

Bridge to Terabithia

Grades 4-6

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ISBN 1-55035-347-0

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Revised January 2006

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Published in the United States by:

On the Mark Press

3909 Witmer Road PMB 175

Niagara Falls, New York

14305

www.onthemarkpress.com

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Published in Canada by:

S&S Learning Materials

15 Dairy Avenue

Napanee, Ontario

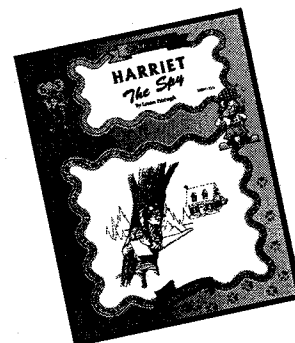
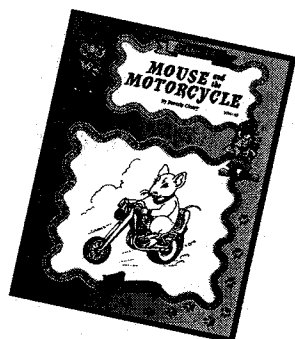
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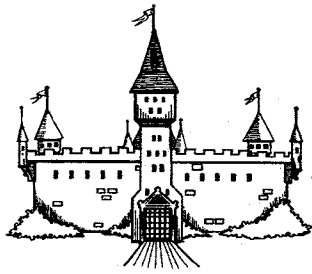
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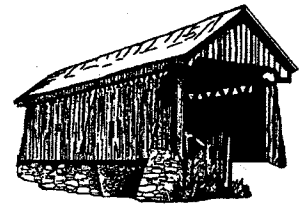
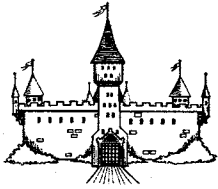


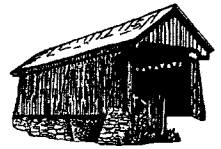
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Expectations

The students will:

- become acquainted with the writings of Katherine Paterson.
- learn about death and how to prepare their feelings about it.
- learn and review many skills to develop good reading habits.
- understand how strong friendships can be developed with others.
- further develop their own imaginations.

Teacher Input Suggestions

NOTE: It is strongly recommended that the teacher read the novel and the material in this resource well in advance of implementing them into the reading program. The teacher's knowledge and interest of the story is essential in order to maintain the enthusiasm of the students.

Introductions for the Unit

Bridge to Terabithia can be used in conjunction with themes about friendship, family and self-esteem.

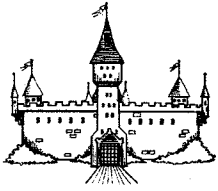
Choose and list the vocabulary words and their meanings that students may have difficulty with, and discuss them with your students. Add any other words that they suggest as they read the book.

Distribute copies of **Bridge to Terabithia** to the students. Have them examine the cover and discuss the title, characters, author and artist. Ask them to make predictions about the story.

Relate information about the author using the Author Biography in this unit.

Give each student a copy of the sheet called "Characters in the Novel". Instruct them to fill out the sheet each time that a new character is mentioned in the book. They are to record information about the character (appearance, personality, relationship to other characters, etc.) and make personal comments.

Display and read other books written by the author. Katherine Paterson has written other Newbery Medal winners including **Jacob Have I Loved** and **The Great Gilly Hopkins**. Discuss the qualities of a good friend. Discuss friendships between boys and girls; how are they different than girl to girl or boy to boy friendships.



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Decorations

Display students' artwork completed on this unit around the class.

Paint a mural of a scene that would be seen in one of the chapters of **Bridge to Terabithia**.

Make a "Magic Kingdom" Bulletin Board display; have each of the students list the rules that they would make for their own magic kingdom. You may want to group the children into boy/girl pairs for this.

Video

Bridge to Terabithia is available on video cassette. Choose one of the versions to show to your class at the end of the novel study. Compare the similarities and differences between the book and the movie.

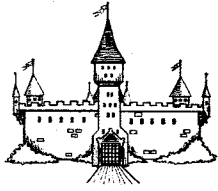
Vocabulary

Bridge to Terabithia contains words that some students may find challenging. However, it is best to discuss vocabulary words in the context they are given in the book. Therefore, rather than listing these words, this unit includes activities that allow the students to use the new vocabulary in a meaningful way.

Response Journals and Reading Logs

A reading log may be used by students as an introduction to response journals. They may be introduced by the teacher before the story study or as part of a story study. It is very important that the teacher model responses. The expectation of Junior Students who have had experience with reading logs is that they may add how they feel about aspects of the story, make predictions, or ask questions which lead to more complex entries expected in a response journal. As with reading logs, spelling and grammar need not be corrected.

Response journals may be shared with the group as well as with the teacher. How often they are checked is determined by the teacher but due to the length of the response journal entry, it is recommended that they be checked daily.



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Synopsis

Jess Aarons is a ten-year old boy with four sisters: two younger - Joyce Ann and May Belle; and two older - Ellie and Brenda. Other than six year old May Belle, he tries to stay out of his sisters' way.

The Aarons are getting new next door neighbors. Jess is disappointed to find out that the ten-year old moving in is another girl. Leslie Burke is a tom-boy but, definitely a girl.

On the first day of fifth grade, Jess finds out that Leslie is in his class. Everyone is surprised to find out that neither Jess nor bossy Gary Fulcher is the fastest runner this year. It is Leslie who "ran as though it was her nature" that outraces them all.

Jess realizes that Leslie isn't a typical girl and that she might even make a good friend. One day, Leslie and Jess decided to make a secret place in which they are the rulers. They make it in the woods behind the farmland and called it "Terabithia".

At Christmas Jess has a problem: what special gift could he give to Leslie that doesn't cost a lot of money? He finds free puppies being given away to good homes. He chooses one whom Leslie names Prince Terrien (P.T.). Leslie gives Jess watercolors and paper because she knows how much he loves drawing.

In the spring, Jess and Leslie aren't able to go to Terabithia as much because it rains a lot and fills the river that they have to cross to get to the stronghold.

One day, Miss Edmunds, Jess' favorite teacher, invites Jess to go to the Art Gallery with her. He is delighted since he loves art and really enjoys being with Miss Edmunds. He decides not to invite Leslie so that he could have a special day alone with his teacher.

When he returns, Jess is told that Leslie has drowned trying to cross the river to get to Terabithia. Jess is devastated. Gradually, he tries to come to terms with her death. He realizes that he can be strong without Leslie by his side.

Leslie's parents move away. Jess builds a safe bridge across the river to Terabithia. May Belle is crowned the new Queen of Terabithia.

Author Biography

Katherine Womeldorf Paterson was born on October 31, 1932 in Qing Jiang, China, the middle child of five children. Her parents were missionaries; as a child, she moved with them eighteen times before she was eighteen years of age, living in China, Japan, and the United States.

Her first college degree was in English from King College in Bristol, Tennessee. She taught sixth grade for a year in Lovettsville, Virginia and then she herself became a missionary in Japan.