

Heidi



By

Johanna Spyri

A Novel Study
by Joel Michel Reed

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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 *Heidi* and is comprised of five of the following different activities:

- Before You Read
- Vocabulary Building
- Comprehension Questions
- Language Activities
- Extension Activities

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.**

A principal expectation of the unit is that students will develop their skills in reading, writing, listening and oral communication, as well as in reasoning and critical thinking. Students will also be expected to provide clear answers to questions and well-constructed explanations. It is critical as well that students be able to relate events and the feelings of characters to their own lives and experiences and describe their own interpretation of a particular passage.

A strength of the unit is that students can work on the activities at their own pace. Every activity need not be completed by all students. A **portfolio cover** is included (p.7) so that students may organize their work and keep it all in one place. A **Student Checklist** is also included (p.6) so that a record of completed work may be recorded.

Themes which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include perseverance when facing difficult circumstances, friendship, respect, family relationships, caring for others.

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List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homonyms
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *anagrams*
7. Use of singular / plural nouns
8. Listing compound words
9. Identifying parts of speech
10. Determining alphabetical order
11. Identify *personification*
12. Identify/create *similes*

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

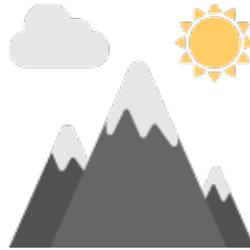
1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Write a description of personal feelings
6. Write a book review
7. Complete an Observation Sheet

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

Heidi

By *Johanna Spyri*



Synopsis

At the age of five, little orphan Heidi is sent to live with her grandfather in the Alps. Everyone in the village is afraid of him, but Heidi is fascinated by his long beard and bushy grey eyebrows. She loves her life in the mountains, playing in the sunshine and growing up amongst the goats and birds. But one terrible day Heidi is collected by her aunt and is made to live with a new family in town. Heidi can't bear to be away from her grandfather; can she find her way back up the mountain, where she belongs? (The Publisher – **Puffin Classics**)

A complete synopsis and other helpful reviews can be found on the following website:
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heidi> (Warning: Website may contain plot spoilers)

Author Biography

Johanna Spyri

Johanna Spyri (12 June 1827 – 7 July 1901) was a Swiss-born author of children's stories, and is best known for her book *Heidi*. Born **Johanna Louise Heusser** in the rural area of **Hirzel, Switzerland**, as a child she spent several summers in the area around **Chur in Graubunden**, the setting she later would use in her novels.

In 1852, Johanna Heusser married Bernhard Spyri, a lawyer. While living in the city of Zurich she began to write about life in the country. Her first story, **A Note on Vrony's Grave**, which deals with a woman's life of domestic violence, was published in 1880; the following year further stories for both adults and children appeared, among them the novel **Heidi**, which she wrote in four weeks. **Heidi** is the story of an orphan girl who lives with her grandfather in the Swiss Alps, and is famous for its vivid portrayal of that landscape.



Courtesy of Wikipedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johanna_Spyri

Heidi



By Johanna Spyri

Name: _____

Heidi

By Johanna Spyri
Chapter 1



Before you read the chapter:

Briefly predict what you think the plot of *Heidi* will be about.



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

gossip	wonderful	eagerly	morning
uncle	property	mountain	companions

1. One sunny June _____, a tall sturdy young woman was climbing up the path.
2. "What, stay with Uncle Alp on the _____? You must be crazy!"
3. "In Germany," said Detie. "A _____ job with a good family in Frankfurt."
4. He couldn't be _____ to everyone in the village, but no one ever called him anything else, even Barbie used that name too.
5. Now Barbie took her arm, and said coaxingly, "You could at least tell me how much of what they say is true, and how much only _____."
6. He got into bad company, and drank and gambled away the whole _____.
7. "And what happened to Tobias?" Barbie asked _____.
8. During the summer months this was the only chance Peter had of seeing other boys and girls. For the rest of the time, goats were his only _____.

Questions



1. Briefly describe the setting of Chapter One.

2. How did the citizens of Mayenfeld feel about Uncle Alp?

3. Why was Heidi going to live with her grandfather in the Swiss alps?

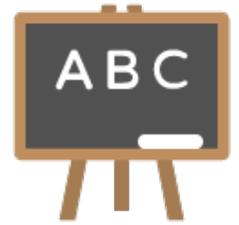
4. According to Detie, why did Uncle Alp live in the mountains like a hermit?

5. How did Detie convince Peter to fetch Heidi's clothes for her?

Language Activities



A. There are many writers that enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device is where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here's an example of an alliteration: "... screeching, screaming, shrieking 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 sound of rustling leaves.	
The sound of water flowing.	
The sound of birds chirping.	

B. A **simile** is a comparison using the words "like" or "as". Here's an example from chapter one: "*We all fear him and he is really just like a heathen or an old Indian, with those thick grey eyebrows and that huge uncanny beard. When he wanders along the road with his twisted stick we are all afraid to meet him alone.*"



What two things are being compared in this example?

--	--

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

a) A herd of goats climbing a mountain.

--

b) A The sun setting on the horizon.

--

C. Choose Wisely



If you were sent away to live with an extended member of your family for an entire year, which three items would you bring along, and why?

1
2
3

D. Switzerland – Fascinating Facts

Using resources from your school library or the Internet, do some research on the nation of **Switzerland** and complete the questions listed below.

Questions	Answers
Population	
Official Language(s)	
Currency	
Largest City	
Capital City	
Land Size (Kilometres or Miles)	
Federal Chancellor	
Kind of Government (Monarchy, etc)	