



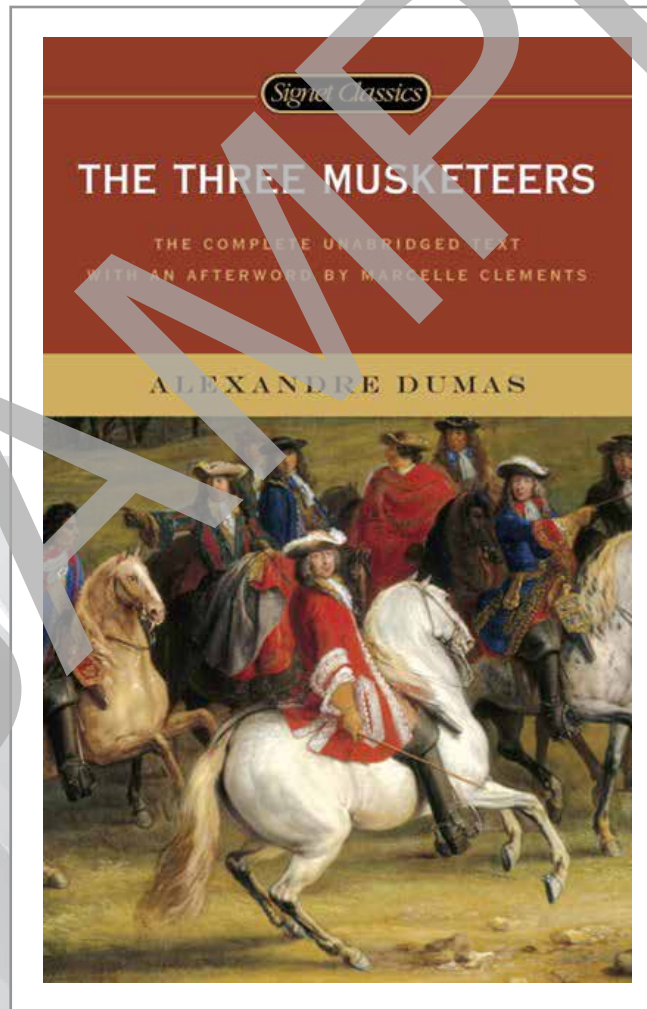
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 9-12

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The Three Musketeers

Alexandre Dumas



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Three Musketeers

Alexandre Dumas

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

Writing

Poetry, compare/contrast,
essay, letter

Vocabulary

Target words, definitions

Listening/Speaking

Discussion, drama
recitation, oral reviews

Thinking

Research, compare/contrast,
analysis, brainstorming

Literary Elements

Characterization, simile,
personification, metaphor,
allusion, plot development,
setting, theme, symbolism,
irony, genre

Across the Curriculum

Art—drawing, caricature,
collage;
Drama—skit, monologue;
History—research, maps

Comprehension

Cause/effect, predictions,
analysis, application

Date of first publication: 1844; first published as a serial in *Siecle*, a Parisian magazine

Genre: romantic historical fiction

Point-of-View: third-person omniscient

Style: narrative

Setting: France and England; 17th century during reign of France's King Louis XIII (1624-1642)

Themes: chivalry, love, intrigue, honor

Summary

Young, ambitious Frenchman D'Artagnan wants to serve in the ranks of the elite king's Musketeers. His acquaintance and exploits with the Three Musketeers: Athos, Aramis, and Porthos, lead him into experiences ranging from frivolous to death-threatening. D'Artagnan saves the queen from the conspiracy of her enemy, Cardinal Richelieu, and becomes the target of Richelieu's vicious agent, Milady, who will stop at nothing to achieve her goals. Love affairs and intrigue involving commoners as well as members of the royalty comprise the legend of D'Artagnan and the Three Musketeers.

Primary Characters

D'Artagnan: protagonist; a young, impoverished Gascon nobleman noted for his courage, his nobility, his ambition, and his intelligence; comes to Paris seeking to serve in the ranks of the king's Musketeers

Monsieur de Tréville: head of the king's Musketeers; honorable, distinguished; father figure to his Musketeers

Athos: oldest and most respected of the Three Musketeers; role model for D'Artagnan; noble, intelligent, brave, expert swordsman

Aramis: one of the Three Musketeers; handsome, rather vain; stresses his plans to someday return to the church and pursue his ecclesiastical calling

Porthos: one of the Three Musketeers; loud, bold, extremely vain, self-important; courageous

King Louis XIII: King of France; irresolute ruler; dominated by Cardinal Richelieu; concerned with trivialities

Cardinal Richelieu: influential advisor to the king; most powerful man in France; self-absorbed but effective leader

Anne of Austria: Queen of France; of Spanish descent, causing divided loyalties; loves the Duke of Buckingham; king does not love nor trust her; cardinal hates her

Lady de Winter (Milady): beautiful, mysterious; dangerous Cardinalist agent with whom D'Artagnan becomes obsessed; becomes fierce adversary of Musketeers; bears brand of the *fleur-de-lis*, marking her as one of the worst criminals

The Duke of Buckingham, George Villiers: Minister of War for King Charles I of England; gentleman who is handsome, rich, and powerful; consumed with his love for and desire to please Anne of Austria

Monsieur Bonacieux: D'Artagnan's landlord; seeks help from D'Artagnan when his wife is kidnapped; later becomes a Cardinalist agent

Madame Bonacieux: wife of M. Bonacieux; loyal seamstress for Queen Anne; becomes focus of D'Artagnan's affections

Lord de Winter: Lady de Winter's brother-in-law; wealthy; instrumental in demise of Milady

Secondary Characters

Planchet: D'Artagnan's manservant; intelligent, reliable

Grimaud: Athos' manservant; communicates with Athos via hand signals

Bazin: Aramis' manservant; desires to see Aramis fulfill an ecclesiastical role

Mousqueton: Porthos' manservant; enjoys fine things

The Comte de Rochefort: private spy for Cardinal Richelieu

The Comte de Wardes: Cardinalist agent with whom Milady is in love

Kitty: Milady's maid; falls in love with D'Artagnan

John Felton: Protestant ward of Lord de Winter; British Naval officer

Madame de Coquenard: Porthos' mistress; wife of wealthy procurator

Madame de Chevreuse: close friend of Queen Anne; banished from Paris by the king; Aramis' secret mistress

Background Information

The Three Musketeers fits both the genre of historical fiction and that of romantic fiction. As a historical novel, the plot revolves around some of the major figures and events in 17th century French history: King Louis XIII, his wife, Anne of Austria, Cardinal Richelieu, and Monsieur de Tréville. Other characters are patterned after historical figures. D'Artagnan is based on Charles de Batz-Castelmore from Gascony. He took the name of Sieur of Artagnan and actually served under Louis XIV, instead of Louis XIII. Arthos, Aramis, and Porthos are based on real king's Musketeers. Arthos was Armand de Sillegue, Seigneur d'Athos et d'Autevielle. He was related to M. de Tréville and died in 1643 in Paris. Aramis was Henry d'Aramitz. He was also related to M. de Tréville and served in the Musketeers beginning in 1640. Porthos was Isaac de Portau, who served in the king's Guards until 1643 and later served as a Musketeer. The king's Musketeers under Louis XIII served as the king's personal escort in peacetime and provided training for the higher ranks in the French army. Cardinal Richelieu also had his own company of guards, and a rivalry existed between his guards and the king's Musketeers. *The Three Musketeers* also features elements of a classic romantic novel: the quest, chivalry, love, immorality, and religion (i.e., the cardinal's influence).

Reference: <http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/3musk/history.html>

Historical Significance

Louis XIII (1601-1643) became king of France in 1610 after the assassination of his father, King Henry IV. Marie de Médicis, Louis's mother, ruled for him until 1617, and Louis, aided by his chief prime minister, Cardinal Richelieu, ruled from 1624-1642. He married Anne of Austria. King Louis XIII declared war on Spain in 1635, leading France into the Thirty Years' War. He died before the war ended and his son, Louis XIV, succeeded him.

religious ecstasy, stands outside her door listening to her prayers and songs, pleads with her not to kill herself, begins to talk with her and fails to tell De Winter of their conversations, lies for her, promises to give her a knife. pp. 464-491)

3. **Prediction:** Will Milady escape and, if so, how?

Supplementary Activities

1. Have students write contrasting name poems for Felton, one for before Milady corrupts him, and one for after.
2. As a class, look up the meanings of the allusions on p. 487 (Baal, Belial, and Antichrist) and correlate with Milady.
3. Note the literary devices: **Metaphor**—Milady’s predicament: a dark hell (p. 464) **Similes**—she remained folded within herself like a fatigued serpent in repose (p. 466); Felton’s words passed like ice through her veins (p. 468); soldier stopped...as if he had been changed into stone (p. 475); expression fleeting as the reflection of lightning (p.475); she studied everything as a comedian who is learning his lines (p. 476); Milady...as a skillful general, beautiful as an antique priestess, inspired like a Christian virgin (p. 487)

Chapters 56-59, pp. 491-526

Milady continues her manipulation of Felton through lies and perversion of the truth. She convinces him that she is the innocent victim of a conspiracy and that the Duke of Buckingham is her tormentor. Felton helps her escape and assassinates the Duke of Buckingham.

Vocabulary

infamy (505)

caprice (506)

usurped (521)

consternation (525)

Discussion Questions

1. Examine the tale Milady relates to Felton and its result on him. *(She tells him she was drugged and awoke in a “magnificent prison,” the captive of a man who intended to make her his mistress. When she refused to willingly cooperate with his sexual advances, he brought in a masked man (the Duke of Buckingham), who accused her of prostitution and branded her with the fleur-de-lis. She implicates Lord de Winter and says she is now his prisoner because of the Duke’s lies. She incites Felton’s anger against the duke and secures his adoration and loyalty. pp. 495-507)*
2. Discuss Milady’s attempted “suicide.” *(She tells Felton that she will kill herself rather than go into exile. When De Winter arrives, she grabs the knife and stabs herself to prevent his telling Felton the truth and to further arouse Felton’s sympathy and anger. The injury is superficial because the knife slips past a protective steel covering she wears over her chest. De Winter sends Felton away because he realizes Milady has begun to pervert him. pp. 508-510)*

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3. Discuss the chain of events following Milady's suicide attempt. (*De Winter sends Felton to the Duke of Buckingham to get the order for Milady's exile signed. Felton helps Milady escape by cutting the bars on her window and securing passage for her on a ship that will take him to Portsmouth, England, then return them both to France. The ship is to wait until 10:00 for Felton to return from his mission. Felton takes the paper to the duke, accuses him of treachery against Milady, and vows that he will not sign the exile order. Felton demands that the duke sign a paper to liberate Milady. When he refuses, Felton stabs him. Before the duke dies, De Winter arrives but realizes the duke is dying. Laporte arrives from France with a message from Anne of Austria, and the duke dies with the assurance of Anne's love. Felton sees the ship leaving before the 10:00 hour and realizes the extent of Milady's treachery. pp. 512-526*)
 4. Analyze the effect Milady has on Felton based on the simile on p. 505: He [Felton] ended by falling on his knees before her as the early Christians did before those pure and holy martyrs whom the persecution of the emperors gave up in the circus to the sanguinary sensuality of the populace. (*Responses will vary.*)
 5. **Prediction:** What scheme will Milady next perpetrate?

Supplementary Activities

1. Have students analyze the truth of Milady's statement "I bring misfortune to all who surround me" (p. 508). List on the board all those to whom Milady has brought misfortune and project those to whom she will bring misfortune.
2. Note the literary devices: **Similes**—words burn like molten lead (p. 501); terrible secret concealed till it burst like a clap of thunder (p. 507); She [Milady] traversed her chamber with the excitement of a furious maniac or of a tigress shut up in a lion cage (p. 511); thunder growled... like passion and anger (p. 512); thought engraven on brow like last kiss of love (p. 525) **Metaphors**—Felton: beam of light, Milady's prison: hell (p. 493); Milady: demon (p. 509); Milady: angel (p. 520) **Personification**—Nature's voice (p. 512) **Allusion**—Judas Maccabeus (p. 516), leader of a Jewish revolt against Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanes, 167 B.C., found in Apocryphal books, 1 and 2 Maccabees.

Chapters 60-63, pp. 526-559

Milady escapes to France. The Musketeers, now including D'Artagnan, depart to secure Constance Bonacieux's release from the convent. Milady arrives first at the convent, befriends Constance, convinces her that the letter telling her D'Artagnan is coming for her is false, and arranges for them both to leave the convent. When Constance does not have the strength to leave, Milady poisons her just before D'Artagnan arrives.

Vocabulary

predilection (528)

candor (534)

courier (552)