

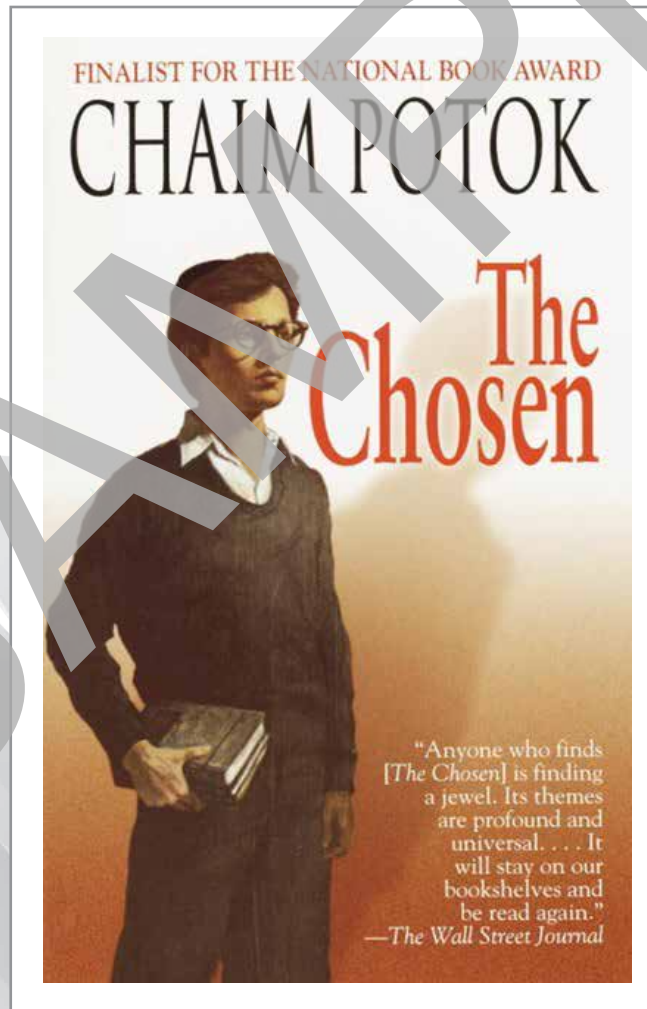


**STUDENT PACKET**

**GRADES 9-12**

# The Chosen

Chaim Potok



**READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT**

# The Chosen

Chaim Potok

## STUDENT PACKET

**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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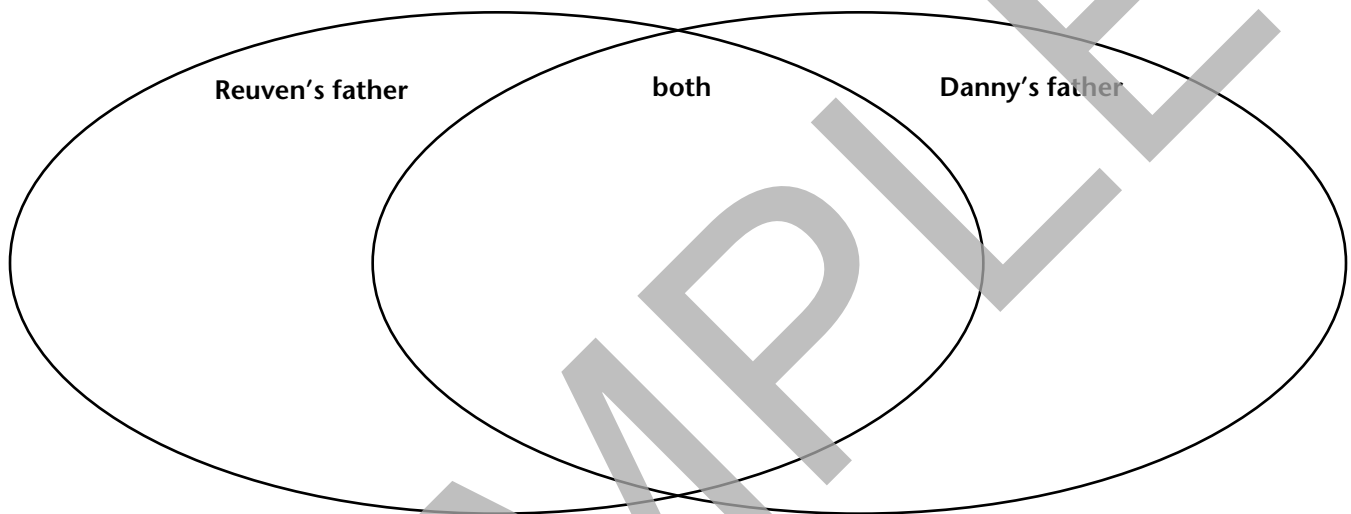
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## Character Comparison and Contrast

1. **Prewriting:** Think about how Reuven's father and Danny's father are alike and how they are different. List their similarities and differences in the Venn diagram below. Briefly note unique characteristics in the outer circles, and similar characteristics in the overlapping area in the middle.



2. **Writing:** Write an essay that begins "Parental and religious conflict are central themes in *The Chosen*..."

Include details from the Venn diagram to support your answer. Use some of the following questions to guide you:

- How does Reb Saunders contrast with Mr. Malter as a father?
- What values do they share?
- How do their approaches to religion differ?
- How do their approaches to parenting differ?
- What is Chaim Potok saying about the survival of Judaism?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Chapter 4, pages 73-92**

1. What advice does Reuven's father give him about Danny?
2. Why doesn't Mr. Savo trust Danny?
3. List some of the authors Danny has read.
4. Why is Danny so bewildered the first time he meets Reuven's father in the hospital?
5. What news does Reuven get from Dr. Snyderman after the doctor examines his eye before discharging Reuven from the hospital?
6. What does Mr. Savo tell Reuven about his own eye as he is saying good-bye to Reuven?

#### **Chapter 5, pages 93-96**

1. How does Reuven spend his first day home from the hospital?
2. How long was Reuven in the hospital? In what ways does it seem to him that everything has changed during that time?

#### **Chapter 6, pages 97-107**

1. What does Reuven ask his father about after the Shabbat meal?
2. For how long were the Jews persecuted in western Europe?
3. During the 13th century, why did Poland want Jews when most other counties were persecuting them?
4. What was the Chmielnicki uprising?
5. Who was the "false Messiah" who revealed himself during the time of the Chmielnicki disaster?
6. What did the "Masters of the Name" claim they could do?
7. Who gave birth to Hasidism? Where? When?
8. Who were the Mitnagdim?
9. Who were the tzaddikim?
10. Who was Solomon Maimon? How was he like Danny?

#### **Chapter 7, pages 108-141**

1. Why doesn't Reuven wear a prayer shawl during the Torah service?
2. Why does Danny's father want to meet Reuven?
3. Where is Reuven's mother?
4. What do Danny and Reuven discover about their birthdays?
5. What is unusual about the communication between Danny and his father?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** In novels, as in life, people face decisions. One helpful strategy when making a difficult decision is to think of as many alternatives as possible, then evaluate each one. The “yardsticks” used to measure each possible solution are called **criteria**. The criteria in the chart below are phrased as questions.

When Danny’s father gets Reuven alone and questions him about Danny’s secret trips to the library, Reuven faces a problem. Help him solve that problem by

- a) adding to the choices already listed in the chart below (those he considers in the novel as well as any others you can think of),
- b) adding to the criteria, and
- c) scoring each decision 1 = yes, 2 = maybe, or 3 = no.

Possible Choices ↓	Criteria		
	Is this honest?	Will this preserve my friendship with Danny?	Will this preserve Reb Saunders’ high opinion of me?
Say you know nothing about it.			
Say nothing, advising Reb Saunders to ask Danny.			
Tell everything you know.			

**Writing Activity:** Write an interior monologue revealing Reuven’s thoughts when he finds himself alone with Reb Saunders—before either one breaks the silence.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** You judge what a character is like in much the same way as you judge what a person in real life is like—by how he looks and acts, by what he says, by what he seems to think and feel, and by how others treat him.

As you read the story, create an attribute web for Reuven. Jot down phrases and page references in the boxes below. For each group of details, write a generalization about Reuven. Then, summarize your generalizations in one or two sentences.

The form is an attribute web for the character Reuven. In the center, the name "REUVEN" is written vertically. Four arrows point from the letters "R", "E", "U", and "N" to four separate boxes. Each box is divided into two sections: the top section for specific details and the bottom section for a generalization. The boxes are: 1. Top-left: "Reuven's Actions" / "My generalization:". 2. Top-right: "Reuven's Thoughts" / "My generalization:". 3. Bottom-left: "Reuven's Statements" / "My generalization:". 4. Bottom-right: "What others say or do" / "My generalization:". Below these four boxes is a large box labeled "To Summarize ...". A large "SAMPLE" watermark is overlaid diagonally across the entire page.