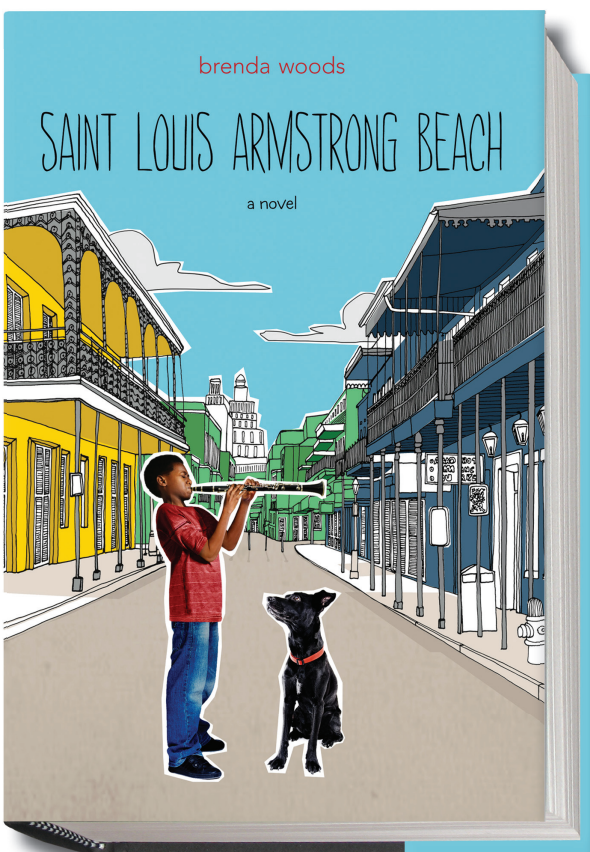


A Readers Companion for

SAINT LOUIS ARMSTRONG BEACH

by **brenda woods**

a boy, a dog, and the hurricane that almost separated them



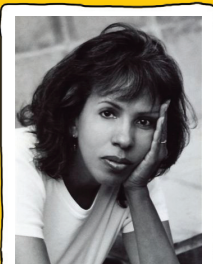
978-0-399-25507-6 (HC) • \$16.99
Ages 10 and up

ABOUT THE BOOK

Saint is a boy with confidence as big as his name is long. A budding musician, he earns money playing clarinet for the New Orleans tourists. His best friend is a stray dog named Shadow, and it's because of Shadow that Saint's still in town when Hurricane Katrina hits. Saint's not worried about the hurricane at first—he plans to live to be a hundred just to defy his palm-reader friend Jupi, who told him he has a short life line. But now the city has been ordered to evacuate, and Saint won't leave without Shadow. His search brings him to his elderly neighbor's home, and the three of them flee to her attic when the waters rise. But when Miz Moran's medication runs out, it's up to Saint to save her life—and his beloved Shadow's.

“A terrible thing happened to a special place—a warm and wonderful city that I love very much. This book captures all of it: the heat, the hope, the music, the panic, the pathos. Most of all, it captures the people. They are real folks to me. And they will be to you, too. Brenda Woods has passed down this gift for the ages...and for all ages.”

—Brian Williams, NBC Nightly News anchor,
Katrina survivor



BRENDA WOODS, whose family hails from New Orleans, is the author of Coretta Scott King Honor winner *The Red Rose Box* and ALA Quick Pick *Emako Blue*. She lives in the Los Angeles area.

For more information about Brenda, please visit www.brendawoods.net.



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Pre-Reading Research Activities for *Saint Louis Armstrong Beach* by Brenda Woods

- Use the Internet or your local library to research Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans. What is a hurricane and how do we predict them? What was New Orleans like before Hurricane Katrina? Why was the hurricane so devastating to the city? How has the city changed in the aftermath?
- Make a drawing, diorama, or sculpture of New Orleans. How does this help you to better understand the story and the destructive power of Hurricane Katrina?
- Explore the jazz scene in New Orleans. Who were some of the famous musicians who lived there? Use the Internet to find samples of some of their music. Why was jazz such a big part of the city's identity? Did Hurricane Katrina change this?

Discussion Questions for *Saint Louis Armstrong Beach* by Brenda Woods

- In the beginning of the book Saint says his "life has three parts: the before, the during, and the after" (page 2). Have you ever had a life-changing moment? What was it? How did it affect you?
- Have any of your friends ever changed drastically like Mona Lisa (Money)? If so, how did you react?
- Do you think that Mona Lisa had the right to be mad at Saint for "turn[ing] into [a] rodent on her" (page 11)? Why or why not?
- Describe Saint's relationships with the people in his life. (Pick two or three.)
- Why is Saint obsessed with the idea of his upcoming death, as predicted by Jupi? How does he react to the news? Who is he worried about if he dies?
- Throughout the novel, do you think Saint is trying to live up to his name even though he says that he is anything but?
- Do you think it was right for Saint to run away from his aunt and uncle?
- Why did Saint's mother refuse to leave when she was endangering her family? What do you think about Mercedes and Valentine's decision to stay in New Orleans but send Saint away?
- Describe Saint and the kind of person he is. Identify both his positive and negative qualities.
- Think back to the pre-reading research you did prior to reading the novel. Did your knowledge of the hurricane's destruction make you feel any differently when reading the novel than you would have felt if you hadn't had this information?

