



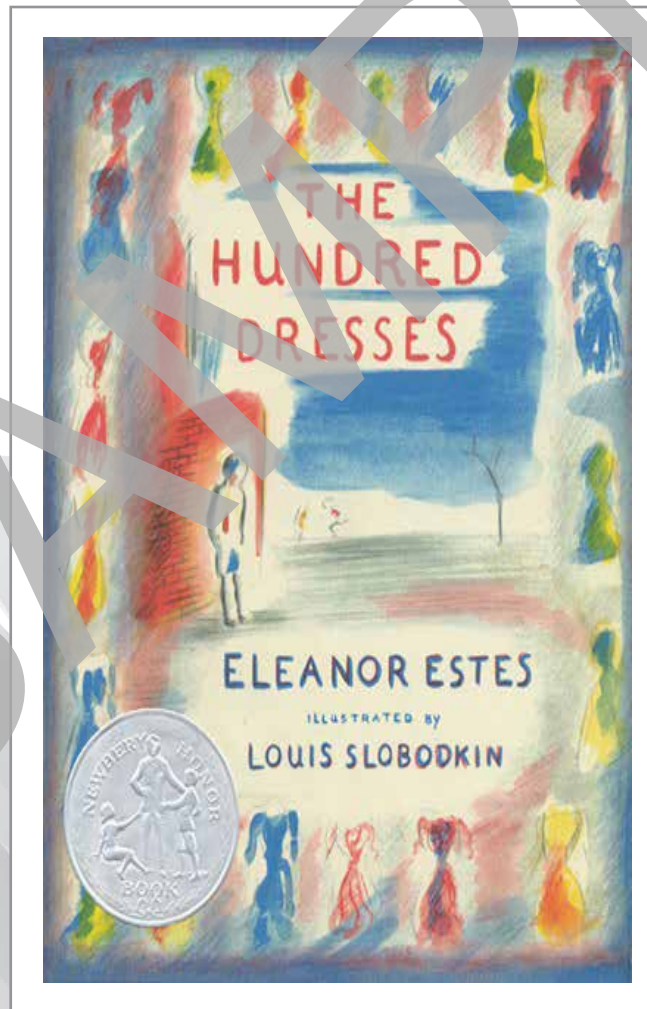
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 3-5

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The Hundred Dresses

Eleanor Estes



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Hundred Dresses

Eleanor Estes

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!

ISBN 978-1-50203-872-2

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Skills and Strategies

Vocabulary

Antonyms/synonyms

Listening/Speaking

Discussion, drama

Literary Elements

Story elements,
characterization, simile,
flashback, decisive plot, conflict

Thinking

Brainstorming

Comprehension

Predicting, cause-and-effect,
comparison/contrast

Summary

The Hundred Dresses is a touching short novel written in 1944. Although it is over fifty years old, its themes are timeless, and the story relates to contemporary issues. The difficulty of peer acceptance for someone who is "different" and the moral decisions of those who feel peer pressure to conform are enduring themes in children's literature.

The story is about Wanda Petronski, a poor Polish girl from an ethnic neighborhood. She attends a school where she has become the object of scorn and laughter because of an innocent school yard remark.

Maddie is a sensitive girl whose best friend Peggy leads the teasing and unkind joking directed towards Wanda. Maddie spends most of the story reflecting on the history of the joking and, driven by a guilty conscience, finally makes the decision that she will not allow herself to stand by while someone else is the object of criticism, regardless of the peer pressure to do so.

This book lends itself quite naturally to a curriculum concerned with values development and morals education.

Instructions Prior to Reading

You may wish to choose one or more of the following Prereading Questions and Activities. 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 Questions and Activities

1. Previewing. Have the students examine the title and cover illustration. Also suggest that they flip through the book and look at chapter titles. What do the girls' expressions tell you about their feelings? What do you predict the story will be about?
2. Ask students if they have read any of Eleanor Estes' other books. What was their reaction to these books?
3. Ask students what a "classic" book is. Explain that *The Hundred Dresses* is considered a "classic" short novel.

Chapter 1: "Wanda" — Pages 2-7

Vocabulary:

scuffling 3
unison 6

askew 6
session 6

precarious 6
vain 7

reciting 6
perish 7

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

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. What do we learn about Wanda Petronski? (*was not in her seat, sat in the corner of the room, was not rough and noisy, lived in Boggins Heights*)
2. What does the author mean by "rough boys"? (*page 3*) What might "rough boys" mean today?
3. What do we know about Peggy? (*Page 5, She sat in the front row and got good marks; she was the most popular girl in school; she was pretty; she had pretty clothes and her auburn hair was curly; her best friend was Maddie.*)
4. Why do Peggy and Maddie wait for Wanda every morning before school? (*page 6, to have some fun with her or to tease her*)
5. How would you describe the relationship between Peggy and Maddie? Is this kind of relationship good for either one of them? Why or why not? (*Answers vary.*)
6. Why do you think Miss Mason has her students read the Gettysburg Address aloud every morning? (*Answers vary.*)

Prediction:

What kind of "fun" do you think the kids who are waiting for Wanda liked to have with her?

Supplementary 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?

As the story is read, more characters may be added and the setting and the problem may change, so additions may be made. Begin to fill in the story map that follows on page 9.

2. Begin attribute webs for Wanda, Peggy, and Maddie. (See pages 12-13 of this guide.)
3. Literary Analysis: A simile is a figure of speech or a comparison of two things using the words "like" or "as." For example: He is as skinny as a toothpick.

Can you find similes on pages 5 and 6?

(page 5, "sit there like a frog"; page 6, "as though he were making a touchdown.")

Personal Response-Based Questions:

1. If you were absent from school, who would notice that you were missing?
2. Do you prefer to have a lot of friends in school whom you do not know very well or just a few best friends whom you know very well? Do you know why you feel this way?
3. How would you describe the friends with whom you most often associate? How do they look? How do they act in school? What do they wear? How do they talk?
4. Do you wish your friends were more like you, or do you wish you were more like your friends?
5. Do you think Wanda liked where she sat in the class? Why or why not?
6. Argue for one of the following statements:
 - a) Teachers in school should let students sit anywhere they want in class. Best friends should be able to sit together.
 - b) Teachers should constantly change seating in class so that everyone gets to know everyone else. No one should feel excluded.
7. Do you have enough friends?

Story Map

