

The Fourteenth Goldfish



By

Jennifer L. Holm

A Novel Study
by Joel Michel Reed

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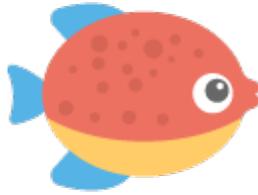


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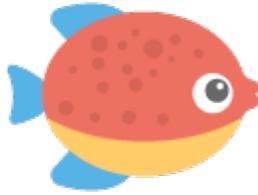
About the author: Joel Reed has over 70 published novel studies and is the author of four novels. For information on his work and literature, please visit www.reednovelstudies.com

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Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each section of the novel study focuses on 4 or 5 chapters and is comprised of five of the following different activities:

- Before You Read
- Vocabulary Building
- Comprehension Questions
- Language Activities
- Extension Activities

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.**

A principal expectation of the unit is that students will develop their skills in reading, writing, listening and oral communication, as well as in reasoning and critical thinking. Students will also be expected to provide clear answers to questions and well-constructed explanations. It is critical as well that students be able to relate events and the feelings of characters to their own lives and experiences and describe their own interpretation of a particular passage.

A strength of the unit is that students can work on the activities at their own pace. Every activity need not be completed by all students. A **portfolio cover** is included (p.7) so that students may organize their work and keep it all in one place. A **Student Checklist** is also included (p.6) so that a record of completed work may be recorded.

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List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/antonyms
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *foreshadowing*.
7. Identify *personification*
8. Use of singular / plural nouns
9. Listing compound words
10. Identifying parts of speech
11. Determining alphabetical order
12. Listing homonyms
13. Identify/create *similes*
14. Identify *anagrams*

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. Identify *cliffhangers*
4. Identify the climax of the novel.

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Complete a character comparison
3. Relating personal experiences

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Write a report on your favorite author.
5. Write a description of personal feelings
6. Write a book review
7. Complete an Observation Sheet

Art Activities

1. Design a storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Casting a feature film
4. Design a cover for the novel
5. Create a comic strip
6. Experimenting with French cuisine.

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Synopsis

Ellie has never liked change. She misses fifth grade. She misses her old best friend. She even misses her dearly departed goldfish. Then one day a strange boy shows up. He's bossy. He's cranky. And weirdly enough ... he looks a lot like Ellie's grandfather, a scientist who's always been slightly obsessed with immortality. Could this gawky teenager really be Grandpa Melvin? Has he finally found the secret to eternal youth?

A complete synopsis and other helpful reviews can be found on the following website:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jennifer_L._Holm

Author Biography

Jennifer L. Holm

Jennifer Holm, born in 1968, in California was raised in Audubon, Pennsylvania with her four brothers. Jennifer's great-grandmother emigrated from the Bahamas to Key West in 1897. After graduating from Dickinson College Jennifer worked in television and later wrote her first novel, ***Our Only May Amelia***, the story of a 12-year-old girl living in the late 19th century, inspired by a diary written by her great aunt. Another of her books, ***Penny from Heaven*** was also a Newbery Honor Book. As well, she is the author of several other highly praised books, including the ***Babymouse and Squish*** series, which she collaborates on with her brother Matthew Holm. Jennifer lives in California with her husband and two children. You can visit her website at jenniferholm.com. [Adapted from the Publisher]



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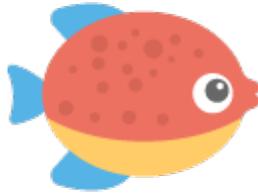


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Name: _____

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Chapters 1-4



Before you read the chapter:

The antagonist in most novels features a character who is recognized as the “bad guy”. What do you think makes for an especially interesting antagonist?



Vocabulary:

Draw a straight line to connect the vocabulary word to its definition. Remember to use a straight edge (like a ruler).

1. Indignant
2. Regeneration
3. Exasperated
4. Obvious
5. Senescence
6. Reluctant
7. Exchange
8. Competition
9. Lecture
10. Passionate

- A. Easily perceived or understood
- B. Unwilling and hesitant; disinclined.
- C. The formation of new animal or plant tissue.
- D. Individuals who are attempting a similar goal.
- E. Irritate intensely; infuriate.
- F. An educational talk to an audience
- G. An act of giving one thing and receiving another.
- H. The process of deterioration with age.
- I. Having or showing strong feelings or beliefs.
- J. Feeling or showing anger or annoyance at what is perceived as unfair treatment

Questions



1. Describe the **setting** of the story as Chapter One begins.

b. What three things did Starlily teach her preschool class?

2. What did Ellie ask for when she flushed her thirteenth goldfish down the toilet?

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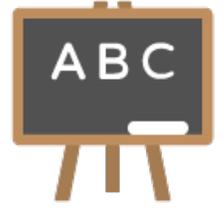
3. What does Ellie's mother want her to pursue as a career, and why?

4. Why did Ellie's mother and grandfather have such a strained relationship?

5. Do you think it's possible to reverse the aging process? Why or why not?

Language Activities

A. Many authors seem to enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here's an example of an alliteration: "... **g**rouching, **g**rouching, **g**rumbling, **g**ripping about something or other."



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

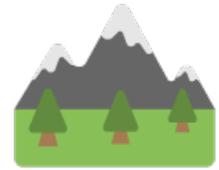
A goldfish swimming.	
Children playing at a park.	
One from your own imagination.	

B. Reassemble the word parts below into ten compound words found in our novel.

back	gold	under	class	grand
after	house	ward	crab	fish
mates	parent	yard	thought	robe
grass	room	hold	stand	bath

1		6	
2		7	
3		8	
4		9	
5		10	

C. Chapter Three contained an important literary devices called a **cliffhanger**. A cliffhanger usually occurs at the end of a chapter when the author leaves the reader in suspense. How is this true in Chapter Three? Why do you think the author ended the chapter this way?



D. Pick A Career, Any Career!

There is a countless variety of careers found across the world. Here's a list of several interesting career choices; doctor, nurse, engineer, museum curator, police officer, fire-fighter, teacher, receptionist, carpenter, electrician, musician, dentist, artist, computer programmer, and even an actor is considered to be a potential career!



Your task is to choose a potential career based on your own talents and interests, and then describe the reasons for your choice, as well as what further studies you will need to focus on in order to make this dream become a reality.

Career Choice:
Reasons For Choice:
What I Need To Study:

Extension Activity

Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can describe one scene – or the entire novel.

Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the first four chapters of *The Fourteenth Goldfish*. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.



1	2
3	4
5	6