

Paperboy



By

Vince Vawter

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 two chapters of *Paperboy* 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 speech impediments (stuttering), race relations, friendship and trust, loyalty, personal growth and responsibility, heroism and courage.

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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

Little Man throws the meanest fastball in town. But talking is a whole different ball game. He can barely say a word without stuttering – not even his own name. So when he takes over his best friend's paper route for the month of July, he's not exactly looking forward to interacting with the customers. But it's the neighborhood junkman, a bully and thief, who stirs up real trouble in Little Man's life. [Courtesy of the Publisher]

"Reminiscent of *To Kill a Mockingbird*" – Booklist

"An unforgettable boy and his unforgettable story. I loved it." - Rob Buyea, author of *Because of Mr. Terupt* and *Mr. Terupt Falls Again*

"A memorable coming-of-age novel." —**School Library Journal**

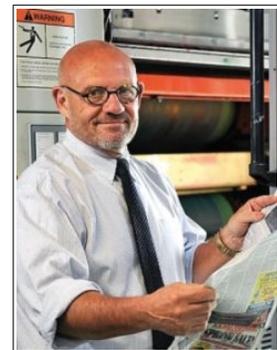
Author Biography

Vince Vawter

Vince Vawter, a native of Memphis, retired after a forty-year career in newspapers, most recently as the president and publisher of the *Evansville Courier and Press* in Indiana. He lives with his wife in Louisville, Tennessee, on a small farm in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains.

Paperboy received the Newbery Honor Book in 2014.

[Biography courtesy of the publisher]



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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 main character of *Paperboy* is Little Man, an eleven-year-old boy with a serious stutter which is complicating his life like you wouldn't believe. 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.

humongous	blasphemy	concrete	rehearse
decent	substitute	concentrate	schedule

1. Little Man really had to settle his mind and _____ before tackling a difficult word.
2. We are going to _____ our parts in the play at recess time.
3. We had a _____ teacher for the afternoon.
4. Does anybody here have a copy of the bus _____?
5. The boys found a _____ grandfather frog down by the pond.
6. Angela was very glad she was wearing a bicycle helmet when she took a spill onto the _____ sidewalk.
7. Our neighbor was so upset he uttered a loud _____ for all to hear.
8. That was mighty _____ of Charlie to loan you his baseball glove.

Questions



1. What is the **setting** of the story?

2. What strategy is mentioned in Chapter One which helps Little Man say a difficult word?

3. What clue is there in the story which indicates that Little Man's family is fairly well-off?

4. When it came to playing ball, Little Man's best friend was _____.

5. To practice his speech drills Little Man decided to say a hard word just before he threw a paper on a porch. True or False

6. Little Man soon begins to suspect that Mrs. Worthington has a serious problem. Predict what you think this problem might be.

7. How was Mrs. Worthington's behavior troubling to Little Man?

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 two chapters of *Paperboy*.

Word	Anagram	Clue
finger		Edge.
breath		One who enjoys the tub.
spread		Curtains.
clean		A small spear.
parts		Snares.
throw		Value.
nose		Vast periods of time.

Now find two additional words from the first two chapters which have interesting anagrams to see if you can stump a classmate.

Word	Anagram	Clue

Good to Know ~ Memphis, Tennessee

The setting of the novel is in **Memphis, Tennessee** in 1959. With a current population of over 650,000 people it is the largest city in Tennessee and the largest city on the Mississippi River. It was first settled over a thousand years ago by people of the Mississippian Culture. European explorers arrived in the 16th Century. Sadly, during the early 1800s the city became a major slave market. In the 20th Century, Memphis developed into the world's largest spot cotton market and the world's largest hardwood lumber market. Many musicians including Aretha Franklin, Johnny Cash and Elvis Presley got their start in Memphis.



B. Even Shakespeare liked to write Quatrain Poems.

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 famous quatrain was written by the great writer, William Shakespeare, and is taken from *Sonnet 18*.

*Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date.*



Various rhyming schemes make up a quatrain poem. As you can see, the above four lines have a rhyming scheme of **A - B - A - B**. Other rhyming schemes include: AABB, AAAA, AABA, ABBA, ABBA, 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 two chapters of our novel.

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: _____

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 Two: ... *made the ice cubes clink.*



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

The call of a blue jay.	
A beautiful sunset.	
Your choice.	

D. A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is: *The one (knock) that sounds like Shave and a Haircut Two Bits.*

What is being compared in this example?

--	--

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

a) a hard-thrown baseball

b) the sound of a race car

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 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

D. My 02¢ About Chapters 1-2.

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

1	2
3	4
5	6