

Chomp



By

Carl Hiaasen

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed

Chomp

By Carl Hiaasen



Table of Contents

Suggestions and Expectations	3
List of Skills	4
Synopsis / Author Biography	5
Student Checklist	6
Reproducible Student Booklet	7
Answer Key	71

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.

Copyright © 2014 Nat Reed
Revisions Completed in 2025
All rights reserved by author.
Permission to copy for single classroom use only.
Electronic distribution limited to single classroom use only.
Not for public display.

Chomp

By Carl Hiaasen



Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on three chapters of **Chomp** and is comprised of the following different activities:

1. Before You Read
2. Vocabulary Building
3. Comprehension Questions
4. 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 survival, ecology and the environment, friendship and responsibility, selflessness, reality television shows.

Chomp

By Carl Hiaasen

List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homophones
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *personification*.
7. Identify *singular/plural*
8. Identify *anagrams*
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. 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. Create an Information Card
4. Design a cover for the novel
5. Create a comic strip

Chomp

By Carl Hiaasen



Synopsis

Wahoo Cray lives in a zoo. His father is an animal wrangler, so he's grown up with all manner of gators, snakes, parrots, rats, monkeys, and snappers in his backyard. The critters, he can handle. His father is the unpredictable one.

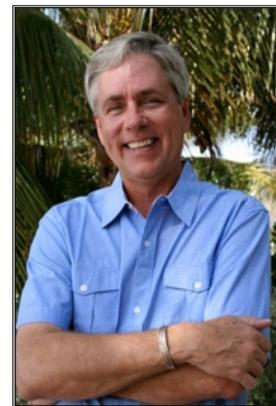
When his dad takes a job with a reality TV show called *Expedition Survival!*, Wahoo figures he'll have to do a bit of wrangling himself—to keep his dad from killing Derek Badger, the show's inept and egotistical star, before the shoot is over. But the job keeps getting more complicated. Derek Badger foolishly believes his own PR and insists on using wild animals for his stunts. And Wahoo's acquired a shadow named Tuna—a girl who's sporting a shiner courtesy of *her* father and needs a place to hide out. (The publisher)

A complete synopsis can be found online at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chomp_novel

Author Biography

Carl Hiaasen

Carl Hiaasen was born and raised in Florida, where he still lives with his family. A graduate of the University of Florida, he wrote for *The Miami Herald* as an investigative reporter. For his journalism and commentary, Hiaasen has received numerous honors. In the early 1980s, he began writing novels with his good friend and a distinguished journalist, the late William D. Montalbano. Together they produced three mystery thrillers – ***Powder Burn***, ***Trap Line*** and ***A Death in China*** -- which borrowed heavily from their own reporting experiences. ***Tourist Season***, published in 1986, was Hiaasen's first solo novel. Since then, Hiaasen has published ***Skin Tight***, ***Native Tongue*** and eight national bestsellers and ***Star Island***. Hiaasen made his children's book debut with ***Hoot*** (2002), which was awarded a Newbery Honor and spent more than two years on the New York Times bestseller lists. For young readers he went on to write ***Flush*** (2005), ***Scat*** (2009) and ***Chomp*** (2012). The film version of ***Hoot*** was released in 2006.



Chomp



By Carl Hiaasen

Name: _____

Chomp

By Carl Hiaasen

Chapters 1-3



Before you read the chapters:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The protagonist of **Chomp** is Wahoo, a young boy with an unusual name – and an even more unusual father. 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 fascinating **protagonist**?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

specialist	ferocious	occupational	confident
abandoned	expedition	devoured	verisimilitude

1. Wahoo thought it would be fun to go on a week-long _____ out on the Everglades.
2. The children were excited to find an old _____ cabin cruiser on the beach.
3. “So you already know that we're all about _____ - making it real.”
4. Getting sunburned is an _____ hazard for most roofers.
5. Serena seems very _____ in her artistic abilities.
6. I think it is most unwise to bring home such a _____ dog.
7. After swallowing the pork chop in one gulp, the St. Bernard _____ my sneaker.
8. Corporal Lee is member of the armed forces and is a _____ at defusing bombs.

Questions



1. What is the **setting** for most of Chapter One?

2. **Investigate:** Although **Wahoo** was named after a famous wrestler, it is also the name of a fish found off the coast of Florida. Using resources in your school library or on the Internet, find out two fascinating facts about this kind of fish.

3. What had caused Mickey's injury?

4. Wahoo's mom was going to Japan to teach Mandarin. True () or False ()

5. What were two factors that influenced Wahoo in accepting the job in Chapter One despite his father's initial objections?

6. What two animals was Derek Badger interested in using for his show?

7. Robin Stark was Derek Badger's _____ assistant.

8. Describe what happened to Wahoo's thumb.

9. Derek Badger's real name was Lee _____.

10. What kind of a person does Derek Badger appear to be?

11. Why had the U.S. Government declared war on the python?

12. What did Beulah do - and why?

Good to Know

Many people living in Florida refer to the **iguana** as a gentle giant, yet it has become a real problem for many people living in this part of the United States. There are simply too many of the reptiles in South Florida. Iguanas generally live in a warm climate and the consensus is that they are eating their way northward.

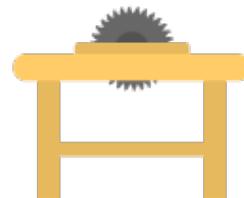
A recent article in the *St. Petersburg Times* stated that *these four-footed lawn mowers have chomped their way through expensive landscaping, caused headaches for botanical gardens and pooped on the deck of more than one cabin cruiser.*



Language Activity

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.

Word	Anagram	Clue
dawn		A magician or a witch might use this instrument.
north		A part of some plants.
snake		Creep; slink.
straw		Benign growths on the skin.
form		Opposite of <i>to</i> .
scarlet		Coalitions of manufacturers or suppliers.
panel		A flat surface.

B. Place the following words from these chapters in **alphabetical order**.

snakes	1.
scattered	2.
thumb	3.
Stark	4.
show	5.
snake	6.
Sunday	7.
pointed	8.
snapped	9.
said	10.

C. A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is “... my skull's 'bout to split open like a rotten pumpkin -” What two things are being compared in this example?

--	--

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

a) the roar of an angry lion

--

b) the northern lights

--

Look for a **simile** in the remaining chapters of the novel. If you find one return to this question and record it below.

--

D. KWS Chart ~ Pythons

A number of rather fascinating and dangerous animals are mentioned in these first three chapters. One of these is the dreaded **python** - a reptile I am sure you would rather not encounter in the middle of a warm dark night. But how much do you know about this dreaded creature? In each of the columns below add helpful details which would assist someone who is researching the python.



What I Know	What I Want To Learn	Possible Sources

Extension Activities

A. Storyboard

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



1	2
3	4
5	6

B. Poems About Wild, Wild Animals

The popular poet, Shel Silverstein, was one of many poets who loved to write poems about snakes. Here is one called *Snake Problem*:

*It's not that I don't care for snakes,
But oh what do you do
When a 24-foot python says . . .
I love you?*



Here is the beginning of another poem about snakes by Josh Coe entitled, *Lament of an Incompetent Pet Keeper*.

*Farewell, good snake, farewell! From now no-one can tell
Where once you shed and made your bed, And guzzled food as well.*

There are many forms of poetry available to the aspiring poet other than the rhyming poem for which the above poets were so adept at creating. An ACROSTIC poem is one example. In an acrostic poem the first letters of each line are aligned vertically to form a word. The word often is the subject of the poem. Here is an example:

The Moth

Multicolored.
Often mistaken for a butterfly
Tickled my nose when it landed on me
Hops from flower to flower on the breeze.

The Acrostic Poem

Now create your own Acrostic Poem on the subject of snakes. Your poem must have at least four lines (and doesn't need to rhyme).

Title: _____
