

# **Activities to Use With Any Novel!**

**Beyond Generic!**

**Analyze Author's Craft and  
Literary Elements!**

**Ready-Made Handouts**



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By Tammy D. Lewis and Shannon B. Temple

ELA Core Plans

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The handouts provided in this packet may not be used in order. To successfully use these handouts, match up chapters to the handouts. For example, if there is a chapter in the novel that you are studying that has a lot of figurative language, use the handout on page 17 for that chapter. Of course, some of the handouts can be used whenever you choose to use them, and some can be used at the end of any novel.

**\*Activity best used after completing the novel**

# Chapter Title Analysis

As you read the novel, complete the following chart. If there are no chapter titles, create your own.

Chapter #	Chapter title	Why is this title effective for this chapter?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		

# Vocabulary

Nothing strengthens our vocabulary like reading! As you read, record words which are unfamiliar to you. Then, complete the directions for each word. You will need a dictionary along with the novel to complete this activity.

Word \_\_\_\_\_ Page # \_\_\_\_\_

My definition (What I think the word means using my own words):

Dictionary definition:

Sentence:

Word \_\_\_\_\_ Page # \_\_\_\_\_

My definition (What I think the word means using my own words):

Dictionary definition:

Sentence:

Word \_\_\_\_\_ Page # \_\_\_\_\_

My definition (What I think the word means using my own words):

Dictionary definition:

Sentence:

Word \_\_\_\_\_ Page # \_\_\_\_\_

My definition (What I think the word means using my own words):

Dictionary definition:

Sentence:

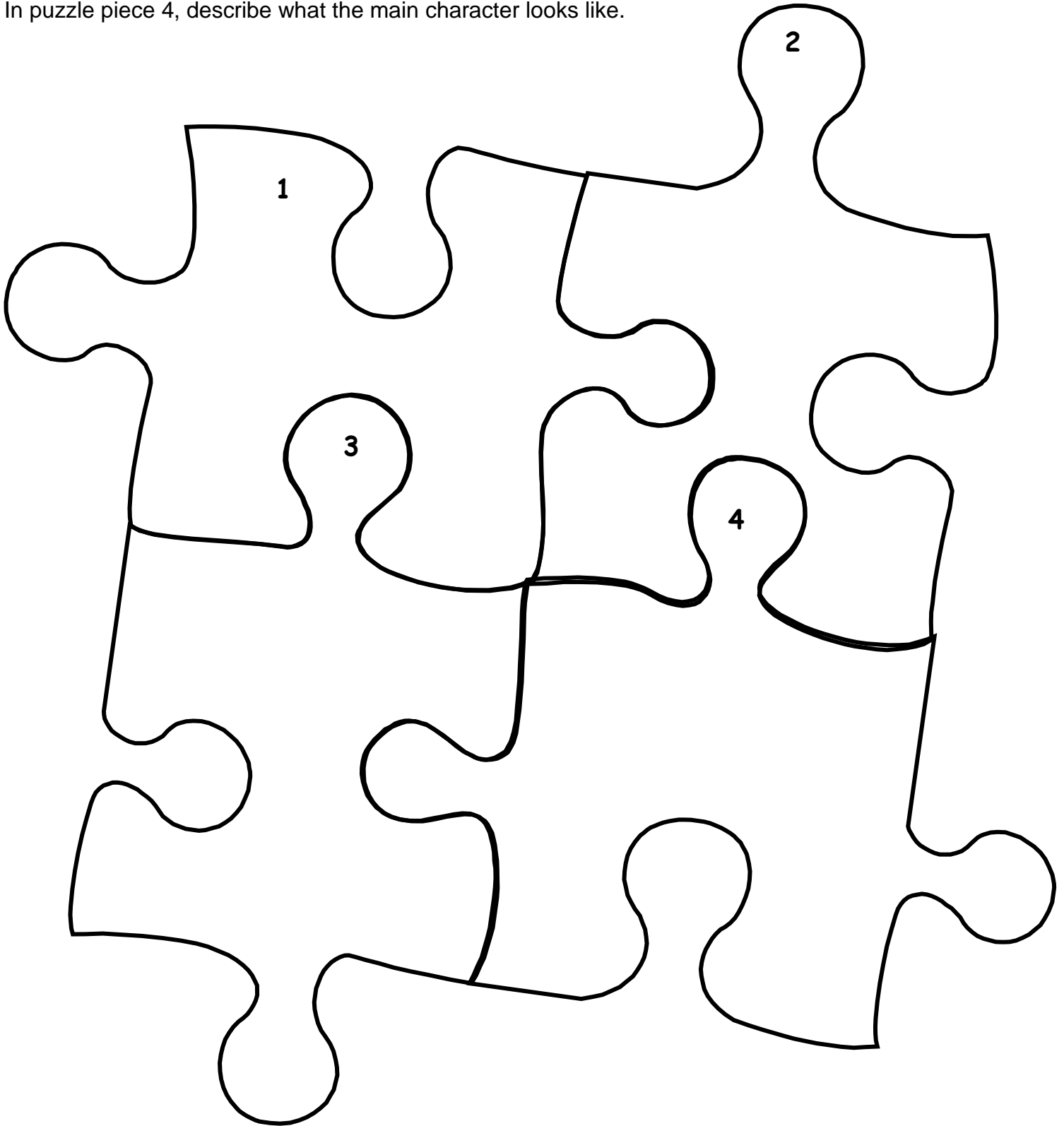
## Who is the Main Character? Piece it Together.

In puzzle piece 1, write down things that you have learned about the main character's life (example: where he/she lives).

In puzzle piece 2, write down words to describe the main character's personality.

In puzzle piece 3, find one or two quotes that show the main character's personality.

In puzzle piece 4, describe what the main character looks like.



# Setting

Study the following chart to understand what setting might include.

Place	Time	Environment
The physical location The country, state, or city Mountains? Lake? Forest? Beach? Under a bridge?	Calendar and clock times Day, month, year Season Future Past Present	Details in the surroundings What else is going on around the characters? Is it crowded? Isolated? What is the weather like?

Describe the setting in the novel so far. Look back at the chapters you have read, and complete the following chart by describing the place, the time, and the environment.

Place	Time	Environment

How does the setting affect the characters?

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If this novel were set somewhere else, how might the story be different?

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# Conflict

There are two types of conflict: internal and external.

An internal conflict takes place within a character's mind. It is a conflict that a character has within him/herself.

- man vs. himself (character vs. him/herself)

An external conflict is a conflict that a character has with someone or something else.

- man vs. man (character vs. character)
- man vs. nature (character vs. nature)
- man vs. society (character vs. society)

Complete the following chart to analyze the conflicts that are present in the novel so far.

Conflict	Passage from the book that proves or supports that conflict (include page #)	Type of conflict (internal or external)

# Imagery

Imagery consists of words and phrases that appeal to readers' senses. Writers use sensory details to help readers imagine how things look, feel, smell, sound, and taste. Look through chapter \_\_\_\_\_ in your novel for examples of imagery. Complete the following chart. An example from a different novel has been provided.

Words that create imagery	The sense or senses that the imagery appeals to	Verbs and/or adjectives used to create imagery
The plane... fell into the wide place like a stone and Brian eased back on the wheel and braced himself for the crash.	sight, feel	wide, fell, eased

# Examine Word Choice

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

The author's word choice is nothing short of excellent in this novel. Let's take a look at it in chapter \_\_\_\_\_.

**Complete the following chart by looking back at this chapter and finding words, phrases, or sentences that paint a picture in your mind, linger in your memory, or that you think are just "cool ways to say something".**

Page Number	Word, Phrase, or Sentence	Why I like it

**Write a paragraph about a school meal using your own descriptive words, phrases, and strong verbs. Write your description in the box below.**

# Flashback

A flashback is a literary device in which an earlier episode, conversation, or event is inserted into the chronological sequence of a narrative. It is a technique that bridges time, place, and action to reveal information about the character. Flashbacks are also used to fill in information about the background of a conflict or to advance the story.

Purposes of flashbacks	Some cues that begin a flashback for a character	Some words that signal a flashback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To fill in information about the background of a conflict</li> <li>To fill in information about the background of a character</li> </ul>	Sound Odor Taste Related setting Daydreams, thinking, dreams	Once Long ago Yesterday A while back

Find a passage from the novel that contains a flashback. Record the page number and the first sentence of the flashback in the box below.

Using the chart above for help, which cues began this flashback?

- a sound
- an odor
- a related setting
- a taste
- something else \_\_\_\_\_

What is the purpose of this flashback?

- to give us more information about a conflict
- to give us more information about a character

What are the words that the author uses to signal this flashback? \_\_\_\_\_

Find another flashback, and complete the chart.

Flashback	Cues that began the flashback	Purpose of the flashback	Words that the author used to begin the flashback
Page(s)			

# Point of View

Point of view is the relationship of the narrator or storyteller to the story.

- In a story with first person point of view, the story is told by one of the characters, referred to as "I".
- In a story with a limited third-person point of view, an unseen narrator is telling the story, and this narrator reveals the thoughts of only one character, and refers to that character as "he" or "she".
- In a story with an omniscient point of view, an unseen narrator is telling the story, and the narrator reveals the thoughts of several characters.

Let's examine the point of view in this novel. Go back and look at chapters one through seven, and complete the following questions.

Who is telling the story?  
Is the point of view

- First person (A character is telling the story.)
- Third-person limited (An unseen narrator , not a character, is telling the story and this narrator reveals the thoughts and feelings of only one character.)
- Third person omniscient (An unseen narrator- not a character- is telling the story and this narrator reveals the thoughts and feelings of several characters.)

Choose and write some words and phrases that helped you to figure out the point of view of this novel.

Why is this point of view a good one for this story?

# Point of View Rewrite

What point of view is used in this book? \_\_\_\_\_

If the novel is told from the first person point of view, which character is telling the story?  
\_\_\_\_\_

The point of view used in a story truly affects and guides the plot. In order to see just how much the point of view affects a plot, you are going to complete a point of view rewrite. First, you will choose one chapter from the book to complete a point of view rewrite. Within that chapter, choose one event or scene that you will rewrite. If the book is written in the first person point of view, you may rewrite the event using the third person point of view or from the point of view of a different character. If the book is written in the third person point of view, rewrite it in the first person point of view by choosing one of the characters to be the narrator.

Complete the following chart.

Chapter and page #	Summary of event that I am choosing	This book is written in the _____ point of view. (1 <sup>st</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> )	I will be rewriting the event using the _____ point of view. If you are doing your rewrite using the first person point of view, name the character who you will have become the narrator.

Rewrite the episode or event in the following box. If you need more room, use the back of this page or a separate sheet of paper.

# Theme

A theme is a story's central message; it is a lesson that you learn about life.

Some things to remember about theme are:

- Theme is what the author wants you to remember most.
- Occasionally the theme is stated directly in the novel/passage.
- Most often, the theme is unstated and is revealed to the reader gradually throughout the novel/passage.
- Theme is written as a statement, not just a word.
- There can be more than one theme in a novel.
- Different readers can have completely different theme statements. This is fine as long as each reader can support his/her idea with evidence from the novel/passage.

Write theme below. Stated Theme Page # \_\_\_\_\_ If theme is unstated, check here

How is this theme true for the main characters in this novel?

How is this theme true for life in general?

# Who's Who When it comes to Characters

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Four common types of characters in a work of fiction are as follows:

- **The protagonist** – This person is the principal driver of the effort to achieve the story's goal.
- **The antagonist** – Usually, this is the “bad guy” or the villain who is opposed to the Protagonist's end goal. This person represents the drive to undermine success.
- **The Hero** – This is who the reader cheers for to see if they will win in the end. Sometimes, the hero and the protagonist is the same person, but sometimes they are two different people.
- **The Obstacle Character** – This character blocks or stands in the way of the protagonist, but is not necessarily the antagonist.

After reading about the different kinds of characters, think about the characters in this novel. Can you match one of the characters from the novel with each of the types listed above? Explain your answers.

Who is the protagonist? Why?

Who is the antagonist? Why?

Who is the hero? Why?

Who is the obstacle character? Why?

## **Static or Dynamic?      Round or Flat?**

Which characters are dynamic in this novel?

Which characters are static?

List three round characters. List three flat characters.



# Create a character sketch and setting sketch

A character sketch introduces the reader to someone. When authors include these, they want to make sure they create a memorable mental image of the person. A character sketch can include how the person looks, talks, walks, the person's mannerisms, personality and more. Character sketches are like snap shots of people. They are usually not very long.

## Example

*Elliot is thin and old and always stooped, like he got tired of having to duck his head, so he does it always now.*

A setting sketch is similar to a character sketch. Setting sketches are like snap shots of a place. The purpose is to allow the reader to picture this place.

*I follow him through the maze of old chairs and tables covered with tools to the instruments. There's a saxophone in an open case, looking dull against the black velvet. An organ is pushed against the wall, and next to that are three snare drums stacked one on top of the other. Four guitars rest against the side of the drums. –Bud, Not Buddy*

Find a character sketch that the author writes in this novel. Page number of sketch \_\_\_\_\_

Create your own character sketch. Create a character by first giving him/her a name. Complete the following chart, and then write your sketch. Next, try writing a setting sketch by describing your bedroom or your classroom.

Looks	Mannerisms	Personality	Voice

Character Sketch:

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Setting Sketch:

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# Figurative Language

Simile – a comparison of two things using the words *like* or *as*

- *The moon is like a big flashlight in the sky.*

Metaphor – calls one thing another

- *Her hair is silk.*

Personification – gives a nonhuman object human traits

- *The lightning scribbled in the sky.*

Hyperbole – an extreme exaggeration

- *I ate a mile high ice cream cone.*

Idiom – a commonly used expression that means something totally different than what it says

- *The teacher knew about the surprise because Jayne let the cat out of the bag.*

**Use the following chart to analyze the figurative language in this chapter. In the box labeled "My own", write your own sentence using this type of figurative language. Try to make your figurative language original.**

Passage and Page Number	Type of Figurative Language	What is being compared or what does this mean?	My own

# Silent Passage Analysis

Find a passage worthy of discussion. Then, complete this activity.

Passage on page \_\_\_\_\_

With your partner, write back and forth about this statement. You may not talk; you can only write. Do not write about anything other than this statement. Include your opinions, predictions, and or feelings. Your teacher will tell you when the activity is complete.

Partner 1 Comment:

Partner 2 Comment/response:

Partner 1 Comment/response:

Partner 2 Comment/response:

Partner 1 Comment/response:

Partner 2 Comment/response

Partner 1 Comment/response:

# Readers' Theater

Students build fluency through reading out loud, and at the middle school level, what better way to allow this than with readers' theater! Choose a chapter for your students to turn into a readers' theater.

If you want to get your students' attention, read the beginning of this chapter with a monotone voice until they stop you and ask you why you are doing this. Explain that when reading aloud, you should always read with expression. Next, reread the section changing your voice to match each character.

Not only will readers' theater be a fun way to incorporate oral reading, it will also promote cooperation and team work. Each group will create speaking parts by breaking down this chapter into dialogue. Narrators will need to be added.

Provide your students with the directions page to help them know what to do.

Once your students understand what they will be doing, they will be eager to begin.

Use the following steps to instruct them.

- In groups of four, five, or six have students prepare their script. It is a good idea to have each student write the script on his/her own notebook paper unless you are allowing them to type it so that multiple copies can be printed.
- Once the script is complete, each member of the group will need to read over it silently.
- Students should work together to decide who will read each part. If there are more parts than students in the group, have one person read both of the narrators' parts.
- Have groups practice reading the script several times. With readers' theater there is no need to act out. The focus should be on the way that they read it. It should be read with lots of expression, and tell them that character "voices" are great as long as they match the character well.
- Students can use highlighters to highlight their individual parts.
- After practicing it several times, groups can "perform" their read aloud for the other groups.

Most students greatly enjoy readers' theater. The key is making sure they feel comfortable with the part that they will be reading. Have fun!

# Create Readers' Theater

## Directions

You will create a readers' theater script for chapter \_\_\_\_\_.

Your script should have \_\_\_\_\_ parts including two narrators.

1. Silently, each member of the group must read the chapter taking notice and counting how many characters have dialogue.
2. After the silent read, make sure that everyone in the group came up with the same number of "speaking parts".
3. You will add two narrators to your script to read everything that is not dialogue of a character.
4. Whenever possible, turn indirect speech into direct speech. The following is indirect speech: *Sheka asked her mom if she could go, but her mom said no.* To turn this into direct speech, you would write it this way: Sheka: Can I go? Mom: No.
5. You may eliminate words that are not needed, such as *she said*, however, do not eliminate other parts unless they are totally unnecessary. You will not need quotation marks around what a character says since you are turning this into a skit.
6. Write the character's name on the left-hand side of the page. Underline the character's name. Put a colon (:) after the character's name, and then write what that character will say.
7. Call the narrators *Narrator 1* and *Narrator 2*.
8. Go back and forth between narrator 1 and 2 giving each equal amounts of narration.
9. Underline or use all CAPS for words that need to be stressed.
10. Use parenthesis to provide directions for how something should be said.

Look at the example on the following page. Pay close attention to how lines are divided between the narrators, how quotation marks are no longer needed, and how directions are given in parenthesis for how something should be said or to tell who it should be said to.

“Let’s go to Seashell Island!” Meg begged her mother. Meg had been saving her money for the trip for some time, and wanted more than anything to take the ferry boat to the island well known for its beautiful hidden shells and sand dollars.

“I think today is a perfect day to go,” her mother said.

“I’m going too!” shouted Dayne from upstairs. Dayne and Meg threw on their baiting suits, and grabbed their sand buckets. The trip to the island would take about thirty minutes.

“Welcome aboard,” announced the captain of the boat. “The waves are a little rough today, so I’m going to ask that all passengers wear a life jacket for precautionary reasons.” Meg and Dayne thought nothing of danger as they strapped on the orange jackets, but their mother immediately began to worry.

“Excuse me, sir” she said talking to the captain. “Is it perhaps too rough to make the trip today?”

**Meg:** (begging voice) Let’s go to Seashell Island!

**Narrator 1:** Meg had been saving her money for the trip for some time and wanted more than anything to take the ferry boat to the island well known for its beautiful hidden shells and sand dollars.

**Mother:** I think today is a perfect day to go.

**Dayne:** (shouting) I’m going too!

**Narrator 2:** Dayne and Meg threw on their baiting suits, and grabbed their sand buckets. The trip to the island would take about thirty minutes.

**Captain:** Welcome aboard. The waves are a little rough today, so I’m going to ask that all passengers wear a life jacket for precautionary reasons.

**Narrator 1:** Meg and Dayne thought nothing of danger as they strapped on the orange jackets, but their mother immediately began to worry.

**Mother:** (to the captain) Excuse me, sir. Is it perhaps too rough to make the trip today?

# Literary Element Scavenger Hunt

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Use the novel to find an example of each of the following.

## Find a simile.

Figure of Speech:

Analysis:

Page number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Find an example of personification.

Figure of Speech:

Analysis:

Page number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Find a flashback.

Page number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Find a good example of imagery.

Page number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Describe the main character with one word. Then, find a passage to support this description.

Page number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Find one example of foreshadowing, irony, or symbolism. Make sure you tell which one you found.

Page number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Find four strong action verbs.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ (page number \_\_\_\_\_)

2. \_\_\_\_\_ (page number \_\_\_\_\_)

3. \_\_\_\_\_ (page number \_\_\_\_\_)

4. \_\_\_\_\_ (page number \_\_\_\_\_)

**Write a theme statement in the box, and find a passage from the novel that supports it.**

Page # \_\_\_\_\_

**Find your favorite quote or line of the novel. Write it, and then explain why it is your favorite.**

Page # \_\_\_\_\_

**Find a passage that describes the setting. Then, explain how the setting affects the plot of the novel.**



# Novel

## “I Am” Poem

Pretend that you are one of the characters in the novel. Complete the following *I Am* poem as if you were this character. Write the first two words of each stanza, and then follow the directions in parenthesis to finish each line.

I am (two special characteristics that describe this character)  
I wonder (something he/she would be curious about)  
I hear (something he/she would hear)  
I see (an imaginary sight)  
I want (an actual desire this character would have)  
I am (repeat the first line)

I pretend (something this character would pretend to do)  
I feel (a feeling about something imaginary)  
I touch ( an imaginary touch that this character might touch)  
I worry (something that worries this character)  
I cry (something that would make this character sad)  
I am (repeat the first line)

I understand (something that this character has found to be true)  
I say (something that this character believes)  
I dream (something he/she dreams of)  
I try (something he/she would make an effort about)  
I hope (something this character hopes for)  
I am (repeat the first line)

### Example of first stanza based on a different novel

*I am determined and brave*  
*I wonder if I will meet the wolf again*  
*I see the bear becoming my friend*  
*I want to find new foods*  
*I am determined and brave*

**Write your own on a separate sheet of paper.**

# Writing Opportunity

**Cinquain:** a poem containing five lines

Write a cinquain poem using a character or object found in the novel as the basis of your poem. The cinquain format and topic suggestions are listed.

## Cinquain Poem Format

Line 1: a noun

Line 2: two adjectives to describe the noun in line one

Line 3: three -ing verbs

Line 4: a phrase describing the noun in line one

Line 5: a synonym for the noun in line one

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# That's My Song

List two characters from this novel. Think of a song that relates to each character's life or a song that describes each character. Make sure the songs you choose are appropriate for the classroom. Complete the following chart.

Character	Song that relates to this character

Write or print a copy of the lyrics of each song. Choose one stanza or portion of each song and write a paragraph explaining why this song is the perfect song for your chosen character.

Character 1:

Character 2:

# Final Text Message

Choose a character from this novel. Then, create a final text message for this character. You can choose to have this character send his/her text to another character or to the readers. Put thought into your message. Do not just write something like "I hope you liked the book". The character's final text message should reflect the theme, a conflict he/she has struggled with, or something this character has learned.





# Comic Strip Rubric

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria	Possible Points	Points earned
Scene selection: Includes all of the most important events from the chapter	15	
Captions: Captions are clearly related to both the scenes drawn and to the important events from the chapter. The captions are well written with few spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors.	35	
Characters: Main characters from the chapter are included and their actions and dialogue in the comic strip match those from the chapter.	25	
Background illustrations: The illustrations are directly related to the imaginary provided by the author and help the reader understand the scene.	25	
Total	100	

# Mottos

A motto is a word or saying that describes a principle or moral that someone lives by. Some examples are:

- The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.
- Never judge someone until you have walked a mile in his/her shoes!

Create a T-shirt for two characters from the novel. In the center of each shirt, write a motto that this character would live by.



Character:



Character:

# Book Review

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

My overall opinion of the book was:

- This was an excellent book.
- This book was pretty interesting.
- This was just an OK book.
- This book was not great.

Explain your opinion. Why do you feel this way about the book? Make sure you use specific details to support your opinion.

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I think \_\_\_\_\_ would enjoy this book because

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Out of five stars (with five being the best and one being the worst), I give this book \_\_\_\_\_ stars.



# ***ABCs of the Novel***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Think of words and phrases that describe this novel, the characters in the novel, or the conflicts or settings involved. Then, place the word in the appropriate box. Make sure you are able to explain why each word relates to the novel.

**a-b**

**c-d**

**e-f**

**g-h**

**i-j**

**k-l**

**m-n**

**o-p**

**q-r**

**s-t**

**u-v**

**w-x-y-z**

## For Interactive Notebooks

Have students write the title of the novel on the left side of the dotted line. Cut out and glue in notebooks. Make flaps by cutting the solid lines. Once this is glued in notebooks, lift each flap and write the answers on paper underneath.

Five strong verbs found in this novel

Two words to describe the  
main character  
and one passage to support  
these descriptions

Theme of this novel  
One passage to support the theme

# Writing Prompts and Other Activities After Reading

- Create a readers' theater script using one chapter from the novel.
- Which character do you admire most in this novel? Explain your choice.
- Compare one of the characters in this novel to another character in another book.
- Compare and contrast yourself and one of the characters in this novel.
- An epilogue is a short final chapter of a story that discusses what happens after the main action of the story is finished. Write an epilog for this novel. Tell what you would have happen to the main characters after the story ends.

## **Multimedia Presentation**

- Allow students to create a multimedia project in which they choose a song to represent three of the characters. In addition to the song, require them to choose their favorite quote from that character and perhaps a picture from the movie or a picture that represents the character. Make sure students choose songs that would be appropriate for the classroom. In addition to their presentation, have them write a short paragraph about each character and explain why the song that they chose fits that character. Allow students to show their presentations to the class.

## **Have a "Talk Show"**

- In small groups, allow your students to create a mock talk show. Someone from the group will be the host, and the others will be the characters. Tell them that Encourage the students to dress and act the part. Once the questions and responses are written, allow them to take turns performing their talk show to the class.

**If you enjoyed this teaching unit, visit our website: [www.elacoreplans.com](http://www.elacoreplans.com)**

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Happy Teaching! 😊

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