The Door In The Wall

By

Marguerite de Angeli

A Novel Study by Nat Reed
The Door in the Wall
By Marguerite de Angeli

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Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on one chapter of *The Door in the Wall* and is comprised of five of the following different activities:

- Before You Read
- Vocabulary Building
- Comprehension Questions
- Language Activities
- Extension 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 medieval times, castles, courage and determination, perseverance, loyalty and friendship, friendship and personal growth.
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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
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Synopsis

Ever since he can remember, Robin, son of Sir John de Bureford, has been told what is expected of him as the son of a nobleman. He must learn the ways of knighthood. But Robin’s destiny is changed in one stroke. He falls ill and loses the use of his legs. Fearing a plague, his servants abandon him and Robin is left alone.

A monk named Brother Luke rescues Robin and takes him to the hospice of St. Mark’s, where he is taught woodcarving and – much harder – patience and strength. Says Brother Luke, “Thou has only to follow the wall far enough and there will be a door in it.”

Robin soon enough learns what Brother Luke means. And when the great castle of Lindsay is in danger, it is Robin, who cannot mount a horse and ride into battle, who saves the townspeople and discovers there is more than one way to serve a king.

[Summary courtesy of the publisher]

Consider visiting the following website to learn more about the author's work and literature: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marguerite_de_Angeli

Author Biography
Marguerite de Angeli

Marguerite de Angeli was one of the most popular, well-loved authors for young people ever. Born in 1889, she wrote more than twenty-five highly acclaimed children's books. A Door in the Wall was the winner of the Lewis Carroll Shelf Award and the Newbery Award. She and her husband, John, had four sons and one daughter. She died at the age of 98 in Philadelphia.
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Student Checklist

Student Name: ____________________________________________

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Grade/Level</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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Name: ____________________________
Before you read the chapters:

The protagonist in most novels features the main character or “good guy”. The main character of *The Door in the Wall* is ten year old Robin de Bureford who lived during the Middle Ages in London, England. Who would you say is your favorite protagonist from a novel you have read or a movie you have seen? Why did you choose this particular character?

Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence. You may need a dictionary!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>vexation</th>
<th>putrid</th>
<th>coif</th>
<th>embrasure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>victuals</td>
<td>hospice</td>
<td>sedately</td>
<td>jennet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Ellen fitted the snug _________ onto her head to help her to stay warm.
2. After the doctor's diagnosis, Jasper was quickly admitted into the _________.
3. The variety of ________ provided for the knights was most delicious.
4. Robin took his place beside the ________ in the castle wall.
5. The ________ odor from the decaying fish finally drove them outdoors.
6. Tears of ________ formed in her eyes.
7. Kevin reluctantly climbed up onto the back of the _________.
8. The princess awaited the arrival of the prince, lounging ________ upon a sofa in the throne room.
1. Describe the **setting** of the story.

2. Why had Robin's father and mother left their home?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Mother</th>
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3. Why do you think Robin treated Dame Ellen so rudely? What was the result of his rudeness?

4. Investigate: It mentions that the story took place during the reign of King Edward III of England. Using resources in your school library or on the Internet research the years of this monarch’s reign. _____________________________

5. Brother Luke told Robin that Dame Ellen had been taken of the plague. **True** or **False**

6. Why hadn't John-the-Fletcher come for Robin as planned?

7. Explain what the friar meant when he told Robin, *Thou hast only to follow the wall far enough and there will be a door in it?*
# Language Activities

## A. King Edward III

King Edward III was an important 14th Century figure, ruling England for 50 years. He was quite successful and achieved many accomplishments during his long and bloody reign.

Using resources in your school library or on the Internet investigate this important historical figure – the king that Robin’s dad served so faithfully. Record at least five important facts about King Edward III’s life and reign in the chart below.

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<td>4.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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</table>
B. A Quatrain Poem Celebrates Courage.

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, *The Knight Whose Armour Didn't Squeak*, written by A.A. Milne (Who also created *Winnie the Pooh*).

*Of all the Knights in Appledore*
*The wisest was Sir Thomas Tom.*
*He multiplied as far as four,**
*And knew what nine was taken from.*

Various rhyming schemes make up a quatrain poem. As you can see, the above four lines have a rhyming scheme of **A – B – A – C**. 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 chapter of our novel (like **knights or castles**).

**The Quatrain Poem**

Now create your own Quatrain Poem. Your poem must follow the format of a quatrain poem described above (and must rhyme).

**Title:** _______________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line 1</th>
<th>Line 2</th>
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<th>Line 4</th>
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C. Many authors enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here's one such example: from Chapter One: *the great whiskered wart on her chin.*

Using your imagination, create your own examples of **alliteration** from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of **three** words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A huge castle.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The flight of an arrow.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your choice.</td>
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</table>

D. **A simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is: *But his legs would not obey him. They were like two long pieces of uncooked dough...*

~ What is being compared in this example?

Invent your own **similes** comparing the following items with something from your own imagination:

a) a jousting tournament

b) a sword fight

c) your choice
Extension Activity

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 chapter of our novel. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.