



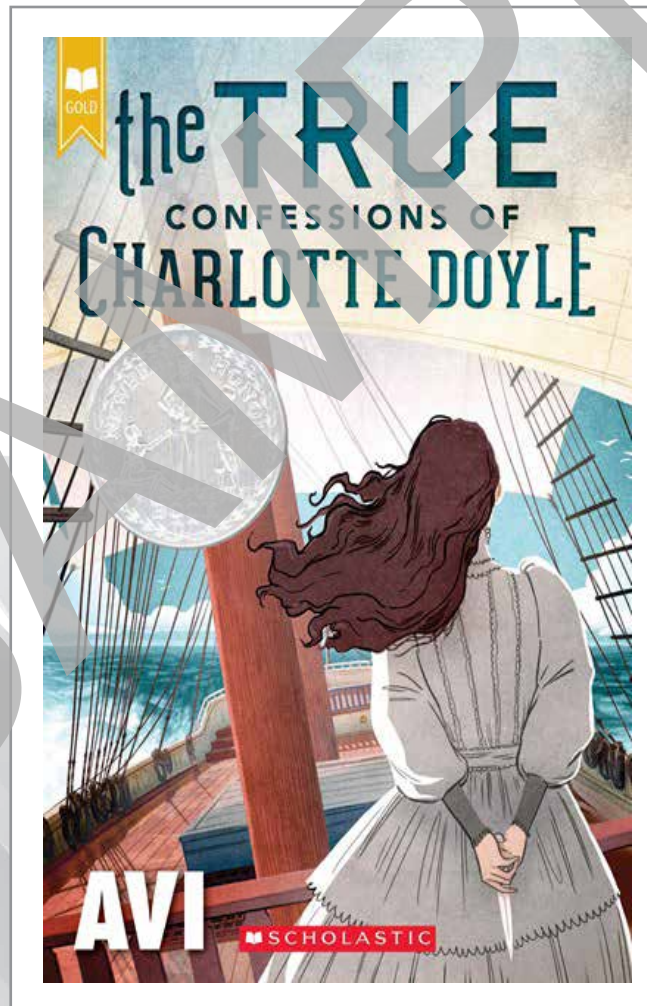
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle

Avi



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle

Avi

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, classifying and categorizing, comparing and contrasting, evaluating, analyzing details, problem solving, synthesizing, making judgments, decision making, making generalizations

Listening/Speaking

Participation in discussion, participation in dramatic activities

Writing

Chapter titles, narrative, journal

Vocabulary

Synonyms/antonyms, using context, multiple meaning words, root words, prefixes/suffixes

Comprehension

Predicting, sequencing, cause/effect, inference, fact vs. opinion, reality/fantasy, story mapping

Literary Elements

Character, setting, plot development, irony, conflict, figurative language, suspense, foreshadowing

Summary of *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*:

Charlotte is a 13-year-old girl who is the only passenger aboard a ship on a long Atlantic Ocean crossing. She is caught between the wicked captain and an angry mutinous crew. Charlotte's tale catches the sights, sounds, and smells of the life on board a ship of the 1830s.

Instructions Prior to Reading:

You may wish to choose one or more of the following Prereading Discussion Questions/Activities. Each is designed to help students draw from their store of background knowledge about the events and themes they will meet in the story they are about to read.

Introductory Activities:

1. **Previewing:** Have students examine the title and cover illustration. Also suggest that they flip through the book. Ask: What can you tell about the time period of the story from the clothes of the girl shown on the cover? What does the girl's expression tell you about her feelings? What do you predict the story will be about?
2. **Concept Map:** Write "Courage" at the center of a large piece of paper, to be kept for later comparison with events in the book (or as a bulletin board display to be expanded as the story is read). Have students generate any ideas that come to mind when they hear the term, helping students organize them into categories such as "synonyms," "antonyms," "famous people who have shown courage," "situations in which students have needed courage," etc. Draw "wagon spokes" around the central concept ("Courage") to connect it with the supporting ideas (categories). Encourage students to add to the chart during and after their reading of the novel. See the following page.
3. **Bulletin Boards:** a) Have the students make or find pictures of ships used for Atlantic crossings in the 1800s; b) Find pictures of the dress of girls and men in the 19th century.
4. The students will keep a response journal. The students will divide their papers in half (vertically). On the left side, they will keep short summaries of what has happened in each section using their own words. On the right side, they will react to what they have read. Reactions include answers to such questions as: How would I have felt in the character's place? What is my opinion of what the character did? How did the character's situation remind me of my own life?

Using Predictions

We all make predictions as we read—little guesses about what will happen next, how the conflict will be resolved, which details given by the author will be important to the plot, which details will help to fill in our sense of a character. Students should be encouraged to predict, to make sensible guesses. As students work on 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 us to help us in making our predictions? Why are some predictions more likely than others?

A predicting chart is for students to record their predictions. As each subsequent chapter is discussed, you can review and correct previous predictions. This procedure serves to focus on predictions and to review the stories.

Use the facts and ideas the author gives.

Use your own knowledge.

Use new information that may cause you to change your mind.

Predictions:

characters and sometimes the writer shifts the point of view from one person to another. Who tells most of the story of *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*?

Prediction:

What troubles will there be for Charlotte?

Supplementary Activities:

1. Writing: This novel does not have chapter titles. After students complete a chapter, they will write a suggestion for a title. In cooperative groups, or with the whole class, these titles will be shared. The group may vote on the best title. These chapter titles may become part of the bulletin board.
2. A story map is an outline that helps you to understand and remember the story better. What do you know about the story after reading only the first chapter?
 - What is the setting?
 - Who is the main character?
 - What is the problem?As the story is read, more characters may be added and the setting and the problem may change, so additions may be made. Fill in the story map that follows on page 14.

Chapter 2—Pages 16-26

Vocabulary:

ferretlike 16	succumbing 18	permeated 18	decrepit 19
compliance 20	deputized 20	vermin 21	vexation 21
marlinspikes 22	chaotic 23	trepidation 23	dirk 25
scrimshaw 25	rasping 26	incomprehensible 26	

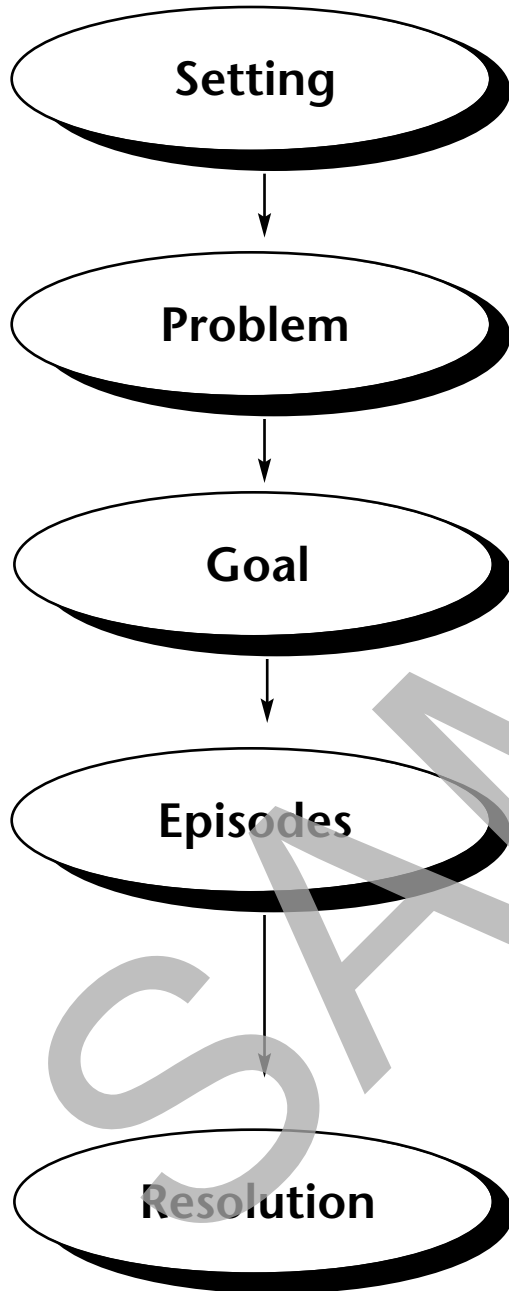
Vocabulary Activity:

Students will make predictions about how the author will use the vocabulary, such as setting, characters, problem, action, and sailing vocabulary.

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. Why was Mr. Keetch an unattractive host on the ship? (*page 16, small man shabbily dressed; unsmiling, nervous, darting, unfocused eyes, ferretlike face*)
2. Why did Mr. Keetch say that Charlotte should take another ship? Do you think he was sincere? Why do you think that Keetch spoke in “an unnecessarily loud voice”? (*Page 16-17, Keetch wanted the other shipmates to hear what he was saying. He may have been sincere about the fact that she should not travel by herself, or, perhaps because of what he knew was going to happen, he did not believe a young girl should be aboard.*)
3. Why do you think the sailors who had overheard the conversations of Keetch, Grummage, and Charlotte were looking at her with hostility? Charlotte had done nothing to them. (*Page 17, Charlotte’s appearance on board may cause them trouble.*)

Story Map



Characters _____

Time and Place _____

Beginning Development Outcome

-
4. Measure the size of Charlotte’s cabin—6 feet in length, 4 feet wide, 4½ feet high. What is the average height of the class? How many students would be comfortable in quarters of this size?
 5. Why didn’t Charlotte listen to Barlow who said she should not be on the ship? (*Page 20, Charlotte thought it was wrong for a man of low station to presume to advise her; page 18, all her life Charlotte had been “trained to obey, educated to accept.”*) Do you think Charlotte could really have arranged to get off the ship? How would that affect the story?
 6. What did Zachariah offer Charlotte? (*pages 22-25, tea, friendship, and a knife*)
 7. Whom did Charlotte overhear talking with Mr. Keetch? (*page 26, Captain Jaggery*) What do you think the Captain meant when he said, “With her as witness, they’ll not dare to move”? What kind of relationship did the Captain have with Keetch?

Prediction:

What will Charlotte’s problems be? What will be the conflict in the novel?

Supplementary Activities:

1. Study the Appendix of parts of the ship and ship’s time. (*pages 227-232*)
2. Write a quiz for a classmate on the Appendix.

Chapter 3—Pages 27-34

Vocabulary:

conspired 28 countenance 29 contempt 30 sardonically 30
reprieve 32 unimpeachable 33 beguiling 33 pallor 33

Vocabulary Activity:

Find the base or root word for each vocabulary word. What prefixes or suffixes were added? What is the meaning of the root word? How did the prefix or suffix change it?

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. Literary Analysis—Irony: An ironic situation is one that turns out quite differently from what one expects. When a narrator or character makes an ironic comment, he recognizes a contrast between appearance and reality, or between what is expected and what really happens. Refer students to page 29 and ask what the narrator meant by saying ironically, “And he—I saw it in a glance—was a gentleman, the kind of man I was used to. A man to be trusted.” Have students look for ironic situations and comments as they read the rest of the story. What do you expect the Captain to do?