

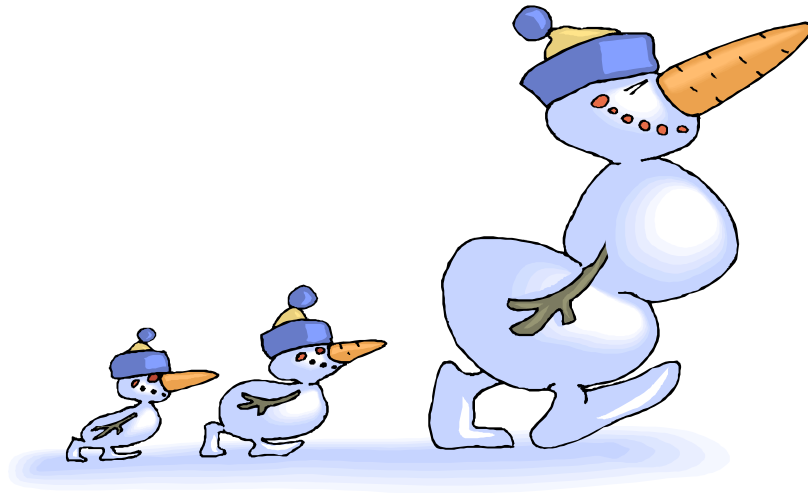
The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

by Barbara Robinson

Teaching Packet

Before You Read
Vocabulary
Short Answer Questions
Keys

from the
Novel Teaching Pack
by Margaret Whisnant



ISBN 978-1-934538-00-0

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Taking Grades Publishing Company
Conover, NC

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Three Christmas Stories

What are your **three** favorite stories about Christmas? Do you like old stories or new ones? Do odd or funny characters catch your attention? Is there music that makes you want to hear or watch one of the stories again and again? Does the ending of a particular story always make you happy? Maybe you enjoy certain phrases, such as *Bah! Humbug* or *Good Grief, Charlie Brown!* Do you look forward to hearing the Christmas story from the Bible each year? Which of your favorites do you like **best**?

Choose your favorite holiday stories and then use the form below to collect your thoughts about each one. Write a composition about **Three Christmas Stories**.

One of my favorite Christmas stories is _____.
I like it because. . .



Another story about Christmas that I like is _____.
I enjoy this one because. . .



I couldn't do without _____.
This one is on my list of favorites because. . .



Something to Think About. . .

- In your opinion, what are the **three best** methods available for parents who want to teach their children to behave properly?
- What are your **three** most important **personal rules**—the ones you always follow without being reminded?
- What do you think your classroom would be like if there were no teacher and no rules to follow?
- Of all the rules that govern your classroom, which one do you think is the most important? Explain how it helps everybody.
- Make a list of things that you believe should always be done the same way every time—*looking both ways before crossing a street*, for example.
- Make a list of things that absolutely should be done differently as often as possible—*meals*, for example. Eating the same thing meal after meal, day after day is neither a pleasant thought nor healthy.
- What is the goofiest thing you remember doing when you were younger? Did you get into trouble for it? Did you do it again? Do you know anybody else who did the same thing?
- Have you ever been in a play? If so, tell about it?
- So far, what is the best **live performance** you have ever seen?
- What is your school's policy about dealing with bullies? What responsibility does every student have when there is a bully at work?
- Do you believe people can change bad behavior, or do you think that some people are just born bad and will never change? Explain your position.

Bulletin Board Ideas:

Composition:

- Ask students to do illustrations for their compositions about ***Three Christmas Stories***. Display both the compositions and the illustrations on a bulletin board.

Story Board for Sequencing skills:

- Divide students into seven groups—one for each chapter of ***The Best Christmas Pageant Ever***. Assign each group to a particular chapter.
- After a chapter is read, the assigned group is responsible for creating drawings, finding magazine cut-outs, or producing staged photographs to illustrate various **scenes** from their chapter.
- When the reading is finished, there will be a graphic rendition of the story—**scene by scene**—on display. Later, the drawings, photos, etc. can be used as *visual* tools for teaching sequencing skills.

Word List with Definitions

(Listed in story order. Some words may appear on more than one page.)

vain In an improper or irreverent manner; to no purpose; futile; excessively proud of or concerned about one's own appearance, qualities, or achievements, etc.; conceited. *homophones: vein and vane* (p. 1)

clonked Hit hard, especially on the head; beat; thumped. (p. 4)

aquarium A glass-sided tank, bowl, or other water-filled enclosure, in which fish or other living aquatic animals or plants are kept. (Distinguished from *terrarium*.) (p. 5)

hysterical Experiencing uncontrollable outbursts of emotion or fear or panic, often characterized by irrational weeping or laughter; agitated; berserk; upset. (p. 7)

contagious Capable of being transmitted by bodily contact with an infected person or object; tending to spread from person to person; catching; communicable. (p. 9)

blackmail To extort money (or other payments) from another by use of threats; extortion. (p. 10)

souvenir A usually small and relatively inexpensive article given, kept, or purchased as a reminder of a place visited, an occasion, etc.; memento. (p. 11)

penitentiary A place for imprisonment, reformatory discipline, or punishment, especially a prison maintained by a state or federal government for serious offenders. (p. 14)

pageant An elaborate public spectacle that illustrates the history of a place, institution, religious celebration, or the like. (p. 14)

contribution Money, time, knowledge, assistance given to a charity, organization, or fund; worked as an important factor in; helped to cause something to happen; donations; offerings; gifts. (p. 16)

bazaar (also **bazar**) A sale of miscellaneous contributed articles to benefit some charity, cause, or organization; a market consisting of a street lined with shops and stalls, especially one in the Middle East. {distinguished from **bizarre** by pronunciation: *bazaar* (bə.zär') *bizarre* (bĩ.zär')} (p. 17)

standard An approved model; an object that is regarded as the usual or most common size or form of its kind; accepted; normal; customary. (p. 17)

tradition Something that is handed down from one generation to another, as customs, beliefs, legends, information, etc.; custom; heritage. (p. 19)

congregation An assembly of people brought together for common religious worship; assembly; audience; gathering. (p. 19)

shrugged Raised and contracted the shoulders, expressing indifference, doubt, disdain, etc. (p. 21)

sentiment A thought, view, or attitude, especially one based mainly on emotion rather than reason. (p. 21)

practical Sensible; suitable or capable of being put into effect; workable; realistic; useful. (p. 21)

slouching Moving or walking with a loosely drooping body posture and a careless gait; sitting or standing in a drooping posture. (p. 22)

sympathize To share a feeling or have a compassion for, as for suffering or trouble. (p. 31)

volunteer To offer oneself for a service without pay; a person who performs a service willingly without pay. (p. 32)

ridiculous Laughable; worthy of being made fun of; absurd; bizarre; funny; foolish. (p. 33)

participate To take part in or share in something. (p. 35)

sacrilegious A behavior in violation against anything sacred or believed to be sacred; irreverent; disrespectful. (p. 35)

barge To push one's way in or intrude rudely; a flat-bottomed vessel, usually intended to be pushed or towed, for transporting freight or passengers; to move clumsily or bump into things. (p. 36)

truant A student who stays away from school without permission. (p. 42)

disgraceful Shameful; dishonorable; bringing about the loss of respect, honor, or esteem. (p. 49)

instincts A powerful motivation or impulse; the inborn patterns of behavior that are characteristic of a species, such as nest building in birds. (p. 50)

villain A wicked or evil person; scoundrel; a dramatic or fictional character who is typically at odds with the hero. (p. 50)

appropriate Suitable or fitting for a particular purpose, person, occasion, etc.; correct; right; befitting; well-suited. (p. 63)

parsonage The residence of a member of the clergy, as provided by the church or parish. (p. 66)

cockeyed Twisted, tilted, or slanted to one side; having a squinting eye; ridiculous; nutty. (p. 72)

colic A condition of unknown cause seen in infants less than three months old, marked by periods of inconsolable crying lasting for hours or weeks at a time; pain in the abdomen or the bowels. (p. 74)

confer To consult together; to compare opinions; to carry on a discussion or deliberation; talk; discuss; to bestow, as an honor. (p. 76)

collapsible Having the ability to fold compactly; bendable. (p. 79)

bewildered Completely puzzled or confused; perplexed; addled; baffled. (p. 80)



Dictionary Digs

Dig into a dictionary for answers to the following questions about some special vocabulary words from *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. Write the **letters** of the correct answers in the blanks to the left.

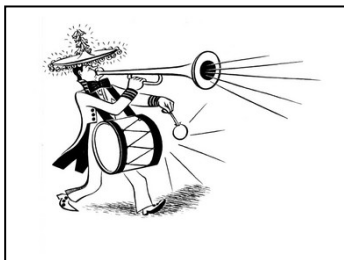
- _____ 1. Which of the following is probably **not** a situation that would cause a person to become **hysterical**? (A) a kitchen fire, (B) winning a large amount of money, (C) watching your favorite television program with your best friend.
- _____ 2. Which of the three possible words can be substituted for **practical** in the following sentence without changing its meaning?
*Asking for Dad's advice is the most **practical** solution to our tree-house construction problems.* (A) sensible, (B) embarrassing, (C) difficult
- _____ 3. What is the job of a **truant** officer? to deal with students who (A) live in extreme poverty, (B) stay away from school without permission, (C) move often and miss too much school.
- _____ 4. In addition to a *flat-bottom vessel, usually pushed or towed*, the word **barge** also means (A) to push one's way in rudely, (B) a medal emblem worn by police officers as identification, (C) expressing one's opinion.
- _____ 5. Who is likely to live in a **parsonage**? a (A) custodian, (B) government official, (C) pastor
- _____ 6. Which of the following is something **not** generally thought of as **contagious**? (A) a bad sunburn, (B) laughter, (C) the flu.
- _____ 7. An **antonym** of **sympathize** is (A) disapprove, (B) console, (C) synthesize.
- _____ 8. Which of the following phrases is the **best** example of the correct use of the word **contribution**? (A) an honest **contribution**, (B) a charitable **contribution**, (C) the **contribution** hidden in his words.
- _____ 9. Of the three homophones **vain**, **vein**, and **vane**, which one means *in an improper or irreverent manner*? (A) vain, (B) vein, (C) vane.
- _____ 10. What is the difference between a **volunteer** and an **employee**? (A) an employee works for a business; a volunteer works for a charity, (B) a volunteer is usually in a supervisory position; an employee is a member of the work force, (C) an employee gets paid for working; a volunteer does not get paid for working.
- _____ 11. What is unique about a **collapsible** chair? It (A) can seat more than one person, (B) can be folded for storage, (C) is sturdier than regular chairs.
- _____ 12. A **synonym** for the word **ridiculous** is (A) unbelievable, (B) serious, (C) absurd.
- _____ 13. A good example of a literary character who is also a **villain** is (A) Lord Voldemort, (B) Batman, (C) Harry Potter.
- _____ 14. If someone has been **clonked**, what has happened? He or she has been (A) promoted to another grade, (B) removed from a sports team, (C) hit on the head.
- _____ 15. What is the **main** difference between an **aquarium** and a **terrarium**? An aquarium always contains (A) plants, (B) animals, (C) water.
- _____ 16. Which one of the three word choices correctly completes the following sentence?
*Melanie haughtily **shrugged** her _____ and walked away.*
(A) nose, (B) shoulders, (C) feet
- _____ 17. Which is the *most likely* place to find a **congregation**? (A) at a sporting event, (B) in a movie theater, (C) in a church.
- _____ 18. An **antonym** of **disgraceful** is (A) shameful, (B) fanciful, (C) admirable.

19. The *most likely* type of people to live in a **penitentiary** are (A) criminals, (B) senior citizens, (C) those belonging to a particular religious order.
20. Another word for **confer** is (A) conifer, (B) discuss, (C) dismiss.
21. Which of the following is something you should refuse if asked to **participate**? (A) a school play, (B) parachuting off a high bridge, (C) reporting a crime to police.
22. At which place is someone *most likely* to purchase a **souvenir**? (A) in a foreign country, (B) at a local discount store, (C) in a school cafeteria.
23. Which of the following cartoons *best* illustrates the meaning of the word **bewildered**?

A.



B.



C.



24. Which word below can be substituted for **cockeyed** in the following sentence so that it changes it to an opposite meaning? *Francine's idea was **cockeyed**.*
(A) practical, (B) crazy, (C) bizarre
25. An *antonym* of **appropriate** is (A) correct, (B) practical, (C) cockeyed.
26. **Sacrilegious** behavior involves showing a lack of respect for (A) something sacred, (B) a parent or other authority figure, (C) the dignity of others.
27. Which of the following is **not** *usually* associated with the definition of **blackmail**?
(A) money, (B) postage, (C) threats.
28. The word **slouching** can be used to describe (A) body posture and a way of walking, (B) the uneasy feeling that one has in a dark room, (C) slow speech and movements.
29. The correct spelling of the word that means *a sale of miscellaneous contributed articles to benefit some charity, cause, or organization* is (A) **bizarre**, (B) **bazaar**, (C) **bizare**.
30. Which of the following phrases is **not** a good example of the correct use of the word **standard**? (A) *standard* English, (B) set a new *standard*, (C) hysterical *standard*.
31. Which of the following topics is *most likely* to be the focus of a **pageant** presented as part of a community celebration? (A) local history, (B) beauty, (C) architecture.
32. The correct respelling of the word **sentiment** is (A) sən'tī. mīnt, (B) sən'tə.mənt, (C) sīn.tə'mīnt.
33. The condition known as **colic** is *usually* associated with (A) teenagers, (B) infants less than three months old, (C) people with severe injuries.
34. An *synonym* for **tradition** is (A) modern, (B) education, (C) custom.
35. Which of the following are **not** classified as **instincts**? (A) reading and writing, (B) migration and nest building, (C) hibernation and animal courtship behavior.

Who Did It?

Someone has removed an important word from each of the following sentences and then hidden it in a list with four incorrect terms. Rescue the missing words by writing each one in the blank next to the sentence where it belongs. Do not allow Imogene Herdman near this page again!

- _____ 1. My brother chose an owl feather as a _____ of our camping trip.
standard tradition souvenir volunteer villain
- _____ 2. Dad's _____ deck chair folded while he was in it.
disgraceful ridiculous contagious collapsible bewildered
- _____ 3. My _____ to tonight's family dinner is eating cooked carrots.
contribution sentiment truant blackmail standard
- _____ 4. _____ on the couch in front of a TV is not an indoor sport.
Participate Slouching Clonked Shrugged Cockeyed
- _____ 5. Claiming that your completed homework was whisked away by aliens in a UFO is a _____ excuse that probably won't work.
contagious sacrilegious cockeyed appropriate practical
- _____ 6. Travis slipped off his skateboard and _____ his helmet on a tree.
cockeyed shrugged standard bewildered clonked
- _____ 7. Mrs. Tolbert's good humor and friendly laughter are _____.
hysterical bazaar contagious disgraceful sacrilegious
- _____ 8. It isn't polite to _____ in on someone's private conversation.
colic confer vain barge truant
- _____ 9. I want to _____ in the play's production as a wardrobe assistant.
participate confer barge appropriate standard
- _____ 10. A picnic on the Fourth of July is an American _____.
standard parsonage tradition contagious sentiment
- _____ 11. My sister's new hairstyle is cockeyed and totally _____.
collapsible appropriate standard clonked disgraceful
- _____ 12. In the art of choosing the best friends, I have good _____.
confer instincts standard vain sentiment
- _____ 13. Mom did not _____ with my goal to win the Dirtiest Socks Contest.
volunteer confer participate sympathize appropriate
- _____ 14. Using the vacuum cleaner to swab the aquarium is not _____.
appropriate clonked bazaar sentiment vain
- _____ 15. We should _____ before we make a final decision.
barge colic confer participate sympathize
- _____ 16. Requiring finished homework before allowing TV time is _____!
contagious hysterical blackmail sacrilegious truant
- _____ 17. A huge crowd of bargain-hunters attended the church _____.
standard bazaar souvenir volunteer parsonage
- _____ 18. Juanita's plea for a curfew extension was in _____.
tradition sentiment vain standard ridiculous
- _____ 19. Is the Grinch a _____ or a hero?
truant villain volunteer sympathize sacrilegious
- _____ 20. Several people were completely _____ by the maze of hedges.
clonked shrugged contagious bewildered truant

Misfit Words

In each of the groups below, one word is a misfit, not quite belonging with the others. Remove the inappropriate terms from the groups and write them in the blanks to the left.

- _____ 1. **bazaar** sale charity market mall
- _____ 2. customary unusual normal **standard** accepted
- _____ 3. cry console **sympathize** ignore hug
- _____ 4. laughter berserk panic relaxed **hysterical**
- _____ 5. cautious suspicious **ridiculous** cantankerous social
- _____ 6. **sacrilegious** disrespectful sacred flight irreverent
- _____ 7. chair fold tent **collapsible** train
- _____ 8. scoundrel **villain** Superman Cruella Deville Darth Vader
- _____ 9. illegal school transportation **truant** parents
- _____ 10. proud you **vain** me first
- _____ 11. **pageant** Christmas beauty costumes shoppers
- _____ 12. audience traffic church **congregation** assembly
- _____ 13. extortion intimidation **blackmail** secrets friendly
- _____ 14. tooth decay cold measles influenza **contagious**
- _____ 15. stopped **shrugged** mugged hugged plugged
- _____ 16. vacation memento disposable inexpensive **souvenir**
- _____ 17. salary **volunteer** donation scoutmaster charity
- _____ 18. preacher church rent **parsonage** home
- _____ 19. **confer** converse consult conversation concert
- _____ 20. associate **participate** cooperate collaborate abbreviate
- _____ 21. **bewildered** composed addled dumbfounded flabbergasted
- _____ 22. skills behaviors abilities **instincts** contributions
- _____ 23. instinct infant **colic** crying discomfort
- _____ 24. sensible nutty ridiculous slanted **cockeyed**
- _____ 25. suitable reasonable disgraceful **appropriate** correct

Short Answer Questions

1

1. What did the Herdmans do that made them absolutely the worst kids in the world?
2. How many Herdmans were there, and where did they live?
3. What did Claude Herdman's cat do the day he brought it to first grade for Show-and-Tell?
4. How did teachers avoid having two of the six Herdmans in one classroom?
5. How did Imogene gain possession of Wanda Pierce's charm bracelet, Lucille Golden's imitation alligator pocketbook, and ten cents a week from Floyd Brush?
6. What information did Imogene learn about Alice Wendleken, and how did she use it?
7. Where was the Herdmans' father?
8. What did Mrs. Herdman do when a social worker tried to get some welfare money so she wouldn't have to work two shifts at the shoe factory?
9. Who looked after the Herdmans?
10. Until they got themselves mixed up with the church and the Christmas pageant, where did it seem they were headed?

2

1. Before she was put in charge of it, what had been Mother's connection to the Christmas pageant?
2. What event prevented Mrs. George Armstrong being in charge of the Christmas pageant as usual?
3. What was the standard casting for the Christmas pageant?
4. What suggestion did Father make as a way to make a change?
5. What happened the year Alberta Bottles whistled "*What Child Is This?*" for a change of pace?
6. What did Charlie say when he stood up to tell what he liked best about Sunday school?
7. How did the Herdmans get the idea that they would get dessert if they went to Sunday school?
8. On the first Sunday they came to church, why did the Herdmans find all kinds of food in the kitchen?
9. How were the Herdmans able to go to movies without paying their way?
10. What did Imogene say when she was told that the Christmas pageant was about Jesus?

3

1. What trick did Father use to get Mrs. Armstrong off the phone with Mother?
2. What was the concern of one child when Mother explained that everyone should be present for rehearsal since there would be only five of them?
3. How did Alice Wendleken behave when Mother asked for volunteers for the role of Mary?
4. How did Elmer Hopkins finally escape his unhappy duty of playing Joseph?
5. What roles did Leroy, Claude, and Ollie Herdman fill?
6. Why were the shepherds unhappy with the idea that Gladys Herdman was going to be the Angel of the Lord?
7. What did Alice's mother think about Imogene's participation in the Christmas pageant as Mary?
8. How did Mrs. Armstrong react when she heard the news about the Christmas pageant?
9. How did Mrs. Armstrong's attitude affect Mother?
10. Explain how Reverend Hopkins finally got the complaints to stop.

4

1. Why did Mother begin the first rehearsal by reading the Christmas story from the Bible?
2. What word did Ralph Herdman yell out when he heard that Mary was "great with child?"
3. What did Alice plan to do about what the Herdmans did during the first rehearsal?
4. Why were the Herdmans able to relate to the part of the story about how the baby Jesus was put in a manger instead of a bed?
5. What organization did Imogene ask about when she realized that Joseph and Mary had tied up their baby and put him in a feedbox?

6. Why did Gladys yell "Shazam!," fling her arms, and smack the kid next to her when she heard Mother read the part about the Angel of the Lord?
7. What was Imogene's opinion of the gifts the Wise Men brought to the baby?
8. What did Leroy say he would do if he was a king and some other king pushed him around?
9. Why did the Herdmans want to know who was going to play Herod in the play?
10. What were the Herdmans arguing about when they left the rehearsal?

5

1. Why did Mother think the Herdmans had some good instincts deep down inside?
2. How did the Herdmans find out about Herod?
3. Why did Miss Graebner, the librarian, say she might as well go ahead and retire?
4. What distressing fact did the Herdmans learn about Herod?
5. How did the Herdmans want to rewrite the Christmas Pageant?
6. What were some of the things that Alice Wendleken was writing down?
7. What was Imogene's portrayal of Mary like?
8. What question did Leroy ask about the Wise Men?
9. What did Imogene offer to do so that a real baby could play the part of Jesus?
10. Why was Imogene pleased when Mother said they would use a baby doll for the part of baby Jesus?

6

1. The night of the last rehearsal, why was the church kitchen full of ladies in aprons?
2. What were **three** things that kept Mother from rehearsing the play straight through as she had planned?
3. What was Imogene's reaction to Alice Wendleken's information that the angel said, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace?"
4. How did Imogene spend the five minute break that Mother called?
5. Why did Mrs. Homer McCarthy call the fire department?
6. How was Reverend Hopkins dressed when he ran over from the parsonage to see what was going on?
7. While everyone was outside milling around in the street, what happened in the kitchen?
8. What did Mrs. Wendleken do when she read Alice's notes?
9. How did Mother answer Reverend Hopkins' question about possibly calling off the Christmas Pageant?
10. Though Reverend Hopkins thought no one would come to the pageant, what actually happened?

7

1. On the night of the pageant, why didn't Mother's family have any supper?
2. How did Gladys and Ralph make their entrance as the angel choir hummed "O, Little Town of Bethlehem"?
3. Describe Imogene's treatment of the baby doll before she put it in the manger.
4. With the only speaking part in the pageant, how did Gladys deliver her line and what did she say?
5. Where did Leroy, Claude, and Ollie get the ham they brought as a gift for the baby Jesus?
6. What unexpected thing did Imogene do during the singing of "Silent Night?"
7. What did everyone say about the Christmas pageant?
8. What was the author's explanation for Imogene's unexpected behavior and her black eye?
9. After the pageant, why did Mother have a ham?
10. To the girl telling the story, what is Mary always going to look like?

Vocabulary

Dictionary Digs

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. C | 21. B |
| 2. A | 22. A |
| 3. B | 23. C |
| 4. A | 24. A |
| 6. C | 25. C |
| 6. A | 26. A |
| 7. A | 27. B |
| 8. B | 28. A |
| 9. A | 29. B |
| 10. C | 30. C |
| 11. B | 31. A |
| 12. C | 32. B |
| 13. A | 33. B |
| 14. C | 34. C |
| 15. C | 35. A |
| 16. B | |
| 17. C | |
| 18. C | |
| 19. A | |
| 20. B | |

Who Did It?

1. souvenir
2. collapsible
3. contribution
4. slouching
5. cockeyed
6. clonked
7. contagious
8. barge
9. participate
10. tradition
11. disgraceful
12. instincts
13. sympathize
14. appropriate
15. confer
16. blackmail
17. bazaar
18. vain
19. villain
20. bewildered

Misfit Words

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. mall | 21. composed |
| 2. unusual | 22. contributions |
| 3. ignore | 23. instinct |
| 4. relaxed | 24. sensible |
| 5. social | 25. disgraceful |
| 6. flight | |
| 7. train | |
| 8. Superman | |
| 9. transportation | |
| 10. you | |
| 11. shoppers | |
| 12. traffic | |
| 13. friendly | |
| 14. tooth decay | |
| 15. stopped | |
| 16. disposable | |
| 17. salary | |
| 18. rent | |
| 19. concert | |
| 20. abbreviate | |

Short Answer Questions

1

1. They lied, stole, smoked cigars, talked dirty, hit little kids, cussed their teachers, took the name of the Lord in vain, and set fire to Fred Shoemaker's toolhouse.
2. There were six Herdmans—Ralph, Imogene, Leroy, Claude, Ollie, and Gladys. They lived over a garage at the bottom of Sproul Hill.
3. It scratched kids, messed up the classroom, and ate two pet mice. The hysterical first graders had to have recess for the rest of the day.
4. The Herdmans were purposely passed from grade to grade.
5. They were fat, and Imogene found out how much they weighed.
6. Imogene found out that Alice picked up a case of head lice at summer camp. She would sneak up on Alice at recess, smack her head, and holler "Cooties." Everybody called Alice "Cooties" the whole rest of the year.
7. When Gladys was two years old, he climbed on a railroad train and disappeared.
8. Mrs. Herdman said no. She liked the work.
9. They looked after themselves—the older one looking after the one who came next. As a result, Gladys, the youngest Herdman, was also the meanest.
10. Everyone thought they were headed straight for hell by way of the state penitentiary.

2

1. She made her children be in it, and she made her husband go see it.
2. She fell and broke her leg.
3. Primary kids were angels; intermediate kids were shepherds; big boys were wise men; the minister's son, Elmer Hopkins, was Joseph; and Alice Wendleken was Mary.
4. He suggested that Mother cancel the pageant and show movies.
5. She put too much into it, ran out of air, and passed out cold on the manger in the middle of the third verse.
6. "What I like best about Sunday school is that there aren't any Herdmans here."
7. Leroy kept stealing the dessert from Charlie's lunchbox. Finally, Charlie told him to take it because he could get all the dessert he wanted in Sunday school.
8. It was the Sunday that the congregation brought food as a Thanksgiving present for the Orphans Home.
9. They caused a commotion and snuck in and then they spread out over the theater so the manager never found them all before the picture was finished.
10. "Everything here is."

3

1. He went out on the porch and rang the doorbell. Mother was able to say truthfully that she had to hang up because someone was at the door.
2. He asked what if he or some of the other children got sick.
3. Alice just sat there, chewing on a piece of her hair and looking down at the floor.
4. Imogene stood to volunteer for the role of Mary and added that Ralph wanted to be Joseph.
5. They were the Wise Men.
6. Gladys Herdman hit too hard.
7. She said it was sacrilegious.
8. She nearly fell out of bed. She said it would never have happened if she had been in charge.
9. She was so mad she couldn't see straight. She said she was going to have the best Christmas pageant anybody ever saw, and she would do it with the Herdmans.
10. He reminded everyone that when Jesus said "Suffer the little children to come unto me," He included the Herdmans.

4

1. The Herdmans had never heard it.
2. He yelled out "pregnant."
3. She was going to tell her mother.
4. They had put Gladys in a bureau drawer because Ollie was still in the bed, and he didn't like Gladys.
5. She wanted to know where Child Welfare was.
6. She thought the Bible story was like the "Amazing comics" that she read.
7. She thought they were cheap kings for handing out oil for a present.
8. He said he would go be king somewhere else.
9. They wanted to beat up on him.
10. They were arguing about whether Joseph should have set fire to the inn or chased the innkeeper into the next county.

5

1. They picked out the right villain in the Christmas story.
2. They went to the library and looked him up.
3. The Herdmans came to get library cards because they wanted to read about Jesus and the king who was out to get him.
4. He died in bed of old age.
5. They wanted to hang Herod for a finish.
6. She was making notes about how Gladys drank communion wine, crayons were being stolen from Sunday-school cupboards, pennies had disappeared from the Happy Birthday bank, and Imogene, dressed in her Mary costume, smoked cigars in the girls' room.
7. She was loud and bossy, refusing to let Joseph or the Wise Men get close to the baby.
8. He wondered what would have happened if they had gone back to Herod and told on the baby Jesus.
9. She offered to steal one from outside the A&P supermarket.
10. She was pleased because a doll can't bite.

6

1. They were getting ready for the pot-luck supper that was going to take place the next night.
2. The baby angels came in at the wrong place. A whole gang of shepherds didn't come in at all, for fear of Gladys. Imogene couldn't find the baby Jesus doll and dropped the flower urn substitute on Ralph's foot. Some of the angels sang "Away in a Manger" while the other half sang "O, Little town of Bethlehem." Imogene yelled at the Wise Men not to touch the baby.
3. Imogene said "My God! . . . He'd never get out of the first grade if he had to write all that!"
4. She went to the ladies' room and smoked cigars.
5. She smelled something funny and saw some smoke in the ladies' room.
6. He was dressed in his pajamas and his woolly bathrobe.
7. All the applesauce cake burned up.
8. She got on the telephone and called everybody she could think of, including Reverend Hopkins.
9. Mother said no, and it was going to be the best Christmas pageant they ever had.
10. Everybody came to see what the Herdmans would do.

7

1. Mother forgot to fix it.
2. They came in late and they didn't come through the door pushing each other out of the way. They looked confused, as if they weren't sure they were in the right place.
3. She had it slung up over her shoulder, and she thumped it twice on the back before she put it in the manger.
4. She hollered "Hey! Unto you a child is born!" as if it was the best news in the world.
5. They had taken it from the food basket the church charitable works committee had given them for Christmas.
6. She began crying and crying and crying.
7. They said it was the best Christmas pageant ever. There was something special about it, but nobody seemed to know why.
8. It was as if she had just caught onto the idea of God, and the wonder of Christmas. She had walked into the corner of the choir cabinet in a daze and given herself the black eye.
9. The Herdmans would not take it back. They also refused the candy and the little Bibles. Imogene asked for a set of Bible-story pictures and declared the image of Mary to be exactly right.
10. Mary was always going to look a lot like Imogene Herdman—sort of nervous and bewildered, but ready to clobber anyone who laid a hand on her baby.

About your Novel Teaching Pack Components. . .

Before You Read

In this component, the focus is on sparking student interest. Each teaching pack includes both an **independent activity** and a series of **whole-group/small-group discussion** or **research topics**, written as open-ended questions.

At least one **bulletin board idea** is included. In some cases, activities in the **Think, Write, Create** component also involve the creation of a bulletin board or classroom display.

Vocabulary

One of the many advantages of literature-based reading instruction is the opportunity to observe vocabulary in action! It is this circumstance that drives the vocabulary portion of the novel teaching packs.

Word Choices. . .

The words lifted from the novel for focused study are chosen based on one or more of the following criteria:

<i>their level of difficulty</i>	<i>their frequency of use in children's literature</i>
<i>their importance in comprehending the story</i>	<i>their value as useful composition vocabulary</i>
<i>the probability that they will be encountered across the curriculum</i>	
<i>unique meanings, spellings, pronunciation, etc.</i>	

Word Lists and Definitions. . .

For teacher convenience and reference, word lists with definitions are included. The selected words are arranged in story order, complete with page numbers so they can be spotted easily and studied in their "natural habitats." For clarity, the definitions are paraphrased to match the word's tense, number, part of speech, etc. rather than cross referenced as in a standard dictionary. The major resource of this information is www.dictionary.com.

Dictionary Activities. . .

Long word lists are divided into chapter sets of workable numbers and presented as **Dictionary Digs**—sometimes given a slightly different name to correspond with the theme of the novel. In this introductory stage, students use a dictionary to answer a series of multiple choice questions about word meanings, usage, unique characteristics, etc.

Using the Words. . .

Other activities, which pull terms from the lists in random order, lead students through a variety of word studies which include

<i>sentence usage</i>	<i>word types (acronyms, onomatopoeia, etc.)</i>
<i>word forms</i>	<i>scrambled sentences</i>
<i>synonyms and antonyms</i>	<i>analogies</i>
<i>categories</i>	<i>whole-class/group games</i>
<i>word groups/connections</i>	<i>etymologies</i>

Short Answer Questions

Short answer questions for each chapter (or groups of chapters) are the first available assessment tools. The items encourage (and check) careful reading. Some require the reader to recognize a major event or idea while others involve finding a minor detail. The questions are in *sequence* with the pages they cover, but they are **not** designed to call attention to plot construction or other story elements.

The short answer questions can be used as

<i>individual student reading guides</i>	<i>discussion group guides</i>
<i>pop quizzes</i>	<i>conferencing with individual students</i>