



TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 3-5

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The Courage of Sarah Noble

Alice Dalgliesh

READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

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Alice Dalgliesh

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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!

ISBN 978-1-50203-704-6

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Printed in the United States of America.

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Skills and Strategies

Thinking

Brainstorming, classifying and categorizing, evaluating, analyzing details, comparing and contrasting

Vocabulary

Synonyms/antonyms

Comprehension

Predicting, sequencing, story mapping

Writing

Script for radio play, narrative, description, letter

Listening/Speaking

Participation in discussion

Literary Elements

Character, setting, plot development, figurative language, conflict

Summary:

Based on real people, this is the Newbery-Honor winning story of eight-year-old Sarah's journey to Connecticut with her father in 1707. One of Sarah's many brothers and sisters was a young infant when Sarah's parents decided to make a new home on the Connecticut frontier. Rather than make the trip with a baby, it was decided that Sarah's father would go on ahead to build the new home, with Sarah as his cook and companion. Many times during that journey, Sarah's mother's words echoed in the girl's mind, giving her strength: "Keep up your courage, Sarah Noble!" Many times, too, she sought the comfort of her cloak, a security blanket, of sorts. She needed that courage and comfort when trying to sleep in the woods amidst strange animal noises; when spending the night with gruff Mistress Robinson and her sons, with their tales of head-chopping Indians; and later, when listening to the night sounds in the dark cave her father had chosen for shelter while building the new home in New Milford.

She needed that courage when she found herself alone, one day, surrounded by Indians—until she realized that they were children who wanted to be her friends. She spent many happy hours playing with these children and teaching them English while her father worked on raising logs for the house with the help of one of the Indian men, "Tall John." Finally, the cabin was finished and it was time for Sarah's father to return to Massachusetts for the rest of the family. She was frightened at first when he outlined his plan for leaving her with Tall John's family until his return, but she soon grew comfortable with her new life, helping the Indians with weaving and other chores, wearing the deerskin clothes and moccasins that Tall John's wife had made for her, and stopped worrying about the possibility of enemy Indians attacking Tall John's tribe.

Finally, to Sarah's joy—her family appeared. For all the growing up she had done, she was happy to be a little girl again—a little girl with her doll to play with, and with her mother to send her to bed.

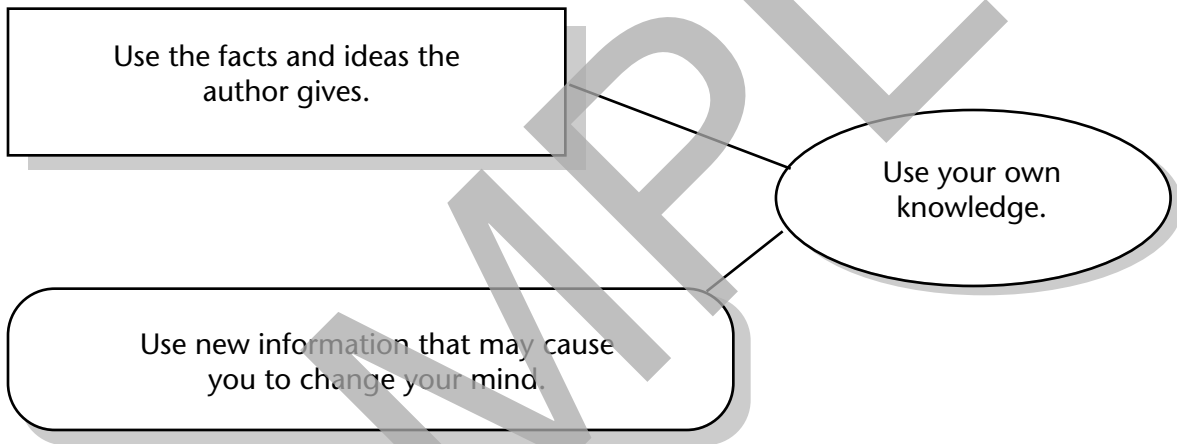
Prior to Reading:

You may wish to choose one or more of the following prereading discussion questions/activities. 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.

Using Predictions

We all make predictions as we read—little guesses about what will happen next, how the conflict will be resolved, which details given by the author will be important to the plot, which details will help to fill in our sense of a character. Students should be encouraged to predict, to make sensible guesses. As students work on predictions, these discussion questions can be used to guide them: What are some of the ways to predict? What is the process of a sophisticated reader’s thinking and predicting? What clues does an author give us to help us in making our predictions? Why are some predictions more likely than others?

A predicting chart is for students to record their predictions. As each subsequent chapter is discussed, you can review and correct previous predictions. This procedure serves to focus on predictions and to review the stories.



Predictions:

7. Why doesn't Sarah's father answer right away when she asks to go to the Indian childrens' homes? Do you think he should let her go? *(He is not certain of her safety, but trusts Tall John because he has come to know him.)*

Prediction: What will the new house be like? When will it be finished? What will Sarah and her father do when it is finished?

Research Activity: Read one of the Bible stories Sarah likes: the story of Sarah, the story of David and Goliath, or the story of Samuel.

Chapters 7-8
pp. 33-41

Vocabulary: scarlet 33 squaw 36 mush 36 strides 38

Discussion Questions:

1. Why doesn't Sarah's father take her on the return trip to get her family? How does she react when she learns she is to stay behind? *(The trip is long; Thomas will be needed to carry goods when the family comes back; she is afraid and says so.)* What do you think Sarah's father would have done if she had begged to go back with him? Why didn't she?
2. Why is Sarah afraid to stay with Tall John's family? How does her father feel about leaving her with them? *(Both trust Tall John and his family, but even Sarah's father knows there is a chance of attack by an enemy tribe.)*
3. What is "strange" about the first night Sarah spends with the Indians? *(The food is different; the Indians eat with their hands; the children stare as she prepares for bed, combs her hair.)*
4. Why does Small John say "Good" as he listens to Sarah pray? *(His father explains that she prays to her "Great Spirit" just as they do.)*

Prediction: How will Sarah spend her days with Tall John and his family?

Art Activity: Draw the house (or construct it from cardboard, Legos, etc.) based on the description given in the story.

Chapters 9-11
pp. 42-54

Vocabulary: disturbance 43 waded 47 outlandish 50

Vocabulary Activity: Develop word maps for “disturbance” and “outlandish.” See sample framework and example below.

