



TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Homecoming

Cynthia Voigt

READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Homecoming

Cynthia Voigt

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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!

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Parts contain: Vocabulary Words and Activities, Discussion Questions and Activities, Predictions, and Supplementary Activities for each chapter	
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Skills and Strategies

Comprehension

Comparison/contrast, cause
and effect, predicting

Writing

Monologue, TV news story,
narrative

Vocabulary

Categorizing, context clues,
word mapping, synonyms

Thinking

Brainstorming, research

Listening/Speaking

Drama, discussion,
mime

Literary Elements

Characterization, setting,
story elements, simile/
metaphor, personification

Summary

Four children are left stranded in a Connecticut shopping center when their mother disappears—overwhelmed by the lack of a job, money, emotional support, and the responsibilities of caring for four children. After waiting overnight, the children decide they should set off on their own for Bridgeport, the home of their only known relative. The author tells the story of their journey in a day-by-day account. Traveling on foot, the children struggle to survive on a minimum of resources—often having to fish for food, sleep in abandoned homes and state parks, and match wits with a variety of characters along the way. The burden of responsibility falls largely on 13-year-old Dicey, who exhibits a persistent resourcefulness and a devotion to keeping her family together. But they arrive in Bridgeport only to learn that their great aunt is dead and that her spinster daughter is not fond of children. They are given temporary shelter but feel forced to move on again when threatened with the prospect of separate foster homes. This time their goal is Crisfield, Maryland, where they have discovered they have an eccentric grandmother no one has heard from in years. Grandmother Tillerman does not receive them warmly, so Dicey uses her wits to help keep the family together.

About the Author

Cynthia Voigt was raised in Connecticut and graduated from Dana Hall School and Smith College in Massachusetts. For a number of years she was a teacher of English and classics.

Cynthia Voigt lives in Annapolis, Maryland, with her husband and two children. In addition to writing and teaching, she enjoys fishing, crabbing and many of the outdoor activities described in her books.

Other books by Cynthia Voigt are:

Building Blocks

Come a Stranger

Dicey's Song (Novel Unit Available)

Izzy, Willy-Nilly (Novel Unit Available)

On Fortune's Wheel

The Runner

A Solitary Blue (Novel Unit Available)

Stories about Rosie

Tree by Leaf

The Wings of a Falcon

The Callender Papers

David and Jonathan

Glass Mountain

Jackaroo

Orfe

Seventeen Against the Dealer

Sons From Afar

The Vandemark Mummy

Tell Me If the Lovers Are Losers

THE NOVEL *HOMECOMING* IS DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS, ONE FOR EACH OF THE LONG JOURNEYS THE CHILDREN MAKE.

Part I: Chapter 1—Pages 9-20

Vocabulary:

decipher 10
pursuer 19

hustled 13

moat 13

diversions 14

Vocabulary Activity:

Draw pictures to remember the definitions.

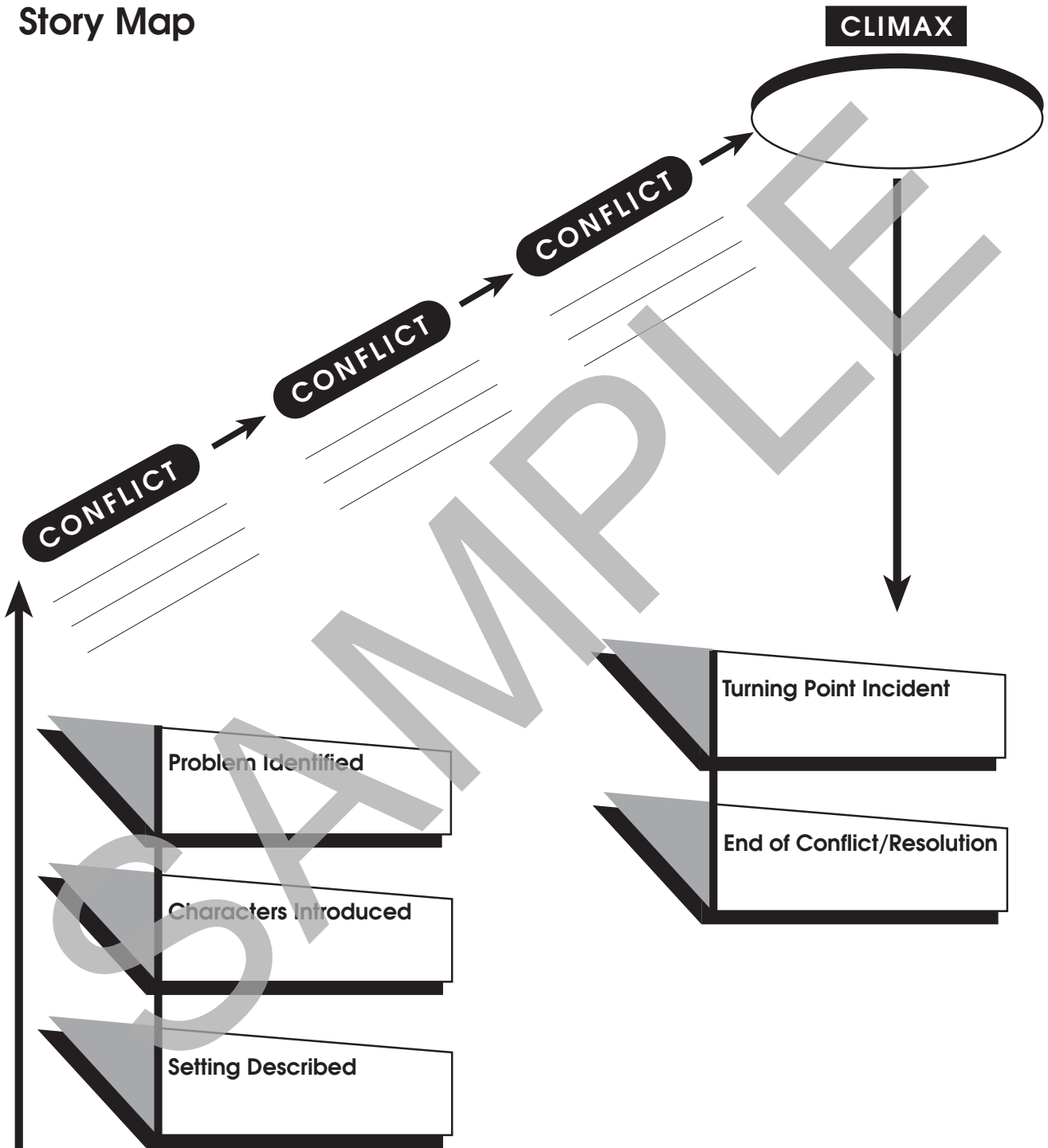
Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. A story map is an outline that helps you to understand and remember the story better. What do you know about the story after reading only the first chapter?
 - What is the setting?
 - Who is the main character?
 - What is the problem?

Begin a story map page. (See page 11 of this guide.) As the story is read more characters may be added and the setting and the problem may change, so additions to the story map may be made.

2. This story starts off with a really big problem. What would you do if your mother left you with two brothers and a sister and very little money? What were Dacey's options or alternatives? Have the class make suggestions. List on a large sheet of paper.
3. What did Dacey think about doing? Why didn't she do these things? Have the class prove what they say by finding the page in the novel to support it.
 - a) Go to the police. (*page 12, could be put in foster homes and be separated*)
 - b) Go back to Provincetown. (*page 12, could not stay in their old house*)
 - c) Go to Bridgeport. (*pages 12, 15, 18, not enough money*)
 - d) Wait for Momma. (*page 12, maybe she would never come back*)
4. What have you learned about Momma? (*pages 9-11, description of her clothing—broken sandal thongs, holes in an oversized sweater, faded, baggy jeans; had lost her job; acted confused and troubled; didn't talk to the children like she used to; bundled the children up in the middle of the night for a trip; walked off and left the children at a shopping mall*) Would you like to have her as a mother? How does she compare with your mother? Begin an attribute web for Momma. Attribute webs are a kind of semantic mapping. It is important to emphasize that attribute webs are just a visual way to organize and remember ideas about particular characters. (See pages 12-13 of this guide.)

Story Map



Using Character Webs—In the Novel Unit Approach

Attribute Webs are simply a visual representation of a character from the novel. They provide a systematic way for the students to organize and recap the information they have about a particular character. Attribute webs may be used after reading the novel to recapitulate information about a particular character or completed gradually as information unfolds, done individually, or finished as a group project.

One type of character attribute web uses these divisions:

- How a character acts and feels. (How does the character feel in this picture? How would you feel if this happened to you? How do you think the character feels?)
- How a character looks. (Close your eyes and picture the character. Describe him to me.)
- Where a character lives. (Where and when does the character live?)
- How others feel about the character. (How does another specific character feel about our character?)

In group discussion about the student attribute webs and specific characters, the teacher can ask for backup proof from the novel. You can also include inferential thinking.

Attribute webs need not be confined to characters. They may also be used to organize information about a concept, object or place.

Attribute Web

