



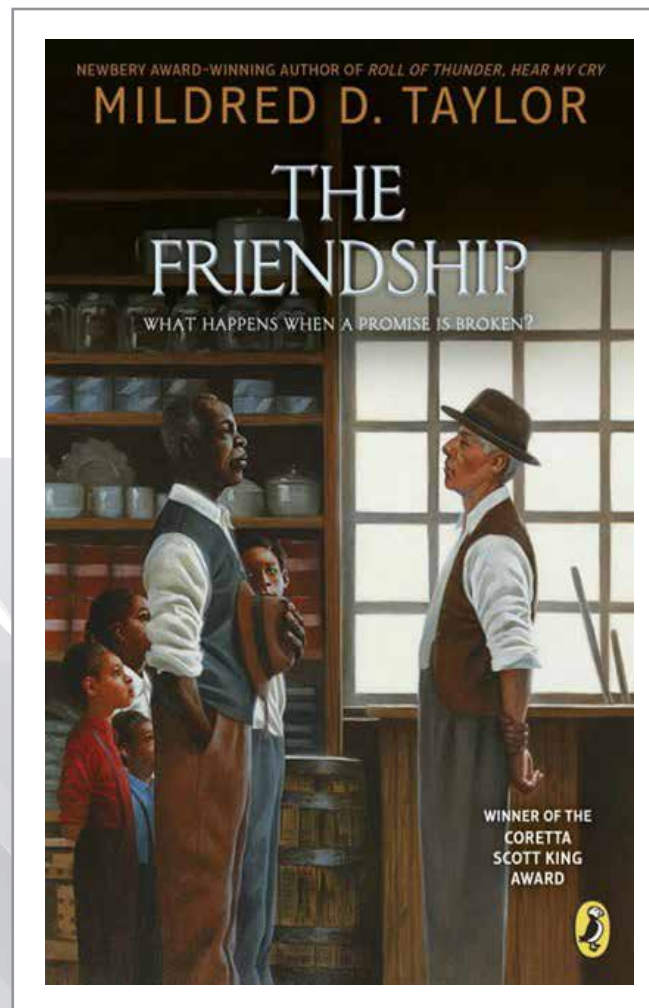
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 3-5

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The Friendship

Mildred D. Taylor



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Friendship

Mildred D. Taylor

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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Skills and Strategies

Thinking

Identifying attributes,
compare/contrast, pros/cons,
brainstorming, identifying
stereotypes, research,
decision-making

Comprehension

Predicting, sequencing,
summarizing, cause and
effect, inference, main idea

Writing

Character journal, poetry,
personal writing, description,
journalism

Vocabulary

Target words, vocabulary
sort, root/base words,
synonym, dialect, word map

Listening/Speaking

Dramatizing, interviewing,
discussion, story-telling

Literary Elements

Characterization, setting,
plot development

Summary of *The Friendship*

The Friendship tells the story of Cassie Logan and her brothers who live in a small town in Mississippi. The year is 1933. The children are friends with Mr. Tom Bee, an elderly black man. The story describes the relationship between the black community and the white community. In 1933, some things are just not done. For example, a black man must never call a white man by his first name. As the story unfolds, the children learn of a special friendship between Mr. Tom Bee and the owner of the Wallace Store, Mr. John Wallace. Trouble begins to brew when Mr. Tom Bee insists upon calling Mr. Wallace by the name John. Cassie Logan and her brothers learn that some friendships do not survive cultural differences even if there are valid reasons for the relationships to continue.

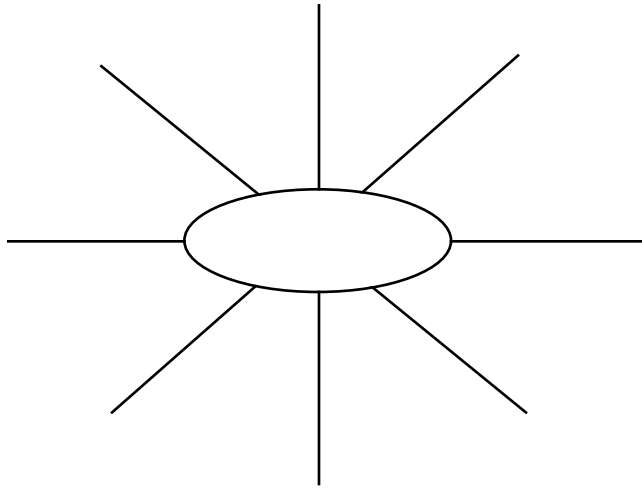
About the Author

Mildred D. Taylor grew up in Toledo, Ohio, but was born in Jackson, Mississippi. She graduated from the University of Toledo and then served two years with the Peace Corps in Ethiopia. She entered the School of Journalism at the University of Colorado after returning to the United States. There she helped the university structure a Black Studies program. Mildred Taylor's books have won many awards: Council on Interracial Books Award in the African Category for *Songs of the Trees*, the 1977 Newbery Medal for *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, and the Coretta Scott King Award for *Let the Circle Be Unbroken*, *The Road to Memphis*, and *The Friendship*. Ms. Taylor now lives in Colorado.

Introductory Activities

1. **Previewing the book:** Have students look at the cover of the book and answer the journalist's questions about what they see: who? what? where? when? why? Based on their answers, students predict what the book will be about.
2. Have students write the names of three of their best friends at the top of their paper. Under each name, the students list at least five qualities that make that person a good friend.
3. **Character Journal:** List the main characters from *The Friendship* and have students choose one. As they read the book, students write regular journal entries from that character's point of view. Journal entries should reflect on the events of the story. At various points in their reading, have students share their journal entries with classmates.
4. Create an **attribute web** (see next page) with students for each of the following ideas: friendship, culture, prejudice, obligation, promise. Focus on one word at a time. Begin by writing the word in the center of a large piece of paper. Ask students to quickly tell what each word brings to mind. Encourage students to elaborate on particular ideas.

Sample Attribute Web



5. **Prediction Chart:** Have students set up a prediction chart (see pages 6-7 of this guide) to use as they read the book.
6. **Anticipation Questions:** Have students respond to each of the following statements with a “thumbs-up” (I agree) or a “thumbs-down” (I disagree) and discuss their responses.
 - It’s important to keep your word.
 - People change for the better as they get older.
 - It’s important to respect all people, no matter what their race.
 - It’s okay to make fun of other people.
 - If someone embarrasses you, you should get back at them by hurting them.
7. **Social Studies:** Using reference materials from the library, students can research the lives of famous people born in 1933 and important events that occurred in that year.

3. **Critical Thinking:** Have the students create a chart that lists the pros and cons about the children entering the store after their parents asked them not to enter.
4. **Literary Analysis/Character:** Have the students begin a character attribute web (see pages 8–10) for each of the main characters in the story. Students should continue to add information to the webs as they read the rest of the book.
5. **Literary Analysis/Story Maps:** Have students begin a story map (see page 11) to use as they read the story. As they read, students should continue to add new information about the characters, setting, problems, and events of the story.

Pages 16–21

Vocabulary

elderly (16)	sharecropping (16)	sardines (16)	loomed (16)
intensely (17)	figure (17)	moodily (17)	miserably (17)
sympathesizing (17)	revealing (17)	indignantly (20)	skeptically (20)
affirmation (20)	remarked (20)	seemingly (21)	comforted (21)

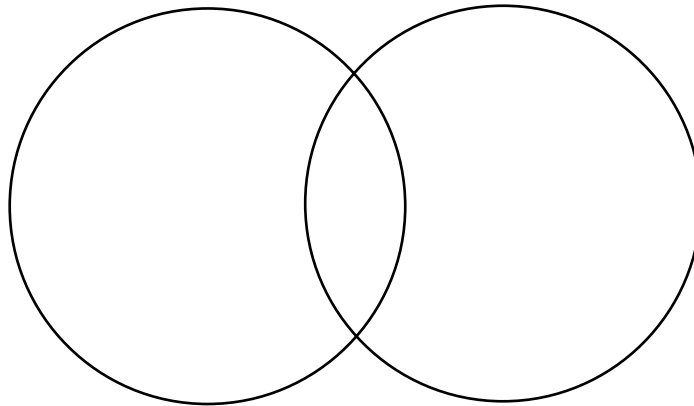
Discussion Questions

1. Who do the children meet as they are leaving the store? (*Mr. Tom Bee*)
2. What is Mr. Bee’s favorite thing to do during the day? (*He loves to spend time fishing for cat fish.*)
3. Do you think Mr. Tom Bee is a generous man? Why? (*Answers will vary.*)
4. Why does the narrator of the story sit down on the steps in the shade? (*She is trying to escape the miserable heat of the Mississippi summer.*)
5. Who always sympathizes with other people’s feelings? (*Christopher-John tries to comfort others.*)
6. Why is Little Man feeling hurt and worried? (*He takes great pride in being clean. He feels sad because Dewberry calls his hands dirty. He is also worried that Dewberry and Thurston will cut off his hands.*)
7. How does Stacey explain what Dewberry and Thurston have said to Little Man? (*He tells him that they are just teasing. It is their way of “funnin’.”*)
8. Why do you think Little Man put his hand flat on the ground? (*He is comparing the color of his hand to the color of the dirt.*)
9. Do you think Little Man will ever forget what the storekeeper has said to him about his hands? Why or why not? (*Answers will vary.*)

Supplementary Activities

1. **Literary Analysis:** Have the students compare their home town to the town in Mississippi. Discuss the differences and similarities between the two towns. Then have students make a Venn diagram that shows how the two towns are alike and how they are different. (See sample diagram on page 14.)
2. **Writing:** Have students look at the illustration on pages 18–19 of the book. Then have them write a paragraph describing the picture.
3. **Research:** have students research to answer the following questions: What is a sharecropper? Where did sharecroppers live? How did they make a living? Do we still have sharecroppers in the United States?

My Town



Town in
Mississippi

4. **Critical Thinking:** Have students discuss the following questions: How are you different from one of the characters in the story? How are you similar to one of the characters in the book?

Pages 21–29

Vocabulary

nudged (21)	reddening (21)	dangling (22)	puzzlement (24)
muggy (24)	midday (24)	cawing (24)	slightly (24)
built (24)	frail (24)	sharp-edged (25)	stubbornness (25)
snapped (25)	sighed (25)	realized (26)	sorry (26)
touchy (26)	seriously (26)	respect (28)	addressed (28)
forgetful (29)	shivered (29)		

Discussion Questions

1. Why is Jeremy standing at the corner of the store's porch? (*He has come to wait on his Pa and R.W. and Melvin. They have a load to pick up.*)
2. What is Stacey's response to Jeremy's question about when they are going fishing? (*He says that cotton time is here and there isn't any time to do much fishing.*)
3. Why is Jeremy a puzzlement to Cassie? (*He always tries to talk friendly to them and he is white.*)
4. What time of day is it when the children sit on the porch waiting for Mr. Tom Bee? (*Around noon; midday.*)
5. Why does Mr. Tom Bee look frail? (*He is a slightly built man. He is also old and standing near a much younger man.*)
6. Why won't Dewberry give Mr. Tom Bee four cans of sardines? (*He thinks Mr. Bee has too many charges now, and he already has a string of fish in his hands.*)
7. Who wants to give Christopher-John some candy canes? (*Mr. Tom Bee*) Who does he ask to give him the candy? (*Dewberry*)