicago because it will get Lottie away from Everett. Why would Mama want to do that? Does she have a good reason?
4. How do Rosie and her family prepare for going to Chicago? Why do they have to do so many things in advance? How are your travel preparations different?
5. How is Aunt Euterpe different from Mama? How is she similar?
6. Granddad is upset with dinner and drags everyone out to the fair to eat. Why was Aunt Euterpe wary of letting Rosie and her siblings go to the fair at night? Would they have been missing out on any of the fair if they had waited until the next day to go? Why or why not?
7. Lottie and Rosie are accustomed to getting up early and helping out with breakfast, but when they try to help Aunt Euterpe, they drive away her hired help. Compare their life in the country to their life in Chicago. Which do you think is better? Why?
8. Why is their first day titled “The Worst Day in Aunt Euterpe’s life”?
9. In the Woman’s Building, Rosie sees a mural of cavewoman around a fire. Aunt Euterpe interprets it as women enlightening men while Lottie interprets it as women being trapped as the cooks of the family. What would influence their views? Who do you agree with and why?
10. Why does Lottie find all the inventions in the Woman’s Building ridiculous? What would she think if she saw all the modern conveniences of today? How would life be different today if we didn’t have them?
11. The second day is titled “The Greatest Day in Granddad’s life”. How was this day memorable for everyone else? Did Granddad redeem himself in Aunt Euterpe’s eyes? If so, how?
12. Rosie claims that girls can be very sly. What evidence from the story supports this claim? Do you agree with it? Why or why not?



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