



TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 3-5

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

How to Eat Fried Worms

Thomas Rockwell



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

How to Eat Fried Worms

Thomas Rockwell

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,
visualizing, synthesizing,
comparison/contrast

Comprehension

Predicting, sequencing

Writing

Poetry, narrative, news,
letters

Vocabulary

Context clues, synonyms

Listening/Speaking

Cooperative learning,
character monologues, role
play, mime

Literary Elements

Story structure, simile

Summary

Alan bets Billy 50 dollars that he can't eat 15 worms in 15 days. Alan and his friend Joe provide the worms, while Billy's friend Tom provides support. Billy's problem of managing to eat the worms is solved, only to be replaced by his problem of getting to a worm in order to eat it. Even Billy's family, after checking with the doctor, help him meet the challenges of the bet. Readers will enjoy this book, particularly the variety of recipes for worms and Billy's nonchalant manner in fulfilling his part of the wager.

About the Author

Like his artist father, Norman, Rockwell is considered a talented depicter of childhood. His appeal lies in childlike sensibility and a humor which focuses on subjects that many adults find disgusting and most preteens find funny.

Rockwell got the idea for writing about fried worms after he'd had a depressing meeting with his editor who wanted him to write more realistic fiction. He had a nasty taste in his mouth like he had been eating mud when all of a sudden he thought about a boy eating worms. The outrageousness of the idea delighted him.

Introductory Information and Activities

Instructions Prior to Reading:

Please be selective and use discretion when choosing the activities that you will do with this unit. It is not intended that everything be done, but that the discretionary choices made are most appropriate for your use and group of students. A wide range has been provided, so that individuals as well as groups may benefit from these selections.

You may wish to choose one or more of the following Prereading Discussion Questions. Each is designed to help students draw from their store of background knowledge about the events and themes they will meet in the story they are about to read.

Prereading Discussion Questions:

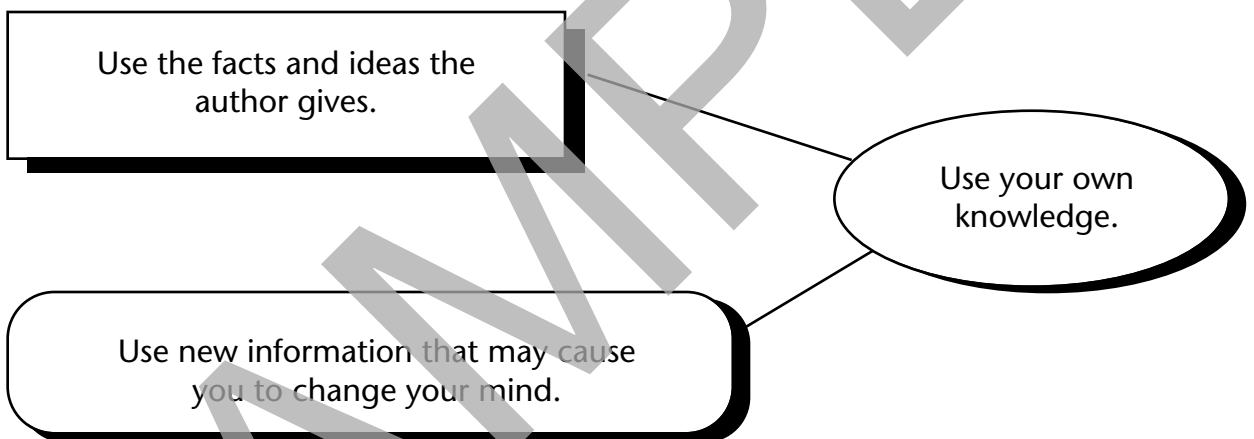
Peer Pressure: What do we mean by this? Who puts on the pressure? What kinds of things does the group want others to do? Is this different from gang pressure? How? How do you resist peer pressure? What sort of things will you go along with? What will you refuse to do? Why?

Facing a Frightening Situation: Have you ever stood up to group pressure to do something? Why did you do it? How did you feel? What made you afraid? Did you have to stand up for what you believed? Did any of your friends take your side? Why did some of your friends go along with peer pressure?

Using Predictions

We all make predictions as we read—little guesses about what will happen next, how the conflict will be resolved, which details given by the author will be important to the plot, which details will help to fill in our sense of a character. Students should be encouraged to predict, to make sensible guesses. As students work on predictions, these discussion questions can be used to guide them: What are some of the ways to predict? What is the process of a sophisticated reader’s thinking and predicting? What clues does an author give us to help us in making our predictions? Why are some predictions more likely than others?

A predicting chart is for students to record their predictions. As each subsequent chapter is discussed, you can review and correct previous predictions. This procedure serves to focus on predictions and to review the stories.



Predictions:

Chapter I: “The Bet”—Pages 1-5; Chapter II: “Digging”—Pages 6-9

Vocabulary:

gnawing 2
schemer 6

fricasseed 5
python 9

furtively 5

manure 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 the students to rate their knowledge of each of the words as a group or individually.

Word	I Can Define	I Have Heard	I Don't Know
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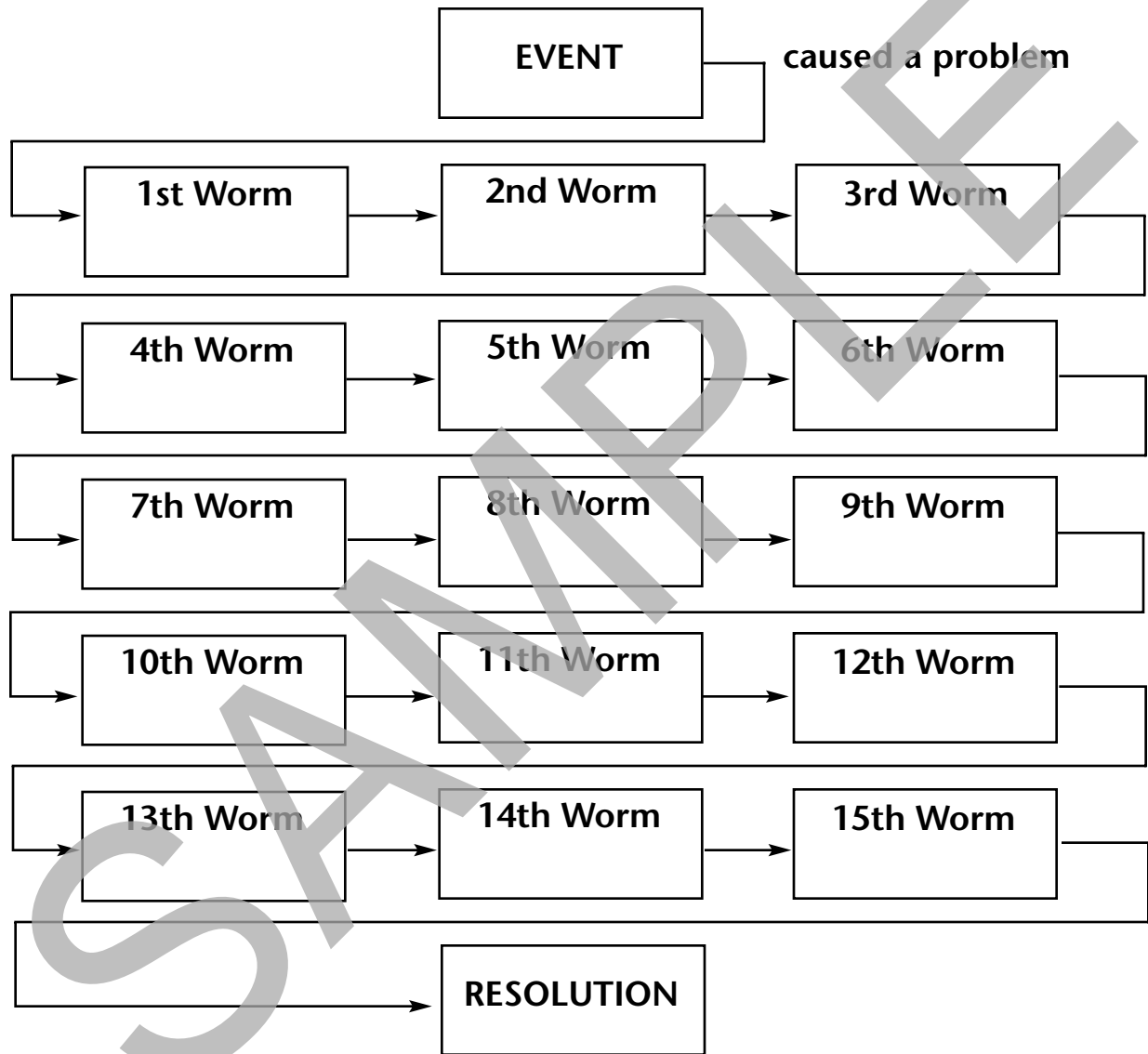
Prediction:

Read the chapter title “The Bet” and pages 1 and 2. What do you think the chapter could be about? Why do you think the chapter title is “The Bet”? What do you think “the bet” will be? The teacher lists class responses or the children list their own predictions on their individual prediction sheets.

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. Why does Billy make the bet to eat 15 worms? (pages 3-5, peer pressure)
2. What kind of peer pressure makes girls do unusual things? What would girls bet? Do you think girls would bet about eating worms?
3. Who do you think will be the main character? Why do you think this? What clues has the author provided?
4. Many stories have the same parts—a setting, characters, ending or conclusion. The story elements may be placed on a story map. Just as a road map helps a driver get from one place to another, so too, a story map leads a reader from one point to another. There are many types of story maps. Students may use one of the types included. (See sequential map and graphing plot lines on pages 10 and 11 of this guide.) What information do we have to begin a story map?
5. What do you learn about the characters? Start an attribute web for each of the four boys as a part of the bulletin board. (See page 12 of this guide.)

Sequential Model



Graphing Plot Lines

Characters

Setting

Problem

Climax:

Resolution:

Beginning:

