



TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Bearstone

William Hobbs

READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

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William Hobbs

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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

Brainstorming, research,
classifying

Comprehension

Comparison/contrast, cause-
effect

Literary Elements

Characterization, symbol,
story elements, conflict,
mood, personification

Writing

Chapter titles, restating
colloquialisms

Vocabulary

Antonyms/synonyms,
context clues, word mapping

Listening/Speaking

Discussion, role play,
interview

Summary of Bearstone

Cloyd was an Indian boy whose mother had died and whose hospitalized father was in an irreversible coma. Cloyd did not go to school and chose to run wild in the mountains with his grandmother's goats. Officials decided to place Cloyd in a group home far from his grandmother. Cloyd did nothing in the school except get into trouble. Cloyd was taken to live with an old rancher, Walter, for the summer. In the mountains close to the ranch, Cloyd found a burial plot and a small carved turquoise bear. Renaming himself Lone Bear, Cloyd began to find himself, after he burned with anger, resentment, and revenge and destroyed the peach orchard which Walter treasured. Cloyd had further contact with a hunter who killed a grizzly bear, which Cloyd had seen. Cloyd saved the life of the old man after a mining accident with the help of the bear hunter and the game warden. Cloyd found the further magic power of the old man's love as well as the father figure he had needed.

About the Author

Will Hobbs was born August 22, 1947 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He is married to Jean Loftus, a teacher. Will Hobbs received a B.A. and M.A. from Stanford University. He taught junior high and high school reading and English, 1973-1989 in Durango, Colorado.

Hobbs said that he discovered his love of reading “when my fourth grade teacher read *Call It Courage* aloud to the class. After that I went on my own from one book to the next—novels and biographies, mostly—and that's where my urge to write came from. I'll always be a reader, because it's endlessly fascinating to look at life from someone else's perspective, someone very different from you.”

As a young man, Hobbs spent a great deal of time hiking and whitewater rafting, and he likes to write about time spent in his favorite settings in Colorado and Utah. He writes about choices facing people and the struggle for identity, and relations with others. He hopes that his readers will appreciate and care more about what's happening with wild creatures and wild places.

Instructions Prior to Reading

Please be selective and use discretion when choosing the activities that you will do with the unit. It is not intended that everything be done, but that discretionary choices made are most appropriate for your use and group of students. A wide range has been provided so that individuals as well as groups may benefit from these selections. You may wish to choose one or more of the following Prereading Discussion Questions. Each is designed to help students draw from their store of background knowledge about the events and themes they will meet in the story they are about to read.

Prereading Discussion Questions:

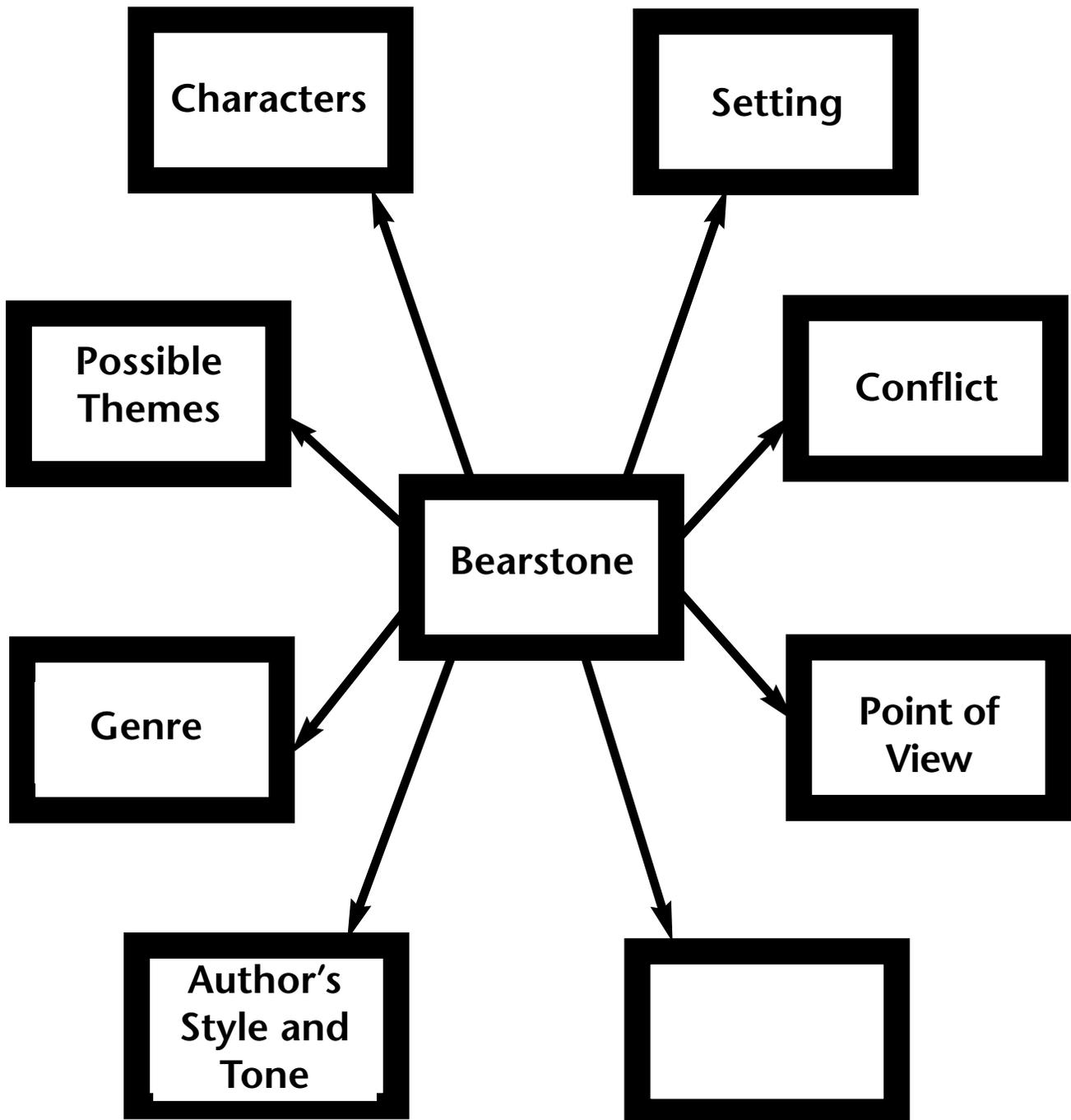
1. *Importance of Fathers:* What is the first memory you have of your father? What are some of the things that only fathers do with their children? What do children learn from fathers? How do some children cope without having a father at home?
2. *Orphans:* Who takes care of children without parents? What are group homes/foster homes? Who takes care of orphans' expenses?
3. *Indian Tribal Conferences:* What are their responsibilities today? How many are there?
4. *Superstitions:* What are some superstitions? How do they get started? What are some superstitions you have heard of? Are you superstitious? Why are some people more superstitious than others?

Initiating Activities

1. Prediction: Have students examine the front cover, read the blurbs on the back cover, read the first page of Chapter One, read a page somewhere in the middle of the book, and read a page somewhere toward the end of the book. Ask them to predict what the novel will be about. Who do you think the character is on the cover of the book? Where is he? What is he doing? How is he feeling? Is the bear in the background important? Why do you think the title of the book is *Bearstone*?
2. Anticipation Guide: Have students discuss whether they agree or disagree with the following statements—and why. Have them reconsider these statements after reading the novel.
 - a) Cultural traditions are important.
 - b) Grandparents can take the place of parents.
 - c) Revenge helps one feel better.
 - d) Preserving nature and endangered species is important.
3. Brainstorm the word *Indian*.

Brainstorming Rules: All ideas count.
Add details to others' ideas.
Adapt others' ideas.
Suggest unusual ideas.
Regroup ideas.

Story Map



Chapter-by-Chapter Vocabulary, Discussion Questions and Activities, Supplementary Activities

Chapter 1—Pages 1-4

Chapter 2—Pages 5-10

Chapter 3—Pages 11-17

Vocabulary:

bolted 7	skittered 7	foliage 9	impish 9
hovering 9	exert 13	gingerly 13	shimmied 14
intact 14	utmost 15	silhouette 15	destination 16
precipice 16			

Vocabulary Activity:

Have students locate the words in context and rewrite the sentence from the text to mean the same thing without using the vocabulary word. Students may use dictionaries for help.

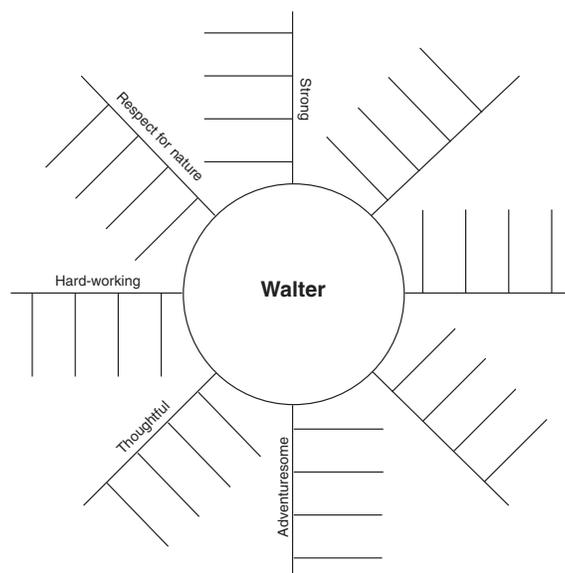
Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. A story map is an outline that helps you to understand and remember the story better. What do you know about the story after reading only the first chapter?
 - What is the setting?
 - Who is the main character or characters?
 - What is the problem?

Begin a story map. (See page 11 of this guide.) As the story is read, more characters may be added and the setting and problem may change, so additions to the story map may be made.

2. Why did Cloyd run away from the group home? What is a group home? (*page 1*)
3. What did Cloyd know about his father? Why do you think Cloyd wanted to know more about his father, but his sister did not? (*page 2*)
4. Why was Cloyd shocked to find his father in the hospital? What did he want to find? (*page 3*)
5. Why wouldn't the authorities let Cloyd go home for the summer? (*Page 6, They were afraid his grandmother would let him disappear in the mountains again.*)

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6. What were the advantages for Cloyd to spend a summer with the old man? (*page 8, a chance to get away from the group home where he had gotten into so much trouble*)
 7. Why were peaches important to the old man? (*Page 9, His wife, Maude, had loved the peaches so he took good care of the peach trees.*)
 8. What does the reader learn about Walter Landis? Begin an attribute web for him. On the spokes record descriptions. On the smaller spokes beneath each spoke, give examples from the book to support the description.



9. Why did Cloyd bolt and decide to run away from the old man and Susan? (*page 7*) What were some of the reasons Cloyd had for deciding to stay at the ranch after all? (*Pages 11-12, The old man had horses, the Utes had lived in the mountains above Durango, and maybe the old man would give him time off to climb the mountain.*)
10. Why was finding the small burial important to Cloyd? What did Cloyd know about his culture? Why did Cloyd think the small blue stone bear was placed near the dead child? (*pages 15-16*)
11. What secret name did Cloyd choose? Why? (*page 16, Lone Bear—a name that described who he really was*)
12. Have the students brainstorm associations with the phrase “culture.” Jot ideas around the central word on a large sheet of paper. Help students “cluster” the ideas into categories. A sample framework is shown below.