

Multicultural literature / Global stories ELA/ Social Studies Lesson Plans



Diane Kern, Ph. D. is an Associate Professor in the School of Education at the University of Rhode Island. She was a public school teacher for fourteen years and holds an elementary and secondary English teacher certification and is certified as a reading Specialist/consultant K-12. Diane teaches English language arts methods K-12, supervises student teachers, and is the International Reading Association's coordinator for reading specialist master's program accreditation (IRA SPA Coordinator). She lives with her husband and two college-age

children in South Kingstown, Rhode Island. dkern@uri.edu 401. 874.9490.



Padma Venkatraman is the award-winning author of three critically acclaimed novels. Her latest, *A TIME TO DANCE* (Nancy Paulsen Books, Penguin) was released to 5 starred reviews (Kirkus, Booklist, SLJ, VOYA and BCCB) and received numerous awards: ALA Notable, IRA Notable, Kirkus Best Book, NYPL Top 25, IBBY outstanding, etc. Her two earlier novels, *ISLAND'S END* and *CLIMBING THE STAIRS*, were also released to multiple starred reviews (12 altogether), were both ALA/Yalsa Best Books, CCBC choices and Booklist Editor's Choice BBYA and won several other honors and

awards. She has spoken at Harvard and other universities; participated on panels at venues such as the PEN World Voices Festival; provided commencement speeches at schools and keynote addresses at numerous conferences; and has been the chief guest at international literary festivals. Padma Venkatraman is American, has a doctorate in oceanography and lives in Rhode Island. Visit her at www.padmasbooks.com and www.padmasbooks.blogspot.com

www.padmasbooks.com , venkatraman.padma@gmail.com , padmatvenkatraman@jhu.edu , [@padmatv](https://www.instagram.com/padmatv) 401.294.4757



A librarian, **Jennifer Hanson** develops teacher professional development opportunities related to world histories/cultures. She has presented on global and multicultural literature, finding and evaluating information, and using technology in classrooms, at the Boston Book Festival, Children's Book Foundation, and Global Education, Massachusetts Teachers Association and ISTE conferences. Twitter: [@libraryjenn](https://twitter.com/libraryjenn)

5 stars for A TIME TO DANCE

- * Starred review, Kirkus
- * Starred review, Booklist
- * Starred review, VOYA
- * Starred review, SLJ
- * Starred review, BCCB

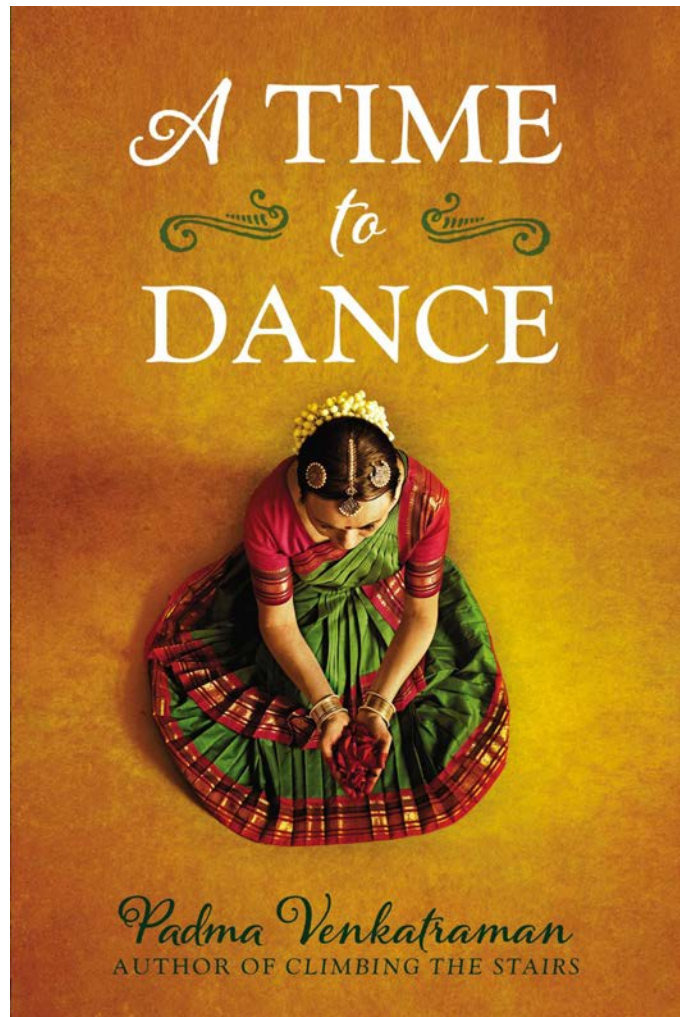
- *ALA Notable
- *Booklist Editor's Choice Best Books
- *Booklist Top 10 art bk
- *CCBC Choices
- *CSML Best Books
- *IBBY Outstanding bk ypd
- *IRA Notable (NBGS)
- *Kirkus Best Books
- *New York Public Library Top 25
- *ALA/YALSA BBYA

Nancy Paulsen Books, Penguin, May 2014 ; ISBN #: 978-0-399-25710-0; ISBN #: 9780147514400

National Book Award Winner,

Gloria Whelan: With words that move with grace and elegance, Padma Venkatraman has chosen poetry to tell the story of Veda, an Indian girl whose whole life is centered around her love of dance...In poetic imagery as graceful as Veda's dancing, Venkatraman has drawn a vivid picture of contemporary India, and given a gift of faith and hope to all who, like Veda, find their dream slipping away.

- * **Kirkus, Starred review:** "...Venkatraman weaves together several themes so elegantly that they become one..."
- * **Booklist, Starred review:** "...To even have a passing thought that Veda is disabled, rather than differently abled, would be utter madness..."
- * **VOYA, Starred review:** "...Told in verse, this story is magnificently strong, as Veda's determination dances off the page and into the reader's heart."
- * **SLJ, Starred review:** "[an] exceptional novel ...captures beautifully the emotions of a girl forced to deal with a number of challenges ... sure to appeal..."
- * **BCCB, Starred review:** "defly-wrought free verse...heart-achingly hopeful...will remain with readers long after the final line"
- Horn Book:** "brief lines, powerful images, and motifs of sound communicate Veda's



struggle to accept her changed body..."

Denver post: "...sure to go on my 'Favorite Books' list...will definitely dance its way through your heart as it did mine." **Chicago Tribune:** "powerful depiction of a teen girl struggling to recover from an accident" **Providence Journal:** "beautifully written...Venkatraman has created a rich, exotic and fully human world that dazzles and delights." **Newsday:** "I loved this book...a love story, tragedy and spiritual read all at once." **IndieBound Citation:** "For anyone looking to be uplifted and inspired, this stunningly lyrical novel comes highly recommended!" **Teen reads (online):** "the spare writing adds so many layers of complexity and meaning with so few words... the voice is perfectly honest... Veda's relationships with her family and friends are authentically complicated, with every teenage mishap and embarrassment presented in its own unique context...The detail-rich setting creates a precise and interesting window into life in modern India...Veda's tenacity, determination and growing spirituality are inspiring..." **LitUp Reviews:** "...every aspect shines, from its backdrop to its story to its writing..." **I heart YA fiction blog:** "This is easily one of the most beautiful stories I've ever read. I love the verse/writing and the sheer beauty of the setting and characters. It's simply stunning... Overall, I can't recommend this one enough. It's beautiful, insightful, and it's a brilliant read. **The hiding spot blog:** "A TIME TO DANCE shouldn't be missed." **Quercus, Winding Oak ezine:** "a master storyteller... By accompanying Veda on her journey, we can't help but look at our own beliefs, our strengths, the areas in which we can make higher leaps, learning to bring the audience in our lives to tears because we have expressed understanding and compassion." **Reading.org:** "this is a story of India, of smells and scents, of dance and determination" **The absolute mag (online):** "Even if you have never taken a dance class before, thanks to Venkatraman's poetic writing, you too will walk away from this novel with a new appreciation for spirituality, culture, and the triumph of the human spirit." **48 HBC:** "Veda is a compelling heroine who undergoes a complicated personal journey, and Venkatraman's writing is gorgeous. It's also an intriguing glimpse into another culture."

Activity using an Excerpt (pg. 53-54) from *A Time to Dance* by Padma Venkatraman. Questions (aligned to CCSS assessments)

1. What does the author mean by the title of the verse "Experimental Project"? Use details from the text to support your response.
2. Highlight the parts of the text that provide evidence to support the idea that Veda has a positive first interaction with Mr. James (also known as Jim).
3. Use what you learned reading *A Time to Dance* by Padma Venkatraman and "Marathon bombing survivor Adrienne Haslet-

Davis..." from the *Boston Globe* to write an essay that analyzes how Veda's experience is similar to Adrienne-Haslet Davis's. Develop your essay using textual evidence for both texts. Be sure to follow the conventions of Standard English.

Experimental Project

Dr. Murali is followed into the room by a strange man

with flame-gold hair and bright blue eyes.

Is my pain medication making me hallucinate?

"We're lucky," Dr. Murali says, "to have, working with us,

Mr. James, from America,

who is collaborating with an Indian research team

to create cost-effective modern prostheses.

He's agreed to help with your rehabilitation

and with the fitting and making of your prosthesis . . ."

He suggests I'm lucky, too, to be part of the project,

because my family doesn't have enough insurance.

I feel the American's eyes on me,

looking

as though I'm more than an amputee, a number, a chore.

He crosses over to me, his strides large, a broad smile on his lips.

"Veda? Did I say your name right?" He sounds sincerely concerned.

"Yes, Doctor."

“Call me Jim. Please.” His left hand in his pocket,
he holds his right hand out to me.

As though we’re equals.

“Thank you, Doctor—I mean—just Jim,” I say.

He chuckles. “Haven’t done anything yet.”

He *has*.

No older man ever invited me to shake hands.

No other adult ever asked me to call them by name.

He even said “please” although I’m a patient.

A smile tugs at face muscles I haven’t used for a while.

My hand slips into his

as though it remembers his touch

and we’ve held hands often

in a previous life.

“Think it over,” he says. “Take as long as you need.”

I let my fingers stay in his pale palm

like brown roots sinking into chalky white soil. “I’ll do it.”

“Good,” Dr. Murali says. “He’ll have you

walking fine in no time.”

“I don’t want to walk fine.

I want to dance.”

The American—just-Jim—lets my hand go,

but his gaze holds me.

His eyes, blue and bright,

light a sparkle of hope inside me.

Informational text:

Marathon bombing survivor dances onstage at TED talk

By Bella English | GLOBE STAFF MARCH 19, 2014

http://www.bostonglobe.com/lifestyle/2014/03/19/marathon-bombing-victim-adrienne-haslet-davis-dances-onstage-ted-talk/N7P3EF3zmrGXtE9brkndxN/story.html?p1=Article_Facet_Related_Article

Professional dancer **Adrienne Haslet-Davis**, who lost her lower left leg in the Boston Marathon bombings, took to the stage Wednesday afternoon to do a short rhumba wearing a prosthetic leg made for her at the MIT Media Lab. Haslet-Davis, who has taught 20 different types of dance at **Arthur Murray** Dance Studio in Boston, performed briefly at a TED Conference in Vancouver, B.C.

Hugh Herr, director of biomechatronics at the Media Lab, was at the conference to explain the design of the leg, which he made with a team of scientists savvy in prosthetics, robotics, and biomechanics. Herr is a double amputee, resulting from a rock climbing accident in 1982. He first met Haslet-Davis at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital and thought he could help. The dancer's husband, Air Force Captain **Adam Davis**, suffered a cut nerve and artery in his left foot in the bombing and had a skin graft from his right thigh to repair his right foot, which was peppered with shrapnel. He had just returned to Boston two weeks earlier from a deployment in Afghanistan when the couple decided to spend a nice spring day watching the Boston Marathon.

After the TED performance, Haslet-Davis stood alongside dancer **Christian Lightner** and wiped away tears.

"I'm thrilled to have danced again. It was invigorating to dance publicly with my new leg, but also to realize that my return to dance may have the power to inspire other people to reach for their goals and be proactive in their lives," she said in a statement. "I was always determined to dance again, and I knew that I had to, that I would, and here I am. My first dance happening to be so near the anniversary of the marathon bombing stands as a reminder that I'm a survivor, not a victim."

The statement continued: “I want to thank the people of Boston for their incredible support on every day of my journey. And of course, I’d like to thank Hugh Herr, the director of the Biomechatronics group at The MIT Media Lab and founder of BIOM, for his determination to create the leg that allowed me to dance again, and to this amazing international conference, TED, for inviting Hugh to speak and me to dance.”

Using Video as a primary source (activity) / CCSS

- Clayton Bates dancing
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hayM4B7hcBQ>
- Adrienne Haslet-Davis dancing
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQVO6Wi_7c8
- Bharatanatyam (Veda’s dance form):
- <http://thehidingspot.blogspot.com/2014/08/review-time-to-dance-by-padma.html?spref=tw>

1. How is Veda’s style of dancing different from that of Peg Leg Bates and Adrienne Haslet-Davis?
2. What do the Bates and Davis videos convey about dancing with a disability? Do you think it was important for the dancers to show that disability doesn’t prevent them from dancing?
3. When and where in A TIME TO DANCE does Veda become as comfortable with her disability as these dancers? What does she do/say that shows her love for dance? Cite textual evidence.
4. How does the power of her art help Veda overcome disability?

Discussion Questions – A TIME TO DANCE

1. What small and large hurdles does Veda have to overcome after her accident? Which of these hurdles are explicitly shown in the text and which of the hurdles can you infer from the text?
2. When Veda meets Kamini for the last time in the novel, Veda suggests that the accident actually helped her grow. Cite specific places in the text where Veda seems to feel this way, and what aspects of growth she attributes to the loss of her limb. What are some other places in the text where you might infer that she overcomes challenges that shape and strengthen her personality, although this is not explicitly stated?
3. Compare Veda’s stage performance before her accident with the scene in which she dances alone beneath the banyan tree and in the final scene of the novel. What words and phrases in the text show the change in Veda’s attitude to dance?
4. Do you think Veda’s character changes as the story progresses? What actions does she take that indicate she is growing less self-centered? How do you think Veda’s personal growth contributes to her deepening understanding of dance?
5. How does Veda’s passion for dance deepen and change after she acquires a new teacher? How does Veda’s role as a teacher help her grow? What role do her students play in helping her learn?
6. Veda remarks that Jim’s politically correct words help lessen her pain in a small way. What does his choice of words reveal about his character? To what extent do you think it matters to use politically correct terms when we speak?

7. When do you think there is a key turning point in Veda's relationship with her mother? How does dialogue show the development in their relationship?
8. How does Patti's attitude to coping with tragedy and her positive world view, contribute to Veda's mental recovery? What specific words and actions of Patti's reveal her inner strength?
9. What actions and metaphors convey the various emotions Veda experiences in the hospital after her accident?
10. What figurative language (cite the text) helps the reader understand and feel empathy for Veda's phantom pain?
11. What role does the allusion to the Buddhist story of Gautami's loss of a son play in Veda's acceptance of her loss?
12. Read Walt Whitman's *Proud Music of the Storm*. How does he approach and express the themes of spiritual bliss attained through dance? How does young Veda communicate her understanding of the deeper aspect of her dance tradition and her inner-growth through her experience of relearning dance? In what fundamental way does narrative poetry that is tied to story-telling and born from one particular character's voice change the way a theme, such as "the power of art" is approached?
13. Veda's point of view differs from her care-givers' points of view during several situations that arise in the hospital, at the bus stop and at school. Cite places in the text where Veda's ironic/sarcastic comments and wry sense of humor help alleviate her pain.
14. How are Jim and Govinda different, especially in terms of the roles they play in Veda's life and the way she sees them? What are some specific places (cite the text) in which Jim's responses indicate that his attitude to Veda is not romantic? How does this insert gentle humor into an otherwise bleak situation?
15. Is gentle humor present in other places in the situation? How is this effected?
16. As Veda's story begins (in the Prologue, *Temple of the Dancing God*) what details of time, place and voice help orient the reader to the narrator and the setting of the story?
17. How do Veda's descriptions and actions in the *Temple of the Dancing God* introduce the reader to her relationship with dance? How do Veda's reflections, dialogue and actions in the verse *Hoping and Waiting* establish the characters of Paati, Ma and Pa? How does dialogue develop their characters and conflicts?
18. In the verse *Time* how is Veda's shift of thought from the present to the past signaled? How does the brief flashback reiterate her passion for her art and reinforce aspects of her character and the characters of Shobana and Mrs. Subramaniam and Veda's relationship with them?
19. What words, phrases, comparisons, details and aspects of sensory language help express Veda's various emotional states in the verse *Speed*?
20. How does Veda's experience of winning an important dance competition help build toward her intense shock after the accident? If the story had begun with the verse *Waking* (instead of starting with Veda's narration of earlier events) might a reader have felt the same level of empathy for her loss?
21. Is there any art, craft, or other activity that you feel as passionately about as Veda does for dance? Using what you have learned by studying the sequence of verses

in *A TIME TO DANCE*, write about something you love doing, focusing on a key event that triggered your passion and on any hurdles you encountered that threaten to keep you from devoting as much time and attention to it as you would like (or nearly destroyed your ability to pursue this passion). Employ relevant details and effective techniques, as Veda does, to show, rather than tell the reader how you felt and help build toward a climax/conclusion that shows your success or failure to overcome the hurdle.

22. Conduct a short research project to discover and briefly describe a few dance traditions from parts of the world other than India. Compare these forms of dance and generate your own related questions on dance (modern and contemporary) the world over.
23. Veda's story is inspired by true stories of differently-abled dancers. Research the life story of a differently-abled person who, like Veda, overcame hurdles to accomplish his/her goal. Compare and contrast this person's experiences with the turning points in Veda's story. How are this person's emotions similar to or different from Veda's feelings? Did this person undergo any change in attitude that parallels the growth in Veda's character? Substantiate your answers with quotations, provide a list of references (print and digital), and justify how you assessed the credibility of the references you cited.
24. Compare and contrast Russell Freedman's biography of *Martha Graham* with *A TIME TO DANCE* in terms of how each work approaches the following related themes: a young woman's passion for dance; overcoming hurdles to become an exceptional dancer; obsession with awards/recognition versus inner spiritual growth through art; pushing one's creative artistic expression through dance.
25. How do events and themes in *A TIME TO DANCE* reflect the Biblical philosophy expressed in Ecclesiastes of a 'time for every purpose under heaven'?
26. How does Veda's story in *A TIME TO DANCE*, set in contemporary India, draw on themes and characters from Indian tradition as well as India's religious history, symbolism and mythology? What are some similarities and differences between your spiritual/philosophical/religious outlook and Veda's?
27. Do you have or do you know someone who is differently abled? What challenges do they face on a daily basis? Imagine how your school day and routine might change if you were physically disabled. Write about this.

Activities presented in this workshop align w/ the following CCSS:

Writing in History, Science, Technical Subjects / Reading informational texts

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12.W & WHST.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational

texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. Reading History/Social Studies

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12.RH.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of

primary and secondary sources. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-8.RH.5 Describe how a text

presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, casually). CCSS.ELA-

Literacy.6-12.RH.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or

secondary source. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.11-12.RH.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple

sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually,

quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS cross references for discussion questions (question numbers provided) Reading Literacy

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12.RL.1. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an

analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. Q 1-2 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12.RL.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text. Q 3-5 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12.RL.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision. Q 6-8 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12.RL.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts. Q 9-11 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12.RL.5 Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style. Q 12 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12.RL.6 Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor. Q 13-15 Writing CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12. W 3 a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. Q 16 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12. W 3 b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. Q 17 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12. W 3 c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events. Q 18 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12. W 3 d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events. Q 19 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12. W 3 e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events. Q 20 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12. W 3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. Q 21 Research to Build and Present Knowledge CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12. W 7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration. Q 22 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12. W 8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation. Q 23 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.6-12. W 9. “Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics”. “Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history. “Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new”. Q 24 – 27

SOCIAL STUDIES CONNECTIONS: Literature evokes empathy. As social studies teachers, we can help students make connections between the fictional character’s problems and current issues of social relevance. We can use global narratives as tools to guide students to achieve higher levels of critical thinking, research, and writing.

More importantly, reading global narratives can help students better understand, not just global history, but also their own selves. By identifying with a character and experiencing the character's hurdles, our students may become more thoughtful, informed and socially responsible citizens.

A TIME TO DANCE by Padma Venkatraman - Social Studies Connections: Universal Health Care ; Human Rights; History of Americans with Disabilities; Classical Dance around the world; World religion Note: In the blog excerpt that follows, the word prosthetic (incorrect) is mistakenly used instead of prosthesis (correct). This is a common error.

The Difference A Prosthetic Can Make - POSTED ON [SEPTEMBER 14, 2014](#) BY [MINDY R](#)

I am well aware that if I had been born in a different time or place my life would not be what it is. I might point to my eyeglasses and reference my very poor unassisted vision as one way my life would have been quite different if I'd been born a few hundred years ago. But I think that my prosthetic arm is the more obvious tie to the modern era that I rely on regularly.

I might argue that I can't go without my glasses for more than a few minutes, and I can go without my fake arm for days if necessary, but the truth is that I don't want to go without either. There are plenty of one armed people who don't use prosthetics- and most insurance companies will consider them cosmetic-but I can't imagine my life without mine.

I wish I had a cool story like the girl in *A Time to Dance* who was able to live her dream of pursuing a career in dance even after losing her foot because of her prosthetic leg. Yes, it's fiction (teen fiction, to be specific), but there's [a real precedent there](#). For Veda in the story, it is obvious how having a prosthetic leg changed her life. It opened her to opportunities that were otherwise closed. Sometimes I can forget that that's possible.

My prosthesis is neither here nor there in my dreams, which revolve around books, libraries, and writing. My story is nowhere near as dramatic as the usual inspirational novel. And the truth is that if I'd never had a prosthetic arm, my life may very well be basically the same.

I have no idea what I would do with my hair without my prosthetic arm, but I'm sure I would have figured out something.

The real story is this: I have had my prosthetic arm since before I can remember. It has always been a part of me. I am not sure how much it has changed my life to have had it. It simply *is* my life. I could probably live without it if I had to, but I really don't want to. It does make my life much easier, and I definitely need it to put my hair in a pony tail.

My story isn't an inspirational novel. My story is set in a world where I haven't had to consider "Ugly Laws" or other limitations. I live after the Americans with Disabilities Act made accommodations available to those who needed them, and I've never need any anyway. I was able to pursue whatever career I wanted, and I never had to worry if I would be barred from anything because of what I lacked.

I am very grateful that I live here and now. But even in the here and now, prosthetics are prohibitively expensive for many.

When I read stories like *A Time to Dance*, I am reminded of how powerful access to prosthetics can be, how it can truly change people's lives. I'll never know how my life would be different without my prosthetic arm, if at all, but I am extremely grateful that my parents made it happen for me. I would love to give someone else a chance to experience what prosthetics can do. Perhaps it will be integral to their dream. Or maybe it will be integral to their sense of identity. Either way, I think it's a worthy cause.

Consider a donation to the charity that made my prosthetic arms possible: [Shriner's Hospital for Children Twin Cities](#). Or explore other options for limb deficient people who find that their insurance does not cover prosthetic devices or their repair such as [Limbs for Life](#).

Note: This is not a sponsored post, and the book was a library copy.

<http://propnounblog.wordpress.com/2014/09/14/the-difference-a-prosthetic-can-make/>

A TIME TO DANCE - social studies activity/ discussions:

Most states include human rights in social studies standards. Use A TIME TO DANCE, in connection with the blog entry above, to spur a discussion on whether access to

health care is a human rights issue, after providing adequate scaffolding, with questions such as:

1. In the excerpt from *A TIME TO DANCE*, Veda mentions that her family doesn't have 'enough insurance'. What do you think that means?
2. Veda's family is 'middle class'. Do you think a middle class family in India enjoys the same standard of living as a middle class family in the U.S.?
3. In the blog excerpt, the writer refers to U.S. citizens whose insurance doesn't cover prosthetic devices or their repair. Do you know what percentage of U.S. citizens lack adequate health insurance? Why do you think this might be?
4. Do you think Veda has a positive first experience with Jim? Cite the text to justify your answer. Does the text provide clues as to how the U.S. and India may differ in terms of health care? (If the entire novel is read, many differences become evident – the use of language while referring to the disabled, the treatment of the disabled, and so on).
5. What can you find out about health care and the medical system in India? Cite references and use primary sources to substantiate.
6. What does the phrase 'universal health care' mean to you? Do you think universal health care is needed in the United States?
7. How 'universal' is 'universal' – should everyone have access to a minimal level of health care, or more than just a minimum? For example, if someone experiences a loss of limb, should they be given one or more state-of-the art prostheses of their choice?
8. Do you know whether other countries aspire to provide universal health care to all their citizens?
9. What does the phrase 'human rights' mean to you? Is access to health care a 'human right'?
10. The blogger says she was born after the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed. When did this occur? What were the circumstances that necessitated this action? Can you interview someone who lived before the act was passed, to find out how different the world was for the disabled in the USA before the act?
11. What does the phrase 'liberty and justice for all' mean to you? Do you think this is related in any way to equal opportunity/access for the disabled?
12. How might socioeconomic status and disability be related? Do you think the disabled in India have as much access/opportunity as do the disabled in the United States?
13. Compare the newspaper article about Ms. Davis with the excerpt 'Experimental Project' from *A TIME TO DANCE*. What are some similarities between their two situations? What are some unique hurdles Veda may face, given her culture and situation?
14. You have seen videos of Adrienne Haslet-Davis and Clayton Bates. Do you know of any other disabled American dancers? How many one-legged American sportspersons have you heard of?
15. Write a paragraph, about one other famous disabled person (not necessarily American). Cite appropriate references.