

Midnight Without a Moon



By

Linda Williams Jackson

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed

Midnight Without a Moon

By *Linda Williams Jackson*



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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 three chapters of *Midnight Without a Moon* and is comprised of the following activities:

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

A **portfolio cover** (Page 7) as well as a **Checklist** (Page 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 racial discrimination, injustice, personal growth, perseverance, accepting responsibilities, courage, friends and family, coming of age, and dealing with loss.

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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. Create a friendly letter.
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

Art Activities

1. Design a cover for the novel
2. Create a comic strip

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Synopsis

It's Mississippi in the summer of 1955, and Rose Lee Carter can't wait to move north. But for now, she's living with her sharecropper grandparents on a white man's cotton plantation.

Then, one town over, an African American boy, Emmett Till, is killed for allegedly whistling at a white woman. When Till's murderers are unjustly acquitted, Rose realizes that the South needs a change . . . and that she should be part of the movement.

Linda Jackson's moving debut seamlessly blends a fictional portrait of an African American family and factual events from a famous trial that provoked change in race relations in the United States. (Courtesy of the Publisher)

Author Biography Linda Williams Jackson

Born and raised in the Mississippi Delta in the town of Rosedale, Linda Williams Jackson likes to spin stories about everyday people in small-town settings. Though she has lived in a few other states (Alabama, Missouri, and Kansas), Linda currently makes her home in a not-so-small city in Mississippi with her husband and three children. While a degree in Math and Computer Science from the University of Alabama allowed her to enjoy careers in Information Technology, Linda now prefers manipulating words rather than numbers and symbols. Besides her debut middle-grade novel *Midnight Without a Moon* from HMH Books for Young Readers and the sequel *A Sky Full of Stars*, Linda is published in multiple *Chicken Soup for the Soul* titles and has written reading assessment passages for various educational publishers. [Courtesy of the author's official website]



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Chapters 1-3



Before you read the chapters:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The main character of *Midnight Without a Moon* is thirteen-year-old Rose Lee Carter who lives with her sharecropping grandparents in Mississippi in the year 1955. 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 interesting **protagonist**? (One that is difficult to forget.)



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

reputation	obscenity	pristine	chastisement
migration	percolate	consent	enthusiasm

1. Rose Lee found it difficult to accept _____ of any kind.
2. People were concerned about the steady _____ of people to the north.
3. Her _____ was contagious among her teammates.
4. The valuable baseball card was in _____ condition.
5. “Please don't touch the pot, Mama said. “Allow the coffee time to _____.”
6. I've never heard one _____ ever pass from Coach Ramsey in all the time I've known him.
7. Joanne has a _____ for being an excellent badminton player.
8. Did Rodney really _____ to his picture appearing in the newspaper?

Questions



1. What is the **setting** of the story for most of Chapter One?

b. Chapter One takes place on what date? _____

2. The incident involving Ricky Turner reveals quite a bit about both his character and Rose Lee's as well. What did you learn about each character from this incident?

Ricky	
Rose Lee	

3. Why was Rose Lee surprised to see Jimmy Robinson in Ricky Turner's truck?

4. What decision had Rose Lee's mother recently made that really caused a great deal of heartache in her immediate family?

5. What was Rose Lee's impression of Sugar? What was there about Sugar that caused Rose Lee to think this way of her?

6. What was your impression of Rose Lee's mother? What was there about her that caused you to form this impression?

7. Why did Papa not think too highly of Mr. Pete?

8. Why did Rose Lee envy Sugar?

9. What was it about Monday, July 25th that caused Rose Lee to dread facing the day?

10. What crisis seemed to be brewing in the neighborhood in Chapter Three? According to Ma Pearl, what was the cause of this crisis?

11. Ma Pearl makes the point: *One Negro do something, white folks get mad at everybody.* What do you think motivated the *white folk* to take it out on *everybody*?

Language Activities



A. Cotton.

Rose Lee mentions having to go out into the cotton field to work that day. Cotton has long been an important crop in this region of the United States and the country continues to be the world's largest exporter of cotton. Using resources in your school library or on the Internet, research three additional facts about this important crop and record these facts below.



1.	
2.	
3.	

B. 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 three chapters of *Midnight Without a Moon*.

Word	Anagram	Clue
named		Make minor changes to.
breath		One who takes a dip.
grown		Not exactly correct.
stared		Swaps.
heart		World.
protest		A necessity in gymnastics.

C. A Quatrain Poem Celebrating Cotton.

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 was written by the famous poet, Atrocious Halitosis. It is called, *The Importance of Cotton*.

*They call me cotton - that they do,
From me they make your socks.
Your carpet, sheets upon your bed,
Your sixteen purple smocks.*



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: ABAB, AABB, 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 theme should have something to do with the themes established in the first three chapters of our novel.

The Quatrain Poem

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

Title: _____

D. A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter is: *Sugar was as rotten as a bushel of bad apples . . .*

What is being compared in this example?

--	--

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

a) Picking cotton on a hot day

B) your choice

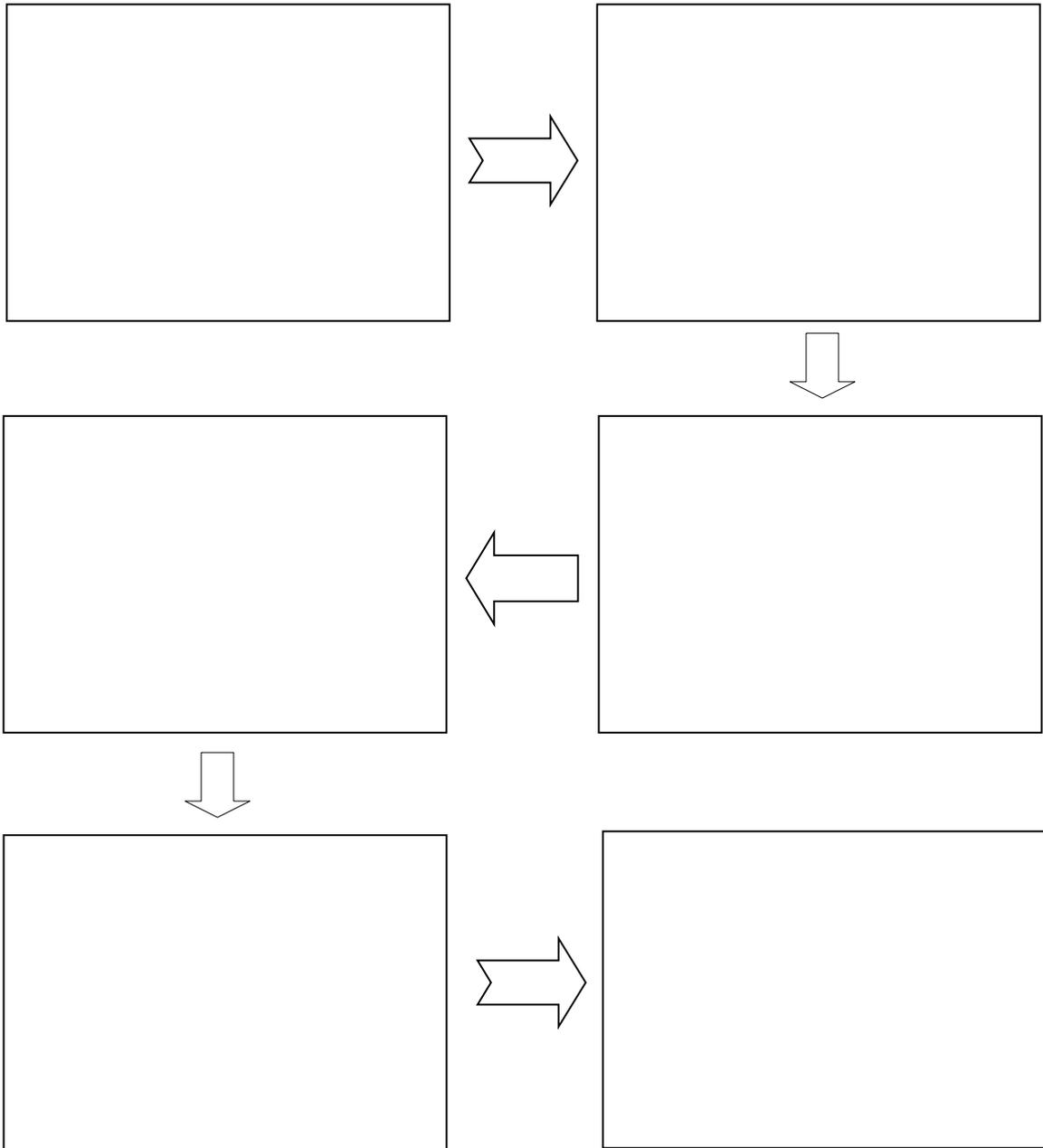
E. Chapter Three contains an example of an important literary device called **foreshadowing**. Foreshadowing is defined as *a warning or indication of a future event*. When discussing why Mr. Albert and his sons were missing from work that morning, Ma Pearl states, *One Negro do something, white folks get made at everyone.*



1. What might the author be warning us of in this statement?
2. Why might the author have included this warning?

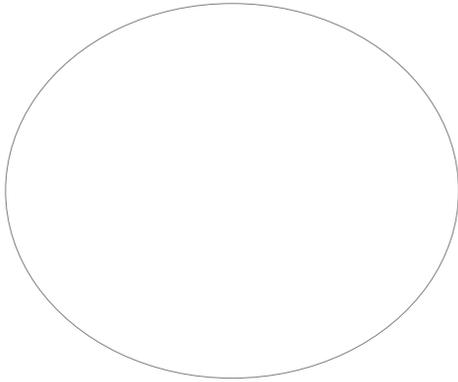
F. Sequence Chart

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.

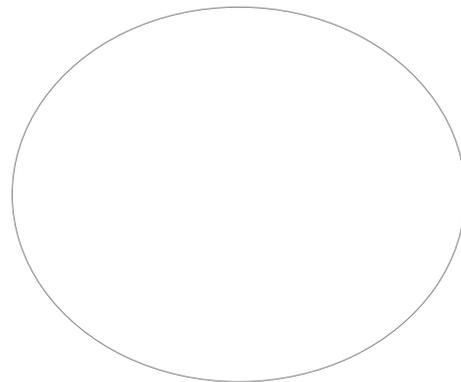


G. 5 Ws and an H.

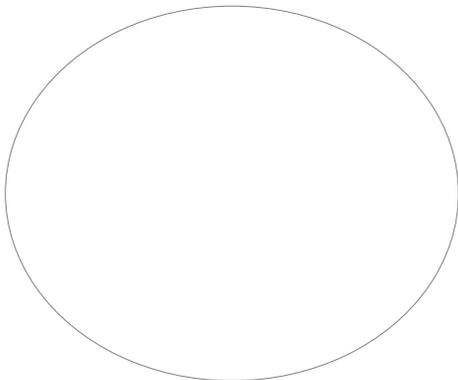
Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



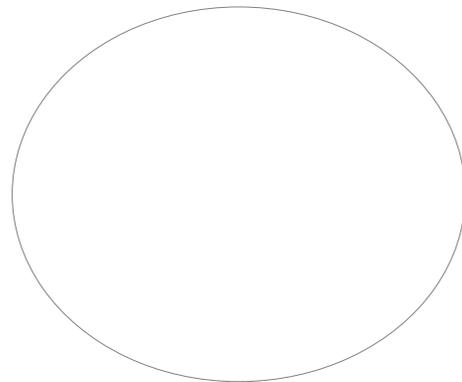
WHO?



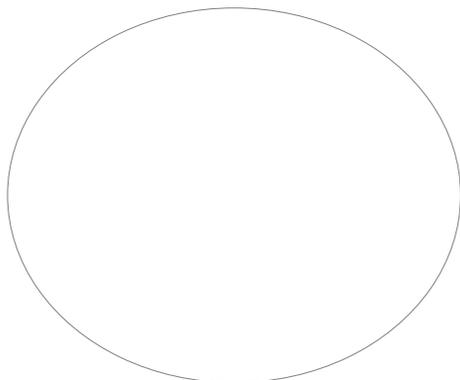
WHAT?



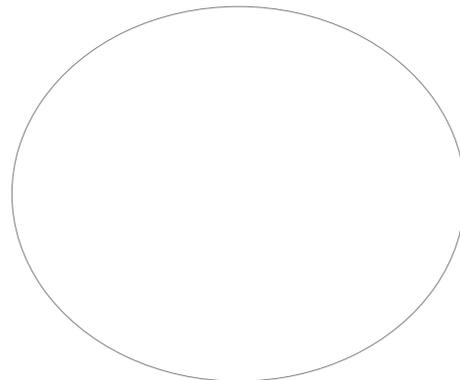
WHEN?



WHERE?



WHY?



HOW?