

The Girl Who Drank The Moon



By

Kelly Barnhill

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 four chapters of *The Girl Who Drank the Moon* 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 witches, dragons and magic, courage and persistence, memories, sorrow, loyalty 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 *anagrams*
7. Listing compound words
8. Identifying parts of speech
9. Identify *personification*.
10. 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 Plot Outline
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 about 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

Every year, the people of the Protectorate leave a baby as an offering to the witch who lives in the forest. They hope this sacrifice will keep her from terrorizing their town. But the witch in the forest, Xan, is kind and gentle. She shares her home with a wise Swamp Monster named Glerk and a Perfectly Tiny Dragon, Fyrian. Xan rescues the abandoned children and delivers them to welcoming families on the other side of the forest, nourishing the babies with starlight on the journey.

One year, Xan accidentally feeds a baby moonlight instead of starlight, filling the ordinary child with extraordinary magic. Xan decides she must raise this enmagicked girl, whom she calls Luna, as her own. To keep young Luna safe from her own unwieldy power, Xan locks her magic deep inside her. When Luna approaches her thirteenth birthday, her magic begins to emerge on schedule—but Xan is far away. Meanwhile, a young man from the Protectorate is determined to free his people by killing the witch. Soon, it is up to Luna to protect those who have protected her—even if it means the end of the loving, safe world she’s always known. [Courtesy of *Algonquin Young Readers*]

Author Biography

Kelly Barnhill

Kelly Barnhill lives in Minnesota with her husband and three children. She is the author of four novels, most recently, *The Girl Who Drank the Moon*, winner of the Newbery Medal. *The Witch’s Boy* received four starred reviews and was a finalist for the Minnesota Book Awards. Kelly Barnhill has been awarded writing fellowships from the Jerome Foundation, the Minnesota State Arts Board, and the McKnight Foundation.



Visit her online at <https://kellybarnhill.wordpress.com>

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Student Checklist

Student Name _____

Assignment	Grade / Level	Comments

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Name: _____

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Chapters 1-4



Before you read the chapter:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The main character of *The Girl Who Drank the Moon* is Luna, who begins the story as an enmagicked baby whose custodian is an ancient witch. It is very important for the main character of a story to be appealing in some way, and be able to hold the reader's interest. What is one book (or movie) that you have read or seen which features an unforgettable protagonist? What was it about this character that made him/her so memorable?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

somber	inexplicable	bereavement	precedent
implacable	decrepit	perpetrated	bulbous

1. The old woman's _____ lasted seven years following her husband's death.
2. Who do you think it was who first _____ that ugly rumor?
3. Everyone was in a most _____ mood after learning of the mining disaster.
4. Allowing Martie to go to the party will set a dangerous _____.
5. Despite spilling the coffee all over himself, Roger remained completely _____.
6. Old Mister Cooper was the most _____ person the children had ever seen.
7. You will recognize the mayor by his red, _____ nose.
8. How he escaped the fire unscathed is quite _____.

Questions



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

2. Between what two geographical features was the City of Sorrows sandwiched? From which of these two did most of the community's inhabitants derive their income?

3. The Grand Elder's nephew was named _____, who was _____ years old. His official position was _____.

4. What traumatic event occurred on the Day of Sacrifice? How was this year different than past Days of Sacrifice?

5. Where was the baby's mother removed to? Who would be in charge of the woman's care from then on?

6. What facts are revealed in Chapter Two which prove that the Elders are quite evil?

7. Match the character on the left with the correct description.

a.	Glerk
b.	Xan
c.	Gherland
d.	Raspin
e.	Antain
f.	Fyrian
g.	Luna

1.	Decrepit
2.	Enmagicked.
3.	Perfectly Tiny Dragon.
4.	Trainee.
5.	Monster.
6.	Grand.
7.	Witch.

8. Describe your impression of Xan (both appearance and personality). Do you think you would enjoy having her for a neighbor? Why or why not?

9. Record three adjectives or short phrases to describe the personalities of Glerk and Fyrian.

Glerk			
Fyrian			

10. Why did Xan take the babies which were left in the forest? Where did she take them?

11. Describe how the child had become enmagicked. Why might it have been possible tha Xan allowed this to happen on purpose?

Language Activities



A. Personification is giving human qualities to something that is not human. The following is an example from Chapter Three: ... *the facts of the matter were as clear as the moon sitting brightly on the tops of the trees.*

Describe how the moon is personified in this sentence.

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.

B. Many authors enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here is such an example from Chapter One: ... *slid the baby back into the sling...*

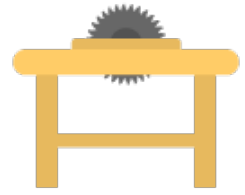


Using your imagination, create your own examples of **alliteration** from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of three words.

The light of a full moon.	
A witch.	
Your choice.	

C. 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 Girl Who Drank the Moon*.

Word	Anagram	Clue
earth		One who despises.
unable		A cloud of dust and gas in outer space.
forest		Not as rigid.
castle		Part of the sole of an athlete's shoe.
dream		___ and dangerous.
slower		Moves in a downward direction.
smile		Fruit.

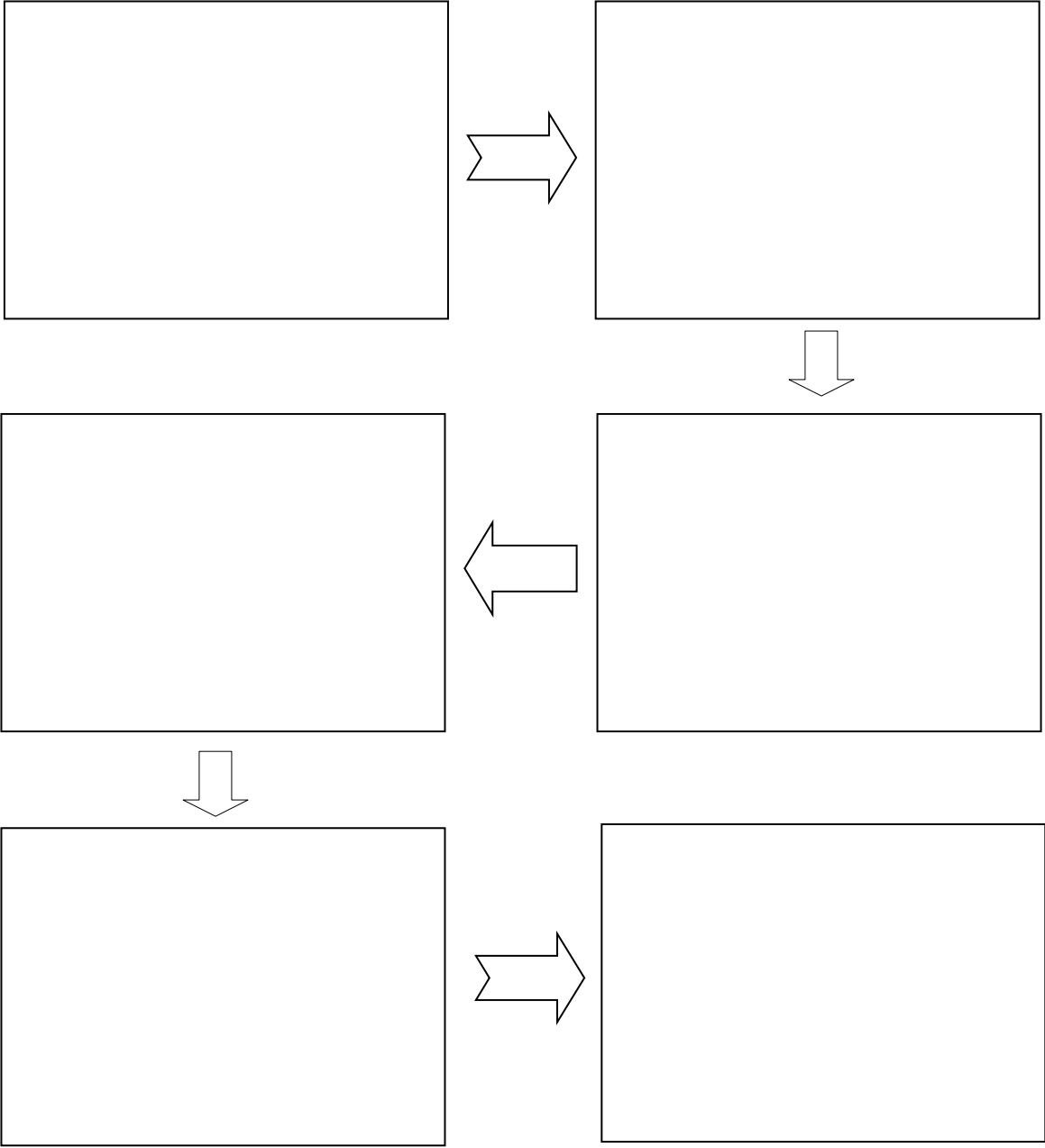
D. Cliffhanger

Chapter Two contains an important literary device called a **cliffhanger**. A cliffhanger usually occurs at the end of a chapter when the author leaves the reader in suspense. How is this true in Chapter Two? Why do you think the author ended the chapter this way?



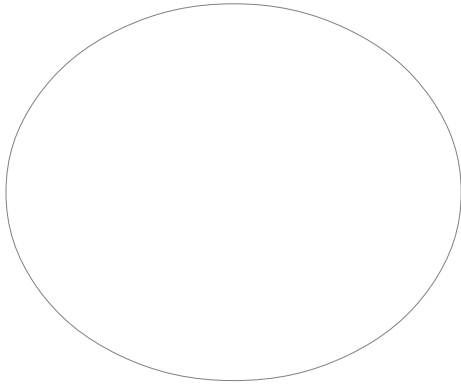
E. Sequence Chart

Choose what you consider to be the six most important events in these chapters. 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.

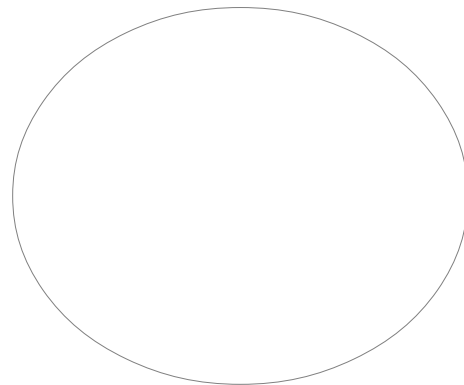


F. 5 Ws and an H.

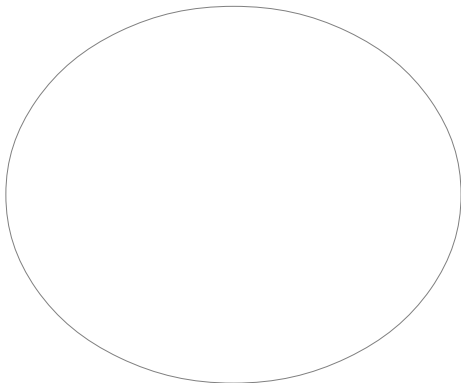
Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



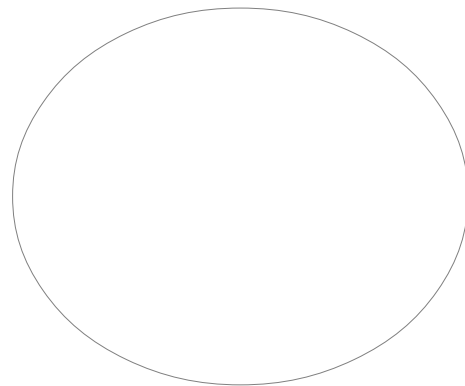
WHO?



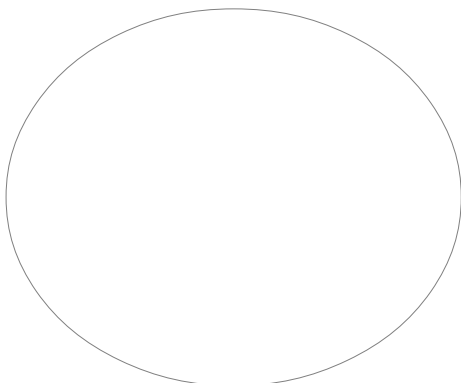
WHAT?



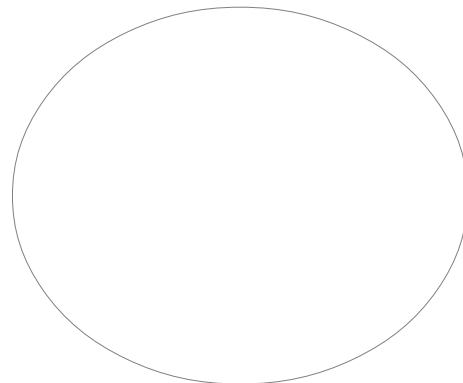
WHEN?



WHERE?



WHY?



HOW?

Extension Activity



A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words



Use the three boxes to describe and illustrate the beginning, middle and end of the 2nd chapter.

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