

Pictures of Hollis Woods



By

Patricia Reilly Giff

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 two or three chapters of *Pictures of Hollis Woods* and is comprised of the following 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 artistic vision, creativity and the importance of family.

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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. Complete a Story Pyramid
5. Identify the climax of the novel.

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. 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

Hollis Woods is the place where a baby was abandoned – is the baby's name – is an artist – is now a twelve-year-old girl who's been in so many foster homes she can hardly remember them all. Hollis Woods is a mountain of trouble. She runs away even from the Regans, the one family who offers her a home.

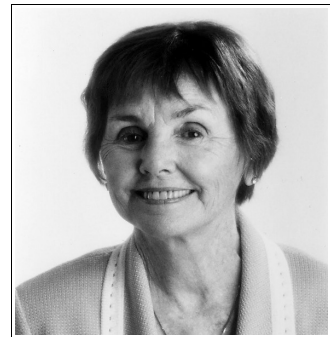
When Hollis is sent to Josie, an elderly artist who is quirky and affectionate, she wants to stay. But Josie is growing more forgetful every day. If Social Services finds out, they'll take Hollis away and move Josie into a home. Well, Hollis Woods won't let anyone separate them. She's escaped the system before; this time she's taking Josie with her.

Still, even as she plans her future with Josie, Hollis dreams of the past summer with the Regans, fixing each special moment of her days with them in pictures she'll never forget. [Courtesy of the Publisher]

Author Biography

Patricia Reilly Giff

Patricia Reilly Giff is the author of many beloved books for children including *The Gift of the Pirate Queen*; *All the Way Home*; *Nory Ryan's Song*; *Maggie's Door*; *Lily's Crossing* (Newbery Honor Book); and *Willow Run*. Patricia was born in Brooklyn, New York and spent twenty years as a reading teacher before beginning her career as a writer. Giff enjoys writing books about the special gifts of ordinary people, she explains, "All of my books are based in some way on my personal experiences, or the experiences of members of my family, or the stories kids would tell me in school." [Adapted from the Publisher]



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Student Checklist

Student Name _____

Assignment	Grade/Level	Comments

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Name: _____

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1st Picture - Chapter 1



Before you read this section:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The main character of *Pictures of Hollis Woods* is Hollis, a twelve-year-old girl who has been passed from foster home to foster home and has run away from most of them. 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 especially interesting **protagonist**?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

dashboard	flimsy	irritable	crouched
wreath	invented	mangy	compartment

1. Thomas Alva Edison _____ the phonograph and motion picture camera.
2. Henry _____ behind an old stump and waited for the soldier to pass.
3. “You’d better hope that the map is in the glove _____,” she said.
4. Are the lights of the _____ supposed to stay on if the car battery dies?
5. Grandpa Bojangles grows very _____ when breakfast is late.
6. All she was wearing when they found her was a _____ Halloween costume.
7. The children were followed home by a _____ mongrel dog.
8. The veterans placed a _____ at the cenotaph.

Questions



1. What is the **setting** of the story as Chapter One comes to a close?

2. Hollis's teacher, Mrs. Evans, was upset with her because she didn't see anything in Hollis's picture which started with the letter _____.

3. If you were Mrs. Evans, how would you have handled the situation when Hollis drew an X on the other student's picture.

4. Why do you think it was odd that Hollis ran away from the Regans?

5. Why do you think that Hollis doesn't want anyone to see into her soul?

6. Why did the mustard woman think that living with Josie Cahill might be a good thing for Hollis?

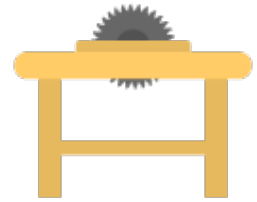
7. How did Josie try to encourage Hollis to stay with her for awhile?

Language Activities



A. 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 this section of *Pictures of Hollis Woods*.

Word	Anagram	Clue
read		Risk.
stairs		Long necked Indian lutes.
saint		A smooth, glossy fabric.
start		Small open pastries.
breath		One who enjoys the tub.
fingers		Edges
tools		A seat without back or arms.

Now find two additional words from the first chapter which have interesting anagrams to see if you can stump a classmate.

Word	Anagram	Clue

Good to Know ~ Foster Homes

In the state of New York there are approximately 20,000 children living in foster homes. This is actually a decrease from 1995 when the number was over 53,000. In the United States there are about 400,000 children living in foster homes. Almost half this number were homes of people unrelated to the children. The average length of time children spend in foster homes is 13 months.



B. A Poem About a Cat.

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 entitled *The Owl and the Pussy-Cat*, was written by the humorous poet, Edward Lear. It is a poem that Josie's pet cat, Henry, would have appreciated. Here is the first verse.

*The Owl and the Pussy-Cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat,
They took some honey, and plenty of money
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.*



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, 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 theme 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. Your poem must follow the format of a quatrain poem described above (and must rhyme).

Title: _____

C. Many authors enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here's one such example: from this section: ... *and then at the house half hidden in the trees.*



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

A blizzard.	
The sound of a police siren.	
Your choice.	

D. Personification is giving human qualities to something that is not human. The following is an example taken from this section: *Those hot dogs were a mean lump in the middle of my stomach.*



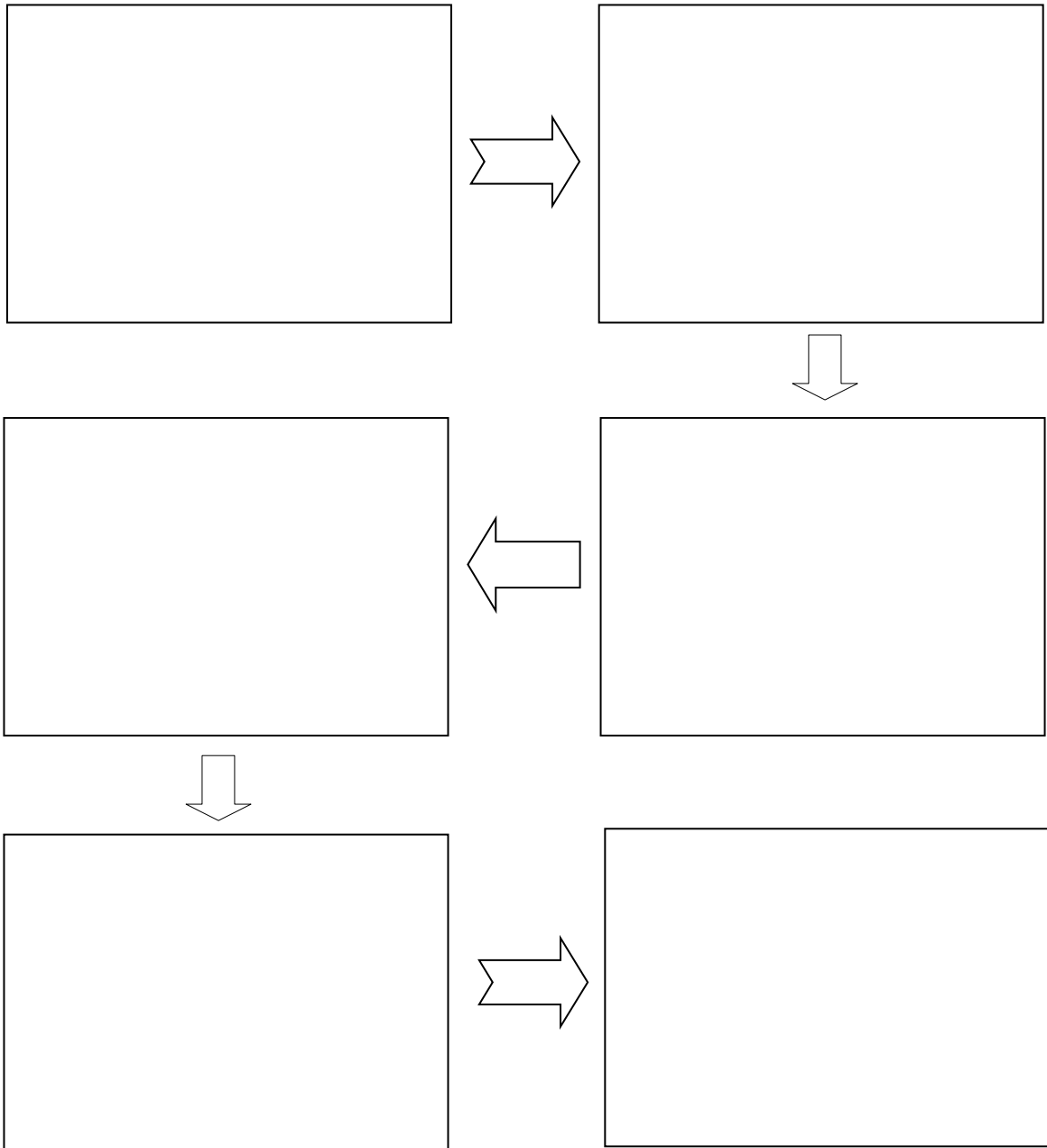
Describe how the hot dog is personified in this example.

Create your own example of personification.

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.

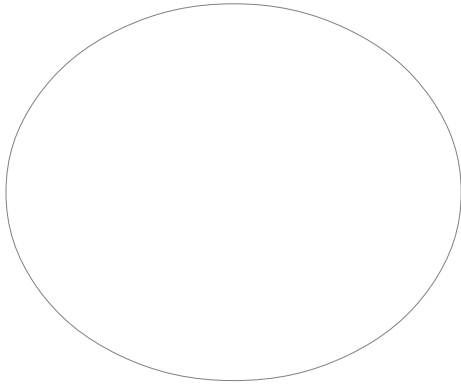
E. Sequence Chart

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.

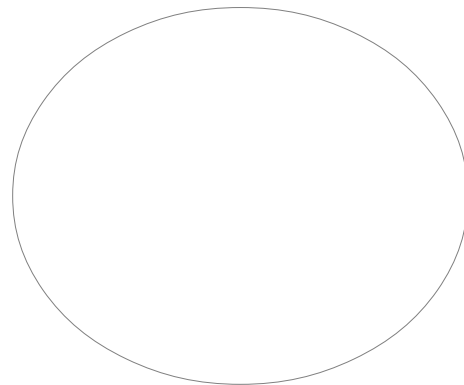


F. 5 Ws and an H.

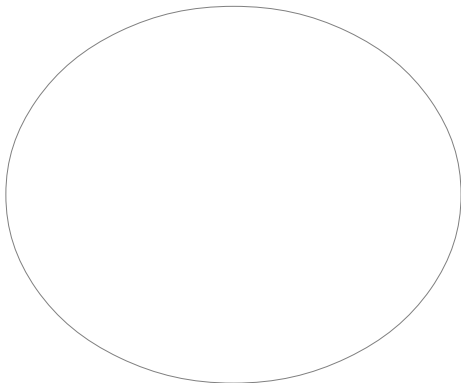
Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



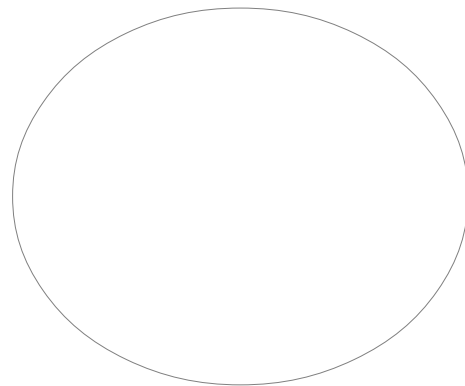
WHO?



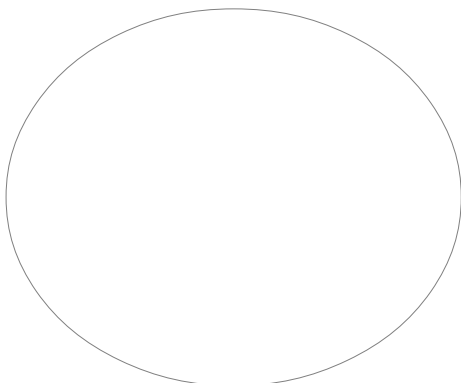
WHAT?



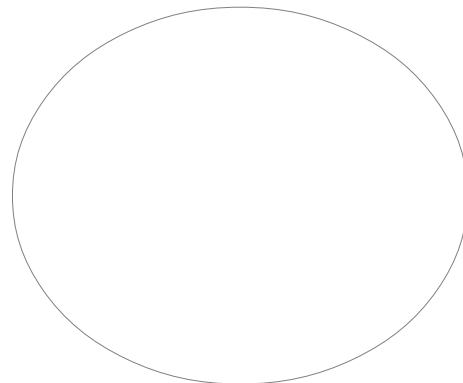
WHEN?



WHERE?



WHY?



HOW?

Extension Activity



Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A story-board can tell the story of only one scene - or the entire novel. Complete the story-board below illustrating the events described in this section of the novel. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.



1	2
3	4
5	6