

The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar



By
Roald Dahl

A Novel Study
by Nat and Joel Reed

The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar

By Roald Dahl



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About the Author: Nat Reed, a member of the teaching profession for more than 35 years, served as a full-time instructor at Trent University's Teacher Education Program for nine years. For more information on his work and literature, please visit reednovelstudies.com.

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The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar

By Roald Dahl



Suggestions and Expectations

Each chapter of the novel study is comprised of four distinct sections:

1. Before You Read
2. Vocabulary Building
3. Comprehension Questions
4. Language and Extension Activities

A **portfolio cover** (page 7) as well as a **Checklist** (page 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.**

There are many themes to be explored among the six short stories and one novella. Themes explored in the novella, *The Wonder Story of Henry Sugar*, includes: greed, selfishness, the power of mental discipline, and the transformative power of empathy.

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List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homophones
3. Identifying/creating *personification*
4. Identify *similes*
5. Identify *anagrams*
6. Listing compound words
7. Identifying parts of speech
8. Identify *syllables*

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Five W's and an H Chart
3. Create a synopsis
4. Identify the climax of the novel

Character Activities

1. Compare characters
2. Identify the protagonist
3. Relating personal experience

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Create a poem
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Write a description of personal feelings
6. Write a book review
7. Create a journal entry
8. Opinion writing

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a movie poster
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Create a comic strip

The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar

By *Roald Dahl*



Synopsis

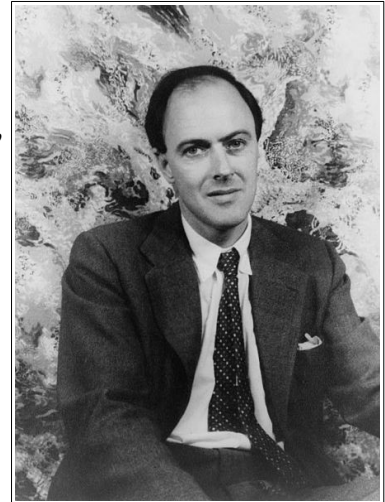
If you could see with your eyes closed . . . Would you use your power for good or for personal gain? That's what Henry has to decide in "The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar", one of the seven short stories in this extraordinary collection. A giant turtle and a very special boy who can talk to animals, a cunning hitchhiker and the curious driver who picks him up, and a very lucky plowman who finds a fabulous fortune but loses a golden opportunity, are only a few of the characters you'll meet. A clever mix of fact and fiction, this collection also includes the story of how master storyteller Roald Dahl became a writer (and a wealth of tips for aspiring authors). With Roald Dahl, you can never be sure where reality ends and fantasy begins. (Courtesy of the Publisher)

Author Biography

Roald Dahl

Few authors of children's books have been as prolific or successful as **Roald Dahl** (1916-1990). His novels have been read and enjoyed by countless children the world over and include such classics as *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Danny the Champion of the World*, *James and the Giant Peach* and *Matilda*.

Born to Norwegian immigrants, Roald Dahl hailed from Llandaff, Wales. Despite losing his father when he was only four, Roald claimed to have had a most happy and eventful childhood. Dahl was married to the famous actress, **Patricia Neal**. Roald began his writing career as a short story writer, and didn't pen his first children's novel until 1961 – *James and Giant Peach*. This was followed by several bestsellers. Roald Dahl passed away in 1990 at the age of 74.



The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar



By Roald Dahl

Name: _____

The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar

By Roald Dahl

The Boy Who Talked With Animals



Before you read this section:

It is important for an author to create an interesting **protagonist** (main character) for any work of fiction. *The Boy Who Talked With Animals* features a very unusual young boy, David, who lives near a luxury seaside resort on the island of Jamaica. Think back on some of the more interesting main characters you have met in previous stories you've read. What do think makes for an intriguing character that really keeps the reader's attention?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

bilious	dignified	patronizing	lethal
sedately	impassive	hangdog	restrain

1. "Cool it, laddie," said a hairy-chest in a _____ voice.
2. The old woman moved _____ across the beach and waded into the water.
3. They had a slightly _____ air of people who were caught doing something shameful.
4. Their shirts were _____ with every clashing color you could think of.
5. The two policemen remained _____. They were used to excitable people.
6. The colonel was a _____ gentlemen who looked down his nose at others.
7. The fishermen failed to _____ the turtle from going back to the sea.
8. A speargun is considered a very _____ instrument.

Questions



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

2. Research: It is thought by many (ChatGPT for instance) that the turtle featured in this story is a leatherback sea turtle, which is the largest of all turtles, reaching lengths of 2.7 meters (8 feet 10 inches) and a weight of up to 500 kg (1100 lbs). Using resources in your school library or on the Internet, find evidence to prove that the identity of the turtle is not a leatherback.

3. What do you think made the author think that even upside down, the turtle appeared to be *extraordinarily dignified*?

4. Why do you think the people seemed to be embarrassed when the boy put up such a fuss?

5. What do you think the author meant when he said that the boy *threw the word high*?

6. Give one reason why the manager did not want to release the turtle.

7. How did the father (subtly) finally get the manager to change his mind? What condition did the father place on his arrangement with the fishermen?

8. Describe the rather surprise ending to this short story. Did you find it satisfying? Why or why not?

Language Activities



A. This story takes place on the Caribbean island of **Jamaica**, a favorite holiday destination for many people from the United States, Canada and Europe. Jamaica is the fourth largest island in the Caribbean and actually sits on the top of a great underwater mountain. Did you know that cars in this country are driven on the left side of the road, or that the island is home to the largest butterflies in the world? Using resources in your school library or on the Internet, research three additional fascinating facts about this important country.



1	
2	
3	

B. A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. We find an example of a simile in this story: *They (two green lizards) circled one another like two boxers . . .* What is being compared in this example?

Invent your own **similes** comparing the following item(s) with something from your own imagination:

a) an old turtle

b) Your choice.

C. 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:



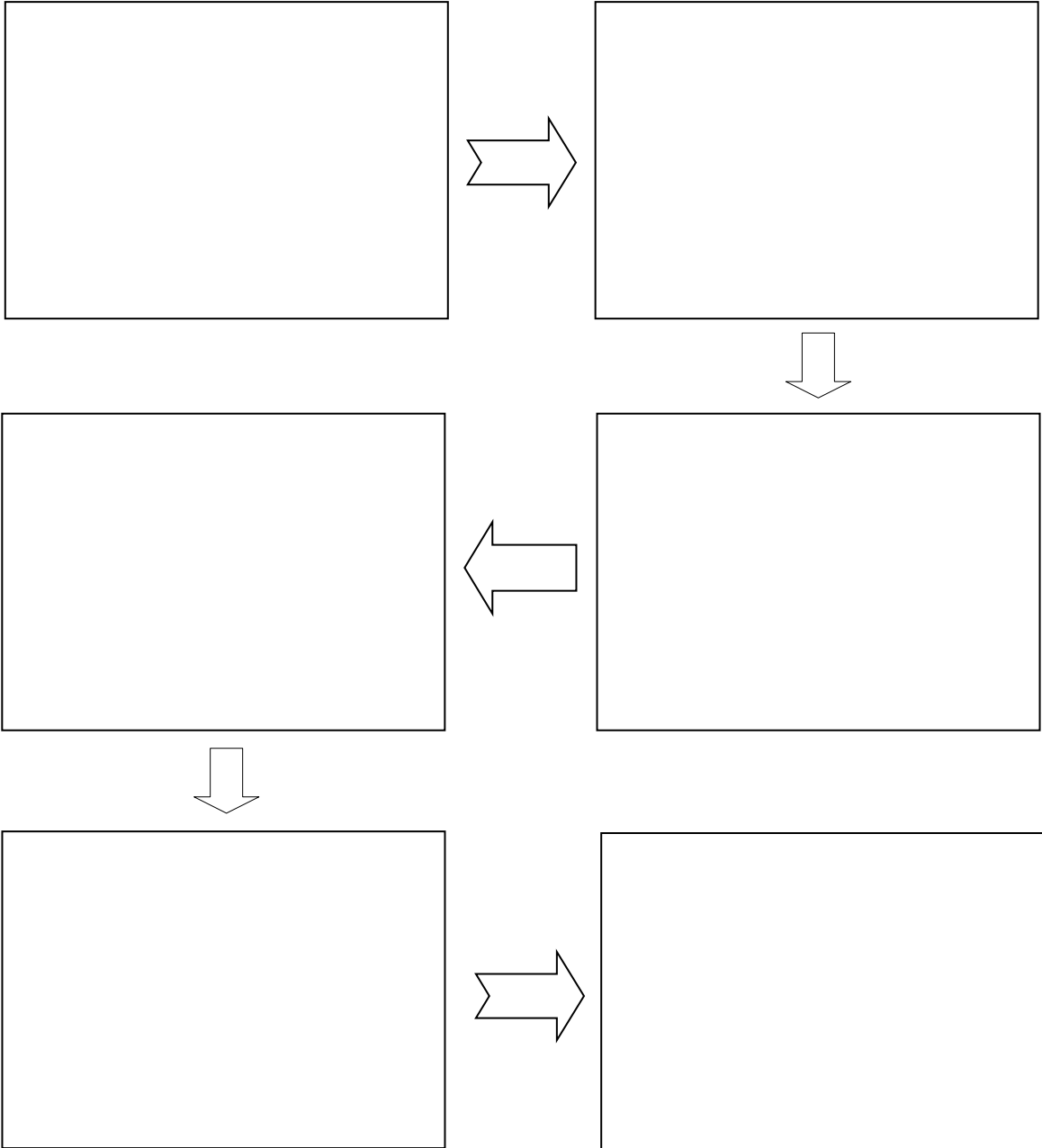
a) read the clue in the right-hand column.

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 this short story.

Word	Anagram	Clue
north		A prickly plant.
palm		A light for my feet.
start		Small cakes.
strode		Arranged into specific groups.
center		Happened a short time ago.
tender		Leased.

D. Sequence Chart

Choose what you consider to be the six most important events in this story. In each of the six boxes below list the six events that you have chosen, describing what happened and telling why you consider this to be an essential part of the plot.



Extension Activity



A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words

Use the three boxes to describe and illustrate the beginning, middle and end of this short story.



Beginning Picture:	Beginning:
Middle Picture	Middle:
Concluding Picture:	Concluding: