



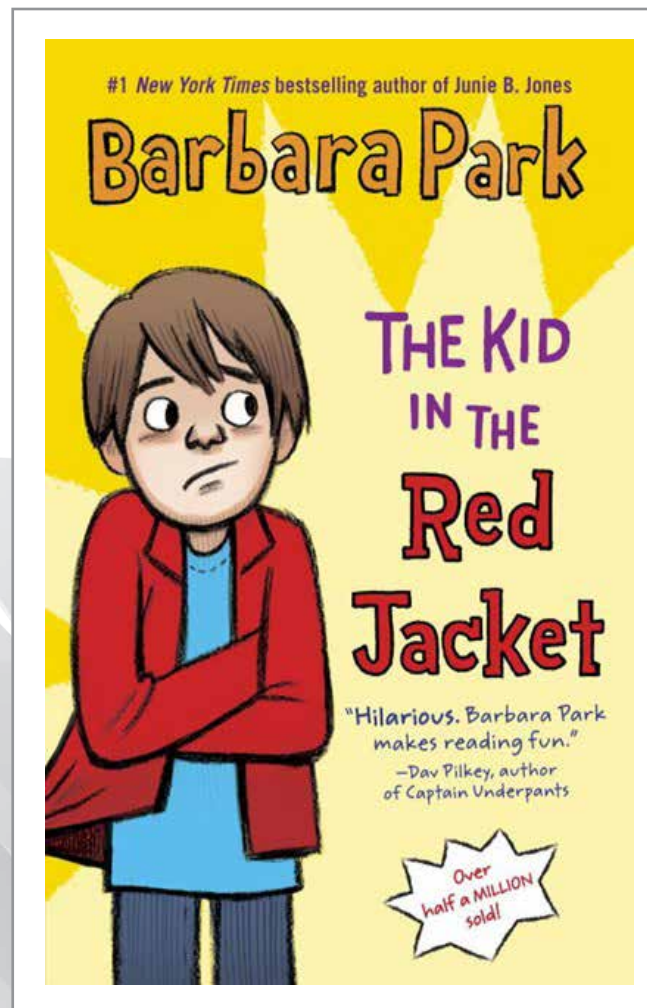
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 3-5

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The Kid in the Red Jacket

Barbara Park



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Kid in the Red Jacket

Barbara Park

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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Table of Contents

Summary	3
About the Author.....	3
Initiating Activities.....	3
Chapter by Chapter	13
Chapters contain: Vocabulary Words and Activities, Discussion Questions, Post- reading Activities, Predictions	
Supplementary Activities.....	29
Teacher Information	36
Bibliography.....	37
Assessment for <i>The Kid in the Red Jacket</i>	40

Skills and Strategies

Thinking

Brainstorming, classifying
and categorizing, evaluating,
analyzing, comparing and
contrasting

Literary Elements

Character, setting, plot
development

Writing

Letters, poetry, sentences

Comprehension

Predicting, sequencing,
inference, comparison/
contrast

Vocabulary

Synonyms/antonyms,
analogies

Listening/Speaking

Participation in discussion,
role play, dramatization

Summary of *The Kid in the Red Jacket*

The Jeeter family moves from Arizona to Massachusetts and Howard must leave behind his best friends, Thornsberry and Roger. However, must he trade the guys for a six-year-old girl with wild, red, frizzy hair? As Howard deals with his own problems as the “new kid on the block,” he also reconciles his feelings about Molly Vera Thompson, admits to being her friend, and promises not to “get divorced” from her, as her parents have done.

About the Author

Barbara Tidswell Park was born April 21, 1947, in Mt. Holly, New Jersey. She married Richard Park in 1969, and they have two sons, Steven Allen and David Matthew. Park attended Rider College, 1965-67, and the University of Alabama in 1969. She is the author of books for young people.

Park has said about her writing, “The nicest thing about writing humor for children is that they are such an appreciative audience. You don’t have to be droll or dry or sardonic. Kids are eager to laugh and, I think, they enjoy laughing at themselves the most. I have fun with my books by writing about characters who are ‘uncool’ and never quite in control. My readers can empathize and chuckle at the same time. For all their faults, the families in my books have a lot of fun as they muddle through life. I do like to think that I leave my readers with a sense that the moments of laughter and joy in life more than make up for the sadness.”

Note:

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.

Initiating Activities

Before starting the unit, contact local moving/relocation companies for any free materials or information that is available. Have this in the room, for easy access to the children. Have several maps available for use. Display some of the materials on walls, bulletin boards, etc.

Make a copy of the poem, “Past” by Arnold Adoff, and have it in the room for the students to see and to read. (See Bibliography, Janeczko.)

When ready to begin the unit, read the poem to the group, and discuss how certain past experiences become a part of one and will forever be there as they help to shape the present individual. However, each new day brings with it experiences that may temper or alter the effects of the past or add to the growth of the individual. As we travel through life, each of us takes along the things that are uniquely our own. We become the “moving vans” that carry this uniqueness from place to place, from friend to friend. What do you take with you? (See Bulletin Board Idea.)

Bulletin Board Idea

Cover the bulletin board with plain background paper. Make a large representation of a moving van to put on the board. Make a caption for the board, such as, “Moving Right Along,” “Moving On,” “A Moving Experience,” etc.

After the Initiating Activity, invite any student who wishes to do so to make a paper representation of a moving van, and to list on the van the things that the student takes along, no matter what.

Procedure

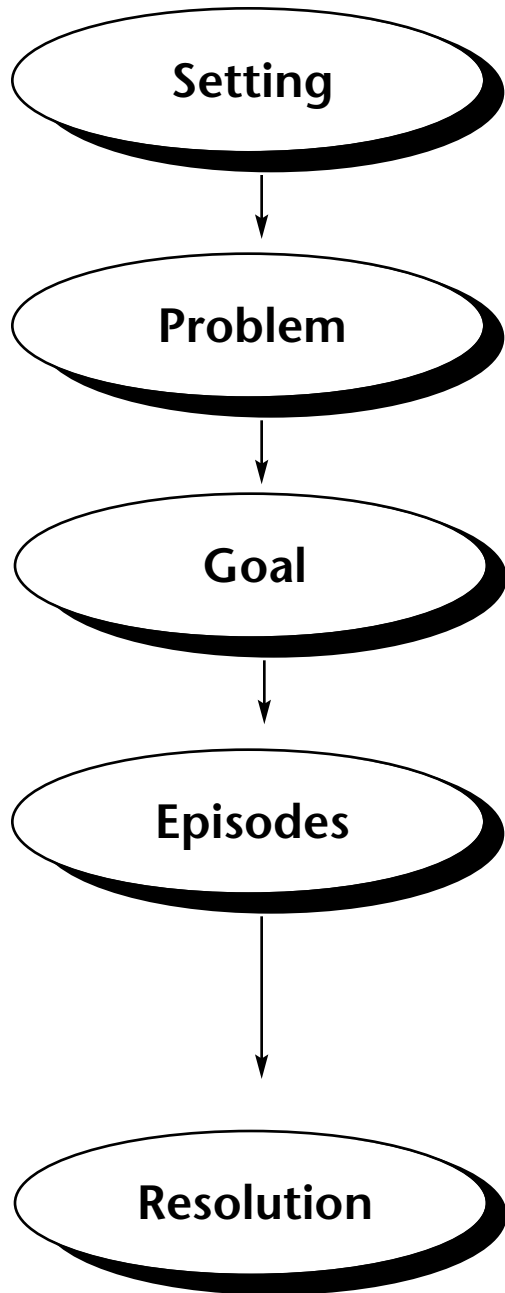
It is recommended that the book be done a chapter at a time, and that the DRTA, Directed Reading Thinking Approach, be used with each chapter. This technique involves reading a chapter and then predicting what will happen next by making good guesses based on what has already occurred in the book. The reading is then continued, and the predictions that have been made are verified.

For the vocabulary words, you may wish to have the students show knowledge of the words before reading by writing simple definitions in their own words of what they think the vocabulary word might mean. After reading, the students will verify or check the meaning of each word.

Previewing the Book

Look at the cover of the book. What has the illustrator, Rob Sauber, told the potential reader about the story? Can one tell by their expressions how the children are feeling? What might they be saying to one another? There is a question with an answer printed under the title on the cover. Read these. Who do you think is asking and answering the question? Why do you think as you do?

Story Map



Characters _____

Time and Place _____

Beginning → Development → Outcome

Chapter 1—Pages 3–14

Vocabulary

promotion 5	spice it up 5	blubbering 6	whisk 6
fidgeting 7	insulting 7	distracted 8	pondering 8
concentrated 9	sensitive 10	sympathetically 13	dismally 13
billboard 13			

Vocabulary Activity

Complete each of the following comparisons using a vocabulary word. (Sample: GOOD is to BAD as HOT is to COLD.)

1. UP is to DOWN as _____ is to JOYFULLY. (*DISMALLY*)
2. UNHAPPY is to SAD as _____ is to SOBBING. (*BLUBBERING*)
3. GOOD is to KIND as _____ is to THINKING. (*PONDERING*)
4. MORE is to LESS as _____ is to WANDERED. (*CONCENTRATED*)
5. GLAD is to HAPPY as _____ is to DIVERTED. (*DISTRACTED*)
6. NIGHT is to DARK as _____ is to SQUIRMING. (*FIDGETING*)

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. Howard and his family are on the road, moving from Arizona to Massachusetts. How is he feeling as they start out on the journey? (*Page 6, Howard is scared. More scared than he has ever been. He is also sad and furious about leaving his friends, school, and soccer team. Howard says, "Moving makes you feel all alone inside."*) How do you think that you would feel if it was you instead of Howard moving away?
2. Howard explains his feeling of sadness more in depth on page 14. He says, "And even though sometimes you can control your anger, you can't control your sadness... Sadness is with you all the time. Even when your friends are trying to make you laugh, sadness seems to be waiting right behind your smile." Have you ever been this sad? Do you think that the author does a good job of expressing this deep sadness through Howard? How does she do it? Discuss methods and means of expression.

Post-reading Activities

1. Howard relates his mother's yelling to other things and says, "...it's like anything else—too much of a good thing, and it's not as fun anymore." (page 4) Have you ever experienced too much of a good thing? Write of your experience, or one that you imagine, giving an example of too much of a good thing. Do you agree that, "it's not as fun anymore"?

- Howard considers the day that the movers came to pack the things in the house as the worst one in his life. (page 8) Do you think that it might help him, if he thought of the BEST day of his life instead? What do you consider to be the BEST day in your life, so far? Share with the group something about this BEST day. You may want to do so in the form of poetry, prose, music, or through the use of art media. Choose the method of expression, and the manner in which this will be shared with others.
- Make a travel cartoon with the baby Gaylord as the main character. What do you imagine that he is thinking about as he gets farther and farther away from the place that he has always known as home? ...as he hears Howard complain about the sun on his leg? ...as he hears his mother offer him for sale at Denny's? ...as his father yells at him to stop crying? ...as Bill the basset hound sleeps peacefully in his cage? etc.
- Start attribute webs for Howard, his mother, and his father. Add to them as more is learned about the characters. (See page 9–11 of this guide.)
- Start a story map. Make a prediction as to how Howard will adjust to his new home and school. Record the predictions for later verification. (See page 12 of this guide.)

Chapter 2—Pages 15–28

Vocabulary

overflowing 16	dreading 20	plaque 21	impress 21
smugly 22	sauntered 22	weird 25	barreling 25
curb 26	thoughtfully 28		

Vocabulary Activity

Match up a definition with a vocabulary word.

Definition	Vocabulary word
fearing	_____ (<i>dreading</i>)
strolled	_____ (<i>sauntered</i>)
moving at a high speed	_____ (<i>barreling</i>)
considerately	_____ (<i>thoughtfully</i>)
unusual	_____ (<i>weird</i>)
complacently	_____ (<i>smugly</i>)

Discussion Questions and Activities

- What is Howard's reaction when he learns the name of the street on which they live? (*Pages 23–24, He is angry and very surprised.*) What is your opinion of the street name? Why do you think as you do? Do you know how the street on which you live got its name? If not, try to find out.