Peter and The Starcatchers

By

Dave Barry & Ridly Pearson

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed
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Suggestions and Expectations

This 77 page curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on several chapters of Peter and the Starcatchers 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 and topics which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include pirates, sea voyages/sailing ships, courage, the importance of friends and family, perseverance and personal growth, overcoming hardships.
Peter and the Starcatchers
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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 anagrams
7. Identify personification
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
14. Identification of a cliffhanger

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. Write a book review
4. Write about personal feelings
5. Conduct an interview
6. Complete an Observation Chart
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

In an evocative and fast-paced adventure on the high seas and on a faraway island, an orphan boy named Peter and his mysterious new friend, Molly, overcome bands of pirates and thieves in their quest to keep a fantastical secret safe and save the world from evil. This impossible-to-put-down tale leads readers on an unforgettable journey – fraught with danger, yet filled with mystical and magical moments. [The Publisher]

Authors Biographies
Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson

David McAlister Barry is a Pulitzer Prize-winning author who was famous for writing a nationally syndicated humor column for the Miami Herald. He was born in Amork, New York in 1947 – the son of a Presbyterian minister. After obtaining his B.A. in English, he began a very successful career in journalism. A talented guitar player and musician he has also played in a number of bands. Dave has had several books published over the years. Peter and the Starcatchers marks the first in this Peter Pan prequel series.

Ridley Pearson was also born in the state of New York – in 1953- but raised in Riverside, Connecticut with his brother and sister. He is the author of a number of very successful suspense and thriller novels for young adults, and adventure books for children. He presently lives in Saint Louis, Missouri with his wife, Marcelle, and their two daughters. Ridley is also an accomplished musician, having played bass for a number of years in the band, The Rock Bottom Remainders (with his friend, Dave Barry).
Student Name: ____________________________

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Grade / Level</th>
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Peter and the Starcatchers

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Name: ____________________________
Before you read the chapter:

The protagonist in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The protagonist of *Peter and the Starcatchers* is Peter, a feisty young orphan who experiences many exciting adventures as the story unfolds. 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>rancid</th>
<th>treacherous</th>
<th>decrepit</th>
<th>provisioned</th>
<th>accentuated</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>prominent</td>
<td>vermin</td>
<td>distracted</td>
<td>maneuvered</td>
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</table>

1. Peter was quite dismayed to discovered they were boarding a ____________ old ship.

2. My cousin was once a ______________ citizen of this community.

3. The basement was overrun with ____________ until Sarah decided to set some rat traps.

4. I’m sure that the New York Rangers will find the Boston Bruins to be ____________ opponents.
5. After three days the meat became ____________ and began attracting flies.

6. The pirate captain was a very ______________ foe.

7. Her voice was ______________ when she used a megaphone.

8. The crew ______________ the ship with enough food and water to last several weeks.

9. The audience was ______________ when the actor stumbled during the swordfight.

10. The taxi cab driver _____________ his vehicle as close to the curb as possible.

Questions

1. What is the setting of the first four chapters?

2. The novel contains a number of words and expressions which have to do with sailing ships. In the chart below, match each seafaring word or expression with the proper description:

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<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mast</td>
<td>The opening where a ship is boarded.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>barnacles</td>
<td>Alcoholic drink made of water, weak beer and rum.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>grog</td>
<td>The main part of a ship running lengthwise along the center line from the bow to the stern.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>bob</td>
<td>Small boat.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>dinghy</td>
<td>Tall spar on a sailing ship which carries the sails.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>gangway</td>
<td>Sea creatures (encrusters) which attach themselves to the bottom of a ship.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>keel</td>
<td>Was once a British coin (shilling).</td>
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3. Why do you think being the oldest boy was so important to Peter?
4. List five appropriate **adjectives** that would accurately describe the personality and character of first officer, William Slank?


5. What unusual effect did the trunk have on Alf when he picked it up?


6. The other ship which was casting off in the harbor was called the ___________.
   Mack thought that this ship might be the only one which could outrun the pirate ship, the ___________ ____________.


7. Describe how Peter avoided severe punishment when he did not attempt to escape from the Never Land.


8. What was rather odd about the travel arrangements made by Molly's father? Why do you suppose he made these particular arrangements?


9. Molly's father was going to be the new ______________ in the country of ______________. The ruler of this country was called King ___________ the Third. Everyone had to salute him with ___________ fingers. The king's father had been eaten by a ________________.


10. What were the Ladies, and why were they of special interest to Black Stache?
**Good to Know**

Black Stache refers to his prisoner as a *scurvy dog*. Scurvy was a disease which afflicted many seamen of this time. It was caused by a lack of vitamin C and characterized by spongy gums, loosening of the teeth, and a bleeding into the skin and mucous membranes.

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**Language Activities**

**A. Pirates!**

For many centuries (and even today off the coast of Somalia), the cry, “Pirates”, has terrified many a seafaring traveler. In Chapter Four we met a fearsome example of this not-so-noble occupation, Black Stache.

Using resources in your school library or on the Internet do a further investigation of this rather remarkable occupation (especially as it was carried out in the 1500s and 1600s.

- Who were these men (and women)?
- What was their purpose?
- Who did they usually attack?
- What sort of booty did they hope to steal from other ships – and what did they do with it?
- And any other fascinating facts you think would be interesting to share with your friends.
B. Choose ten words from these chapters with two or more syllables. Indicate the syllables by drawing a line between each syllable. Example: good / bye.

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C. Personification is giving human qualities to something that is not human. In Chapter Four when describing the ship, the Wasp, Black Stache says, “So she thinks she can sting us, does she?” In this sentence the Wasp is given human characteristics (the ship is referred to as “she” and may also be capable of stinging).

a) Why do you think personification is a literary device used by many authors?

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b) Create your own example of personification.

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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 four chapters of *Peter and the Starcatchers*. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.