

Lost on a Mountain in Maine



By
Donn Fendler

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed

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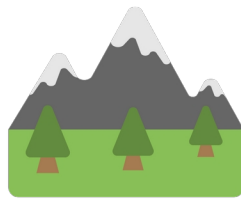


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About the author: Nat Reed was a member of the teaching profession for more than 35 years. He was a full-time instructor at Trent University in the Teacher Education Program for nine years. For more information on his work and literature, visit novelstudies.org.

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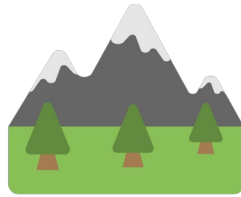
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Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on two chapters of *Lost on a Mountain in Maine* and is comprised of five 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 Maine, wilderness survival, flora and fauna of North America, resilience, perseverance and courage.

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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 *anagrams*
7. Listing compound words
8. Identify *personification*.
9. Identify/create *similes*
10. Identification of root words

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a Sequence Chart
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Complete Five W's Chart
4. Identify the climax of the novel

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Identify the protagonist
3. Relating personal experiences

Creative and Critical Thinking

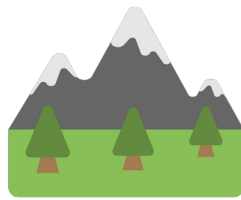
1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Create a poem
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a book review
8. Complete an Observation Chart
9. Complete a Problem Solution Chart
10. Create a friendly letter.

Art Activities

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

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Synopsis

When twelve-year-old Donn Fendler gets tired of waiting for his father and brothers to join him on the summit of Maine's highest peak, he decides to find his own way back to camp. But Donn doesn't expect a fast-moving fog to obscure his path, knocking him completely off course. He doesn't count on falling down an embankment that hides him from sight. And he never could have imagined taking a wrong turn that leaves him alone to wander aimlessly for nine days in the empty mountain wilderness. A true and inspiring story about a boy's harrowing journey through nature's unforgiving terrain. [Courtesy of the Publisher]

Author Biography

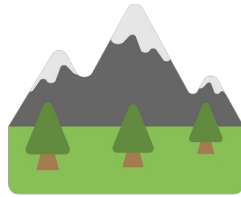
Donn Fendler

Since his close encounter with death in the mountains of Maine more than seventy years ago, Donn Fendler visited countless schools, speaking to eager readers about his journey back to civilization. Until his death on October 10, 2016, he received countless letters from fans inquiring about that time in his life – which he always answered. On the 70th anniversary of the event, Fendler was interviewed by the Bangor Daily News, in which he stated that he survived not only by eating strawberries and checkerberries, but by his "never-give-up attitude" through his faith in God and his prayers. In November 2011, his book was republished as a young adult graphic novel. In 1953, Fendler married to Maryrose Connolly; the couple had four children. A film adaptation of the novel *Lost on a Mountain in Maine* was released on November 1, 2024. [Adapted from The Publisher and Wikipedia.]



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Student Checklist

Student Name _____

Assignment	Grade / Level	Comments

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Name:

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Chapters 1-2



Before you read these chapters:

The protagonist (the hero or 'good guy') of *Lost on a Mountain in Maine* is Donn Fendler, a twelve-year-old boy who endured a most harrowing experience that ended up making him quite famous. Have you ever read a book or seen a movie or television program in which the young boy or girl went through a great trial like Donn? If so, briefly describe what this person went through.



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

summit	fleece	reefer	plateau
dungarees	pucker	timberline	dissolve

1. Jeremy was very thankful that his jacket was _____ - lined.
2. Do you think that sugar will _____ in Coca Cola?
3. They were only half-way up the mountain when they arrived at a great _____.
4. The _____ of Mount Gloria was at an elevation of 4,200 feet.
5. Climbing back down the mountain, Donn was relieved to finally reach the _____.
6. _____ is a one-piece garment consisting of pants, a piece of cloth that covers the chest, and straps which go over your shoulders.
7. Donn grabbed hold of a _____ bush when he almost fell into a deep hole.
8. A _____ is a double-breasted jacket or coat made of thick cloth.

Questions



Please Note: Although the terms “redskin” and “half-breed” have long been regarded as derogatory terms, they were unfortunately used by many non-indigenous people at the time this story took place (1939). It is probable that young boys like Donn may not have been aware of how degrading these words are to indigenous people.

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

2. Who was Henry? What did he suggest to Donn?

3. Why didn't Donn want to wait? What further mistake did he make before leaving Henry?

4. What event happened almost immediately after Donn left Henry that should have made him turn back?

5. As Chapter One comes to an end, do you think Donn should have stayed where he was and waited for the fog to lift, or should he have kept going down off the mountain? Please give reasons(s) for your answer.

6. What did Donn find funny about the pucker bush?

7. Describe Donn's close call in Chapter Two.

8. What was the "first thing" he learned in Scouting? Then what did he decide to do?

9. Who was Pamola?

10. Where did Donn's imagination take him at the end of Chapter Two?

Language Activity



A. A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is, *Dimly, just like a ghost, we saw a man . . .* 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 thunderstorm

b) your own example

B. Antonyms, Synonyms or Homophones

Beside each pair of words write **A** (antonym) or **S** (synonym) or **H** (homophones). A word from each of these pairs appears in the first two chapters of the novel.

a)	summit - top		f)	understand - misinterpret	
b)	nervous - calm		g)	plateau - highland	
c)	trail - path		h)	cliff - precipice	
d)	knew - new		i)	one - won	
e)	foolish - intelligent		j)	struggle - calm	

C. 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 two chapters of *Lost on a Mountain in Maine*.

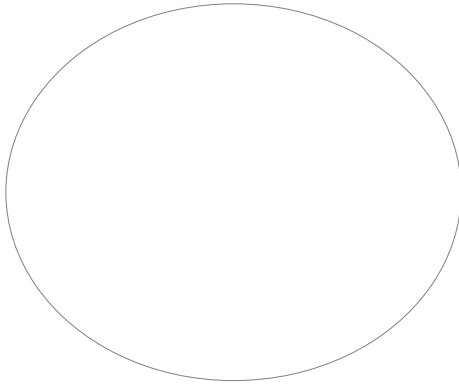
Word	Anagram	Clue
now		Victory!
below		A body part.
trail		Takes place in a court.
break		Makes bread.
start		Small pies.
time		A small insect.
roots		A chicken does this.
tried		Weary.

Check out the the author's entry in Wikipedia.

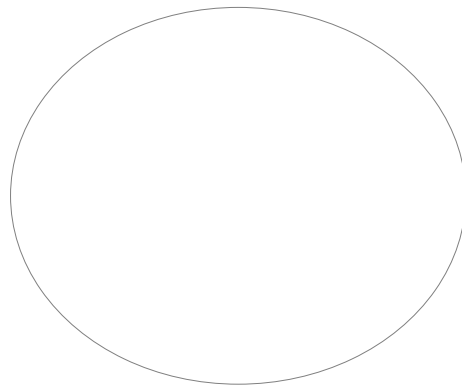
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donn_Fendler

D. 5 Ws and an H.

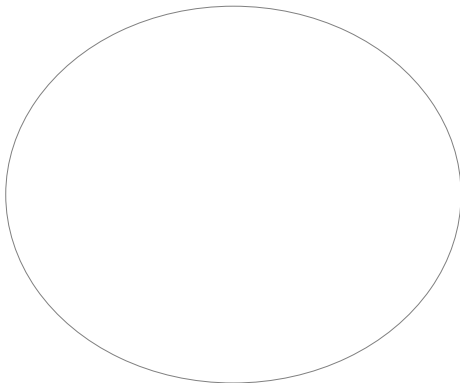
Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



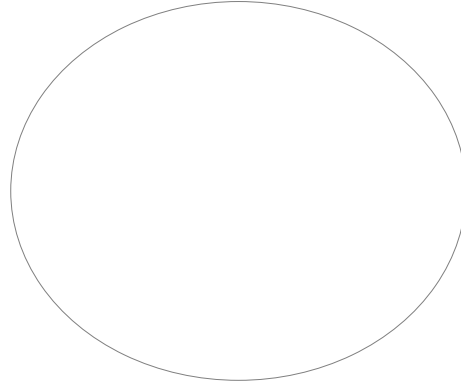
WHO?



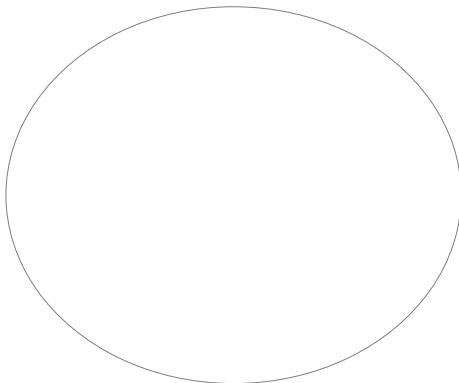
WHAT?



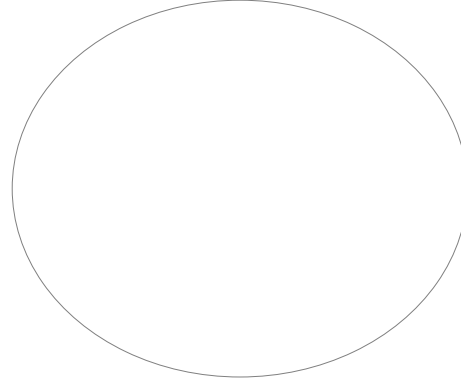
WHEN?



WHERE?



WHY?



HOW?

E. A Quatrain About Making Rash Decisions

The **quatrain** is a popular form of rhymed verse. It is a poem of four lines, is usually light and humorous. The following quatrain is a poem written by the acclaimed poet, Atrocious Halitosis. It is called **Rash Decisions**.

*Stop and think real hard, my friend,
Before you jump in the deep end.
Make sure your trunks are on real tight,
Or you'll give the girls an awful fright.*



Various rhyming schemes make up a quatrain poem. As you can see, the above four lines have a rhyming scheme of **A – A – B – B**. Other rhyming schemes include: ABAB, AAAA, AABA, ABBA, ABBA, 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 topic should have something to do with the themes established in the first two 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: _____

Here is a quatrain by C.S. Lewis from the poem, ***The Meteorite***.
More of his poems can be found on the website, best-poems.net

Lullaby! Lullaby!
There's a tower strong and high
Built of oak and brick and stone,
Stands before a wood alone.

Extension Activity



A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words



Use the three boxes to describe and illustrate the beginning, middle and end of Chapters 1 and 2.

Beginning Picture	Beginning
Middle Picture	Middle
Concluding Picture	Concluding