



House of Purple Cedar

written by Tim Tingle

About the Book

Genre: Fiction

Format: Paperback, 336 pages

ISBN: 9781933693200

Reading Level: Grade 8*

Interest Level: Grades 8-12

Guided Reading Level: V

Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:
N/A

Lexile™ Measure: 860L

*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

Themes: Discrimination, Families, Fantasy, Fiction, History and Civics, Indigenous / First Nations / Native American Interest, Mystery and Suspense, Overcoming Obstacles

Resources on the web:

leeandlow.com/books/house-of-purple-cedar/

All guided reading level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.

SYNOPSIS

"The hour has come to speak of troubled times. It is time we spoke of Skullyville."

Thus begins Rose Goode's story of growing up in Indian Territory in pre-statehood Oklahoma. Skullyville, a once-thriving Choctaw community, was destroyed by land-grabbers, culminating in the arson of New Hope Academy for Girls in 1896. Twenty Choctaw girls died, but Rose escaped. She was blessed by the presence of her grandmother Pokoni and her grandfather Amafo, both respected elders who understand the old ways.

Soon after the fire, the White sheriff beats Amafo in front of the town's people, humiliating him. Instead of asking the Choctaw community to avenge the beating, her grandfather decides to follow the path of forgiveness. And so unfolds this tale of mystery, Indigenous magical realism, and deep wisdom. It's a world where backwoods spiritualism and Bible-thumping Christianity mix with bad guys; a one-legged woman shop-keeper, her oaf of a husband, herbal potions, and shape-shifting panthers rendering justice.

House of Purple Cedar is the winner of the Best Young Adult Novel from the American Indian Library Association.

Tim Tingle—a scholar of his nation's language, culture, and spirituality—tells Rose's story of good and evil with a local perspective and even laugh-out-loud Choctaw humor.

BACKGROUND

About the Author Tim Tingle

Tim Tingle is an Oklahoma Choctaw and an award-winning author. His great-great grandfather, John Carnes, walked the Trail of Tears in 1835, and his paternal grandmother attended a series of rigorous Indian boarding schools in the early 1900s. Responding to a scarcity of Choctaw lore, Tingle initiated a search for historical and personal narrative accounts in the early 1990s.

In 1992, Tingle began mentoring with Choctaw storyteller Charley Jones. Tim retraced the Trail of Tears to Choctaw homelands in Mississippi and began recording stories of tribal elders. His family experiences and these interviews with fellow Choctaws in Texas, Alabama, Mississippi and Oklahoma—over two hundred hours and counting—are the basis of his most important writings.

Tingle received his master's degree in English Literature, with a focus on American Indian studies, at the University of Oklahoma in 2003. While teaching freshmen writing courses and completing his thesis, "Choctaw Oral Literature," Tingle wrote his first book, *Walking the Choctaw Road*. It was selected by both Oklahoma and Alaska as Book of the Year in the "One Book, One State" program, and is now studied at universities across the United States and abroad.

House of Purple Cedar was fifteen years in the crafting. Filled with hope in the most tragic of circumstances, *House of Purple Cedar* is Tingle's testament to Choctaw elders who continue to watch over the well-being of the Choctaw Nation and its people.

Note on Choctaw Storytelling from Tim Tingle (Adapted from the Backmatter of *Crossing Bok Chitto* by Tim Tingle, <https://www.leeandlow.com/books/crossing-bok-chitto/>)

"Steeped in modern times of internet communication, with the razor edge of printed fact separating truth from untruth, it is difficult to imagine a world where the human voice reigns supreme. Yet Native Americans live in a world that tends to accept the spoken word as the authority. Even today, many Choctaws are likely to trust a story told to them by another Choctaw more than anything they read on the printed page.

We Choctaws live by our stories.

We Indians need to continue recounting our past and, from this book, non-Indians might realize the sweet and secret fire that drives the Indian heart. We are proud of who we are. We are determined that our way, shared by many of all races, a way of respect for others and the land we live on, will prevail.

"We are people of the earth. Our faith and our stories are down to earth.
We are a working people who will never feel comfortable far from the earth.
When allowed our own plot of earth, we are at our best.

We will remain as close as possible to our rivers,
For they are intertwined with our faith.

We love the clean waters of our rivers.
We renew our strength by returning to our rivers.
We are baptized in our rivers.

We do not deny that darkness exists, but we chose to walk in light,
As a people, and for this choice we are rewarded with miracles in our lives.
To stay the darkness, we laugh at our frailties, and to stay the needs of others,
We reach out—and we give.
Our stories tell us this is the way it has been.
The telling of our stories assures us this is the way it will be.
You listen and you tell and you become.
As long as our stories are told,
We can be Choctaw forever.”

Note About Terminology

When using this guide, teachers are encouraged to incorporate local Indigenous histories into the discussions. We acknowledge that terms may vary by region when discussing Indigenous communities. For example, discussions may include a specific tribe name and/or may use more general terms such as Native American, American Indian, Indigenous, or First Nations that are neither intended to minimize nor elevate any one tribe. Furthermore, the term Native is used to identify Indigenous people, as this is a commonly used term in some Indigenous communities. Teachers are encouraged to speak about Native Americans in present tense and acknowledge that all Native Americans carry rich cultures and traditions. A Native American's identity is not tied to the United State of America's recognition as people.

Choctaw

It is important to note that a tribe may have multiple bands, each with potentially distinct cultures and traditions. *House of Purple Cedar* is specific to the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. There are three federally-recognized Choctaw bands: Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, and Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. It should not be assumed that all three are the same. Teachers are encouraged to visit the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's website to learn more information about the tribe's history, culture, traditions, current events, and many other elements that make up their community at: <https://www.choctawnation.com/>

Choctaw Women

Some tribes have gender roles while other tribes may view gender as fluid. Tim Tingle notes in one of his books, *Saltpie*, that “In truth, women were the principal landowners, so it could be said that *women recognized men as equal citizens*” (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/saltpie/>). The power, influence, and importance of women in Choctaw ways is underscored in Tingle's books. You might consider the following website to dive deeper into understanding the positionality Choctaw women hold in their Tribe at: [https://choctawschool.com/home-side-menu/biskinik-archive-\(history,-news,-iti-fabvssa\)/2012-articles/women-%E2%80%93-the-givers-and-supporters-of-life.aspx](https://choctawschool.com/home-side-menu/biskinik-archive-(history,-news,-iti-fabvssa)/2012-articles/women-%E2%80%93-the-givers-and-supporters-of-life.aspx)

Native American Oral Storytelling

Oral storytelling is a way people from a variety of backgrounds may share traditional stories and songs across generations. Prior to colonization in the present-day United States of America, storytelling existed. Oral storytelling remains a way that Native American communities share wisdom and preserve rich cultures and traditions. These stories not only entertain but also teach important lessons about our history, values, and connection to the land. Storytelling remains a vital part of Choctaw culture, keeping Choctaw heritage alive for future generations (<https://chahtaoundation.com/initiatives/tradition/>) (<https://www.choctawnation.com/bios/storyteller/>) (<https://www.choctawnation.com/biskinik/news/choctaw-nation-works-to-preserve-the-stories-of-its-tribal-elders/>)

Thomas King's book *The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative* is an additional reference when thinking about the role of storytelling in our daily lives. King's book is recommended for educators to gain a deeper understanding about storytelling from a Native American perspective. (<https://www.upress.umn.edu/book-division/books/the-truth-about-stories>)

For more information on teaching with *House of Purple Cedar*, see the following resources below:

- Teachingbooks.net Teacher's Guide: https://school.teachingbooks.net/media/pdf/CincoPuntos/HousePurpleCedar_TG.pdf
- American Indians in Children's Literature Review: <https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/2014/12/tim-tingles-house-of-purple-cedar.html>
- University of North Carolina's "The Impact of Indigenous Novels: A Book Club Unit": <https://worldview.unc.edu/lesson-plan/the-impact-of-indigenous-novels-a-book-club-unit/>
- San Antonio Current's "Local Author's New Novel 'House of Purple Cedar' Speaks Choctaw Truth": <https://www.sacurrent.com/arts/local-authors-new-novel-house-of-purple-cedar-speaks-choctaw-truth-2249261>
- Understand Native Minnesota's "A Guide to Reliable Native American-Related Teaching Resources: With Reference to Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in English Language Arts": https://www.understandnativemn.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2024_-Native_American_Teaching_Resources_Guide.pdf
- Zinn Education Project's review of *House of Purple Cedar*: <https://www.zinnedproject.org/materials/house-of-purple-cedar/>

Teaching about Death and Grief

House of Purple Cedar deals with death and grief throughout the story. Edutopia's "Teaching Students about Death and Grief" provides tips and strategies on how to prepare students when talking about death and discussing grief (<https://www.edutopia.org/article/teaching-students-about-death-and-grief/>). The National Association of School Psychologists also have general tips on supporting students through grief and also when addressing grief and death in the classroom or school settings (<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-safety-and-crisis/mental-health-resources/addressing-grief/addressing-grief-tips-for->

[teachers-and-administrators](#)). "Helping the Grieving Student: A Guide for Teachers" (<https://chilliwackhospice.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/7-A-Helping-the-Grieving-Student.pdf>) also details the basic concepts of grief, the stages of grieving, and how to support students during difficult and traumatic times in their lives.

Additional Background for Teaching About Sensitive Topics

Childhelp: childhelp.org

A 24-hour, seven-days-a-week child-abuse hotline with professional counselors. Childhelp provides crisis intervention, information, literature, and referrals.

Mental Health Awareness Month: <https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Awareness-Events/Mental-Health-Awareness-Month>

The month of May is Mental Health Awareness Month. This initiative aims to fight stigma, provide support, educate the public and advocate for policies that support people with mental illness and their families.

The themes in this story must be addressed and handled with deep sensitivity and open mindedness.

Teachers must be aware and prepared that by teaching this novel (and the corresponding topics addressed in it) they may be addressing a legacy of harm and violence, specifically within largely minority and underrepresented socioeconomic groups.

Set the example of what culturally responsive teaching looks like:

- Collaborate with students to establish guidelines early on. This will serve as a reminder for discussion etiquette as thought-provoking topics are developed.
- Anticipate how your students will respond to controversial topics presented in the novel (abuse, war, etc). While teachers should encourage students to share their views without fear of judgment, teachers should consider how to respond to emotion, and use this to guide instruction and for future instructional planning.
- Don't be afraid to share your own learning journey as it pertains to cultural identity and trauma. This will create a positive classroom climate and an overall feeling of sameness.
- Aim to include and discuss outside materials that align with the text and essentially address underrepresented groups' experiences in ways that do not trivialize or marginalize their experiences.

Native American Boarding Schools

Rose attended government-run boarding school for American Indians before it burned down. The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition, a nonprofit under the laws of the Navajo Nation, states that there were over 350 boarding schools across the United States in the 19th and 20th centuries. By 1925, this affected more than 60,000 children and their families (<https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/native-american-boarding-schools/>).

The United States government instituted these schools especially for American Indian children with the idea that they needed to unlearn their "Indian ways" and live as the settlers did. According to the Library of Congress, the purpose of these schools was to make Indian children patriotic and productive citizens. The motto "Kill the Indian... Save the Man" originated from the army officer who first founded the schools to deal with "the Indian problem" (<https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=16516865>). The days in these schools followed military-like schedules and discipline, and children were mostly taught job training like carpentry for boys and housekeeping for girls. Native children were not allowed to speak in their Indian languages, and their long hair was cut short.

For more information about boarding schools for American Indians boarding schools:

- Consult the Library of Congress's (LOC) Teacher's Guide on Assimilation through Education: <https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/native-american-boarding-schools/#teachers-guide>
- The blog at the National Museum of the American Indian <https://americanindian.si.edu>
- Read the Department of Interior's Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative (<https://www.doi.gov/priorities/strengthening-indian-country/federal-indian-boarding-school-initiative>) and the report findings (<https://www.doi.gov/priorities/strengthening-indian-country/federal-indian-boarding-school-initiative>)
- And the National Indian Education Association flipbook on Native Nations and American Schools at <https://www.niea.org/boarding-school-healing-curriculum>.

For more books and resources about boarding schools for American Indians, see the list divided by age group at the American Indians in Children's Literature blog:

<https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/2008/02/as-more-resources-and-books-are.html>.

You will want to treat this part of the story with sensitivity as this history is a painful issue for some families and the impact may have personally touched the lives of some of your students.

Note about Alcoholism

Marshal Hardwicke has alcoholism in *House of Purple Cedar*. You will want to treat this part of the story with sensitivity as alcoholism is a painful issue for some families and the disease may have personally touched the lives of some of your students.

Additional Note

Be cognizant of the students in your classroom and aware of students' circumstances prior to reading *House of Purple Cedar*. Prepare to have engaging, rich discussions about the topics posed in *House of Purple Cedar*. *House of Purple Cedar* and the questions and activities in this guide help expose children to the realities of domestic abuse, racism, and alcoholism in the United States.

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Before introducing this book to students, you may wish to develop background knowledge and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

- Retell a family story. This might be a funny story or one with a lesson learned. Why did you choose this story? Why is storytelling important?
- Use the interact map at <https://native-land.ca/> to explore the importance of place in storytelling and our lived experiences.
- Why do you think learning about family stories is important? Have you ever asked your grandparents, aunts, uncles, caregivers, or any adults in your life about their childhoods? What did you learn?
- Have you ever been in a difficult situation where you didn't know what to do? Who did you go to for help? What plan did you come up with to address the situation? How did this situation make you feel?
- What strategies do you use when you're sad or scared? How do you cope with those feelings?
- What does it mean to be resilient? How do you demonstrate resilience even though something may be challenging?
- Ask students to think about what their family and friends mean to them. How is family important to you? How do you interact with your family members? Your friends?
- What does it mean to be powerful? How can you exercise power in different ways? What are ways that power is abused? What people hold power? How can power affect others?

Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1; Craft & Structure, Strand 5; and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Talk about the title of the book. Then ask students what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about. What do they think might happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that?

Take students on a book walk and draw attention to the following parts of the book: front and back covers, title page and "About Tim Tingle" in the back of the book.

Point out that this book uses the Choctaw language. Ask students why a book might be written this way. Why does it matter what language an author uses? How does a language change how a story is told or who hears it?

Setting a Purpose for Reading

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

Have students read to find out:

- the culture and traditions of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
- the impact of the burning of the New Hope Academy for Girls and how it affected Rose, her family and the Choctaw community
- the role of Choctaw storytelling in honoring and sustaining cultures and traditions across generations
- ways that abuse, violence and power can demoralize and terrorize others
- how racist acts impacted Rose and her Choctaw community at large
- how family and friendships is valued in Choctaw tradition

Encourage students to consider why the author, Tim Tingle, would want to share this story with young people.

VOCABULARY

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

The story contains several content-specific and academic words and phrases that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary below. Encourage a variety of strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, create a specific action for each word, list synonyms and antonyms, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

In *House of Purple Cedar*, teachers are strongly advised to proceed with caution regarding the pronunciation of words in the Choctaw language. If a teacher is uncertain about the pronunciation of a word, it is respectful to discuss the words, but do not attempt to interpret the words. Colonization continues to have an impact of revitalization efforts of Native languages. Interpreting words that are in a language other than one's own can negatively impact revitalization efforts and can be viewed as disrespectful. Seek guidance on correct pronunciations and interpretations from Choctaw cultural knowledge holders.

Content Specific

Skullyville, stagecoach shop, Choctaw, Nahullo, livestock, britches, hymnbook, pashofa, *Chipisa lachi*, chisel, *Yakoke*, pashofa corn soup, bootleggers, hackberry, Bohpoli, Bowie knife, roan, brethren, cottonmouth moccasin, hoke, *Shilombish Holitopama*, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek, Seminole, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, saloon, dickens, *Galveston Daily News*, gardenia, *ohoyo*, scrub

oaks, *Koi chitto*, homesteader, *chi-pisalachiki*, the Walking People, scoopanong

Academic

embers, encampment, perverse, porous, kinfolks, spectacle, porter, marshal, haggard, humility, blustery, congregation, reined, intrusion, skulking, aura, tormentor, immobilized, chagrin, acquaintances, stupor, opaque, unconsciously, fertilizing, reverence, immobile, muddled, dilemma, stupefied, morrow, rummaged, humdinger, beholding, stupor, stouthearted, quarantine, misbegotten, stagnant, lurched, inclined, detachment, compliance, accommodations, forthright, smidgen, ceremonious, endeavor, brandishing, appendage, supplicants, altar, irony, devoid, buoyancy, dignitaries, allotment, heathens, quivered, sheathed, precarious, bewilderment, whinnying, polecat, dormant

AFTER READING

Discussion Questions

After students have read the book, use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension, and develop appreciation for the content. Encourage students to refer to passages and/or illustrations in the book to support their responses. **To build skills in close reading of a text, students should cite textual evidence with their answers.**

Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

A Note Before the Reckoning/Fire & Ice

1. Who is the narrator?
2. Where was Rose born?
3. What school did she attend?
4. What happens in Rose's dream?
5. Who were the Willis boys?
6. Who did Rose end up marrying?
7. What happened to the New Hope Academy for Girls?
8. Who was Lillie Chukma?
9. What did Efram decide to do?

Spiro Town

10. Who is Amafo? What does he tell Rose to do?
11. Where do Rose and Amafo go?
12. Who is the new Indian agent?
13. Who is the town marshal?

14. What is Marshal Hardwicke like? How does he act at the train station?
15. What does Marshal Hardwicke do to Amafo?
16. How does Rose respond to the incident?
17. What did Rose say that she learned about Amafo after the incident with the marshal?
18. Who was in Colonel Mingo's army?
19. Who was Jezzy? What story did they tell about Jezzy? What was the lesson that Colonel Mingo wanted to teach about Jezzy?
20. What did Colonel Mingo know about New Hope?
21. What did the people want to do about the marshal?
22. How did Amafo help Lillie's mother?
23. What does Reverend Willis say at his sermon after the incident?
24. Who is John Burleson? What do he and Amafo talk about?

Leggy Maggy and Friends

25. Who is Maggie Johnston? Where did she work? Who is her boss?
26. What is Maggie like?
27. What do Maggie and Amafo discuss?
28. Who is Terrance Lowell? What is he like?
29. What does Terrance try to do? Who stops him?
30. What does Maggie say about Marshal Hardwicke?

The Fist of Darkness

31. What happened a week after the incident with the marshal at the train station?
32. Who is Marshal Hardwicke's wife? How does she act around the marshal?
33. What does Samuel Willis see? How does he respond?

Escape in Broad Daylight

34. Where does Terrance go in Spiro? What does he want to do?
35. What happens in the bank?
36. What does Terrance try to do to Hiram?
37. What is the significance of the butter knife?
38. How does Maggie react to Terrance? What does she think of him?
39. What does Maggie ask of the bartender?
40. What happens the day after the arrest of Terrance? Where does Maggie go? What does she do?
41. What does Maggie give the marshal?

42. What is Maggie's plan?
43. Where do Maggie and Terrance go? How does John Burleson help them?
44. What does Maggie write in her letter?
45. What notice appears in the *Galveston Daily News*?
46. Where do Maggie and Terrance go?

Pokoni and Amafo

47. What happens to Pokoni? How does Rose respond?
48. How does Amafo react to Pokoni's death?
49. Who comes to Rose's house?
50. What does Roberta Jean do at the cemetery?
51. Who follows Roberta Jean? What happens to her?
52. Who goes out to look for Roberta Jean? Where do they find her?
53. What animal do they see in the shadows?
54. What does Reverend Willis recall in his childhood memory about his uncle?
55. What does Reverend Willis say in the shortest sermon he ever preached?
56. What does the marshal tell Roberta Jean?
57. Who is Bill Gibbons? What does the marshal do to him? Where does the marshal go?
58. What does Ona Mae say about her husband, the marshal?
59. What does Mrs. Taylor tell Ona Mae about the marshal?

Dark Resurrection

60. Where does the marshal end up?
61. Who does the marshal meet? What does he begin to do for them?
62. Who does George think the marshal is?
63. What does George give the marshal in the barn?
64. How does George treat the marshal?
65. What happens to the homesteaders' barn? What does the marshal do? What does Marty say about the marshal?
66. Where does the marshal go next?
67. How does Slowboat save Amafo?
68. What happens to the McCuratins? How do Rose and her family help them?
69. What do Rose and her family see on the tree?

70. What animal does Rose see when they return home? What does it do to her?
71. What does the panther do at the house?
72. What is the significance of the panther, according to Daddy?
73. Who does Rose realize burned the school, killed the show, chased them through the woods, and hung the snake?

Final Reckoning

74. What does Rose think about the marshal?
75. What does Ona Mae do to the marshal?
76. What happens to Maggie and Terrance?

Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. How does the burning of New Hope Academy for Girls affect Rose? Why do you think the author chose to story with the school burning down? How does it alter the community?
2. What is the significance of Amafo and Pokoni's characters? How do they influence Rose and her family? How do they demonstrate their protective and caring nature towards Rose and other people in their community?
3. How are Amafo and Pokoni similar? How are they different? What kinds of roles do they play in their family? In their community at large? Rose states about the: "My grandfather was slow and deep, like the nearby Arkansas River, while Pokoni, my grandmother, was sharp and quick, like a crackling winter fire." What do you think she means by these descriptions? Show evidence from the text.
4. What happened during the incident with the marshal and Amafo? Why did the marshal hit Amafo? How did it affect Amafo and his family afterwards?
5. Why do you think Rose stated the following after the incident with the marshal: "Maybe this day turned out to be one of the best days of my life after all. I learned to see as Amafo saw. I learned to see through Amafo's spiderweb eye." What do you think she meant by this? How do you think this affected Rose's behavior for the rest of the story?
6. How did Amafo change after the incident with the marshal? How does Rose describe what happens to Amafo?
7. The importance of place and community are emphasized throughout the book: 1) Identify different places in the book; 2) How do places and communities in the book guide the storyline?
8. Amafo states about the marshal breaking his glasses: "Maybe now the people of Spiro can see, as we have seen for years, the man who is their marshal." What do Amafo's broken glasses represent? What are the broken glasses representative of?
9. Why do you think author Tim Tingle chose Rose as the main character? How did that affect the way that you read the book? Why do you think certain chapters had Rose narrating in first-person, and other chapters were in third-person?

10. What do you think was the point of Colonel Mingo's story about Jezzy? What lesson did he want to teach the children?
11. What are the different celebrations and traditions present in *House of Purple Cedar*? How do those traditions influence Rose, her friends, and family?
12. Examine Reverend Willis's sermons throughout *House of Purple Cedar*. How do they change? What are the messages in each of his sermons? How did the incidents preceding the sermon alter what Reverend Willis speaks about?
13. What is the point of Maggie Johnston's character? Why do you think Tim Tingle decided to include her?
14. How do Maggie and Terrance Lowell meet? What is the significance of the bank robbery incident with Terrance? What does Maggie see in Terrance?
15. What is the relationship like between Marshal Hardwicke and his wife, Ona Mae? How does Ona Mae act around the marshal? How does his abusive and sadistic behavior affect her both physically and emotionally?
16. Who helps Ona Mae after the marshal abuses her? How does he nurture and protect her?
17. How does Ona Mae respond to the question "why do you stay with him?" How do you think this is reflective of abusive relationships?
18. How does Pokoni's death influence Rose? What happens after Pokoni dies? How does Rose describe what Pokoni's death feels like to Rose?
19. What interrupts Hardwicke's attempt to stab Amafo? How did the scene unfold? Who rescued Amafo?
20. Why did Rose think the rattlesnake was the warning upon returning from the McCurtains? What did the rattlesnake represent?
21. What happens with Rose and the panther? What does Rose discover about the panther? What does Daddy tell Rose about the panther?
22. What does it mean when Pokoni and the Walking Ones will be with us until the end? Why was this an important realization for Rose?
23. How does the story end? What is significant about the ending?
24. How does *House of Purple Cedar* compare to other books you have read that discuss Native Americans past, present, or future?
25. What is the role of Nahullos in the story? Who are the Nahullos in the story, and how do they impact Rose and her family?
26. Examine the role of symbolism in the text. What symbols did you notice throughout *House of Purple Cedar*? What were their significance?
27. How does Tim Tingle use flashbacks in *House of Purple Cedar*? How are the flashbacks used to present the story's themes and messages?
28. What sense of hope is there in the end? How can bad experiences lead to good things?

Reader's Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

Use the following questions and writing activities to help students practice active reading and personalize their responses to the book. Suggest that students respond in reader's response journals, essays, or oral discussion. You may also want to set aside time for students to share and discuss their written work.

1. Select one of the characters from the book and analyze the character. How does this character contribute to the story? What characteristics do they have? Students may select Rose, Amafo, Pokoni or any of the characters (regardless of their real or perceived importance to the storyline).
2. Imagine you were hired to write a "what happens next" book about one of the main characters in the book. Write a draft of your ideas, including a graphic organizer to help outline your ideas.
3. Identify at least one cultural connection you found in the book and compare it to something in your life.
4. Tell a story about a lesson you learned from your family. You might pick a story about discrimination, identity, or family as shared in the book.
5. Have students make a text-to-text connection. Did you think of any other books while you read *House of Purple Cedar*? Why did you make those connections?
6. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to what you have seen in the world, such as on television or in a newspaper? Why did this book make you think of that?
7. What is one big thought that you have after reading this book? What is your takeaway from this book? What would you tell a friend about this book?
8. What do you think author Tim Tingle's message is to the reader? Think about possible motivations behind Tim Tingle's intentions to write the book. What do you think he wanted to tell his readers?

Multilingual Learners Teaching Activities

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6)
(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are multilingual learners (ML).

1. Assign ML students to partner-read the story with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another, or listen to the more fluent reader.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Depending on students' level of English proficiency, after the first reading: 1) Review the sections of the book in order and have students summarize what is happening in each section. 2) Have students work in pairs to retell either the plot of the story or key details. Then ask

students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.

4. Have students give a short talk about what they think Tim Tingle's message is in *House of Purple Cedar*.
5. The book contains several content-specific and academic words that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all the vocabulary. Expose Multilingual Learners to multiple vocabulary strategies. Have students make predictions about word meanings, look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of a word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, list synonyms and antonyms, create an action for each word, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.
6. Keep a list of all the Choctaw words and their meanings mentioned in *House of Purple Cedar*. Consider displaying a chart in the classroom for students' reference.
7. Consider consulting www.multilinguallearningtoolkit.org/ for more ideas on how to support Multilingual Learners.

Social and Emotional Learning

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4-6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4-6)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 6)

Social and emotional learning involves being aware of and regulating emotions for healthy development. In addition to understanding one's own feelings, strong socio-emotional development allows individuals to develop empathy for others and to establish and maintain relationships.

Use the following prompts to help students study the socio-emotional aspects of this book.

1. Rose states about the marshal: "For the first time in my life I saw the power that evil and fear exercise over people." Unpack this statement. What do you think she meant by this? How did the marshal's behavior impact the community?
2. Choose a scene from *House of Purple Cedar* and use silent acting to act out the emotion that go along with the scene. Have students guess the emotion you portray, the character it is attributed to, and the related scene. Discuss other possible emotions related to the scene.
3. How does Rose demonstrate persistence and resilience throughout *House of Purple Cedar*? Identify a scene from the story that exemplifies how Rose is persistent. What made you choose this scene? How did it affect you and what did you learn from Rose after reading *House of Purple Cedar*?
4. How is grief presented in *House of Purple Cedar*? How is Rose affected by grief? How does she cope with the different emotions she experiences throughout the story, especially after Lillie and Pokoni's deaths? How do other characters cope with grief? Amafo? Lillie's family? What are the different traditions in Choctaw culture that are present in their grieving processes?

5. Why do you think Rose uses the metaphor as Amafo as an infant after Pokoni's death? Why do you think Tim Tingle decided to describe how Amafo felt after Pokoni's death in this way?
6. There are many kinds of families in the world. How does *House of Purple Cedar* show different families and family dynamics? What are the different ways people show respect and care for one another in families? Students can brainstorm ideas on chart paper that can be presented and accessible for the whole class.
7. Loss is a theme in this story. Have you ever dealt with a loss of someone you love? Why do some people become angry during times of sadness or trauma? What are some other grieving processes people usually go through when dealing with the loss of someone they love?
8. Analyze the theme of domestic violence in *House of Purple Cedar*. Describe Ona May Hardwicke. How does she describe her relationship with Marshal Hardwicke? Why does she decide not to leave him? How does the despicable and hatred abuse from the marshal affect Ona Mae and her mental health? For more information and resources about domestic violence, consult the National Domestic Violence Hotline (<https://www.thehotline.org/>). Other lesson plans and teaching resources include: Georgia State University's Domestic Violence Curriculum (<https://research.library.gsu.edu/c.php?g=115814&p=752339>) and Literacy Minnesota's Domestic Violence Unit (<https://s28543.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/sites/39/2021/02/Domestic-Violence-lesson.pdf>).
9. Hardwicke reflects about George: "Hardwicke gave himself to the old man's embrace. No one had ever held him like this, not in this father-son way. For the briefest of moments he felt the warmth of the old man, felt sorrow at the slipping of him into a tight hug." What do you think this says about Hardwicke's character? Why do you think Tim Tingle decided to include this scene? Did this affect the way you viewed Marshal Hardwicke? Why or why not?

INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

(Introduction to the Standards, page 7: Students who are college and career ready must be able to build strong content knowledge, value evidence, and use technology and digital media strategically and capably)

Use some of the following activities to help students integrate their reading experiences with other curriculum areas. These can also be used for extension activities, for advanced readers, and for building a home-school connection.

English/Language Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Language might be viewed as an element of culture.** Think about the languages noticed in your classroom and discuss how the languages help us better understand the related culture. In *House of Purple Cedar*, there are instances of Choctaw language used.

How does the inclusion of the Choctaw language help us understand culture and story? (<https://www.choctawnation.com/history-culture/language/about-choctaw-language>)

- **What does the role of elder play in *House of Purple Cedar*?** Have students write an analytical essay investigating the role of Choctaw elders in the story. How do young people respect the elders in their community? How does Rose show respect towards Amafo? She states: "For the first time, I saw a Choctaw elder at work. And I understood—for the first time—why our way is a powerful way." What do you think this means, in relation to Choctaw elders and their community? Consult Choctaw Nation's "Choctaw Nation works to preserve the stories of its tribal elders" (<https://www.choctawnation.com/biskinik/news/choctaw-nation-works-to-preserve-the-stories-of-its-tribal-elders/#:~:text=Elders%20have%20told%20the%20stories,future%20generations%20and%20recorded%20history.>) for more inspiration on elders in Choctaw communities.
- **Analyze the following statements from Rose about Pokoni and Amafo: "Yes, Amafo was slow and deep like a river, while Pokoni was sharp and quick like a crackling winter fire. Reflecting on my grandparents, I realize now what should have been obvious to us all. A river flows on forever, while a winter fire is gone before you know it."** What does she mean by these statements? Analyze both the characters of Pokoni and Amafo, using a graphic organizer. What are their roles in the story? How are they similar? How are they different? What are their roles in their communities? How are they respected as elders? How do they impart their wisdom on Rose, her family, and the Choctaw nation?
- **Use *House of Purple Cedar* as a mentor text for descriptive writing.** After Roberta Jean was tied up by the marshal and rescued, Tim Tingle writes about Rose's reflection on the incident: "A grey cloud floated across the moon, leaving behind a world of blue, the blue of breath when all hope for warmth is gone, blue trees, blue earth, blue stars, a word cast in deep grey blue, a world as cold as moon flesh." Have students think about the descriptive writing in this sentence. How does this help them visualize the text? Students can experiment with descriptive writing, finding excerpts and passages of Tingle's from the book and using those techniques in their own writing.
- **Investigate the role that women play in the story.** List out all of the female characters, and their influence in the story. Answer the following guiding questions: how do these women represent power and strength? How do women help guide and help others in *House of Purple Cedar*? How do they exercise will and determination? Students can write an analytical essay and share their findings with a partner, small group, or whole class.
- **Examine the role of the "villain" in *House of Purple Cedar*.** For more information on how to teach about villains, see ReadWriteThink's "Tracking the Ways Writers Develop Heroes and Villains" (<https://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/tracking-ways-writers-develop>). Have students consider the following questions: who is the villain in *House of Purple Cedar*? Is there one villain, or multiple villains? What does it mean to be a villain? Can villains change over the course of the story? Students can discuss their findings with a partner, small group, or the whole class.

- **Examine the different literary elements that author Tim Tingle uses throughout *House of Purple Cedar*. Have students come up with a list and select portions of the text that showcase a specific literary device (i.e. foreshadowing, flashback, metaphor, etc).** How do literary elements look different in a novel? How does the artwork help convey the literary elements, such as foreshadowing or a flashback? Afterward, students can select one literary device and write about how that was impactful when reading *House of Purple Cedar*. How do literary devices make the story engaging, and how do they contribute to the story overall? Discuss how the artwork and literary elements work together to support the story's themes and messages. See PBS's "Literary Elements and Techniques" video for more information about how to teach about literary devices (<https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/litel18-fig/literary-elements-and-techniques-figurative-language/>).
- **Look up and read the other Tim Tingle books available from Lee & Low Books *Saltypie*** (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/saltypie/>), ***Crossing Bok Chitto*** (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/crossing-bok-chitto/>), and ***Stone River Crossing*** (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/stone-river-crossing/>). Make text-to-text connections between *House of Purple Cedar* and one of Tim Tingle's other books. What do these books have in common? How are they different? What do you think are similar themes across Tim Tingle's books? What do his characters have in common? How are they different? Students can write an analytical essay comparing Tim Tingle's books and share their responses with a partner, small group or whole class.
- **Have students discuss the elements of magical realism and fantasy in *House of Purple Cedar*.** Students can generate their ideas in a graphic organizer about the different parts of the book that incorporate fantasy. How do the fantastical elements add to the book? What does it mean to require a "suspension of disbelief" from the reader? What about "magical realism"? How does it affect you as a reader?
- **Tell students to imagine they will be interviewing Tim Tingle for a local newspaper or talk show.** Ask students to develop a list of interview questions they want to ask. What do they want to learn about in terms of Tim Tingle's process of writing this novel and how he got inspired to write *House of Purple Cedar*? Lead a class discussion, creating a combined list of questions and then narrowing that list down to ten questions.
- **Have students identify a place in the story where Rose's character changes in *House of Purple Cedar*.** Why do students think that was a point where Rose changed? How does Rose feel before the change, what causes the change, and then how does he feel and act after? Create a graphic organizer with a column on the left that says "Before," a column in the middle that says "During," and a column on the right that says "After." Afterward, have students write an essay using evidence from the text to support their findings about Rose's character change.
- **Assign students different characters from the book and have them brainstorm about a guiding question: what and how can this character teach us?** Students can think about different characters to examine as a whole class and then break into smaller, specific character groups. Encourage students to think about how characters have

made mistakes and have also done good things in the book, and ultimately what they learned from that character. Have students share their findings: How is this character important to the book, and what lessons did they teach us over the course of the story? How did their actions develop the narrative, and why are they crucial to understanding the meaning of the book?

- **Encourage students to read two blurbs for *House of Purple Cedar* and write their own review of the novel.** Read Dr. Debbie Reese's review of *House of Purple Cedar* from her website, American Indians in Children's Literature (<https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/2014/12/tim-tingles-house-of-purple-cedar.html>). What would students want to include in their review? What do they want to tell other readers about this book? How did it affect them?
- **For ideas, check out this Book Review Template** (<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/printouts/book-review-template-30200.html>) **by ReadWriteThink.org.** For a list of the reviews for *House of Purple Cedar*, consult the book page at [leeandlow.com/house-of-purple-cedar](https://www.leeandlow.com/house-of-purple-cedar) and at the end of this guide.
- **Seek out culturally sustaining/revitalizing Native texts for students.**
 - Find books that feature Native People in the present. Lee & Low titles include *This Land is My Land* by George Littlechild (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/this-land-is-my-land>), *Kiki's Journey* by Kristy Orona-Ramirez (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/kiki-s-journey>), *When the Shadbush Blooms* by Carla Messinger (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/when-the-shadbush-blooms>), *The Blue Roses* by Linda Boyden (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-blue-roses>), *All Around Us* by Xelena González (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/all-around-us>), and *Where Wonder Grows* by Xelena González (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/where-wonder-grows>).
 - Find books that present Native People accurately such as *Buffalo Song* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/buffalo-song>), *Crazy Horse's Vision* by Joseph Bruchac (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/crazy-horse-s-vision>), *Blessing's Bead* by Debby Dahl Edwardson (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/blessing-s-bead>), *Sky Dancers* by Connie Ann Kirk (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/sky-dancers>), *Giving Thanks* by Chief Jake Swamp (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/giving-thanks>), *The People Shall Continue* by Simon J. Ortiz (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-people-shall-continue>), and *Indian No More* by Charlene Willing McManis with Traci Sorell (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/indian-no-more>).
 - Find biographies of Native People, such as *Jim Thorpe's Bright Path* by Joseph Bruchac (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/jim-thorpe-s-bright-path>), *Bowman's Store* by Joseph Bruchac (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/bowman-s-store>), *Quiet Hero* by S.D. Nelson (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/quiet-hero>), and *Louis Sockalexis* by Bill Wise (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/louis-sockalexis>).

Social Studies/Geography

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Interview a family member about family history.** Create a web that documents your family's physical moving. This may be moving within the same town/city or moving to different states or countries.
- **Food is a part of the story in *House of Purple Cedar*.** Have students consider how food was used by Rose and her family. Think about innovative food combinations to emphasize culturally sustaining and revitalizing pedagogies.
- **Learn about afterlife in Choctaw culture.** Read about Choctaw burial rituals and how the afterlife is viewed in Choctaw traditional culture. Resources include "Ancient Choctaw Burial Practice" (<https://choctawnationculture.com/media/27495/2012.02%20Ancient%20Choctaw%20burial%20practice.pdf>) and Choctaw Nation's "Choctaws have long history of remembering and honoring loved ones" (<https://www.choctawnation.com/biskinik/iti-fabvssa/choctaws-have-long-history-of-remembering-and-honoring-loved-ones/>). Have students write an analytical essay about what they learned in these resources in connection to the afterlife themes in *House of Purple Cedar*.
- **Conduct a Primary Source Analysis for Native American Boarding Schools.** Show students primary source images from the government-run boarding schools. Some include <http://home.epix.net/~landis/primary.html>, <http://cdm15330.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15330coll22/id/38528>, <http://cdm15330.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15330coll22/id/19785>, and <https://www.loc.gov/item/2007661485/>. Have students analyze the images using the Library of Congress's primary source analysis tool (http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Analyzing_Primary_Sources.pdf). What did they learn about Native American Boarding Schools from this activity? For additional information and activities about Native American Boarding Schools, consult PBS' documentary, *Unspoken: America's Native American Boarding Schools* (<https://www.pbs.org/video/unspoken-americas-native-american-boarding-schools-oobt1r/>) in addition to Lee & Low's *Home to Medicine Mountain* (leeandlow.com/books/home-to-medicine-mountain) and *Saltpie* (leeandlow.com/saltpie).
- **Learn about the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma culture and history.** Explore the Choctaw Nation's website, that has rich and plentiful resources about the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (<https://www.choctawnation.com/about/culture/>). What did students learn more about the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma? If students are Choctaw, what did they connect with or relate to from exploring these resources and reading *House of Purple Cedar*? If students are not Choctaw, what did they learn from the book and engaging with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma website?

Art/Media

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **Students can write a short piece discussing highlights or themes from their family photos, recipes, and/or videos.** Students can write a short piece discussing highlights or themes from their family photos, recipes, and/or videos.
- **Have students research Native writers and illustrators today.** If available, have students consult the librarian for help with researching and/or acquiring these books. Consider having the class generate a list of questions about the author or illustrator's work that they can send to the author or illustrator to encourage collaborative dialogue. Additionally, have students read Dr. Debbie Reese's blog posts about Native authors and illustrators. ([https:// americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/2014/05/why-i-advocate-for-books-by-native.html](https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/2014/05/why-i-advocate-for-books-by-native.html))

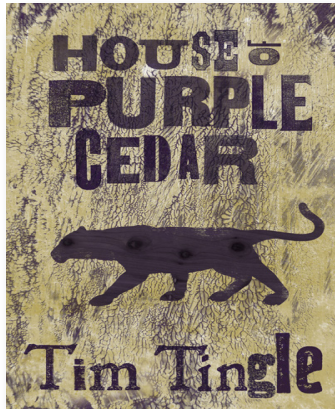
School-Home Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **Encourage students to interview family members about a favorite or impactful childhood memory.** How did that event influence the family member? How did it affect the person's life moving forward? Consider having students, if comfortable, share their findings with a partner, a small group, or whole class.
- **Similarly, ask students to speak with family members about their traditions how their traditions are special to them.** What is unique about each family's traditions? How did it influence them throughout their lives?
- **If applicable, have students and families research more about the Choctaw people, in history and in present today.** If students are Choctaw, have them discuss what they related to or connected with from the text. If students are not Choctaw, they can share what they learned from the book.



Ordering Information

⊕ General Order Information:

leeandlow.com/contact/ordering

Secure Online Ordering:

leeandlow.com/books/house-of-purple-cedar

☎ **By Phone:** 212-779-4400

✉ **By Mail:**

381 Park Ave S, #1401
New York, NY 10016

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tim Tingle is an Oklahoma Choctaw, an award-winning storyteller, and the author of more than twenty books for children, teenagers, and adults. Tingle, responding to a scarcity of Choctaw literature, began interviewing tribal elders in the early '90s. His collection *Walking the Choctaw Road* was the Oklahoma Book of the Year. Tingle's children's book, *Crossing Bok Chitto*, garnered over twenty state and national awards, including Best Children's Book from the American Indian Library Association, and was an Editor's Choice in the *New York Times Book Review*. He received his master's degree from the University of Oklahoma with a focus in American Indian Studies. Tingle lives in Texas. Visit his website at timgingle.com.

Reviews

"Tingle's storytelling is both deeply poetic--the inclusion of Choctaw hymnal lyrics is affecting even for those who can't read them--and gently spiced with dialect, making this a feast for gourmets of good storytelling. . . ."—*Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*, **starred review**

"Rose, a young Choctaw woman of the late 1800s, looks back on a dark episode from her childhood when the racism and fear that paralyzed a town are faced down by the steadfast confidence her grandfather has in the goodness of people to overcome hate. Told with superb storytelling and unforgettable characters."—*School Library Journal*

"An overarching message of forgiveness and love, underscored by themes of patience and resilience, takes *House of Purple Cedar* from historical to timeless. Readers won't need to be Oklahomans or history buffs to appreciate the book's intricate web of small town happenings and mystical realism. To enjoy this world, you need only an open heart and a love of great stories."—*Shelf Awareness*

"In quiet, often poetic language drawn from nature's images. . .the tale is ripe with symbolism and peopled by riveting characters. A lyrical, touching tale of love and family, compassion and forgiveness."—*Kirkus Reviews*

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