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Literature Made Fun!



The Princess Bride
BY WILLIAM GOLDMAN



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All references come from the Harcourt edition of *The Princess Bride*, copyright 2007.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading**Storytelling**

Objectives: Recounting a personal experience
Writing creatively

Activity

Published in 1973, and later made into a movie, *The Princess Bride* received praise from critics and fans. The novel is funny, playful, adventurous, and romantic. One critic from the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* wrote:

“Drift into an hour or so of silly-willy fantasy with a master yarn spinner. If you have half as much fun reading it as Goldman seems to have had writing it, it should be rewarding. You will have become a child for a while, slashing at dragons, rescuing fair damsels, and performing derring-do.”

Through reading, we can be transported to other places and experience interesting and exciting situations, which is one of the reasons so many people enjoy it. Literature provides a way for us to imagine ourselves in the lives of others. *The Princess Bride* allows readers to enter a world where romance and adventure prevail.

Think of an experience from your past that was particularly exciting or fun. Write about the experience in the form of a short story, told from your point of view. Use creative descriptions of the setting, people, and events to draw readers into your story and allow them to fully imagine the experience.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Preface

Letter to a Favorite Teacher

Objective: Identifying with the author

Activity

In the introductory commentary, William Goldman claims that he hated to read when he was a child and considered school to be “torture.” Perhaps school was not challenging enough to keep him engaged, or maybe he didn’t feel any connection to what he was expected to learn. However, his 3rd through 5th-grade teacher, Miss Roginski, was the one bright spot in his elementary education. She cared about his struggles with school, tried to understand them, and treated him kindly. When his first novel *The Temple of Gold* came out, Goldman thought of Miss Roginski and had a copy sent to her with a short note. Whether this account is true or part of the fictionalized story of how *The Princess Bride* came to be written is unimportant. What readers can relate to is the fact that a favorite teacher can have a significant impact on one’s life.

We’ve all had memorable teachers—some who have provided guidance and inspired us, and some who have not. Think of a teacher who has had a positive influence on you in some way, and write that teacher a letter. In your letter, thank the teacher, and explain what he or she did to make an impact on your life. In addition, explain how it made you who you are today or what change you experienced because of it.

Name: _____

Date: _____

One: The Bride**Social Networking**

Objective: Creating an online “Blog” page for a character

Activity

Social networking is an important part of many societies. In medieval times, status was determined by who you were, with whom you were associated, and where you lived. Gossiping was as widely practiced then as it is now.

Social networking today, however, has taken on a different meaning. The term most commonly refers to using the variety of websites available on the Internet to communicate with friends, family, and classmates.

Blogging is an effective method of keeping others informed about what’s going on in our lives, and it’s a great way to make new friends and business connections through people we already know.

Use the template provided to create a blog for Buttercup, similar to those that are found on popular social networking sites. Use all that you have learned about her up to this point in the novel.

You may write the blog from the perspective of Buttercup in Europe in the Middle Ages, or you could write it as if she lives in today’s society. You will need to infer some information from the text to complete parts of the blog. Use your imagination to make up information, but stay true to Buttercup’s personality. Be sure to keep the content appropriate for the classroom.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Two: The Groom**Zoo of Death Diagram**

Objectives: Listing descriptive details from the text
Drawing a diagram

Activity

In this chapter, the reader learns a great deal about Prince Humperdinck. The author focuses particularly on the prince's obsession with hunting. The prince once traveled the world to hunt a variety of animals, but as time went by, he found that travel was costly, and the long absences were interfering with his responsibilities. To solve this problem, Humperdinck created the Zoo of Death, in which animals are brought in from other countries so that he can hunt whenever he wants.

Review the description of the Zoo of Death. Make a list of details about the Zoo—its levels and the types of animals housed there. Then, use those details to draw a diagram of the Zoo. You must include all five levels, the animals contained on each, and the animals' habitats. For the fifth level, which Humperdinck has left empty, draw what you think he might one day put there.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Three: The Courtship

Greeting Card

Objective: Creating a greeting card that expresses the emotions of a character

Activity

Usually, a marriage proposal is romantic and touching; so, you might have been surprised by Prince Humperdinck's proposal to Buttercup and even more surprised when she agrees.

Imagine you are Prince Humperdinck, and you are making a greeting card to give to Buttercup, in which you ask her to marry you. Use details, words, and phrases from the novel the prince might include on the card to convince (or force) Buttercup to marry him. Your card can be humorous or serious. Be creative; add artwork, or purchase a card that is blank inside and has an image on the cover that conveys the spirit of your proposal. You can write your own message on the inside. If you have access to art software or online greeting card websites, you can create a realistic-looking card and print it.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Five: The Announcement

"Lost" Poster

Objective: Identifying character traits

Activity

A "Lost" poster alerts the public that someone is missing. Usually, the police or other public agencies make Lost posters, but they can also be made by family members or loved ones. Lost posters often offer a reward for information that could lead to finding the missing person.

When Buttercup goes for her daily ride on Horse, she is abducted. Horse returns to the Castle without her, and the only clue as to what might have happened to her is a strip of fabric from the uniform of an officer of Guilder.

Imagine that Prince Humperdinck sends out a search party to look for Buttercup and makes Lost posters to hang all over the Great Square of Florin City. Create a Lost poster that the Prince would make to alert the public that Buttercup is missing. Include where she was last seen, what she was wearing, any other information that could be useful, and reward information. Also provide a picture of Buttercup and a physical description. Use the text to infer some of the information, and you may add fictional information, as long as it doesn't contradict the plot of the story. You may draw the poster, cut pictures and text from print media, or use computer-generated images to create your poster.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Five: The Announcement

Mapping Fezzik's Journey

Objectives: Creating a map
 Summarizing a passage

Activity

Chapter Five recounts Fezzik's fighting tour when he was living in Turkey with his parents. After Fezzik defeated every opponent in his home country, his parents decided to take him to other places in Europe and beyond to challenge him further. Other than not wanting to be booed, he had few objections and went along with the plan. Fezzik traveled to many places and, after his parents died, eventually joined the circus.

Reread the section in Chapter Five that describes Fezzik's journey. Find and list the locations he traveled to and any events that occurred at those places. Then, using the template provided, create a map of Fezzik's journey from his home in Turkey to where he meets Vizzini. Use the Internet or other sources to find the locations, and plot them on the map, along with a brief note of what Fezzik did there (e.g., an opponent he fought, defeating three camel drivers in the Gobi desert, etc.). When you research the locations, keep in mind that Siam is modern-day Thailand, and the Gobi desert is located in Mongolia.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Seven: The Wedding

Found Poem

Objective: Writing a “Found” Poem

Activity

A “found” poem is a poem made up entirely of phrases, sentences, or quotations found in the text. Go back through this chapter and make up a found poem of your own. The poem could tell the reader something about a character’s emotional state, but this is not necessary; it may have direct relevance or be totally unrelated to the action of the story, which is one of the best parts of writing a found poem.

Your poem should be at least 10 lines long. The lines do not need to rhyme, but they certainly may. You can arrange the phrases in any way you like and change the punctuation, but do not deviate from Goldman’s actual words. You may add *and*, *a*, or *the*, or alter the tense of verbs, if necessary. Move adjectives and adverbs to create different images. Give the poem a title, which may or may not come from the book. The following is an example taken entirely from Chapter Six.

“Inigo’s Reawakening”

filthy stoop, cobwebs
dark streets, dizzy moonlight
trouble tied around a tree
fingers fumbling
failure
insanity
death...
and then—
consciousness...laughter
never never never never again
to the beginning
replan, start again
confident and strong, dangerous, big, mean, a titan
existence was really very simple.