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 **Prestwick House**
Activity Pack
Literature Made Fun!



Ethan Frome

BY EDITH WHARTON



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All references come from the Dover Thrift edition of *Ethan Frome*, published 1991.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading**Theme**

Objectives: Understanding thematic ideas
 Developing positions for debate
 Focusing reading

Activity

Choose one of the thematic statements from the worksheet that follows, and write a position paper on it. The paper should offer at least three specific, detailed examples that support your opinion on the issue.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Introduction

Setting and Symbolism

Objectives: Understanding how setting contributes to symbolism
 Understanding historical context

Activity

Research the style of farmhouse known as the “ell.” This was a popular design in New England at the time of the novel. Note that in the novel, it is called the “L.”

Sketch a bird’s eye view of what a typical New England farmhouse with an “ell” might have looked like during the early 1900s. Label the main house, “ell,” and barn or work building(s).

On page 8, the narrator sees Ethan Frome’s house for the first time. Using only the description that follows, sketch what you think a bird’s eye view of Ethan’s house might have looked like to the narrator. Label the buildings.

The house was bigger in my father’s time: I had to take down the “L,” a while back,’ Frome continued...I saw then that the unusually forlorn and stunted look of the house was partly due to the loss of what is known in New England as the “L”: that long deep-roofed adjunct usually built at right angles to the main house, and connecting it, by way of storerooms and tool-house, with the wood-shed and cow-barn.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters I – X**Main Ideas and Theme**

Objectives: Identifying main ideas and themes
 Summarizing content

Activity

Some authors use chapter titles to give an overview of a chapter's content or to point toward a significant incident or theme. Sometimes, a chapter title is taken directly from the dialogue or descriptions in the story. For example, chapter I of *Ethan Frome* could have been entitled "Mattie Silver" because she is the focus of the story in that chapter or "Zeena Takes Note" because Zeena makes repeated observations of Mattie and Ethan's relationship in the chapter.

As you read the novel, write a title for each chapter that focuses on its main idea or a theme. Be prepared to explain your choices.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter VII

Characterization

Objectives: Analyzing character relationships
 Comparing character relationships

Activity

Most couples have their special song—one that was playing when they first met or during their first kiss or one that just reminds them of each other.

Based on the nature of their relationship and experiences together, what should Ethan and Zeena's song be? What about Ethan and Mattie's?

- Choose a song for each couple that you think sums up their relationship. If you need help getting started, think about the images that are associated with each couple in the book.
- Bring a copy of the lyrics to class. Be prepared to explain in detail why you think the song fits the couple.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Wrap-Up**Book Cover****Objective:** Responding to the novel**Activity**

Create a new book cover for the novel.

Using one sheet of drawing or construction paper folded in half, draw pictures or cut and paste them from a magazine to design the new front cover. Be sure to include some of the symbols from the story as well as the title and the author's name.

On the back cover, write a brief review of the story. Be sure to include the following information:

- what you learned from the story
- a main theme or the overall theme of the story
- why you recommend this book to others
- why this is a good novel to be taught in classrooms
- the most interesting incident in the novel

Be careful not to give away any of the mystery of the story! Your job is to try to create suspense so that others will want to read it.