

# A Wrinkle In Time



By

Madeleine L'Engle

A Novel Study  
by Nat Reed

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**About the author:** Nat Reed was a member of the teaching profession for more than 35 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, visit [novelstudies.org](http://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 chapter of *A Wrinkle In Time* and is comprised of five different activities:

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

A **portfolio cover** (p.7) as well as a **Checklist** (p.6) are included so that students may track of their completed work.

**Every activity need not be completed by all students.**

### 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.**

**Themes** which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include good versus evil; the importance of love; personal responsibility; personal acceptance; being different.

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## List of Skills

### Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms & antonyms
3. Identifying/creating *personification*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Listing compound words
7. Identifying / creating similes
8. Identifying/creating *metaphors*.
9. Use of singular/plural nouns
10. Using content clues: analogies
11. Identifying parts of speech
12. Determining alphabetical order
13. Identification of root words
14. Identifying / creating *alliteration*
15. Identifying anagrams.
16. Identifying/creating *exaggeration*.

### Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

### Plot Activities

1. Complete a 5 W's Chart
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Identify *cliffhanger*
4. Identify the climax of a novel
5. Write a synopsis
6. Predict an outcome
7. Complete a Sequence Chart
8. Identify *foreshadowing*

### Character Activities

1. Compare characters
2. Relating personal experiences

### Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper article
3. Write a letter to a friend
4. Complete an Observation Chart
5. Conduct an interview
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a Book Review
8. Create *Found Poetry*

### Art Activities

1. Design a cover for the novel
2. Create a Storyboard.

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## Synopsis

It was a dark and stormy night. Out of this wild night, a stranger comes to the Murry house and beckons Meg, her brother Charles Wallace and their friend Calvin O'Keefe on a most dangerous and extraordinary adventure - one that will threaten their lives and our universe. Winner of the 1963 Newbery Medal, ***A Wrinkle in Time*** is the first book in Madeleine L'Engle's classic **Time Quintet** (The Publisher)

Themes include: good versus evil; the importance of love; personal responsibility; personal acceptance; being different.

## Author Biography

*Madeleine L'Engle*

**Madeleine L'Engle** was born November 29th, 1918 in New York City. Even as a young girl she preferred writing stories and poems to doing her school work. At the age of 12 she and her family moved to the French Alps where she attended an English boarding school. A few years later she attended Smith College, continuing her passion for writing by studying English. After graduation she moved to Greenwich Village to work in the theater. During this time she saw her first two novels published. Here she also met her future husband, Hugh Franklin. Madeleine and Hugh had three children.

Madeleine wrote more than 60 books during her illustrious writing career, the most famous being the award-winning, ***A Wrinkle in Time***. Sadly, she passed away in 2007.



*"We can't take any credit for our talents. It's how we use them that counts."*



# A Wrinkle In Time



By Madeleine L'Engle

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

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## Chapter 1



### Before you read the chapter:

Meg, the novel's protagonist, says about herself, "A delinquent, that's what I am." What do you think a person might do to improve one's negative impression of him/herself? You may wish to brainstorm possible ideas with a colleague.




### Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence. [Be careful, some words may be appropriate for more than one sentence - try to pick the best fit.]

serenity	crevices	subside	diction
moderation	prodigious	exclusive	relinquish

1. No one would have guessed what \_\_\_\_\_ talents she would develop.
2. After spending the day curled up in bed, her headache began to \_\_\_\_\_.
3. After working for forty years, Anne finally decided to \_\_\_\_\_ her responsibilities.
4. When the warm weather arrived, great \_\_\_\_\_ in the ice began to appear.
5. Everyone respected the Emperor because of the sense of \_\_\_\_\_ he showed.
6. The children found his manner of speaking to be quite amusing, for his \_\_\_\_\_ was much more precise than they were used to hearing.
7. The golf club across the street is very expensive and quite \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Whenever the children entered their grandmother's house, it seemed that an air of \_\_\_\_\_ was always present, no matter what the circumstances.

# Questions



1. Describe the **atmosphere** presented in the opening few paragraphs of the novel. How is the author able to create such an atmosphere?


2. The **setting** of a story includes not only where but when the story takes place. What is the setting of the story in Chapter One?


3. *Every good story involves a crisis.* Describe a specific **crisis** faced by Meg in this chapter.


4. How did Meg's father know that she wasn't dumb?


5. Describe your impression of Meg's brother, Charles Wallace, when you first meet him in the Murry kitchen.


6. What special "gift" did Charles Wallace have when it came to his mother and Meg?


7. Match each of the following characters from Chapter One with the correct descriptor [Careful: some characteristics may fit more than one person, but all must find a home.]

Meg	- learned to talk at age 4
Mrs. Murry	- was full of bad feeling
Charles Wallace	- 10 years old
Mrs. Whatsit	- understanding, kind and wise
Dennys	- nothing ruffled the serenity of this person's expression
Mr. Murry	- wild nights were this character's glory

8. Where did Charles Wallace discover that Mrs. Whatsit and her two friends were living?


9. When Mrs. Whatsit dropped in at the Murry house, what startling piece of information did she convey to Mrs. Murry?


## Language Activities



### A. The Tesseract

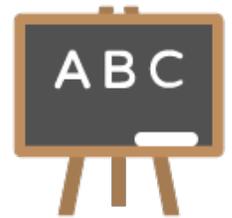
The revelation by Mrs. Whatsit regarding the **tesseract** leaves the readers wondering why such a revelation would cause Mrs. Murry so much anxiety. Using resources in your school library or the Internet, do an investigation of the **tesseract**. Record your information below.


**B. Define cliffhanger:**


Why might Chapter One be considered to end as a cliffhanger?


**C. Alliteration**

The author seems to enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device where the author repeats the same consonant sound at the beginning of several words in close succession. The following is an example from Chapter One: “It was his mother's mind, and Meg's...” **Using your imagination**, create your own examples of **alliteration** from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of 3 words.



The sound of a Ferris wheel -	
A raven's call -	

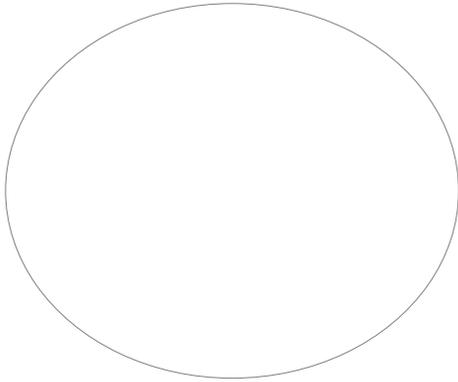
**D. A quintet** is a five-line verse that tells a story. The quintet has a syllable pattern and can bring an exciting scene to life. (It doesn't have to rhyme.)

Line 1 – tells <b>when</b> , 3 syllables Line 2 – tells <b>where</b> , 5 syllables Line 3 – tells <b>what</b> , 7 syllables Line 4 – describes <b>activity</b> , 9 syllables Line 5 – contains a <b>thought</b> , 3 syllables.	Now create a quintet poem using ideas from recent events in <b><i>A Wrinkle in Time</i></b> .
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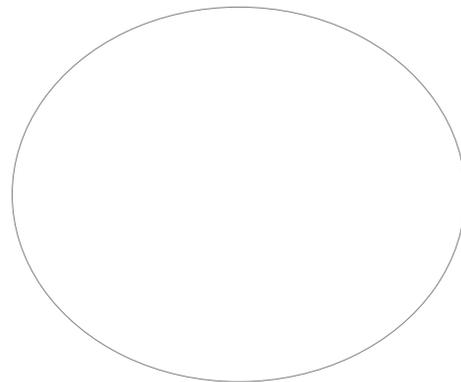
TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_


## E. 5 Ws and an H.

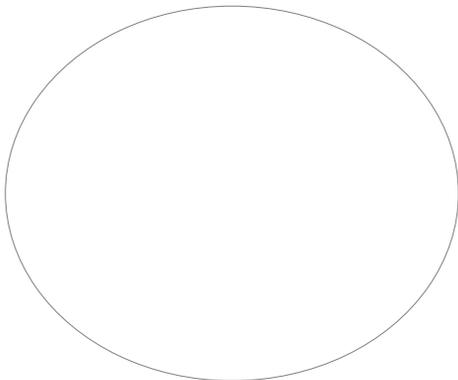
Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



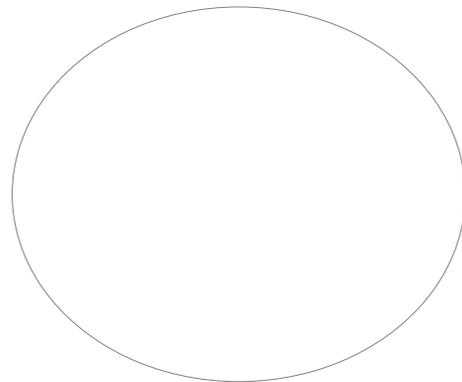
**WHO?**



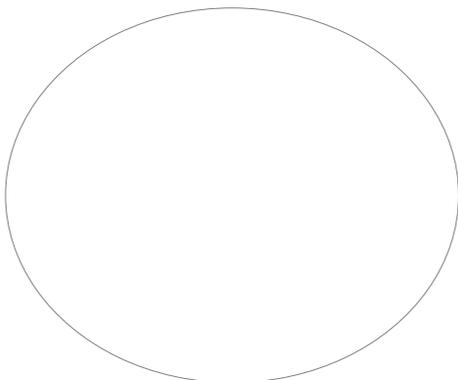
**WHAT?**



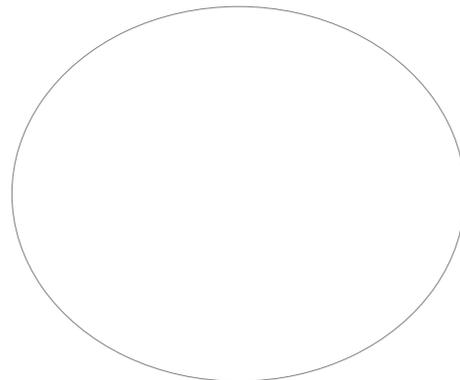
**WHEN?**



**WHERE?**



**WHY?**



**HOW?**

## Extension Activity



### A Comic Strip

This activity is especially for students with an artistic flair or who love comic books! It can be done for any event up to this point in the story. The first step is to decide on the length of your comic strip (6 to 9 frames is suggested); next consider what events you will include. You may wish to highlight a brief incident. A quick sketch of the comic strip can first be accomplished in a **storyboard format** before a final, good copy is attempted. The strip should include a title, dialogue, and color. It should be neat and imaginative.
