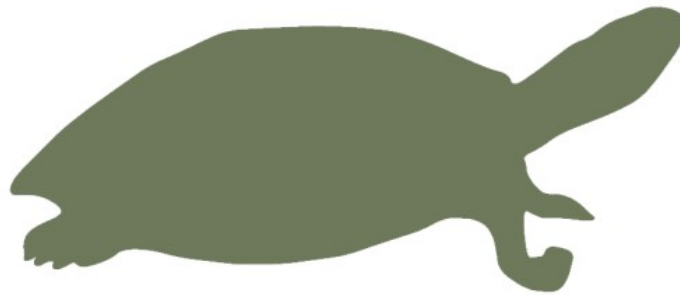


# Turtle In Paradise



By

Jennifer L. Holm

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](http://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 *Turtle in Paradise* 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 the Florida Keys, life during the Great Depression, perseverance and courage, personal growth, what family means to different people, loyalty, independence.

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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

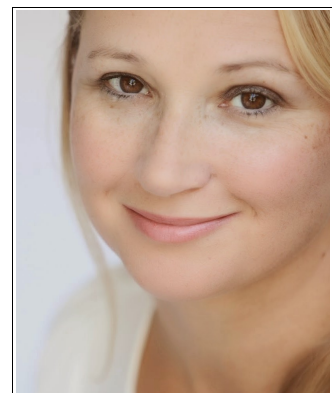
Life isn't like the movies, and eleven-year-old Turtle is no Shirley Temple. She's smart and tough and has seen enough of the world not to expect a Hollywood ending. After all, it's 1935, and jobs and money and sometimes even dreams are scarce. So when Turtle's mama gets a job housekeeping for a lady who doesn't like kids, Turtle says goodbye without a tear and heads off to Key West, Florida, to stay with relatives she's never met. Florida's nothing Turtle has ever seen. It's hot and strange, full of ragtag boy cousins, family secrets, and even buried treasure! Before she knows what's happening, Turtle finds herself coming out of the shell she's spent her life building, and as she does, her world opens up in the most unexpected ways. [The Publisher]

A complete synopsis and other helpful reviews can be found online at such sites as the following: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turtle\\_in\\_Paradise](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turtle_in_Paradise)

## Author Biography

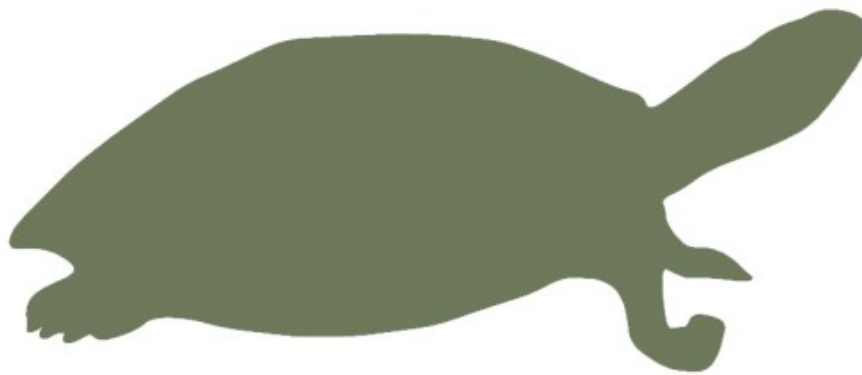
Jennifer L. Holm

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](http://jenniferholm.com). [Adapted from the Publisher]





# Turtle In Paradise



*By Jennifer L. Holm*

Name:

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## Chapters 1-2



### Before you read the chapter:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The protagonist of our novel is eleven-year-old Turtle, a very determined, out-spoken girl whose life is turned upside down when she is sent by her mother to live with relatives in Key West, Florida. 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.

encyclopedia	pomade	depression	serum
adaption	prohibit	furtively	grouses

1. The doctor determined that the \_\_\_\_\_ contained in the bottle was just water.
2. He always \_\_\_\_\_ and complains when asked to take out the garbage.
3. Kevin crept \_\_\_\_\_ through the dark room until he reached the doorway.
4. What did you think of the filmmaker’s \_\_\_\_\_ of the best-selling novel?
5. The death of a loved one will often send a person into a great \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Charlie worked the \_\_\_\_\_ into his hair, hoping that the girls would approve.
7. I'm afraid the \_\_\_\_\_ she is using for a reference is quite dated.
8. Will your parents \_\_\_\_\_ you from coming to the lake this weekend?



# Questions



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


2. Why do you think it would be a challenge for Mr. Edgit in sell hair serum?


3. Think of three appropriate adjectives which would describe Turtle's personality.

1.	2.	3.
----	----	----

4. What is your impression of Turtle's mother in this chapter? Please explain how you formed this opinion.


5. What cruel thing did the Curley boys do? How did Turtle's mother pay for what they did?


6. Why was Turtle going to live with her aunt?


7. In Chapter Two Turtle states: *I think the color of a person's eyes says a lot about them.* What might be a better way to tell something about a person?


8. Why was Aunt Minnie surprised to see Turtle?

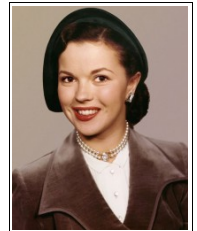

9. How do you think Aunt Minnie feels about Turtle's arrival?


## Language Activity



### A. Shirley Temple

The child actress, **Shirley Temple**, is mentioned from time to time throughout this novel. Using resources in your school library or the Internet, research three interesting facts about Shirley Temple's life and accomplishments.



1.	
2.	
3.	

**B. Personification** is giving human qualities to something that is not human. Here's an example from Chapter Two: ... *Where bonbons play, On the sunny beach of Peppermint Bay.*

Describe how the bonbons are 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.


**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 One: *Who's that you're talking to, Turtle?*



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

The croak of a bullfrog.	
A thunderstorm.	
Your own choice.	

**D.** A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is, *Everyone thinks children are sweet as Necco Wafers...* What two things are being compared in this example?

--	--

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

a) the sting of a bumble bee

--

b) the sound of a parachute opening

--

Look for a **simile** in the remaining chapters of the novel. If you find one return to this question and record it below.

--

## E. Homophones

This section includes a number of examples of words that have homophones. Examples of homophones include **horse** – **hoarse** and **way** – **weigh**. Two words are **homophones** if they have the same pronunciation but different meanings, origins, or spelling. Think of two more examples of homophones and use each in a sentence showing the meaning of each word quite clearly.



### Example 1

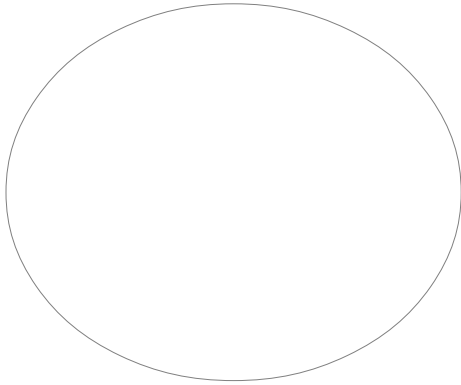
Homophones	Sentence
1	
2	

### Example 2

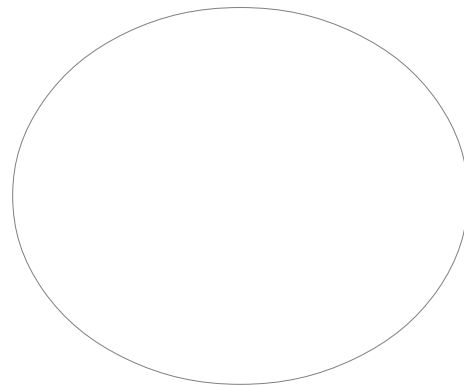
Homophones	Sentence
1	
2	

## F. 5 Ws and an H.

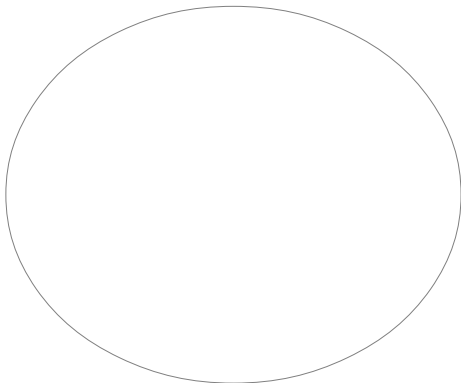
Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



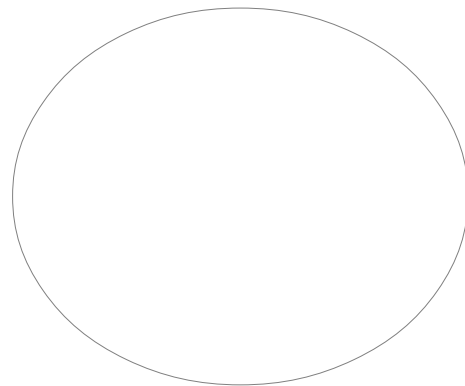
***WHO?***



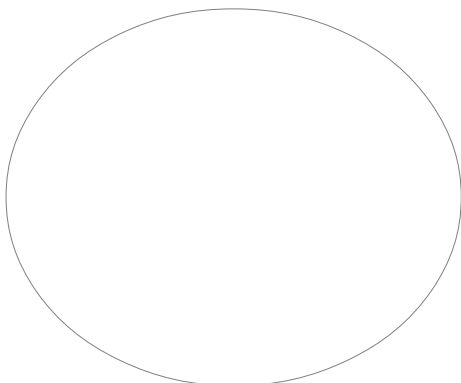
***WHAT?***



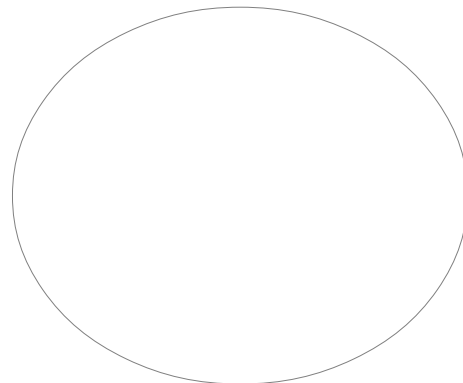
***WHEN?***



***WHERE?***



***WHY?***



***HOW?***

## G. An Acrostic Poem

There are many forms of poetry available to the aspiring poet other than the rhyming poem. An ACROSTIC poem is one example. In an acrostic poem the first letters of each line are aligned vertically to form a word. The word often is the subject of the poem. Here is an example written by the acclaimed poet, Atrocious Halitosis:

### The Firefly

Freaky-looking  
Itches me when I touch  
Restless at night  
Early or late  
Fearless  
Little  
Yellowfly



### The Acrostic Poem

Now create your own Acrostic Poem on a subject featured in this novel. Your poem must have at least four lines (and doesn't need to rhyme).

**Title:** .....


## Extension Activities



### 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