Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher

By

Bruce Coville

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed
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About the author: Nat Reed has been a member of the teaching profession for more than 30 years. He was a full-time instructor at Trent University in the Teacher Education Program for nine years. For more information on his work and literature, please visit the websites www.reedpublications.org and www.novelstudies.org.

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This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on two chapters of *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher* and is comprised of five of the following different activities:

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the <em>Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5</em>, 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.</td>
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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 dragons, courage and tolerance, sacrifice, friendship, personal growth.
Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher
By Bruce Coville

List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words / phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homonyms
3. Identifying / creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *personification*.
7. Identify *anagrams*
8. Listing compound words
9. Identifying parts of speech
10. Identify/create *similes*
11. Identification of root words

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Complete Five W's Chart
4. Identify *cliffhangers*
5. Identify the climax of the novel.
6. Complete a Story Pyramid

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Identify the protagonist
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Compare characters

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Create a poem
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a book review
8. Complete an Observation Chart
9. Complete a KWS Chart
10. Create a friendly letter.

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Create a comic strip
Jeremy Thatcher knows a thing or two about raising animals – after all, his dad is a veterinarian.

But after he leaves Mr. Elives' magic shop with a strange marbled egg, it soon becomes clear that this is one pet he wasn't prepared for! How is he supposed to keep a flame-breathing dragon with razor-sharp teeth and an out-of-control appetite in his bedroom?

But if the playful baby dragon is ever to grow up and become a magnificent beast of myth and legend, it needs Jeremy. And though he doesn't know it yet, Jeremy needs a dragon. [Courtesy of the publisher]

Author Biography

Bruce Coville

Bruce Coville was born in Syracuse, NY on May 16, 1950 (where he still lives). As a young boy he loved to read (Nancy Drew, The Hardy Boys and The Voyages of Dr. Doolittle). When he was 19 he married Katherine Dietz who lived right around the corner. They had three children together. Along the way Bruce had a number of different jobs including gravedigger and elementary school teacher. Bruce and Katherine have written a number of books together including The World's Worst Fairy Godmother.

Check out his website at www.brucecoville.com

[Bio adapted from Bruce's website]
# Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher
By Bruce Coville

## Student Checklist

**Student Name:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Grade/Level</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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Jersey Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher

By Bruce Coville

Name: __________________________
Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher  
By Bruce Coville  

Chapters 1-2

Before you read the chapters:

The protagonist in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The main character of *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher* is Jeremy, an animal lover who lives in the small town of Blodgett's Crossing. Think back on some of your favorite characters from past novels you have read or movies you’ve seen. Who would you say is your most favorite character ever? What made you select this character?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>in justice</th>
<th>humiliation</th>
<th>deliciously</th>
<th>kaleidoscope</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>admonishing</td>
<td>specimen</td>
<td>sympathy</td>
<td>pursuer</td>
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</table>

Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

1. After his run-in with his annoying neighbor, Jeremy felt ____________ cranky.
2. When hit on the nose with the swing, a ____________ of colors exploded in his head.
3. Chelsea felt a grievous sense of ____________ while listening to the maid's sad story.
4. It took Hansel and Gretel more than an hour to lose their ____________ in the forest.
5. The scientist removed the ____________ from under the microscope's lens.
6. His mother gave him an ____________ look, but didn't say a word.
7. Kelvin was filled with ____________ when his younger brother broke his bike.
8. Karen felt such a sense of ____________ that she began to weep uncontrollably.
1. Describe the **setting** of the story at the beginning of Chapter One.

2. Please describe your impression of Mr. Kravitz in this chapter and the evidence upon which you based this first impression.

3. What did Jeremy consider unjust in Chapter One? Do you think Jeremy has a legitimate point? Why or why not?

4. What did you consider to be the oddest thing about Mr. Elives' shop?

5. The name of Jeremy's hometown was _______________________________.

6. Mr. Elives warns Jeremy, “And for Ishtar's sake, be careful.” Using resources in your school library or on the Internet research who **Ishtar** is and record two interesting facts about her below.

   1. 
   2. 

7. How do you think Jeremy's collection of pets will serve him well as a *dragon hatcher*?
8. Summarize the written instructions given to Jeremy from Mr. Elives.

---

**Language Activities**

**A. Anagrams**

An anagram is a word that is formed by changing the order of the letters of another word. For example, the letters in the word *WAS* can also form the word *SAW*. Follow these directions to form the anagrams:

a) read the clue in the right-hand column.

b) Using the word in the left-hand column move the letters around in any order, but you must use all the letters. All of the words in the left-hand column can be found in the first five chapters of *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Anagram</th>
<th>Clue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>smiles</td>
<td></td>
<td>Green, sour fruits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resist</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sibling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>start</td>
<td></td>
<td>Small pastries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words</td>
<td></td>
<td>An ancient weapon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>done</td>
<td></td>
<td>A central or connecting point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ears</td>
<td></td>
<td>Scorch or burn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hear</td>
<td></td>
<td>A mammal.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Now find two additional words from the first two chapters which have interesting anagrams to see if you can stump a classmate.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
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B. A Quatrain Poem Celebrates Dragons.

The **quatrain** is a popular form of rhymed verse. It is a poem of **four** lines, is usually light and can be humorous. The following quatrain is the first four lines of the famous poem, *Dragons*, written by the famous poet, Atrocious Halitosis.

*Dragons is delicious,*
*When you cook them in a pot.*
*They’re tasty and nutritious,*
*Whether cold or piping hot.*

Various rhyming schemes make up a quatrain poem. As you can see, the above four lines have a rhyming scheme of **A – B – A – B**. Other rhyming schemes include: AABB, AAAA, AABA, ABBA, ABBB, and AAAB.

Your task is to write your own quatrain poem. You may choose a rhyming scheme that fits with your own personal creation. The theme should have something to do with the themes established in the first two chapters of our novel (like *magicians* or *injustice*).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Quatrain Poem</th>
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<tr>
<td>Now create your own Quatrain Poem. Your poem must follow the format of a quatrain poem described above (and must rhyme).</td>
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<td><strong>Title:</strong> __________________________________________</td>
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**Bonus Question.**

In the above poem why do you think the poet used the word *is* instead of *are* in the first line?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bonus Question.</th>
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<tr>
<td>In the above poem why do you think the poet used the word <em>is</em> instead of <em>are</em> in the first line?</td>
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C. Cliffhanger

Chapter Two contains an important literary device called a cliffhanger. A cliffhanger usually occurs at the end of a chapter when the author leaves the reader in suspense. How is this true in Chapter 2? Why do you think the author ended the chapter this way?

D. Personification is giving human qualities to something that is not human. The following is an example taken from Chapter Two: *The bounding dog greeted him with an explosion of enthusiasm*...

Describe how enthusiasm is personified in this example.

Create your own example of personification.

As you continue to read through the novel be on the lookout for other examples of this literary device. If you should find one, come back to this question and enter it below.
# 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. Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the first two chapters of our novel. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.

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