



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

Island of the Blue Dolphins

based on the book by
Scott O'Dell

Written by
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A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Scott O'Dell

O'DELL, Scott (1898-1989). Scott O'Dell was born on Terminal Island, a part of Los Angeles, California, on May 23, 1898. He claims L.A. was a frontier town then with more horses than automobiles and more jackrabbits than people. The very first sound he can remember was a wildcat scratching on the roof while he lay in bed. His father was a railroad man, so Scott moved around a lot as a child. Many of the places he lived show up as settings for his stories. He attended four different colleges and universities. He worked as a motion picture technical director and cameraman before becoming a newspaperman and an author.

Many of O'Dell's books are set in the past, but the issues dealt with are timeless. He felt writing historical fiction for children was very important work because according to him, "No educated person can live a complete life without a knowledge of where we came from." He claims he was didactic- he wanted to teach through his books. He says, "History has a direct bearing on children's lives."

His best known book is the Newbery Medal, *Island of the Blue Dolphins* (1961). While researching the history of California, O'Dell discovered an article about the Lost Woman of San Nicolas. This provided the inspiration for *Island of the Blue Dolphins*. It takes place on some islands that are much like those he lived on as a kid. He put many of his happy childhood memories in it: the look of the islands, the colors and sounds of the sea, and the wild creatures that lived there. He also wrote the book in anger at the hunters who invaded the mountains where he lived and slaughtered everything that crept or flew. This anger was also directed against himself, who at a young age, committed the same crimes against nature.

O'Dell felt that writing for children was more rewarding than writing for adults. He knew that if children like your book they respond for a long time with thousands of letters. It was this response that made the task of writing worth doing for this author. During his lifetime, Scott O'Dell received more than 2,000 letters a year from his young readers. When Scott wasn't writing, he liked to read and to work in the sun; gardening, planting trees, and fishing.

O'Dell published over two dozen books for children including: *The King's Fifth* (1967), *The Black Pearl* (1968), *Sing Down the Moon* (1971), *Zia* (1976), and *Black Star, Bright Dawn* (1988).

INTRODUCTION - *Island of the Blue Dolphins*

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, and language skills through exercises and activities related to *Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell. It includes twenty lessons supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to the factual basis of the novel discovered by Scott O'Dell. Following the introductory activity, students are given the materials they will be using during the unit.

The **reading assignments** are approximately twenty pages each; some are a little shorter while others are a little longer. Students have approximately 15 minutes of Pre-reading work to do prior to each reading assignment. This Pre-reading work involves reviewing the study questions for the assignment and doing some vocabulary work for ten or less vocabulary words they will encounter in their reading.

The **study guide questions** are fact-based questions; students can find the answers to these questions right in the text. These questions come in two formats: short answer or multiple choice. The best use of these materials is probably to use the short answer version of the questions as study guides for students (since answers will be more complete), and to use the multiple choice version for occasional quizzes. It might be a good idea to make transparencies of your answer keys for the overhead projector.

The **vocabulary work** is intended to enrich students' vocabularies as well as to aid in the students' understanding of the book. Prior to each reading assignment, students will complete a two-part worksheet for approximately ten or less vocabulary words in the upcoming reading assignment. Part I focuses on students' use of general knowledge and contextual clues by giving the sentence in which the word appears in the text. Students are then to write down what they think the words mean based on the words' usage. Part II nails down the definitions of the words by giving students dictionary definitions of the words and having students match the words to the correct definitions based on the words' contextual usage. Students should then have an understanding of the words when they meet them in the text.

After each reading assignment, students will go back and formulate answers for the study guide questions. Discussion of these questions serves as a **review** of the most important events and ideas presented in the reading assignments.

After students complete extra discussion questions, there is a **vocabulary review** lesson which pulls together all of the fragmented vocabulary lists for the reading assignments and gives students a review of all of the words they have studied.

Following the reading of the book, two lessons are devoted to the **extra discussion questions/writing assignments/activities**. These questions focus on interpretation, critical analysis and personal response, employing a variety of thinking skills and adding to the students' understanding of the novel. These questions are done as a **group activity**. Using the information they have acquired so far through individual work and class discussions, students get together to further examine the text and to brainstorm ideas relating to the themes of the novel.

The group activity is followed by two **reports and discussion/ activity** sessions in which the groups share their ideas about the book with the entire class; thus, the entire class gets exposed to many different ideas regarding the themes and events of the book.

There are three **writing assignments** in this unit, each with the purpose of informing, persuading, or having students express personal opinions. The first assignment gives students the opportunity to express personal opinion: students will keep a diary throughout the reading of the novel. The second assignment gives students the chance to persuade: students are to select their ideal vacation location and convince their parents it's the spot for the next family vacation. The third assignment is to inform: students select a topic of interest to them from the Extra Activities or More Activities section in Unit Resource Materials to research and summarize in a composition.

In addition, there is a **nonfiction reading assignment**. Students are required to read a piece of nonfiction related in some way to *Island of the Blue Dolphins*. In this case, it ties in with their Writing Assignment #3. After reading their nonfiction pieces, students will fill out a worksheet on which they answer questions regarding facts, interpretation, criticism, and personal opinions. During one class period, students make **oral presentations** about the nonfiction pieces they have read. This not only exposes all students to a wealth of information, it also gives students the opportunity to practice **public speaking**.

Writing Assignment #2 is followed by a **project** which students complete independently, outside of class. Students are to create a travel poster and brochure advertising their chosen vacation spot. Sharing of these will be done as part of the **reports and discussion / activity** sessions held at the end of the unit.

The **review lesson** pulls together all of the aspects of the unit. The teacher is given four or five choices of activities or games to use which all serve the same basic function of reviewing all of the information presented in the unit.

The **unit test** comes in two formats: all multiple choice-matching-true/false or with a mixture of matching, short answer, and composition. As a convenience, two different tests for each format have been included.

There are additional **support materials** included with this unit. The **extra activities packet** includes suggestions for an in-class library, crossword and word search puzzles related to the novel, and extra vocabulary worksheets. There is a list of **bulletin board ideas** which gives the teacher suggestions for bulletin boards to go along with this unit. In addition, there is a list of **extra class activities** the teacher could choose from to enhance the unit or as a substitution for an exercise the teacher might feel is inappropriate for his/her class. **Answer keys** are located directly after the **reproducible student materials** throughout the unit. The student materials may be reproduced for use in the teacher's classroom without infringement of copyrights. No other portion of this unit may be reproduced without the written consent of Teacher's Pet Publications, Inc.

UNIT OBJECTIVES *Island of the Blue Dolphins*

1. Through reading Scott O'Dell's *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, students will gain an appreciation of the need for companionship.
2. Students will determine traits necessary for survival.
3. Students will do research to become familiar with relevant physical, geographical, and cultural aspects of a Californian coastal island and its inhabitants.
4. Students will become familiar with and able to identify various forms of sea life and plants.
5. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical and personal.
6. Students will gain appreciation for and demonstrate proficiency in identifying and using figurative language.
7. Students will be given the opportunity to practice reading aloud and silently to improve their skills in each area.
8. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *Island of the Blue Dolphins* as they relate to the author's theme development.
9. Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the novel through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with the novel.
10. The writing assignments in this unit are geared to several purposes:
 - a. To have students demonstrate their abilities to inform, to persuade, or to express their own personal ideas
Note: Students will demonstrate ability to write effectively to inform by developing and organizing facts to convey information. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to persuade by selecting and organizing relevant information, establishing an argumentative purpose, and by designing an appropriate strategy for an identified audience. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to express personal ideas by selecting a form and its appropriate elements.
 - b. To check the students' reading comprehension
 - c. To make students think about the ideas presented by the novel

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET - *Island of the Blue Dolphins*

Date to be Assigned	Chapters	Completion Date
	Author's Note pp. 182-184 Chapters 1-3	
	Chapters 4-7	
	Chapters 8, 9	
	Chapters 10-12	
	Chapters 13-15	
	Chapters 16-18	
	Chapters 19-21	
	Chapters 22-25	
	Chapters 26-29	

UNIT OUTLINE - *Island of the Blue Dolphins*

1	2	3	4	5
Introduction Author's Note PVR Ch. 1-3	Study ? Ch. 1-3 Writing Assignment #1 PVR Ch. 4-7	Study ? Ch. 4-7 Conflict PVR Ch. 8,9	Study ? Ch. 8, 9 Prediction PVR Ch. 10-12	Study ? Ch. 10-12 Decision-making
6	7	8	9	10
PVR Ch. 13-15 Writing Assignment #2 Project	Study ? Ch. 13-15 PVR Ch. 16-18	Study ? Ch. 16-18 Survival	PVR Ch. 19-21 Writing Conference	Figurative Language
13	12	13	14	15
Study? Ch. 19-21 Companionship PVR Ch. 22-25	Study ?Ch. 22-25 PVR Ch. 26-29 Oral Reading Evaluation	Extra Discussion Questions	Extra Discussion Questions/ Activities	Writing Assignment #3
16	17	18	19	20
Project/Writing Assignment #2 Sharing	Nonfiction Reading Oral Presentation	Vocabulary Review	Review	Test

Key: P=Preview Study Questions V= Vocabulary Work R= Read

LESSON ONE

Objectives

1. To introduce *Island of the Blue Dolphins* unit
2. To give students some background information on *Island of the Blue Dolphins*
3. To distribute books and other related materials: study guides, reading assignments, etc.
4. To model effective oral reading skills by reading aloud Author's Note and Chapter 1.
5. To have students identify setting and point of view

Activity #1

Ask the class if anyone has ever been to California? Have them point out on a map where and tell about it. If anyone has been to any, this could lead into the discussion of missions on the coast of California. Be sure to point out the major cities of Los Angeles and San Diego. Show the class a map of the southern coast of California and its surrounding islands. Point out the island of San Nicolas. Tell them Scott O'Dell, the author, grew up on an island very similar to and near this island. He came across this true account while researching the history of California which forms the basis for the novel they are about to read. Ask students to listen carefully while you read the Author's Note.

Activity #2

Distribute the materials students will use in this unit. Explain in detail how students are to use these materials.

Study Guides Students should preview the study guide questions before each reading assignment to get a feeling for what events and ideas are important in that section. After reading the section, students will (as a class or individually) answer the questions to review the important events and ideas from that section of the book. Students should keep the study guides as study materials for the unit test.

Vocabulary Prior to reading a reading assignment, students will do vocabulary work related to the section of the book they are about to read. Following the completion of the reading of the book, there will be a vocabulary review of all the words used in the vocabulary assignments. Students should keep their vocabulary work as study materials for the unit test.

Reading Assignment Sheet You need to fill in the reading assignment sheet to let students know when their reading has to be completed. You can either write the assignment sheet on a side blackboard or bulletin board and leave it there for students to see each day, or you can make copies for each student to have. In either case, you should advise students to become very familiar with the reading assignments so they know what is expected of them.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 - *Island of the Blue Dolphins*

PROMPT

You are going to read a story about a young Native American girl who is stranded on an isolated tropical island. Through the course of the novel, Karana develops into a character of great courage and self-reliance. The choices she makes and carries out in her day-to-day survival are quite worthy of your comment.

Your assignment is to keep a diary during the time we are reading this novel. Each entry must be at least eight to ten sentences long. You may make your entries longer if you wish. You must have at least one entry for each reading assignment. (A total of 9 entries is the minimum requirement.)

PREWRITING

What will you write about? After your reading assignment has been completed, go back and review the events in it. Respond to Karana's thoughts, plans, and actions. Respond to the abundant descriptions of sea life and sea environment. What would you have done if you would have been Karana? Would you have done things differently? In what ways? How would you have felt in her situation? What have you learned about her tribe? her environment? her intelligence? her values? What forms of sea life do you find most fascinating? What aspects of her environment do you find appealing, less than appealing? Include anything else you find interesting.

DRAFTING

What is important is that you sit down and write after each reading assignment or even more frequently. Diaries are not formal, written papers; they are a form of personal expression. There is no right or wrong thing to include in your diary. There is no formal structure- just take the time to get comfortable and let the ideas flow.

PROOFREADING

It can be quite a self-revealing exercise to go back and reread your earlier entries- not so much for proofreading purposes but to re-evaluate yourself and your feelings. One of the best ways to get to know yourself is to keep a diary or journal. We are all too frequently rushing here and there, with fleeting thoughts coming and going like wisps of smoke. It can be very helpful to slow down at some point, and record your thoughts and feelings for the day. Hopefully, this will not be the last diary you will ever write.