

Moon Over Manifest



By

Clare Vanderpool

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed

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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 87 page curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on a few chapters of *Moon Over Manifest* (usually about 25 pages of the novel) 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 life's journey, grief, coal mining, prohibition, World War I, the Spanish Influenza, importance of family, belonging and roots, homelessness.

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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. Identify the climax of the novel.
4. Complete a KWS Chart

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Compare two characters
3. Relating personal experiences

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Write a letter to a friend
4. Complete an Observation Sheet
5. Conduct an interview
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a book review

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Create a Collector's Card

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Synopsis

Abilene Tucker feels abandoned. Her father has put her on a train, sending her off to live with an old friend for the summer while he works a railroad job. Armed only with a few possessions and her list of universals, Abilene jumps off the train in Manifest, Kansas, aiming to learn about the boy her father once was.

Having heard stories about Manifest, Abilene is disappointed to find that it's just a worn-out old town. But her disappointment quickly turns to excitement when she discovers a hidden cigar box full of mementos, including old letters that mention a spy known as *the Rattler*. These mysterious letters send Abilene and her new friends on an honest-to-goodness spy hunt, even though they are warned to "Leave well enough alone."

Abilene throws all caution aside when she heads down the mysterious Path to Perdition to pay a debt to the reclusive Miss Sadie, a diviner who tells stories from the past. It seems that Manifest's history is full of long-held secrets. What will happen if they are finally revealed? [Courtesy of the publisher]

Author Biography

Clare Vanderpool

If you ask anyone who knows me, they will tell you that I have a very strong connection to place. I live in Wichita, Kansas, about four blocks from where I grew up, in an old neighborhood called College Hill. From my house I can walk to my parents' house, my sister's house, the school I went to and where my kids go now, the pool, the sledding hill, and two bookstores!

I grew up reading many wonderful books in a lot of strange places. Books like **Harold and the Purple Crayon**, **Anne of Green Gables**, and **Island of the Blue Dolphins** in places like dressing rooms, the bathroom, and church. (Like you never read a book in church.)

While I do have a college degree in English and Elementary Education, my best education has come from reading, listening to family stories, looking out the car window on road trips, pretending to be pirates with my brother, and just plain imagining. Besides writing I like to go to the pool with my kids, browse at the bookstore, have a neighbor over for tea, watch re-runs of *Monk*, have a lot of kids playing at our house, and go out for dinner with my husband. Life is good. (The Author's Website)



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Name: _____

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(1) Pages 1-25 - Santa Fe Railway to Sacred Heart of the Holy Redeemer School (But not including)



Before you read the chapter:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The protagonist of *Moon Over Manifest* is twelve year old Abilene, a most unusual character living a very different kind of life than most girls her age. Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels you have read (or movies you have seen). What do you think makes for an especially intriguing protagonist?

Do you think *Moon Over Manifest* is an effective title for a novel? Why or why not?

What is the best title of a book you have ever read (or heard of)?

--



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

vigilant	dyspepsia	perdition	dilapidated	interim
antiquity	extraordinaire	discombobulated	tentative	anticipation

1. When the bank manager was in a serious car accident, an _____ manager was appointed by head office.
2. "I can't emphasize it enough," Ms. Potter said. "Everyone in our class must be _____ if we are to catch whoever is stealing the lunches."
3. Johnny Bower was a goalie _____ during the 1960s.
4. Surprisingly, the mayor lived in a _____ old house by the factory.
5. Sara found the _____ of waiting for the bell to ring was more than she could bear.
6. The nurse was quite certain that the pills would cure his _____.
7. He felt quite _____ after being struck on the head with the basketball.
8. She is a student of _____, especially pertaining to ancient Greece.
9. The preacher warned them that a life of sin would end in _____.
10. I gave him a _____ timetable which is good until the end of the month.

Questions



1. Describe why Abilene was going to the town of Manifest.

2. Describe the **setting** of the first chapter.

3. _____ started to write a weekly column in the Manifest Herald in the year _____.

4. How had Gideon come to know Shady?

5. What action did Abilene take to fulfill the advice, *it's best to get a look at a place before it gets a look at you*?

6. Describe how Shady and Hattie Mae treated Abilene when she arrived in town.

7. Think of an example to support Abilene's statement: *I'd always been in the protective shade of my father*. Why did this feeling make her feel vulnerable?

8. Why did they think it might be a good idea for Abilene to attend school the next day, even though it was the last day of school before summer holidays?

9. Describe what Abilene found when she was looking for a place to hide her compass.

Language Activities



A. A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is “Hearing Gideon tell about it was like sucking on butterscotch.”

What two things are being compared in this example?

--	--

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

a) the glitter of a Christmas tree ornament

b) the call of a chickadee

B. Caviar Words

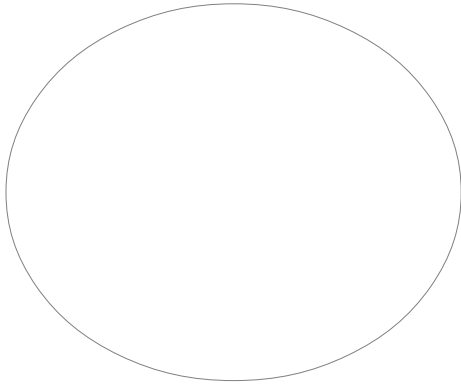
The author of this novel is noted for her use of elegant, tasteful words. Someone once stated that some words have the sound of **caviar** (rich and elegant) and others are more are common (**peanut butter** words). With a colleague come up with 6 examples of each type of word. You may use any chapter of the novel to find these words.



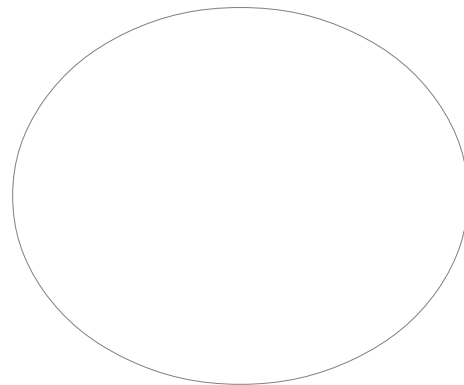
Caviar Words	Peanut Butter Words

C. 5 Ws and an H.

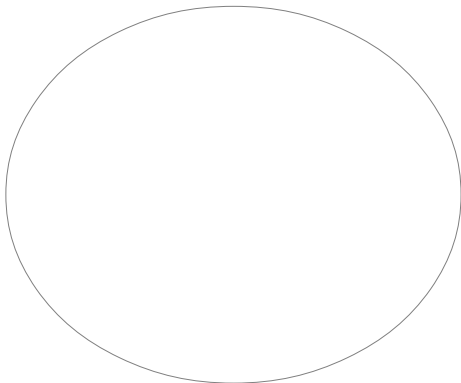
Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



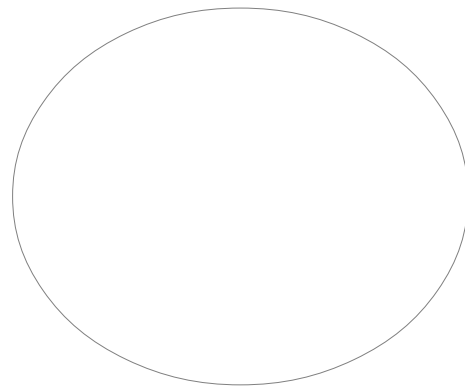
WHO?



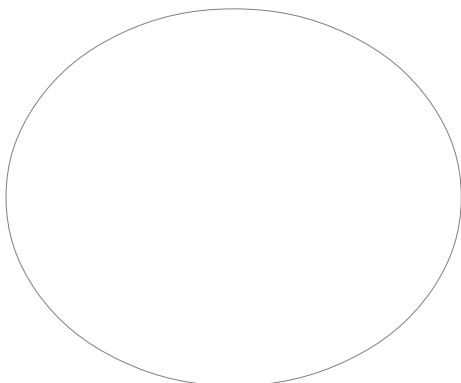
WHAT?



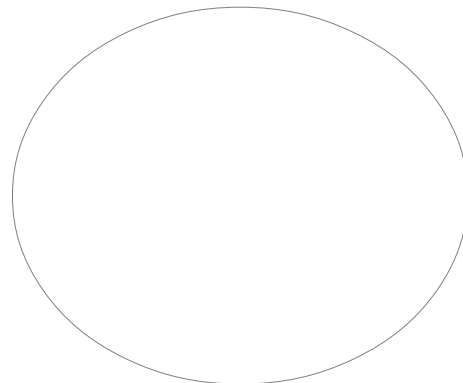
WHEN?



WHERE?



WHY?



HOW?

D. Quintet

Unlike **quintuplet** (a set of five children born to the same mother at one birth), a **quintet** is a five-line verse that tells a story. The quintet has a syllable pattern and has the wonderful ability of bringing a visual image to life for the reader.

Here is the structure of the quintet:

A Creative Title

Line 1 – tells **when** ~ and has 3 syllables

Line 2 – tells **where** ~ and has 5 syllables

Line 3 – tells **what** ~ and has 7 syllables

Line 4 – describes **activity** ~ and has 9 syllables

Line 5 – contains a relevant **thought** ~ and has 3 syllables

An Example!

Here is an example of a Quintet take from the poem, *Jack and Jill*.

Jack and Jill

*Dinner time,
Up a hill they went,
To fetch a pail of water,
Then Jack and Jill tumbled down the hill,
Poor old Jack.*

Now try your hand at writing a quintet which contains some of the important details from this section of the novel.

Extension Activities



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 few chapters of *Moon Over Manifest*. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.

1	2
3	4
5	6