Stuart Little

By

E.B. White

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed
Stuart Little
By E. B. White

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Suggestions and Expectations

This 54 page curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on one or two chapters of *Stuart Little* and is comprised of four different activities:

- Before You Read
- Vocabulary Building
- Comprehension Questions
- Language and Extension Activities

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.

**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.

Students can work on the activities at their own pace. Every activity need not be completed by all students. A **portfolio cover** is included as well as a **Student Checklist**.

**Themes** which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include mice, the importance of family and friends, challenges of being “different”, courage and sacrifice, perseverance, overcoming difficulty.
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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. Working with anagrams.
8. Use of singular / plural nouns
9. Listing compound words
10. Identifying parts of speech
11. Determining alphabetical order
12. Identification of root words
13. Identify/create similes

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. Identify the climax of the novel.
4. Five W’s Chart

Character Activities
1. Determine character traits
2. Protagonists and antagonists
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Comparing two Characters

Creative and Critical Thinking
1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Conduct an interview
4. Write a description of personal feelings
5. Write a book review
6. Compare two Characters
7. Complete a KWS Chart

Art Activities
1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Design an Information Card
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Synopsis

Stuart Little is no ordinary mouse. Born to a family of humans, he lives in New York City with his parents, his older brother, George, and Snowbell the cat. Though he’s shy and thoughtful, he’s also a true lover of adventure.

Stuart’s greatest adventure comes when his best friend, a beautiful bird named Margalo, disappears from her nest. Determined to track her down, Stuart ventures away from home for the first time in his life. He finds adventure aplenty. But will he find his friend? (The Publisher – Harper Collins)

Author Biography
E.B. White

E. B. White, the author of such beloved classics as Charlotte's Web, Stuart Little, and The Trumpet of the Swan, was born in Mount Vernon, New York. He graduated from Cornell University in 1921 and, five or six years later, joined the staff of The New Yorker magazine.

Mr. White's essays have appeared in Harper's magazine, and some of his other books are: One Man's Meat, The Second Tree from the Corner, Letters of E. B. White, Essays of E. B. White, and Poems and Sketches of E. B. White. He won countless awards, including the 1971 National Medal for Literature and the Laura Ingalls Wilder Award, which commended him for making a "substantial and lasting contribution to literature for children."

During his lifetime, many young readers asked Mr. White if his stories were true. In a letter written to be sent to his fans, he answered, "No, they are imaginary tales . . . But real life is only one kind of life—there is also the life of the imagination."

He died on October 1, 1985, and was survived by his son and three grandchildren.
# Student Checklist

**Student Name:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Grade / Level</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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Name:
Before you read the chapter:

The protagonist in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. One of the main protagonists of *Stuart Little* is a very likeable young mouse, Stuart. 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 especially interesting protagonist?


Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>solemn</th>
<th>prefer</th>
<th>trifle</th>
<th>perspiration</th>
<th>inconvenience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>substitute</td>
<td>pantry</td>
<td>inquire</td>
<td>horrified</td>
<td>agreeable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Harriett was _____________ to discover that her hair had been dyed a dark green while she slept.

2. The ceremony marking the anniversary of the disaster was a most _______ event.

3. “I know it is an __________________.” Matty said apologetically, “But can you leave your game and help with the dishes?”

4. I think that Archie is a ______________ spoiled.

5. Please go to the ______________ and fetch me a jar of pickles.

6. By the time it was noon, the__________________ was rolling down our faces.

7. Charlene was most ______________ to the sudden change of plans.
8. “Which would you ______________,” Angus asked. “A bowl of noodles or a sandwich?”

9. It looks like they will allow a ______________ player to enter the game to replace the injured goalie.

10. Who is going to ______________ at the front desk of the hotel to see if we left our baggage there?

Questions

1. What was startling about the entrance into the world of Stuart Little?

2. Describe the setting of Chapter One.

3. Why was the doctor sent for? What was his verdict regarding Stuart?

4. Describe how Stuart rescued Mrs. Little’s ring.

   b. How did you feel about this incident? Was this a dangerous thing the Stuart family asked their son to do?
5. Some readers have felt that in these chapters Stuart’s brother, George, does not show much brotherly love toward young Stuart. What incident seems to support this conclusion?

6. The Littles adjusted the words to a nursery rhyme and a poem to protect Stuart’s feelings. The name of the nursery rhyme is ____________________________, and the name of the poem is ____________________________.

7. A cliffhanger is a literary device where the author leaves the reader in suspense at the end of a chapter. How is the conclusion of Chapter 2 an example of a cliffhanger?

Language Activities

A. Alliteration

Authors often enjoy using alliteration – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. An example from Chapter One is “. . . the sun streamed in . . .”

Using your imagination, create your own examples of alliteration from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of three words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The squeak of a mouse</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The roar of a freight train</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From your imagination</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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 PAN can also form the word NAP. 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.

Each of the words in the left-hand column are found in the first two chapters of our novel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Anagram</th>
<th>Clue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>east</td>
<td></td>
<td>A place to sit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>left</td>
<td></td>
<td>To sense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>came</td>
<td></td>
<td>A spice; or a heavy club.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>three</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deaf</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wither or vanish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tail</td>
<td></td>
<td>On fire.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Choose ten words from these chapters with two or more syllables. Indicate the syllables by drawing a line between each syllable. Example: good / bye.
Extension Activities

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 *Stuart Little*. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.