

# Lyddie



By

Katherine Paterson

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 *Lyddie* and is comprised of these 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 factory life in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, perseverance, personal growth, selflessness, loyalty, independence.

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## 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 *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. 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 about 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

Her parents are gone, and her brother and sisters sent to live with other people. Lyddie Worthen is on her own. When Lyddie hears about the mill jobs in Lowell, Massachusetts, she heads there with the goal of earning enough money to reunite her family. Six days a week from dawn to dusk Lyddie and the other girls run weaving looms in the murky dust-and-lint-filled factory. Lyddie learns to read – and to handle the menacing overseer. But when the working conditions begin to affect her friends' health, she has to make a choice. Will she speak up for better working conditions and risk her job – and her dream? Or will she stay quiet until it is perhaps too late? [The Publisher - Penguin]

A complete synopsis and other helpful reviews can be found online at such sites as the following: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyddie>

## Author Biography

*Katherine Paterson*

Katherine Paterson was born in China to missionary parents in 1932. In 1937 the family was forced to flee China because of the war between China and Japan. Katherine's first language was Chinese, so when she returned to the United States she found it difficult to learn how to read and write in English. Katherine's first book was published in 1976, and the next year her highly-acclaimed children's novel, ***Bridge to Terabithia*** was published. This book, and some of her other novels feature difficult themes, such as the death of a loved one. She has twice won prestigious Newbery Awards for her novels ***Jacob Have I Loved*** and ***Bridge to Terabithia***.



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## Student Checklist

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment	Grade / Level	Comments

# Lyddie



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Name:

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## Chapters 1-2



### Before you read the chapters:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The protagonist of our novel is thirteen-year-old Lyddie Worthen, a very determined, hard-working girl whose life is turned upside down when she is abandoned by her parents and forced to survive on her own as best she can. 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.

adversary	frustration	accustomed	acknowledge
plaits	abundance	primitive	persisted

1. The \_\_\_\_\_-looking drawing appeared to have been made by a child.
2. Mrs. Baker would not even \_\_\_\_\_ anyone who asked a question at the meeting.
3. There was an \_\_\_\_\_ of grapes on the vines.
4. The \_\_\_\_\_ in her hair must have taken hours to do.
5. Couldn't you see the look of \_\_\_\_\_ on Mr. Gerbel's face?
6. Marjorie \_\_\_\_\_ until she finally completed the 3-D jigsaw puzzle.
7. I'm afraid that Captain Hook will prove to be a worthy \_\_\_\_\_ for Peter Pan.
8. Before long the children grew \_\_\_\_\_ to their stepmother's cooking.



# Questions



1. What is the **setting** of the story in Chapter One?


2. The novel opens with a serious crisis for Lyddie and her family. Describe briefly what danger faced the Worthen family and how it was resolved.


3. How did Lyddie demonstrate her courage during this incident?


4. What is your impression of Lyddie's mother in this chapter? Please explain how you formed this opinion.


5. What momentous decision does Lyddie's mother make in Chapter One?


6. Investigate: Lyddie's mother accuses her neighbors, the Stevenses, of being abolitionists. Given that the novel takes place in the United States during the 1840s, what is meant by **abolitionist**?


7. What bad news did Lyddie's mother's letter bring at the end of Chapter One?


8. What kindness did Mr. Stevens show Lyddie and Charles?


9. What did Luke offer to do for the Worthens?

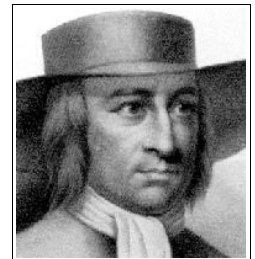

10. Describe how you would probably be feeling at the end of Chapter Two if you were Lyddie (or Charles).


### Language Activity



#### A. The Quakers

Lyddie's mother seems to look down her nose at the Stevens family because they are Quakers, and even Lyddie is a bit embarrassed to be seen with Luke. Using resources in your school library or on the Internet investigate the Quaker people and then record three interesting facts about them in the space below.



1	
2	
3	

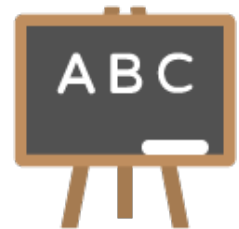
**B. Personification** is giving human qualities to something that is not human. Here's an example from Chapter One: ... *the tiny eyes [of the black bear] bright with hungry anticipation.*

Describe how the bear's eyes are personified in this example.


Create your own example of personification.


As you continue to read through the novel be on the lookout for other examples of this literary device. If you should find one, come back to this question and enter it below.


**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: ... *tears of laughter and relief ran down her thin cheeks.*



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

The roar of a black bear.	
A spring rain shower.	
Your own choice.	

## D. Simile

A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is, ... *he [the bear] was wearing it over his head like a black 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) fingernails being dragged across a chalkboard

--

b) a bowling ball landing in the gutter

--

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

--

## E. Homophones

Homophones are words which sound the same but have different meanings. An example is **air** and **heir**. These chapters feature words which are examples of homophones. In the chart below, create sentences which show the meaning of each set.

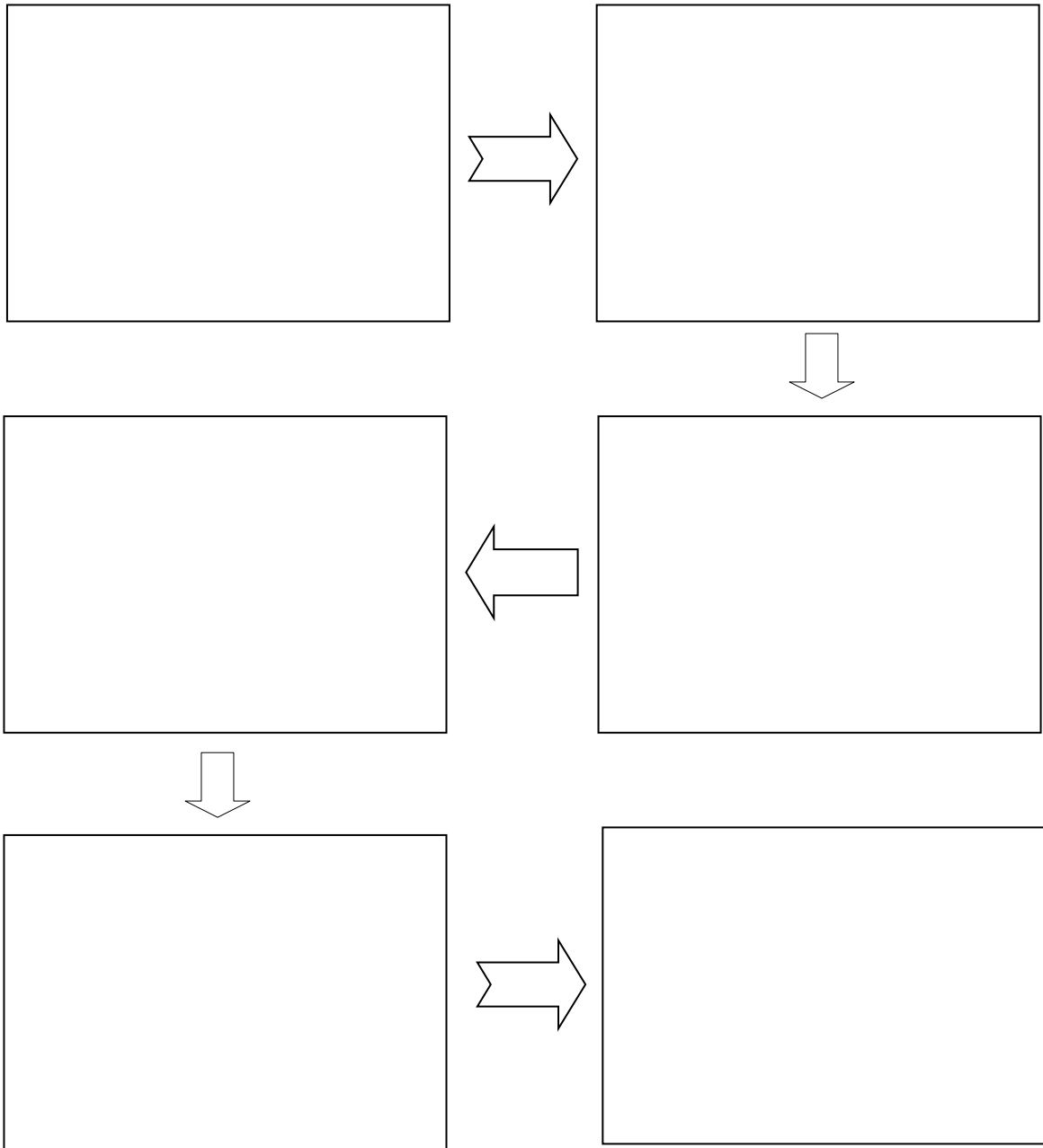


Example 1	
Homophones	Sentence
1. pain	
2. pane	

Example 2	
Homophones	Sentence
1. ways	
2. weighs	

## F. Sequence Chart

Choose what you consider to be the six most important events in these chapters. In each of the six boxes below list the six events that you have chosen, describing what happened and telling why you consider this to be an essential part of the story.



## Extension Activities



### 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 the first two chapters of our novel. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.



1	2
3	4
5	6