



**TEACHER GUIDE**

**GRADES 9-12**

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

# Jane Eyre

Charlotte Brontë



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

# Jane Eyre

Charlotte Bronte

## 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 978-1-50203-903-3**

Copyright infringement is a violation of Federal Law.

© 2020 by Novel Units, Inc., St. Louis, MO. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any way or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise) without prior written permission from Novel Units, Inc.

Reproduction of any part of this publication for an entire school or for a school system, by for-profit institutions and tutoring centers, or for commercial sale is strictly prohibited.

Novel Units is a registered trademark of Conn Education.

Printed in the United States of America.

To order, contact your  
local school supply store, or:

Toll-Free Fax: 877.716.7272

Phone: 888.650.4224

3901 Union Blvd., Suite 155

St. Louis, MO 63115

[sales@novelunits.com](mailto:sales@novelunits.com)

[novelunits.com](http://novelunits.com)

## Table of Contents

Summary.....	3
About the Author.....	4
Introductory Activities.....	5
Chapter-by-Chapter.....	8
Chapters contain: Vocabulary Words, Discussion Questions, Supplementary Activities, and Writing Suggestions	
Post-reading Discussion Questions.....	30
Post-reading Activities.....	31

## Skills and Strategies

### Thinking

Identifying attributes,  
compare/contrast, research,  
decision-making, analysis  
evaluation, invention/design,  
brainstorming

### Comprehension

Predicting, summarizing,  
cause and effect, inference,  
main idea

### Writing

Journal, story, story ending,  
definition, compare/  
contrast, character sketch,  
scene, poem, film review

### Vocabulary

Synonyms, antonyms, word  
mapping

### Listening/Speaking

Role playing, story scene,  
mock trial, talk show

### Literary Elements

Characterization, motive,  
plot, point of view, figurative  
language

### Other

Illustrations, flow chart,  
collage, poster, timeline,  
drawing, science, history,  
geography

---

## Summary of *Jane Eyre*

Young Jane Eyre, an intelligent, plain girl who apparently has no other relatives, has become the ward of her uncle's widow. The widow, Mrs. Reed, despises the girl; when Jane finally rebels against the bullying of Mrs. Reed's over-indulged son, Mrs. Reed wastes no time sending her off to a school called Lowood. Lowood is an austere place where the girls are not given enough to eat and are punished for any failure to conform. Jane finds solace, however in her friendship with a bright, gentle girl named Helen Burns and under the tutelage of a kind teacher named Miss Temple. Helen sickens from TB and dies in Jane's arms during a moving scene that mirrors Charlotte's experience with the deaths of her own younger sisters (see the "Background on the Novelist" that follows). Jane goes on to teach at Lowood herself, but finds—especially after Miss Temple leaves to get married—that she yearns for something more than the simple life she knows.

She advertises her services as a governess and her notice is answered by a "Mrs. Fairfax" whom she assumes to be a gentlewoman and mother. When she journeys to Thornfield Hall to assume her new duties, Jane soon discovers that Mrs. Fairfax is the kind housekeeper and manager of the estate, which is actually owned by a Mr. Rochester, who is now away from home, as he frequently chooses to be. Jane begins tutoring little Adèle—the daughter of a French actress and possibly Rochester's illegitimate daughter.

While out walking one day, Jane sees a rider fall from his horse and helps the man get back on his horse. Only later does she learn that the Byronic stranger is her employer, Mr. Rochester. As the weeks pass, Jane and gruff Mr. Rochester spend a good amount of time in conversation together. Mr. Rochester admires Jane's directness (she pronounces him decidedly unhandsome), intelligence, and perceptiveness. Jane, in turn, finds herself falling in love with Mr. Rochester and struggles to accept the fact that he appears destined to marry the lovely and talented Blanche Ingram.

Meanwhile, Jane continues to teach Adèle, who adores her—and to ponder what may lie behind the terrifying mystery that hangs over Thornfield. Often she hears manic laughter coming from some inner room, and assumes that the source is the odd, quiet Grace Poole—a servant who is seldom seen and who lives on the third story. One night Mr. Rochester is nearly burned alive in his bed (but rescued by Jane), and another night a guest is stabbed in his room. Jane assumes that Grace is the culprit and cannot understand why Mr. Rochester does not get rid of her.

Mr. Rochester tricks Jane into betraying her feelings for him by pretending to court Blanche Ingram, then proposes to Jane, who does not hesitate to accept. Mr. Rochester sets an early date for the wedding and plans a honeymoon trip to the continent. Jane's happiness is marred only by the night-time appearance in her room of a fearsome figure (she presumes it to be Grace Poole) who viciously tears the elaborate wedding veil Mr. Rochester has ordered for his bride-to-be. The wedding is already underway when a stranger appears and reveals that the ceremony cannot continue—Mr. Rochester is already married. Mr. Rochester makes no denial, but takes Jane and others in the wedding party to see the wife he has kept hidden for a dozen years—a murderous lunatic confined to the upper rooms of Thornfield, with Grace Poole as her custodian. When he had married this formerly beautiful Creole woman, her family and his had both kept their knowledge of the family's hereditary madness from him, but his wife's insane savagery had soon become evident.

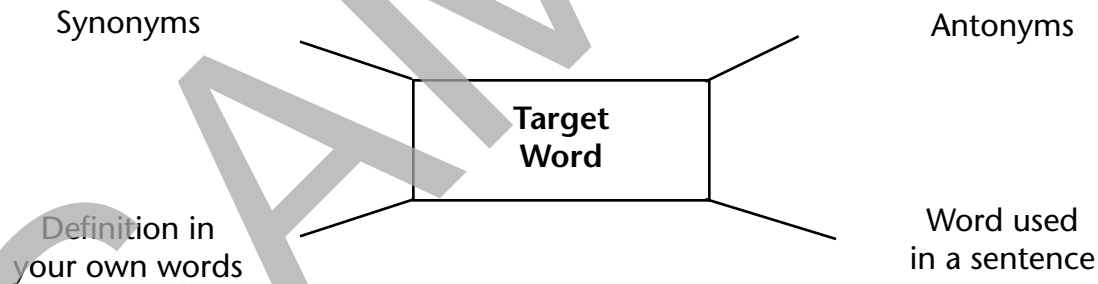
## Chapters 1-6, Pages 39-91

### Vocabulary Words

sombre (39)	penetrating (39)	dispensed (39)	cavillers (39)
moreen (39)	vignettes (40)	torpid (40)	diffidence (41)
intimated (41)	visage (41)	bilious (41)	sallowness (41)
antipathy (42)	equilibrium (42)	impudence (42)	tyrant (43)
pungent (43)	subjoined (43)	benefactress (44)	ligature (44)
ignominy (44)	incredulous (44)	influx (45)	damask (45)
tabernacle (45)	riveted (46)	ottoman (46)	torbid (46)
opprobrium (47)	transitory (47)	consternation (47)	insurrection (47)
vassalage (47)	duplicity (50)	parley (50)	apothecary (51)
unwonted (52)	convolvuli (53)	emulation (57)	audacious (59)
functionary (61)	parterre (62)	usurious (62)	perused (67)
tract (67)	tenor (68)	pelisse (73)	monitors (76)
indefatigable (77)	inanition (77)	refectory (77)	repast (77)
holland (79)	eneration (79)	benignant (79)	frieze (80)
<i>Rasselas</i> (81)	frivolous (82)	substantial (82)	benevolent (82)
redolent (83)	ignominious (84)	ewers (85)	animadversion (85)
surnames (85)	slatternly (86)	gloaming (87)	assiduity (89)
singularly (89)	truculent (90)	cumbrous (91)	impalpable (91)
seraph (91)			

### Vocabulary Activity

Word mapping is an activity that lends itself to any vocabulary list. For words that have clear antonyms, the following framework would be suitable:



Students might enjoy coming up with variations on this framework. For example, instead of listing antonyms, students could provide line drawings to illustrate the target word.

### Cooperative Learning Activity

Each individual within a small group is responsible for three or four words. Each group member teaches the others about these words by sharing his/her maps with the others. Students are tested individually on all the words, but all members of a group get bonus points if everyone gets above a certain score.

---

## Discussion Questions

1. Who is the narrator? What are your impressions of her? (See page 11 for a description of the “attribute web” you might begin.) From what point in time is she telling her story? (*The adult Jane Eyre is telling about her childhood. Jane is a bright, perceptive, plain orphan who loves to read, seems depressed, is despised by her guardian Mrs. Reed and taunted by Mrs. Reed’s son, is capable of speaking her mind about the injustices heaped upon her.*)
2. What images come to mind as you read the opening passage? What tone is set? (*The description of the cold winter wind and rain, the leafless shrubbery conveys a sombre, bleak tone.*)
3. How do John Reed and his sisters treat Jane? Why do you suppose they act that way toward her? (*The sisters act indifferent; John bosses and bullies her, demands that she call him “Master Reed,” strikes her continually.*)
4. How does Jane usually react to John? How would you have reacted to such an abusive person when you were Jane’s age? Why do you suppose her reaction is different from usual the day he throws the book at her? (*Usually she endures the abuse and is obedient to him, but when he cuts her with the book she calls him cruel, compares him with the Roman emperors about whom she has been reading, and fights back.*)
5. How do Bessie and Abigail treat Jane? Why do you suppose these women—servants who also must submit to Mrs. Reed’s will—don’t feel more sympathetic toward Jane? (*Both are critical of her outburst and remind her that she should be more grateful to Mrs. Reed and remember “her place”; Abigail in particular feels that Jane is not to be trusted; they would probably be more sympathetic if she were prettier, happier, more accepting.*)
6. What is the “red room”? Why is Jane locked in it? Why does she feel so frightened? (*In punishment for “attacking” John, she is locked in the room where Mr. Reed died; Jane associates the room with death and is terrified Mr. Reed’s ghost will appear.*)
7. Why is Jane removed from the red room and seen by Mr. Lloyd? What do you think would have happened if she had been left there another day? Do you think it is really possible for such an incident to give someone’s nerves such a “shock” that they would still “feel the reverberation” as an adult? (*She had an emotional/physical collapse and the apothecary was called to check her.*)
8. What special treatment does Jane get from Bessie after her collapse? What book does Jane request? Why not a book of fairy tales? Is Jane comforted? Do you find comfort in any particular stories? (*Bessie is kinder, brings a tart on a pretty plate, fetches Gulliver’s Travels—which Jane prefers to fairy tales because she truly believes that Lilliput, unlike fairy land, exists.*)
9. Does Jane tell Mr. Lloyd why she is unhappy? What options does Mr. Lloyd suggest to Jane? Why does she reject the idea of going to live with poor relations? Judging from the interchange between Jane and Mr. Lloyd—do you think that Charlotte Brontë understood the minds and feelings of children very well? (*Jane isn’t able to articulate much except that she is afraid of Mr. Reed’s ghost; she rejects the idea of living with poor relations because she has a naive, biased view of the poor that does not include potential for love and respectability; most will agree that the writer portrays the inner world of her child character with skillful realism.*)
10. What does Jane know about how she came to be with Mrs. Reed? What and how does she learn about what happened to her parents? (*Jane has always known that Mr. Reed promised to care for Jane, his sister’s orphaned child, and on his deathbed made his wife promise to continue that care; only when Miss Abbot talks with Bessie after the incident with John does Jane learn that her father was a poor clergyman who married her mother against the wishes of her mother’s wealthy family and that both caught typhus from the poor, where Jane’s father had his curacy, and died within a month of each other.*)

- 
11. How much time passes between the blow-up with Mrs. Reed and Mr. Brocklehurst's arrival? Why has Mrs. Reed sent for him? Do you think Jane would have been better off if she hadn't told Mr. Lloyd she wanted to go to school? (*Several months pass; Mrs. Reed decides to send Jane away to school.*)
  12. What opinion does Mr. Brocklehurst form of Jane? How? Why is she so upset to be accused of deceitfulness by Mrs. Reed in front of Mr. Brocklehurst? Do you think that Mrs. Reed means well? Has your "reputation" ever "preceded you" because of some sort of "labeling" by teachers or other adults? (*Based on his interview with Jane and on comments by Mrs. Reed, Mr. Brocklehurst quickly decides that Jane is bad, deceitful, and insufficiently dedicated to Bible reading.*)
  13. What does Mr. Brocklehurst give Jane as he is leaving? Why? (*After Mrs. Reed tells him that Jane is a liar, he gives Jane a book containing a story about a girl who dies after lying.*)
  14. What is Jane thinking of when she comments that "It was the hardest battle I had fought, and the first victory I had gained." Why doesn't her elation last? Do you think it is still true that "A child cannot quarrel with its elders...without experiencing afterwards the pang of remorse"? (*She has finally told Mrs. Reed exactly what she thinks of her; now she feels guilty for talking back to an adult.*)
  15. How can you tell that Bessie and Jane share some affection for each other? Would Bessie have liked you at age 10? (*Although Bessie can be gruff, she tells Jane stories, admits that she likes Jane the best of the children, and asks for a kiss when Jane leaves; Jane describes how happy she is when Bessie sings and tells stories.*)
  16. What sort of good-byes are said when Jane leaves the Reed household? (*Jane clings to Bessie's neck; no one else comes to say good-bye.*)
  17. What are Jane's first impressions of the school? What sights, sounds, smells do you imagine as you read this description? Does Jane regret coming? (*Everything seems regimented; the girls are uniformly dressed, share common mugs, are given scanty meals, sleep in a row, two to a bed.*)
  18. How are Helen and Miss Temple alike? (*Both are serious, kind, and scholarly.*)
  19. Why does Helen get in trouble with some of her teachers? How does she seem to feel about being in trouble? Why doesn't she resist? Do you admire her attitude? (*Helen is punished by Miss Scatcherd and others for being "disorderly" and "untidy"; she feels that she will improve herself by learning from criticism.*)
  20. Like Jane, Helen has thought about death. Cite a passage where Helen speaks of death. How do her feelings about death contrast with Jane's? (*p. 91: "I hold another creed...it makes eternity a rest—a mighty home—I live in calm, looking to the end." Jane has a nightmarish fear of death.*)
  21. **Prediction:** Will Jane become better friends with Helen? How long will Jane be at Lowood? Will Jane grow happier—or more miserable?

### Writing Suggestions

- a. p. 60: "Bessie supplied the hiatus by a homily of an hour's length, in which she proved beyond a doubt that I was the most wicked and abandoned child ever reared under a roof." Write Bessie's "homily."
- b. p. 68: Jane struggles over whether or not to speak out as Mrs. Reed orders her from the room. Finally the angry words come tumbling out, to Mrs. Reed's dismay. Think of a time in the past when you experienced something similar. Using p. 68 as a model, describe the situation, your thoughts, the angry statements you made, and the adult's reaction. Like Brontë, combine narrative and direct quotation.

---

## Using Character Attribute Webs in the Novel Unit Approach

Character Attribute Webs are simply a visual representation of a character's traits. They provide a systematic way for students to organize and recap the information they have about that particular character. Attribute Webs may be used after reading the story or completed gradually as information unfolds—done individually, or finished as a group project.

One type of Character Attribute Web uses these categories:

- How a character acts and feels (What do his/her statements reveal about feelings? What does his/her behavior show you about him/ her?)
- How a character looks (What do clothing and physique tell you about this character?)
- Where a character lives (In what country, state, neighborhood, does this character live? During what time period?)
- How others feel about the character (What do others' statements and actions show about their attitude toward the character?)

In group discussion about students' Attribute Webs for specific characters, the teacher can ask for supportive evidence from the story. The framework on page 12 is appropriate for Character Attribute Webs. Divide the main characters among the students so that you have an equal number of webs for each character—or have the students complete one web for each character as a small group activity.

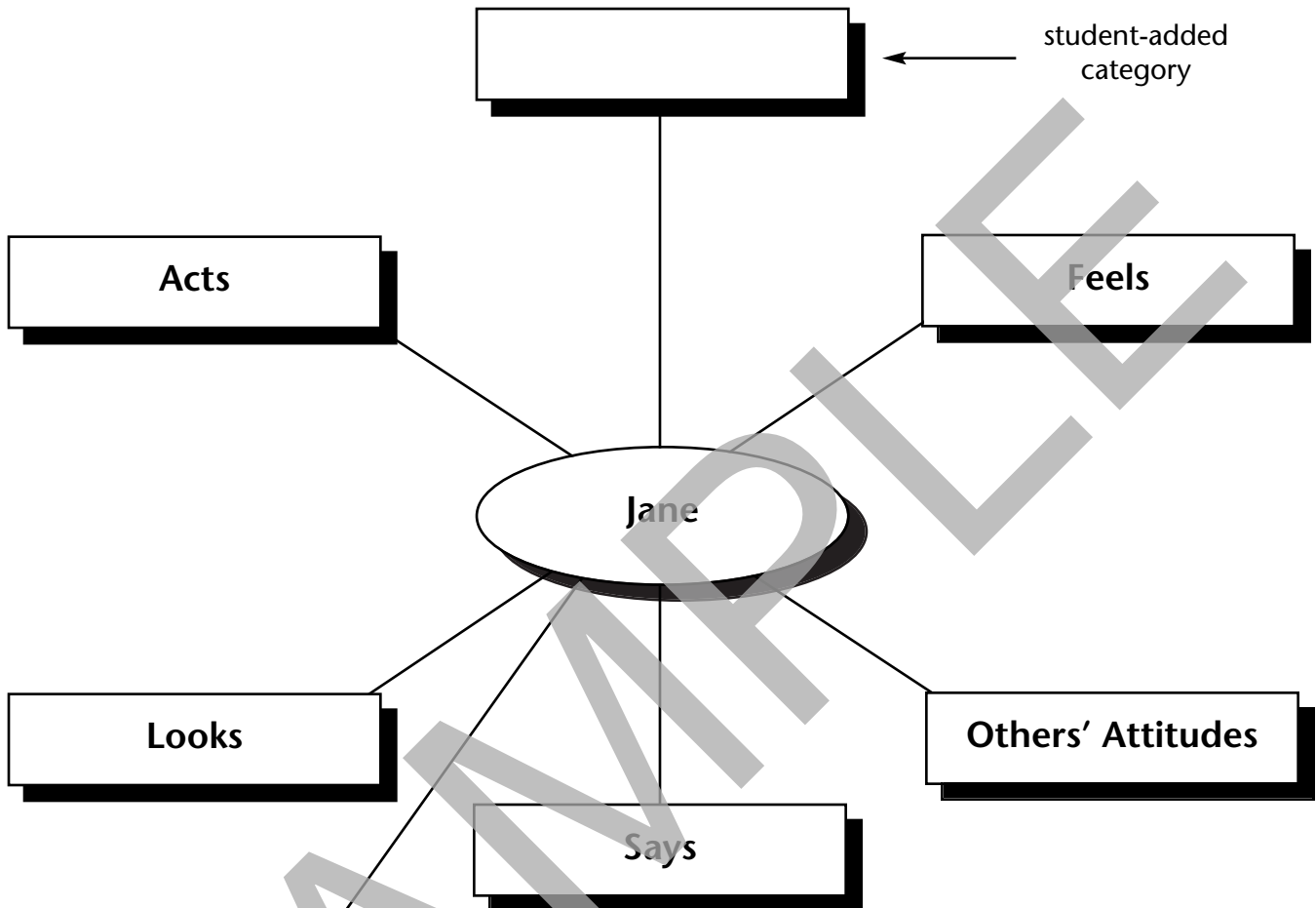
Attribute Webs need not be confined to characters. They can also be used to organize information about a concept, object, or place. Since *Jane Eyre* is a novel about strong emotions, Attribute Webs are particularly useful tools for discussion and comprehension. Use Attribute Webs to map concepts such as "love," "jealousy," "loyalty," "family," "integrity" and other ideas central to the novel. Have students web in definitions, examples from the novel, examples from their own world, and so forth.

Attribute Webs are a kind of semantic mapping. Students can move on from Attribute Webs to other creative kinds of mapping. They can be encouraged to modify Attribute Webs—use sub-divisions, add divisions, change connections—in whatever ways are useful to them personally. It is important to emphasize that Attribute Webs are just a graphic way to record ideas. They provide students with a tool for helping them generate ideas and think about relationships among them.



---

## Sample Framework for a Character Attribute Web



**Additional Notes and Thoughts:**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for students to write their additional notes and thoughts about the character.