



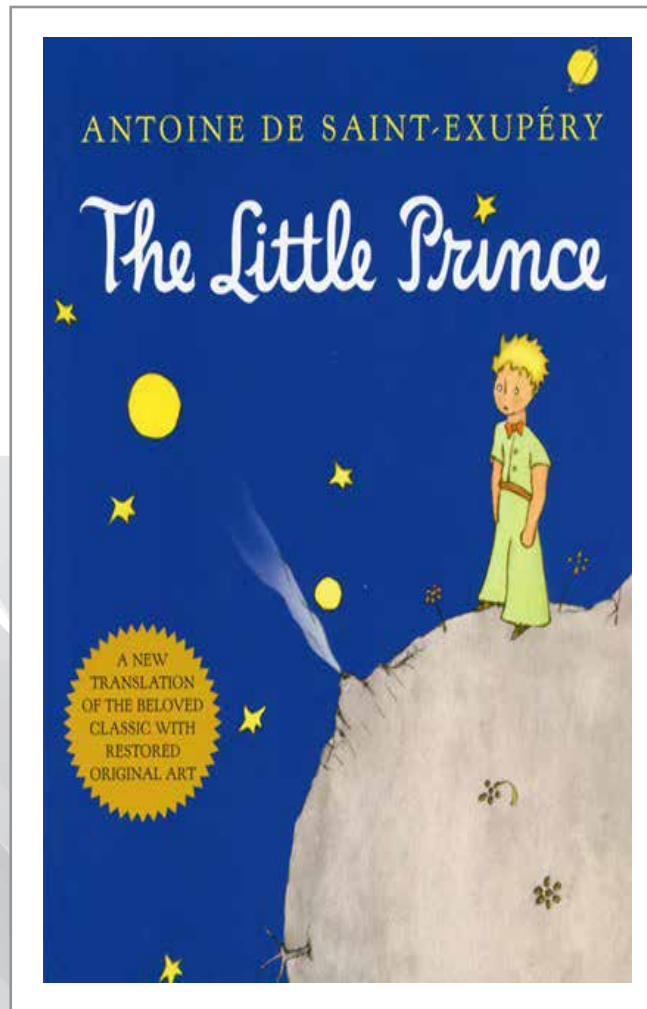
**TEACHER GUIDE**

**GRADES 9-12**

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

# The Little Prince

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry



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

# The Little Prince

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

## 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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**ISBN 978-1-50203-955-2**

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## Table of Contents

Summary .....	3
About the Author .....	4
Initiating Activities.....	5
Teaching Approaches .....	6
Ten Sections .....	12
Each section contains: Summary, Vocabulary, Discussion Questions, and Supplementary Activities	
Post-reading Discussion Questions .....	21
Post-reading Extension Activities.....	23
Assessment.....	25
Glossary.....	26

## Skills and Strategies

### Thinking

Research, compare/contrast,  
analysis, brainstorming,  
critical thinking

### Writing

Journal response, poetry,  
prose, epilogue, letter

### Vocabulary

Target words, definitions,  
application

### Across the Curriculum

Art—drawing, caricature,  
collage

### Literary Elements

Characterization, irony,  
personification, simile,  
metaphor, allusion, fable,  
allegory, theme, universality,  
foreshadowing

### Comprehension

Predicting, cause/effect,  
inference

### Listening/Speaking

Discussion, oral reading,  
poetry reading, film viewing,  
music

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**Genre:** fiction; fable/allegory

**Setting:** Sahara Desert, Africa

**Date:** written in 1943

**Point-of-View:** first person

**Themes:** friendship, love, innocence, loyalty

**Protagonist:** the Little Prince

**Antagonist:** the Little Prince's inner search

**Style:** narrative

## Summary

The narrator, a pilot, is downed in the Sahara Desert, and attempts to repair his wrecked plane. He encounters a small apparition, the Little Prince, who asks him to draw a sheep. Their ensuing dialogue reveals the conflict that led the Little Prince to leave his own planet and the details of his journey from planet to planet until his arrival on Earth. The friendship that develops between the pilot and the Little Prince and the Little Prince's encounter with a fox help him discover the secret of what is important in life. The story is a study in contrasts: reality/unreality; childhood/adulthood; joy/sadness; life/death.

## Historical Background

Written in the midst of World War II, *The Little Prince* portrays problems that Saint-Exupéry and his native France were facing. France was occupied by the Nazis, and the author grieved over the suffering of his family, his friends, and his countrymen. The drawing of the boa constrictor swallowing an elephant depicts the political monster that was swallowing Europe.

## Characters

**The Little Prince:** visitor to earth, probably from Asteroid B-612, who leaves his flower, the love of his life, in search of the value and importance of life; loves sunsets and thinks grown-ups are strange and confuse everything

**His flower:** his friend and companion whom he faithfully tends, yet leaves because of her vanity. Note the duality of her character: beauty/vanity; causes happiness/pain; cause of the Little Prince's departure from/return to his planet; essential to development of the tale

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## The Little Prince's Encounters on Earth

**The narrator:** a pilot who is attempting to repair his downed airplane; becomes friend and confidant of the Little Prince

**The snake:** the first creature he meets on earth; symbolizes death

**The roses:** reveal the identity of his flower

**The fox:** teaches the Little Prince what is really important in life; symbolizes friendship

**The railway switchman:** reveals basic (adult) dissatisfaction with life

**The merchant:** interested only in saving time

## The Little Prince's Interplanetary Encounters

*Note:* Each character symbolizes some futile aspect of adult existence, and all except the lamplighter are completely self-absorbed.

**The king:** believes he rules over everything and issues demands that ensure absolute obedience

**The conceited man:** refuses to hear anything but praise

**The tippler:** ironically drinks to forget his shame over drinking

**The businessman:** a picture of futility; counting, recounting, and banking "his stars"

**The lamplighter:** never rests because he must continually light and re-light his lamp

**The geographer:** records only things that are "matters of consequence"; never explores for himself but depends on others' efficiency

## About the Author

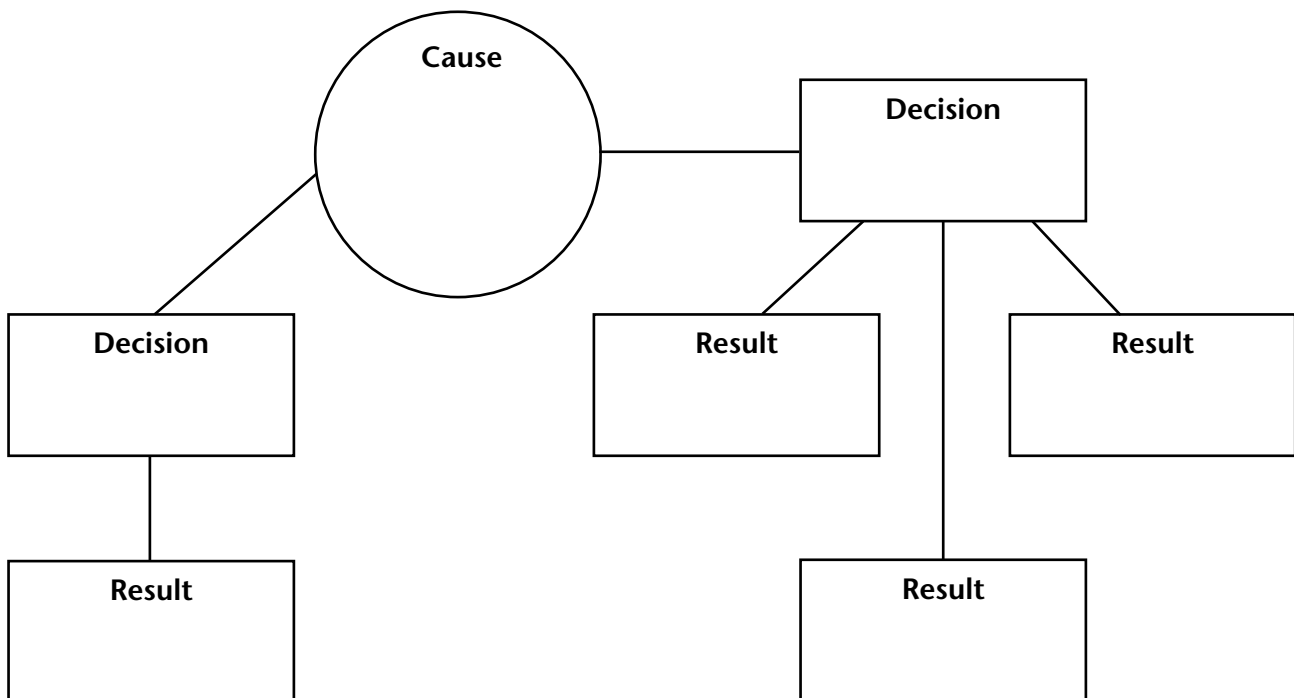
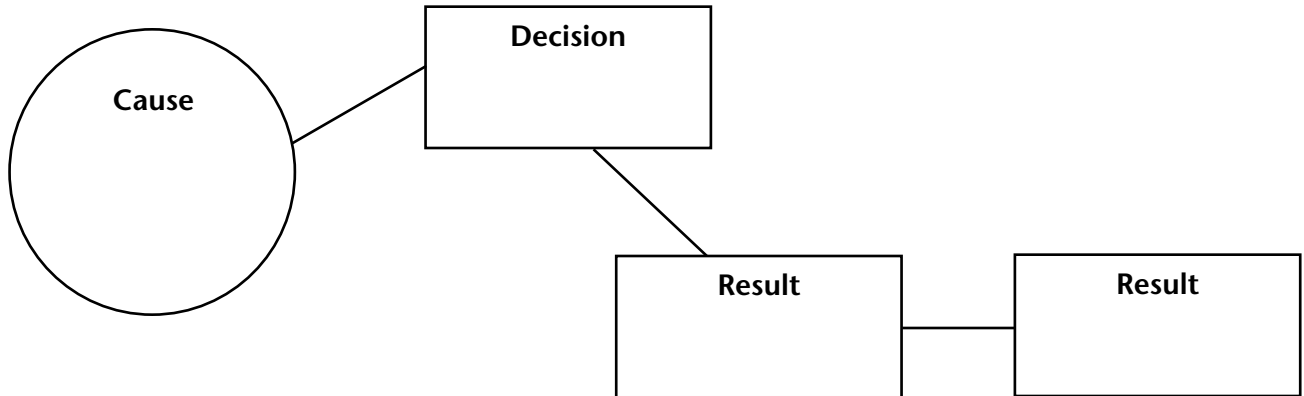
Antoine de Saint-Exupéry was born June 29, 1900, in Lyon, France. He was educated in Jesuit schools and at the Villa Saint Jean in Frebourg, Switzerland. He joined the French Air Force, serving as a mechanic, in 1921. In 1926, he left the Air Force to become a commercial pilot, flying mail routes over North Africa and South America. In 1935, he was stranded in the desert after crashing his plane. He flew to many South African cities during the Spanish Civil War. He married Consuelo Suncion in 1931.

In 1938, after German troops occupied France, Saint-Exupéry moved to the United States and flew dangerous missions over the Mediterranean Sea and the Sahara Desert. In 1942, he joined the American army, serving as a pilot, but later returned to his old French Army squadron in North Africa. On July 31, 1944, he flew his last mission. German airplanes destroyed his plane over the Mediterranean.

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## Cause/Effect Chart

**Directions:** Make a flow chart to show decisions a character made, the decisions (s)he could have made, and the result(s) of each. (Use your imagination to speculate on the results of decisions the character could have made.)



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## Chapters 1-2, pp. 3-10

The narrator, a pilot who is attempting to repair his plane in the Sahara Desert, meets the Little Prince, who asks him to draw a sheep.

### Vocabulary

primeval (3)	pondered (3)	consequence (5)	intimately (5)
apparition (6)	cumbersome (9)	indulgently (9)	

### Discussion Questions

1. Read Chapter 1 aloud. Make prior arrangements for a student to read aloud Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken." Discuss the narrator's desire to become an artist and his comment, "So then I chose another profession, and learned to pilot airplanes." Compare Frost's "road less traveled by" with the "road" the narrator has taken and discuss whether or not he feels he made the right choice. *(Responses will vary. Note that both of the professions [artist and pilot] were, at that time, roads "less traveled." While Frost apparently is pleased with his choice [between English teacher and poet], he realizes that toward the end of his life, he may regret not going back and traveling the other road. The narrator wanted to become an artist, but, because grown-ups did not understand, he becomes a pilot. Hints of his regret occur throughout the novel. pp. 3-6)*
2. Compare/contrast grown-ups and children's views of "matters of consequence" (pp. 5, 8). *(Responses will vary. Elicit student response about the priorities of adults compared with those of teenagers today.)*
3. Discuss the appearance of the Little Prince, his request, and its effect on the narrator (a pilot). *(The pilot faces a life and death situation in the Sahara Desert and must repair his downed plane. He feels isolated and alone until he is astonished by the appearance of the Little Prince, who asks the narrator to draw him a sheep. This request triggers memories of the narrator's feelings of inadequacies as an artist, but the Little Prince is delighted with the finished product. pp. 6-10)*

### Supplementary Activities

1. Have students analyze the drawing of the Little Prince and begin a list of facts about him. Continue this as the story progresses. *(for example, extraordinarily small person, wears boots and is dressed in a long coat with stars on shoulders, carries sword, lives where everything is small, imaginative, etc. pp. 6-10)*
2. Have students respond in their journals to the Little Prince's statement, "That is exactly the way I wanted it!" (p. 10) in response to the pilot's drawing of a box for the sheep.
3. Place the word "isolation" on an overhead transparency. Elicit student response to different types of isolation and times they have felt completely isolated. Analyze the simile, "I was more isolated than a shipwrecked sailor on a raft in the middle of the ocean" (p. 6).