



TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 3-5

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Basil of Baker Street

Eve Titus

READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Basil of Baker Street

Eve Titus

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NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Skills and Strategies

Thinking

Predicting, analysis,
visualizing, categorizing,
research

Comprehension

Comparison/contrast

Writing

Poetry, directions, creative
writing

Vocabulary

Context clues, analogy,
word mapping

Listening/Speaking

Reading aloud

Literary Elements

Mystery genre, personifica-
tion, characterization, story
mapping, alliteration, simile

Summary of Basil of Baker Street

Basil is a famous mouse detective. Living in Holmestead, located in the cellar of the famous Baker Street Address, Basil is able to practically “study at the feet” of the famous detective, Sherlock Holmes. When the Proudfoot twins, Angela and Agatha, are kidnapped, Basil has just 48 hours to bring the criminals to justice. Dr. Dawson knows that Basil’s failures are few, but wonders if this will prove to be one of them.

About the Author

Eve Titus was born July 16, 1922, in New York. She attended New York University. She is a freelance author and lecturer, and director and originator of the annual “Storybook Writing Seminar,” in Miami, Florida and Houston, Texas.

Mrs. Titus was originally a professional concert pianist, giving piano recitals in New York, Florida, Arkansas, Texas, Jamaica, and Mexico. She has also cruised the Caribbean on ships as a concert pianist.

“My original field was music, and I have never given it up entirely, for both writing and music are my true loves. I have found, particularly with children, that those whom I don’t reach through my books I can reach through my music.”

Note: Please be selective and use discretion when choosing the activities that you will do with the unit. It is not intended that everything included herein be done, but that discretionary choices be made that are the most appropriate for your use and your group of students. A wide range has been provided so that individuals as well as groups may benefit from these selections.

Initiating Activities

1. Before starting the mystery unit, go to the library and check out additional mystery novels to place in an area that will be easily accessible to the students. In addition, look for sound recordings to use with the unit, either for background music or audio recognition, such as:

Blues Brothers. *The Blues Brothers*. (Compact Disc) NY: Atlantic, 1988. “Peter Gunn Theme”

Eddy, Duane. *Duane Eddy: Compact Command Performances*. (Compact Disc) Hollywood, CA: Motown, 1986. “Peter Gunn Theme”

Kunzel, Erich. *Bond & Beyond*. (Compact Disc/Cassette) Cleveland, OH: Telarc Digital, 1991. “Peter Gunn Theme,” “Dick Tracy,” “Dragnet,” “Perry Mason Theme,” etc.

Mancini, Henry. *Pure Gold*. (Cassette) NY: RCA, 1975. "Charade," "Peter Gunn Theme," "The Pink Panther"

Silver. *Silver: Music From the Motion Picture*. (Compact Disc/Cassette) Beverly Hills, CA: Virgin Movie Music, 1993. "Peter Gunn Theme"

2. Make a large chart for the recording of favorite mystery books, movies, and TV programs, and place it on a bulletin board that has been covered with plain background paper. Invite the students to record personal choices during the course of the unit. **The choice of the students of** _____

Mystery Books	Mystery Movies	Mystery Television

(Examine the choices, and then invite "critics" to review some of the above.)

3. Make a large "mystery " banner to display in the room, such as:



4. Refer to the following book of quotations.* Prepare some of them to display in the room. For example, the following are quotations by Sherlock Holmes from the work of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle:

- "There is nothing like first-hand evidence."
- "I never guess. It is a shocking habit—destructive to the logical faculty."
- "You see, but you do not observe."
- "As a rule, the more bizarre a thing is the less mysterious it proves to be."
- "There is nothing more deceptive than an obvious fact."

*Horning, Jane. *The Mystery Lovers' Book of Quotations*. NY: The Mysterious Press, 1988.

5. When ready to start the unit, find out what the students know about mystery stories. Request that the students think about a favorite mystery book, movie, or television program. What makes a mystery story different from other stories? Make a list. Example:

- 1) A crime is discovered.
- 2) A sleuth/detective enters the drama.
- 3) The detective looks for clues/evidence.

Using Character Webs in the Novel Unit Approach

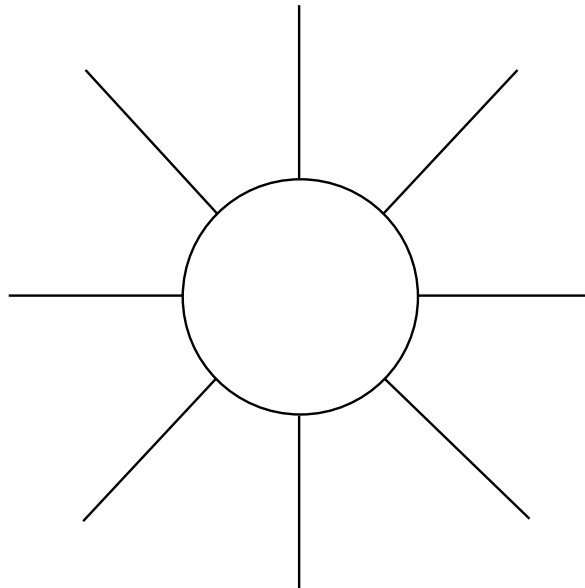
Attribute webs are simply a visual representation of a character from the novel. They provide a systematic way for students to organize and recap the information they have about a particular character. Attribute webs may be used after reading the novel to recapitulate information about a particular character, or completed gradually as information unfolds. They may be completed individually or as a group project.

One type of character attribute web uses these divisions:

- How a character acts and feels. (How does the character act? How do you think the character feels? How would you feel if this happened to you?)
- How a character looks. (Close your eyes and picture the character. Describe him/her to me.)
- Where a character lives. (Where and when does the character live?)
- How others feel about the character. (How does another specific character feel about our character?)

In group discussion about the characters described in student attribute webs, the teacher can ask for backup proof from the novel. Inferential thinking can be included in the discussion.

Attribute webs need not be confined to characters. They may also be used to organize information about a concept, object, or place.



Possible Clues

Page 12: "...the twins are known to be mischievous."

Page 14: The twins never return from school later than four o'clock.

Page 14: Mr. Proudfoot tells Basil, "You know the twins—they are happy, contented children, and contented children do not run away from home."

Page 14: It is known that the twins planned to stop at the sweetshop on their way home from school. They are especially fond of chocolates. The proprietor said that they had not arrived there.

Page 15: The sweetshop proprietor is trusted by the Proudfoots.

Chapter 3: "The Telltale Footprints"—Pages 17-22

Vocabulary

telltale 17 vast 17 menacing 17 pondering 17
 skimmed 20 contemptible 22

Vocabulary Activity

List a synonym and antonym, and then develop word maps for the vocabulary words.

Word	Synonym	Antonym
telltale	revealing	protecting
vast	immense	small
menacing	dangerous	harmless
pondering	deliberating	thinking rashly
skimmed	glanced	read
contemptible	despicable	admirable

For example:

