

Eggs



By

Jerry Spinelli

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed

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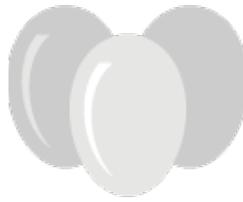


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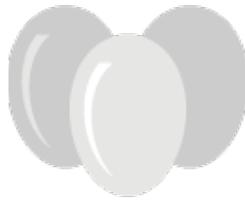
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About the author: Nat Reed was a member of the teaching profession for more than 35 years. He was a full-time instructor at Trent University in the Teacher Education Program for nine years. For more information on his work and literature, visit novelstudies.org.

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Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on between two and five chapters of **Eggs** and is comprised of five of the following activities:

1. Before You Read
2. Vocabulary Building
3. Comprehension Questions
4. Language and Extension Activities

A **portfolio cover** (p.7) as well as a **Checklist** (p.6) are included so that students may track of their completed work.

Every activity need not be completed by all students.

Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters ... respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

Themes which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include friendship, personal growth, death and personal loss, selflessness, loyalty, independence.

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List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homophones
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *personification*.
7. Identify *anagrams*
8. Listing compound words
9. Identifying parts of speech
10. Identify/create *similes*
11. Identification of root words

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Complete Five W's Chart
4. Identify *cliffhangers*
5. Identify the climax of the novel.
6. Complete a Story Pyramid

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Identify the protagonist/antagonist
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Compare characters

Creative and Critical Thinking

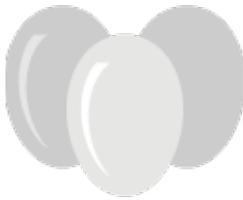
1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Create a poem
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a book review
8. Complete an Observation Chart
9. Complete a KWS Chart
10. Create a friendly letter.

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Create a comic strip

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Synopsis

Nine-year-old David has recently lost his mother to a freak accident, his salesman father is constantly on the road, and he is letting his anger out on his grandmother. Sarcastic and bossy 13-year-old Primrose lives with her childlike, fortuneteller mother, and a framed picture is the only evidence of the father she never knew. Despite their differences, David and Primrose forge a tight yet tumultuous friendship, eventually helping each other deal with what is missing in their lives. This powerful, quirky novel about two very complicated, damaged children has much to say about friendship, loss, and recovery. [www.lb-kids.com]

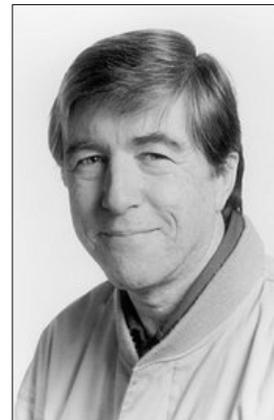
A complete synopsis and other helpful reviews can be found online at such sites as the following: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eggs_\(novel\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eggs_(novel))

Author Biography

Jerry Spinelli

Born in 1941 in Norristown, Pennsylvania, Jerry Spinelli discovered his calling in 1957 when his high school football team won a big game. The town celebrated, his fellow students raced through the streets, but Jerry sneaked back home and marked the occasion in his own way. He wrote a poem. Later the town newspaper published it. "And," he reports, "I've been a writer ever since."

Married to Eileen Spinelli, who is also a writer, Jerry was for many years an editor for the Chilton Company. Now a full-time writer, he lives in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania.



Jerry Spinelli's books include *Space Station Seventh Grade*, *Jason and Marceline*, *Who Put That Hair in My Toothbrush?*, and *Maniac Magee*, which has won more than fifteen state children's book awards in addition to the Newbery Medal. [The Publisher]

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Name: _____

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Chapters 1-4



Before you read the chapter:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. There are actually two protagonists in *Eggs*, nine-year-old David and thirteen-year-old Primrose. Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels you have read or movies you’ve seen. What do you think makes for an especially interesting **protagonist**?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

wince	suffocate	memento	casually
protruding	swagger	degrading	assume

1. No one expected her to act so _____ after escaping from the fire.
2. Hearing Charlotte drag her fingernails across the blackboard made me _____.
3. “I am going to keep this seashell as a _____ of our summer vacation,” she informed us.
4. Mr. Hershey's keys were _____ from his coat pocket.
5. Why did you _____ that Sammy was guilty just because he was here when it happened.
6. The air became so thick with smoke that we all thought we were going to _____.
7. Wearing such a cheap-looking a toupee must have been very _____ for him.
8. After winning the race John walked with a noticeable _____.

Questions



1. What is the **setting** of the story at the beginning of Chapter One?

2. Describe how David treated his grandmother. Do you think David had a good reason for treating her this way? Why or why not?

3. What activity was his grandmother taking him to?

--

4. What was unusual about Primrose's room and the house that her mother lived in?

5. Why do you think the other kids egged her "room"?

6. From the events described in Chapter 3, how would you say David felt about rules in general?

7. Describe how David was the victim of a bully during the Easter egg hunt.

8. Describe the unusual sight that David discovered in the woods.

9. Why do you think that David told the girl about his mother?

10. At the end of Chapter Four it mentions that when David saw his grandmother's eyes wild with worry, he slowed down. Why do you think he slowed down instead of speeding up?

Good to Know ~ Fun Facts About Eggs

~ The color of the egg shell (brown or white) depends on the breed of chicken which laid it. Hens with white feathers tend to lay white eggs, whereas hens with red feathers tend to lay brown eggs.
~ If you crack open your egg to discover a dark yellow yolk, the hen was probably fed green vegetables.

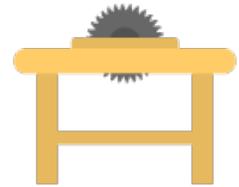


Language Activity



A. Anagrams

An **anagram** is a word that is formed by changing the order of the letters of another word. For example, the letters in the word **WAS** can also form the word **SAW**. Follow these directions to form the anagrams:



a) read the clue in the right-hand column.

b) Using the word in the left-hand column move the letters around in any order, but you must use all the letters. All of the words in the left-hand column can be found in the first four chapters of *Eggs*.

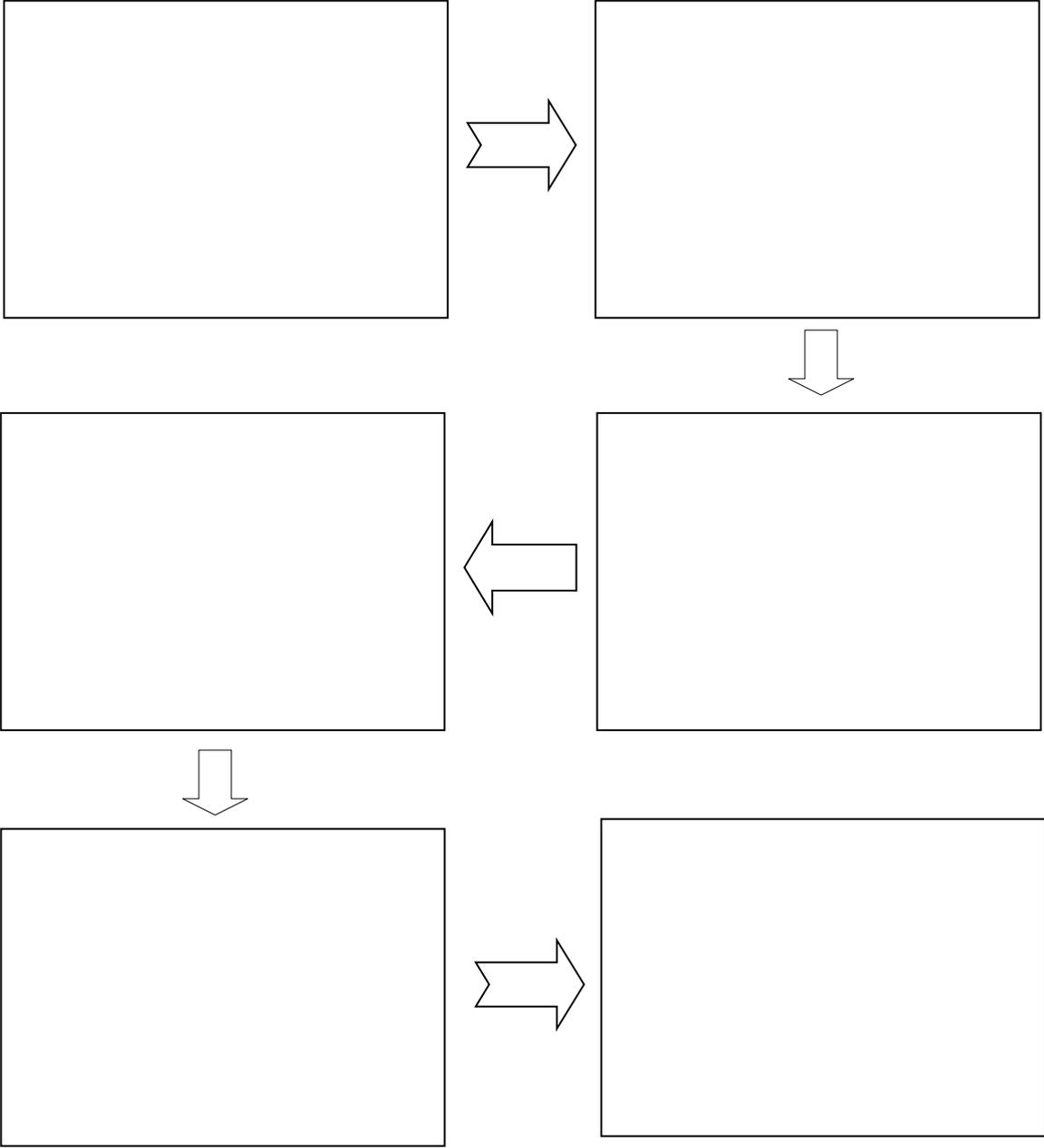
Word	Anagram	Clue
trees		To guide or control.
smear		Female horses.
sliver		Body organs.
street		To redo an examination.
sleep		Removes the outer covering from a fruit.
swear		Manufactured articles offered for sale.
rules		Attracts.

Now find four additional words from the first four chapters which have interesting anagrams to see if you can stump a classmate.

Word	Anagram	Clue

B. Sequence Chart

Choose what you consider to be the six most important events in these chapters. In each of the six boxes below list the six events that you have chosen, describing what happened and telling why you consider this to be an essential part of the story.



C. Cinquain Poems

A Cinquain poem has five lines and most often does not rhyme. Write two Cinquain poems describing two of the characters from **Eggs** using what you know about them from this novel. With your teacher's permission you may wish to collaborate with a colleague in the creation of these poems.

<p>Line 1 is one word. Line 2 is two words. Line 3 is three words. Line 4 is four words. Line five is one word.</p>	<p><i>Santa Saint Nick Long white beard Christmas Eve present-giver Jolly</i></p>
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Character 1 _____

Character 2 _____

Extension Activities

A. Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A story-board can tell the story of only one scene – or the entire novel. Complete the story-board below illustrating the events described in the first four chapters of our novel. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.



1	2
3	4
5	6

B. A Poem Even Charlotte Would Enjoy

The **quatrain** is a popular form of rhymed verse. It is a poem of four lines, is usually light and can be humorous. The following quatrain is actually the start of a much longer poem called *what Easter means to me* which is found on the poetry.com website. (Notice the absence of capital letters in this poem.)

*the day is coming
and is almost here
that glorious sunday
of easter cheer*



Various rhyming schemes make up a quatrain poem. As you can see, the above four lines have a rhyming scheme of **A - B - C - B**. Other rhyming schemes include: AABB, AAAA, AABA, ABBA, ABBB, and AAAB.

Your task is to write your own quatrain poem. You may choose a rhyming scheme that fits with your own personal creation. The theme should have something to do with the themes established in the first four chapters of our novel.

The Quatrain Poem

Now create your own Quatrain Poem on a subject of your choice. Your poem must follow the format of a quatrain poem described above (and must rhyme).

Title: _____
