



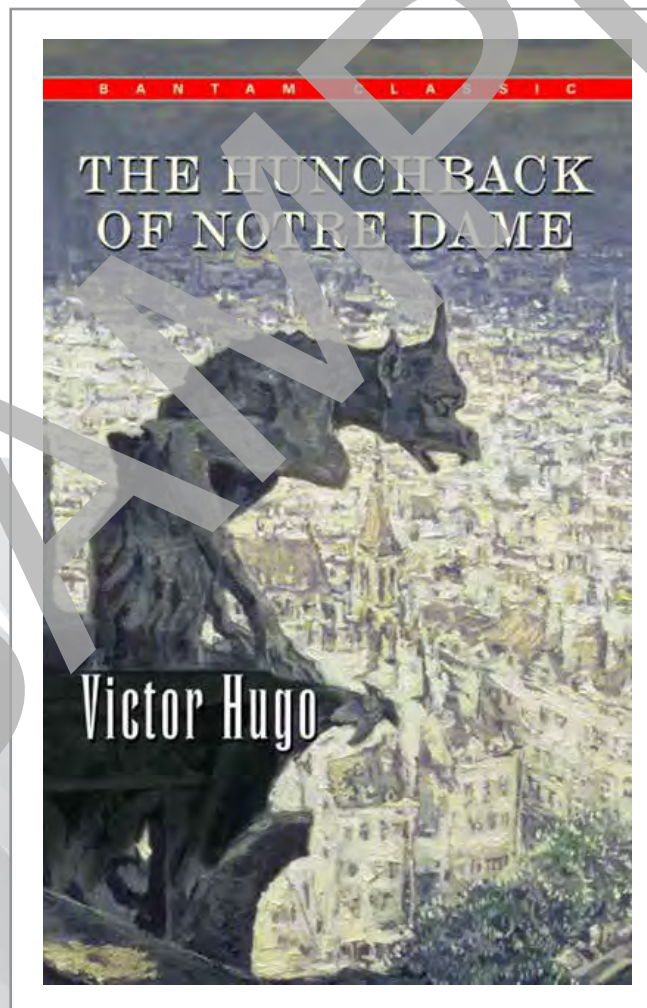
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 9-12

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The Hunchback of Notre Dame

Victor Hugo



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Hunchback of Notre Dame

Victor Hugo

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

Analysis, compare/contrast,
research

Writing

Poetry, newspaper article,
editorial, essay, epitaph,
lament, soliloquy

Literary Elements

Characterization, theme,
tone, style, simile, metaphor,
symbolism, personification,
allusion, inference, irony

Comprehension

Cause/effect, prediction,
summarization

Vocabulary

Target words, definitions,
applications

Listening/Speaking

Discussion, interview,
oral presentation

Across the Curriculum

Art—collage, caricature;
Drama—script; Music—
ballad, appropriate
selections; Current Events—
articles; Multimedia—video
presentation

Genre: fiction

Setting: medieval Paris, France, especially the Cathedral of Notre Dame; 1482

Point of View: third person

Themes: isolation, love, “importance” of physical appearance, good vs. evil, courage/cowardice, shame, destiny of an individual

Conflict: person vs. person, person vs. society, person vs. self

Style: narrative; features imagery, colorful details, and symbolism

Structure: primary plot revolving around Quasimodo, Esmeralda, and Claude Frollo, begins chronologically; progresses through a series of flashbacks and subplots that eventually merge with the main plot

Tone: pessimistic, ill-fated

Date of First Publication: 1831, as *Notre Dame de Paris*; 1833, first translated into English as *Notre Dame of Paris*; second English translation a few months later as *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*

Summary

Quasimodo, a hideously deformed foundling rescued by the priest Claude Frollo, grows up in the shelter of the Cathedral of Notre Dame. In addition to his deformities, his job as bell ringer leaves him deaf. Although by nature gentle and kind, he is destined to remain hidden from public view because of his repulsive appearance. He falls in love with Esmeralda, a beautiful gypsy girl, when she treats him kindly. His master, Frollo, secretly obsesses with lust for Esmeralda and determines to have her as his own. Quasimodo is torn between his unswerving loyalty to Claude Frollo and his love for Esmeralda when she is falsely accused of murdering Phoebus, the man she loves, and is sentenced to death. Although Quasimodo rescues Esmeralda from the gallows and takes her to Notre Dame for sanctuary, he is unable to prevent her ultimate death. As he views her body on the gallows, he throws Frollo to his death. Quasimodo's lifeless body is found about two years later clutching Esmeralda's body in the crypt.

Characters

Quasimodo: protagonist; a deformed, deaf hunchback with only one eye; lives in bell tower of the Cathedral of Notre Dame; feared and maligned by citizens of Paris; devoted to Claude Frollo; reveals his kindness, courage, and sense of justice

Claude Frollo: antagonist; priest of Notre Dame; archdeacon of Josas; somber, austere, gloomy; adopts Quasimodo; evil obsession with Esmeralda causes him to reject his own religious teachings; vows that, if he cannot have Esmeralda, no one will; stabs Phoebus

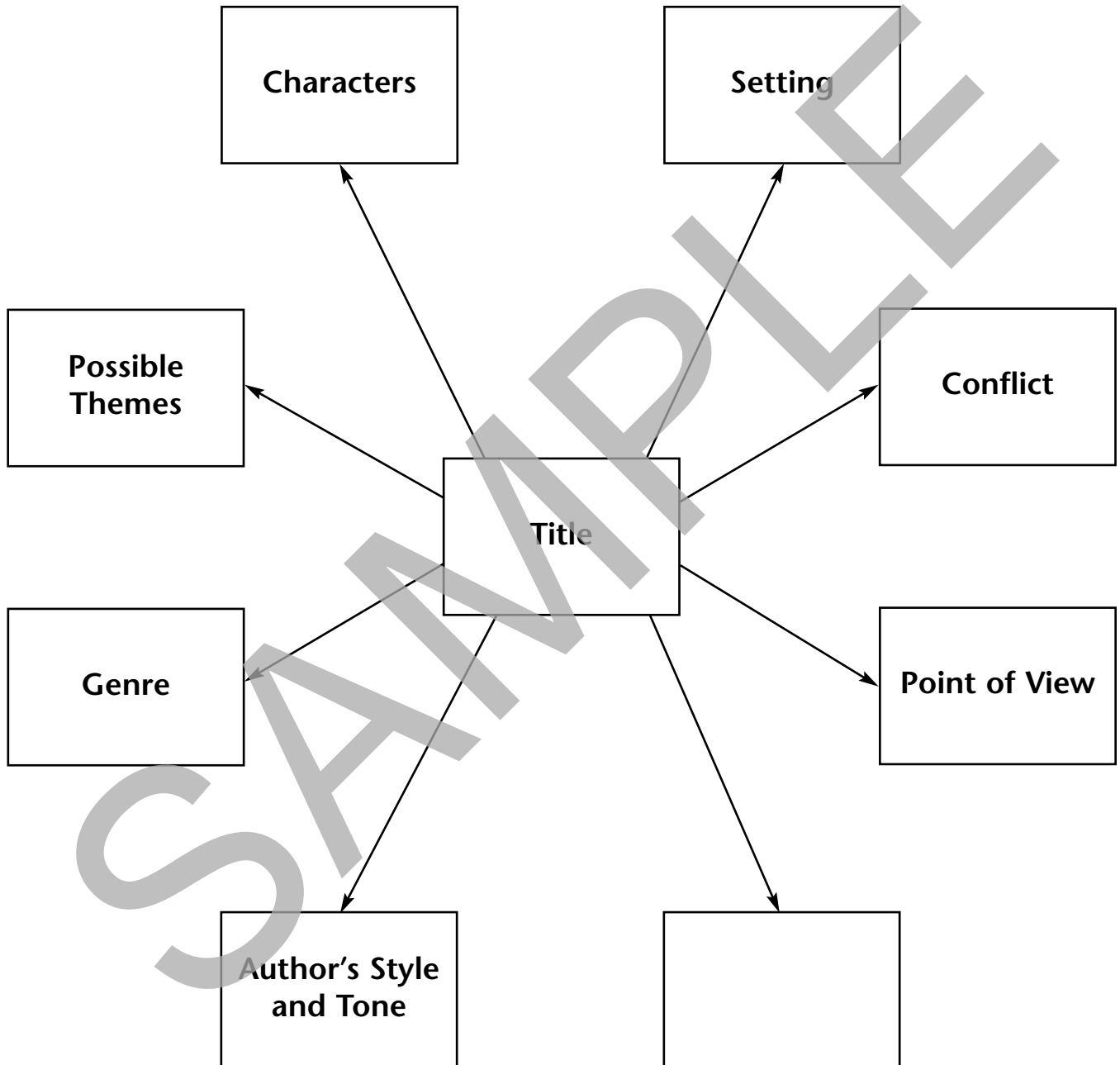
Esmeralda: beautiful, compassionate, naïve, 16-year-old gypsy girl; performs street tricks with her goat Djali; falls madly in love with Phoebus; enters into a platonic marriage with Gringoire to save his life; a.k.a. the Egyptian and the Bohemian

Phoebus: a captain in the King's army; vain, arrogant, self-serving; feigns love for Esmeralda in order to seduce her; recovers from stab wound; instrumental in causing Esmeralda's death

Pierre Gringoire: poet, playwright, philosopher; student of Claude Frollo; becomes a street performer after marrying Esmeralda; proves to be cowardly and interested only in self-preservation

Story Map

Directions: Use the story map to identify and discuss the elements of the novel.



Chapters 1–4, pp. 1–35

Hugo gives background information about the customs of 15th-century Paris. Gringoire's play is postponed, interrupted, and finally canceled. The gypsies prepare to elect a "Pope of Fools."

Vocabulary

imprecations (6)
colloquy (15)
interlocutor (17)
mendicant (19)
physiognomy (26)
bailiff (27)
diaphanous (33)

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the significance of the time lapse between Hugo's setting for the novel and the date he wrote the book. Note the references to the customs, architecture, and law enforcement of 15th-century Paris. *(By alluding to the lapse of over 300 years since the events of the novel, Hugo sets the stage for not only the plot of the novel but also for expounding throughout the book on historical events that transpire during the intervening years. He transports the reader vicariously back to 15th-century Paris, with the Cathedral of Notre Dame overlooking the entire city. The descriptions of the architecture enhance the reader's mental imagery of the city as a living creature that is able to talk, sing, and grow. A sergeant of the bailiff of Paris is stationed at each corner of the marble table on which the play is to be performed, indicating the intensity with which the populace responds to festivities, including executions. Spectators often become disorderly and openly criticize the activities. Several young men are disparaging the education system. pp. 1–5, throughout)*
2. Discuss the introduction of characters in this section and analyze the portrayal of each one. *(Jehan Frolo: a defiant young man who would protest more vigorously if he were not the archdeacon's brother; Pierre Gringoire: a poor, persistent, vain, sensitive poet who does not wish to offend the aristocracy; Guillaume Rym: the crafty, spiteful chief magistrate of Ghent, the region where the gypsies live, who spies for King Louis XI; Clopin Trouillefou, a gypsy beggar, and Jacques Coppenole, hosier to the king, pp. 9–28)*
3. Examine the importance of January 6, 1482. Note the preceding events two days prior and the reason for the celebrations taking place in Paris. *(January 6: two days after the Flemish ambassadors commission a marriage between King Louis XI's son and Margaret of Flanders. The date signifies the celebration of the Epiphany and the Festival of Fools. Shops are closed, and citizens make their way to one of three places of amusement, anticipating fireworks, a mystery play, or the election of the Pope of Fools. In the midst of revelry, quarrels, and complaints about the government, Gringoire attempts to present his play. The crowd grows restless while waiting on the Cardinal's arrival. pp. 2–13)*
4. Discuss Gringoire's play and the response of the spectators. Note the exaggeration in the actor playing Jupiter. *(Gringoire presents a morality play rather than the mystery play the spectators expect. The mystery play was a form of biblical drama that dramatized stories from both the Old and New Testaments and often combined biblical scenes with references to local places and events. The morality play developed from the mystery play and the miracle play, which dramatized the lives of saints. Morality plays were usually allegorical. The spectators are easily distracted, and their attention is diverted to Coppenole's demands to see a festival of fools. Gringoire demands that his actors continue, even when he is the only spectator left. Exaggeration: "Jupiter" thinks he will be hanged by the populace for having to wait on the play or by the Cardinal for not waiting for his arrival. pp. 13–35)*

5. Analyze the allegory in Gringoire's play. (*The four characters, Nobility, Clergy, Trade, and Labor represent the facets of society and symbolize the marriage, i.e., merging, of Nobility to Clergy and Trade to Labor. The two couples jointly possess a golden dolphin, which symbolizes the son, a.k.a. the dauphin, of King Louis XI, a.k.a. the Lion of France. Thus, a dolphin is the offspring of a lion. The couples, after searching for the most beautiful woman in the world to become the dolphin's wife, select Margaret of Flanders. The play correlates with the commission of the marriage between the Dauphin and Margaret of Flanders. pp. 1, 19–22*)

Supplementary Activities

1. Begin a list of metaphors and similes. This is an ongoing assignment, and examples are given in the supplementary activities of each section. **Similes**—streets “like the mouths of so many rivers” (p. 2); arms and legs “like the four sails of a windmill” (p. 7); see also pp. 6, 11, 21, 27, 29; **Metaphors**—people: waves of this sea (p. 2); actors: poor devils (p. 12)
2. Bring to class pictures of the Cathedral of Notre Dame spanning several hundred years. Display these on posters.
3. Working with a partner, write a limerick about one of the characters.

Chapters 5–11, pp. 35–64

The gypsies elect Quasimodo as the “Pope of Fools.” Gringoire first encounters Esmeralda and her goat, Djali, in the Place de Grève. Phoebus foils Quasimodo's attempt to kidnap Esmeralda for Claude Frollo.

Vocabulary

phantasmagorias (36)
obstreperous (42)
pillory (48)
misanthropy (54)
archdeacon (58)

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the election of the Pope of Fools. Note the simile that describes the crowd's response. How would you react to being a candidate for this “honor”? (*The “Pope” is elected based on his ability to portray the most atrocious facial grimaces. The contortions include distorted geometric figures, grotesque expressions, and bizarre profiles. The contest diverts attention from Gringoire's play. Simile: “...from all this effervescent crowd issued, like vapor from a furnace, a sharp, shrill, hissing noise, as from an immense serpent.” Responses will vary. pp. 35–37*)
2. Examine the description of Quasimodo and the crowd's reaction to him. Note the simile that describes him and the allusions to Cyclop and Polyphemus. (*His nose is shaped like a pyramid and his mouth like a horseshoe; he has a small left eye but the right one is hidden by an enormous tumor; his teeth are jagged and irregular, with one protruding over his lip like an elephant's tusk; and his chin is forked. Red bristles cover his massive head, a huge hump rises between his shoulders, his legs touch only at the knees, his hands and feet are immense, and he is deaf. In spite of his hideous physical appearance, however, he demonstrates unusual strength, agility, and courage. The crowd recognizes him as the bell ringer at the Cathedral. They call him the hunchback of Notre Dame, “the one-eyed,” and “the bandy-legged.” The men applaud him vigorously, but the women call him the devil and reveal the fear and superstitions surrounding him. Women of child-bearing age cover their faces. Simile: “He looked like a giant who had been broken in pieces and ill-soldered together.” Allusions: A Cyclop is a one-eyed giant; Polyphemus is the Cyclop in “The Odyssey” who imprisons the Greeks and eats six of them. pp. 37–41*)