



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

Maniac Magee

based on the book by

Jerry Spinelli

Written by

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FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR

SPINELLI, JERRY 1941-Jerry Spinelli was born on February 1, 1941, in Norristown, Pennsylvania. While still a youngster, one of his poems about a hometown football team's victory was published in a local paper. This inspired him to consider a career as a writer. As an adult writer, he thought he should write about topics that would be interesting to adults. The publishers he approached were not interested in his work. After he married, he started writing about things his own children did. One incident, when his child ate some food he was saving for himself, was the inspiration for his first book, *Space Station Seventh Grade*.

Space Station Seventh Grade (Little, Brown, 1982) tells the daily life of Jason Herkimer. Jason deals with everyday incidents as well as serious issues such as his parents' divorce, and living with a stepfather. In the sequel, *Jason and Marceline* (Little, Brown, 1990), Jason and the trombone player, Marceline, develop a deeper, more caring, and romantic relationship.

Who Put That Hair in My Toothbrush? (Little, Brown, 1984) is the story of Megin and Greg, siblings who fight a lot but unite against a common threat. The story is told in first person, with chapters alternating between Megin and Greg.

Maniac Magee (Little, Brown, 1990) was the Newbery Medal winner in 1991. In this book, Spinelli deals with the absurdities of racism. Jeffrey Lionel Magee is a Caucasian boy who is orphaned at the age of three. He runs away from his aunt and uncle's tension-filled home, and lives with a succession of people. The first is a kind and loving black family. He leaves them when racist graffiti is sprayed on their home. Next he lives with an old man in the equipment room of the park, but the man dies. After that he lives with a racist, dysfunctional white family. Nicknamed Maniac because of his athletic feats, he tries to start better racial relationships between the blacks and whites. Maniac Magee also won the Boston Globe/Horn Book Award, 1990, American Library Association, 1991, and the D.C. Fisher Award, 1992.

Spinelli's other works include *Dump Days*, (Little, Brown, 1988), *The Bathwater Gang* (Little, Brown, 1990), *There's a Girl in My Hammerlock*, (Simon and Schuster, 1991), and *Fourth Grade Rats* (Scholastic, 1991.) He lives in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania.

THE NEWBERY MEDAL

The Newbery Medal is named in honor of John Newbery (1713-1767), a British publisher and bookseller in the 1700s. Newbery is known as the father of children's literature because he was the first to propose publishing books specifically for children. The award is presented each year by the American Library Association to the "author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children" published during the preceding year. The award was first given in 1922, and is awarded annually. The winning book receives the Newbery Medal and one or more runners-up are also recognized as honor books.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>AUTHOR</u>
1997	<i>The View from Saturday</i>	Elaine Konigsburg
1996	<i>The Midwife's Apprentice</i>	Karen Cushman
1995	<i>Walk Two Moons</i>	Sharon Creech
1994	<i>The Giver</i>	Lois Lowry
1993	<i>Missing May</i>	Cynthia Rylant
1992	<i>Shiloh</i>	Phyllis Reynolds Naylor
1991	<i>Maniac Magee</i>	Jerry Spinelli
1990	<i>Number the Stars</i>	Lois Lowry
1989	<i>Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices</i>	Paul Fleischman
1988	<i>Lincoln: A Photobiography</i>	Russell Freeman
1987	<i>The Whipping Boy</i>	Sid Fleischman
1986	<i>Sarah, Plain and Tall</i>	Patricia MacLachlan
1985	<i>The Hero and the Crown</i>	Robin McKinley
1984	<i>Dear Mr. Henshaw</i>	Beverly Cleary
1983	<i>Dacey's Song</i>	Cynthia Voight
1982	<i>A Visit To William Blake's Inn</i>	Nancy Willard
1981	<i>Jacob Have I Loved</i>	Katherine Ann Patterson
1980	<i>A Gathering of Days</i>	Joan W. Blos
1970	<i>Souder</i>	William H. Armstrong
1960	<i>Onion John</i>	Joseph Krumboltz
1950	<i>The Door in the Wall</i>	Marguerite de Angeli
1940	<i>Daniel Boone</i>	James Daugherty
1930	<i>Hitty, Her First Hundred Years</i>	Rachel Field
1922	<i>The Story of Mankind</i>	Hendrik Willem van Loon

INTRODUCTION

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, listening and speaking skills through exercises and activities related to *Maniac Magee* by Jerry Spinelli. It includes twenty lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to one main theme of the novel, racial prejudice, through a bulletin board and a student participation 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-five 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 8 to 10 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 8 to 10 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 **persuade**: students will try to persuade someone to perform a task or give the writer something. The second assignment is to **inform**: students will give information about a non-fiction topic related to *Maniac Magee*. The third assignment is to express a personal **opinion**: students will write Clerihew and acrostic poems based on the novel.

The **nonfiction reading assignment** is used as Writing Assignment #2. Students are required to read a piece of nonfiction related in some way to *Maniac Magee*. After reading their nonfiction pieces, students will fill out a worksheet on which they answer questions regarding facts, interpretation, criticism, and personal opinions. They will also write a short report on the information they researched. 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 *Maniac Magee*

1. Through reading *Maniac Magee* 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 novel 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 *Maniac Magee*.
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 *Maniac Magee*

1	2	3	4	5
Unit Intro Distribute Unit Materials	PVR 1-5 Study ?? 1-5	PVR 6-11 Oral Reading Evaluation	Writing Assignment #1 Persuade Study ?? 6-11	Minilesson: Cause & Effect PVR 12-16 Study ?? 12-16
6	7	8	9	10
Minilesson: Simile & Metaphor PVR 17-21 Study?? 17-21	Quiz 1-21 PVR 22-26 Study ?? 22-26	Minilesson: Character Traits Study ?? 22-26 PVR 27-32	Writing Conference PVR 33-37	Study?? 33-37 Writing Assignment #2/ Non-Fiction Information
11	12	13	14	15
PVR 38-41	Study ?? 38-41 PVR 42-46	Minilesson: Story Map Study ??42-46	Writing Assignment #3 Personal Opinion	Extra Discussion Questions
16	17	18	19	20
Project/ Group Work	Vocabulary Review	Unit Review	Test	Non-Fiction Assignment Presentations

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

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET *Maniac Magee*

Date to be Assigned	Chapters	Completion Date
	Chapters 1-5	
	Chapters 6-11	
	Chapters 12-16	
	Chapters 17-21	
	Chapters 22-26	
	Chapters 27-32	
	Chapters 33-37	
	Chapters 38-41	
	Chapters 42-46	

LESSON ONE

Student Objectives

1. To preview the *Maniac Magee* Unit
2. To receive books and other related materials (study guides, reading assignment)
3. To relate prior knowledge to the new material
4. To discuss one of the major themes of the novel (prejudice) by participating in a group activity
5. To discuss the characteristics of mythology and compare them to reality

Activity #1

Make an even number of small squares of either green and purple construction paper. Give green squares to half of the class and purple to the other. Tell all of the students with green papers to sit on one side of the room, and the students with the purple papers to sit on the other side. Put a barrier, such as a piece of masking tape, down the center of the room. Then tell the students they are not allowed to cross the barrier. Tell the students in the purple group that the students in the green group are strange: they don't brush their teeth, they eat with their hands; they beat up students with purple papers. Then tell the students in the green group the same things about the purple group. Ask students what they know about each other, how they found it out, and whether or not they would want to cross the barrier. Then ask students what this exercise reminded them of. If no one suggests prejudice, explain it yourself. Tell students one of the themes in *Maniac Magee* is prejudice between the black and the white people in the town.

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 duplicate 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.

Unit Outline You may find it helpful to distribute copies of the Unit Outline to your students so they can keep track of upcoming lessons and assignments. You may also want to post a copy of the Unit Outline on a bulletin board and cross off each lesson as you complete it.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 *Maniac Magee*
Writing to Persuade

PROMPT

Jeffrey wanted to borrow one of Amanda's books. Amanda never lent her books to anyone, but he persuaded her to lend him one. Your assignment is to persuade someone to do something you want. You can either write a letter or prepare a speech to present in person.

PREWRITING

Choose one of the topics from the brainstorm list, or think of another one on your own. Make a list of the reasons someone should do what you want. Then number the reasons in order from most to least important. Under each reason, think of supporting statements to go along with it.

DRAFTING

Make an introductory statement in which you state your request. Use one paragraph for each of your reasons. Use the supporting statements for each reason. Summarize your request in the closing paragraph.

PEER EDITING /REVISING

When you finish the first draft, ask another student to look at it. You may want to give the student your notes so he/she can double check for you and see that you have included all of the information. After reading, he or she should tell you what he/she liked best about your persuasive speech or letter, which parts were difficult to understand or need more information, and ways in which your work could be improved. Reread your persuasive speech or letter considering your critic's comments and make the corrections you think are necessary.

PROOFREADING

Do a final proofreading of your persuasive speech/letter. Double check your grammar, spelling, organization, and the clarity of your ideas.

FINAL DRAFT

Follow your teacher's guidelines for completing the final draft of your paper.