



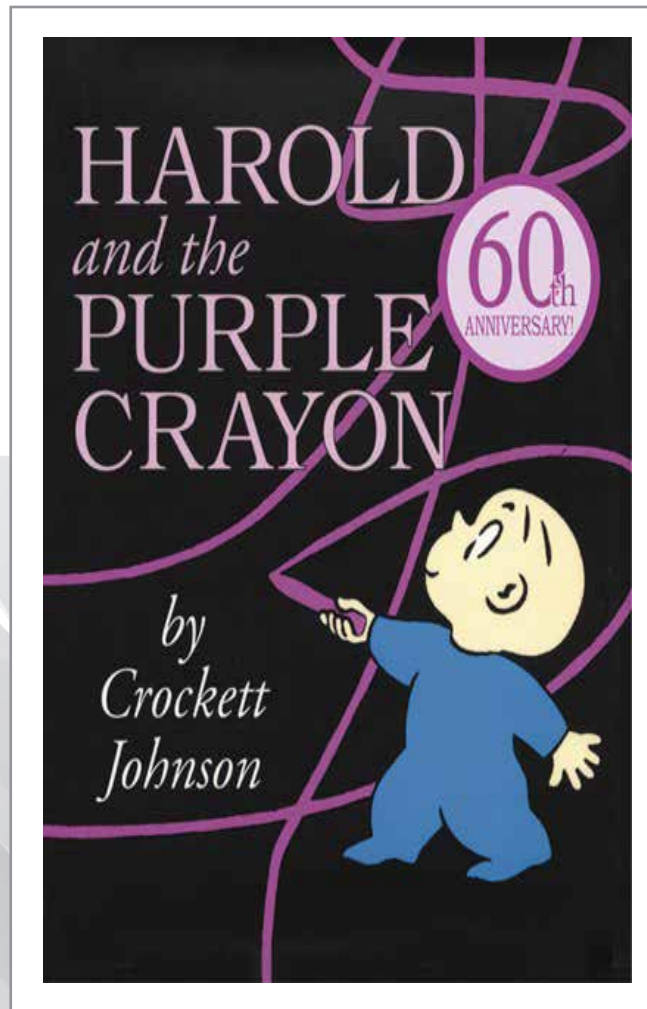
**TEACHER GUIDE**

**GRADES K-3**

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

# Harold and the Purple Crayon

Crockett Johnson



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

# Harold and the Purple Crayon

Crockett Johnson

## 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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## Summary

*Harold and the Purple Crayon* tells the story of how Harold uses his purple crayon to create special adventures for himself.

## About the Author and Illustrator

David Johnson Leisk was born on October 20, 1906, in New York City. He grew up in Elmhurst, Long Island, New York, and attended high school there. He completed his art studies at Cooper Union College and New York University. After completing art school, he worked in Macy's advertising department and served as art editor for various magazines. He was also a professional football player for a brief period of time. Leisk adopted the pen name of Crockett Johnson, using a childhood nickname for his first name.

In 1939, Johnson met the woman who would become his wife, Ruth Krauss, a writer of children's books. During the early years of their marriage, Johnson wrote and illustrated a comic-strip starring his beloved character, Barnaby. However, he eventually followed Krauss's lead and became involved in children's books. He illustrated *This Rich World* (1943), *The Carrot Seed* (1945), and several other books before both writing and illustrating his first children's book, *Who's Upside Down?* (1952). Johnson's most famous character, Harold, first appeared in *Harold and the Purple Crayon* in 1955. Several other Harold books followed from 1956 through 1963. In his later life, Johnson—obviously ahead of his time—used a computer to plan the shapes for more than 100 abstract paintings he completed. Many of these paintings now hang in several different museums and art galleries.

Johnson died on July 11, 1975.

## Bulletin Board Activities

1. Cover a large bulletin board with white butcher paper. Have students use one crayon each to draw on the paper. Direct students to draw themselves having a special adventure.
2. Display an interactive graph titled “Favorite Colors.” Have each student color a paper crayon (see page 20 of this guide for crayon pattern) in his/her favorite color and write their name on it. Students then attach their paper crayons on the appropriate portion of the graph.

## Initiating Activities

1. Prediction: Show students the cover of *Harold and the Purple Crayon*. Discuss what the students think the boy in the picture is doing.
2. Critical Thinking: Have students respond to the following questions. Write at least three student responses on the chalkboard for each of the following questions:
  - Why do people have favorite colors?
  - What is your favorite color? Why?
  - What kinds of pictures do you like to draw? Why?
  - If you could draw yourself doing something exciting, what would you draw?
3. Brainstorming: Have students fill out the Attribute Web on page 5 of this guide.
4. Poetry Writing: As a class, write a color poem. Each line of the poem should begin with the words “Purple is/are...” (The poem does not need to rhyme.)

*Example:*

Purple is blueberry syrup on crisp waffles.

Purple is the sky at sunset.

Purple is the bruise on my knee.

Purple are the flowers in my Mommy’s garden.

5. Anticipation Guide: Have students begin the Anticipation Guide on page 6 of this guide. Once the class has finished reading *Harold and the Purple Crayon*, have them complete the chart.
6. Critical Thinking to Music: Imagination is an important part of *Harold and the Purple Crayon*. Discuss imagination with the class. Then play a piece of instrumental music. Have students do an imagination exercise. Suggestion: As students listen to the music, have them draw what they hear. The music may remind them of objects they can draw.

## Study Guide

### “One evening...”—“He backed away.”

Vocabulary
decided
moonlight
crayon
forest
tasty
frightening
dragon
guard

1. What time of day is it when the story begins? (*evening*)
2. How does Harold take a walk in the moonlight? (*He draws himself a moon and a straight path to walk on.*)
3. Why does Harold take his purple crayon with him on a walk? (*Answers will vary; Suggestion: He may want to draw other things.*)
4. Why does Harold leave the straight path? (*He doesn't seem to be getting anywhere. He takes a short cut across the field.*)
5. What does Harold draw in his forest? (*one apple tree*)
6. Why does Harold draw a frightening dragon? (*to guard the apples on the tree until they turn red*)

### Supplementary Activities

1. Literary Devices: **Compound words**—closed: moonlight; open: short cut, apple tree; **Expressions**—“thinking it over,” “short cut”
2. Research/Drawing: Find pictures of forests in magazines or books. What is a forest? Can a forest have only one tree in it, like Harold’s forest? Draw a forest of your own.
3. Art: Cut a paper bag into the shape of a balloon and paste it to a piece of paper. Color the balloon with your favorite crayon color. Draw Harold in the balloon.
4. Brainstorm: Your teacher will write the word “imagination” on the chalkboard. What does this word mean to you? What have you imagined? Raise your hand and share your ideas with the class.

### “His hand holding the purple crayon shook.”—“And the thought of picnics made him hungry.”

Vocabulary
suddenly
realized
happening
ocean
aboard
trim
ashore
reminded
picnics

1. What happens after Harold draws a dragon? (*He is afraid, and his hand shakes. The purple crayon is in his shaking hand, drawing an ocean.*)
2. Why does Harold draw an ocean before he draws a boat? (*He did not know he drew an ocean until he fell in it.*)
3. What kind of boat does Harold draw? (*a sailboat*)
4. Who sails along with Harold? (*the moon*)
5. When does Harold stop sailing? (*when he “makes land;” Discuss the significance of this phrase, figuratively and literally.*)
6. What makes Harold think about being hungry? (*When Harold stands on the sandy beach, he thinks of picnics and feels hungry.*)

# Sequencing Activity Patterns

