



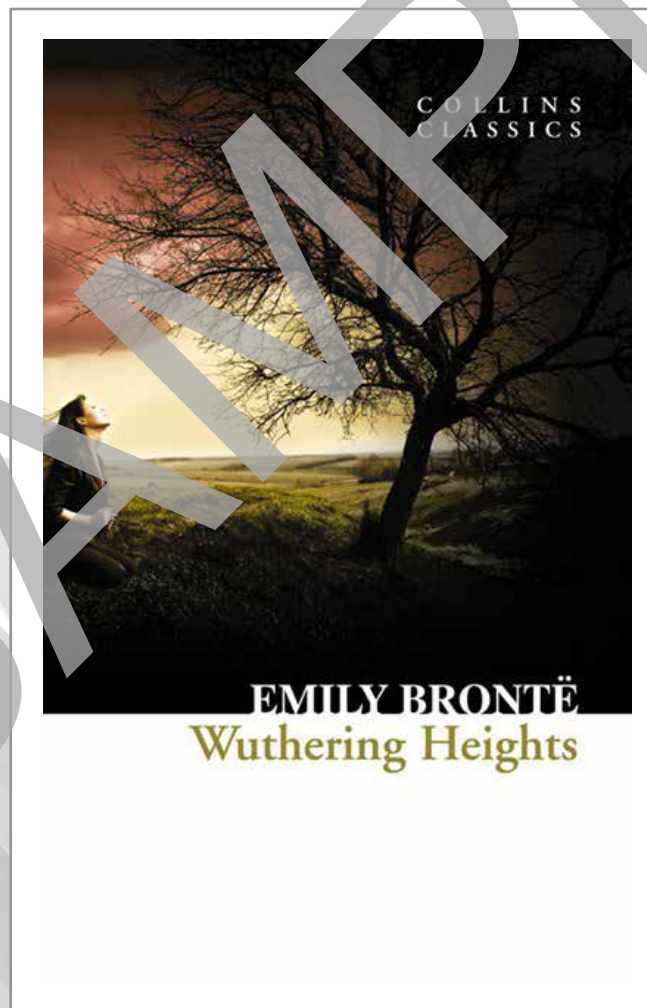
**TEACHER GUIDE**

**GRADES 9-12**

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

# **Wuthering Heights**

Emily Bronte



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

# Wuthering Heights

Emily Bronte

## 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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## INTRODUCTION

In her "Preface and Biographical Notation" to the second edition of *Wuthering Heights*, the author's sister, Charlotte, described the novel as "...hewn in a wild workshop, with simple tools, out of homely materials. It is rustic all through. It is moorish, and wild, and knotty as a root of heath." In the lengthy Preface, Charlotte seemed to be making an attempt to apologize to the public and to explain the novel to those who had found it disagreeable because of its revenge theme, violent scenes, and bizarre characters. Most novels popular at the time—especially those written by women—were light romances with happy endings, centering around the plot of "girl-must-decide-between-two-men."

Emily Brontë took this plot many steps further, and while her version may have shocked her contemporaries, *Wuthering Heights* is the novel that has endured as literature, considered by some to be the finest novel in the English language. Cathy and Heathcliff have become standard-bearers for the tragic romance theme, and the novel has been made into a movie four times. Its author, who died the year after it was published, had no idea of her success.

*Wuthering Heights* straddles the traditions of both the Romantic and the Victorian periods, a cross between the Gothic (Romantic) and Domestic-Realist (Victorian). Its emphasis on intense passions, idealization of childhood, glorification of nature, and celebration of individualism all link the novel with the Romantic period, but there is also a leaning toward community, family, and duty, which are more Victorian concerns. It is, in fact, Catherine Earnshaw's vacillation between a life in the "real" world with Edgar Linton and a wild, spiritual kind of life with Heathcliff that creates the conflict and destroys the two lovers.

Emily Brontë's tightly-condensed style, imagery, and descriptive passages are combined with her ability to portray the deep feelings of her characters. The themes of revenge, romantic love, and the struggle between social classes are timeless ones to which students today can readily relate.

While the novel is not an example of either waning Romanticism or emerging Victorianism, its structure—the use of first-person narration in several forms—is notable. Mostly, though, students will appreciate the passionate love story and the suspenseful plot that have made *Wuthering Heights* a classic.

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## CHAPTERS 7-12, PAGES 46-122

### Vocabulary

blackguard 47	expostulated 52	cambric 53	equanimity 53
prognosticate 55	consumption 57	dissipation 59	petulantly 62
consternation 64	vociferating 66	vagaries 66	winsome 70
munificent 81	dilatory 82	sizar 82	protract 88
abjured 91	avarice 94	mitigating 97	propitiate 100
approbation 102	compunction 108	pertinaciously 109	deranged 111
paroxysm 115	recantation 118	scruple 119	sovereign 121

### Questions for Discussion

1. How has Cathy changed after her stay at the Grange? to whose dismay? (She is now a refined and dignified young lady, to Heathcliff's dismay, as she teases him about being so slovenly and dirty.)
2. Nelly Dean tells Heathcliff, "Proud people breed sad sorrows for themselves." Give an example of a situation where this would be true, or explain why you believe it's not true.)
3. What advice does Nelly give Heathcliff about improving himself? (She tells him he needs to change his attitude to be more cheerful and less suspicious, and that he should invent high notions of his birth.)
4. What happens, almost immediately, to show that Heathcliff didn't take Nelly's advice very seriously? (He throws a tureen of hot applesauce at Edgar.)
5. What vow does Heathcliff make regarding Hindley? (that he will pay him back no matter how long it takes)
6. Do you find it unusual that a servant would be as articulate as Nelly Dean is? How does Brontë make this seem plausible? (She has Nelly tell Mr. Lockwood that she is well-disciplined and very well-read.)
7. What sad event and happy event happen within the first few pages of Chapter 8? (A son is born to Hindley and Frances; Frances dies.)
8. What is Hindley's reaction to the tragedy? (He gives himself up to complete dissipation.)

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9. In what ways is Catherine leading a double life? (She is as unruly and wild as ever when at home or out on the moor with Heathcliff, but when in the company of the Lintons she acts like a fine young lady.)
  10. How would you describe Edgar? (He is soft, spoiled, pale and fair, and has a great affection for Catherine.)
  11. What do you perceive as the real cause of Catherine's childish behavior toward Nelly and her quarrel with Edgar? (She is upset over the argument she had with Heathcliff just prior to Edgar's arrival, and is probably taking out her frustration on Nelly and Edgar.)
  12. Who takes care of Hareton? (Nelly) Is Hindley a good father? (No; he is drunk and half-crazy most of the time.) After Heathcliff saves Hareton's life, what does he immediately realize? (If he had let the baby fall to the floor and die, his revenge against Hindley would have been exacted—Hindley would have been plagued by the guilt of killing his son for the rest of his life.)
  13. What part of Catherine's conversation with Nelly on pages 69-75 does Heathcliff overhear? (that Cathy has decided to marry Edgar and that it would degrade her to marry Heathcliff) Which part does he NOT overhear? (that Cathy loves Heathcliff dearly; that their souls are the same; that nothing will keep her from being with him, even her marriage to Edgar)
  14. What similes appear on page 74 that help describe Cathy's feelings about Linton as opposed to Heathcliff? ("My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods...My love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath.")
  15. What are the results of Heathcliff's leaving Wuthering Heights? (Cathy catches a fever as she waits up for him in the rain; during her recuperation at the Grange, Mr. and Mrs. Linton both catch her illness and die. Three days after his father's death, Edgar marries Catherine.) How do you imagine Catherine felt at this point?
  16. How did Catherine adjust to married life? (For the most part, she was happy, but she had times when she was gloomy and silent.) Do you think her depressed periods were simply part of the normal ups and downs of life, or is there a special reason?
  17. What surprise visitor arrives at the Grange? (Heathcliff) How has he changed? (He is tall and well-built, dignified and intelligent-looking, however the half-civilized ferocity is still in his dark eyes.) How is he received by Catherine? (ecstatically) by Edgar? (very reluctantly)

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18. What complication develops regarding Isabella? (She is infatuated with Heathcliff.) What advice is given to her by Catherine, Nelly, and her brother? (They all tell her she would be making a terrible mistake by getting involved with Heathcliff.) Do you find it odd that Catherine warns Isabella against him when she is so fond of Heathcliff herself?
  19. What upsets Nelly when she visits the Heights? (After she acted as a stand-in for his mother for five years, Hareton doesn't recognize Nelly, throws stones at her, and swears at her. She learns Heathcliff has taught him to swear at Hindley, who he calls "devil Daddy.")
  20. After seeing Heathcliff kissing Isabella, Nelly reports the action to Catherine and later to Edgar. What is the result? (Catherine and Heathcliff quarrel; then Edgar and Catherine quarrel. The disagreement escalates into violence when Heathcliff enters the scene and is struck by Edgar, who then runs away.)
  21. What decision does Catherine make after the trouble between her husband and her friend? [She is angry with both of them; since Edgar is jealous and Heathcliff is angry at her, she says, "I'll try to break their hearts by breaking my own." (p. 107)] Does Nelly take Catherine's threat very seriously at first? Why? (Nelly is used to Catherine's dramatic behavior and tantrums; she assumes this is more of the same.)
  22. After three days of fasting, how is Catherine behaving? (She is declining into a kind of feverish madness.)
  23. What promise does Catherine make on page 116? (that she will never let Heathcliff rest until he is with her in the grave)
  24. What has become of Isabella? (She and Heathcliff have run off together.) Who do you think tried to hang Isabella's dog, and would have succeeded if Nelly had not seen it?

### Writing Suggestions:

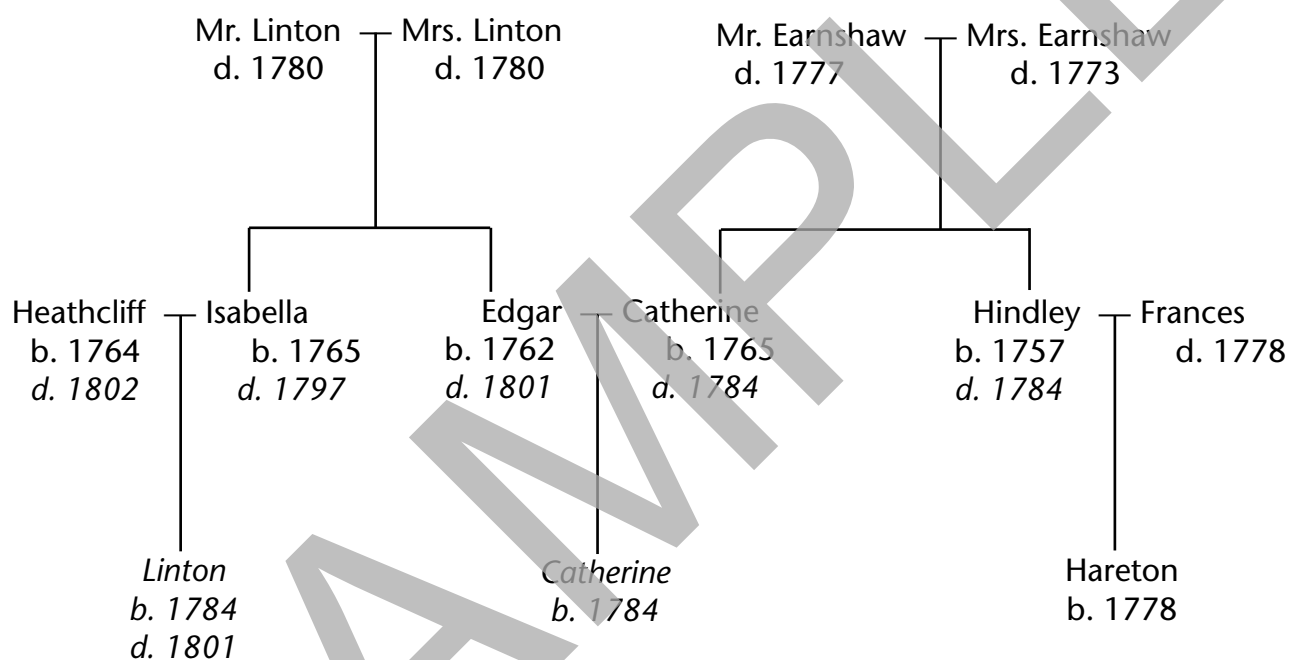
(1) Catherine says if she married Heathcliff they would be beggars. Is it better to marry for love alone, or should the financial/social situation of your intended spouse be strongly considered? Has Catherine made the right decision, or should she have married Heathcliff?

(2) Imagine Catherine and Heathcliff had married. Write a typical scene from a day in their married life. Be sure to include dialogue which indicates, directly or indirectly, their feelings about the marriage.

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### Activity: Family Ties

Elicit information from students to construct the family tree on a large piece of posterboard or on the overhead projector. At this point in the reading, the italicized events cannot yet be included. As your reading progresses, fill in these remaining characters and dates. This activity requires considerable skimming as well as critical thinking. Have the students look for specific dates and other references to time as they read. You might give extra credit to students who find the clues. (*Novel Units Student Packet, Activity #9*, provides an individual reproducible worksheet for this activity.)



As a tie-in with this activity, you might have the students look for magazine pictures they think look like the various characters. Take votes as to which submissions are most like the characters, then paste the pictures near the names on the chart.

You might have students draw their own family trees.