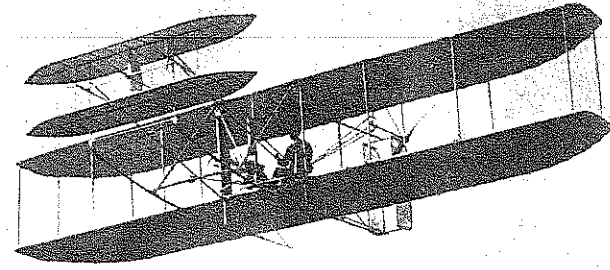




Read the excerpt from the novel *Dragonwings*. Then compare it to the next selection, a dramatization of the same section of the novel. **Guiding Question:** How does the dramatization change the way you see the characters in the novel?



from the novel  
**DRAGONWINGS**

by Laurence Yep

while reading your anchor book

**Background** In 1903, when Moon Shadow is eight, he leaves China to join his father, Windrider, in San Francisco. Moon Shadow becomes caught up in his father's dream of building and flying an airplane. In this excerpt, it is 1909, and Moon Shadow awakens to find that his uncle and several other men have arrived to help him and his father get their flying machine, *Dragonwings*, up a hill.

Vocabulary Builder

**Before you read**, you will discuss the following words. In the Vocabulary Builder box in the margin, use a vocabulary building strategy to make the words your own.

toiling    coils    abominable    haul

**As you read**, draw a box around unfamiliar words you could add to your vocabulary. Use context clues to unlock their meaning.

I do not know when I fell asleep, but it was already way past sunrise when I woke up. The light crept through the cracks in the walls and under the shutters and seemed to delight especially in dancing on my eyes. Father lay huddled, rolled up in his blanket. He did not move when the knock came at our door. I was still in my clothes because it was cold. I crawled out of the blankets and opened the side door.

Marking the Text

Dramatization

**As you read**, underline details that reveal important information about the plot, characters, and setting. In the margin, write notes about how you might use these details in a dramatization of the novel.

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The fog lay low on the hill. Tendrils<sup>1</sup> drifted in through the open doorway. At first I could not see anything but shadows, and then a sudden breeze whipped the fog away from the front of our barn. Hand Clap stood there as if he had appeared by magic. He bowed.

"There you are." He turned and called over his shoulder. "Hey, everybody, they're here."

I heard the clink of harness and the rattle of an old wagon trying to follow the ruts in the road. **Toiling** up the hill out of the fog was Red Rabbit<sup>2</sup>, and behind him I saw Uncle on the wagon seat. The rest of the wagon was empty—I suppose to give Red Rabbit less of a load to pull. Behind the wagon came the Company, with **coils** of ropes over their shoulders and baskets of food. I ran down the hill, my feet pounding against the hard, damp earth. I got up on the seat and almost bowled Uncle over<sup>3</sup>. For once Uncle did not worry about his dignity but caught me up and returned my hug.

"Ouch," he said, and pushed me away. He patted himself lightly on his chest. "I'm not as young as I used to be."

Then Hand Clap, Lefty, and White Deer crowded around.

"Am I ever glad you're here," I said. "Poor Father—"

Uncle held up his hands. "We know. That's why we came."

"But how? Why?" I was bursting with a dozen questions all at once.

"Why, to help you get that thing up to the top of the hill," Uncle said. "Why else would we close up our shop and take a boat and climb this **abominable** hill, all on the coldest, wettest day **ever** known since creation?"

"But you don't believe in flying machines."

"I still don't," Uncle said sternly. "But I still feel as if I owe you something for what was done to you by that man who once was my son<sup>4</sup>. I'll be there to **haul** your machine up the hill, and I'll be there to haul it back down when it doesn't fly." "We were all getting fat anyway," White Deer said, "especially Uncle."

<sup>1</sup> **tendrils** (ten drəlz) *n.* long, thin, curling structures, such as hair or shoots from a plant. Here the word is used to describe the way the fog moves.

<sup>2</sup> **Red Rabbit** a horse named after the speedy horse ridden by Kuan Kung, the Chinese god of war.

<sup>3</sup> **bowled . . . over** knocked over.

<sup>4</sup> **man . . . son** Black Dog, who robbed Moon Shadow and his father.

### Vocabulary Builder

**After you read**, review the words you decided to add to your vocabulary. Write the meaning of words you have learned in context. Look up the other words in a dictionary, glossary, thesaurus, or electronic resource.

### Marking the Text



### Vocabulary Builder

#### **toiling**

(toil i[ng]) *v.*

#### Meaning

#### **coils**

(koilz) *n.*

#### Meaning

#### **abominable**

(ə bām'ə nə bəl) *adj.*

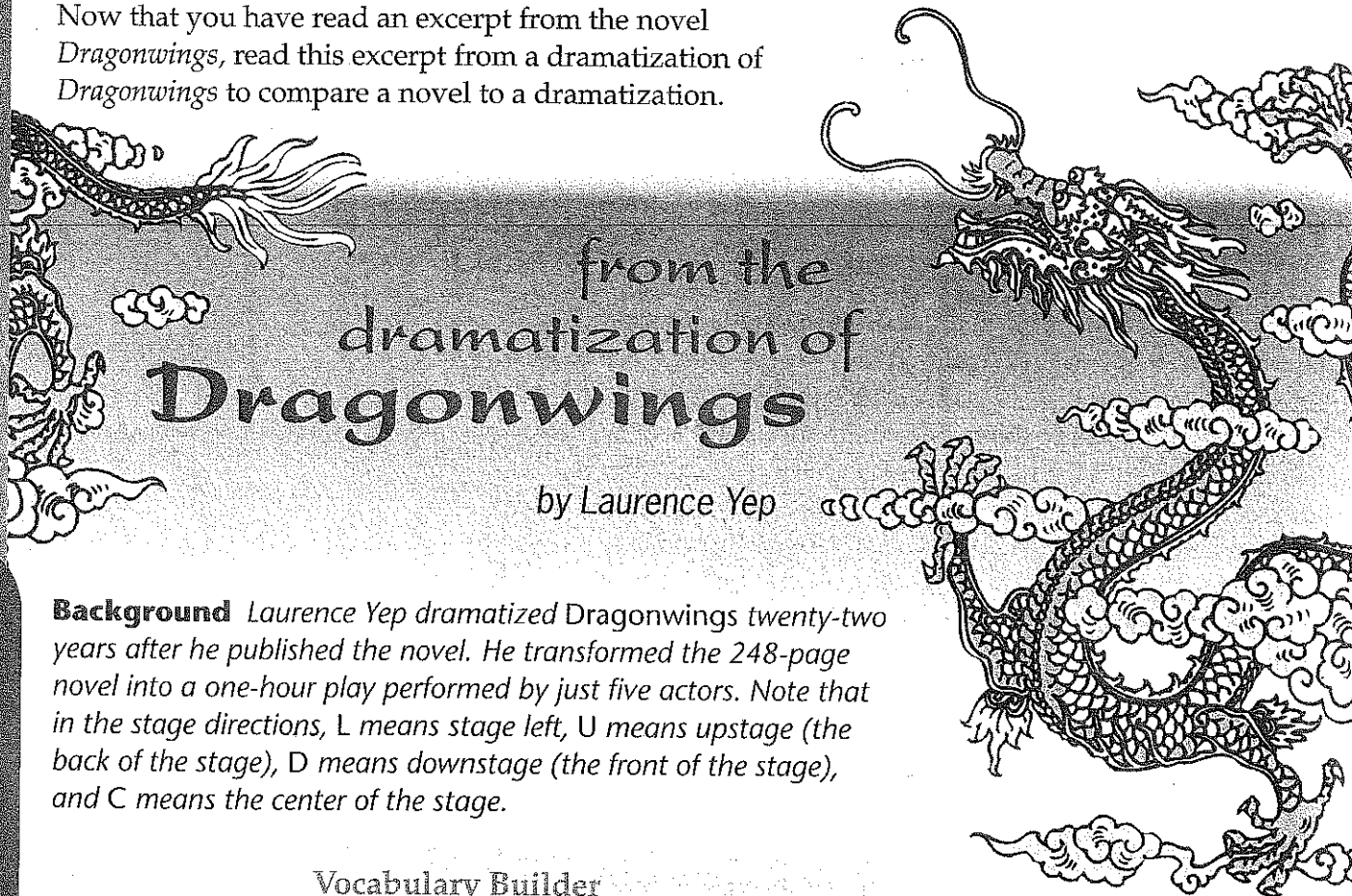
#### Meaning

#### **haul**

(hōl) *v.*

#### Meaning

Now that you have read an excerpt from the novel *Dragonwings*, read this excerpt from a dramatization of *Dragonwings* to compare a novel to a dramatization.



from the  
dramatization of  
**Dragonwings**

by Laurence Yep

**Background** Laurence Yep dramatized *Dragonwings* twenty-two years after he published the novel. He transformed the 248-page novel into a one-hour play performed by just five actors. Note that in the stage directions, L means stage left, U means upstage (the back of the stage), D means downstage (the front of the stage), and C means the center of the stage.

### Vocabulary Builder

**Before you read**, you will discuss the following words. In the Vocabulary Builder box in the margin, use a vocabulary building strategy to make the words your own.

**extension      contraption      propeller**

**As you read**, draw a box around unfamiliar words you could add to your vocabulary. Use context clues to unlock their meaning.

### CAST OF CHARACTERS

**RED RABBIT** a horse that pulls the company's laundry wagon

**MOON SHADOW** the narrator of the story

**MISS WHITLAW** owner of a stable in San Francisco where the narrator and his father live

**UNCLE BRIGHT STAR** another laundry owner

**WHITE DEER** the third laundry owner

**WINDRIDER** Moon Shadow's father

**SCENE 9** Piedmont, later that day outside the stable.

**MOON SHADOW:** September twenty-second, Nineteen-ought-nine<sup>5</sup>. Dear Mother. I have bad news. We are going to lose *Dragonwings* before

<sup>5</sup> **Nineteen-ought-nine** old-fashioned way of saying 1909. *Ought* (ôht) means "nothing" or "zero" (usually spelled *ought*).

father can fly it. Black Dog stole all we have, and the landlord will not give us an **extension** on our rent. So we'll have to move and leave Dragonwings behind. We have asked Miss Whitlaw for help, but her new house has taken up all of her money. And even if Uncle would speak to us, he has probably spent all he has on rebuilding his laundry.

[UNCLE BRIGHT STAR and MISS WHITLAW enter from L.]

MISS WHITLAW: I could have gotten down from the wagon by myself.

UNCLE BRIGHT STAR: Watch gopher hole.

MISS WHITLAW: I'm younger than you.

MOON SHADOW: Uncle, Miss Whitlaw!

MISS WHITLAW: How are you?

[Shaking MOON SHADOW's hand. WINDRIDER enters from U. He now wears a cap.]

WINDRIDER: Come to laugh, Uncle?

UNCLE BRIGHT STAR: I came to help you fly your **contraption**.

MOON SHADOW: But you don't believe in flying machines.

UNCLE BRIGHT STAR: And I'll haul that thing back down when it doesn't fly. Red Rabbit and me were getting fat anyway. But look at how tall you've grown. And how thin. And ragged. [Pause.] But you haven't broken your neck which was more than I ever expected.

MISS WHITLAW: As soon as I told your uncle, we hatched the plot together. You ought to get a chance to fly your aeroplane<sup>6</sup>.

UNCLE BRIGHT STAR: Flat purse, strong backs.

WINDRIDER: We need to pull Dragonwings to the very top.

UNCLE BRIGHT STAR: That hill is a very steep hill.

WINDRIDER: It has to be that one. The winds are right.

UNCLE BRIGHT STAR: Ah, well, it's the winds.

WINDRIDER: Take the ropes. [Pantomimes<sup>7</sup> taking a rope over his shoulder as he faces the audience.] Got a good grip?

OTHERS: [Pantomiming taking the ropes.] Yes, right, etc.

WINDRIDER: Then pull.

[They strain. MOON SHADOW stumbles but gets right up. Stamping his feet to get better footing, he keeps tugging.]

## Marking the Text



## Vocabulary Builder

**extension**  
(ek sten' shən) *n.*

**Meaning**

**contraption**  
(kən trap' shən) *n.*

**Meaning**

<sup>6</sup> **aeroplane** (er'ə plān) *n.* old-fashioned spelling of airplane.

<sup>7</sup> **pantomimes** (pan'tə mīm') *v.* acts out silently.

MOON SHADOW: [*Giving up.*] It's no good.

UNCLE BRIGHT STAR: Pull in rhythm. As we did on the railroad<sup>8</sup>. [*In demonstration, UNCLE BRIGHT STAR stamps his feet in a slow rhythm to set the beat and the others repeat. The rhythm picks up as they move.*] Ngúng, ngúng. Dew gùng.

OTHERS: Ngúng, ngúng. Dew gùng.

UNCLE BRIGHT STAR: [*Imitating the intonation of the Cantonese<sup>9</sup>.*] Púsh, púsh. Wòrk, Wòrk.

OTHERS: Púsh, púsh. Wòrk, Wòrk.

UNCLE BRIGHT STAR: Seen gà. Gee gà.

[*High rising tone on the last syllable.*]

OTHERS: Seen gà. Gee gà.

[*High rising tone on the last syllable.*]

UNCLE BRIGHT STAR: Get rich, Go hóme.

OTHERS: Get rich, Go hóme.

[*MOON SHADOW, WINDRIDER, UNCLE BRIGHT STAR and MISS WHITLAW arrive D.*]

MOON SHADOW: [*Panting.*] We made it. Tramp the grass down in front.

[*WINDRIDER stands C as the others stamp the grass. They can't help smiling and laughing a little.*]

WINDRIDER: That's enough.

MOON SHADOW: [*To MISS WHITLAW.*] Take that **propeller**.

[*MISS WHITLAW takes her place before the right propeller with her hands resting on the blade. MOON SHADOW takes his place beside the left propeller. WINDRIDER faces U, his back to the audience.*]

MISS WHITLAW: Listen to the wind on the wings.

UNCLE BRIGHT STAR: It's alive.

WINDRIDER: All right.

[*MOON SHADOW and MISS WHITLAW pull down at the propellers and back away quickly. We hear a motor cough into life. Propellers begin to turn with a roar.*]

UNCLE BRIGHT STAR: [*Slowly turning.*] What's wrong? Is it just going to roll down the hill?

[*MISS WHITLAW crosses her fingers as they all turn to watch the aeroplane.*]

<sup>8</sup> **railroad** (rāl'rōd') *n.* Uncle Bright Star had helped dig tunnels through the mountains for the railroad.

<sup>9</sup> **Cantonese** (kan'tə nēz') *n.* dialect of Chinese.

## Marking the Text



## Vocabulary Builder

**propeller**  
(prə pel'ər) *n.*

**Meaning**

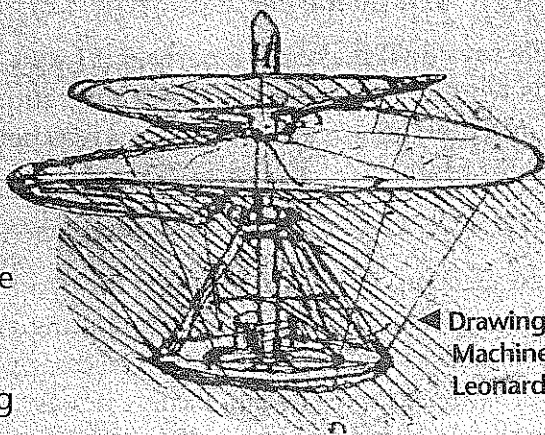


## Literature in Context

# The History of Flying Machines

In the late 1400s, the Renaissance artist and inventor Leonardo da Vinci drew up plans for a flying machine. However, it would be hundreds of years before someone built and actually flew one.

The earliest designers of flying machines took their ideas from the flight of birds, constructing planes with wings that would flap. These efforts were unsuccessful. Historians believe that the first successful, manned flight occurred in 1853. It took place in England, in a glider designed by Sir George Cayley. Toward the end of the 1800s, German engineer Otto Lilienthal made perhaps as many as two thousand glider flights before crashing to his death. During the same period, inventors around the world were



◀ Drawing of Flying Machine by Leonardo da Vinci

experimenting with engines. It is the brothers Orville and Wilbur Wright who are given credit for the first successful manned, powered flight. Their historic flight took place on December 17, 1903, in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Orville flew a small airplane a distance of one hundred twenty feet in twelve seconds.

MISS WHITLAW: He's up!

[WINDRIDER starts to do his flight ballet.]

MOON SHADOW: [Pointing.] He's turning.

UNCLE BRIGHT STAR: He's really flying.

MISS WHITLAW: I never thought I'd see the day. A human up in the sky. Off the ground.

[They turn and tilt their heads back.]

MISS WHITLAW: Free as an eagle.

UNCLE BRIGHT STAR: [Correcting her.] Like a dragon.

MOON SHADOW: Father, you did it. [Wonderingly.] You did it.

[The aeroplane roars loudly overhead. MOON SHADOW as an adult steps forward and addresses the audience.]

MOON SHADOW: I thought he'd fly forever and ever. Up, up to heaven and never come down. But then some of the guy wires<sup>10</sup> broke, and the right wings separated. Dragonwings came crashing to earth. Father had a few broken bones, but it was nothing serious. Only the aeroplane was wrecked. Uncle took him back to the laundry to recover. Father didn't say much, just thought a

<sup>10</sup> **guy wires** (gī wīrz) *n.* wires that help to steady the plane's two sets of wings.

## Marking the Text



A series of horizontal lines for writing, consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line. There are approximately 12 lines in total.

