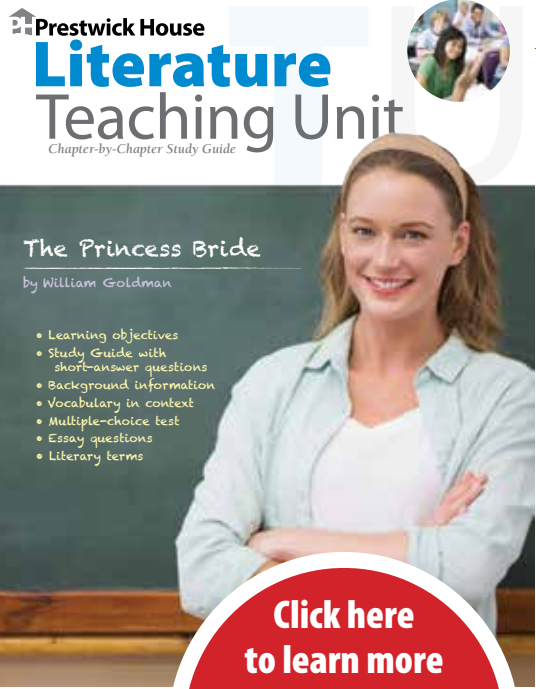




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# Literature Teaching Unit

*Chapter-by-Chapter Study Guide*



## The Princess Bride

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by William Goldman

- Learning objectives
- Study Guide with short-answer questions
- Background information
- Vocabulary in context
- Multiple-choice test
- Essay questions
- Literary terms

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Item No: 300879

## Objectives

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

1. explain and discuss the author's use of the frame story in writing the text.
2. cite and explain the fantastical elements as they appear in the text.
3. discuss the author's use of time as a plot device in the text.
4. compare the characters within the story and their personal motivations.
5. discuss the author's treatment of men and women throughout the story.
6. cite examples of figurative language as they are used throughout the text and explain their effect.
7. recall the plot elements in the story and give a chronological depiction of the events without the insertion of flashbacks and author interruptions.
8. identify and discuss how Goldman prepares the reader for an encouraging scene but then ends with tragic results.
9. explain the significance of S. Morgenstern and his role in the narrative.
10. discuss the success of *The Princess Bride* as a story and Goldman as a storyteller.
11. discuss the following theme: Life is not fair.
12. explain how love is used as motivation for characters throughout the novel.
13. list the skills of each character and his or her purpose in the story.
14. discuss the importance of setting in the novel.
15. explain Goldman's purpose in omitting parts of the novel and characterize the parts of the novel that Goldman claims to omit.
16. discuss the relationships that Goldman is a part of as he reveals them in the novel.
17. cite examples of foreshadowing throughout the text.
18. explain the major and minor conflicts throughout the novel and discuss their resolutions.

### Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. Discuss the way in which Goldman creates different layers in his novel. What are the different layers, and what is the effect of their insertion in the story?
2. Goldman claims that his version of the original Morgenstern story is the true love and adventure version, and he has omitted the political satire from the story. However, what Goldman claims may or may not be true. Cite and explain instances of satire throughout the novel.
3. Discuss the ways in which the story of *The Princess Bride* could be considered fantasy. What elements of the story seem to be possible, and which seem to be something out of a fairy tale? Cite specific examples from the text.
4. In the novel there are four separate groups of people from very different worlds: Goldman, who inserts himself as a character; Vizzini, Fezzik, and Inigo; Prince Humperdinck and Count Rugen; Westley and Buttercup. Discuss how each of these worlds begins separately and how they are intertwined within the text. Is there any one world that does not ultimately connect with the others? If so, what is it?
5. Evaluate the motivations of each of the character in the story. Explain how the characters' motivations evolve throughout the narrative. Do they evolve in a positive or negative way? Explain.
6. Discuss the roles of men and women within the novel. Are men portrayed more positively than women? Is the man's role in the story stronger than the woman's role? Explain.
7. *The Princess Bride* offers many lessons to its readers. For example, Goldman learns from a friend's mother how: "Life isn't fair... We tell our children that it is, but it's a terrible thing to do. It's not only a lie, it's a cruel lie. Life is not fair, and it never has been, and it's never going to be." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain. Does the novel seem to express the same sentiments?
8. Goldman writes a frame story interrupting the story at key points. Do his intrusions add or detract from the story? Why or why not? What might Goldman's reason for doing this be?
9. Discuss the characteristics of a hero. Is there a hero in this book? If so, who is it? How does this person become the hero? If there is not a hero, explain why.
10. Discuss *The Princess Bride* as a story. How effective is William Goldman at story telling?

# The Princess Bride

## One – “The Bride”

### VOCABULARY

**adversary** – enemy  
**antiquity** – history  
**bewilderment** – confusion  
**careening** – knocking, rolling randomly  
**droll** – odd, humorous  
**dullard** – a stupid person  
**dumpling** – a term of endearment  
**hovel** – hut  
**inadvertent** – accidental  
**moldering** – decaying  
**scullery** – kitchen  
**sublimity** – perfection  
**supplication** – humbleness  
**undaunted** – resolutely  
**unfathomable** – unimaginable  
**visage** – face

1. Chronicle the list of beautiful women before Buttercup. At what point does Buttercup start to be noticed for her beauty? How does Buttercup feel about beauty? What does the text say about Buttercup’s hygiene?

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2. Who is the farm boy, and what is his connection to Buttercup? How does the farm boy respond to Buttercup’s requests?

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### Three – “The Courtship”

#### VOCABULARY

**alliance** – bond  
**doted** – had great affection for  
**etiquette** – social conduct  
**ferreting out** – searching out  
**insolvency** – bankruptcy; inability to pay debts  
**supped** – to eat (supper)

1. How does setting the story in the castle contribute to the overall effect? What other images are included in the first paragraph add to the illusion?

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2. Describe the Queen. How can she be loved by everyone in addition to being evil?

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3. Who is Miracle Max, and how is he related to the story?

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**Eight – “Honeymoon”**

## VOCABULARY

**afflicted** – injured  
**cleric** – a member of the clergy  
**contemplated** – thought about, pondered  
**cowardice** – lack of courage  
**crescendoing** – gradually increasing  
**fauceted** – ran quickly  
**forlorn** – miserable  
**impediment** – hindrance  
**imperiously** – commandingly  
**lumbered** – moved slowly  
**propriety** – appropriateness  
**reminiscing** – remembering  
**squabbled** – argued; bickered  
**swarthy** – dark complexioned  
**unendurable** – unbearable

1. How are Fezzik, Inigo, and Westley able to retrieve the key from Yellin?

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2. Describe the wedding.

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3. What does Buttercup do after the wedding?

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4. Fezzik, Inigo, and Westley make it into the castle. Explain how the three men are separated once inside.

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