



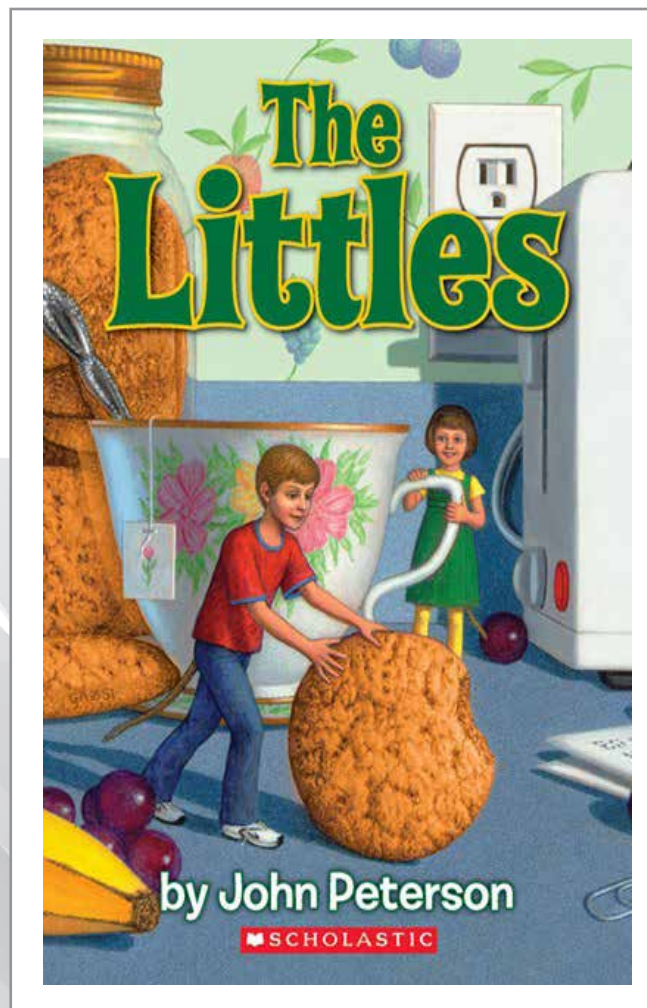
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 3-5

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The Littles

John Peterson



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Littles

John Peterson

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 978-1-50203-957-6

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

novelunits.com

Table of Contents

Summary	3
Introductory Information and Activities	3
Chapter by Chapter	8
Chapters contain: Vocabulary Words and Activities, Discussion Questions, Predictions, Supplementary Activities	
Post-reading Questions	21
Post-reading Activities	22
Assessment	26

Skills and Strategies

Thinking

Brainstorming, visualization,
decision-making

Vocabulary

Word mapping, analogies,
synonym chains

Comprehension

Cause-and-effect, predicting,
comparison/contrast

Listening/Speaking

Drama

Writing

Expository, description,
creative narrative

Literary Elements

Characterization, story
elements

Summary

The Littles are an extended family of tiny people who live in the home of the “normal-sized” Bigg family (unknown to the Biggs). The Littles secretly take their food and other necessities from the Biggs; in return, the Littles fix problems with the house’s plumbing and electricity. Their happy coexistence is shattered one May when the Biggs decide to go on a three-month vacation and rent their house to the Newcombs.

Mr. Newcomb has decided to “paint masterpieces” while enjoying his vacation from city life, while Mrs. Newcomb is doing some writing. The couple are nice enough, and the Littles do enjoy listening to Mrs. Newcomb read her wonderful stories, but unfortunately they give short shrift to cooking and housekeeping. As a result, the Littles must endure a steady diet of hamburger—and, worse, they must defend their very lives against some dreaded mouse intruders (who have gone unnoticed by the Newcombs). When fighting the dangerous rodents with tiny bows and arrows proves ineffective, young Tom Little volunteers to dress up like a mouse in order to draw the Newcombs’ attention to the problem (so that they will do something about the infestation). Tom dons the costume Granny Little makes, and bravely skitters between Mrs. Newcomb’s feet, producing the intended effect.

Unfortunately, rather than setting traps, which the Littles expected and planned to avoid, the Newcombs get a cat. When little Lucy witnesses a feline attack on her father, she stabs the cat’s tail with a tiny arrow. Mr. Little devises a plan to convince the Newcombs that their cat is noisy and clumsy, so that they will get rid of the animal. No matter how many curtains they pull down and bowls of milk they spill, though, the Littles find that Mrs. Newcomb is disinclined to get rid of the pet she has grown to like. The Littles then reverse tactics and devise a strategy for making friends with the cat. After giving the cat yarn to play with and scratching its chin, they find that she not only purrs, but lets Tom ride on her back. In fact, by the time the Newcombs are ready to return to the city, the cat is so attached to the Littles that she stays behind with them.

Prior to Reading

You may wish to choose one or more of the following pre-reading discussion questions/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.

Pre-reading Discussion Questions

On Stealing: What are some of the reasons for stealing? Is it ever right to steal?

On Mice and Cats: Why do mice infest some houses and not others? What would be an “ideal home” for mice? What are some ways to get rid of mice? Which would you use if you had a problem with mice? Can you think of some unusual new ways?

On Facing Danger: What are some of the dangers we have to face today? Have you ever had to face personal danger? How do people react to danger? Can you think of examples of people who have found extra courage when they needed it? What do these examples have in common?

On Being Small: What are some special problems that short people face? What are some ways of coping with these problems? Are there any advantages?

Pre-reading Activities

Anticipation Guide

1. If you agree with the following statements, mark them "True;" if you disagree, mark them "False." Be prepared to defend your answer. (After you read the story, see if any of your answers change.)

	TRUE	FALSE
a. Stealing is wrong.		
b. I'd rather live in the country than in the city.		
c. If there are mice in your house, you should get rid of them.		
d. Always do what your parents say.		
e. If you can't beat em, join em.		

Writing

2. Imagine that you wake up one morning to find that you are only five centimeters tall! Write a composition about some of the problems you would have, and how you might solve them. (What would you do about clothing? food? shelter? entertainment? threats to your safety?)

T-Chart Comparison

3. Discuss with students the difference between "realistic fantasy" stories and "realistic fiction," and ask which they think describes the story about tiny people that they are about to read. (realistic fantasy)

Chapter 5, pages 23-30

Vocabulary

generation (27) crack shot (28) invasion (28) quiver (29)

Vocabulary Activity

1. Does a "crack shot" usually hit the target?
2. Could your picnic be interrupted by an invasion of ants?
3. Is a "quiver" the same thing as a "bow and arrow"?
4. Are you and your teacher from the same generation?
(Answers: 1 = yes 2 = yes 3 = no; the quiver holds the arrows)

yes	no

Discussion Questions

1. Why did Mr. Little punch tiny holes in the wallpaper? Do you think he was wrong to do so?
(*so that the Littles could hear what was going on in the room outside*)
2. Why do the Littles usually cork up the hole? Why do they remove the cork after dinner?
(*Usually they don't want anyone to hear them; after dinner they like to hear Mrs. Newcomb read her stories to her husband.*)
3. How did Uncle Pete get his limp? (*A mouse grabbed him by the foot in '35.*)
4. What steps do the adults take, once the mice are spotted? (*Father orders Tom to lock the doors and gets out his bow and arrow; he tells the children that Uncle Pete will teach them to shoot.*)
5. Who is more likely to attack the mice first, Father or Uncle Pete? Do you think it is right to attack before being attacked? (*Uncle Pete seems more militant, and feels it is better to "teach em a lesson before they start to bother us."*)

Prediction

How will the Newcombs finally come to realize that they have mice? What will they do about it?

Writing Activity

Discuss with a partner what kind of stories Mrs. Newcomb probably writes. Then pretend you are Mrs. Newcomb. Write a short story and read aloud to your "husband" (classmate).

Art Activity

Look at the picture on page 25. The artist has drawn a "cutaway" picture; you can see what is happening on both sides of the wall, as if someone has cut away the front wall. Make another "cutaway" drawing to illustrate a different part of the story. (Instead, you might choose to draw a "cutaway" of activities in two rooms at your school, or in your home.)

Activity Sheet

Causal Chains

Directions: Connect each of the causes on the left with one main effect on the right.

CAUSES	→	EFFECTS
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 30px; height: 30px; text-align: center; line-height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;">1</div> <p>The Littles wanted to help the Biggs in return for the food and other things they took...</p>	→	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 30px; height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>a. so the Newcombs and the Littles ate a lot of hamburger.</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 30px; height: 30px; text-align: center; line-height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;">2</div> <p>The Biggs were going on a three-month vacation...</p>	→	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 30px; height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>b. so Tom dressed as a mouse to attract their attention.</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 30px; height: 30px; text-align: center; line-height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;">3</div> <p>Mrs. Newcomb decided to spend her time writing instead of cooking...</p>	→	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 30px; height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>c. so the Littles rushed through dinner to make sure they didn't miss the stories.</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 30px; height: 30px; text-align: center; line-height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;">4</div> <p>Mrs. Newcomb read what she had written to Mr. Newcomb in the evenings...</p>	→	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 30px; height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>d. so mice came into the house.</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 30px; height: 30px; text-align: center; line-height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;">5</div> <p>The Newcombs left food around...</p>	→	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 30px; height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>e. so they let the Newcombs stay in their house.</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 30px; height: 30px; text-align: center; line-height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;">6</div> <p>The Newcombs didn't notice the mice...</p>	→	<div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 30px; height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>f. so they fixed problems with the plumbing and electricity.</p>

(Answers: 1 = f; 2 = e; 3 = a; 4 = c; 5 = d; 6 = b)