



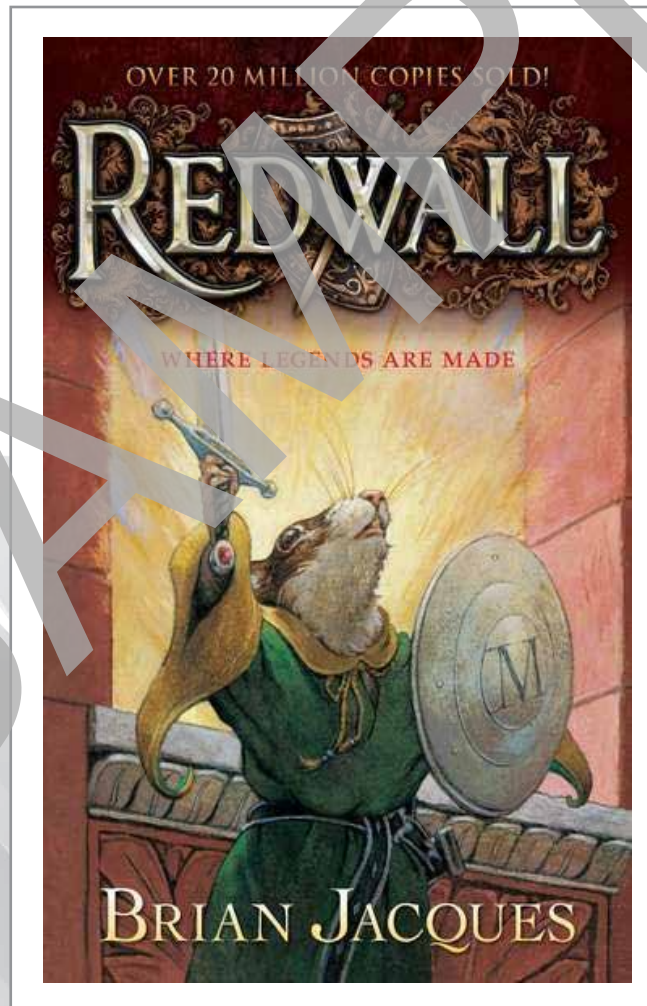
**TEACHER GUIDE**

**GRADES 6-8**

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

# Redwall

Brian Jacques



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

# Redwall

Brian Jacques

## 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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3901 Union Blvd., Suite 155

St. Louis, MO 63115

[sales@novelunits.com](mailto:sales@novelunits.com)

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## Table of Contents

Summary .....	3
About the Author .....	3
Introductory Activities .....	3
Vocabulary Activities.....	4
Ten Sections .....	10
Each section contains: Vocabulary, Discussion Questions, and Supplementary Activities	
Post-reading Discussion Questions .....	30
Post-reading Extension Activities.....	31
Assessment.....	32

## Skills and Strategies

### Thinking

Identifying attributes,  
research, compare/contrast,  
brainstorming, problem  
solving, creative thinking,  
critical thinking

### Comprehension

Predicting, foreshadowing,  
cause/effect, inference,  
evaluation

### Writing

Character journal, memories,  
personal, creative, letter,  
riddles, blank verse

### Vocabulary

Charades, word maps,  
definitions

### Listening/Speaking

Dramatizing, interviewing,  
story telling, oral reports,  
music

### Literary Elements

Literary analysis, story  
mapping, plot development,  
setting, characterization,  
point of view

### Across the Curriculum

Science—animal research;  
Art—collage, advertisements,  
comic strips, illustrations;  
Health—first aid;  
Computer Technology—  
graphic presentations,  
Internet research

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## Summary

*Redwall* introduces the creatures that inhabit an Abbey called Redwall. The mice that maintain the Abbey are peaceful creatures who have vowed to live their lives helping other animals. But their peaceful lives are shattered with the arrival of a hideous, evil rat named Cluny the Scourge. A clumsy young mouse named Matthias is the Abbey's only hope for survival. Matthias must overcome his own insecurities and inexperience, and accept his destiny, to defeat Cluny and save the beloved inhabitants of Redwall.

## About the Author

Brian Jacques has written numerous best-selling books about the creatures that inhabit Redwall Abbey. He brings a certain humanity to his characters that makes them engaging to readers. Jacques has experimented with numerous careers, gaining experience that has added to the creative adventures in his *Redwall* series. He currently resides in Liverpool, England.

## Introductory Activities

1. **Previewing the Book:** Have students look at the cover and the map found in the beginning of the book. Students should answer the journalist's questions about what they see: Who? What? When? Where? and Why? Based on their answers, students predict what the book will be about.
2. **Predict:** Given the following clues, students write a paragraph predicting what they think will happen in the story.  
war      bravery      riddles      swords      success
3. **Character Journal:** Some of the main characters in *Redwall* are Cluny the Scourge, Matthias, Abbot Mortimer, and Methuselah. Have students choose one character. As they read the book, students should write regular journal entries from that character's point of view. Journal entries should reflect the events of the story. At various points in their reading, have students share their journals with classmates.
4. **Attribute Web:** Create an attribute web (see page 8 of this guide) with students for each of the following ideas: friendship, self-preservation, conquest, greed, kindness, and sacrifice. Ask students to brainstorm what each word brings to mind. Encourage students to elaborate on particular ideas.
5. **Prediction Chart:** Have students set up a prediction chart (see pages 5-6 of this guide) to use as they read the book.

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## Using Predictions

We all make predictions as we read—little guesses about what will happen next, how a conflict will be resolved, which details will be important to the plot, which details will help fill in our sense of a character. Students should be encouraged to predict, to make sensible guesses as they read the novel.

As students work on their predictions, these discussion questions can be used to guide them: What are some of the ways to predict? What is the process of a sophisticated reader's thinking and predicting? What clues does an author give to help us make predictions? Why are some predictions more likely to be accurate than others?

Create a chart for recording predictions. This could be either an individual or class activity. As each subsequent chapter is discussed, students can review and correct their previous predictions about plot and characters as necessary.

Use the facts and ideas the author gives.

Use your own prior knowledge.

Apply any new information (i.e., from class discussion) that may cause you to change your mind.

Predictions

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## Book One: The Wall

### Chapters 1–8, pages 3–31

#### Vocabulary

buffoon (3)	sedate (4)	feigning (4)	benignly (6)
sultana (11)	encompassing (12)	precariously (13)	insubordination (14)
juggernaut (15)	specter (16)	slandering (17)	trundled (18)
contemptuously (21)	skittles (21)	fractious (24)	derisive (25)
abashed (25)	chronicle (26)	garrulous (26)	consternation (27)

#### Discussion Questions

1. What is your first impression of Matthias? *(Answers will vary.)*
2. What makes the tapestry that hangs in the Abbey so special? *(It is the pride and joy of the Abbey. The Founders of the Abbey wove the oldest part, and each successive generation added to it so that it now chronicles the history of Redwall.)*
3. Why are the Redwall mice able to go anywhere and pass through any territory unharmed? *(They are a respected and peaceful society. All the animals know that the mice of Redwall are dedicated to healing the sick and helping the impoverished.)*
4. What kind of a rat is Cluny the Scourge? *(Cluny is an evil bilge rat with a huge army. He is also a fierce, unsympathetic warrior.)*
5. Why does Abbot Mortimer keep asking Friar Hugo about the amount of food available? *(He wants to make sure there is enough food for everyone at the celebration.)*
6. Why does Cluny want Skullface to bite the horse on the back? *(The horse stopped due to exhaustion, but Cluny wants him to keep going. Cluny wants Skullface to bite the horse and risk getting hurt to get it moving again.)*
7. Describe how Matthias feels as he escorts the guests home from the jubilee. *(Answers will vary.)*
8. Why does Constance decide to go back to the Abbey instead of taking the guests home? *(She wants to let Abbot Mortimer know about the band of rats they encountered.)*
9. Discuss how Cluny's attitude toward the injured rats and his philosophy on what will happen to animals that don't want to join him reveal about his character. *(Answers will vary.)*
10. Why do you think the animals scoff at the idea that Cluny the Scourge is nearby? *(Answers will vary.)*
11. What makes the animals finally take the news of Cluny seriously? *(Methuselah reads from his records and recounts stories of Cluny's carnage.)*
12. What does Matthias' willingness to stand up to the rat army say about his character? *(Answers will vary.)*

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13. What do you think is the meaning of Cluny's dream? Do you think it foreshadows a coming event? (*Answers will vary.*)

### Supplementary Activities

1. Literary Analysis: Discuss with the class the point of view from which the book is written (i.e., first person, third person, etc.). Give examples from the story to show this literary technique. Ask students: How does point of view affect one's ability to relate to the story and identify with the characters?
2. Character Attributes: Have students use attribute webs (page 8 of this guide) to make notes about Matthias, Cluny, and Abbot Mortimer. Students should update their entries as they read. Keep extra forms on hand for students to complete as they read about characters mentioned later in the book.
3. Literary Analysis/Story Map: Have students begin a story map (page 9 of this guide) to use as they read the story. They should continue to add new information about characters, settings, problems, and events.
4. Creative Writing: Have students write a composition using the following prompt: One day, as I walked through a wooded area, I came upon the most amazing sight. There before me were tiny creatures dressed in cleric's robes. It was a colony of humanlike mice. The following is my account of what I witnessed as I observed them on that day.
5. Predicting: Given what the students have read thus far, have them write a paragraph predicting what they think will happen in the story. They should include answers to the following questions: What will happen to the Churchmouse family now that Cluny has taken over their home? What is the meaning of Cluny's nightmare? Who will be sent to confront Cluny? What will happen to Redwall Abbey?

### Chapters 9–14, pages 32–65

#### Vocabulary

damsons (33)	stolidly (33)	construing (36)	formidable (37)
hackles (37)	balefully (38)	emanating (41)	insolently (41)
impudence (43)	parapet (44)	aspen (45)	tactician (46)
veritable (46)	rudimentary (47)	poultice (47)	daft (48)
hassocks (51)	basilisk (60)	obsidian (61)	laconically (65)

#### Discussion Questions

1. Why aren't the reassuring words of Abbot Mortimer enough to comfort Constance and put her mind at ease? (*Deep within, she senses that a dark shadow is casting itself over Redwall Abbey, and it is happening in the present, not the past.*)
2. Why does Matthias feel as if he has grown up overnight? (*Cluny is a threat to Redwall and its inhabitants, and Matthias knows that he must rise to the challenge and protect the Abbey.*)