

Pax



By

Sara Pennypacker

A Novel Study
By Nat Reed

Pax

By Sara Pennypacker



Table of Contents

Suggestions and Expectations	3
List of Skills	4
Synopsis / Author Biography	5
Student Checklist	6
Reproducible Student Booklet	7
Answer Key	87

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.

Copyright © 2020 Nat Reed
Revisions Completed in 2025
All rights reserved by author.
Permission to copy for single classroom use only.
Electronic distribution limited to single classroom use only.
Not for public display.

Pax

By Sara Pennypacker



Suggestions and Expectations

Each chapter of the novel study focuses on several chapters of *Pax* and is comprised of these distinct sections:

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 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 foxes, courage, coming of age, persistence, controlling one's anger, the effects of war, personal growth, sacrifice.

Pax

By Sara Pennypacker

List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homophones
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Identification of root words
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *anagrams*
7. Listing compound words
8. Identifying parts of speech
9. Identify *personification*.
10. Identify *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. Complete a Plot Outline for a Sequel
5. Identify the climax of the novel.

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

Pax

By Sara Pennypacker



Synopsis

Pax and Peter have been inseparable ever since Peter rescued him as a kit. But one day, the unimaginable happens: Peter's dad enlists in the military and makes him return the fox to the wild. At his grandfather's house, three hundred miles away from home, Peter knows he isn't where he should be—with Pax. He strikes out on his own despite the encroaching war, spurred by love, loyalty, and grief, to be reunited with his fox. Meanwhile Pax, steadfastly waiting for his boy, embarks on adventures and discoveries of his own.

Pax is a wonderful choice for independent reading, sharing in the classroom, homeschooling, and book groups. [Courtesy of the Publisher]

Author Biography

Sara Pennypacker

When I was young, I loved reading, gardening, going to the beach, riding horses, getting presents, and ... cake. I loved books and I loved art - books and art didn't care that I was really tall or really shy. So I drew and painted and did mosaics and carved things (for a couple of years, I spent my whole allowance on bars of Ivory soap - great for carving!) and I read and made up stories. Even today, I am happiest reading, writing, or making art.



These days, I split my time between Florida and Massachusetts, where I feel lucky to be able to write every day. I enjoy other things as well, like: bird-watching, raising orchids, bothering my kids even though they are grown-ups now, and ... pie. I am the author of seventeen children's books, including the New York Times best-selling *Clementine* series; *Summer of the Gypsy Moths*; *Pierre in Love*; *Sparrow Girl*; and *The Amazing World of Stuart*. I have also contributed four books to the venerable *Flat Stanley* series. [Courtesy of the author's official website]

Pax



By Sara Pennypacker

Name: _____

Pax

By Sara Pennypacker

Chapters 1-3



Before you read this section:

This novel actually features two **protagonists**, Peter and his pet fox, Pax, which he raised from a kit. Think of one reason why having a fox as a principal character would be really great, and one possible reason why it might not be such a good idea.



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

surreptitious	inseparable	audible	shriveled
scudded	evacuation	electrified	camouflaged

1. Pax enjoyed the boy's company so much that soon they were _____.
2. With a _____ glance around the room, Cary carefully removed his wallet.
3. The crowd were _____ by the president's speech.
4. The butterfly was _____ by the leafy plant.
5. As the water rose, authorities concluded that _____ was necessary.
6. The peach was so old and _____, it was inedible.
7. The large cumulus clouds _____ across the summer sky.
8. John isn't a genius, he's merely an _____.

Questions



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

2. How would you describe the **mood** (or atmosphere) of the story in the first chapter?

3. Pax heard the word “NO” several times in Chapter One. What was Peter pleading with his father not to do?

4. Under these circumstances, you are probably able to have a more rational point of view than Peter and his father. Do you think the father was making a wise decision with regard to Pax? Why or why not?

5. The setting of Chapter Two is an abrupt change from Chapter One. Where is Peter at the beginning of this chapter and why is he there?

6. What was there about the photo that Peter found in the tin that made him tear it up?

7. How would you describe the attitude of Peter's grandfather about having Peter stay with him? What might have been the cause of this attitude?

8. Describe how Peter's father's rabbit trap went awry.

9. As you consider the plan Peter concocts, what might be two possible reasons why it might not be successful?

1	
2	

10. What danger had Pax not foreseen with regard to his plan to wait by the road?

11. What confident feeling made Pax remain where he was despite the dangers?

Language Activities



A. What Do You Know About Foxes?

An important character in this novel is the fox, Pax. Foxes are extremely interesting animals and have been the subject of folk tales and fables for countless generations (and for good reason). Did you know, for instance, that there are 37 species of fox, although only 12 are recognized as “true” foxes, as they belong to the genus “vulpes”? Did you know that they have a lot in common with cats – or that they generally make good parents? Using resources in your school library or on the Internet, research three additional fascinating facts about this amazing mammal.

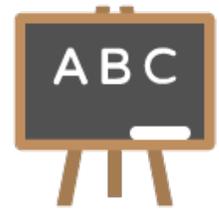
1	
2	
3	

B. Personification is giving human qualities to something that is not human. What human qualities is Pax given in this section?

Give an example of personification from the first three chapters.

As you continue to read through the novel be on the lookout for other examples of this literary device. If you should find one, come back to this question and enter it below.

C. Many authors enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Although alliteration is usually seen as a series of several words beginning with the same consonant (i.e. *Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers*) the following also serves as an example of this literary device: *After a hundred years of scrubbing by a dozen different families ...*



Using your imagination, create your own examples of **alliteration** from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of three words.

A fox barking.	
An old jalopy starting up.	
Your choice.	

D. 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:



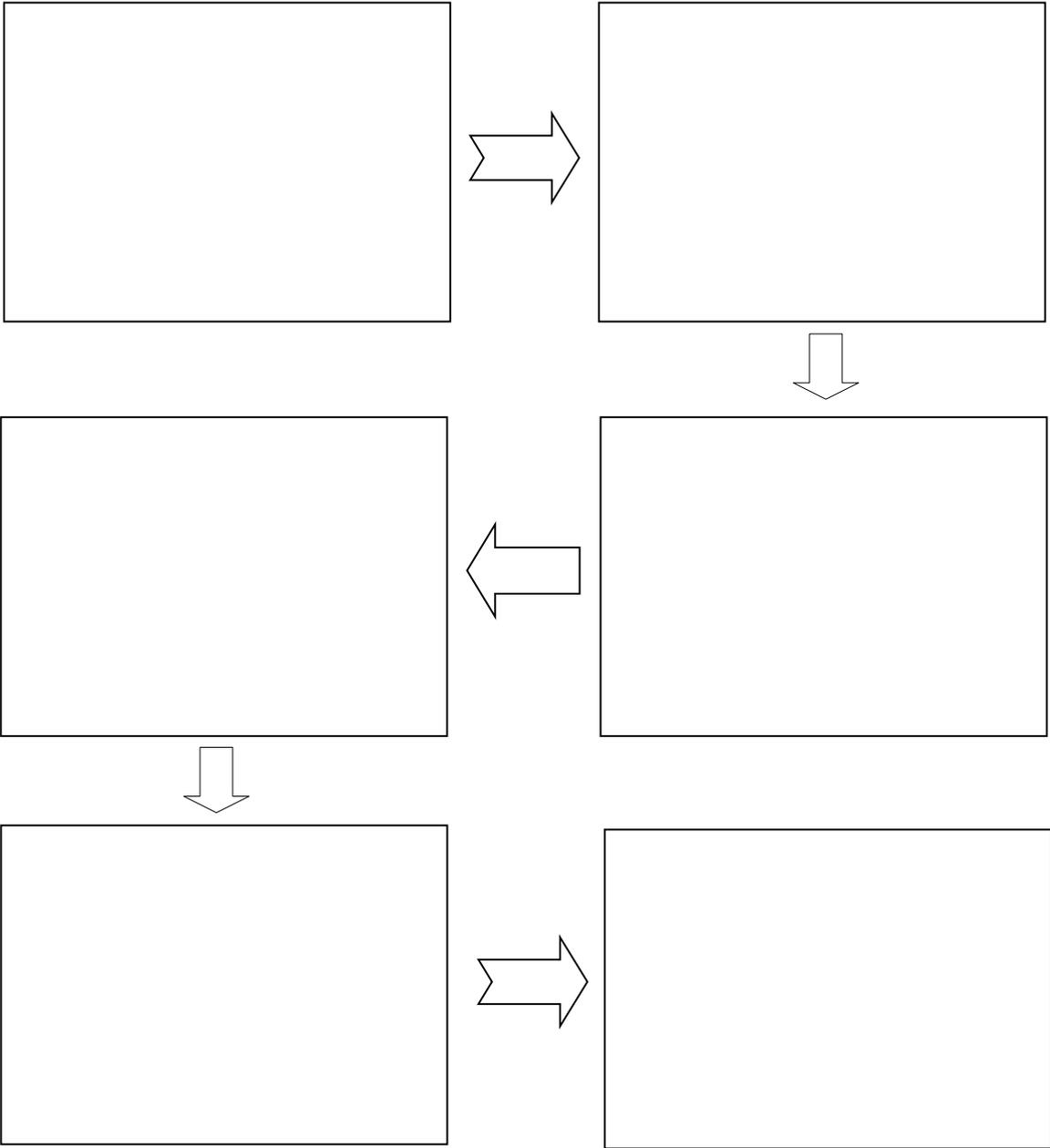
a) read the clue in the right-hand column.

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 table can be found in this section of **Pax**.

Word	Anagram	Clue
odors		Entranceways.
shake		Long-headed, elongated fish.
paws		Trade.
scent		Currency.
failed		At a distance.
charm		Walk in a military manner.
chose		Reverberations.

E. Sequence Chart

Choose what you consider to be the six most important events in this section. 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.



Extension Activity



A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words



Use the three boxes to describe and illustrate the beginning, middle and end of this section.

Beginning Picture:	Beginning:
Middle Picture:	Middle:
Concluding Picture:	Concluding: