

The Wolves of Willoughby Chase



By

Joan Aiken

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed

The Wolves of Willoughby Chase

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Table of Contents

Suggestions and Expectations	3
List of Skills	4
Synopsis / Author Biography	5
Student Checklist	6
Reproducible Student Booklet	7
Answer Key	77

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 one chapter of *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* and is comprised 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 family and friendship, loyalty, personal growth, hypocrisy, child abuse and learning to accept life's difficulties.

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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

'The ship on which your mamma and papa set sail has been sunk off the coast of Spain. You are an orphan, Miss Green, like your cousin, and from now on it is I who have sole say in your affairs. I am your guardian.'

Even the wolves that surround the great house of Willoughby Chase are not as cruel and merciless as the evil Miss Slighcarp. Bonnie and Sylvia must use all their wits to survive.

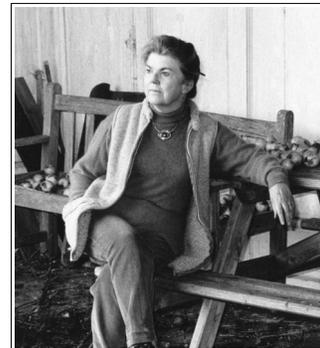
The first title in the now classic *Willoughby Chase* saga is set in 1832 in a period of English history that never happened. King James III is on the throne and a newly opened Channel Tunnel gives access to ravaging wolves... [The Publisher]

One genuine small masterpiece. Time Magazine.

Author Biography

Joan Aiken

Aiken was born in Rye, Sussex in 1924. Her father, Conrad Aiken was a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet and both her brother and sister were also accomplished writers. Joan Aiken wrote more than 100 books including more than a dozen collections of fantasy stories, plays and poems. She was a lifelong fan of ghost stories. Aiken was married to the landscape painter and teacher, Julius Goldstein. They had two children and divided their time between Sussex, England and New York. Joan Aiken died in 2004 at the age of 79.



The Wolves of Willoughby Chase



By Joan Aiken

Name: _____

The Wolves of Willoughby Chase

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Chapter 1



Before you read the chapter:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The main character of *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* is Bonnie, a young girl born into a rich family, who will find her fortunes turned upside down as events unfold. 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 intriguing and memorable **protagonist**?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

indignation	inevitable	impetuosity	indulgence
dignified	deportment	reverence	commodious

1. It seemed _____ that sooner or later he would win a game of chess.
2. The family always treated the old lady with a high degree of _____.
3. The spoiled little rich girl received every _____ the family could bestow on her.
4. The prince carried himself in a most _____ manner.
5. She opened the door revealing a _____ set of rooms.
6. The butler's _____ from being ignored was soon felt by everyone present.
7. Charlie's _____ was always getting him into trouble.
8. The governess will attempt to improve her ward's _____ so that she might be received into polite company.

Questions



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

2. Whose arrival was Bonnie eagerly expecting at the beginning of this chapter?

3. What was your first impression of Miss Slighcarp? On what evidence did you base this?

4. Describe the physical altercation which occurred between Bonnie and Miss Slighcarp. What does this incident reveal about Bonnie's personality/character?

5. What responsibilities did Miss Slighcarp assume at Willoughby Chase?

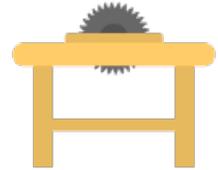
6. What did Sir Willoughby find mysterious about Miss Slighcarp's arrival? What was her explanation?

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 chapter of *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase*.

Word	Anagram	Clue
great		Price something once more.
shovel		Small, squalid buildings.
golden		Yearned.
snow		Possesses.
slender		Banks.
wrestle		Bake under the noonday sun.
secret		Builds.

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

Word	Anagram	Clue

Good to Know ~ Timber Wolves (Fascinating Facts)

Wolves are the largest members of the dog family, which also includes coyotes and dingos. There are approximately 150,000 wolves in the world today. Did you know that a hungry wolf can eat 20 pounds of meat at a single meal, which is akin to a human eating 100 hamburgers. Male and female wolves that mate usually stay together for life. Under certain conditions a wolf's howl can be heard six miles away. Wolves do not make good guard dogs as they are naturally afraid of the unfamiliar and will hide from visitors.



B. Quatrain Poems about 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 was written by the famous poet, Atrocious Halitosis. It is called, ***Where Wolves Walk***.

*The timber wolf's a furry chap,
He's got sharp teeth and claws to match.
He hunts and prowls amid the trees,
And goes wherever he may please.*



Various rhyming schemes make up a quatrain poem. As you can see, the above four lines have a rhyming scheme of **A - A - B - B**. Other rhyming schemes include: ABAB, 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 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. Personification is giving human qualities to something that is not human. The following example is taken from Chapter 1: ... *the sombre sighing of the wind*...

Describe how the wind is 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.

D. 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: *It would have taken me a wearly while to walk...*



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

A wolf's howl.	
A blizzard.	
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. My 02¢ About Chapter 1.

What I Liked Best:

I Didn't Like The Part:

I Didn't Like It Because:

G. 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

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