

The BFG



By

Roald Dahl

A Novel Study
by Joel Michel Reed

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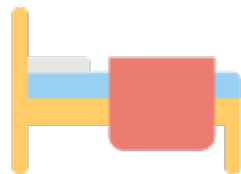


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About the author: Joel Reed has over 70 published novel studies and is the author of four novels. For information on his work and literature, please visit www.reednovelstudies.com

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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 three chapters of *The BFG* and is comprised of five of the following different 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 growing up, perseverance when facing difficult circumstances, (dysfunctional) families and family relationships, putting right to a wrong.

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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 *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. Complete Five W's Chart
4. Identify *cliffhangers*
5. Identify the climax of the novel.

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Relating personal experiences

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Write about personal feelings
6. Write a book review
7. Complete an Observation Sheet

Art Activities

1. Create a storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Create an information card
4. Design a cover for the novel
5. Create a comic strip
6. Casting a feature film

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Synopsis

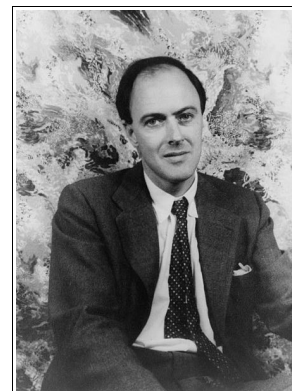
The BFG is no ordinary bone-crunching giant. He is far too nice and jumbly. It's lucky for Sophie that he is. Had she been carried off in the middle of the night by the Bloodbottler, the Fleshlumpeater, the Bonecruncher, or any of the other giants – rather than the BFG – she would have soon become breakfast. When Sophie hears that they are flush-bunking off to England to swollomp a few nice little chidders, she decides she must stop them once and for all. And The BFG is going to help her! (Courtesy of the publisher)

A complete synopsis can be found on Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/THE_BFG

Author Biography

Roald Dahl

Few authors of children's books have been as prolific or successful as **Roald Dahl** (1916-1990). His novels have been read and enjoyed by countless children the world over and include such classics as ***Charlie and the Chocolate Factory***, ***Danny the Champion of the World***, ***James and the Giant Peach*** and ***George's Marvelous Medicine***. Shortly before his death, the top five selling children's books in Great Britain were all authored by Dahl.



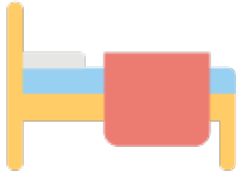
Born to Norwegian immigrants, Roald Dahl hailed from Llandaff, Wales. Despite losing his father when he was only four, Roald claimed to have had a most happy and eventful childhood. Although not a particularly good student, Roald did excel at athletics.

Dahl was married to the famous actress, **Patricia Neal**, for many years and they had five children together. The couple were, however, divorced after thirty years of marriage. Roald began his writing career as a short story writer, and didn't pen his first children's novel until 1961 – ***James and Giant Peach***. This was followed by several more bestsellers.

Roald Dahl passed away in 1990 at the age of 74. In Great Britain the anniversary of Dahl's birthday on 13 September has become widely celebrated as **Roald Dahl Day**.

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Student Checklist

Student Name _____

Assignment	Grade / Level	Comments

The BFG

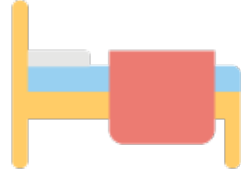


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Name:

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Chapters 1-3

The Witching Hour - Who? - The Snatch



Before you read the chapter:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. What do you think makes for an especially interesting **protagonist**?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

streets	underneath	smother	crossed
windows	devilish	suitcase	frightening

1. It was so tall its head was higher than the upstairs _____ of the houses.
2. There are many strange things that happen during witching hour, including Giants who wander the _____ once everyone is fast a sleep.
3. Sophie decided to hide _____ her blanket when she saw the Giant.
4. The giant's legs were so long, he _____ the river in one stride.
5. When she gazed up at the enormous monster, he had a _____ look about him.

- 6. When I told my sister about the giants roaming the streets, she said that the very idea of seeing such ghastly creatures would be utterly _____.
- 7. The giant kept several items packed safely away in his _____.
- 8. It was very fortunate that the giants massive hand didn't _____ Sophie.

Questions



1. Briefly describe the **setting** of the story as Chapter One begins.

2. After reading the first three chapters, what four adjectives do you think would best describe Sophie's personality?

3. Describe what is meant by the term 'The Witching Hour'?

4. When Sophie first spots The BFG through her window walking up the street, what was the Giant doing that she found so peculiar?

5. Sophie watched The BFG pour something into an object resembling a musical instrument. Which particular musical instrument did this object resemble?

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6. The author describes the Giant with a number of imaginative terms. Name at least four of the terms used to describe the physical characteristics of the giant.

Language Activity

A. The author seems to enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. An example from this chapter is: "... **g**rouching, **g**rouching, **g**rumbling, **g**ripping about something or other."



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

The bark of a dog.	
The sound of a car or truck driving down the street.	
Waves crashing in the ocean.	

B. A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is “. . . *The Giant was sprinting down the High Street. He was running so fast his black cloak was streaming out behind him like the wings of a bird.*”



What two things are being compared in this example?

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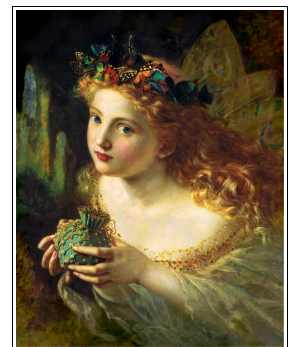
Invent your own **similes** comparing the following items with something from your own imagination:

a) a car speeding away from a traffic light

b) a man kicking a soccer ball

C. Simply Myth-defying!!

There are many people who believe that giants are not just a myth, but a part of genuine history. Your task is to make it possible for your classroom colleagues to become more familiar with another famous 'mythical creature' that's been taught throughout history which may contain an element of truth. [With your teacher's approval you may choose an alternative mythical creature for this assignment, such as a dragon or unicorn.]



Create an information card featuring one of these creatures. Your card will resemble a sports card (i.e. baseball, hockey...) The front of the card will feature an appropriate picture and the back at least four fascinating facts you have researched from sources in your school library or on the Internet.

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 3 chapters of *The BFG*. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.

1	2
3	4
5	6