



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

Sounder

based on the book by  
William Armstrong

Written by  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS - *Sounder*

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Introduction                            | 5   |
| Unit Objectives                         | 7   |
| Reading Assignment Sheet                | 8   |
| Unit Outline                            | 9   |
| Study Questions (Short Answer)          | 13  |
| Quiz/Study Questions (Multiple Choice)  | 18  |
| Pre-reading Vocabulary Worksheets       | 31  |
| Lesson One (Introductory Lesson)        | 43  |
| Nonfiction Assignment Sheet             | 46  |
| Oral Reading Evaluation Form            | 48  |
| Writing Assignment 1                    | 45  |
| Writing Assignment 2                    | 50  |
| Writing Assignment 3                    | 58  |
| Writing Evaluation Form                 | 59  |
| Vocabulary Review Activities            | 53  |
| Extra Writing Assignments/Discussion ?s | 54  |
| Unit Review Activities                  | 60  |
| Unit Tests                              | 63  |
| Unit Resource Materials                 | 91  |
| Vocabulary Resource Materials           | 107 |

## A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William Armstrong

William Armstrong was born on September 14, 1914 in Lexington, Virginia. Living in the Shenandoah Valley, he developed a love of history at an early age, and went on to become a history master at the Kent School in Kent, Connecticut.

In 1942 Mr. Armstrong married Martha Stonecrest Williams. They had three children: Chrostopher, David and Mary.

Among William Armstrong's most noted works are *Study is Hard Work* (1956), *Through Troubled Waters* (1957), *87 Ways to Help Your Child in School* (1961), *Tools of Thinking* (1968), *Souder* (1969), *Barefoot in the Grass: the Story of Grandma Moses* (1970), *Sour Land* (1971), *My Animals* (1972), and *Hadassah: Esther, the Orphan Queen* (1972).

## INTRODUCTION

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, and language skills through exercises and activities related to *Sounder* by William Armstrong. It includes eighteen lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to one main theme of the novel through a bulletin board activity. Following the introductory activity, students are given a transition to explain how the activity relates to the book they are about to read. Following the transition, students are given the materials they will be using during the unit. At the end of the lesson, students begin the pre-reading work for the first reading assignment.

The **reading assignments** are approximately thirty 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 required or multiple choice-matching-true/false. 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 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 reading the work, a lesson is 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.

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.

The **group activity** has students working in small groups to research and discuss topics related to the novel. The group activity is followed by a **reports and discussion** session in which the groups share their ideas about the topics with the entire class; thus, the entire class is exposed to information about all of the themes and the entire class can discuss each theme based on the nucleus of information brought forth by each of the groups.

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 write a short composition about their own pets. The second assignment is to persuade: students create a bad situation caused by a pet, take one side of the argument and persuade the other side to take the action they think is necessary. The third assignment is to express personal opinions: students express their own opinions and questions regarding one of the topics discussed through the group activity.

There is a **nonfiction reading assignment**. Students are required to read a piece of nonfiction related in some way to *Souder*. After reading their nonfiction pieces, students will fill out a worksheet on which they answer questions regarding facts, interpretation, criticism, and personal opinions. The nonfiction assignment for *Souder* is incorporated into the group project.

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, multiple choice, and composition. As a convenience, two different tests for each format have been included.

There are additional **support materials** included with this unit. The **resource** sections include 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 - *Sounder*

1. Through reading William Armstrong's *Sounder*, students will consider the question, "Is crime ever justified?"
2. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical and personal.
3. Students will discuss segregation, illiteracy, poverty, bigotry, the Civil Rights Movement, and other relevant topics.
4. Students will be given the opportunity to practice reading aloud and silently to improve their skills in each area.
5. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *Sounder* as they relate to the author's theme development.
6. Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the novel through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with the novel.
7. 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
  - d. To encourage logical thinking
  - e. To provide an 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.

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET - *Souder*

| Date Assigned | Reading Assignment<br>(Chapters) | Completion Date |
|---------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
|               | 1                                |                 |
|               | 2-3                              |                 |
|               | 4                                |                 |
|               | 5-6                              |                 |
|               | 7                                |                 |
|               | 8                                |                 |

UNIT OUTLINE - *Souder*

|  |                         |                                 |  |                       |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>                | <b>3</b>                        | <b>4</b>                                 | <b>5</b>              |
| Introduction<br>PV 1<br>Writing<br>Assignment #1 | Read 1<br>PV 2-3        | Study ?s 1<br>Read 2-3<br>PVR 4 | Study ?s2- 3<br>Writing<br>Assignment #2 | Study ?s 4<br>PVR 5-6 |
| <b>6</b>   | <b>7</b>                | <b>8</b>                        | <b>9</b>                                 | <b>10</b>             |
| Study ?s 5-6<br>PVR 7                            | Study ?s7<br>PVR 8      | Study ?s 8<br>Extra ?s          | Discussion                               | Library               |
| <b>11</b>  | <b>12</b>               | <b>13</b>                       | <b>14</b>                                | <b>15</b>             |
| Reports &<br>Discussion                          | Reports &<br>Discussion | Vocabulary                      | Writing<br>Assignment #3                 | Film                  |
| <b>16</b>  | <b>17</b>               | <b>18</b>                       |  |                       |
| Film   | Review                  | Test                            |  |                       |

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



## LESSON ONE

### Objectives

1. To introduce *Sounder* unit.
2. To distribute books and other related materials
3. To preview the study questions for chapter 1
4. To familiarize students with the vocabulary for chapter 1

NOTE: Prior to this lesson you need to have prepared a bulletin board with background paper and the title MAN'S BEST FRIEND or some other appropriate title. Tell each student to bring in a picture of his/her pet(s) along with Writing Assignment #1 completed. You will find Writing Assignment #1 following Lesson One in this unit package.

Also prior to this lesson you need to have invited a guest speaker from your local SPCA or animal shelter -- even a veterinarian who will donate a little time would be great. Have your speaker talk to students about pet care, training pets, and/or recent issues relating to pets.

### Activity #1

Tell students to get out their pictures and writing assignments. Have each student post the picture of the pet along with the writing assignment (under the picture) on the board. Each student should take about fifteen seconds to post his/her picture and, while posting the picture, tell the class a little about his/her pet.

### Activity #2

Introduce your guest speaker for his/her presentation. Allow some time for students to ask questions.

TRANSITION: Tell students that the story they are about to read is titled *Sounder* -- the name of the family's dog in the story.

### Activity #3

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

Study Guides Students should read the study guide questions for each reading assignment prior to beginning the reading assignment to get a feeling for what events and ideas are important in the section they are about to read. 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.

## WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 - *Sounder*

### PROMPT

People and animals share our planet, and probably since the earliest ages, people have had pets. In the next couple of weeks you will be reading a book about a dog named *Sounder*. Actually, the book is about more than just the dog, but the dog is important enough to have the book titled after him.

Your assignment has two parts. First, you are to find and bring in a picture of your pet. If you don't have a pet, bring in a picture of something you would like to have as a pet. If you don't have and don't want a pet, don't bring in a picture.

The second part is to write a little composition telling about your pet (if you have one), why you would like to have a particular kind of pet (if you don't have a pet but would like one), or why you don't have and don't want a pet.

### PREWRITING

What can you say about your pet? Start with something easy. What's the pet's name? What kind of an animal is it? What does your pet do? Do you have a short tale to tell about your pet? Do you like your pet? Why? There are literally dozens of questions you could answer to tell about your pet. Consider these and other questions you think of relating to your pet. Brainstorm a list of things you would like to tell and/or interesting facts about your pet.

The problem is that you aren't going to write a whole book about your pet. In fact, you are only going to write as much as will fit on a 5" X 7" index card. That means you will have to sort through your ideas and choose only those facts and stories that are most interesting and tell the most about your pet in the shortest way.

If you don't have a pet but would like one, on your card tell what pet you would like to have, what you would name it, and why you would like to have one.

If you don't have a pet and don't want one, on your card explain why you don't want a pet.

### DRAFTING

At the top of the card, print your pet's name on the left-hand side. Print your name on the right-hand side.

Write your facts/stories on the lines on the front of the card. That's the only space you have, so choose your words carefully for the best results possible.

### PROOOOFREADING

When you finish the rough draft of your paper, ask a student who sits near you 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.

Do a final proofreading of your paper double-checking your grammar, spelling, organization, and the clarity of your ideas.