

One-Eyed Cat



By

Paula Fox

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 curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on one chapter of *One-Eyed Cat* and is comprised of five of the following 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 responsibility, guilt and shame, truth vs. lies, compassion, friendship, personal growth, dealing with death and grief.

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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 *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
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Compare characters

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 KWS Chart
10. Create a friendly letter.

Art Activities

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

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Synopsis

Ned Wallis knows he's forbidden to touch the rifle in his attic. But he can't resist sneaking out of the house just once. Before he realizes it, Ned takes a shot at a dark shadow.

When Ned returns home he's sure he sees a face looking down at him from the attic window. Who has seen and heard him?

Ned's guilt and fear only gets worse when one day, while helping an elderly neighbor, he spots a wild cat with one eye missing. Could this be the thing Ned shot at that night? How can Ned bring himself to reveal his painful secret? [The Publisher]

A complete synopsis and other helpful reviews can be found online at such sites as the following: <http://www.bookrags.com/studyguide-oneeyed-cat/#gsc.tab=0>

Author Biography

Paula Fox

Paula Fox was born in New York City in 1923. Paula's had an extremely traumatic childhood, being rejected by her mother shortly after her birth and left in a foundling home. Her parents were both writers who eventually divorced. Paula attended Columbia University and later worked as a teacher and tutor for troubled children. She didn't begin writing novels until she was in her 40s. Her first novel, published in 1966, was well-received although it sold poorly. During her writing career she published over 20 books for young readers including *Slave Dancer*, which received the Newbery medal. She was the grandmother of singer, Courtney Love. Paula Fox died in 2017 at the age of 93.



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Name:

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Chapter 1



Before you read the chapter:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The protagonist in *One-Eyed Cat* is eleven-year-old Ned Wallis. Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels that you have read or movies you’ve seen. What do you think makes for an especially interesting **protagonist**, one that you found very hard to forget?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

adversity	flourish	tremulous	parsonage
intrude	comical	penetrate	gargoyle

1. Pastor Billings and his family moved into the _____.
2. The petunias in Grandma's garden began to _____ when the rains came.
3. The children were frightened to see the _____ by the mansion's door.
4. “I did not mean to _____ on your business meeting,” Mrs. Argyle apologized.
5. On warm days, the high _____ voices of the singers could be heard.
6. Did the knight's sword _____ the armor of Prince John?
7. Not too many people deal with _____ as well as my father has.
8. Once you get to know Mrs. Smithers, you will see the _____ side of her personality.

Questions



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

2. Why did Ned's family live in their *big, ailing old house* instead of the parsonage?

3. What was your first impression of Mrs. Scallop? On what evidence did you base this impression?

4. Ned's mother's illness was _____.

5. Ned makes the point that the worst thing you could do to a person was not to say why you were angry with him. Why do you think this can be so upsetting to people?

6. Ned was born in the month of _____, in the year _____. His dad mentions that Ned will be eleven on Wednesday, so the year the story takes place must be _____. If Ned was alive today, he would be _____ years old.

7. From what you know of Ned's father, what two adjectives would you use to describe his personality?

--	--

8. Describe how the Kimball family was quite different than Ned's.

9. Why do you think Ned's mother especially enjoyed Hilary's visits?

Language Activities



A. A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is, ... *the high tremulous voices of the oldest singers - would float into the darkness of the barn like the thin, sweet aroma of meadow flowers..* 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 dove

--

b) a wolf's howl

--

c) Paula Fox loves to use similes. When you find another example record it below.

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 chapter of *One-Eyed Cat*.

Word	Anagram	Clue
first		Divisions.
aisles		Scottish girl.
Hudson		Pooches.
else		Fish.
table		A sheep talking.
stones		Beginnings.
stained		Rather than.

C. The Great Depression

This novel is set during the time of the Great Depression which occurred mainly during the 1930s. Using resources in your school library or on the Internet, research three important facts about the Great Depression.

1.	
2.	
3.	

D. A Poem Ned Might Have Written

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

*Mrs. Scallop keeps our house so tidy and neat,
I scarcely can tell where to place my feet.
"She's a dear old soul," so says my dad,
But I fear she's driving my mommy quite mad.*



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: AABB, 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 chapter 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: _____

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 our novel. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.



1	2
3	4
5	6