

# Summerlost



By

Ally Condie

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](http://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 several chapters of *Summerlost* 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 the theater, grief and loss, autism, personal growth, accepting responsibilities, learning to deal with life's difficulties, coming of age, love and friendship.

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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. 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

It's the first real summer since the devastating accident that killed Cedar's father and younger brother, Ben. But now Cedar and what's left of her family are returning to the town of Iron Creek for the summer. They're just settling into their new house when a boy named Leo, dressed in costume, rides by on his bike. Intrigued, Cedar follows him to the renowned Summerlost theatre festival. Soon, she not only has a new friend in Leo and a job working concessions at the festival, she finds herself surrounded by mystery. The mystery of the tragic, too-short life of the Hollywood actress who haunts the halls of Summerlost. And the mystery of the strange gifts that keep appearing for Cedar. [Courtesy of [allycondie.com](http://allycondie.com)]

## Author Biography

Ally Condie

Ally Condie is the author of the MATCHED Trilogy, a #1 New York Times and international bestseller. MATCHED was chosen as one of YALSA's 2011 Teens' Top Ten and named as one of Publisher's Weekly's Best Children's Books of 2010. The sequels, CROSSED and REACHED, were also critically acclaimed and received starred reviews, and all three books are available in 30+ languages. She is also the founder of the non-profit WriteOut Foundation, which runs [riteoutcamp.org](http://riteoutcamp.org) – a writing camp for teens that allows students to work with published authors, experience the outdoors, and enjoy other activities (plays, costume balls, rock climbing, and more). Ally lives with her husband and four children outside of Salt Lake City, Utah. She loves reading, writing, running, and listening to her husband play guitar. [Biography courtesy of [allycondie.com](http://allycondie.com)]



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## Student Checklist

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment	Grade / Level	Comments

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ACT I. Chapters 1-6



### Before you read the chapter:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The main character of *Summerlost* is Cedar, who is spending the summer in Iron Creek, a small town in Utah. 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.

peasant	sherbert	fragile	varnish
beige	relentless	convenience	logic

1. The Black Hawk forwards were \_\_\_\_\_ during the first period.
2. “I fail to see the \_\_\_\_\_ behind the reasons you're giving,” the professor stated.
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ struggled down the lane with a great load of firewood on his back.
4. The \_\_\_\_\_ on the kitchen floor had begin to fade badly.
5. “We don't do everything in this family for your \_\_\_\_\_,” Mother informed us.
6. No one expected Monica to paint her room \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The workers were urged to be careful when moving the \_\_\_\_\_ urns.
8. What is your favorite flavor of \_\_\_\_\_?



# Questions



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


b. Think of one thing you would enjoy about living in this setting, and one thing you would probably not enjoy.

Enjoy	
Not so much	

2. From what recent tragedy was Cedar and her family still recovering?


3. What worry now concerned both Cedar and Miles?


4. Cedar's mom planned on living in Iron Creek in the summers and renting it out to local miners for the rest of the year. True or False

5. What was your impression of Ben from Cedar's reminiscences in these chapters?


6. Why did Cedar refer to the boy on the bike as a Nerd?




7. Why do you think Cedar didn't care what bedroom she got?


8. What did Cedar see in the tree outside her bedroom window?


9. What particular behavior of Cedar's worried her mother? To what did her mother attribute this behavior?


10. What decision did Cedar make at the end of Chapter 6? Predict what will come about as a result of this decision.


11. Moving to a new place can be a difficult experience. Suppose you moved in next door to Cedar and her family. From what you know of Cedar so far, what do you think would be one good thing about having her as a friend, and one thing which might not be so good.

# Language Activities



## A. Turkey Vultures

A turkey vulture makes a mysterious appearance in a tree outside Cedar's bedroom window. The turkey vulture is a common bird in many parts of North America. It may be seen by some as a repulsive bird for its unusual appearance and the fact that it is a scavenger. Investigate the turkey vulture further and record three interesting facts about it 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 six chapters of *Summerlost*.

Word	Anagram	Clue
waste		A result of hard work.
cedar		Sped.
start		Small pies.
drive		This person uses a springboard.
parent		Snare
things		Between the hours of dusk and dawn.
shingle		A popular language.

### C. A Quatrain Poem the Turkey Vulture.

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 Vulture's Wish*.

*When strolling through the desert waste,  
A shadow passed where I did tread.  
A turkey vulture looked my way,  
And wished that I was dead.*



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 six chapters of our novel.

<p><b>The Quatrain Poem</b></p> <p>Now create your own Quatrain Poem. Your poem must follow the format of a quatrain poem described above (and must rhyme).</p> <p><b>Title:</b> _____</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
--

**D. Personification** is giving human qualities to something that is not human. The following example is taken from Chapter 2 when Cedar's mom is speaking of their new house: *I want the heart and the bones to stay the same...*



Describe how the *heart and bones* is an example of personification.


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.** Chapter Five may contain an example of **foreshadowing**, which is defined *as a warning or indication of a future event*. It seems kind of odd that Cedar sees a turkey vulture sitting in a tree outside her window.

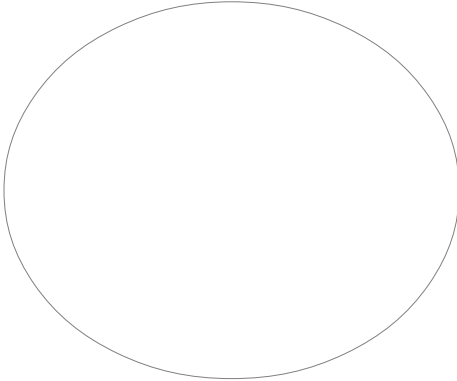


1. How might this particular bird's appearance be an example of foreshadowing?

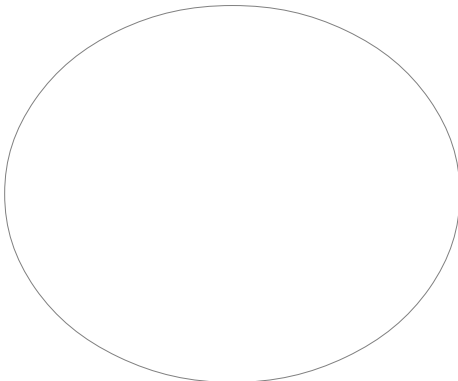

2. Why might the author have included the appearance of a vulture at this time?


**F. 5 Ws and an H.**

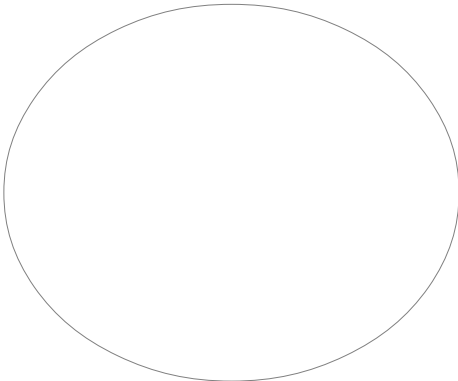
Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



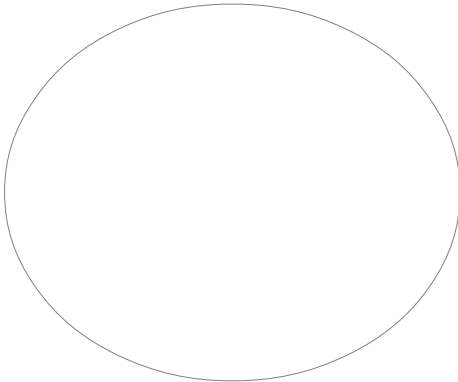
***WHO?***



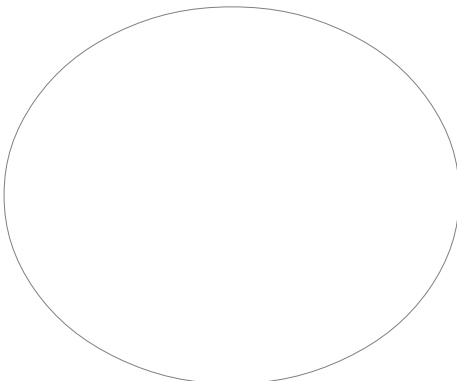
***WHAT?***



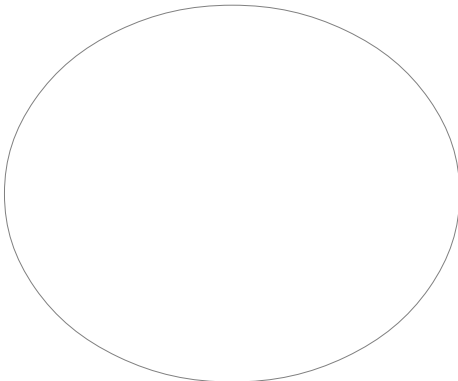
***WHEN?***



***WHERE?***



***WHY?***



***HOW?***

## G. My 02¢ About Chapters 1-6.

What I Liked Best:

I Didn't Like The Part:

I Didn't Like It Because:

## H. 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

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



1	2
3	4
5	6