

Where The Mountain Meets The Moon



By

Grace Lin

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 four chapters of *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* and is comprised 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 fortune and fate, persistence, generosity and thankfulness.

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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 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

Young Minli lives in the Valley of Fruitless Mountain, where she and her parents spend their days working hard in the fields. At night, Minli listens to her father's tales about the Old Man of the Moon, who knows the answers to everything. Minli sets out on a quest to find the Old Man of the Moon - he will know how she can bring good fortune to her family. Along the way, she meets many magical friends, including a talking fish, a powerful king, and a dragon who can't fly! [Courtesy of The Publisher]

Where the Mountain Meets the Moon was a Newbery Honor Book

A complete synopsis can be found on the following website
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Where_the_Mountain_Meets_the_Moon

Author Biography Grace Lin

Lin's parents were Taiwanese immigrants to the United States and Lin grew up in New York. She later graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design. She currently resides in Somerville, Massachusetts and has a daughter born in May 2012. Her book *Where The Mountain Meets the Moon* was a recipient of a 2010 Newbery Honor Book mention. She also received an Honorable Mention for *Year of the Dog* in 2007 from the *Asian/Pacific American Awards for Literature. Year of the Dog.*



Biography courtesy of Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grace_Lin

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Name: _____

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Chapters 1-4



Before you read the chapters:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The main character of *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* is Minli, a young girl who lived in China many years ago. Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels you have read. What do you think makes for an especially interesting **protagonist**?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

meager	impulsive	reverence	indignant
anguish	envious	manipulation	enthralled

1. The queen was very proud of the _____ which the people paid to her.
2. Jonathan was most _____ when his uncle accused him of stealing.
3. Felicia was filled with _____ at the thought of being lost in the woods.
4. Casper was quite _____ of his sister when she received a bike for Christmas.
5. The beautiful actress left all of the servicemen _____ when she sang for them.
6. The peasant's _____ diet consisted mainly of beans and boiled water.
7. The wicked man's _____ of the villagers began years ago.
8. The hockey player's _____ action cost his team a goal.

Questions



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

2. The crop grown by the villagers was _____.

3. How was Minli different from the rest of the villagers?

4. What was your impression of the Jade Dragon? What caused you to form this impression?

5. Fruitless Mountain would remain bare until _____

6. What did the goldfish man promise to the one who purchased a bowl of goldfish?

7. Who did the Old Man of the Moon say that the magistrate's son would marry? What did the magistrate do to try to prevent this from happening? How was his plan ruined?

8. Where did the Old Man of the Moon live?

--

9. Why did Minli get up in the middle of the night? What prompted her to do this? How was she rewarded for her troubles?

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 four chapters of *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon*.

Word	Anagram	Clue
was		A carpenter's tool
dried		Do something over again.
smile		Fruits.
drop		Poke.
pearl		More ashen.
despair		Hoped.
earth		A vital organ.

Good to Know ~ Goldfish

A small member of the carp family, the goldfish was one of the earliest fish to be domesticated. It is thought that the goldfish was first domesticated in China more than one thousand years ago. Today it is one of the most commonly kept aquarium fish. They vary greatly in size and color, and can be found in various combinations of white, yellow, orange, red, brown and black.



B. A Poem About a Dragon.

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 *My Pet Dragon*, was written by the humorous poet, Atrocious Halitosis.

*A dragon makes a dandy pet
It don't shed and it don't sweat.
It lazes round the house all day
And doesn't have a lot to say.*



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 four chapters 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: ... *his black eyes sparkled like raindrops in the sun*....



What is being compared in this example?

--	--

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

a) the speed of a race horse

b) the beauty of the northern lights

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 are two such examples: from Chapter Two: ... *seeing her parents patiently working, backs bent...*

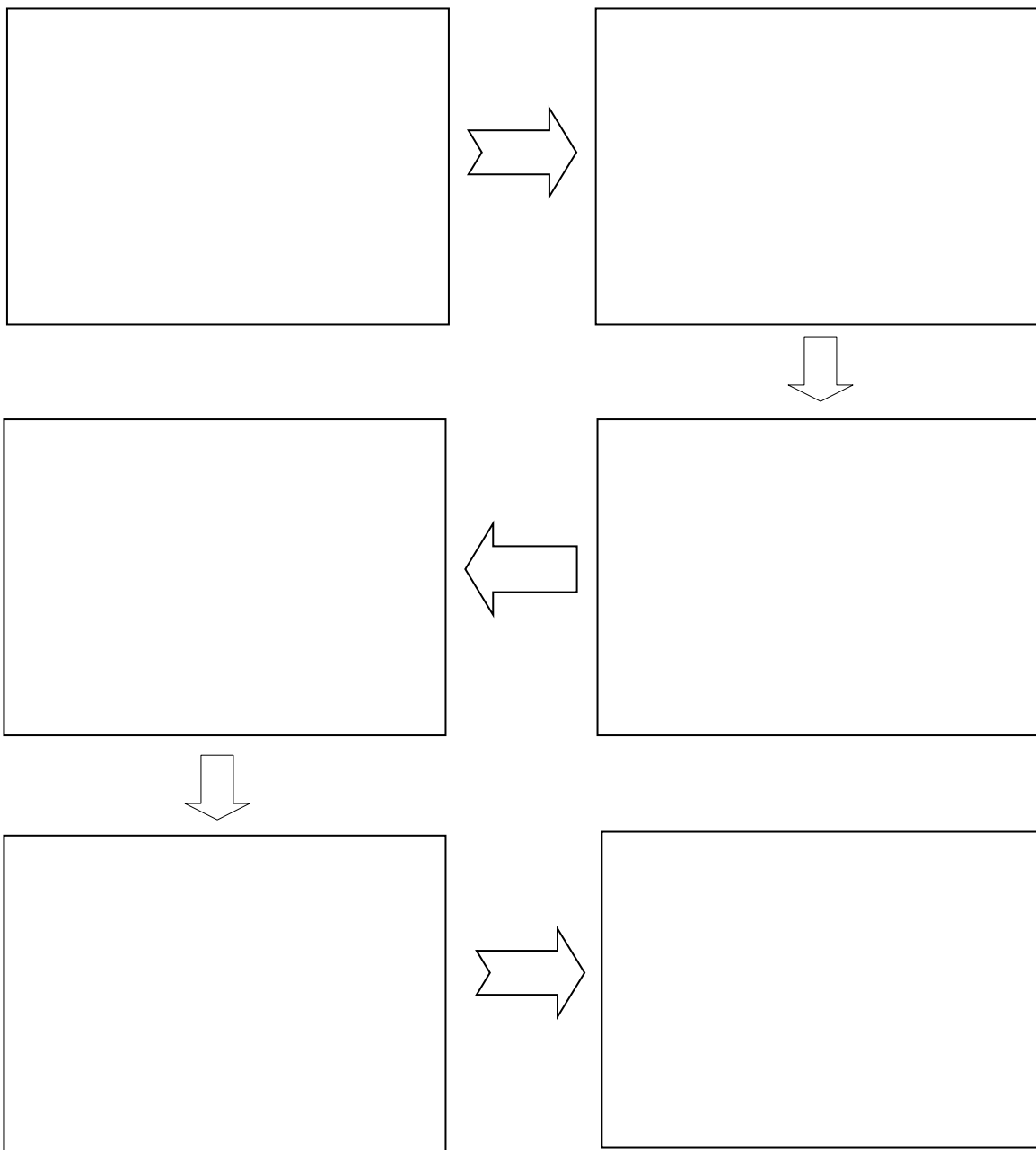


Using your imagination, create your own examples of **alliteration** from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of three words.

A dragon in flight.	
A barren mountain.	
Your choice.	

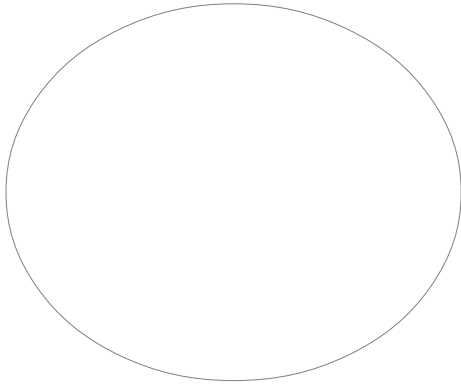
E. Sequence Chart

Choose what you consider to be the six most important events in these chapters. 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 story.

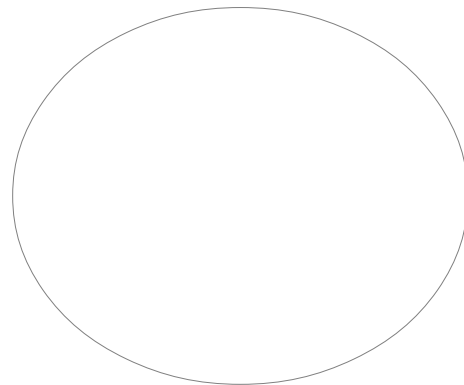


F. 5 Ws and an H.

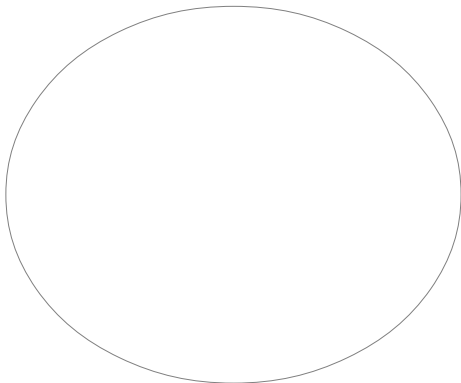
Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



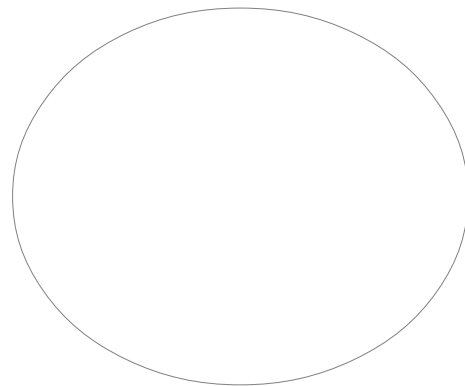
WHO?



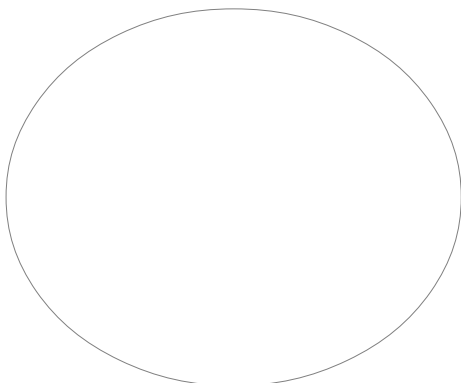
WHAT?



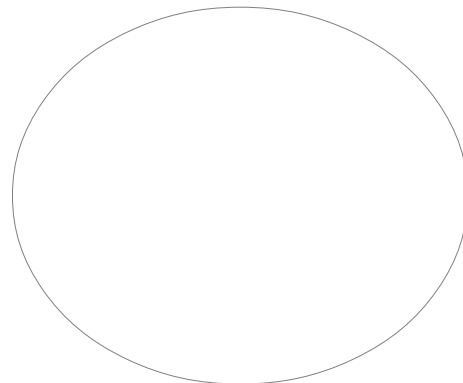
WHEN?



WHERE?



WHY?



HOW?

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



1	2
3	4
5	6