



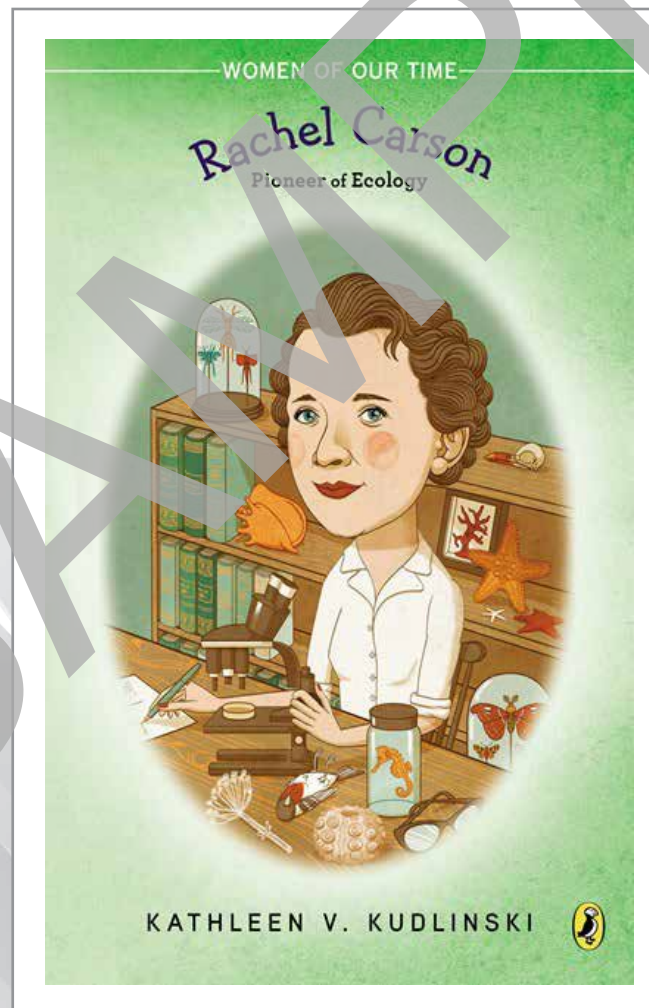
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 3-5

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Rachel Carson: Pioneer of Ecology

Kathleen V. Kudlinski



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Rachel Carson: Pioneer of Ecology

Kathleen V. Kudlinski

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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Summary

This biography gives an insight into the life of Rachel Carson, and tells how this gifted scientist and writer changed the way people look at their planet.

About the Author

Inspired by the life of Rachel Carson, Kathleen V. Kudlinski became a scientist, teacher, and eventually, a writer. The ALA *Booklist* says of Kudlinski's book, *Rachel Carson: Pioneer of Ecology*, "Kudlinski has admirably captured the driving force and spirit of a shy but courageous woman in a succinct, respectful approach. An ideal curriculum resource."

Note: Please be selective, and use discretion when choosing the activities that you will do with the unit. It is not intended that everything be done but that discretionary choices made are the 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

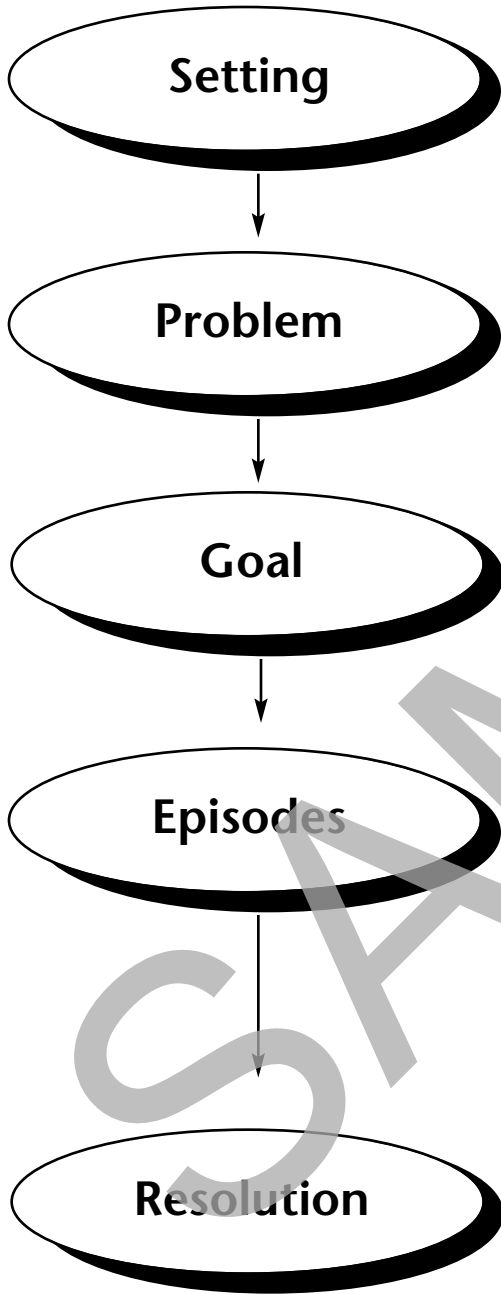
Before starting this unit, collect newspaper and magazine articles concerning the environment and conservation. Check out copies of the books written by Rachel Carson, as well as others on this subject. Also examine books about people involved in the fight to save the planet Earth. Place the books and magazines in an area of easy access for the students.

Make a copy of the following quotation by Albert Schweitzer: "Man has lost the capacity to foresee and to forestall. He will end by destroying the Earth." When ready to start the unit, put up this quotation, and ask for a volunteer to read it to the group. Discuss the quotation, and its meaning. (The book *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson is dedicated to Albert Schweitzer. This quote is on the dedication page of this book, first published in 1962.)

Read the following to the group, from pages 18-19 of the 1964 paperback edition of *Silent Spring*, published by Crest. Follow the reading by a discussion and update of the current status of environmental contamination. (Point out the materials on the bulletin board, and in the area designated for display and storage.)

"Along with the possibility of the extinction of mankind by nuclear war, the central problem of our age has therefore become the contamination of man's total environment with such substances of incredible potential for harm—substances that accumulate in the tissues of plants and animals and even penetrate the germ cells to shatter or alter the very material of heredity upon which the shape of the future depends.

Story Map



Characters _____

Time and Place _____

Problem _____

Goal _____

Beginning → Development → Outcome

Resolution _____

Chapter 1: “Dreams of the Sea”—Pages 1-7

Vocabulary

conch 1	fascinated 1	roamed 2	tinkered 4
squatting 4	flyswatter 6		

Vocabulary Activity

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

1. BEAGLE is to DOG as _____ is to SHELL. (CONCH)
2. UP is to DOWN as _____ is to UNINTERESTED. (FASCINATED)
3. GLAD is to HAPPY as _____ is to PUTTER. (TINKER)
4. UNHAPPY is to SAD as _____ is to WANDERED. (ROAMED)
5. CUP is to CONTAINER as _____ is to DEVICE. (FLYSWATTER)

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. Why does Mrs. Carson often keep Rachel home while she is of elementary school age? (Page 2, Mrs. Carson keeps Rachel home if a classmate is ill, if she doesn't want her daughter to walk the half mile through snowdrifts, or if Rachel is not feeling well.) Does Rachel get behind in her schoolwork? (Page 2, No. Mrs. Carson was once a teacher. She makes sure that Rachel keeps up with her classmates.) Do you ever stay home from school? Why? (See Supplementary Activity #2.)
2. Since her sister and brother are much older than she, Rachel is often alone. However, she is never bored. Why is that? (Page 4, Rachel says of those who love science, “We are never bored. We can't be. There is always something new.”) Consider other disciplines. Might the same thing be said about music? literature? art? mathematics? Is there one thing that you really enjoy doing/studying? What seems to happen to the time when you are doing something that you really enjoy and have a great interest in? Why do you think that this seems to happen? Discuss.
3. What does Rachel do to change her brother's attitude about one sport that he engages in? (Page 6, Robert once liked to hunt in the woods and fields. Rachel would go with her brother, but since she hated the killing part, would talk to Robert and argue against shooting wild animals. He gives up hunting.) What is your opinion of the hunting of wild animals for sport? Do you agree or disagree with Rachel?

Supplementary Activities

1. On page 1 the author explains, through Rachel, that the sounds heard when one presses a shell to the ear are echoes of the pulse in one's own ear. Are you aware of this fact? Press a shell close to your ear. What do you hear?

2. Do some investigating for your area. Are there currently laws that require school attendance? Were the same laws in effect in 1914, the year mentioned by the author? Make a comparison of the years. What conclusions may be made?

Current Attendance Requirements	1914 Attendance Requirements

3. From early on, Rachel dreams of the sea. Do you have a special dream? Is there something that you would like to do, see, accomplish? Tell of your special dream in prose, poetry, music, or through the use of art media, or any combination thereof.
4. Start character attribute webs for Rachel Carson and her mother. Add to the webs as more is learned about these two people. (See pages 8-10 of this guide.)

Chapter 2: "Big Plans"—Pages 8-14

Vocabulary

realized 8 exciting 9 aviator 11 submission 11
 impressed 13 scholarship 14

Vocabulary Activity

Match up the vocabulary word with its definition.

Definition	Vocabulary Word
1. pilot	_____ (<i>aviator</i>)
2. student grant	_____ (<i>scholarship</i>)
3. to be fully aware of	_____ (<i>realized</i>)
4. influenced	_____ (<i>impressed</i>)
5. act of submitting something	_____ (<i>submission</i>)
6. producing excitement	_____ (<i>exciting</i>)