

Old Wolf



By

Avi

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.

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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 several chapters of *Old Wolf* and is comprised of five of the following 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 wolves, archery, the coexistence of species, the finality of real-world killing, courage, sacrifice, friendship and kindness, personal growth.

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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 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

In the computer-game world of *Bowhunter* – Casey's world – there are no deaths. Just kills.

In the wolf world – Nashoba's world – there have been no kills.

For this is March, the Starving Time in the Iron Mountain region of Colorado, when wolves and ravens alike are desperate for food. With the help of one raven, the miraculous Merla, Nashoba must lead his pack of eight to a next meal. The wolf hates being dependent on a mere bird – but this bird is wise beyond her years. Like Nashoba, she is old.

How a young teen crosses paths with them – for good and ill – comprises one of Avi's most suspenseful, dramatic tales – memorable for the pictures it paints in the mind as well as inspires in the art of long-time collaborator, artist Brian Floca.

[Summary courtesy of the publisher]

Author Biography

Avi

Avi is the author of more than seventy books for children and young adults, including the 2003 Newbery Medal winner, ***Crispin: The Cross of Lead***, and most recently ***Catch You Later, Traitor***. He has won two Newbery Honors and many other awards for his fiction. He lives with his wife in Colorado.

For more information, visit him online at Avi-Writer.com

[Biography courtesy of the publisher]



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Student Checklist

Student Name _____

Assignment	Grade / Level	Comments

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Name:

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Chapters 1-5



Before you read the chapters:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. *Old Wolf* actually features dual protagonists, Casey, whose world revolves around the computer game, *Bowhunter*, and an old, starving wolf, Nashoba. Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels you have read or movies you’ve seen. Who would you say is your *most favorite* character ever? What made you select this character?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

blatant	submission	acknowledgment	composure
ventured	precisely	obliged	simultaneous

1. Everyone enjoys receiving some kind of _____ for a job well done.
2. “That is _____ the answer I was looking for,” Mrs. Green said.
3. Exercising great caution, the wolf _____ out onto the ice.
4. There were _____ explosions in different parts of the mine.
5. A dog will demonstrate its _____ by rolling over onto its back.
6. “I’d be _____ if you would take this to the principal’s office,” Mr. Cho said.
7. The player’s foul was so _____ that everyone in the stadium witnessed it.
8. It is hard to maintain one’s _____ after being insulted.

Questions



1. Describe the **setting** of the story at the beginning of Chapter Two.

2. What crisis did Nashoba's wolf pack face in these chapters?

3. What was Garby's response to the crisis – and the result of his actions?

4. Do you think that Nashoba was wise in showing mercy to his rival? Please explain your response.

5. The author makes the following statement in Chapter Four: *Though wolves never attack humans...* Is this true? Research this question to determine the truth or untruth of this statement.

6. Why was Nashoba drawn to the cawing of the raven?

7. What was Casey's greatest desire?

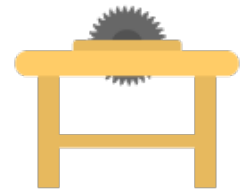
8. From the author's description of where Casey lived, do you think you would enjoy living there? Why or why not?

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 five chapters of *Old Wolf*.

Word	Anagram	Clue
snow		Has.
time		A tiny creature.
ache		Every one.
inches		Alcoves; nooks.
lower		A spiked revolving disk at the end of a spur.
wolves		There are 5 of these - and sometimes even 6.
poster		Abracadabra.

B. A Quatrain Poem Celebrates Wolves.

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 is the first four lines of the poem, *My Timber Wolf*, written by the famous poet, Atrocious Halitosis.

*A timber wolf once lived with me,
A savage beast was he.
He growled and bit and threw a fit,
And chased me up a tree.*



Various rhyming schemes make up a quatrain poem. As you can see, the above four lines have a rhyming scheme of **A - A - B - A**. Other rhyming schemes include: ABAB, AAAA, AABB, 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 five chapters of our novel (like **wolves**, or **courage**).

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: _____

Good to Know - The Ute People

A poster on Casey's wall shows a picture of *a keen-eyed Ute warrior, his bow drawn...*
The Ute people now live primarily in Utah and Colorado. The state of Utah, in fact, is named after these people. It is believed that the ancestors of the Utes migrated to this area more than one thousand years ago. Like other Plains Indian tribes the Utes were skilled warriors who specialized in horse-mounted combat.

C. Onomatopoeia

Chapter Four contains an important literary device called onomatopoeia. Onomatopoeia refers to words whose very sound is very close to the sound they are meant to depict. For example in chapter four the wolf hears the sound of a raven, *Caw! Caw! Caw!*



Think of three other example which demonstrate this literary device and list them below.

Example	Represents the Sound Of...

D. A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter Five is: *Images of the next few months spooled out in his mind like a movie trailer...*

What is being compared in this example?

--	--

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

a) a wolf tracking an elk

b) the sound of a raven

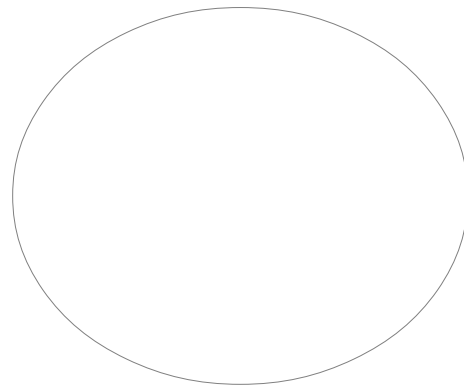
c) your choice

E. 5 Ws and an H.

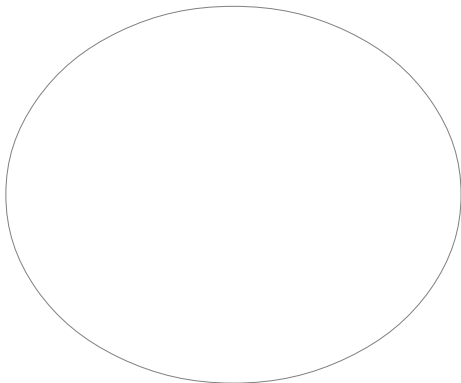
Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



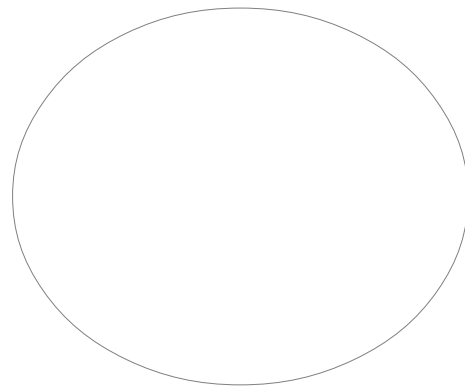
WHO?



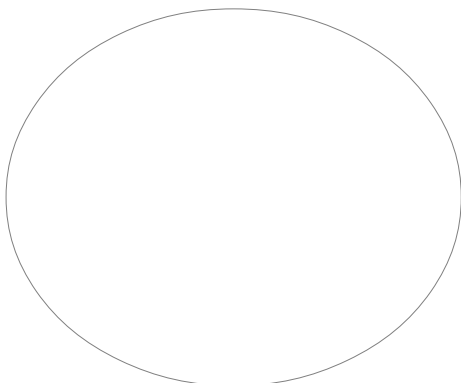
WHAT?



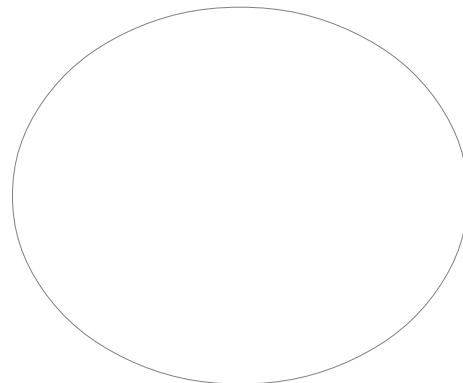
WHEN?



WHERE?



WHY?



HOW?

F. Caviar Words

The author of this novel is noted for his use of elegant, tasteful words. Someone once stated that some words have the sound of **caviar** (rich and elegant) and others are more are common (**peanut butter** words). With a colleague come up with 6 examples of each type of word. You may use any chapter of the novel to find these words.



Caviar Words	Peanut Butter Words

G. My 02¢ About Chapters 1-5.

What I Liked Best:

I Didn't Like The Part:

I Didn't Like It Because:

Extension Activity



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 five chapters of our novel. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.



1	2
3	4
5	6