



Me and Martha Black

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Melanie White likes history but she certainly doesn't believe in ghosts. However, when a voice from the past begins to haunt her, she soon discovers wisdom in her words. With the plucky ghost of Martha Black as her guide, Melanie wanders through the history books like she never has before. From the Great Fire of Chicago, to the Klondike Gold Rush of 1898, Martha Black recounts her life story vividly—sometimes a little too vividly. Along the way, Melanie hears the stories of a whole cast of Gold Rush characters: Klondike Kate, Soapy Smith, Robert Service, Sam McGee, and, of course, Martha Black, First Lady of the Yukon. In the glow of the midnight sun, these two Yukon women encounter adventure, mystery, as well as secrets from the past.

Writing ideas:

1. Students will think about how Melanie went back into history and learned that history can be fascinating. They will be asked to think about a person or event that they could go back into history and meet or experience. Students will write about who or what they would choose and why. You could do a follow up activity with them researching the actual person or event and writing about it.
2. Students will research Martha Black and then write an acrostic poem with the information.
3. Students will write a postcard from Melanie describing her first impression of Dawson City.
4. Students will write a letter back home from Martha Black's point of view. They can choose what the focus of the letter will be.
5. Students after reading more about the Klondike Gold Rush will create a travel brochure that would highlight what it is and why people would want to go.



We are learning about Martha Black. Do additional research to learn more about her. After you have completed your research, you will share the information in an acrostic poem.

M _____

A _____

R _____

T _____

H _____

A _____

B _____

L _____

A _____

C _____

K _____

Melanie has just arrived in Dawson City. She is sending a postcard home with her first impression of the town. Write the postcard from Melanie's perspective.





You want to encourage people to travel to the Klondike for the Gold Rush. Create a travel brochure that would tell about the Klondike and why people should go. You can sketch your design and information below.