

The Dog Who Wouldn't Be



By

Farley Mowat

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed

The Dog Who Wouldn't Be

By *Farley Mowat*



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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 or two chapters of *The Dog Who Wouldn't Be* 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 dogs and pets, wildlife, friendship, personal growth and responsibility.

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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

This is the story about a dog and his boy. The boy was the author and the dog was Mutt.

Clearly, Mutt believed that he could do better than just be a dog. Dogs weren't supposed to climb trees or ladders, but Mutt didn't care about that. And dogs weren't supposed to ride in the family's open car wearing goggles either, but Mutt liked wearing them and even knew how to adjust them with a careful paw.

Whether he was fighting off other dogs by lying on his back and bicycling in the air as hard as he could, or tangling with owls, geese, or cows, or ducks, or even skunks, Mutt was always full of surprises.

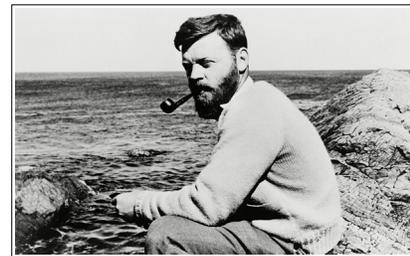
Farley's mother originally bought Mutt as a puppy for only four cents. The adventures that Mutt brought to Farley, his mother and father and all of their friends, made him the biggest bargain of all time. His true story makes this a wonderful and very funny book for readers of all ages. [The Publisher]

The Dog Who Wouldn't Be won the Hans Christian Anderson Award in 1962.

Author Biography

Farley Mowat

Farley Mowat was born in Belleville, Ontario, Canada in 1921. In the 1930s his family moved to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Farley later attended the University of Toronto and then was an officer in the Canadian army during World War II. His first book, *The People of the Deer*, a book about the Inuit people, was published in 1952 and made him a national and controversial figure. During his lifetime Farley's books have sold more than 17 million copies and have been translated into 52 languages. He died in 2014.



The Dog Who Wouldn't Be



By Farley Mowat

Name:

The Dog Who Wouldn't Be

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Chapter 1



Before you read the chapter:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The main character of *The Dog Who Wouldn't Be* is Mutt, an orphaned dog that the Mowat family purchased for 04¢. Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels you have read. What do you think makes for an especially interesting **protagonist**?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

desecrate	acquiesce	ponderous	indispensable
precarious	anticipation	ingenious	bourgeois

1. The slow, top-heavy trailer made its _____ way across the prairie.
2. Jeremy's was perched in a most _____ position high atop the flagpole.
3. Better to give them a simple _____ name like *Sport* or *Nipper*.
4. After arguing with her daughter for several long minutes, Mrs. Plumley decided to _____ and give in to her demands.
5. The complicated battery-powered engine that my uncle built was quite _____.
6. What kind of hoodlums would _____ a graveyard?
7. The children were wild with _____ as Halloween approached.
8. We found that a clear set of directions was _____ when assembling the robot.

Questions



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

2. The family car was a Model A Ford convertible which the family called _____.

3. Describe how the family came to acquire Mutt.

4. What ulterior motive did Mrs. Mowat have for buying the dog?

5. What was unusual about the trailer that Mr. Mowat built for their move to Saskatchewan?

6. Figure it out: The Mowats moved from Richmond Hill, Ontario to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, a journey of approximately 2,950 km (or 1833 miles). If they could travel an average of 400 km (or 249 miles) per day, on which day of their trip would they arrive at their destination? Show your work below.

7. Mr. Mowat told his friends that Mutt was a one of a kind (in the west), imported Prince Albert retriever.

True or False

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 the first chapter of *The Dog Who Wouldn't Be*.

Word	Anagram	Clue
arid		A sudden attack.
cents		Odor.
pains		A country in Europe.
weather		Festoon; decorate.
wrong		A homophone of <i>groan</i> .
lamps		A sacred song or hymn.
tales		Loot; pilfer.

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 ~ The Model A Ford

The Model A Ford was made from 1927 to 1932. During this time the Ford Motor Company sold almost 5 million of the Model A in all body styles. Prices ranged from \$385 for a *Roadster* to \$1400 for the top-of-the-line *Town Car*. That was a lot of money for the time considering a farmer earned about \$300/year.



B. A Poem About a Dog.

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 Dog***, was written by the humorous poet, Ogden Nash.

*The truth I do not stretch or shove
When I state that the dog is full of love.
I've also found, by actual test,
A wet dog is the lovingest.*



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: 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 an example from Chapter One: ... *my father determined to test those tales.*



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

The baying of a hound dog.	
The screech of tires.	
Your choice.	

D. Personification is giving human qualities to something that is not human. The following is an example taken from Chapter One: *A head wind would force Eardlie into second gear and even then he would have to strain and boil furiously to keep headway on his balky charge.*

Describe how the car (Eardlie) 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. 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.



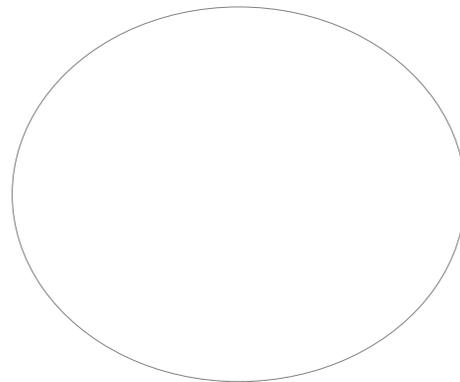
WHO?



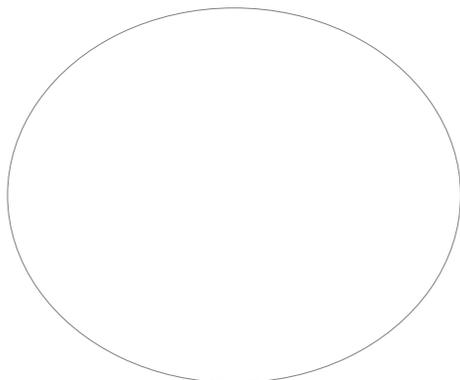
WHAT?



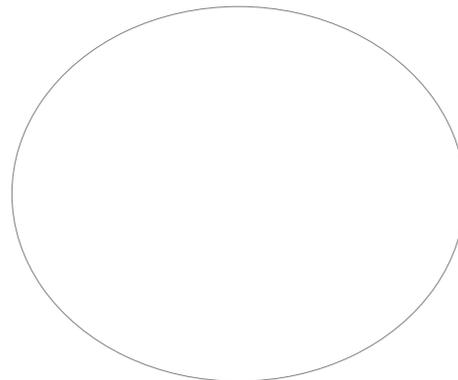
WHEN?



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 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