~ A Novel Study ~

Georges Marvelous Medicine

By Roald Dahl

A Novel Study
By
Nathanael Reed
# Table of Contents

Suggestions and Expectations ................................................................. 3

List of Skills .......................................................................................... 4

Synopsis / Author Biography ................................................................. 5

Student Checklist .................................................................................. 6

Reproducible Student Booklet .............................................................. 7

Answer Key ............................................................................................ 46

---

**About the author:** Nat Reed has been a member of the teaching profession for more than 30 years. He is presently a full-time instructor at Trent University in the Teacher Education Program.
George's Marvelous Medicine
By Roald Dahl

Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on one or two chapters of George’s Marvelous Medicine and is comprised of five different activities:

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

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.

Themes which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include growing up, perseverance when facing difficult circumstances, (dysfunctional) families and family relationships, putting right to a wrong.
George's Marvelous Medicine
By Roald Dahl

List of Skills

Vocabulary Development
1. Locating descriptive words / phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homonyms
3. Identifying / creating alliteration
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identifying foreshadowing
7. Identify personification
8. Use of singular / plural nouns
9. Listing compound words
10. Identifying parts of speech
11. Determining alphabetical order
12. Identification of root words
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. Complete Five W's Chart
4. Identify cliffhangers
5. Identify the climax of the novel.

Character Activities
1. Determine character traits
2. Relating personal experiences

Creative and Critical Thinking
1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Create a poem
5. Conduct an interview
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a book review
8. Complete an Observation Sheet

Art Activities
1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Create an Information Card
4. Design a cover for the novel
5. Create a comic strip
George's Marvelous Medicine

By Roald Dahl

Synopsis

George is alone in the house with Grandma. The most horrid, grizzly old grunion of a grandma ever. She needs something stronger than her usual medicine to cure her grouchiness. A special grandma medicine, a remedy for everything. And George knows just what to put into it. Grandma’s in for the surprise of her life - and so is George, when he sees the results of his mixture! (The Publisher)

A complete synopsis and other helpful reviews can be found on the following website: http://www.helium.com/items/829575-book-reviews-georges-marvellous-medicine-by-roald-dahl

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. Shortly before his death, the top five selling children’s books in Great Britain were all authored by Dahl.

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. Although not a particularly good student, Roald did excel at athletics.

Dahl was married to the famous actress, Patricia Neal, for many years and they had five children together. The couple were, however, divorced after thirty years of marriage. 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. In Great Britain the anniversary of Dahl’s birthday on 13 September has become widely celebrated as Roald Dahl Day.
George's Marvelous Medicine  
*By Roald Dahl*

Student Checklist

Student Name: ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Grade / Level</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
George's Marvelous Medicine

By Roald Dahl

Name: ______________________________
George's Marvelous Medicine
By Roald Dahl

Chapter 1 - Grandma

Before you read the chapter:

Living with one's grandmother can be a great experience for some children. Think of one thing which you think would be good about living with your grandmother.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Think of one thing which might not be advantageous about living with a grandparent.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>grunion</th>
<th>grousing</th>
<th>ridiculous</th>
<th>earwig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wondrous</td>
<td>sockets</td>
<td>wizardry</td>
<td>nippers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Jonathan was so startled when his brother jumped out of the closet that his eyes almost popped out of their _____________.

2. The _______________ is a small, silvery food fish found off the coast of California.

3. The crab used its little _______________ to inflict some pain on Jeremy's exposed thumb.

4. "I think it is absolutely _______________ that you can't find a buyer for your bike," Sara said disgustedly. _______
5. Mrs. Calamine is always _______________ about something.

6. I decided that after finding an ___________ in my soup, I would never eat at that restaurant again.

7. What Sydney Crosby can do with a hockey puck is sheer _______________.

8. The birth of a baby is considered a most ___________ event.

Questions

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

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

2. After reading this chapter, what four adjectives do you think would best describe George's grandma's personality?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

3. What opinion did George have of his grandmother? Support your answer with proof from the story.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

4. When was the only time that George's grandmother ordered him around? Why do you think this was the case?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
5. What was Grandma’s secret to ensuring that George stopped growing so fast?

6. What disturbing information did Grandma convey to George near the conclusion of this chapter? Why was this so upsetting to George?

Language Activity

A. The author seems to enjoy using alliteration – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. An example from this chapter is: “. . . grousing, groching, grumbling, griping about something or other.”

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The screech of a raven</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The roar of a piece of farm machinery (i.e. tractor)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From your imagination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. A simile is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is “. . . a small puckered-up mouth like a dog’s bottom.”

What two things are being compared in this example?

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

a) your view of a rainbow after a sun shower

b) a woman screaming after seeing a mouse

C. Positively Revolting!!

Grandma refers to a number of interesting creatures in this chapter in a very positive manner. They include slugs, beetles, earwigs and caterpillars. Your task is to make it possible for your classroom colleagues to become more familiar with one of these rather intriguing creatures. [With your teacher’s approval you may choose an alternative creature for this assignment, as long as it is equally disgusting.]

Create an information card featuring one of these creatures. Your card will resemble a sports card (i.e. baseball, hockey...) The front of the card will feature an appropriate picture and the back at least four fascinating facts you have researched from sources in your school library or on the Internet.
**Extension Activity**

**Storyboard**

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

Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the first chapter of *George's Marvelous Medicine* You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
George's Marvelous Medicine
By Roald Dahl

Chapter 2 & 3
The Marvelous Plan + George Begins to Make the Medicine

Before you read the chapter:

In the next chapters George decides to repay his grandma for her abuse and cruelty. The singer, Rosanne Cash, once said, "I choose not to give energy to the emotions of revenge or hatred . . ." Do you think it would be wise for George to follow this advice? Give a reason for your response.

______________________________

Vocabulary:

Many of the words in this Crossword Puzzle are from these two chapters. Use the words in the box to complete the puzzle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Down</th>
<th>Across</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A shade of red.</td>
<td>6. Grandma urged George to eat more of this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Don't sit.</td>
<td>10. Furry snack enjoyed by Grandma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A light haircut.</td>
<td>11. The novel's antagonist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Thrust suddenly.</td>
<td>17. The opposite of &quot;don't&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The maker of bread.</td>
<td>20. ___ you kidding?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Really impresses.</td>
<td>21. Grandma asked George to fetch her ___.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Huge!</td>
<td>22. Homonym of &quot;sew&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. George decided to give Grandma a ___ of his special medicine.</td>
<td>24. Short note.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. &quot;He was ___ small ___ a mouse.&quot;</td>
<td>25. Extraterrestrial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Someone or something that erases.</td>
<td>27. Grandma urged George to grow this way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Fib.</td>
<td>29. We.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Semester.</td>
<td>30. His ___ was marvelous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. George added extra hot ___ sauce.</td>
<td>36. Southwest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Windshield ___.</td>
<td>38. Speak to God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Grandma said that a big fat one is tasty.</td>
<td>39. A thinking organ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. The four directions.</td>
<td>41. George forgot this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. A mineral spring.</td>
<td>44. One ___ at a time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. An Italian poet.</td>
<td>46. Evil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Don't pull.</td>
<td>48. &quot;Don't eat this,&quot; Grandma said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Placed after the name of a married woman to indicate her maiden name.</td>
<td>49. Many of these were put into George's concoction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Disney's ___ Theme Park.</td>
<td>50. George also failed to bring Grandma this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Tiny insect.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. A Red road sign.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Plot.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. A shell that fails to explode.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Automobile.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questions

1. When brainstorming ideas of what he would like to do to Grandma, George originally comes up with three rather startling ideas. What were they?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Describe in detail the final plan that George came up with to fix his grandma.

3. What was the general rule that George had regarding what went into his medicine?

4. What prevented him from touching anything in the medicine cupboard?

5. What do you think were the two most startling things that George put into his medicine? Why?

6. Think of at least one potential "flaw" in George's scheme.
A. Chapter 3 (George Begins to Make the Medicine) contains an important literary device 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 3? Why do you think the author ended the chapter like this?

B. Choose ten words from these chapters with two or more **syllables**. Indicate the syllables by drawing a line between each syllable. **Example:** some / time.

_________________________  ______________________
_________________________  ______________________
_________________________  ______________________
_________________________  ______________________
_________________________  ______________________
_________________________  ______________________
The poem that George creates before concocting his magic medicine is superlatively creative. You now have the chance to alter George’s creation a wee bit. In each of the blanks from the first six lines enter an appropriate alternative to the one chosen by George. Try to make the finished product every bit as wonderful as George’s poem. A tall order, but you can do it!

“So give me a _____________ and a jumping _____________.

Give me two ______________ and ______________ three,

And a slimy _______________ from the sea,

And the poisonous ______________ of a bumblebee,

And the _____________ from the ______________ of the _____________ tree,

And the powdered ______________ of a ________________ knee.”