



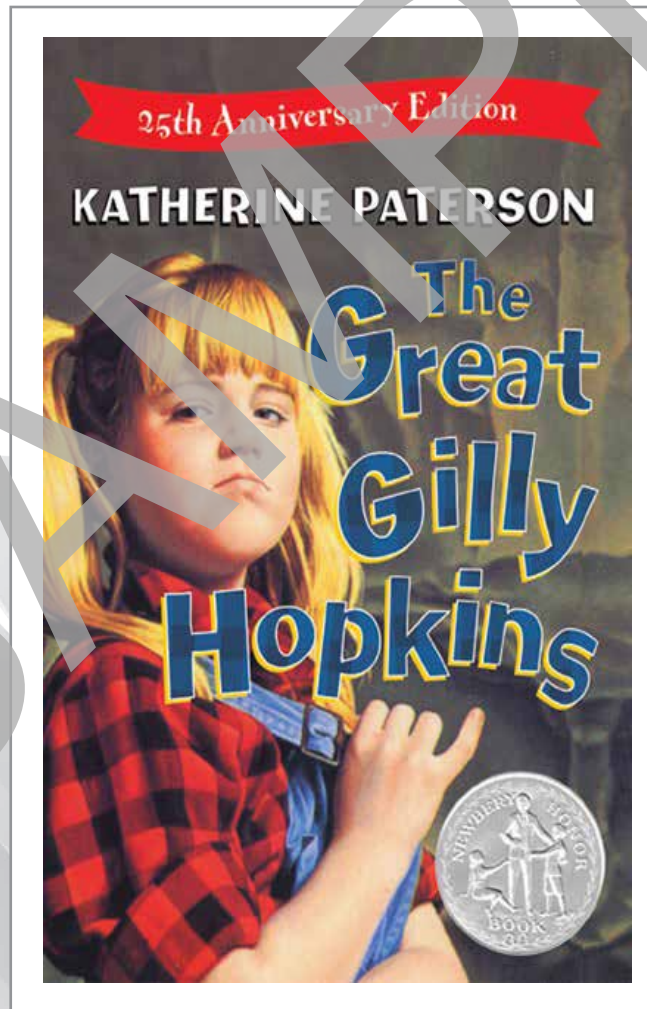
**TEACHER GUIDE**

**GRADES 3-5**

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

# **The Great Gilly Hopkins**

Katherine Paterson



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

# The Great Gilly Hopkins

Katherine Paterson

## 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

Research, brainstorming

### Literary Elements

Story elements, point of  
view, characterization,  
metaphor, foreshadowing,  
irony, simile, language style

### Writing

Letters, narrative, description

### Comprehension

Predicting, comparison/  
contrast, cause/effect

### Vocabulary

Antonyms/synonyms, word  
mapping, multiple meaning

### Listening/Speaking

Role play

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## Summary

*The Great Gilly Hopkins*, a Newbery Honor Book, centers on Galadriel Hopkins. Gilly, as Galadriel is known, is a bright, alert, street-wise eleven-year-old who has been moved from foster placement to foster placement, probably because she's typically hard to handle. Gilly, who really only wants a home, plays little psychological games with her teacher, foster mother, and acquaintances. While the story has bittersweet moments and may even provoke a damp eye or two, it gives us a clear, vivid view of the title character and offers insight into the struggles of an emerging adolescent.

## The Author

Katherine Paterson's work has won many honors for children's fiction, including Newbery Awards, National Book Award, and Notable Children's Books. She has authored *Bridge to Terabithia*, *The Master Puppeteer*, *Of Nightingales That Weep*, and *The Sign of the Chrysanthemum*. She was born in China and lived in Japan. She currently resides in Maryland.

## Introductory Information and Activities

### *Prereading Discussion Topics:*

1. On separation from family: Have you ever been separated from a parent or family member for a period of time? How did you feel about the separation? What was the hardest part? What did you do to make yourself miss the parent or other family member less?
2. Facing a frightening situation: Have you ever been very frightened? What made you afraid? What was the situation? How did you feel at first? Did you try to bluff, to act tough? How did you overcome your fear?
3. Thinking positively: Have you ever heard the expression, "the power of positive thinking"? What does it mean? Do you believe in it? If not, why not? If so, when have you seen it work for someone else? When has it worked for you?

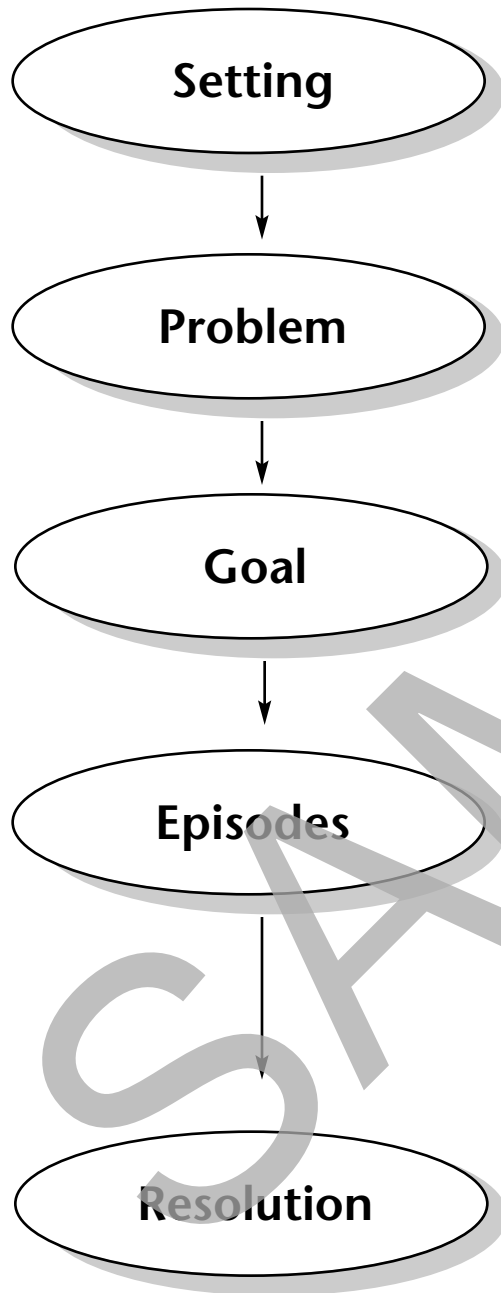
### *Initiating Activities:*

1. Here are some clues about the novel we are going to read. Given these clues, what might happen in the book?

foster home    sassy girl    freaky foster brother    emotional problems

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## Story Map



Characters \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Time and Place \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Problem \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Goal \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Beginning → Development → Outcome

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Resolution \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Chart on page 4 may be used. Have the students write a prediction as to what they think will happen in each chapter. After they have read the chapter, have them summarize what really happened in only one or two sentences. If this is a first attempt at summarizing, the teacher should model a summary for Chapter 1. Explain the part of a summary and the questions one must ask in order to write a summary. For Chapter 2, the class may work in pairs to write the summary. For the remainder of the chapters, they may summarize independently or in groups. After the summary is written, the students should write their independent prediction as to what they think will happen in the next chapter.

Steps to a summary:

- Main Ideas: What is this about?
- Key words
- Only the most important ideas
- Eliminate detail.
- Keep it short.

## Chapter 1: “Welcome to Thompson Park”—Pages 1-6

### Vocabulary:

maneuver 1	flinched 2	obligingly 3	gruesome 3
bolster 5	repertory 5	barracuda 6	

### Vocabulary Activity:

List the vocabulary words on the board or on a sheet of paper in the form of a table. Pronounce the words. Ask students to rate their knowledge of each of the words (as a group or individually). After the students have read the chapter, ask if they would change any of the classifications.

I Can Define

I Have Heard

I Don't Know

Words:

### Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. Who is telling the story? What is point of view? (*Point of view is the angle from which a narrator tells a story. The students may not be sure after reading just Chapter 1. In third-person omniscient point of view, the narrator of the story is an outsider, but can give us insight into what the characters are thinking or feeling. In third-person limited omniscient point of view, the narrator can give us some insight into the characters' thoughts and*

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*feelings, but his is limited to one character or only a few characters.)* Ask the class to find examples of point of view. The students will support their ideas of point of view using examples from the novel. How would the novel be changed if the social worker was telling the story?

2. Why has Gilly moved around so much? (*Gilly was in foster care. The Dixon foster parents had moved to Florida; foster parent Mrs. Richmond was hospitalized for her nerves, etc.*) How do you think moving so often would make Gilly feel?
3. Do you think Gilly wants to be cooperative with Mrs. Trotter? Why or why not?
4. Why do you think Gilly spreads her gum on the door handle?
5. What does “get off on the right foot” mean? (*page 2*) What does Gilly picture as the right foot start?
6. What does Gilly think of herself? (*page 3, does not wet the bed anymore; is not nice; is brilliant; is famous across the county; nobody wants to tangle with her; is too clever; is too hard to manage*) What do you think she really is thinking?
7. Reread the last two paragraphs of the chapter. What insights do you have about Gilly? (*She likes to be “in charge.”*) Make an attribute web for Gilly.

**Prediction:**

Given this kind of attitude, what do you think Gilly will make of this opportunity of a new foster home?

**Supplementary Activities:**

1. If you were an illustrator what pictures would you add? Why?
2. Character Chart: Complete the character chart on page 14. Add characters as you meet them in the novel. For each of the characters, describe when they experience the feelings listed. Add additional feelings if you like.

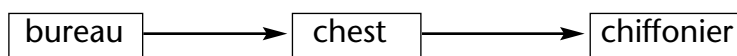
## Chapter 2: “The Man Who Comes to Supper”—Pages 7-15

**Vocabulary:**

bureau 7                      curlicues 8                      abruptly 9                      vengeance 10  
incident 14                      self-righteous 15                      fetch 15

**Vocabulary Activity:**

Synonym Chain: English has many synonyms for the same word. Try to make a chain of synonyms for several of the vocabulary words.



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## Character Chart

Feelings:	Gilly	Miss Ellis	Mrs. Trotter
Frustration			
Disgust			
Fear			
Anger			
Relief			
Happiness			
Humiliation			

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