



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

Where the Red Fern Grows

based on the book by
Wilson Rawls

Written by
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A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Wilson Rawls

RAWLS, Wilson (born 1913), U.S. author, born on September 24, 1913 in Scrapper, Oklahoma. Rawls wrote books that appealed to young people, especially because of his fully developed animal characters.

Rawls had very little formal education, but his mother read stories to him as a child. He was especially influenced by Jack London's *Call of the Wild*. Rawls went to work as a carpenter, finding jobs in Mexico, South America, Alaska, and throughout the United States. He did not begin writing full-time until 1959. His novel *Summer of the Monkeys* (1976) received several awards, including the Sequoyah Children's Book Award, the Golden Archer Award, and the William Allen White Children's Book Award. He also wrote *Where the Red Fern Grows* (1961), which was a selection of the Literary Guild, and which was made into a motion picture.

Courtesy of Compton's Learning Company

INTRODUCTION

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, listening and speaking skills through exercises and activities related to *Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls. It includes nineteen lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to one main theme of the novel (the special kind of love that can exist between a person and their pet) 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 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 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 **inform**: students will compose a classified advertisement to sell something. The second assignment is to **persuade**: students will write a persuasive argument to convince their parents they should get a pet. The third assignment is to express a personal **opinion**: students will discuss the relative merits of living in an urban or a rural area.

In addition, there is a **nonfiction reading assignment**. Students are required to read a piece of nonfiction related in some way to *Where the Red Fern Grows*. 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 **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 *Where the Red Fern Grows*

1. Through reading *Where the Red Fern Grows* 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 *Where the Red Fern Grows*
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 - *Where the Red Fern Grows*

1 Unit Intro Distribute Unit Materials PV I-IV	2 Read I-IV Study ?? I-IV	3 PVR V-VII Oral Reading Evaluation	4 Quiz I-VII PVR VIII-X	5 Writing Assignment #1
6 Study ?? VIII-X PVR XI-XII	7 Study ?? XI-XII PVR XIII-XIV	8 Study ?? XIII-XIV Writing Assignment #2	9 Writing Conference	10 Quiz VIII-XIV PVR XV-XVI
11 Writing Assignment #3	12 Study ?? XV-XVI PVR XVII-XVIII	13 Study ?? XVII-XVIII PV XIX-XX	14 R XIX-XX Study ?? XIX-XX	15 Extra Discussion ??
16 Library Work	17 Vocabulary Review	18 Group Work	19 Non-Fiction Assignment	20 Movie and Discussion
21 Review	22 Test			

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

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET *Where the Red Fern Grows*

Date to be Assigned	Chapters	Completion Date (Prior to Class on This Date)
	Chapters I-IV	
	Chapters V-VII	
	Chapters VIII-X	
	Chapters XI-XII	
	Chapters XIII-XIV	
	Chapters XV-XVI	
	Chapters XVII-XVIII	
	Chapters XIX-XV	

LESSON ONE

Objectives

1. To introduce the *Where the Red Fern Grows* unit
2. To relate students' prior knowledge to the new material
3. To distribute books and other related materials (study guides, reading assignments)
4. To do the prereading work for Chapters I-IV

Activity #1

Make a bulletin board display of pictures of people with their pets. Make sure to include pictures of children, especially boys between the ages of ten and fourteen. Title the board *People and Pets-A Special Relationship*. Also show pictures of the Ozark mountains, hunting dogs, and raccoons. First discuss pets. Ask students to share information about their own pets and the kinds of things they like to do with them. Then ask students to tell you what they know about the Ozarks and hunting, about Wilson Rawls, and about the novel. Tell them the novel they will be reading is set in the Ozark Mountains, and is about a boy and his dogs. Do the included group KWL sheet with the students. Put any information the students know in the K column (What I Know.) Ask students what they want to find out and put that information in the W column (What I Want to Find Out.) Keep the sheet and refer to it while reading. After reading the novel, complete the L column (What I Learned.)

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.

Extra Activities Center The unit resource portion of this unit contains suggestions for a library of related books and articles in your classroom as well as crossword and word search puzzles.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT 1 *Where the Red Fern Grows*

PROMPT

Billy found the answer he wanted in an advertisement in an old newspaper. He read about a kennel in Kentucky that was selling hunting dogs.

Your assignment is to write a classified ad for a newspaper. It should tell what you want to sell, how much it costs, and how to contact you.

PREWRITING

The first thing you need to do is read some classified ads to get an idea of the kinds of things you can sell and how to write an ad. Decide what you want to sell. You could sell kittens, puppies, baby rabbits, or other domestic animals. You might want to sell an outgrown bicycle, a video game system, or some athletic equipment.

DRAFTING

Follow the format of the ads you looked at. Write a fairly detailed description of the item you are selling. Include its age, size, and physical condition. Mention any special attributes that may be good selling points. Then tell your asking price and how to get in touch with you.

PROMPT

When you finish the rough draft of your classified ad, 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.