The Light in the Forest

By

Conrad Richter

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed
The Light in the Forest
By Conrad Richter

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About the author: Nat Reed has been a member of the teaching profession for more than 30 years. He was a full-time instructor at Trent University in the Teacher Education Program for nine years. For more information on his work and literature, please visit the websites www.reedpublications.org and www.novelstudies.org.

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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 one or two chapters of The Light in the Forest and is comprised of five of the following different activities:

- Before You Read
- Vocabulary Building
- Comprehension Questions
- Language Activities
- 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. Students will also be expected to provide clear answers to questions and well-constructed explanations. It is critical as well that students be able to relate events and the feelings of characters to their own lives and experiences and describe their own interpretation of a particular passage.

A strength of the unit is that 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) so that students may organize their work and keep it all in one place. A Student Checklist is also included (p.6) so that a record of completed work may be recorded.

**Themes** which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include the struggle for one's personal identity, indigenous people of North America, friendship and loyalty, personal growth and responsibility.
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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. Complete a Story Pyramid
5. Identify the climax of the novel.

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

When John Cameron Butler was a child, he was captured in a raid on the Pennsylvanian frontier and adopted by the great warrior Cuyloga. Renamed True Son, he came to think of himself as fully Indian. But eleven years later his tribe, the Lenni Lenape, has signed a treaty with the white men and agreed to return their captives, including fifteen-year-old True Son. Now he must go back to the family he has forgotten, whose language is no longer his, and whose ways of dress and behavior are strange to him as the ways of the forest are to them. A beautifully written, sensitively told story of a white boy brought up by the Indians. The Light in the Forest is a beloved American classic. [The Publisher]

Good reading for anyone curious about the past of our country. - The Yale Review.

Author Biography

Conrad Richter

Conrad Richter was born in Pennsylvania in 1890. His family on his mother's side was identified with the early American scene, and from boyhood on he was saturated with tales and the color of Eastern pioneer days. In 1928 he and his small family moved to New Mexico, where his heart and mind were captured by the Southwest. From this time on he devoted himself to fiction. His book, The Town, won the Pulitzer Prize in 1951. His book, A Country of Strangers (1966) was a companion to The Light in the Forest. Conrad Richter died in 1968.

(Adapted from The Publisher)
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Student Checklist

Student Name: ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Grade/Level</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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Name: __________________________
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Chapter 1

Before you read the chapter:

The protagonist in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The main character of The Light in the Forest is True Son, a fifteen-year-old boy who has been living with the Delaware people for eleven years – ever since being captured by them and kidnapped from his parents at the age of four. Who would you say is your favorite protagonist from a novel you have read or a movie you have seen? Why did you choose this particular character?

Vocabulary:
Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>aversion</th>
<th>dismayed</th>
<th>endure</th>
<th>humiliated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>redoubt</td>
<td>stern</td>
<td>overwhelmed</td>
<td>fringed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. When Joanne was assigned homework in every class she felt completely ____________.
2. The soldiers built a crude ____________ with the hope of keeping their enemies at bay.
3. Francis found it difficult to ____________ the jeers of the other children.
4. His belt was tied in the back and his cape was ____________ with threads.
5. Kevin could tell by the principal's ____________ expression that he was in trouble.
6. My mother has a definite ____________ to attending parent-teacher meetings.
7. When Jack ripped his pants during recess, he felt completely ____________.
8. Letitia was ____________ to learn that her mother had been in an accident.
1. What is the **setting** of the story for most of Chapter One?

2. Describe the crisis that True Son suddenly faced.

3. Describe the feelings that were going through True Son's mind during this crisis.

4. If you were in True Son's place, what do you think you would find most difficult about leaving the Lenni Lenape people?

   b. What do you think you would find most difficult about rejoining his white family?
Language Activities

A. 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 chapter of The Light in the Forest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Anagram</th>
<th>Clue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pale</td>
<td>Beg.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>wrong</td>
<td>An adult is _____ up.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>Replicas or copies.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>stake</td>
<td>Lays hold of something.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sisters</td>
<td>Withstands.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words</td>
<td>An ancient weapon.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>flesh</td>
<td>Ledge.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Now find two additional words from the first chapter which have interesting anagrams to see if you can stump a classmate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Anagram</th>
<th>Clue</th>
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Good to Know ~ The Tuscarawas River

True Son's village lies on the banks of the Tuscarawas River which is in northeastern Ohio. The Tuscarawas is 129 miles long (209 km) and is part of the watershed of the Mississippi River, draining an area of over 2500 square miles (6,700 square km). It is thought that the name, Tuscarawas means “Old Town”.

10
B. A Poem About a Delaware.

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 entitled *The Delaware*, was written by the poet, Campfire Sam.

*It came to me one night in June*  
*When I lay gazing at the moon.*  
*The world is mine to keep or share,*  
*For I'm a man – a Delaware.*

Various rhyming schemes make up a quatrain poem. As you can see, the above four lines have a rhyming scheme of **A – A – B – B**. Other rhyming schemes include: ABAB, AAAA, AABA, ABBA, ABBB, 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 chapter 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:** ____________________________________________
C. Many authors enjoy using alliteration – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here's one such example: from Chapter One: the Lenni Lenape.

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

| An evergreen tree. |
| An insect's chirp. |
| Your choice. |

D. A simile is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is: Then how could he be torn from his family like a sapling....

~ What is being compared in this example?

Invent your own similes comparing the following items with something from your own imagination:

a) a canoe on a river

b) a falling tree

c) your choice
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 chapter of our novel. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.