



 Prestwick House

Activity Pack

THE PRINCESS BRIDE

BY WILLIAM GOLDMAN



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Written by Katie Mitchell

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading**Storytelling**

Objectives: Recounting a personal experience
Writing creatively

Activity

Published in 1973, and later made into a movie, *The Princess Bride* received praise from critics and fans. The novel is funny, playful, adventurous, and romantic. One critic from the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* wrote:

“Drift into an hour or so of silly-willy fantasy with a master yarn spinner. If you have half as much fun reading it as Goldman seems to have had writing it, it should be rewarding. You will have become a child for a while, slashing at dragons, rescuing fair damsels, and performing derring-do.”

Through reading, we can be transported to other places and experience interesting and exciting situations, which is one of the reasons so many people enjoy it. Literature provides a way for us to imagine ourselves in the lives of others. *The Princess Bride* allows readers to enter a world where romance and adventure prevail.

Think of an experience from your past that was particularly exciting or fun. Write about the experience in the form of a short story, told from your point of view. Use creative descriptions of the setting, people, and events to draw readers into your story and allow them to fully imagine the experience.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Preface

Author Background

Objective: Learning about the author through research

Activity

The Princess Bride is a work of fiction. However, sometimes the author of a novel will lie or exaggerate the truth for entertainment purposes. William Goldman has done that with *The Princess Bride*. In addition to other fabrications, he invented an original author of the work—S. Morgenstern.

How does the reader know which parts of Goldman's preface (the introduction before the first chapter) are true and which are not? You'll have to do some research to find out. Form small groups to complete the following chart. In the left column are some "facts" about William Goldman and *The Princess Bride*. Using the Internet and/or other sources, determine whether each statement is true or false, and indicate it on the chart. In the right column, provide the correct information for the false statements.

Name: _____

Date: _____

During Reading**Chapter Titles****Objective:** Identifying main ideas and motifs**Activity**

Authors use chapter titles for a variety of reasons: to give the reader an idea of what a chapter will be about; to highlight a significant event or motif; or to pique a reader's interest by using unique words and phrases. Sometimes, a title is taken directly from the dialogue or descriptions in the text. A title can also focus on an individual character.

Almost all of the chapter titles in *The Princess Bride* have either one or two words. Although the titles are very concise and reflect the main focus of the chapter, they aren't very original or creative. If you were the author, what would you title them? After you read each chapter, create a new title for it. List the new title on the following chart. In the third column, give a brief explanation for your choice. Create titles based on what you want to convey to readers about the stories. Your titles can be from quotes, characters, plot, events, symbols, motifs, or anything else you find relevant. An example of a title for Chapter One has been provided for you, but you must also create one of your own.

Name: _____

Date: _____

One: The Bride**Social Networking****Objective:** Creating an online “Blog” page for a character**Activity**

Social networking is an important part of many societies. In medieval times, status was determined by who you were, with whom you were associated, and where you lived. Gossiping was as widely practiced then as it is now.

Social networking today, however, has taken on a different meaning. The term most commonly refers to using the variety of websites available on the Internet to communicate with friends, family, and classmates.

Blogging is an effective method of keeping others informed about what's going on in our lives, and it's a great way to make new friends and business connections through people we already know.

Use the template provided to create a blog for Buttercup, similar to those that are found on popular social networking sites. Use all that you have learned about her up to this point in the novel.

You may write the blog from the perspective of Buttercup in Europe in the Middle Ages, or you could write it as if she lives in today's society. You will need to infer some information from the text to complete parts of the blog. Use your imagination to make up information, but stay true to Buttercup's personality. Be sure to keep the content appropriate for the classroom.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Two: The Groom**Improvisation**

Objectives: Imitating the author's style
Completing fill-in-the-blanks descriptions

Activity

Chapters One and Two include descriptions of Westley and Prince Humperdinck. Westley is a handsome and strong young man whom all the village girls adore. The prince is compared to a "barrel" who waddles when he walks and would fail miserably at being a ballet dancer.

Divide into pairs to complete the following descriptions of Westley and Prince Humperdinck. Using the passages from the text, you will fill in the blanks without being able to view the passages in advance. Each of you will choose a character. Ask your partner to supply words that will fill in the blanks of the passage you chose. Do not read the passage out loud as you ask for the words. Then, supply your partner with words for the passage he or she chose. When all the blanks have been filled in, read each other the completed passages to find out how you've actually described either Westley or Prince Humperdinck. Be sure to keep the words you choose appropriate for the classroom.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Three: The Courtship

Princess Noreena's Speech

Objectives: Adopting a persona
Making inferences based on details in the novel

Activity

Because his father is in poor health, Prince Humperdinck must find a woman to marry quickly, so that there will be an heir to the throne. The prince doesn't want to waste time looking for the perfect mate, so he suggests Princess Noreena.

Princess Noreena lives in Guilder, the country across the channel from Florin. Count Rugen thinks she might be a good choice. For this activity, however, you will write a persuasive speech as if you were Noreena, explaining why you are the best choice for Prince Humperdinck.

Reread Chapter Three, and look for details that support Noreena's chances of marrying Prince Humperdinck. You might need to infer additional reasons that are not necessarily stated in the text. Remember that a speech is a form of persuasion. In this case, you are presenting your best characteristics in hopes of being chosen by the prince.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Four: The Preparations

Class Schedule

Objectives: Writing creatively
Designing classes for nobility training

Activity

Chapter Four is the shortest chapter in *The Princess Bride*, despite Goldman's contention that in the original version, it was the longest chapter. Nonetheless, Goldman tells the reader what the chapter originally contained—information about how Buttercup comes to be the Princess of Hammersmith, how the miracle man tries to help the king's failing health, and finally, “seventy-two pages on the training of a princess.” Goldman states that Morgenstern detailed every moment of Buttercup's training: “He follows Buttercup day to day, month to month, as she learns all the ways of curtsying and tea pouring and how to address visiting nabobs and like that.”

Imagine that there were a school a female could attend to prepare for her role as a princess or queen. What courses would be offered? Create a class schedule for Buttercup. Think of classes she would be required to take to become a princess. In addition, add some electives she might be interested in. The schedule should list at least seven classes with course descriptions.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Five: The Announcement

Create a Flyer

Objective: Creating a flyer to advertise a new sporting event

Activity

There is a lot of action in Chapter Five. Some of the most exciting parts are when the Man in Black faces and defeats Inigo, Vizzini, and Fezzik, feats which take incredible speed, skill, strength, and intelligence.

For this activity, you will invent a new sports competition (similar to the Olympic Games), in which contestants compete in a variety of events. Review the chapter for any activities that could be events in your "Olympics." Then, create a flyer advertising each event in the sports competition. Be creative, and use whatever resources you have available to make an eye-catching advertisement. Your flyer must include descriptions of each event you list and a dynamic name for your competition. You may use a single page, bi-fold, or tri-fold format.