

# The Princess and The Goblin



By

George MacDonald

A Novel Study  
by Joel Michel Reed

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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 Princess and The Goblin* 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 in this unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to the following:

- 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 family, courage and perseverance, the destructive power of vengeance, faith, and bravery.

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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. Identify/create *similes*
13. 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. Create a poem.
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a book review
8. Complete an Observation Sheet
9. Write a short story
10. Complete a KWS Chart

### Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
4. Design a cover for the novel
5. Create a comic strip

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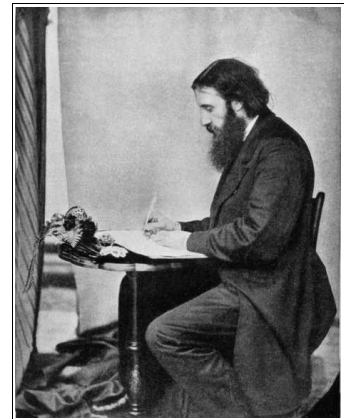
## Synopsis

Princess Irene has discovered a secret winding stairway in the castle. It leads to a bewildering labyrinth of unknown passages with closed doors – and a further stairway. What lies at the top? Meanwhile, the miner's son Curdie overhears a fiendish plot by the goblins that live below the mountain, But with the help of Irene's magic ring, can they stop the goblins' terrifying plans in time? (The Publisher – Puffin Classics)

A complete synopsis and other helpful reviews can be found on the following website:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Princess\\_and\\_the\\_Goblin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Princess_and_the_Goblin)

### Author Biography George MacDonald

**George MacDonald** (10 December 1824 – 18 September 1905) was a Scottish author, poet, and Christian minister. He was a pioneering figure in the field of fantasy literature and the mentor of fellow writer Lewis Carroll. His writings have been cited as a major literary influence by many notable authors including **W.H. Auden**, **C.S. Lewis**, **J.R.R. Tolkien**, **Walter de la Mare**, **E. Nesbit** and **Madeline L'Engle**. C. S. Lewis wrote that he regarded MacDonald as his "master": "Picking up a copy of *Phantastes* one day at a train-station bookstall, I began to read. A few hours later," said Lewis, "I knew that I had crossed a great frontier." G.K. Chesterton cited *The Princess and The Goblin* as a book that had "made a difference to my whole existence".



Even **Mark Twain**, who initially disliked MacDonald, became friends with him, and there is some evidence that Twain was influenced by MacDonald. Christian author **Oswald Chambers** wrote in *Christian Disciplines*, vol. 1, that "it is a striking indication of the trend and shallowness of the modern reading public that George MacDonald's books have been so neglected". Courtesy of Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_MacDonald](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_MacDonald)

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## Student Checklist

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

Assignment	Grade / Level	Comments

# The Princess and The Goblin



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

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## Chapters 1-4



### Before you read the chapter:

Write a brief summary about what you believe the plot-line of our novel will be about.




### Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

distance	misshapen	brushed	valleys	miserable
passage	delighted	subterranean	humming	beneath

1. There was once a little princess whose father was king over a great country full of mountains and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Now in these \_\_\_\_\_ caverns lived a strange race of beings, called by some *gnomes*, by some *kobolds*, by some *goblins*.
3. And as they grew \_\_\_\_\_ in body they had grown in knowledge and cleverness, and now were able to do things no mortal could see the possibility of.
4. There she found the landing was the end of a long \_\_\_\_\_.
5. She ran for some \_\_\_\_\_, turned several times, and then began to be afraid.



6. After a good cry, she got up, and \_\_\_\_\_ the dust from her frock.
7. But as she stood, she began to hear a curious \_\_\_\_\_ sound.
8. 'I will some day, but now you must go back, or nursie will be \_\_\_\_\_ about you. I dare say she's looking for you everywhere.'

## Questions



1. Describe the **setting** of the story as Chapter One begins.


2. Why did the goblins disappear into the depths of the caverns?


- b. How did this change the behaviour of the goblins?


3. Briefly describe what happened when Princess Irene decided to leave her room.


4. What did Princess Irene say to Lootie that upset her so much?


## Language Activities



**A.** The author seems to enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here's an example of an alliteration: “. . . **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 sound of goblins mining.	
The sounds of a forest.	
One from your own imagination.	

**B.** Find nine singular nouns in Chapters 1-4 and write the plural of each noun in the columns below. Careful – you may wish to consult a dictionary for some of these words.

Singular Noun	Plural Noun
Child	Children

**C.** Find ten interesting words found in Chapters 1-4 that begin with the letter 'P' and have no less than seven characters. Once you have completed your list, arrange them in alphabetical order on the right hand side.

Words	Alphabetical Order

**D. Foreshadowing** is a literary device used by authors to provide clues for the reader so they are able to predict what might occur *later* in the story. How might the following statement from Chapter Three be considered an example of this literary device: *"About this spinning of hers I will tell you more another time. Guess what she was spinning."*