



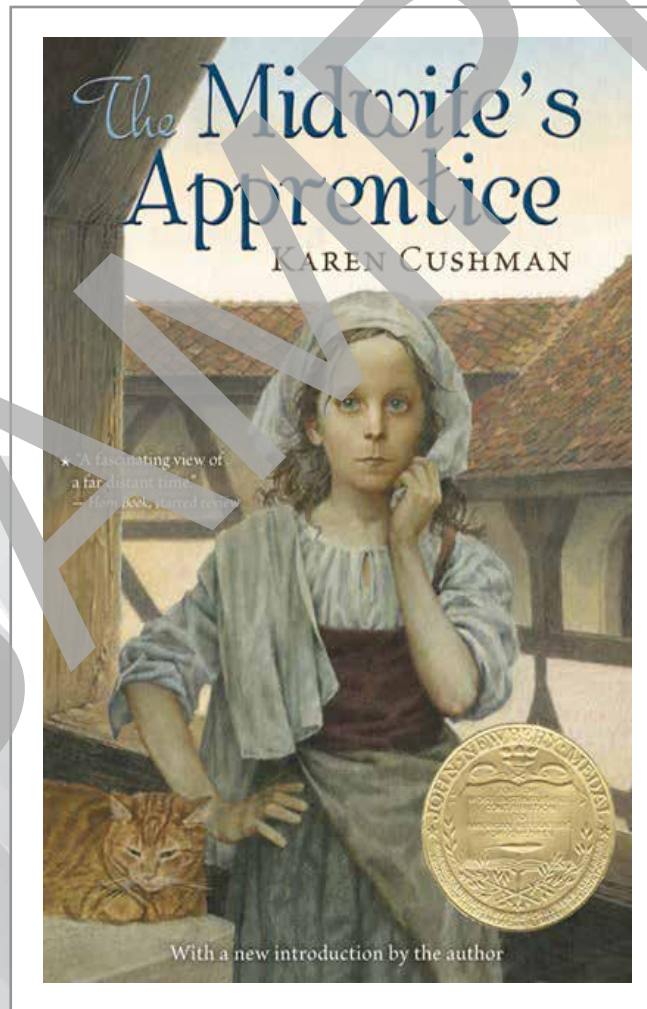
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The Midwife's Apprentice

Karen Cushman



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Midwife's Apprentice

Karen Cushman

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 978-1-50203-993-4

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
About the Author.....	3
About the Newbery Medal.....	3
Introductory Activities and Information	4
Seventeen Chapters and Author's Note.....	12
Chapters contain: Vocabulary Words, Discussion Questions and Activities, Supplementary Activities, Predicting	
Concluding Activities	34
Vocabulary Activities.....	37
Assessment.....	39

Skills and Strategies

Comprehension

Predicting, cause and effect,
comparison/contrast

Literary Elements

Alliteration, assonance,
characterization, style, found
poetry, personification,
similes

Listening/Speaking

Dramatizing, discussion

Thinking

Visualization, research,
brainstorming

Writing

Descriptive, opinion,
interpretive

Vocabulary

Word mapping, synonyms,
antonyms

Summary of *The Midwife's Apprentice*

The Midwife's Apprentice tells of Alyce, a poor, homeless waif in medieval England. The story starts at the dung heap where Alyce, as yet nameless, sleeps to keep warm. A passing midwife rescues the child from her tormenters, the village tough boys. Beetle, as the child is called after the dung beetles, goes with the midwife and enters life as her apprentice. Jane Sharp, the midwife, is a tough taskmaster, but Alyce (Beetle) does learn about midwifery. When Alyce is unable to help with a particularly difficult birth, she decides she is a failure and leaves Jane Sharp's cottage. Her adventures continue as she works in an inn. As Alyce interacts with Edward Jennet, a passing merchant and his pregnant wife, and with Magister Reese, she learns to appreciate her own worth. Finally, she decides to return to the midwife to learn more, and aspires to become a midwife herself.

The Midwife's Apprentice is written and printed in a manner reminiscent of the medieval period. The author received the 1995 Newbery Medal for the book.

About the Author

Karen Cushman was born in Chicago, Illinois, and currently lives in Oakland, California, with her husband, daughter, two cats, a dog, and a rabbit. Her first book was *Catherine, Called Birdy* (Novel Unit available). Her second book, *The Midwife's Apprentice*, won the Newbery Medal. Both books are set in medieval England. Cushman cites a long-standing interest in history and a desire to tell about ordinary young people as her motivations for writing the books.

Cushman has earned masters degrees in human behavior and museum studies. She is assistant director of the Museum Studies Department at John F. Kennedy University in the San Francisco Bay area.

About the Newbery Medal

The Newbery medal is named for an eighteenth-century British bookseller, John Newbery. Awarded annually by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association, the medal honors the year's most distinguished contribution to American children's literature.

Other recent Newbery Award winners are:

Lowry, *The Giver*, 1994

Naylor, *Shiloh*, 1992

Lowry, *Number the Stars*, 1990

Freedman, *Lincoln: A Photobiography*, 1988

MacLachlan, *Sarah Plain and Tall*, 1986

Cleary, *Dear Mr. Henshaw*, 1984

Creech, *Walk Two Moons*, 1995

Rylant, *Missing May*, 1993

Spinelli, *Maniac Magee*, 1991

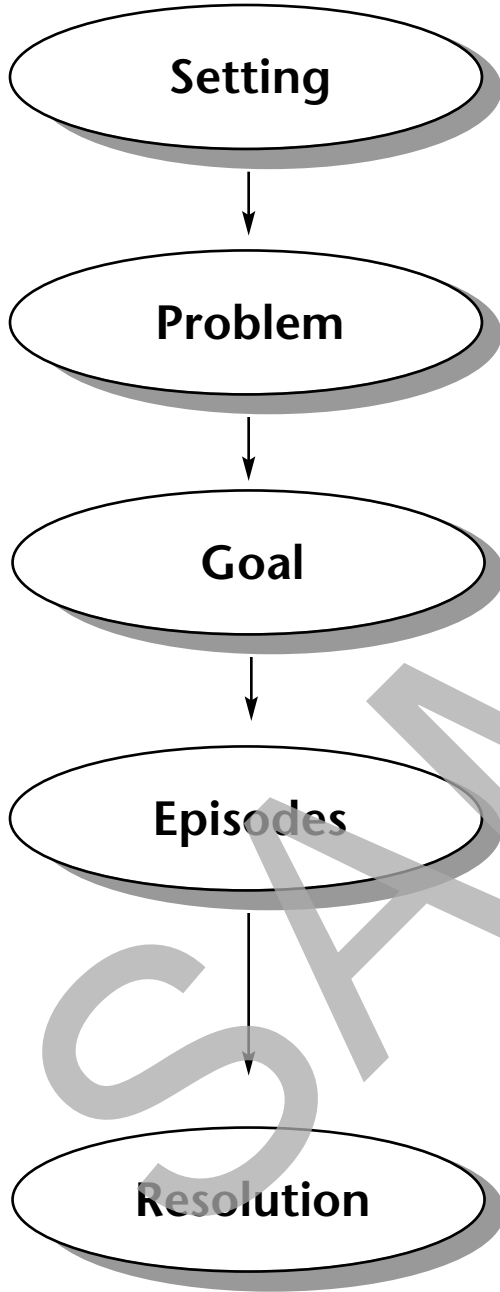
Fleischman, *Joyful Noise: Poems...*, 1989

Fleischman, *The Whipping Boy*, 1987

McKinley, *The Hero and the Crown*, 1985

Voigt, *Dacey's Song*, 1983

Story Map



Characters _____

Time and Place _____

Beginning → Development → Outcome

Chapter-by-Chapter Vocabulary, Discussion Questions, and Supplementary Activities

Chapter 1: “The Dung Heap”—Pages 1-5

Vocabulary:

moiling 1
bailiff 3

stench 1

reeked 2

mucking 3

Discussion Questions and Activities:





1. Who is Beetle and what is her situation? (*a homeless young girl who is taunted by the local boys and lives in the worst of situations*)
2. How does Beetle keep warm? (*by sleeping in a dung heap*)
3. What is the time period in this book? (*The author doesn't state directly but it appears that it is the middle ages because no modern inventions are mentioned. There is a dung heap.*)
4. How is the situation depicted in the book different from anything you've experienced? (*Answers will vary. Students with experience on farms may have some more understanding.*)
5. Who saves Beetle from the taunting toughs of the village? (*the midwife*)
6. How does the girl come to be called “Beetle”? (*There are dung beetles in the dung heap where she has sought heat from the cold night. She acquires the name.*)
7. Predicting—What will happen to Beetle in the midwife's house?

Supplementary Activities:

1. What do the literary terms *alliteration* and *assonance* mean? Look for examples in the pages of chapter one.
2. How does the author appeal to your senses in chapter one? Look for words that appeal to your senses of smell, sight, hearing, and touch. Start to collect these sensory images; record them on the chart provided on page 13 of this guide.

Sensory Images

Directions: Collect words which the author uses to appeal to your senses of smell, sight, hearing, and touch.

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>SMELL</i> 	<i>SIGHT</i> 	<i>HEARING</i> 	<i>TOUCH</i> 
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				