

# The Green Ember



By

S.D. Smith

A Novel Study  
by Nat and Joel 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 four chapters of ***The Green Ember*** and is comprised of these 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 redemption, self-sacrifice, honor and loyalty, personal growth, perseverance, accepting responsibilities, learning to accept life's difficulties, coming of age, and dealing with loss.

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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

Heather and Picket are extraordinary rabbits with ordinary lives until calamitous events overtake them, spilling them into a cauldron of misadventures. They discover that their own story is bound up in the tumult threatening to overwhelm the wider world.

Kings fall and kingdoms totter. Tyrants ascend and terrors threaten. Betrayal beckons, and loyalty is a broken road with peril around every bend.

Where will Heather and Picket land? How will they make their stand?  
(Courtesy of [www.goodreads.com](http://www.goodreads.com))

For a more complete synopsis you may wish to check out the following website:  
<https://www.pluggedin.com/book-reviews/green-ember/>

## Author Biography

S. D. Smith

S. D. Smith is the author of The Green Ember Series, a million-selling adventure saga featuring heroic #Rabbits With Swords. *The Green Ember* spent time as the number one best-selling audiobook in the world on Audible. His newest novel, co-authored with his sixteen-year-old son, is a thrilling fantasy called *Jack Zulu and the Waylander's Key*. Smith's stories are captivating readers across the globe who are hungry for "new stories with an old soul." Smith is a founder and owner of Story Warren, a publishing, events, and IP development house based in rural West Virginia. Story Warren exists to serve families as "allies in imagination." S. D. Smith lives in Grandview, West Virginia with his wife and four kids. (Courtesy of [www.sdsmith.com](http://www.sdsmith.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 chapters:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. There are actually two main characters in *The Green Ember*, a courageous young rabbit, Heather, and her younger brother, Picket. Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels you have read. What do you think makes for an interesting **protagonist**?




### Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

invariably	intricate	ingredients	distinguish	diplomacy
tacking	sophisticated	calamitous	insistent	vigilantly

1. She saw it before he did, but he was closer, \_\_\_\_\_ back and forth.
2. The forest was \_\_\_\_\_ protected by the army of Jupiter Goodson.
3. They sound awfully \_\_\_\_\_ and clever out that way.
4. The carnation bow was an \_\_\_\_\_ weave of one long ribbon.
5. I have told you of the escape from the Coast and the \_\_\_\_\_ sea passage.
6. The bow she \_\_\_\_\_ wore over one ear was coming undone.
7. Her mother was \_\_\_\_\_ that the girls all have a cool drink of water.
8. King Jupiter bent all his energies to \_\_\_\_\_, to avoiding any wars that could be prevented.
9. This name came to \_\_\_\_\_ him from his father.
10. She was unaware that she held the \_\_\_\_\_ for a game that would give them endless hours of fun.

## 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 the setting described in the first four chapters, and one thing you would not enjoy.

Enjoy	
Not so much	

2. Describe briefly the Starseek game that Heather created.


3. Describe how Chapter One ends with a cliffhanger.


4. Heather's mother considered the people of the east to be country bumpkins. True or False

5. Why do you think that Father's biggest regret were those moments when he said to Fear, "You are my master."


6. Give one example as to why King Jupiter was considered such a great monarch.


7. Why do you think many of the songs that Heather's parents sang were sad?


8. Why do you think the author makes their visiting guest so mysterious? Why do you think she stopped by?


9. What did Heather's parents often tell the children to do when they wanted to have a serious discussion with another adult?


10. How were the last words spoken by the mysterious visitor encouraging to Heather?


## Language Activities



### A. The Rabbit

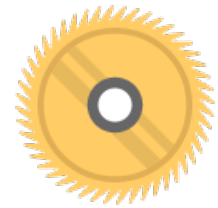
There are 29 species of long-eared mammals belonging to the family Leporidae, excluding hares. They are ground-dwellers living in environments ranging from deserts to tropical forests and wetlands. Investigate the rabbit further and record three interesting facts about it below.



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 four chapters of *The Green Ember*.

Word	Anagram	Clue
stick		Regular short, sharp sounds.
hangs		Can be done with one's teeth.
agreed		Prepared or adjusted.
stone		You might take these in class.
smiled		Taken down the garden path.
maple		Lots and lots.
teased		Not standing or lying down.

**C.** A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is: *Its limbs stretched out like the brittle arms of a lanky monster.*

What is being compared in this example?

--	--

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

a) Two rabbits hopping across a meadow.


b) Diving into a thicket.


c) your choice


**D.** Chapter Four contains an example of an important literary device called **foreshadowing**. Foreshadowing is defined as *a warning or indication of a future event*. Read the last few sentences of Chapter Four and then explain why this might just be an example of foreshadowing.




## E. A Quatrain Poem Celebrating Rabbits.

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, *Percy the Rabbit*.

*Percy is my bunny,  
I got him from the zoo.  
He mopes around all day because  
He don't know what to do.*



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 four chapters 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: \_\_\_\_\_


**F. Personification** is giving human qualities to something that is not human. The following example is taken from Chapter 2: *The singed fingers of the outmost branches pawed at them.*

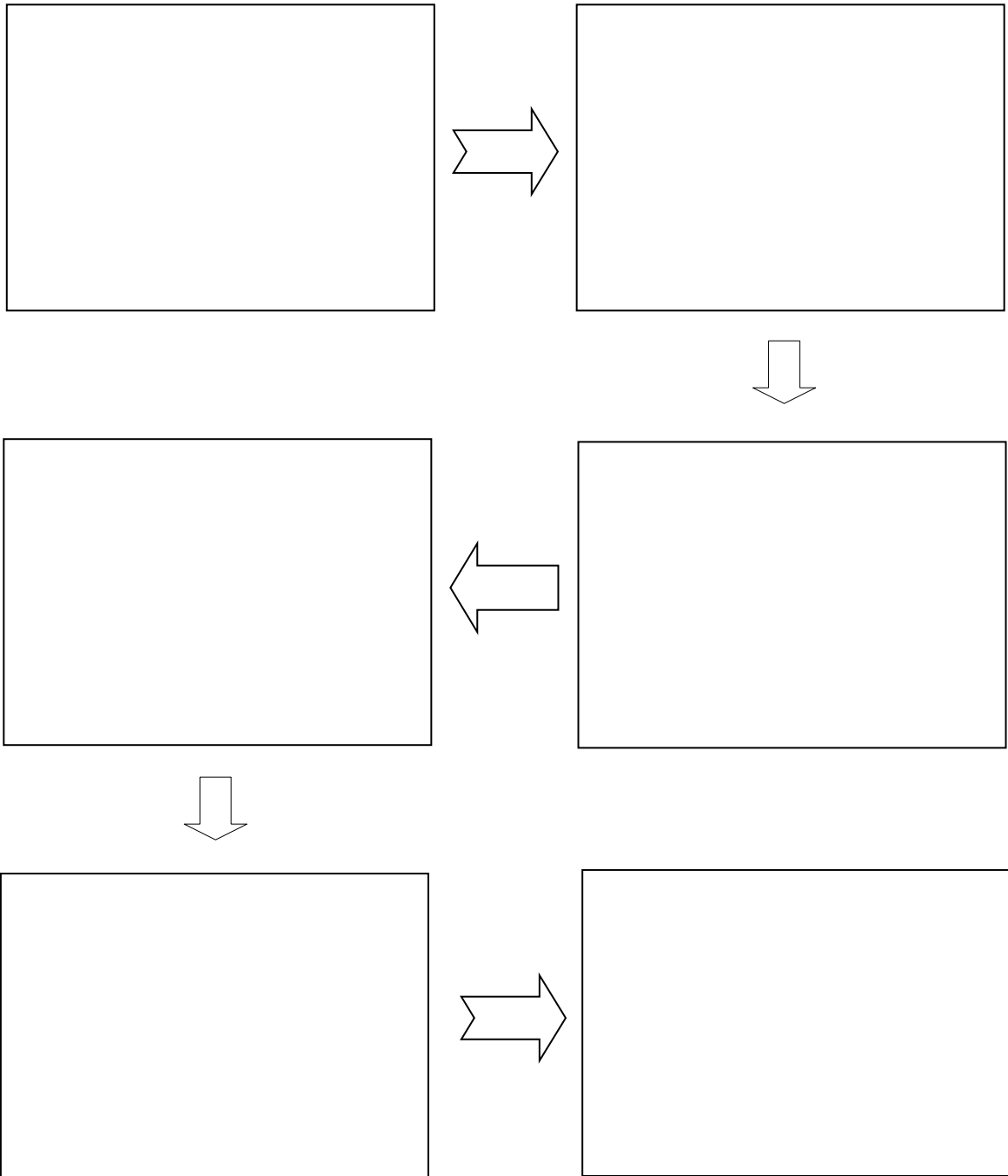
Describe how the branches are personified in this example.


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.

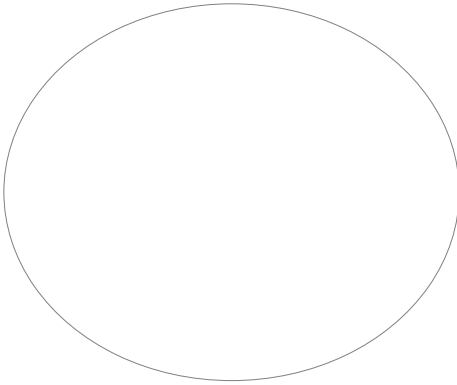

## G. Sequence Chart

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.

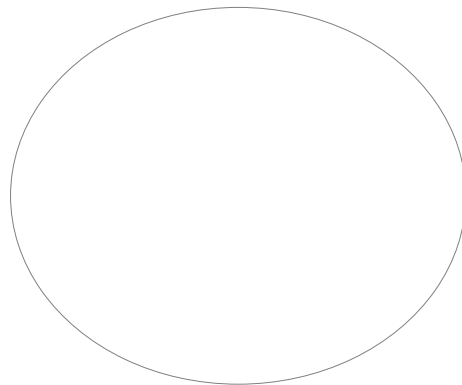


## H. 5 Ws and an H.

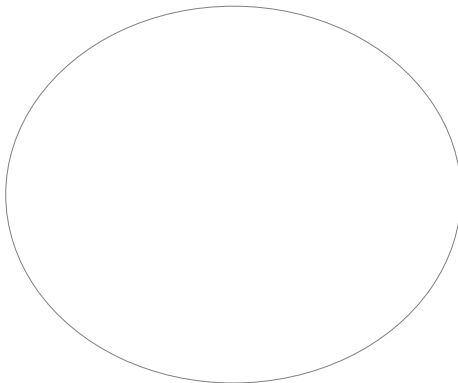
Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



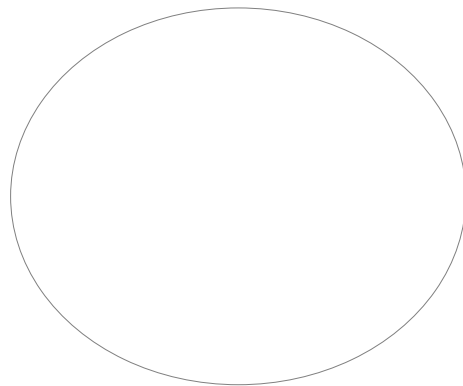
**WHO?**



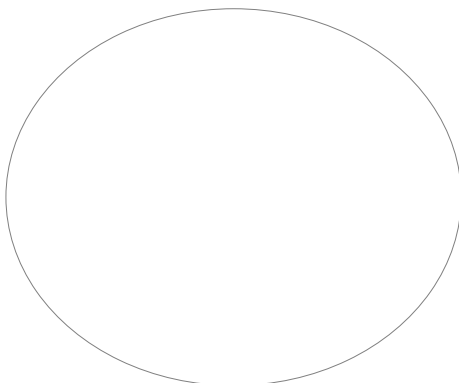
**WHAT?**



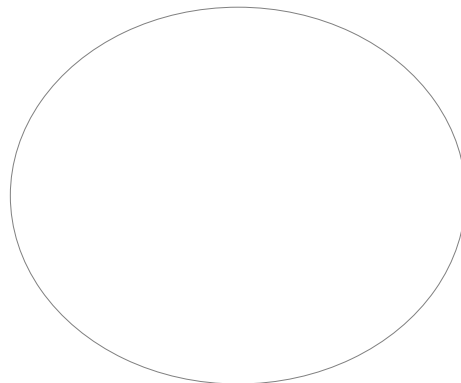
**WHEN?**



**WHERE?**



**WHY?**



**HOW?**

## Extension Activity



### Storyboard

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



1	2
3	4
5	6