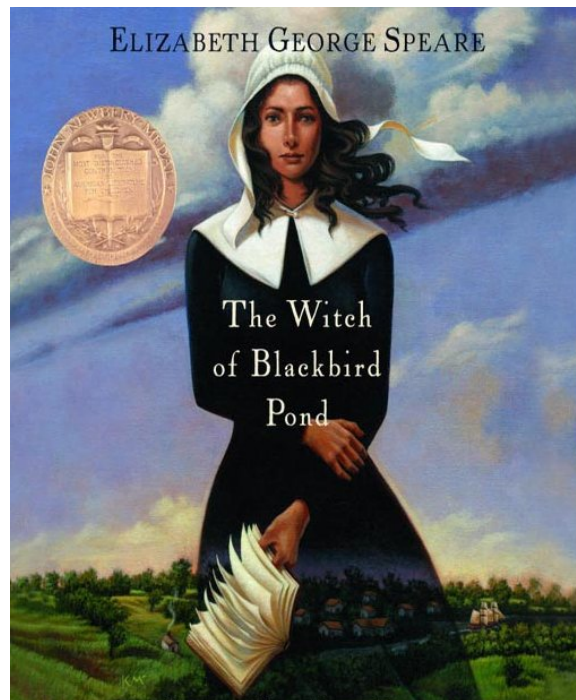


The Witch of Blackbird Pond: A 5th Grade Literacy Focus Unit

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FEATURED SELECTION:

The witch of Blackbird Pond by Elizabeth George Speare. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1958

Summary: The setting is the Colony of Connecticut in 1687 among the political and religious conflicts of that day. Sixteen-year-old Kit Tyler unexpectedly arrives at her aunt and uncle's doorstep and is unprepared for the new world that awaits her. Her grandfather in Barbados raised Kit; she does not understand the conflict between those loyal to the king and those who defend the Connecticut Charter. Not ready for the religious intolerance and rigidity of the Puritan community, she is constantly astounding her aunt, uncle, and cousins with her dress, behavior, and ideas. She takes comfort in her secret friendship with the widow, Hannah Tupper, who has been expelled from Massachusetts because she is a Quaker and suspected of being a witch. When a deathly sickness strikes the village, first Hannah and then Kit are accused of being witches. Through these conflicts and experiences, Kit comes to know and accept herself.

RELATED MATERIALS:

Avi. (2000). *Night journeys*. New York: Avon Books.

- This book is about a boy who lives in the mid-1700s, about 100 years after the pilgrims traveled to America, with a deeply religious Quaker man. It provides information into the life of Quakers and what life was like after the initial colonial period, with an exciting story along with it.

Erickson, P. (2001). *Daily life in the pilgrim colony 1636*. New York: Sandpiper.

- This book includes background detail on politics and religion in 17th-century Europe and to specific information on day-to-day activities in the lives of pilgrims. The author presents the general conduct of the new community, and life in the colony of New Plymouth.

Grace, C. (2001). *1621: A new look at Thanksgiving*. Washington DC: National Geographic Society.

- 1621: A New Look at Thanksgiving exposes the myth that this event was the “first Thanksgiving” and is the basis for the Thanksgiving holiday that is celebrated today. This book describes the actual events that took place during the three days that the Wampanoag people and the colonists came together.

McGovern, A. (1991). *If you sailed on the Mayflower in 1620*. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

- Imagine being a Pilgrim on the Mayflower, anxiously awaiting arrival in a new land. This book answers a variety of questions about Pilgrim life--both on the ship and on shore--helping readers understand what it was like to have lived at that time.

Sewell, M. (1986). *Pilgrims of Plymouth*. New York: Aladdin

- Daily life of the pilgrims is portrayed in this picture book. The focus of the book takes place in Plymouth, Massachusetts in the 1620s.

Yolen, J. & Stemple, H. (2004). *The Salem witch trials: An unsolved mystery from history*. New York: Simon & Schuster Publishing.

- The Salem Witch trials were a very important event that shaped the history of the colonial period. This book ties in with The Witch of Blackbird Pond due to the discussion of the witch trials.

GOALS:

- The students will enjoy reading/learning about the colonial period.
- The students will learn about different perspectives of the Church of England/Puritans/Quakers/Native Americans.
- The students will ask in depth questions about the topic and will seek the answers on their own.
- The students will gain an understanding for new vocabulary words.
- The students will create projects that reflect their learning during this unit.

SKILLS:

- The students will learn to compare and contrast points of view.
- The students will learn how to write concise and thorough responses that answer questions completely without repeating thoughts and/or information.
- The students will be able to identify the main conflict of the featured story and explain how it is resolved.
- Students will learn how to participate in grand discussions that dig deeper and involve critical thinking.

INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS:

Social Studies Standards

- 5.1.4 Ways of Life Before and After the Arrival of Europeans to 1610. Locate and compare the origins, physical structure and social structure of early Spanish, French and British settlements.
- 5.1.5 Colonization and Settlements: 1607 to 1763. Explain the religious, political and economic reasons for movement of people from Europe to the Americas.
- 5.1.6 Colonization and Settlements: 1607 to 1763. Identify and discuss instances of both cooperation and conflict between Native American Indians and European settlers, such as agriculture, trade, cultural exchanges and military alliances, as well as later broken treaties, massacres and conflicts over control of the land.

- 5.2.2 Foundations of Government: Identify and explain ideas about limited government, the rule of law and individual rights in key colonial era documents.

English Standards

- 5.3.1 Identify and analyze the characteristics of poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction and explain the appropriateness of the literary forms chosen by an author for a specific purpose.
- 5.3.2 Identify the main problem or conflict of the plot and explain how it is resolved.
- 5.3.4 Understand that theme refers to the central idea or meaning of a selection and recognize themes, whether they are implied or stated directly.

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- 5.7.1 Comprehension: Ask questions that seek information not already discussed.
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- 5.7.11 Deliver oral responses to literature that:
 - summarize important events and details.
 - demonstrate an understanding of several ideas or images communicated by the literary work.
 - use examples from the work to support conclusions.
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UNIT PLAN:

Pre-Reading

- Create a KWLH chart and fill in the first three columns as a class about what they know about pilgrims and the colonial period. The teacher will then introduce the students to the colonial period by providing a brief background information lesson. (From a text book and/or supplemental reading material seen above)
- Then the teacher will show the students a website in which they can learn how to talk like the pilgrims did. [<http://www.plimoth.org/kids/talk.php>]
 - Because this is an introduction to the topic students will be assessed on attentiveness and input while the teacher is talking and during the creation of the KWLH chart.

Reading:

- The first chapter will be read aloud by the teacher, and then periodically throughout the unit. Students will read independently or with a friend during class on the days the teacher does not read aloud. (See time schedule for details).
- While students read they will write questions/comments on Post-it notes and place them in the book to help them participate in grand discussions and fuel independent research if they so choose.
 - Students will be assessed on their participation during discussion and the inclusion of Post-it notes in their book.

Responding:

- The students will identify the main problem of the book or and explain how it is resolved through creating a pamphlet about the plot, setting, etc. of the book and including the conflict and resolution.
- The class will meet and have grand discussions and talk about what is happening in book, answer question, and discuss Post-it notes.
 - Students will be assessed on their participation during discussion and the inclusion of Post-it notes in their book.

Exploring:

- The teacher will provide mini lessons over vocabulary words, based on the words outlined at: [http://www.glencoe.com/sec/literature/litlibrary/pdf/witch_of_blackbird_pond.pdf]

- The students will keep a journal as an individual living during the colonial period including vocabulary words from the book. (See Applying section for details).
 - Journal entries will be due periodically during the unit and will be assessed on historical accuracy according to “character” and inclusion of historical events.
- The students will create Venn diagrams comparing Native Americans vs Pilgrims and Puritans vs Quakers.
 - Student will be assessed on completion.

Applying

- The Students will imagine that they are living during the colonial period. They will decide whether they are Puritan or Quaker, create a new name for the character that they will be playing, based on research and what they know about each group, and come up with a profession. As their new persona, students will create a structure that fits the profession they have chosen and place it in the town the class will create.
 - Students will be assessed on neatness, historical accuracy, etc.

TIME SCHEDULE:

Day 1 *Introduce topic of the colonial period —KWL Chart *Teacher read Ch.1-Ch. 2 aloud	Day 2 *Students read Ch. 3- Ch. 4 *Vocabulary review for chapters 1-8	Day 3 *Students read Ch. 5-Ch. 6 *Grand Discussion *Choose name/ profession, etc.	Day 4 *Students read Ch. 7 –Ch. 8 *Venn diagram #1 due	Day 5 *Teacher read Ch. 9- Ch. 10 aloud *Vocabulary review for chapters 9-16 *First journal entry due
Day 6 *Students read Ch. 11-Ch. 12 *Grand discussion	Day 7 *Students read Ch. 13- Ch. 14 *Second journal entry due	Day 8 *Teacher read Ch. 15- Ch. 16 aloud *Grand discussion	Day 9 *Students read Ch 17- Ch 18 *Vocabulary review for chapters 17-21 *Venn diagram #2 due	Day 10 *Students read Ch 19- Ch 20 *Grand Discussion *Third journal entry due
Day 11 *Teacher read Ch 21 *Grand discussion	Day 12 *Project work day *Fourth journal entry due	Day 13 *Project work day	Day 14 *Project work day	Day 15 *Projects finished placed in town/ presented to class

ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST:

- _____ Post-it notes
- _____ Journal entries during unit
- _____ Pamphlet
- _____ Venn Diagrams
- _____ Building/Structure for town