



**TEACHER GUIDE**

**GRADES K-3**

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

# **Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile**

Bernard Waber



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

# Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile

Bernard Waber

## 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 978-1-50203-967-5**

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## Summary

Lyle is a crocodile with many human traits. He lives with the Primms on East 88th Street, and is treated as a member of the family. He is helpful, and enjoys playing with Joshua and his friends. Mr. Grumps and his cat, Loretta, live two houses away from the Primms, and Loretta is afraid of Lyle. Circumstances cause Mr. Grumps to arrange for Lyle to be sent to the zoo. With the help of his old performing partner, Signor Valenti, Lyle leaves the zoo, and becomes a hero on his way to visit the Primms.

## About the Author

Bernard Waber was born September 27, 1924, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He married Ethel Bernstein in 1952, and they have three children, Paulis, Kim, and Jan Gary. Waber attended the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia College of Art, and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. He started out with a major in finance, but his education was interrupted by World War II. It was during his army days that his interest shifted to drawing and painting. When he returned to civilian life, he enrolled at the Philadelphia College of Art. It was a decision that he never regretted. His first employment was as a commercial and graphic artist. Writing and illustrating children's books has been his primary interest since 1961, with the publication of *Lorenzo*.

He has said, "In one way or another, I seem to find myself thinking of children's books most of the time. I love the total involvement of putting a book together. I seem to write best when in motion. Ideas seem to shake loose from my head. If forced to choose between writing and illustrating, I would choose writing. There is a freedom about writing that appeals to me. It can be done almost anywhere."

Since Lyle's debut, Waber's home has become a "museum of crocodilia." Friends and readers have furnished all kinds of Lyle memorabilia, and when youngsters visit, they truly expect Lyle to appear! To allay disappointment, Waber will make a souvenir sketch of Lyle, having him, at least, present in spirit.

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Lyle's Hometown	My Hometown
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8. Research crocodiles. Find out more about them. Add to the KWL chart. Take off any incorrect information.
9. Start a T-comparison of the human and non-human characteristics of Lyle. Add to the comparison as the story evolves.

Human	Non-human
lives in a house	looks like a crocodile
bathes in a bathtub	

## Pages 8—15

### Vocabulary

desperately 9  
excitable 10  
furious 15

toothsome 9  
particular 13  
irritable 15

distrustful 9  
coaxing 14

### Discussion Questions and Activities

1. Who is Loretta? (*Page 8, Loretta is a cat belonging to Mr. Grumps, who lives two houses away from the Primms.*)
2. What are Loretta's feelings toward Lyle? (*Page 8, Lyle makes Loretta nervous. Loretta is perfectly miserable.*) Why do you think that Loretta feels this way? If you were Loretta, how would you feel?

- 
3. What are Lyle’s reactions to Loretta’s feelings? (*Page 9, Lyle wants to be a friend to Loretta. He tries to win her over by smiling at her.*)
  4. How does Mr. Grumps react to Lyle? (*Page 10, Mr. Grumps is even more excitable than his cat. He thinks that something should be done about Lyle.*) What are some things that you think might be done about Lyle? Make some predictions.
  5. What does Lyle play with Joshua and his friends? (*Pages 11-13, They play “It,” double-dutch, and high-jump.*) What would you like to play with Lyle?
  6. Why does Loretta climb a tree? (*Pages 13-14, Loretta sees Lyle high-jump, and is terribly surprised and shaken.*) Have you ever been as afraid as Loretta is? How did you react? Think of some ways that frightened people react. Make a list.
  7. What do you think that the author means when he says that Mr. Grumps would be “impossible to live with”? (*Page 15*) Have you ever been “impossible to live with”? Why?
  8. Start to fill in a story map. (See page 10 of this guide.) Complete this as the story evolves.
  9. Think of some things that Loretta would say to Lyle if she could talk. Illustrate the things, using speech balloons.

## Pages 16—21

### Vocabulary

fussed 16

browsing 19

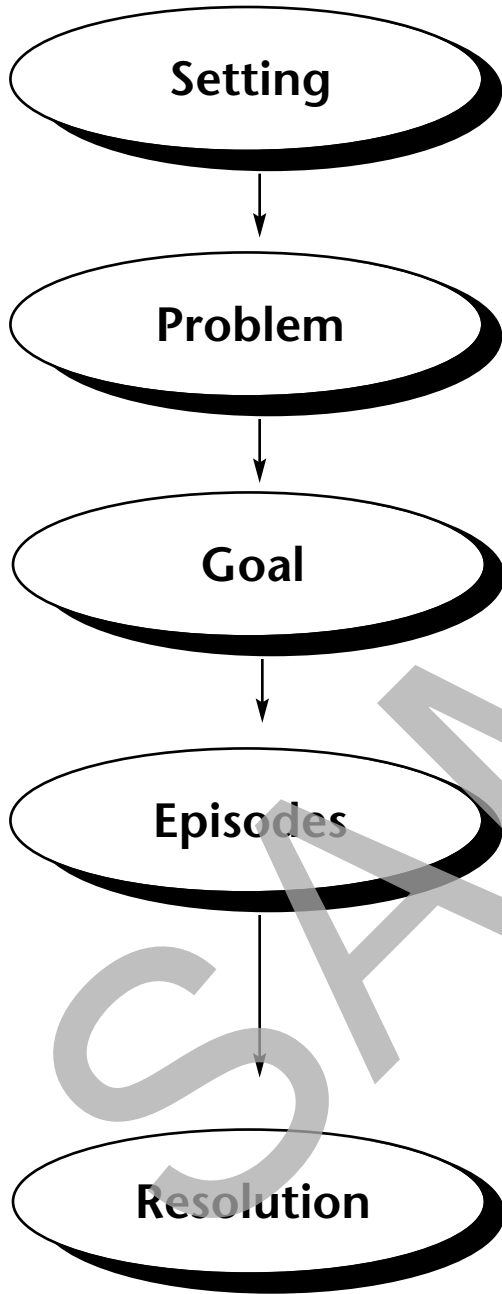
antique 19

### Discussion Questions and Activities

1. Why do you think that Mrs. Primm thought it best to keep Lyle close at her side? (*Page 16*)
2. What are some things that Mrs. Primm and Lyle did together? (*Pages 16-21, They cooked, lunched in the park, fed the birds, went antiquing, watched construction, and went ice-skating.*) What are some other things that they might do in a big city? Have you ever been to a big city? What do you like to do when you go to a big city?
3. Interview an adult, to find out what that person would like to do when in the city for pleasure. Compare the things from that interview to the things that Mrs. Primm did with Lyle when they were in the city.

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## Story Map



Characters \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Time and Place \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Beginning → Development → Outcome

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