



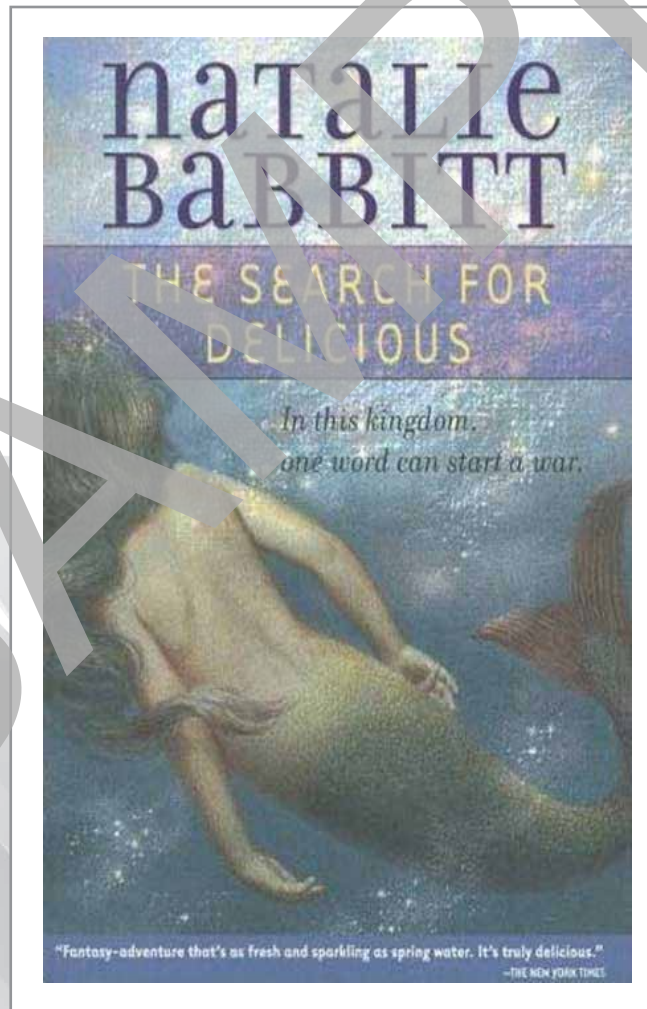
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The Search for Delicious

Natalie Babbitt



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Search for Delicious

Natalie Babbitt

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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Skills and Strategies

Thinking

Brainstorming, visualization,
research

Comprehension

Predicting, comparison/
contrast

Vocabulary

Antonyms/synonyms, prefixes

Literary Elements

Characterization, story
elements, similes

Listening/Speaking

Discussion

Writing

Persuasion, proverbs,
description, poetry

Summary

The Prime Minister of the kingdom is writing a dictionary. All goes well until the word “delicious” is to be defined. Since no one at the palace can agree on any one food that is delicious, Gaylen, the twelve-year-old Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, is sent out to poll the people of the kingdom. Seizing this as an opportunity to create a civil war pitting Crisps against Squashies, Hemlock, the villainous brother of the Queen, puts his plan to become king into action. This plan relies, in part, on the help of the woldweller of the forest, the dwarfs of the mountain, the wind, and Ardis, the mermaid of the lake who grieves for her lost spring house whistle. As Gaylen travels throughout the kingdom, he is met with increasing hostility as Hemlock’s effective propaganda campaign weaves a tale that snares the people. Gaylen’s solace is his horse, Marrow, and the mysterious stone key given to him by a minstrel. Discouraged and ready to abandon humankind, Gaylen realizes that he truly cares about his people and his world, and that he must try to help them to survive.

About the Author

Natalie Zane Moore Babbitt was born July 28, 1932, in Dayton, Ohio. She attended Smith College, B.A., 1954, and married Samuel Fisher Babbitt after graduating. They have three children.

About her writing, Babbitt has said, “I write for children because I am interested in fantasy and the possibilities for experience of all kinds before the time of compromise.” However, she is concerned that by making fantasy seem too real for children, they may confuse reality with fantasy. She feels that children also need to be reminded that change and growth in the real world take a long time and hard work.

Introductory Information and Activities

Note: It is not intended that everything presented in this guide be done. Please be selective, and use discretion when choosing the activities you will do with the unit. The choices that are made should be appropriate for your use and your group of students. A wide range of activities has been provided so that individuals as well as groups may benefit.

Initiating Activity

Before starting this unit, collect as many different dictionaries as you can. Include old, outdated dictionaries, specialized dictionaries such as language dictionaries, and professional dictionaries. Make banners of adjectives that are descriptive and are easiest to define by giving examples, such as: salty, sour, cranky, bulky, etc. DO NOT USE THE WORD DELICIOUS. That word will be used in the Prereading Activity and Prereading Discussion.

Prepare a KWL chart to place on the bulletin board temporarily. This will be used to record the knowledge that the students have about the **DICTIONARY**.

What I KNOW	What I WANT to find out	What I LEARNED

When ready to start the unit, place the KWL on the bulletin board and hang the banners in the room. Ask the students to give examples of things that could be used for the words on the banners. Have students be in charge of recording responses, and then adding on to the banners some of the examples given. Ask other students to consult the dictionary and to write out definitions for the words on the banners. Compare the dictionary definitions to the examples given by the students.

(See Supplementary Activities, Dictionary, page 34)

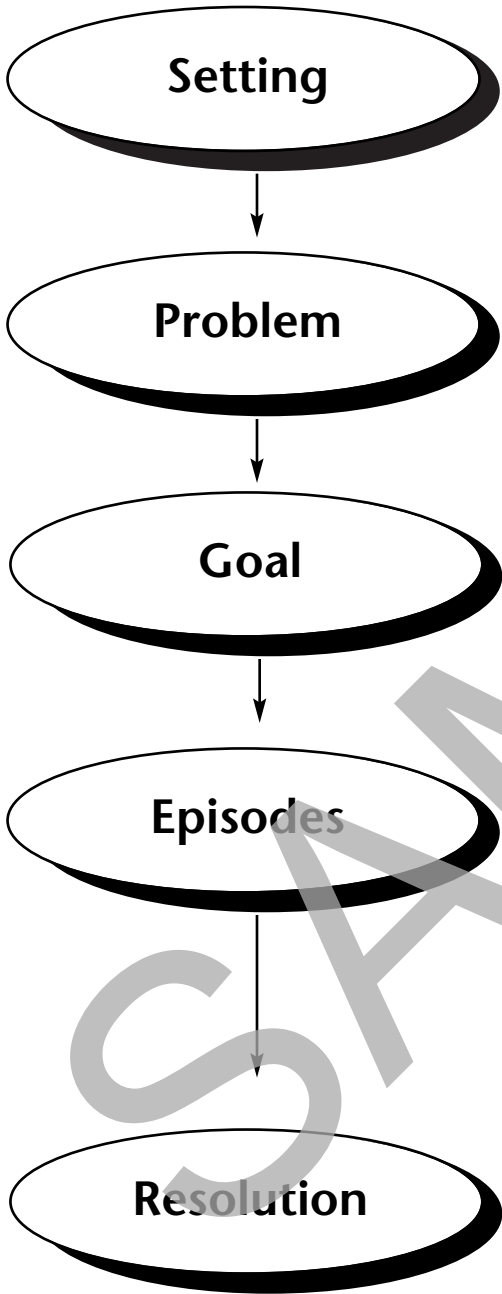
Point out the KWL form on the bulletin board. If one has not been used previously, point out the use of the form as a record keeper. Find out what the students know about the dictionary, and have that information recorded in the K section. (Incorrect information may be deleted as the correct information is learned.) Find out what the students would like to learn about the dictionary, and record that in the W section. The L section, what has been learned, will be filled in as the unit progresses.

Look at and talk about the various dictionaries that have been collected and placed in the room. List the different kinds in the L section of the form.

Remove the KWL chart from the bulletin board and place it where it may be viewed by the students. The bulletin board will be used for something else. (See Bulletin Board Idea and Prereading Activity.)

Go on to Prereading Discussion.

Story Map



Characters _____

Time and Place _____

Problem _____

Goal _____

Beginning → Development → Outcome

Resolution _____

Section 7: Pages mid-54 through mid-60

Vocabulary

splayed 56

Vocabulary Activity

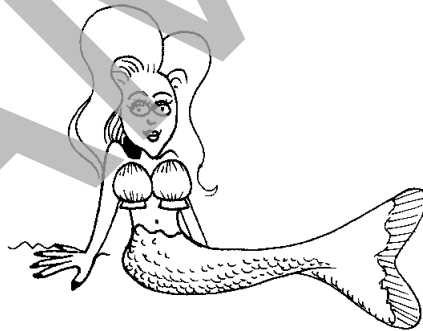
How many words can you list that rhyme with “splay” in three minutes? Here are some: bay, cay, day, fay, jay, hay, lay, clay, flay, play, slay.

Discussion Questions

1. Who does Gaylen meet in the orchard that night? (*Page 57, Gaylen meets Canto, the minstrel.*) Does Canto believe Gaylen’s story about the woldweller? (*Page 58, No. Canto thinks that the stories about woldwellers are only legends.*)
2. As the light fades in the evening, what happens to Gaylen’s belief in the woldweller? (*Page 58, Gaylen’s belief fades with the light. His fear of Hemlock also fades.*) Why do you think this happens? Has something similar ever happened to you? (*For example, the farther removed from the situation, the less real it becomes.*) Discuss.

Post-reading Activities

1. Do some research. Find out more about minstrels, a lute, and legends. Share the information with others.
2. Read a legend that has not been studied. Prepare a review of the legend for use by the group members. Would you recommend it to others? Why? Why not?



3. Fictionalize* a real event. Think of some insignificant thing that has recently taken place. Use this as the basis of a story told in rhyme. (*Fictionalize: to make into or treat in the manner of fiction)
4. Gaylen, Canto, and Muzzle are asleep in the orchard. The rest of the world seems far away. What do you think might happen next?

Section 8: Pages mid-60 through mid-69

Vocabulary

loped 66

Vocabulary Activity

The vocabulary word “loped” describes a movement. What other words can you think of that also describe movement? Make a list. For example: run, walk, jump, skip, hop, gallop, leap, bound, saunter, meander... Demonstrate one movement.

Discussion Questions

1. What does Canto give to Gaylen so that he will know Gaylen thirteen years from that time? *(Page 63, Canto gives Gaylen the key carved out of gray stone that he has hanging on a chain around his neck.)*
2. How is Gaylen to recognize Canto? *(Page 63, Canto tells Gaylen that he will still be a minstrel, but an old one of almost forty with a long gray beard and a shabby lute.)*
3. Why does Canto want to see Gaylen then? *(Page 63, Canto wants to know the results of the poll that Gaylen is taking.)*
4. Do you think the two will meet again in thirteen years? Why or why not? Discuss what might happen to the two during that time.

Post-reading Activities

1. Once again the King’s proclamation causes dissension. This time it is in the Mildew household. When last seen by Gaylen, Whimsey is chasing Mildew into an alder wood behind their farm (page 68). Make a cartoon or comic strip about the Mildews with caption(s).
2. Modernize Canto. Describe Canto as you think he would look as a forty-year-old musician today. Give enough detail in your description so that Gaylen will be sure to recognize Canto should they meet again.
3. After leaving the Mildew farm, Gaylen is feeling tired and wishes to be back in the orchard listening to Canto’s songs. Think of a song that Gaylen might like to hear at this time. Write out the particulars, such as the title, performer, etc., and why you made this choice for Gaylen.
4. Gaylen is on his way once again. What do you think might happen next?

Section 9: Pages mid-69 through the top of 77

No new Vocabulary

Vocabulary Activity

Do the Vocabulary Word Search Puzzle in the Supplementary Activities section of this guide, page 39.