



TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 9-12

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Cry, the Beloved Country

Alan Paton

READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Cry, the Beloved Country

Alan Paton

TEACHER GUIDE

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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Table of Contents

Rationale	3
Plot Summary	5
Initiating Activities	7
Anticipation Guide, Viewing, Historical Background, Eliciting Background Knowledge, Brainstorming, Role Play, Prereading Predictions, Special Vocabulary	
Vocabulary, Discussion Questions, Writing Ideas, Activities	
Chapters 1–5	10
Chapters 6-8	15
Chapters 9-12.....	17
Chapters 13-16.....	19
Chapters 17-20.....	21
Chapters 21-24.....	23
Chapters 25-28.....	25
Chapters 29-31.....	27
Chapters 32-35.....	28
Chapter 36.....	30
Post-Reading Discussion Questions	32
Post-Reading Extension Activities	33
Further Reading and Viewing, Language Study, Art, Music, Drama, Oral Language, Writing, Research, Science, Math	
Cooperative Groups as a Strategy with the Novel Units Approach	37
Assessment	43

Novel Units: Rationale

How do you ensure that the needs of individual students are met in a heterogeneous classroom? How do you challenge students of all abilities without losing some to confusion and others to boredom?

With the push toward “untracking” our schools, these are questions that more and more educators need to examine. As any teacher of “gifted” or “remedial” students can attest, even “homogeneous” classrooms contain students with a range of abilities and interests.

Here are some of the strategies research suggests:

- cooperative learning
- differentiated assignments
- questioning strategies that tap several levels of thinking
- flexible grouping within the class
- cross-curriculum integration
- process writing
- portfolio evaluation

Novel Units are designed with these seven facets in mind. Discussion questions and projects are framed to span all of the levels of Bloom’s taxonomy. Graphic organizers are provided to enhance critical thinking. Tests have been developed at two levels of difficulty (Level 1=lower; Level 2=higher). While most activities could be completed individually, many are ideal vehicles for collaborative effort. Throughout the guides, there is an emphasis on collaboration: students helping other students to generate ideas, students working together to actualize those ideas, and students sharing their products with other students. Extension activities link literature with other areas of the curriculum—including writing, art, music, science, history, geography, and current events—and provide a basis for portfolio evaluation.

Finally, teachers are encouraged to adapt the guides to meet the needs of individual classes and students. You know your students best; we are offering you some tools for working with them. Here are some of the “nuts and bolts” for using these “tools”: a glossary of some of the terms used above that will facilitate your use of the guides.

Vocabulary • Discussion Questions

Writing Ideas • Activities

Chapters 1-5

Pages 3-27

Vocabulary Words:

bracken 3

maize 4

Afrikaans 15

sombrely 26

veld 3

laboriously 9

Anglican 19

kloof 3

primitive 13

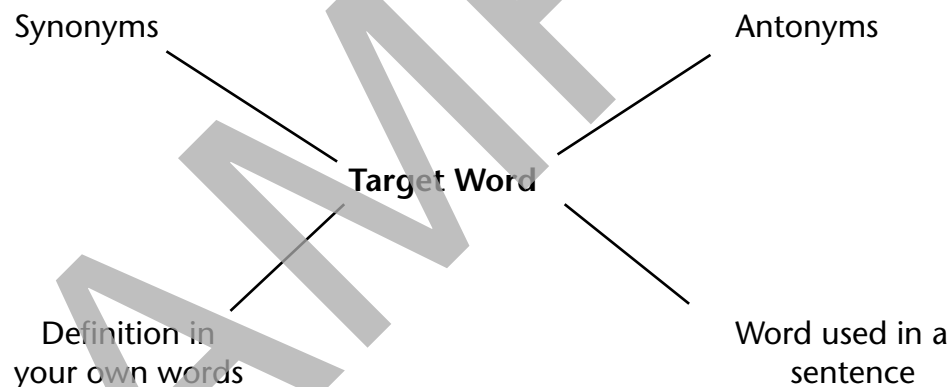
lavatory 21

desolate 4

wattle 14

pondered 26

Vocabulary Activity: Word mapping is an activity that lends itself to any vocabulary list. For words that have clear antonyms, the following framework is suitable:



Students might enjoy coming up with variations on this framework. For example, instead of listing antonyms, students could provide line drawings to illustrate the target word.

Cooperative Learning Activity: You may want to have all students examine examples of wordmaps for all target vocabulary words, even when the list is too lengthy to expect all of the students to map all of the words. One way to circumvent the problem is to assign small groups responsibility for several words. Each group selects a reporter who describes the group's word maps to the large group, using an overhead projector.

Chapters 6-8

Pages 28-51

Vocabulary Words:

segregation 28
punctuated 32
fidelity 37
corrupt 39
boycott 42
illicit 44

confirmation 29
knowing smile 34
intervene 37
exposition 39
picketing 43
squatters 49

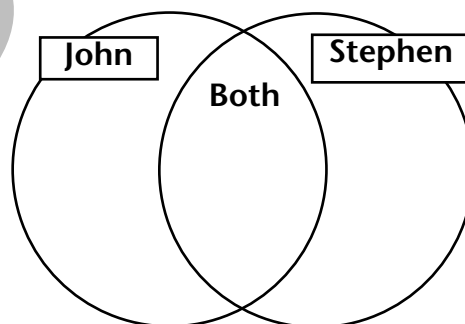
sullenly 30
compounds 36
attentively 38
grave 40
lorries 44

self-denunciation 31
compelled 37
earnestly 39
oppressed 40
accomodation 44

Discussion Questions:

1. Why does Msimangu say that it is a pity that blacks and whites are not separated? (The trams are segregated; hooligans often throw black travelers off the tram.)
2. How does Gertrude act when she finds her brother at the door? How do they part? (She is afraid, defensive, uncomfortable, then sobs that she wants to return to Ndotsheni with him, and they pray together.)
3. p. 32 "...already the tribe was being rebuilt..." Who feels that way? Why? (Kumalo feels optimistic because Gertrude is coming back with him; already he has begun to heal the "wound" created when she left.)
4. What is Stephen Kumalo's brother like? How does he feel about the chief? How has he changed since Stephen last saw him? (Unlike Stephen—humble, religious, a devoted husband—John has given up on God, the chief, and the tribal way, left his wife, and now is an aggressive spokesman, calling for an end to the oppression of blacks in South Africa.)

Have students compare/contrast the two brothers using a Venn diagram chart drawn on a large piece of butcher paper:



-
5. What is Msimangu’s opinion of John Kumalo? What is yours? (He thinks John is misguided in direction, although not entirely in goals; he observes that too often when the South African black gets the power and money he seeks, he uses them to gratify his own lusts instead of using them to more productive ends; Msimangu thinks it is self-destructive to plan to use power for revenge against the white man—that blacks and whites need to work together.)
 6. Why does Kumalo go to Alexandra? (John mentions that Absalom and John’s son had gotten a room in Alexandra.)
 7. What is the petition that Msimangu describes? Why did his white friends fight against it? (Some whites petitioned to do away with the black neighborhood in Alexandra because of the high crime rate, but Msimangu’s friends feel that the good things of Alexandra are more than the bad—that it is important for blacks to buy land and own houses.)
 8. Why is the woman who answers the door in Alexandra afraid? What does she tell Kumalo? (She is afraid to reveal all she knows of Absalom’s troubles; when Kumalo returns alone, she tells him that Absalom and his cousin brought stolen goods to the house and left about a year ago.)
 9. What is the reason for the boycott of the buses? Why does Kumalo smile when he sees the white drivers take in black passengers? (The whites are trying to raise the price; Kumalo smiles because he is unused to seeing whites help blacks in public.)
 10. Why does Msimangu hit himself across the chest and say, “Take me to court”? (He is thinking about the defiance of the white man who told the traffic officer to take him to court when the officer asked whether he had a license to carry black passengers.)

PREDICTION: When Kumalo goes to Shanty Town looking for Absalom, what sights and sounds will he experience? How long will it be before he finds his son?

WRITING ACTIVITY: Imagine that you are Stephen Kumalo. You have just witnessed the boycott of the buses. Write an entry in your private journal about what you have seen and how it makes you feel.