

Lassie Come-Home



By

Eric Knight

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed

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Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on two chapters of *Lassie Come-Home* and is comprised of five different activities:

1. Before You Read
2. Vocabulary Building
3. Comprehension Questions
4. Language Activities
5. Extension Activities

Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters . . . respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

A principal expectation of the unit is that students will develop their skills in reading, writing, listening and oral communication, as well as in reasoning and critical thinking. It is important, too, that students be encouraged to relate their own feelings and experiences in certain contexts, and describe their own interpretations of particular passages.

- Students can work on the activities at their own pace.
- Every activity need not be completed by all students.
- A **portfolio cover** is included (p.7) as well as a **Checklist** (p.6) to keep a record of completed work.

Themes which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include honor and loyalty, personal growth, perseverance, accepting responsibilities, learning to accept life's difficulties, coming of age, and dealing with loss.

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List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words / phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homonyms
3. Identifying / creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *personification*.
7. Identify *anagrams*
8. Listing compound words
9. Identifying parts of speech
10. Identify/create *similes*
11. Identification of root words

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Complete Five W's Chart
4. Identify *cliffhangers*
5. Identify the climax of the novel.
6. Complete a Story Pyramid

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Identify the protagonist/antagonist
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Compare characters

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Create a poem
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a book review
8. Complete an Observation Chart
9. Complete a KWS Chart
10. Create a friendly letter.

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Create a comic strip

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Synopsis

Lassie is Joe's prized collie and constant companion. But when Joe's father loses his job, Lassie must be sold. Three times she escapes from her new owner, and three times she returns home to Joe, until finally she is taken to the remotest part of Scotland – too far a journey for any dog to make alone.

But Lassie is not just any dog.

First published in 1940, **Lassie Come-Home** is one of the best-loved dog stories in the world. (Courtesy of the Publisher)

For a more complete synopsis you may wish to check out the following website:
<https://www.bookreports.info/lassie-come-home-summary/>

Author Biography

Eric Knight

Eric Knight was born in 1897 in Yorkshire, England, the countryside setting for **Lassie Come-Home**. He moved to the United States as a teenager and graduated from Cambridge Latin School in Massachusetts. Inspired by his dog, Toots and by the harsh realities of life during the Great Depression, Mr. Knight wrote **Lassie Come-Home** on his farm in Pennsylvania. He was killed in 1943 while serving in the US Army during World War II.



Lassie first appeared in a short story published by the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1938. The story was so popular that Mr. Knight expanded it into a full-length book, which was published in 1940 and instantly became a bestseller. (Courtesy of the Publisher)

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Student Checklist

Student Name: _____

Assignment	Grade/Level	Comments

Lassie Come-Home



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Name: _____

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Chapters 1-2



Before you read the chapter:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The main character of *Lassie Come-Home* is (of course) Lassie, a five-year old purebred collie. Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels you have read or movies you’ve seen. What do you think makes for an interesting **protagonist**? (One that is difficult to forget.)



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

aristocratic	ingrained	dire	luxurious
bludgeoned	automatic	intently	valuable

1. Joe gazed across the moorland, searching _____ for signs of Lassie.
2. The collie had an _____ appearance that was most impressive.
3. That necklace is my mother's most _____ piece of jewelry.
4. It seemed to be _____ in the dog to walk at his master's heel.
5. “There will be _____ consequences if you don't listen,” the principal warned.
6. The thief _____ the poor storekeeper until he was unconscious.
7. The mayor is driving a most _____ car.
8. Agreeing with the coach without the briefest of pauses, displayed how _____ the team's responses were.

* **Note:** A *collier* is a coal miner.

Questions

1. What is the **setting** of the story at the beginning of Chapter One?

b. Think of one thing you would enjoy about living in this setting (both time and place), and one thing you would not enjoy.

Enjoy	
Not so much	

2. What was there about Lassie that won the respect of the dog lovers of Greenall Bridge?

3. What did the village people mean when they said that they could set their clocks by Lassie?

4. The people of the village were proud of Lassie because she stood for something to do with their pride. True or False

5. What surprise was in store for Joe as Chapter Two begins?

6. What were two of the possible explanations that Joe came up with as to what might have happened to Lassie?

7. Why do you think that it was Joe's mother who gave him the bad news about Lassie being sold, and not his dad?

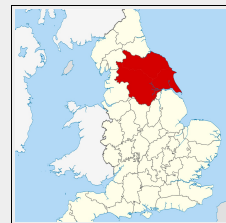
8. What did the newspapers mean by “the stricken areas”?

9. Describe the details which forced Joe's parents to sell Lassie.

10. How did Joe's mother try to console him at the end of Chapter Two? What was Joe's response?

Good to Know ~ Yorkshire

Yorkshire, the English county that Joe called home is the largest in the country. The countryside of Yorkshire has acquired the common nickname, "God's Own County". Yorkshire includes the North York Moors and Yorkshire Dales National Parks. Areas of this county have been designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Yorkshire is famous for its scenic views and rugged cliffs.





Language Activities

A. The Collie

The collie is a breed of herding dog which originated in Scotland and Northern England. Collie dogs are in fact a distinctive type of herding dog and contain many different formal breeds. Investigate the collie further and record three interesting facts about it below.



1.	
2.	
3.	

B. Anagrams

An **anagram** is a word that is formed by changing the order of the letters of another word. For example, the letters in the word **WAS** can also form the word **SAW**. Follow these directions to form the anagrams:

a) read the clue in the right-hand column.

b) Using the word in the left-hand column move the letters around in any order, but you must use all the letters. All of the words in the left-hand column can be found in the first two chapters of *Lassie Come-Home*.

Word	Anagram	Clue
agreed		A car's transmission is ____.
part		Ensnare.
pride		Levered open.
sable		Large bundles of hay or cotton.
alert		By and by.
lassie		Passageways between rows of seats.
reason		A title for a Spanish-speaking woman.

C. A Quatrain Poem Celebrating Tea.

The **quatrain** is a popular form of rhymed verse. It is a poem of four lines, is usually light and can be humorous. The following quatrain was written by the famous poet, Atrocious Halitosis. It is called, **Confusion About Tea**. (Which is understandable since the people of England often call their evening meal, “tea”.)

*When I did visit England, they asked me out for tea,
“Why I prefer my coffee black and tea just ain’t for me.”
My host she shook her head and smiled and said so patiently,
“Our evening meal’s a hearty deal, as soon you’ll surely see.”*



Various rhyming schemes make up a quatrain poem. As you can see, the above four lines have a rhyming scheme of **A – A – A – A**. Other rhyming schemes include: ABAB, AABB, AABA, ABBA, ABBA, and AAAB.

Your task is to write your own quatrain poem. You may choose a rhyming scheme that fits with your own personal creation. The theme should have something to do with the themes established in the first two chapters of our novel.

The Quatrain Poem

Now create your own Quatrain Poem. Your poem must follow the format of a quatrain poem described above (and must rhyme).

Title: _____

D. Personification is giving human qualities to something that is not human. The following example is taken from Chapter 2: ... *his heart still cried for Lassie.*

Describe how Joe's heart is personified in this example.

Create your own example of personification.

As you continue to read through the novel be on the lookout for other examples of this literary device. If you should find one, come back to this question and enter it below.

E. Chapter One contains an example of an important literary device called **foreshadowing**. Foreshadowing is defined as *a warning or indication of a future event*. Chapter One ends with the statement, *And sometimes there comes a time in a man's life when fate has beaten him so that he must bow his head and decide that he must eat his pride so that his family may eat bread.*



1. What is the author hinting at in this statement?
2. Why might the author have included this statement?

Extension Activity

Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can tell the story of only one scene – or the entire novel. Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the first two chapters of our novel. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.



1	2
3	4
5	6