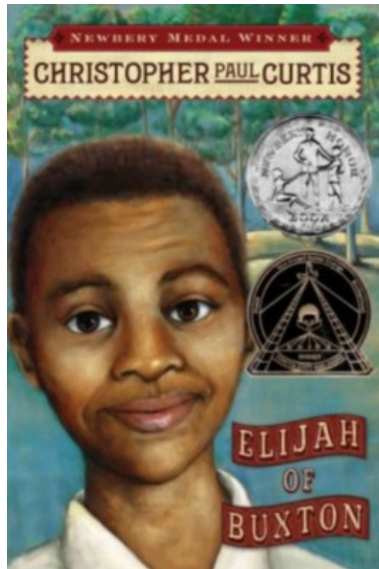


# Elijah of Buxton



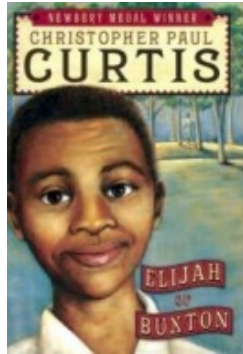
By

Christopher Paul Curtis

A Novel Study  
by Nat Reed

# Elijah of Buxton

By Christopher Paul Curtis



## Table of Contents

|                                    |    |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Suggestions and Expectations ..... | 3  |
| List of Skills .....               | 4  |
| Synopsis / Author Biography .....  | 5  |
| Student Checklist .....            | 6  |
| Reproducible Student Booklet ..... | 7  |
| Answer Key .....                   | 60 |

**About the author:** Nat Reed has been a member of the teaching profession for more than 30 years. He is presently a full-time instructor at Trent University in the Teacher Education Program. For more information on his work and literature, please visit the websites [www.reedpublications.org](http://www.reedpublications.org) and [www.novelstudies.org](http://www.novelstudies.org).

Copyright © 2012 Nat Reed  
All rights reserved by author.  
Permission to copy for single classroom use only.  
Electronic distribution limited to single classroom use only.  
Not for public display.

# Elijah of Buxton

By Christopher Paul Curtis

## Suggestions and Expectations

This 65 page curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on two chapters of *Elijah of Buxton* and is comprised of four different sections:

- Before You Read
- Vocabulary Building
- Comprehension Questions
- Activities

### Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters . . . respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

A principal expectation of the unit is that students will develop their skills in reading, writing, listening and oral communication, as well as in reasoning and critical thinking. Students will also be expected to provide clear answers to questions and well-constructed explanations. It is critical as well that students be able to relate events and the feelings of characters to their own lives and experiences and describe their own interpretation of a particular passage.

A strength of the unit is that students can work on the activities at their own pace. Every activity need not be completed by all students. A **portfolio cover** is included (p.7) so that students may organize their work and keep it all in one place. A **Student Checklist** is also included (p.6) so that a record of completed work may be recorded.

**Themes** which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include hope, courage, choice and freedom; slavery in 19th Century America; rural life in 19th Century North America; Frederick Douglass; coming of age.

# Elijah of Buxton

By Christopher Paul Curtis

## List of Skills

### Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words / phrases
2. Listing synonyms & antonyms
3. Identifying / creating *onomatopoeia*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Listing compound words
7. Identifying / creating *similes*
8. Identifying/creating *personification*.
9. Use of singular / plural nouns
10. Using content clues: analogies
11. Identifying parts of speech
12. Determining alphabetical order
13. Identification of root words
14. Identifying / creating *alliteration*
15. Identifying anagrams.
16. Use of *exaggeration*.

### Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

### Plot Activities

1. Complete a 5 W's Chart
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Identify *cliffhanger*
4. Identify the climax of a novel
5. Write a synopsis
6. Predict an outcome
7. Complete a Sequence Chart
8. Identify *foreshadowing*.

### Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Compare two or more characters
3. Understand concepts such as *meeting a challenge*
4. Relating personal experiences

### Creative and Critical Thinking

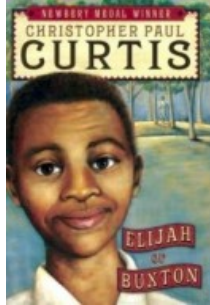
1. Research
2. Write a newspaper article
3. Crossword puzzle/word search.
4. Complete an Observation Chart
5. Conduct an interview
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a Book Review
8. Complete a journal entry.

### Art Activities

1. Design a cover for the novel
2. Design an information card.
3. Create a Storyboard.

# Elijah of Buxton

By Christopher Paul Curtis



## Synopsis

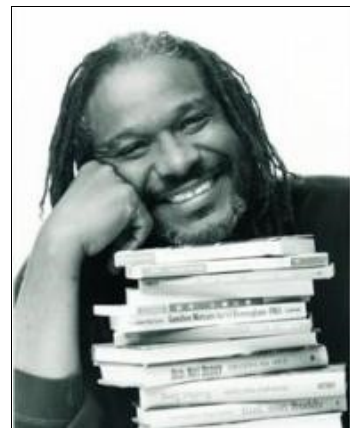
Eleven-year-old Elijah lives in Buxton, Canada, a settlement of runaway slaves near the American border. Elijah's the first child to be born free, and he ought to be famous for just that - not to mention for being the best at chunking rocks and catching fish. Unfortunately, all that most people see is a "fragile" boy who's scared of snakes and tends to talk too much. But everything changes when a former slave steals money from Elijah's friend, who has been saving to buy his family out of captivity in the South. Now it's up to Elijah to track down the thief - and his dangerous journey just might make a hero out of him. *[The Publisher]*

## Author Biography

*Christopher Paul Curtis*

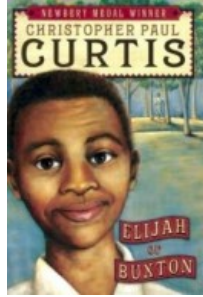
**Christopher Paul Curtis** was born in Flint, Michigan in 1953. Here he attended both elementary and secondary school. He later graduated from the University of Michigan and the University of Windsor. Christopher spent thirteen years working in a car assembly plant and assorted other jobs.

He took a year off work to write his first novel, ***The Watsons go to Birmingham - 1963***. Other award-winning book by Mr. Curtis followed, including ***Bud, Not Buddy*** and ***Elijah of Buxton***, which were both Newbery winners. Christopher and his wife, Kaysandra, live in Detroit. They have two children.



# Elijah of Buxton

*By Christopher Paul Curtis*

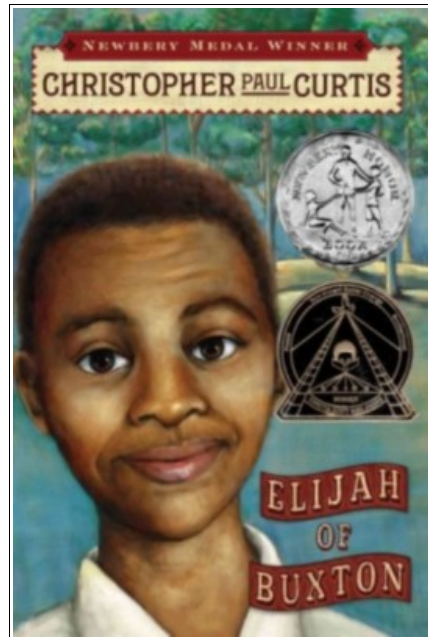


## *Student Checklist*

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

| Assignment | Grade / Level | Comments |
|------------|---------------|----------|
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |
|            |               |          |

# Elijah Of Buxton



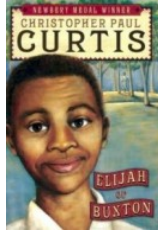
By Christopher Paul Curtis

Name:

---

# Elijah of Buxton

By Christopher Paul Curtis



## Chapter 1 - 2



### Before you read the chapter:

Elijah of Buxton takes place in a small settlement in Canada more than a century ago. Name three things about Elijah's home which would probably be different than your own.

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |
|  |

What would be one advantage and one disadvantage to living during this time period?

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |
|  |



### Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence. [Be careful, some words may be appropriate for more than one sentence - try to pick the best fit.]

|         |           |           |           |        |
|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| stoop   | vile      | prolonged | tolerate  | daft   |
| torment | commotion | tragedy   | permanent | beacon |

1. Our whole family was awakened from our sleep by a great \_\_\_\_\_ in front of our house.
2. Everything seemed fine until Marvin was suddenly smitten with a \_\_\_\_\_ coughing spell.
3. In the evening Elijah's parents sit out on their \_\_\_\_\_ passing the time away.
4. The lighthouse acted as a safety \_\_\_\_\_ to countless sailors passing that way.
5. "I never expected this blasted cold to be such a \_\_\_\_\_," my grandfather said angrily.



6. Everyone thought the old woman was \_\_\_\_\_ to make such a wild prediction.
7. The collision of the two passenger trains represented the town's worst \_\_\_\_\_.
8. "I won't \_\_\_\_\_ any back talk from you," the coach told his star player.
9. "Cigarette smoking is a \_\_\_\_\_ habit," the nurse exclaimed.
10. Mustard will sometimes leave a \_\_\_\_\_ stain.

## Questions



1. Getting to the know the characters of a story can be challenging. In the first two chapters of *Elijah of Buxton* the reader is introduced to those in Elijah's family and a couple of other important characters. In the chart below see if you can identify one characteristic (either physical or regarding his/her personality) for each character.

| Character    | Characteristic |
|--------------|----------------|
| Elijah       |                |
| Elijah's Mom |                |
| Elijah's Dad |                |
| Cooter       |                |
| The Preacher |                |

2. The **setting** of a story includes not only where but when the story takes place. What do we know about the setting of the story from the first two chapters?

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |
|  |

3. *Every good story involves one or many crisis.* Describe the **crisis** which Elijah faces in Chapter One.

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |
|  |

4. What is your personal impression of The Preacher? What caused you to form this impression?

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |
|  |

5. Describe the prank that Elijah and Cooter played on Elijah's mom, and how she got revenge.

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |

6. Two famous people who visited Buxton were \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

7. Why did Elijah consider himself *special person number three*?

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |
|  |

8. What tragic event had scarred Elijah when Frederick Douglass came to visit their settlement?

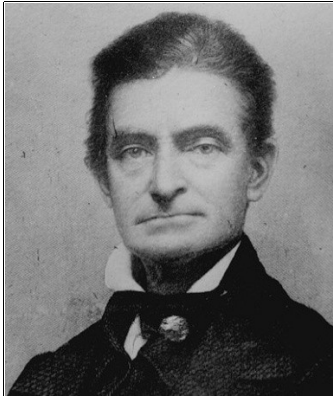
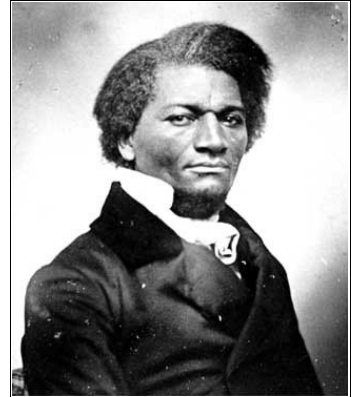
|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |
|  |



## Language Activities

### A. Investigation

Two very famous historical figures are mentioned in Chapter Two: **Frederick Douglass** and **John Brown**. Both of these men were devoted to the cause of ending slavery in the United States during the 19th Century. Both chose very different means to accomplish their goals. One paid the ultimate price.



Using resources in your school library or the Internet, choose one of these men, then prepare an information card on your selection which includes at least one picture (can be downloaded and printed out from the Internet or hand-drawn) and at least four interesting facts pertaining to his life and/or accomplishments. The purpose of your information card is to share with your classmates so that others will be better informed about this important figure from American history.

**B.** The author uses exaggeration very humorously in these chapters, this is especially true when describing the stories resulting from Elijah throwing up on Frederick Douglass: "Some folks swear I throwed up so hard that desks and chairs rose up and floated out of the schoolhouse".

Define **exaggeration**:

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |
|  |

Give another example of exaggeration - either from the novel or your own imagination.

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |

Why do you think an author might use this device?

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |

## Extension Activities

### Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can tell the story of only one scene – or the entire novel. [ You may wish to postpone the completion of this assignment until you have read further in the novel.]

Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events of your favourite scene from the novel thus far. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 |