

George's Marvelous Medicine



By

Roald Dahl

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed

George's Marvelous Medicine

By Roald Dahl



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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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George's Marvelous Medicine

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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 one or two chapters of *George's Marvelous Medicine* and is comprised of the following different 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 growing up, families and family relationships, perseverance when facing difficulty, putting right to a wrong.

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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 *foreshadowing*.
7. Identify *personification*
8. Use of singular / plural nouns
9. Listing compound words
10. Identifying parts of speech
11. Determining alphabetical order
12. Identification of root words
13. Identify/create *similes*
14. Identify *anagrams*

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.

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Relating personal experiences

Creative and Critical Thinking

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

Art Activities

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

George's Marvelous Medicine

By *Roald Dahl*



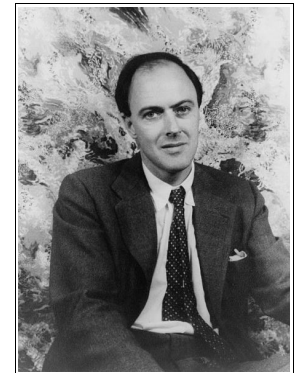
Synopsis

George is alone in the house with Grandma. The most horrid, grizzly old grunion of a grandma ever. She needs something stronger than her usual medicine to cure her grouchiness. A special grandma medicine, a remedy for everything. And George knows just what to put into it. Grandma's in for the surprise of her life - and so is George, when he sees the results of his mixture! (The Publisher)

Author Biography

Roald Dahl

Few authors of children's books have been as prolific or successful as **Roald Dahl** (1916-1990). His novels have been read and enjoyed by children the world over and include such classics as *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Danny the Champion of the World*, *James and the Giant Peach* and *George's Marvelous Medicine*. Shortly before his death, the top five selling children's books in Great Britain were all authored by Dahl.



Born to Norwegian immigrants, Roald Dahl hailed from Llandaff, Wales. Despite losing his father when he was only four, Roald claimed to have had a most happy and eventful childhood. Although not a particularly good student, Roald did excel at athletics.

Dahl was married to actress, **Patricia Neal**, for many years and they had five children together. The couple, however, divorced after thirty years of marriage. Roald began his writing career as a short story writer, and didn't pen his first children's novel until 1961 - *James and Giant Peach*. This was followed by several more bestsellers.

Roald Dahl passed away in 1990 at the age of 74. In Great Britain the anniversary of Dahl's birthday on 13 September has become widely celebrated as **Roald Dahl Day**.

George's Marvelous Medicine



By Roald Dahl

Name: _____

George's Marvelous Medicine

By Roald Dahl

Chapter 1 - Grandma



Before you read the chapter:

Living with one's grandmother can be a great experience for some children. Think of one thing which you think would be good about living with your grandmother.

Think of one thing which might not be advantageous about living with a grandparent.



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

grunion	grousing	ridiculous	earwig
wondrous	sockets	wizardry	nippers

- Jonathan was so startled that his eyes almost popped out of their _____.
- The _____ is a small, silvery food fish found off the coast of California.
- The crab used its little _____ to inflict some pain on Jeremy's exposed thumb.
- I think it is absolutely _____ that you can't find a buyer for your bike.
- Mrs. Calamine is always _____ about something.
- I was grossed out when I found an _____ in my soup.
- What Sydney Crosby can do with a hockey puck is sheer _____.
- The birth of a baby is considered a most _____ event.

Questions



1. Describe the **setting** of the story as Chapter One begins.

2. After reading this chapter, what four adjectives do you think would best describe George's grandma's personality?

3. What opinion did George have of his grandmother? Support your answer with proof from the story.

4. When was the only time that George's grandmother ordered him around? Why do you think this was the case?

5. What was Grandma's secret to ensuring that George stopped growing so fast?

6. What disturbing information did Grandma convey to George near the conclusion of this chapter? Why was this so upsetting to George?

Language Activity

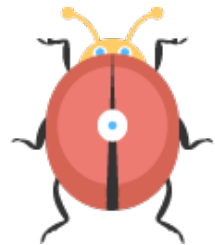
A. The author seems to enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. An example from this chapter is: “. . . **g**rouching, **g**rouching, **g**rumbling, **g**ripping about something or other.”

Using your imagination, create your own examples of **alliteration** from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of three words.

The screech of a raven	
The roar of a piece of farm machinery (i.e. tractor)	
From your imagination	

B. Positively Revolting!!

Grandma refers to a number of creatures in this chapter in a positive manner. They include slugs, beetles, earwigs and caterpillars. Your task is to make it possible for your classroom colleagues to become more familiar with one of these intriguing creatures. [With your teacher's approval you may choose an alternative creature for this assignment, as long as it is equally disgusting.]



Create an information card featuring one of these creatures. Your card will resemble a sports card (i.e. baseball, hockey...) The front of the card will feature an appropriate picture and the back at least four fascinating facts you have researched from sources in your school library or on the Internet.

C. A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is “. . . a small puckered-up mouth like a dog's bottom.”



What two things are being compared in this example?

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Invent your own **similes** comparing the following items with something from your imagination:

a) your view of a rainbow after a sun shower

b) a woman screaming after seeing a mouse

D. A **quintet** is a five-line verse that tells a story. The quintet has a syllable pattern and can bring an exciting scene to life. (It doesn't have to rhyme.)

Line 1 – tells when , 3 syllables Line 2 – tells where , 5 syllables Line 3 – tells what , 7 syllables Line 4 – describes activity , 9 syllables Line 5 – contains a thought , 3 syllables.	Now create a quintet poem using ideas from recent events in <i>George's Marvelous Medicine</i> .
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TITLE: _____

E. The Story Pyramid

The story pyramid gives the creator an opportunity to summarize points in a story using only a certain number of words. By limiting your options in this way, it will give you the opportunity to stretch your thinking because of the small number of words required at each level of the pyramid. It is also a great opportunity to gather the most important information when writing a summary.

Write a story pyramid following these instructions.

Line 1: One word, stating the name of the main character

Line 2: Two words, describing this character

Line 3: Three words, describing the setting for a part or all of this chapter

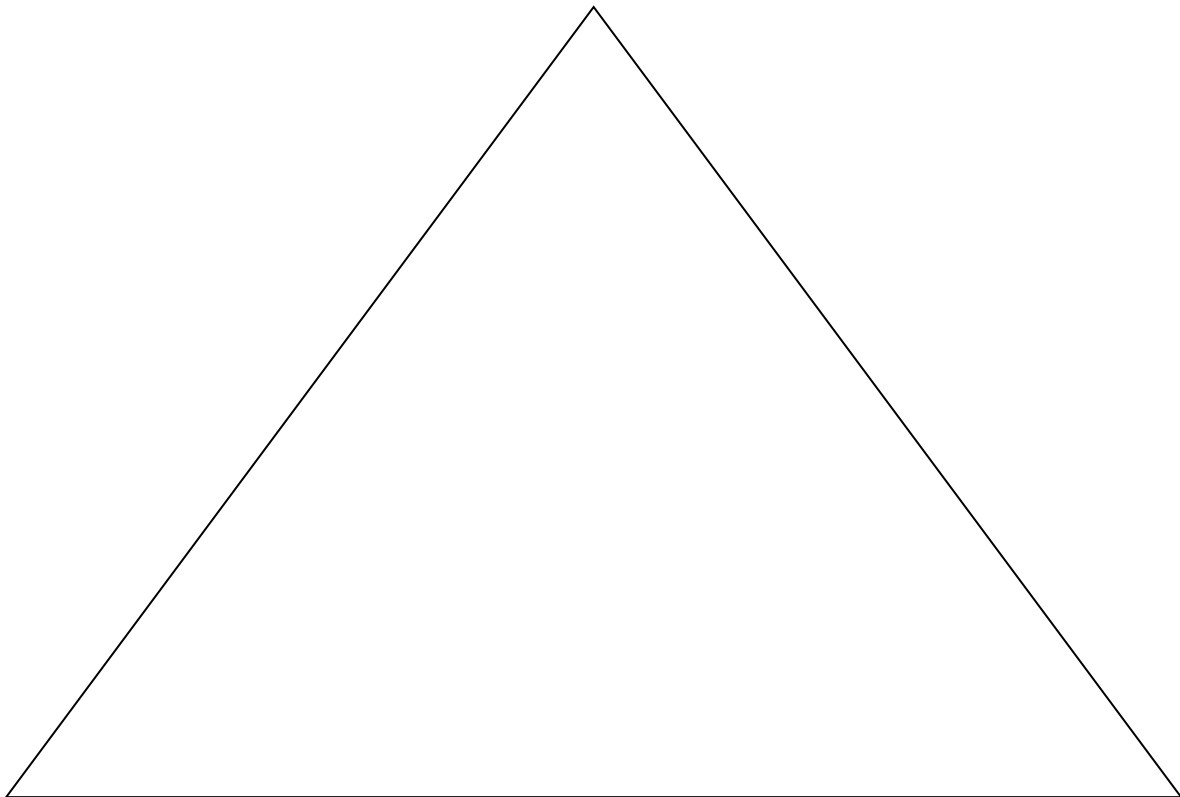
Line 4: Four words, stating a problem faced in this chapter

Line 5: Five words, describing one event from this chapter

Line 6: Six words, describing a second event from this chapter

Line 7: Seven words, describing a third event from this chapter

Line 8: Eight words, describing another character from this chapter



Extension Activity

Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can tell the story of only one scene – or the entire novel.

Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the first chapter of *George's Marvelous Medicine*. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.



1	2
3	4
5	6