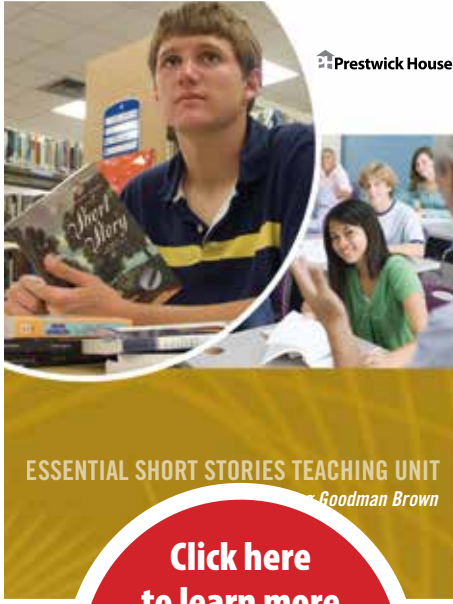




Essential Short Stories  
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**Teaching Unit**

**Young Goodman Brown**

by Nathaniel Hawthorne

written by Stephanie Polukis

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# Young Goodman Brown

## Biography

Considered one of the greatest American writers, Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804 – 1864), is a direct product of his New England background. His father was a sea captain, who died when the boy was only four. Reared in a reclusive setting, Hawthorne became an avid reader, as recorded by the huge number of books he borrowed from the local lending library in Salem, Massachusetts. His uncle sent him to Bowdoin College, where Hawthorne became good friends with the future president Franklin Pierce and future poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Hawthorne wrote a great deal, but destroyed most of his early writings; however, by the time he was 33, his writing style and content had matured. Critics credit Hawthorne with making the short story acceptable literature in America, especially after his *Twice-Told Tales* was published in 1837.

Haunted by his Puritan past, including a grandfather who was a judge at the Salem Witch Trials, Hawthorne portrayed the characters in many of his novels and short stories, including *The Scarlet Letter*, *The House of the Seven Gables*, and “Young Goodman Brown” as having deeply Puritan backgrounds. His contributions to American literature include his meticulous style, intriguing themes, complex symbolism, and keen psychological insights into human nature.

# Young Goodman Brown

## Objectives

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

- Analyze how themes are developed in a work of literature
- Identify the type of conflict and how it appears in the text
- Understand how characterization contributes to the meaning of the story
- Trace elements of foreshadowing in the text
- Evaluate various symbols and their importance in the story
- Analyze how setting affects plot and mood
- Identify and understand the significance of metaphor, allusion, simile, and personification
- Assess the role the author's diction plays in conveying a message
- Identify point of view and its effect on the story
- Define new vocabulary words using context
- Determine how plot elements are applied in the text

**tarry** – to delay leaving  
**thither** – towards something  
**unconcerted** – separated  
**verge** – an edge  
**verily** – honestly  
**vexed** – irritated, annoyed  
**wanton** – inconsiderate, careless  
**wrought** – designed, created  
**zenith** – the highest point in the sky

1. In “Young Goodman Brown,” Nathaniel Hawthorne uses several examples of literary devices, including metaphor, simile, and personification. Use the chart below to find two examples of each device.

**EXAMPLES CHART**

	Example #1	Example #2
metaphor		
simile		
personification		

2. From what point of view is “Young Goodman Brown” told? How do you know?

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2. Read Nathaniel Hawthorne's short story "The Man of Adamant." Then, create a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting Richard Digby and Young Goodman Brown (as characters), focusing particularly on their views on religion and the community. Then, write a short paragraph elaborating on the significances these similarities and differences have on the story.

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**RICHARD DIGBY & YOUNG GOODMAN BROWN VENN DIAGRAM**

