

The Sisters Grimm



By

Michael Buckley

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 79 page curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on one chapter of *The Sisters Grimm* and is comprised of these 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 and **topics** which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include fairy tales and fairy tale characters, storybook characters, perseverance in the face of difficulty, the importance of family and a sense of belonging.

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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. 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. Identification of a *cliffhanger*

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. Identify the climax of the novel
4. Five W's Chart

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Protagonists/Antagonists
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Comparing two Characters

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Write a letter to a friend
4. Complete an Observation Chart
5. Conduct an interview
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a book review
8. Complete a KWS Chart

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Design an Information Card

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Synopsis

For Sabrina and Daphne Grimm, life hasn't been a fairy tale. After the mysterious disappearance of their parents, the sisters are sent to live with their grandmother – a woman they believed was dead! Granny Relda reveals that the girls have two famous ancestors, the Brothers Grimm, whose classic book of fairy tales is actually a collection of case files of magical mischief. Now the girls must take on the family responsibility of being fairy-tale detectives. Their first case? A roller-coaster ride of an adventure to stop a giant from destroying their new hometown. [The Publisher]

Check out the clips of the movie *The Sisters Grimm* on [YouTube](#)

Author Biography

Michael Buckley

Michael Buckley was born in Akron, Ohio on August 16, 1969 and is the best-selling children's book author of *The Sisters Grimm* and N.E.R.D.S. series. After graduating from Ohio University, Michael moved to New York City where he started an internship with the Late Show With David Letterman. Later he moved into a television production job where he worked on documentaries.



Michael and his writing partner, Joe Deasy created a new animated series for Cartoon Network called *Robotomy*. He is currently working on a screenplay for a NERDS animated feature.

Michael is married to Alison Fargis, a literary agent and co-owner of Stonesong Press. They have one son, Finn.

Courtesy of Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Buckley_author

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Student Checklist

Student Name _____

Assignment	Grade / Level	Comments

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Name: _____

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Chapter 1



Before you read the chapter:

The **protagonist** in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The protagonist of *The Sisters Grimm* is Sabrina Grimm, a feisty young girl who experiences many exciting adventures as the story unfolds. Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels that you have read or movies you’ve seen. What do you think makes for an especially interesting **protagonist**?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

melancholy	custody	destination	curt	reputation
gaunt	precarious	distracted	dislodged	hideous

1. We were very surprised to receive such a _____ reply from our mother.
2. Sabrina and Daphne were placed in the _____ of their grandmother.
3. After several days stranded in his car, Mr. Sheldon appeared frail and _____.
4. The travelers’ ultimate _____ remained a mystery to everyone.
5. The ghost took on a _____ appearance to frighten the trespassers.
6. The slow music put Florence in a very _____ frame of mind.
7. The tremor _____ the blocks and caused the building to collapse.
8. The increase in interest rates put the bank in a very _____ position.
9. “I have my _____ to think of!” Mr. Kelly exclaimed loudly.
10. The goalie was _____ when his own player’s stick struck him.

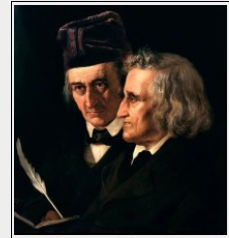
Questions



1. What is the **setting** during the last part of Chapter One?

Good to Know

The Brothers Grimm were two brothers (Jacob and Wilhelm) who lived in Germany. Jacob (1785-1863) and Wilhelm (1786 – 1859) collected and published folklore including the stories of *Cinderella*, *The Frog Prince*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Snow White*, *Rapunzel* and *Rumpelstiltskin*. Their first collection of folktales was published in 1812.



2. What had happened to the Grimm Sisters' parents?

3. Why did Sabrina object to going to live with her grandmother?

4. Mrs. Grimm was certainly an odd-looking woman. List three particular things describing her appearance when Sabrina and Daphne first met her.

5. How far away was Mrs. Grimm's closest neighbor?

- a) 30 minutes b) 15 minutes c) four hours d) two days

6. Mrs. Grimm liked to call the girls, *liebling*, which in English means _____. The word, *oma*, means _____ in English.

7. Think of one good **adjective** which would accurately describe the personality of Mr. Canis. _____

8. Why didn't the girls have any extra clothes?

9. What evidence made Sabrina and Daphne realize that Mrs. Grimm was a world traveler?

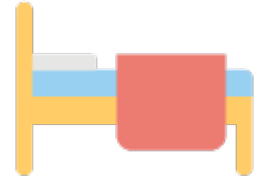
10. A **cliffhanger** occurs when a chapters ends leaving the main character in a difficult or suspenseful situation. How might the ending of Chapter One be considered a cliffhanger?

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 **PAN** can also form the word **NAP**. 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.

The words in the left-hand column are found in Chapter 1 of our novel.

Word	Anagram	Clue
acres		Worries.
time		A piece of news or information.
taped		Highly skilled; expert.
later		Quick to perceive and act.
slept		Animal skins.
seats		A plus. An item of value owned.

B. Personification is giving human qualities to something that is not human. In Chapter One when describing the house, the author states, "... but just behind the house loomed the forest – its branches hanging over the little roof as if the trees were preparing to swallow the house whole." In this sentence the forest is given human characteristics (it seems as if it will devour the little house).

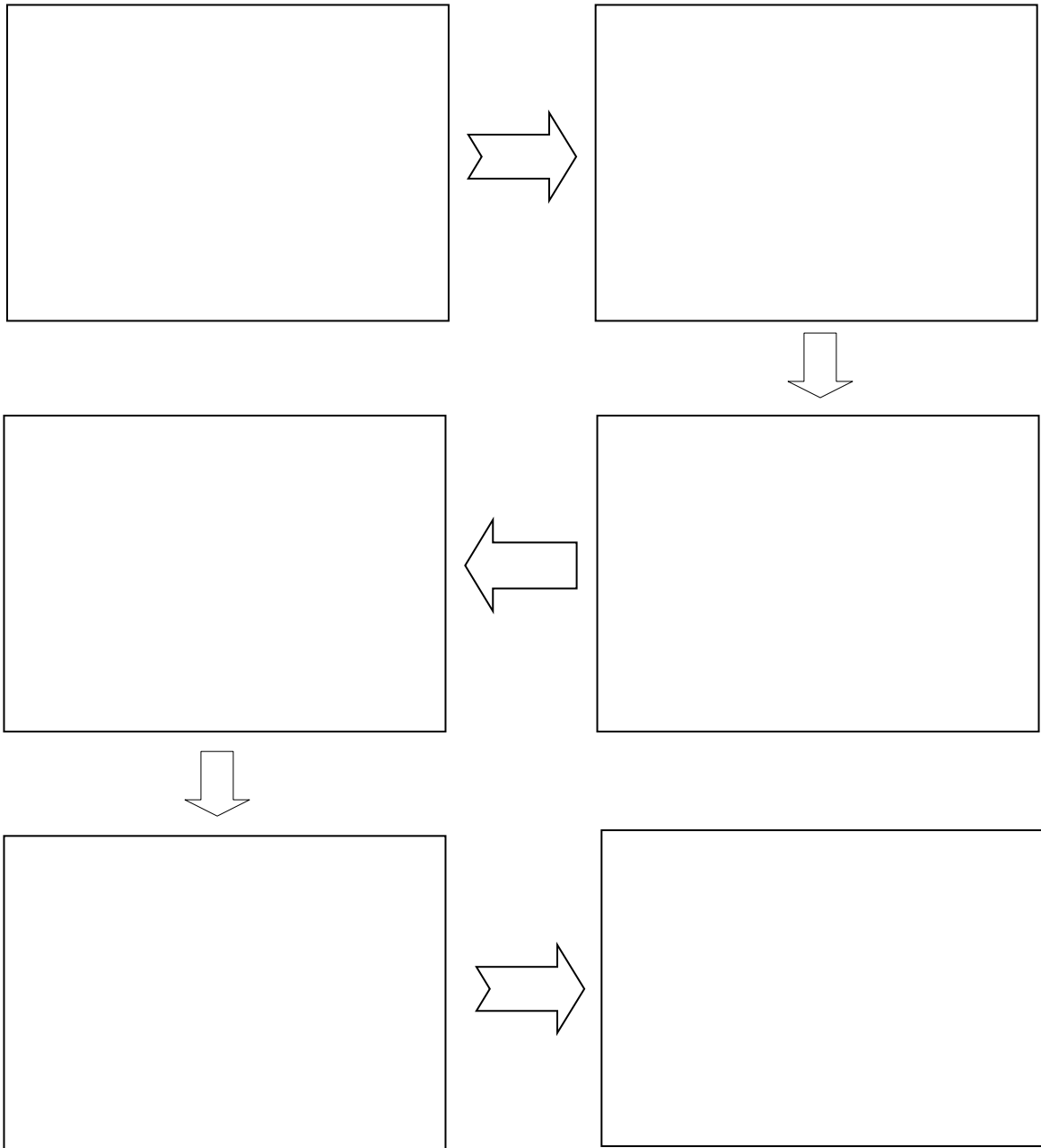


- a) Why do you think personification is a literary device used by many authors?

- b) Create your own example of personification.

C. 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.



D. Cinquain Poems

A Cinquain poem has five lines and most often does not rhyme. Write two Cinquain poems describing two of the characters from *The Sisters Grimm* using what you know about them from this novel. With your teacher's permission you may wish to collaborate with a colleague in the creation of these poems.

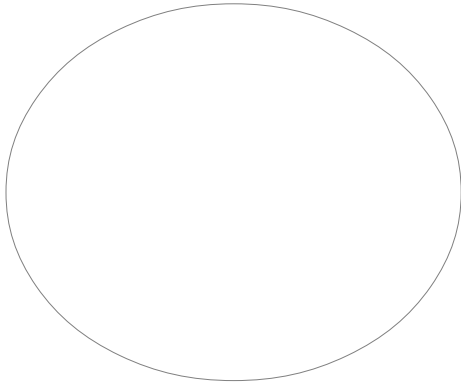
<p>Line 1 is one word. Line 2 is two words. Line 3 is three words. Line 4 is four words. Line five is one word.</p>	<p><i>Santa Saint Nick Long white beard Christmas Eve present-giver Jolly</i></p>
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Character 1 _____

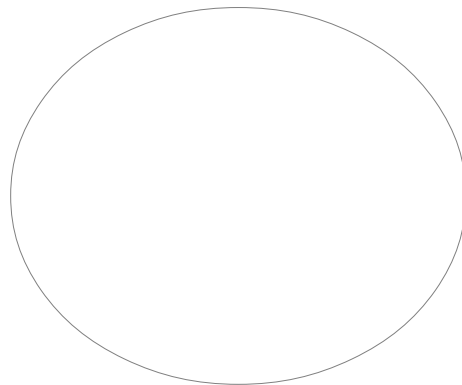
Character 2 _____

E. 5 Ws and an H.

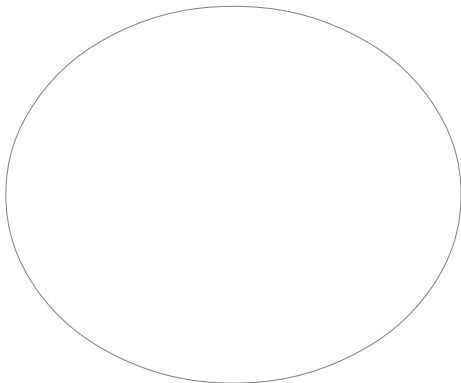
Choose an event from this section that you thought was really important and/or exciting. Using facts that you gleaned from reading about this event, fill in the balloons below, summarizing what you learned.



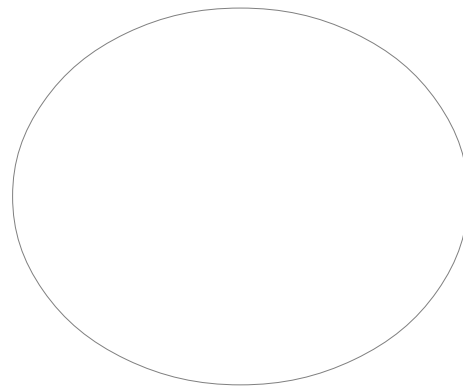
WHO?



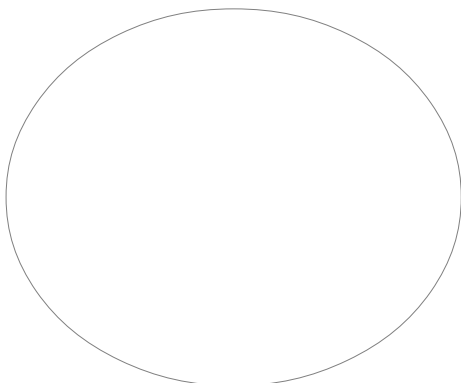
WHAT?



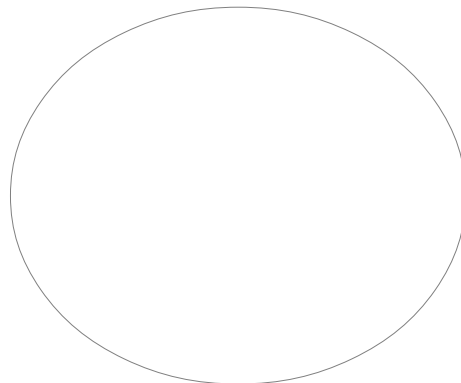
WHEN?



WHERE?



WHY?



HOW?

Extension Activity



Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can tell the story of only one scene - or the entire novel.



Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the first chapter of *The Sisters Grimm*. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.

1	2
3	4
5	6