

Prestwick PowerPacks™

Practical Activities for Comprehension and Key Skills



A Wrinkle in Time

by Madeleine L'Engle

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Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity I: Critical Thinking/Generalizations**Pre-Reading**

Generalizations are statements that simplify complex situations or make unfair judgments about groups of people. Often, generalizations accuse everyone in a situation of acting the same way. Usually, generalizations are untrue comments, but they can be useful if they make you think about how a difficult situation or problem affects others.

Different perspectives on the following generalizations will be examined in *A Wrinkle in Time*. Decide whether you consider each statement true or false, then circle "T" or "F" accordingly. Be prepared to share and defend your answers in a class discussion.

1. Life is harder for those who do not fit in.
T F
2. One cannot experience true happiness unless one has also experienced sadness.
T F
3. The world would be *safer* if everyone were more alike.
T F
4. The world would be *better* if everyone were more alike.
T F
5. It would be better to have no feelings, since many feelings are painful.
T F
6. If there were any way we could make a world without sickness, war, and loneliness, we should make it.
T F

Student's Page

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Activity I: Similes **Chapters 1-2**

A simile is a comparison between two things that uses “like” or “as” to connect them. You are probably already familiar with common similes like “white as snow” and “cold as ice.” Writers use similes to create instant, vivid pictures in readers’ minds.

To complete the **SIMILE CHART**, look for similes as you read Chapter 1. When you find one, quote and record it in the first column, making sure to include a page number. In the second column, describe the picture or idea that the simile brings to your mind. An example is provided for you. Find and describe the effects of **four** more similes in the chapter.

SIMILE CHART

Simile and Page #	Image or Idea the Simile Creates
“Charles Wallace slid down from his chair and trotted over to the refrigerator, his pajamaed feet padding softly as a kitten’s.” (Pg. 8)	The comparison to a kitten makes me picture Charles Wallace as a small, delicate boy.

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Now, try your hand at writing your own similes. The first column of the following ORIGINAL SIMILES CHART includes plain sentences that do *not* contain similes. To fill in the second column, re-write each sentence so that it *does* include a simile. Try to make your similes fresh and interesting. An example is provided for you.

ORIGINAL SIMILES CHART

Starting Sentence	New Sentence with My Original Simile
The moon is bright tonight.	The moon is as bright as a searchlight tonight.
The storm was really harsh.	
That math test was difficult.	
You are beautiful.	
His hair is a really bright red.	
The first chapter was bizarre.	

Name: _____

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Activity II: Context Clues **Chapters 1-2**

In trying to understand the meaning of a new word, it often helps to look at context clues—the information that appears in the same sentence as the new word and in the surrounding sentences. From the sense of the overall passage, we can often discover the definition of unfamiliar words.

To complete the following **DEFINITIONS FROM CONTEXT CLUES CHART**, re-visit the pages where the vocabulary words are found. Look at the sentence that contains each word, and examine the sentences that come before and after that sentence. Record any significant clues you find in the second column. Then, using the clues, determine what you think each word means and write your own definitions in the third column. An example is provided for you.

When you are finished, check a dictionary to see how close you came to determining correct meanings.

DEFINITIONS FROM CONTEXT CLUES CHART

Word & Page #	Context	My Definition
uncanny (Pg. 3)	“Charles...had an uncanny way of knowing when she was awake and unhappy.”	strange; mysterious
diction (Pg. 7)		
prodigious (Pg. 8)		
supine (Pg. 17)		
avid (Pg. 22)		
tractable (Pg. 23)		
sagely (Pg. 26)		
inadvertently (Pg. 26)		
placidly (Pg. 28)		
raucous (Pg. 30)		
assimilate (Pg. 33)		

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Activity III: Characterization **Chapters 1-2**

In the first two chapters, we learn Meg Murry's thoughts, words, and actions, as well as what *other* characters think about and say to her. From these clues, we can determine what kind of person Meg is, and can make informed comments about the personality traits she possesses.

To complete the CHARACTERIZATION CHART FOR MEG, take note of any significant thoughts, words, or actions of Meg's as you read. Also, note *others'* words to and thoughts about Meg. Place these notes in the first column of the chart, being sure to include page numbers when quoting from the book. In the second column, explain what each reveals about Meg's character. You must make a **minimum** of ten entries on your chart. An example has been provided for you.

CHARACTERIZATION CHART FOR MEG

Thought, Words, or Action	This Tells us that Meg is...
"...on the way home from school...one of the boys said something about her 'dumb baby brother.' At this she'd...tackled him with every ounce of strength she had..." (Pg. 2)	protective, brave, and a bit rash.

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Activity IV: Motivation**Chapters 1-2**

On page 27, Meg describes Calvin as a “big bug,” which means someone who is quite popular at school. Calvin, however, almost immediately takes to awkward, unpopular Meg and her strange little brother Charles Wallace. What motivates Calvin’s instant friendliness and protectiveness towards Meg and Charles when so many others openly treat them like outcasts?

Imagine that you are Calvin, and write a journal entry in which you explain what draws you to Meg and Charles Wallace—and why they make you feel that, “for the first time in [your] life,” you are “going home.” (Pg. 33)

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Activity I: Vocabulary (Sentence Completion)**Chapters 3-4****WORD BANK**

gamboled – frolicked

tangible – solid; able to be touched

inexorable – relentless

ephemeral – fleeting, short lived

dispersed – scattered

morass – swamp; confusion

plaintively – woefully

ineffable – indescribable

resonant – echoing

corona – circle of light

The words listed in the **WORD BANK** are all introduced in Chapters 3 and 4. Review the provided definitions; then, complete the following sentences in a way that shows that you understand the meanings of the underlined words. The first one has been done for you as an example.

1. You could say that Bill's fame was ephemeral because...it took only a few days for everybody to forget his name.
2. When my cat meowed plaintively, I realized that...
3. The large auditorium made Kwame's resonant voice...
4. Because the dog had gamboled in the flowerbeds, ...
5. The corona in the sky...
6. When the students dispersed after school^o
7. The baby only responds to tangible expressions of love, like...
8. The morass in Amy's mind...
9. Because the waves were inexorable, the swimmer...
10. The beauty of the moment was ineffable, so...

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Activity II: Characterization—Create a New Character**Chapters 3-4**

In Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who, and Mrs. Which, L'Engle creates three strange, unique, and memorable characters. She characterizes the three Mrs. Ws through descriptions of their appearances, their actions, and their unique manners of speaking. While Mrs. Whatsit has an “unoiled-door-hinge” voice, Mrs. Who speaks almost entirely through the quotations of famous people. (Pg. 54) Mrs. Which’s odd, shimmering voice is represented with extra letters: “Wwell, jusstt ttoo kkeeppp yyou girrrlls happyy.” (Pg. 54)

Imagine that the author has decided that she wants to include a fourth “Mrs. W” in *A Wrinkle in Time* and asks you to create the character. You may be as inventive as you wish, but you **must** complete the following requirements:

1. Your character must be named Mrs. When, Mrs. Why, or Mrs. Where.
2. Your character must have a unique manner of speaking, like the other Mrs. Ws.
3. You must describe your character’s appearance in writing **and** produce a portrait of your character. You may draw or paint your character, create a portrait with computer art, or fashion her from bits and pieces cut from magazines or other sources.
4. You must write a page-long, detailed description of your character, including appearance, manner of speech, any special talents she might have, which of the children she is likely to “bond” with the most, and why she will be a good addition to the story.

You will be evaluated on your neatness, originality, **and** full completion of the above requirements. Be prepared to share your description and portrait with the rest of the class, and have fun!

Name: _____

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Activity I: Vocabulary (Selection)**Chapters 5-6****WORD BANK**

perturbed – greatly disturbed
sonorous – full and impressive in sound
aberration – a deviation from the norm
resilience – the ability to bounce back
medium – a channel of communication
between worlds

dissolution – disintegration
malignant – harmful
chiding – scolding
propitious – favorable

The words in the **WORD BANK** are all introduced in Chapters 5 and 6. Review the provided definitions; then, select and fill in the words that best complete the following sentences. One has been done for you as an example.

1. I hoped the medium would put me in touch with one of my ancestors.
2. On the morning of the meet, everything seemed _____; I found a penny and a four-leaf clover on my way to the pool.
3. Lucy was _____ by the confusing scenes in the movie.
4. Playing kickball with a rock is a(n) _____.
5. He was advised to have the tumor removed in case it was _____.
6. I applauded Mara's _____ when I saw that she was cheerful after losing the class election.
7. The company's _____ happened quickly, and soon there was nothing left of what had been a great empire.
8. Your cello has a far more _____ tone than mine.
9. The sound of my father's _____ voice told me he had discovered that my brother had eaten some of the pie before dinner.