



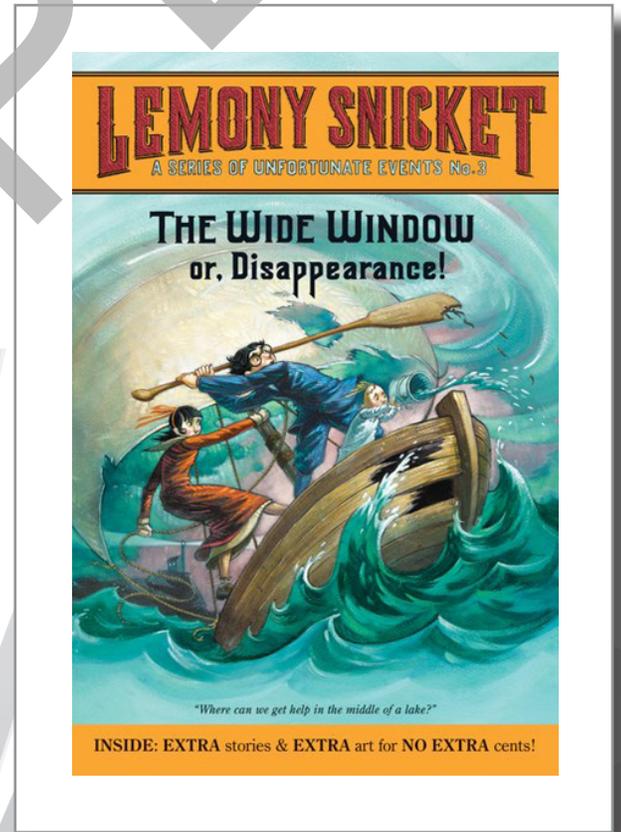
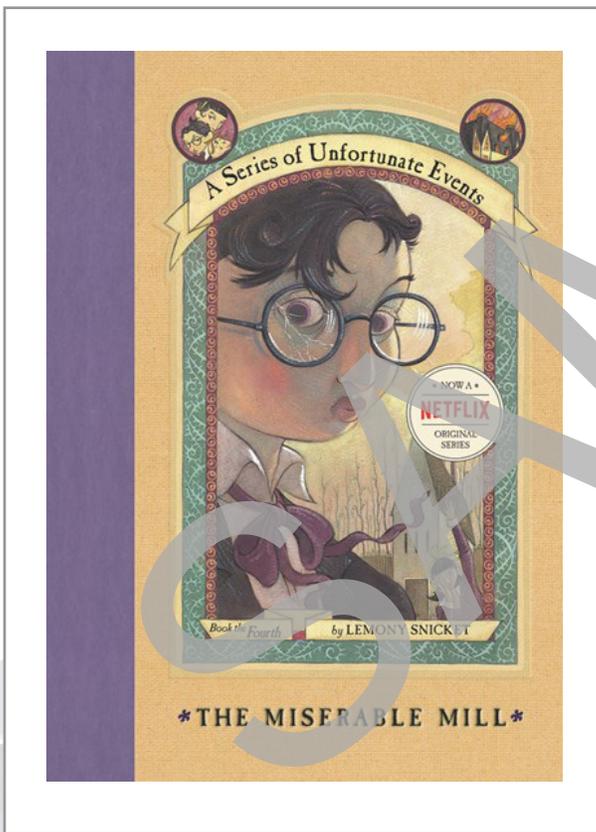
COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

A Series of Unfortunate Events: The Miserable Mill

Lemony Snicket

A Series of Unfortunate Events: The Wide Window

Lemony Snicket



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

A Series of Unfortunate Events: The Miserable Mill

A Series of Unfortunate Events: The Wide Window

Lemony Snicket

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

Research, pros/cons,
compare/contrast,
predicting, critical thinking,
brainstorming, analysis,
decision-making

Comprehension

Cause/effect, summarization

Writing

Poetry, letters, essays,
persuasive writing, stories,
book chapters

Vocabulary

Definitions, parts of speech,
context clues, glossary
formation

Listening/Speaking

Oral presentation, interview,
discussion

Literary Elements

Setting, conflict, theme,
foreshadowing, foil,
point of view, plot,
characterization, figurative
language

Across the Curriculum

History—Alexander the
Great; Science—leeches,
hurricanes, electricity,
sailboats, hypnotism; Social
Studies—child labor laws;
Art—caricatures, sketches,
painting, model making,
collage; Health—diet, eye
care; Genealogy; Internet
research

Genre: young-adult fiction

Setting: Lake Lachrymose and the surrounding area; the town of Paltryville and Lucky Smells Lumbermill

Point of View: third-person omniscient

Themes: survival, good vs. evil, optimism, family, innovation, self-reliance, fear

Conflict: person vs. person, person vs. society, person vs. nature, person vs. self

Tone: candid, honest, suspenseful

Summary

In *The Wide Window*, the three Baudelaire orphans—Violet, age 14; Klaus, age 12; and the infant Sunny—are taken to stay with a distant relative they call Aunt Josephine. Aunt Josephine is plagued by multiple, debilitating phobias and is a grammar expert. Count Olaf returns in a new disguise—as Captain Sham, a boat-rental shop owner with a wooden leg. Captain Sham convinces Aunt Josephine to forge a suicide note, leaving the children in his care, and disappears from her home. However, she leaves a hidden message in the note, which the Baudelaire children decipher. The children escape from Captain Sham and one of his associates to retrieve Aunt Josephine from her hiding place in a cave by the lake and prove they do not belong in the custody of their nemesis. In the end, Captain Sham is discovered to be Count Olaf, and he escapes.

In *The Miserable Mill*, Mr. Poe delivers Violet, Klaus, and Sunny to another distant relative, a man whose name is so hard to pronounce he is known only as “Sir.” He treats the children as he does his other workers at the Lucky Smells Lumbermill. While living in the dorm there, the children meet a kind, optimistic man named Phil and work under the taskmaster, Foreman Flacutono. After a while, the foreman begins intentionally tripping Klaus, causing him to be sent to the nearby eye doctor. He always returns from these doctor visits as though in a trance, and while in this state, causes problems with the machinery so that the children’s new caretaker threatens to send them away. Before long, the children realize the eye doctor is hypnotizing Klaus, and that she is working with Count Olaf, who is disguised as “Shirley,” the doctor’s receptionist. They eventually reveal Count Olaf’s true identity to their caretaker and Mr. Poe. While they escape Count Olaf’s clutches, Count Olaf again escapes justice.

About the Author

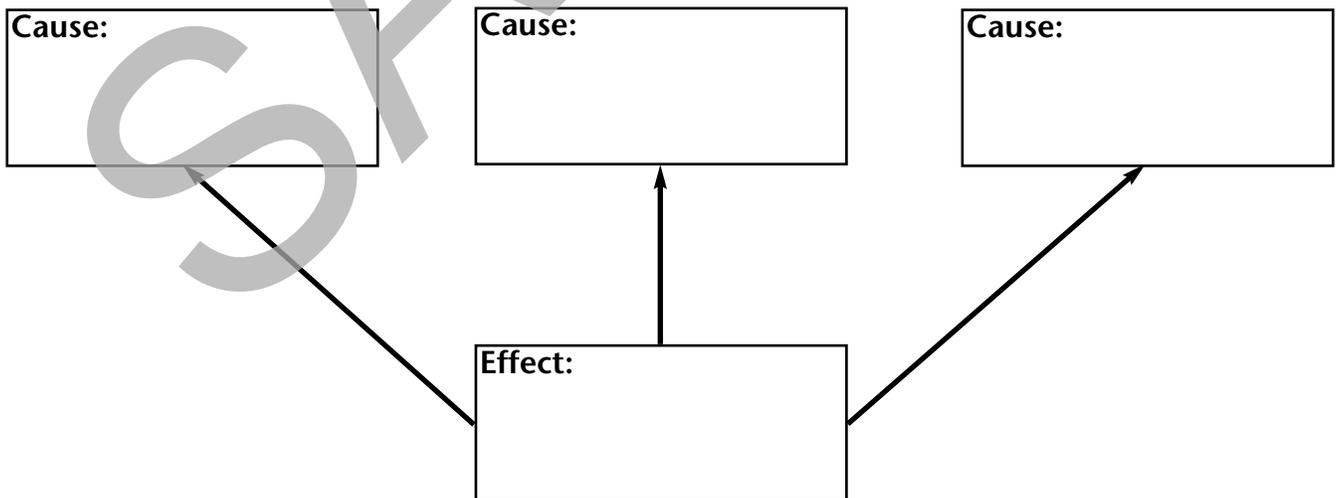
Daniel Handler, the man behind the persona of Lemony Snicket, was born in San Francisco on February 28, 1970. He graduated from Wesleyan University in 1992. His first novel, *The Basic Eight*, was rejected 37 times before it was published. His first children’s series, *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, will end with the publication of the thirteenth book. Handler currently lives in San Francisco with his wife, Lisa Brown, who is an illustrator.
www.imdb.com; www.somethingjewish.co.uk/articles/75_daniel_handler.htm (active at time of publication)

Cause/Effect

Directions: To plot cause and effect in a story, first list the sequence of events. Then mark causes with a C and effects with an E. Sometimes in a chain of events, one item may be both a cause and an effect. Draw arrows from cause statements to the appropriate effects.

Events in the story	Cause	Effect
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

Another way to map cause and effect is to look for an effect and then backtrack to the single or multiple causes.



the costs of caring for them by making a long-distance phone call to Mr. Poe. Charles does not want to upset Sir, so he only offers the children raisins rather than true assistance. pp. 133–139)

3. On page 147, the author compares the stylistic consistency of *The Miserable Mill* to that of the book Violet is reading to learn more about what has happened to Klaus. Discuss what stylistic consistency means, how a book’s “miserable” content does not apply to the definition, and what truly makes *The Miserable Mill* stylistically consistent. (Discussions will vary. Note that stylistic consistency has to do with how a book is written rather than its content—or what is written. Stylistic consistency has to do with the reading level of words chosen, the way the author chooses to arrange information and make explanations, and how the author’s writing incorporates different themes and tones into the book. *The Miserable Mill* is stylistically consistent by having a mysterious tone, dark themes, and the author’s unusual uses of personal story as examples.)
4. **Prediction:** Will Klaus injure Charles? What words cause Klaus to fall in and out of his hypnosis?

Supplementary Activities

1. Figurative Language: Examples: **Similes**—“like part of his brain had been wiped clean” (p. 144); “Charles...looked a bit like a cocoon” (p. 154).
2. Persuasive Writing: Violet and Sunny are unable to convince Sir that Shirley is Count Olaf and that Dr. Orwell has hypnotized Klaus. Rewrite this section of the story to make Violet’s arguments more compelling. Consider what motivates Sir when deciding how best to persuade him to believe Violet, or at least give her the benefit of the doubt.

The Miserable Mill: Chapters Twelve–Thirteen, pp. 157–194

Violet discovers the word to cause Klaus’s hypnosis is “lucky.” While the girls are arguing with the foreman to keep Klaus from hurting Charles, Dr. Orwell and Shirley arrive. Violet figures out how to free Klaus from his hypnosis, Sunny and Violet begin fighting the adults, and Klaus is able to pull Charles to safety with an invention. The saw ends up killing Dr. Orwell. Mr. Poe arrives, and the children finally convince him and Sir that Shirley is Count Olaf and not a suitable guardian. They also discover the foreman is one of Count Olaf’s associates. Both villains escape, and Mr. Poe informs the children they will be sent to boarding school.

Vocabulary
despair (159)
lurking (162)
immoderate (165)
demise (178)
dismissively (189)

Discussion Questions

1. How does Violet discover the word that causes Klaus to obey orders while under hypnosis? How does she discover the word that causes him to snap out of it? (She thinks back to all of the times the foreman has ordered Klaus to do something to see if there is a word he uses repeatedly. She also tries to consider what word she used the night Klaus came back and she said something to him to trigger the hypnosis. When she hears the foreman call Klaus “lucky” again, she realizes that must be the word. She is thinking about how

horrible their current situation is when the word “inordinate” comes to mind, and she remembers this is the same word Klaus defined when he snapped out of his hypnosis the first time.

pp. 161, 165)

2. How are the children challenged to save themselves and Charles in this book that is different from the other three books in the series? (*Answers will vary. Note that in this book, Violet must be the one to read and research because Klaus is hypnotized. When Shirley and the foreman grab Violet, Klaus must invent something to save Charles from the saw. Their roles are reversed. pp. 141–155, 169–175*)
3. What is unreasonable about the discussion among Sir, Charles, and Mr. Poe the morning after the “accident” and Dr. Orwell’s death? Why do you think the adults have a difficult time believing that Shirley is really Count Olaf? (*Answers will vary. Some students may think it is unreasonable for the adults to believe everything about the scheme to steal the Baudelaire fortune except for Shirley’s true identity. Point out that it is also unreasonable that there are no authorities on the premises, for surely someone would have called the police to report Dr. Orwell’s death, and the police or some medical personnel would have arrived before Mr. Poe, who had to take a train to Paltryville from a different city. pp. 179–180*)
4. Discuss what is just and unjust about the way the book ends. (*Answers will vary. Suggestions: It is just that Dr. Orwell is punished for her evil deeds, though accidental death is a brutal way to be punished. It is also just that the children are saved as Sir walks in on Count Olaf and the foreman trying to cause injury to the children and Charles. Injustice prevails when the bald man and Count Olaf escape, and Sir decides not to keep his end of the bargain with Mr. Poe and the Baudelaires, forcing the children to leave the mill to attend boarding school. pp. 176, 181–182, 186–190*)
5. Do you agree or disagree with Phil and the narrator that maybe the Baudelaires do have an inordinate amount of luck to still be together and alive after all of their struggles? (*Answers will vary. p. 194*)
6. **Prediction:** What do you think will happen to the Baudelaires at boarding school?

Supplementary Activities

1. Figurative Language: Examples: **Similes**—“[gum] like a feather, or a piece of paper” (p. 171); “the gum stretched...as fishing line will stretch out across the surface of a lake” (p. 174); “wrinkling his long nose...as if they smelled bad” (p. 188) **Metaphor**—Charles: fish (p. 174)
2. Creative Writing: Sunny is portrayed as an intelligent infant who simply cannot speak clearly. Rewrite the ending of the story from Sunny’s point of view, including the scene where she battles Dr. Orwell.