



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

The Light in the Forest

based on the book by
Conrad Richter

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A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR
CONRAD RICHTER

RICHTER, Conrad Michael 1890-1968 Conrad Richter was born on October 13, 1890, in Pine Grove, Pennsylvania. He started working when he was fifteen. His early jobs included teamster, clerk, farm hand, and bank teller. At nineteen he became the editor of the weekly *Courier* in Patton, Pennsylvania. After that he worked as a reporter at newspapers in Pittsburgh and Johnstown, Pennsylvania. In 1928 Richter moved to the West and began a career as a full-time writer, specializing in fictional accounts of early American life.

The Trees, 1940, *The Fields*, 1946, and *The Town*, 1950, are probably Richter's best known works. The three novels deal realistically with early American life on the frontier. Richter enjoys looking into the minds of the pioneers as well as the myths about their life. His other writings include *Brothers of No Kin, and Other Stories*, 1924; *Early Americana and Other Stories*, 1936; *The Sea of Grass*, 1937; *Tacey Cromwell*, 1942; *The Light in the Forest*, 1953; *The Mountain on the Desert*, 1955; *Over the Blue Mountain*, 1962; *The Wanderer*, 1966; and *The Aristocrat*, 1966. *The Sea of Grass* was made into a movie in 1947 by MGM. *The Light in the Forest* was filmed in 1958 by Buena Vista (Walt Disney Productions.) The novel *Tacey Cromwell* was the basis for the Universal film "One Desire" in 1955.

Richter was the recipient of many literary awards throughout his career. In 1942 he was awarded the Gold Medal for Literature of Society of Libraries of New York University for *Sea of Grass* and *The Trees*. In 1951 he was awarded the Ohioana Library Medal. Richter received the 1951 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for *The Town*. He also received the National Institute of Arts and Letters grant in literature in 1959; the Maggie Award in 1959 for *The Lady*; and the National Book Award in 1961 for *The Waters of Kronos*. His honorary degrees include Litt. D., Susquehanna University, 1944, University of New Mexico, 1958, Lafayette College, 1966; LL.D., Temple University, 1966; and L.H.D., Lebanon Valley College, 1966.

INTRODUCTION

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, listening and speaking skills through exercises and activities related to *The Light in the Forest* by Conrad Richter. It includes eighteen lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to one main theme of the novel, in order to attain what the white man thought of as civilization, he gave up many liberties, through a bulletin board activity. Following the introductory activity, students are given an explanation of how the activity relates to the book they are about to read.

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 10 to 15 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 10 to 15 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 gives students dictionary definitions of the words and has them 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 separate 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**. 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 a **reports and discussion** session 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 is to **inform**: students will pretend to be early settlers in the Pennsylvania-Ohio area and write a letter describing their life to a friend in England. The second assignment is to **persuade**: students will take a position either in favor of or against returning the Indians' captives to their white relatives, and attempt to persuade the other side to agree with them. The third assignment is to express a personal **opinion**: students will describe their ideas about freedom.

In addition, there is a **nonfiction reading assignment**. Students are required to read a piece of nonfiction related in some way to *The Light in the Forest*. 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**.

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 *The Light in the Forest*

1. Through reading *The Light in the Forest*, students will analyze characters and their situations to better understand the themes of the novel.
2. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical, and personal.
3. Students will practice reading aloud and silently to improve their skills in each area.
4. Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the autobiography through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with it.
5. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *The Light in the Forest*.
6. Students will practice writing through a variety of writing assignments.
7. The writing assignments in this are geared to several purposes:
 - a. To check the students' reading comprehension;
 - b. To make students think about the ideas presented by the novel;
 - c. To make students put those ideas into perspective;
 - d. To encourage critical and logical thinking;
 - e. To provide the opportunity to practice good grammar and improve students' use of the English language.
8. Students will read aloud, report, and participate in large and small group discussions to improve their public speaking and personal interaction skills.

UNIT OUTLINE *The Light in the Forest.*

1 Unit Intro Distribute Unit Materials PV 1-3	2 Read 1-3 Study ?? 1-3	3 PVR 4-6 Oral Reading Evaluation	4 Quiz 1-6 PVR 7-8	5 Writing Assignment #1
6 Study ?? 7-8 PVR 9-11	7 Study ?? 9-11 Quiz 7-11 PVR 12-13	8 Study ?? 12-13 Writing Assignment #2	9 Writing Conference	10 PVR 14-15 Study ?? 14-15
11 Extra Discussion ??	12 Writing Assignment #3	13 Library Work	14 Vocabulary Review	15 Group Work
16 Non-Fiction Assignment	17 Review	18 Test		

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

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET *The Light in the Forest*

Date to be Assigned	Chapters	Completion Date
	Chapters 1-3	
	Chapters 4-6	
	Chapters 7-8	
	Chapters 9-11	
	Chapters 12-13	
	Chapters 14-15	

LESSON ONE

Objectives

1. To introduce the unit for *The Light in the Forest*
2. To distribute books and other related materials (study guides, reading assignments)
3. To relate students' prior knowledge to the new material
4. To preview the study questions for Chapters 1-3
5. To familiarize students with the vocabulary for Chapters 1-3

Activity #1

Make a bulletin board display that includes the following items: a current map of Ohio and Pennsylvania, pictures of early (pre 1800s) white settlers, and pictures of Northeastern Indian tribes such as the Delaware. If possible, include a map of the Ohio and Pennsylvania area from the late 1700s. Tell students the setting of the story is what is now Ohio and Pennsylvania. Have them locate the Tuscarawas River in Ohio and trace it to the Ohio River in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Then have them locate Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Explain that the story takes place in the early days of the white settlement of the area, probably in the mid to late 1700s. At this time, Philadelphia was the largest city in the area. Western Pennsylvania had been partially explored and settled, but the land to the west, where Ohio is today, was still mainly Indian territory. Ask students to use the pictures to compare and contrast the lives of the Indians and the white settlers. Ask which group seems to have the most freedom, and why. Tell students the story is about a young white boy living on the frontier who is raised by Indians. Ask them to speculate about the conflicts that he might have, and what could happen if he were to return to live among the white settlers.

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.

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 "ditto" 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 *The Light in the Forest*

PROMPT

You are one of the early settlers in what is now Pennsylvania. You have faced hardships and have had many interesting experiences. Now you are going to write a letter about your life in the New World and send it to your friends in England.

PREWRITING

Before writing, make a word web or outline to help organize your thoughts. Think of the categories you will write about (the geographical features of the area, the weather, the food, the hardships, encounters with the Indians, etc.) Then add descriptive words to each category.

Use information from *The Light in the Forest*, encyclopedias, and other books about the early colonial era to make sure your letter is accurate.

DRAFTING

Make sure you observe the correct format for a letter. Begin your letter with a greeting and a few pleasantries. Then use a separate paragraph to describe each part of your life as an early settler. End with a complimentary closing and your name.

PROMPT

When you finish the rough draft of your paper, ask another student to read it. After reading your rough draft, he/she should tell you what he/she liked best about your work, which parts were difficult to understand, and ways in which your work could be improved. Reread your paper considering your critic's comments, and make the corrections you think are necessary.

PROOFREADING

Do a final proofreading of your paper, double-checking your grammar, spelling, organization, and the clarity of your ideas. You may want to write a final copy of your letter on a paper bag, or make your own writing paper to have your letter look authentic.