

The Doll People



By

Ann M. Martin & Laura Godwin

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 1-2 chapters of *The Doll People* and is comprised of five 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 friendship, courage and the enterprising spirit, acceptance of the differences in others.

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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. Complete a Story Pyramid
5. Identify the climax of the novel.

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 journal entry.

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

Passed down from one generation to the next, the Doll family has lived in the same dollhouse, located in the same room of the Palmer family's house, for 100 years. While the world outside has changed, their own lives have not with two significant exceptions. First, Auntie Sarah Doll suddenly and mysteriously disappeared 45 years ago when the Doll family belonged to Kate Palmer's grandmother. More recently, the modern, plastic Funcraft family has moved into Kate's little sister's room. By focusing on Annabelle's and Tiffany Funcraft's risky mission to find Auntie Sarah, the authors provide plenty of action and suspense, yet it is their skillfully crafted details about the dolls' personalities and daily routines that prove most memorable. Selznick's pencil illustrations cleverly capture the spark of life inhabiting the dolls' seemingly inanimate bodies. Doll lovers may well approach their imaginative play with renewed enthusiasm and a sense of wonder after reading this fun-filled adventure.

Synopsis courtesy of www.publishersweekly.com

Author Biography

Ann M. Martin/Laura Godwin

Ann Matthews Martin was born on August 12, 1955. She grew up in Princeton, New Jersey, with her parents and her younger sister, Jane. After graduating from Smith College, Ann became a teacher and then an editor of children's books. She's now a full-time writer.

Ann has always enjoyed writing. Even before she was old enough to write, she would dictate stories to her mother to write down for her. Some of her favorite authors at that time were Lewis Carroll, Astrid Lindgren, and Roald Dahl. Her favorite thing to do is to make clothes for children.

Laura Godwin grew up in Alberta, Canada. She has written many well-loved books for children, including *Barnyard Prayers*, *Little White Dog*, and co-authored *The Doll People*, *The Meanest Doll in the World*, and *The Runaway Dolls*.



Biographies courtesy of Ann's Website: www.scholastic.com/annmartin/about/
And <http://authors.simonandschuster.com/Laura-Godwin/1685185>

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Name: _____

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Prologue & Chapter 1



Before you read the chapters:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The main character of *The Doll People* is Annabelle Doll, an eight-year-old doll who has actually been living in the same dollhouse, with the same family for one hundred years! Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels you have read or movies you’ve seen. What do you think made this character so unforgettable?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

hymn	sheaves	compartment	specific
scurry	parlor	prevented	glimpse

1. The security guard _____ Jason from entering the abandoned factory.
2. My favorite _____ is called *Come Thou Fount*.
3. No one knew of the secret _____ until Annabelle discovered it by accident.
4. The children grinned broadly as they watched the mouse _____ across the floor.
5. “Can you please be more _____?” Mrs. Gray said impatiently.
6. The maids all gathered in the _____ for a brief meeting after dinner.
7. We watched the farmer bringing the _____ of wheat into the barn.
8. It was impossible to even catch a _____ of the President when he passed by.

Questions



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

2. What was the most dramatic thing that had happened to Annabelle and the characters of the dollhouse during the last 45 years?

3. A **cliffhanger** is defined as the ending of a chapter which leaves the audience in suspense. How does the Prologue end in a cliffhanger?

4. Seven Dolls now occupy the dollhouse. What are their names?

1		2		3		4	
5		6		7			

5. Who are the dolls afraid of? _____

6. What did the Doll family have to do whenever one of the Palmers were nearby?

7. Why were the Dolls stuck singing only hymns and Great Hits of the Sixties?

8. Why do you think Annabelle was hoping to uncover a secret which Auntie Sarah may have written in her journal?

9. Living the life of a doll (even one that is alive) would have its advantages and disadvantages. Think of one advantage to being a member of the Doll family – and one thing that wouldn't be so great!

Advantage	
Disadvantage	

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 are found in the Chapter 1.

Word	Anagram	Clue
time		A thing or object.
words		An ancient weapon.
pages		Stares rudely.
life		A carpenter's tool
spider		Groups of lions.
staring		Rankings.
lips		Take a tumble.

B. A Poem About a Doll.

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 entitled **Charlotte Anne**, was written by the renowned poet, Atrocious Halitosis.

*When I was young I had a doll,
I called her Charlotte Anne.
She learned to talk, she learned to crawl,
She even learned to stand.*



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, 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 chapter 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. A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is: ... dozens of pages as thin as onion skin....

What is being compared in this example?

--	--

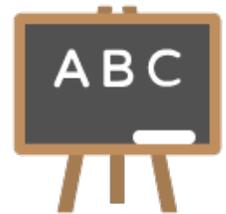
Invent your own **similes** comparing the following items with something from your own imagination:

a) the sound of Grandpa snoring

b) a butterfly in flight

c) your choice

D. Many authors enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here is an example from the Prologue: *T rue, tiny things had been added...*



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

A campfire.	
An old tomcat.	
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 her 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 Chapter 1.

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



1	2
3	4
5	6