

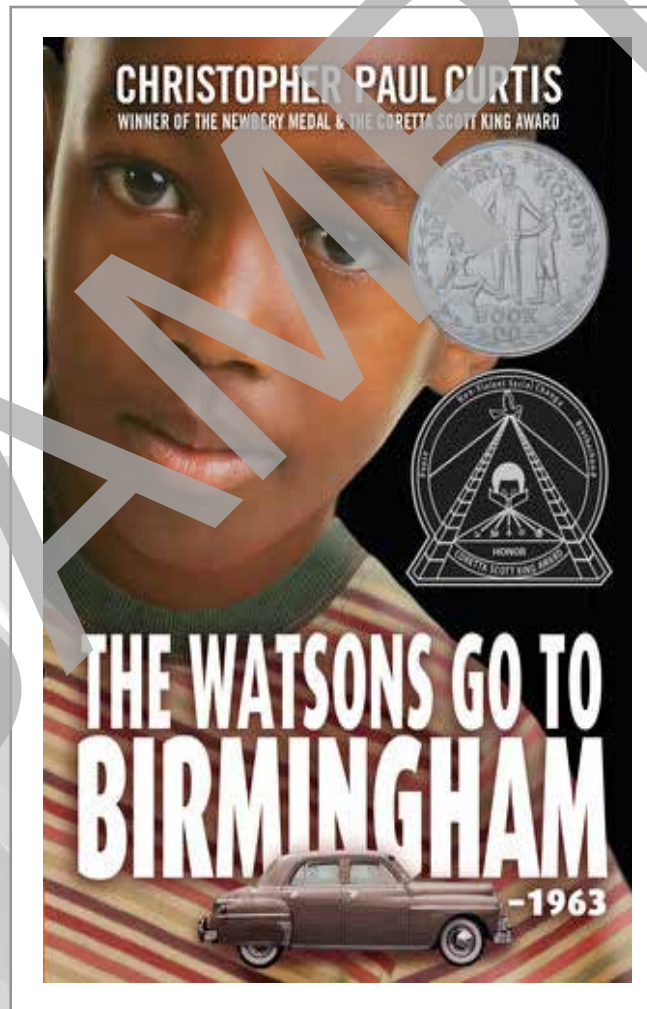


**STUDENT PACKET**

**GRADES 6-8**

# The Watsons Go to Birmingham

Christopher Paul Curtis



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

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## STUDENT PACKET

**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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## Note to the Teacher

Selected activities, quizzes, and test questions in this Novel Units® Student Packet are labeled with the following reading/language arts skills for quick reference. These skills can be found above quiz/test questions or sections and in the activity headings.

**Basic Understanding:** The student will demonstrate a basic understanding of written texts. The student will:

- use a text's structure or other sources to locate and recall information (Locate Information)
- determine main idea and identify relevant facts and details (Main Idea and Details)
- use prior knowledge and experience to comprehend and bring meaning to a text (Prior Knowledge)
- summarize major ideas in a text (Summarize Major Ideas)

**Literary Elements:** The student will apply knowledge of literary elements to understand written texts. The student will:

- analyze characters from a story (Character Analysis)
- analyze conflict and problem resolution (Conflict/Resolution)
- recognize and interpret literary devices (flashback, foreshadowing, symbolism, simile, metaphor, etc.) (Literary Devices)
- consider characters' points of view (Point of View)
- recognize and analyze a story's setting (Setting)
- understand and explain themes in a text (Theme)

**Analyze Written Texts:** The student will use a variety of strategies to analyze written texts. The student will:

- identify the author's purpose (Author's Purpose)
- identify cause and effect relationships in a text (Cause/Effect)
- identify characteristics representative of a given genre (Genre)
- interpret information given in a text (Interpret Text)
- make and verify predictions with information from a text (Predictions)
- sequence events in chronological order (Sequencing)
- identify and use multiple text formats (Text Format)
- follow written directions and write directions for others to follow (Follow/Write Directions)

**Critical Thinking:** The student will apply critical-thinking skills to analyze written texts. The student will:

- write and complete analogies (Analogies)
- find similarities and differences throughout a text (Compare/Contrast)
- draw conclusions from information given (Drawing Conclusions)
- make and explain inferences (Inferences)
- respond to texts by making connections and observations (Making Connections)
- recognize and identify the mood of a text (Mood)
- recognize an author's style and how it affects a text (Style)
- support responses by referring to relevant aspects of a text (Support Responses)
- recognize and identify the author's tone (Tone)
- write to entertain, such as through humorous poetry or short stories (Write to Entertain)
- write to express ideas (Write to Express)
- write to inform (Write to Inform)
- write to persuade (Write to Persuade)
- demonstrate understanding by creating visual images based on text descriptions (Visualizing)
- practice math skills as they relate to a text (Math Skills)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Anticipation Guide

**Directions:** Rate each of the following statements before you read the novel, and discuss your ratings with a partner. After you have completed the novel, rate and discuss the statements again.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_  
strongly agree strongly disagree

Before

After

- |   |       |       |
|---|-------|-------|
| 1. Loving family members never disagree.                        | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Being an adult is easier than being a child.                 | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Parents always know how to best discipline their children.   | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Children usually understand their parents' decisions.        | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Older siblings should protect their younger siblings.        | _____ | _____ |
| 6. It is easy to predict the behavior of a close family member. | _____ | _____ |
| 7. Family problems can be humorous.                             | _____ | _____ |
| 8. People don't suffer if they are not guilty of wrongdoing.    | _____ | _____ |
| 9. Some people struggle every day for their basic human rights. | _____ | _____ |
| 10. The world is a fair and just place.                         | _____ | _____ |

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Respond to the following on a separate sheet of paper. Use your answers in class discussions, for writing assignments, and to review for tests.

**Chapters 1–3**

1. What is the weather like in Flint, and what do the Watsons do to stay warm?
2. What is Byron and Kenny's relationship like?
3. Who is Larry Dunn?
4. How does being Byron's brother help Kenny?
5. How does Byron treat Kenny after Kenny's book recital?
6. What advice does Byron give Kenny about his eye?
7. Why doesn't Kenny like when Byron skips school?
8. Describe the two new boys who ride the bus.
9. How do the other kids on the bus treat the new boys?
10. What does Kenny think of the oldest new boy?
11. Why is Kenny upset when Mrs. Cordell seats Rufus next to him?
12. What does Rufus do with the sandwich Kenny gives him?
13. Why does Rufus stop talking to Kenny?
14. How do Rufus and Kenny mend their friendship?

**Chapters 4–6**

1. How does Momma dress Kenny and Joetta for school?
2. What false story does Byron tell Joetta and Kenny to scare them?
3. What does Kenny share with Rufus?
4. What happens to Kenny's second pair of gloves?
5. How does Byron retrieve Kenny's gloves?
6. Why is Momma so adamant that Byron not play with fire?
7. What does Momma do when she catches Byron playing with fire?
8. How does Joetta protect Byron?
9. What arrangements has Dad made with Mr. Mitchell, and how does Byron react?
10. According to Byron, what welfare food has the family had in the past?
11. How does Byron get the bags of Swedish Creme cookies?
12. What happens to the mourning dove? How does Byron react?
13. What doesn't Kenny understand about Byron?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Character Chart

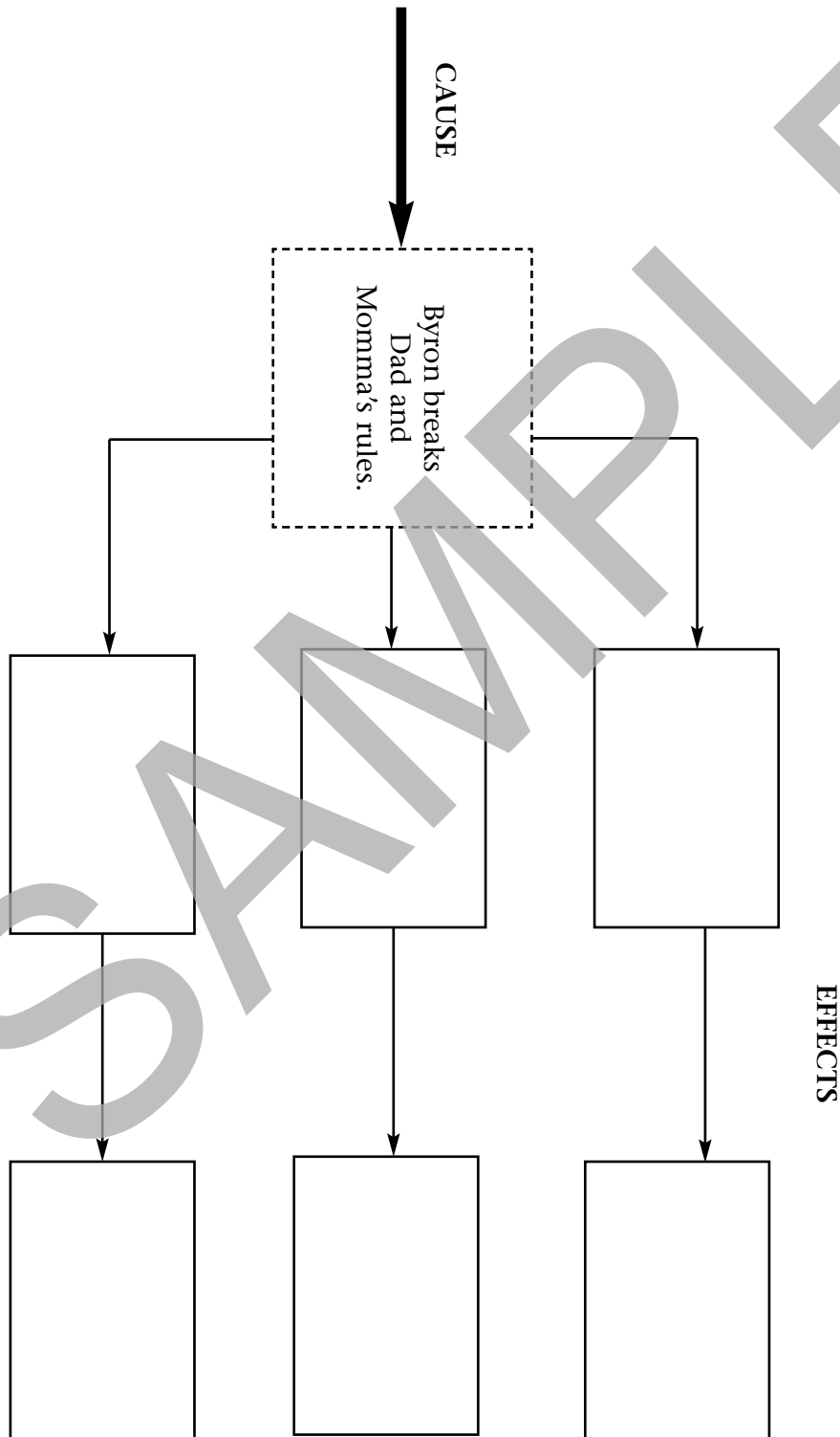
**Directions:** In the boxes across from each of the feelings, describe an incident or time in the novel when each of the listed characters experienced that feeling. You may use “not applicable” if you cannot find an example.

	Kenny	Byron	Momma	Dad
<b>Frustration</b>				
<b>Anger</b>				
<b>Fear</b>				
<b>Humiliation</b>				
<b>Relief</b>				
<b>Triumph</b>				

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Cause/Effect Chart

**Directions:** List the effects of Byron's rebellious behavior.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

### A Character's World

**Directions:** You may be able to draw parallels between Kenny's world and your own. In each of the boxes below, describe Kenny's world and then describe a related situation or event from your own world.

<b>Kenny's World</b>
_____
_____
_____
<b>My World</b>
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<b>Kenny's World</b>
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<b>My World</b>
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<b>Kenny's World</b>
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<b>My World</b>
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<b>Kenny's World</b>
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<b>My World</b>
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