

For the boy,
there is no dog like Sounder,
the great coondog,
whose unmistakable voice
fills the night with music.

And then,
with the scent of ham still lingering in the cabin,
the sheriff and his deputies
take the boy's father away.

Sounder
takes a blast from the deputy's shotgun
and disappears.

The boy goes searching
for Sounder,
for his father,
and for himself. . .



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Souder
by William H. Armstrong
A Novel Teaching Pack
by Margaret Whisnant

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An Introduction to **Your Novel Teaching Pack. . .**

Goals

To . . .

- Offer a teaching guide with a full spectrum of learning experiences that flow from **basic knowledge** to **higher-level thinking skills**.
- Provide **classroom-ready** materials that **motivate** and **instruct**.
- Create **novel-specific activities** that require careful reading, help develop comprehension skills, and challenge the thinking process.
- Accommodate a wide variety of student **ability** and **interest**.
- **Support teachers** by providing a practical teaching resource that saves preparation time.
- Include **cross-curricula activities** as an integral part of the novel study.
- Correlate to various state **education standards and requirements** for language arts.

The Seven Components. . .

1. Summaries

Written in present tense, the chapter-by-chapter summaries are more detailed than those found in most teachers' guides or other sources. Important points of the plot, character motivation and development, and story clues are all included. For quick reference, the summaries are presented in bulleted format. These synopses are a valuable resource for

*quickly becoming familiar with a title when time is limited
managing a reading program that involves multiple titles/reading groups
facilitating independent study
refreshing memory when using a novel from year to year.*

2. 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.

3. 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

sentence usage
word forms
synonyms and antonyms
anagrams
categories
word groups/connections

word types (acronyms, onomatopoeia, etc.)
scrambled sentences
analogies
whole-class/group games
etymologies

4. Assessment

The two sections in this portion of the teaching pack offer a wealth of materials designed to build a strong **foundation** for student progression to higher level thinking skills. The operative phrase is **basic comprehension**.

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

student reading guides
pop quizzes

discussion groups guides
conferencing with individual students

Objective Tests

The objective tests have multiple functions. In addition to their obvious application, they also serve as tools that can *improve **comprehension skills** by providing practice in understanding plot structure and recognizing important story elements.*

Rationale:

Focus on the Plot. . .

Whether they are aware of their ability or not, all good readers sense the **rhythm** of the **connected** events that compose the plot of a novel, and consequently **comprehend** the story. They are in tune with cause and effect, behavior and consequence, sequence—the heartbeat of the narrative.

This “plot rhythm” forms the framework for the objective tests. The chain of events that tell the story have been pulled from the novel and reformatted into a series of sequential questions, none of which require **interpretation**. They are intended to **draw student attention to the fact that something happened**, not to what the incident means. That comes later.

In addition to their testing function, teachers may use the pages to strengthen their students’ ability to **Summarize**: With only the questions as a guide, have students write a summary of the chapter. For a set of ten questions, limit the number of sentences they may write to seven or fewer. When they work with twenty or more questions, allow no more than twelve sentences.

Report the News: Ask your students to write a newspaper article based on the events identified in a set of questions and the *who, what, when, where, why* elements. Some information needed to complete this assignment may be located in previous chapters.

Twist the Plot: Choose one or two questions from each chapter and change its answer—true to false, no to yes, etc.—to demonstrate how changing a single (or several) events would (or would not) change the story. This process can be used to help students become proficient in distinguishing major plot movers from minor story details.

The Characters. . .

Too often, when they are asked to describe a story character’s personality, the only answer many students can muster is “nice.” This portion of the Novel Teaching Pack, coupled with related activities from **Think, Write, Create**, is a well of opportunities for those teachers who wish to eradicate “nice” from their students’ vocabularies!

Questions that identify a character’s personality and/or motivation are purposely and carefully included with the plot movers. Again, the questions do not require **interpretation**. They simply establish that someone did or said something—knowledge that is invaluable when character analysis is required.

Implied Meaning and Story Clues. . .

The objective tests include items that establish the existence of story components carrying **implied meaning**. **Story clues** that tantalize the reader with hints of future events also appear as question. At this point in the novel study, as before, **interpretation** is not the goal. **Awareness** of the **facts** is the target.

Developing/Improving Listening Skills. . .

Listening skills are rightfully included on every list of state competency requirements. Rather than always requiring students to answer test questions on a printed page, why not surprise them occasionally by doing the test orally and meeting competency goals at the same time?

Discussion Guide Capability. . .

The objective tests are helpful discussion guides. Use individual items on these pages to draw student attention to sequence, cause and effect, story clues (foreshadowing), character traits, recognizing and interpreting implied meanings, etc. These “thinking out loud” sessions are an **important building block** for the next learning phase.

5. Think, Write, Create

In this section, students pack up what they already know about the novel and go exploring into its every nook and cranny. Some activities require the simplest interpretation or application, while others will challenge the most proficient thinkers. There is a high probability that young scholars, even reluctant ones, will label some of the selections as **fun**.

Rationale:

Guidelines. . .

Most of the items in this section are based on the skills presented in the **Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Bloom’s Taxonomy)**. There are two reasons for this choice. First, it mirrors the Novel Teaching Pack’s primary purpose of building a variety of sophisticated thinking skills on a foundation of basic knowledge. Second, in following the taxonomy guidelines, activities that correlate with many state educational standards emerge automatically.

Organization. . .

Chapter-specific activities are grouped and presented according to their corresponding sets of **Short Answer Questions** and **Objective Test** page(s). Having led students through the basics for each chapter (or selected section), teachers may shop in this section for in-depth activities to optimize student understanding and interest. Armed with a firm grasp of each successive chapter, students are more likely to anticipate, embrace, and enjoy the next section. By repeating the process, students are also mastering concepts and intricacies connected to the **whole** novel

The **Whole Book Activities**, as their name indicates, require a grasp of the theme(s), characters, implications, etc. as they apply to the full novel. These pages are a teacher’s smorgasbord of culminating possibilities. In some cases, the choices are outgrowths of concepts that students have dealt with in a previous activity. In others, students are encouraged to look at the novel from a new angle.

Levels of Difficulty. . .

A broad spectrum of **difficulty levels** to accommodate the needs of individual students, including the gifted, is an integral part of **Think, Write, Create**. However, **all** items from this section are intended to **challenge** and **sharpen** thinking abilities.

Activities. . .

Every novel teaching pack includes activities that require students to choose and use precise, appropriate, and meaningful **vocabulary**. These exercises involve choosing a group of words to describe a character’s personality or behavior. The following example is from **Charlotte’s Web**.

Eight-year-old Fern cried and begged her father not to destroy the runt pig. She sealed the little animal’s fate by asking her father if he would have killed her if she had been born very small.

- Which **two** of the following words do you think **best** describe the way Fern’s father behaved during this episode? Explain your choice. Include the definitions of the words you selected in your answer.

<i>practical</i>	<i>sensitive</i>	<i>loving</i>	<i>cruel</i>	<i>considerate</i>
<i>realistic</i>	<i>flexible</i>	<i>callous</i>	<i>compassionate</i>	<i>logical</i>

- Choose **two** words from the list below that you believe **best** describe Fern’s behavior. Explain why they are the appropriate words. Use the definitions of your choices as part of your explanation.

<i>impulsive</i>	<i>compassionate</i>	<i>assertive</i>	<i>tender-hearted</i>	<i>hysterical</i>
<i>undisciplined</i>	<i>naive</i>	<i>juvenile</i>	<i>humane</i>	<i>empathetic</i>

In each case students work with a given collection of terms, all of which can be correctly applied to the character(s) in question. However, the individual words have strengths of meaning. It is the student's task to analyze both the character's behavior and the words, make choices, and then cite events from the story to support his/her selection.

Teachers may opt to narrow the choices to fewer words, choose words for individual students, divide the class into groups and offer a specific set of words to each group, or use the assignment as it is written. Whatever the technique, it is here that the word *nice* can be knocked off the shelf, shattered on the floor, and swept out the door. No longer necessary. Useless. Gone!

Other items in this section challenge students to . . .
*write for self-expression, for communication, and
for entertainment
form opinions and theories
cite "evidence" from the story to support their
explanations and opinions
connect personal experience to story situations
become familiar with and identify literary elements
analyze story characters and events
make predictions based on given facts*

*think about social issues
create drawings, diagrams, photos, maps,
models, recordings, films, etc.
imagine
categorize
engage in research and data gathering
recognize and perceive story theme(s)
understand point of view*

Cross Curricula. . .

Think, Write, Create takes full advantage of opportunities to connect both major themes and the smallest story detail to other realms of the curriculum. In **Charlotte's Web**, for example, students may apply their calculation skills to a page of "Spider Math." In the **Holes** teaching pack is a challenge to create a game that utilizes a "saved" group of Camp Green Lake's holes.

Options, options, and more options. . .

Think, Write, Create is purposely bulging at the seams to give teachers **pick-and-choose options** for
*individualizing assignments
group work
whole class activities
capitalizing on student interest*
*homework
short-term and long-term projects
differentiating assignments for two or more classes*

6. Graphic Organizers

Ideas for the graphic organizers are pulled from the chapter or whole book activities and expanded into a writing assignment. Priority is given to those topics that allow a student to relate personal experiences, make choices, empathize with a story character, and/or imagine.

Structure. . .

The organizers do not repeat a set pattern of circles, squares, lines, etc., prescribed for a particular type of writing. Each one is tailored to a **specific idea** pulled from the novel. **Structured directions** for organizing the topic support the student at this stage of the process so that **writing** is the major focus.

Non-writing Organizers. . .

Sometimes, students are enticed to stretch their imaginations by filling out "forms" or writing "diary entries." One graphic organizer from **Hatchet**, for example, allows students to assume the persona of the pilot who rescued Brian by writing three entries into his log—the day before the rescue, the day of the rescue, and the day after the rescue. In the **Holes** Novel Teaching Pack, students become detectives and conduct a "background check" on Mr. Sir, recording their findings on the provided "official form." In these cases, composition skills take a back seat to **imagination, empathy, and pure enjoyment**. Teachers may wish to capitalize on student enthusiasm by asking for a written "report" based on the information entered on the forms.

7. Answer Keys

Keys for **all items that require a specific answer** are included in this section.

A final note from the author. . .

It is my personal wish that when the last page has been read, the last activity completed, and the last idea discussed, at least one of your students will ask, "What are we going to read next?" Margaret Whisnant



Margaret Whisnant

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Chapter Summaries

I (Pages 1-11)

- The boy, shivering in the cold October wind, stands with his father on the cabin porch. He pets the head of the coon dog Sounder. Three small children peer from inside the cabin, but they are not allowed to come out in the cold to pet the dog.
- Sounder and the boy are about the same age.
- There are no visible lights from other sharecropper cabins. The white man has scattered them over his endless fields. Sometimes the boy and his parents walk to visit the distant cabins, or to go to the meetin' house.
- There is also a school, which opens after harvest and ends before planting time, but it is eight miles away. The boy has tried for two Octobers to make the long journey in the cold, but he is laughed at for always being late. His mother encouraged him to give it up. When he is bigger, he believes he can walk faster and get to school on time.
- Without school, the boy is pleased to have Sounder. There is no other dog like him.
- The boy's father stands silent and motionless, listening. But the boy hears nothing.
- Sounder—a mix of redbone hound and bulldog—is named for his voice, louder and clearer than any purebred hound. The dog stalks quietly, but when his quarry is close, his voice fills the night. Neighbors listen and know that it is Sounder.
- The boy's father promises to let him go hunting with him that night if the wind doesn't rise. The two of them bring a stick of wood inside for the cabin stove. The boy hears the leaves rattling as he closes the cabin door.
- The mother serves corn mush, and talks with the boy's father about how things will be better next year.
- The hunting is getting worse this winter. Sounder and his master come home with an empty brown sack night after night. There are few scraps for Sounder, and the people inside the cabin are hungry for solid food.
- After supper, Sounder's master goes out of the cabin and stands listening. Back inside, he sits behind the stove for a long time. When it is bedtime for the smaller children, the man goes back outside without the hunting lantern or Sounder or the boy. He orders the whining dog to go back under the porch.
- Inside, the boy's mother picks kernels of walnuts with a bent hairpin. She intends to pick two pounds, which she can sell for thirty cents at the store.
- The stories the woman sometimes tells take away the boy's night loneliness, which fills him when the younger children have gone to bed or when his father is not in the cabin. His mother had once explained that his night loneliness was part fear. He is never afraid when his father is near.
- The woman, who does washing once a week for the people in the big house down the road, tells her son the story of the mighty flood which the Lord sent to wash away all the evil in the world.
- Later, tucked in bed with his little brother, the boy hears Sounder whimpering under the porch. He wonders where his father has gone without the dog. He dreams of the land being covered by the Lord's mighty flood and of all the cabins floating together forming a town—a place where he wouldn't be lonely anymore.

I—continued (Pages 11-18)

- The boy awakens to find there is no floodwater. Except for the frost, everything is the same as it had been the day before.
- The possum kettle boils on top of the stove, which the family uses for cooking and heating. In the skillet are pork sausages and the possum kettle holds hambone, which the boy has smelled only twice in his life.
- The aromas excite Sounder, and the dog scratches at the door. The boy calls to him to hush and go away.

Alphabetical Word List

(Some words may appear on more than one page.)

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| addled (p. 9) | gyrations (86) |
| ajar (p. 2) | hobble (p. 83) |
| amid (p. 113) | indistinct (p. 106) |
| animosity (p. 90) | malicious (p. 90) |
| ashen (p. 23) | mange (p. 48) |
| askew (p. 107) | mellow (p. 93) |
| avalanche (p. 108) | mimicked (p. 104) |
| baser (p. 90) | mistletoe (p. 54) |
| bittersweet (p. 54) | mongrel (p. 23) |
| bramble (p. 20) | murmur (p. 32) |
| bulging (p. 4) | orneriness (p. 93) |
| calloused (p. 4) | parched (p. 103) |
| chute (p. 60) | peering (p. 2) |
| cistern (p. 91) | plaintive (p. 27) |
| commotion (p. 92) | poultice (p. 48) |
| compulsion (p. 84) | prompted (p. 112) |
| conjured (p. 95) | pursuit (p. 92) |
| constrained (p. 27) | quarry (p. 5) |
| corridor (p. 63) | resolved (p. 108) |
| drought (p. 103) | rivulets (p. 44) |
| echo (p. 114) | sanctuary (p. 93) |
| encased (p. 108) | scarred (p. 71) |
| fallow (p. 19) | sharecropper (p. 2) |
| famished (p. 68) | spires (p. 16) |
| felled (p. 110) | spiraled (p. 45) |
| flex (p. 110) | successive (p. 3) |
| floundering (p. 27) | suffocated (p. 107) |
| fret (p. 68) | sulfurous (p. 106) |
| gruff (p. 22) | sultry (p. 106) |



Word Lists with Definitions

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

Set One: Chapters I—V (Pages 1-75)

- ajar** Neither entirely open nor entirely shut; partly open. (p. 2)
- peering** Looking intently, searchingly, or with difficulty; being partially visible. (p. 2)
- sharecropper** A tenant farmer who gives a share of the crops raised to the landlord as rent. (p. 2)
- successive** One following another in a regular sequence; one after another in uninterrupted order; consecutive; continuous. (p. 3)
- bulging** Curving of swelling outward; protruding. (p. 4)
- calloused** Made thick and tough through wear or work; insensitive or indifferent, especially to the sufferings of others. (p. 4)
- quarry** A hunted animal; prey; game, especially that hunted with hounds or hawks; hunted animals considered as a group; an excavation or pit, usually open to the air, from which building stone, slate, or the like, is obtained by cutting, blasting, etc.; the act of taking stone from a quarry. (p. 5)
- addled** Confused; muddled; upset; bewildered. (p. 9)
- spires** Tapering, pointed parts of something; a tall, sharp-pointed summits of something, as of buildings or trees. (p. 16)
- fallow** Pertaining to land that has been plowed and left unseeded for a season or more; not in use; inactive; unproductive. (p. 19)
- bramble** A prickly shrub or bush, such as a blackberry; a brier. (p. 20)
- gruff** Low and harsh; surly; hoarse; rough; brusque. (p. 22)
- ashen** Extremely pale; drained of color; pale, as from illness or emotion. (p. 23)
- mongrel** A dog of mixed or indeterminate breed; of mixed origin or character. (23)
- constrained** Forced; stiff or unnatural; kept within close boundaries; confined; uneasy or embarrassed. (p. 27)
- plaintive** Expressing sorrow or sadness; mournful; pathetic; pitiful. (p. 27)
- floundering** Making clumsy attempts to move or regain one's balance; moving or acting clumsily or in confusion. (p. 27)
- murmur** A low, continuous, indistinct sound, especially of discontent; mumbling; babbling. (p. 32)
- rivulets** Small brooks or streams; a branch. (p. 44)
- spiraled** Moved in a circular motion or course; circled. (p. 45)
- poultice** A soft moist mass of bread, meal, clay, or other adhesive substances, usually heated, spread on a cloth and applied to an aching or inflamed part of the body. (p. 48)
- mange** Any of several skin diseases caused by parasitic mites, affecting animals and characterized by skin lesions, itching, and loss of hair. (p. 48)
- mistletoe** A plant having yellowish flowers and white berries, growing parasitically in trees, used as Christmas decoration; the floral emblem of Oklahoma. *Mistletoe is a hemi-parasite, having green leaves that do some photosynthesis, using the host mainly for water and minerals.* (p. 54)
- bittersweet** A climbing, trailing plant, also called woody nightshade, having small, violet, star-shaped flowers with a protruding yellow center and scarlet berries; both bitter and sweet to the taste, such as chocolate; producing or expressing a mixture of pain and pleasure; a dark to deep reddish orange. (p. 54)
- chute** An inclined passage, channel, or trough through which things may pass; a parachute; to drop from an aircraft by means of a parachute. (p. 60)
- corridor** A hallway; a passage into which several rooms or apartments open; a narrow tract of land forming a passageway, as one connecting two cities or for allowing an inland passage to the sea. (p. 63)
- fret** To feel or express worry, annoyance, discontent, etc.; brood; mope. (p. 68)
- famished** Extremely hungry; starving to death. (p. 68)
- scarred** Showing a mark left by a healed wound, sore, or burn; blemished; marked by a scar or scars. (p. 71)

Dictionary Digs

Set One: Chapters 1-V (Pages 1-75)

Use a dictionary to find answers to the following questions about some challenging words from pages 1-75 of Sounder's story. Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank to the left.

- _____ 1. Which of the following statements is **not** true of **mistletoe**? (A) It is used as a Christmas decoration. (B) It grows in trees as a type of parasite. (C) Its berries are often used to make jams and jellies.
- _____ 2. The most likely person to have **calloused** hands is (A) a teacher, (B) a farmer, (C) an electrical engineer.
- _____ 3. The word that is a *homophone* for **chute** is (A) shoot, (B) cute, (C) shoe.
- _____ 4. Which word can be substituted for **addled** in the following sentence without changing its meaning?

*The boys were **addled** for a few seconds after their collision.*

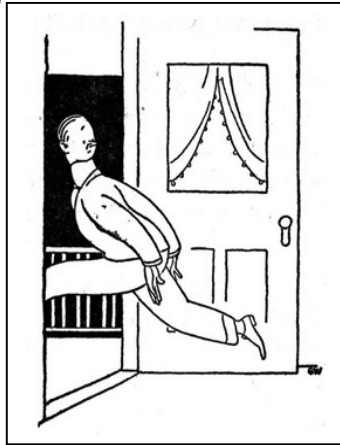
(A) confused, (B) hysterical, (C) enraged

- _____ 5. Identify the drawing that illustrates a door left **ajar**.

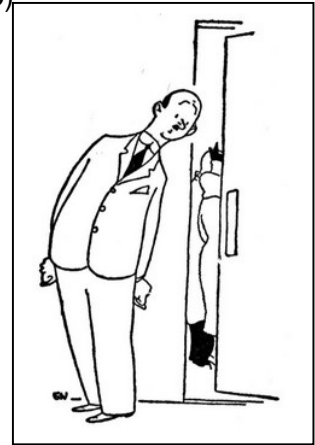
(A)



(B)



(C)



- _____ 6. Which of the following could be correctly described as "*flowing in rivulets*"? (A) a row of flags on display, (B) muddy water after a downpour, (C) a flock of ducklings.
- _____ 7. An *antonym* for **plaintive** is (A) pathetic, (B) obstinate, (C) pleased.
- _____ 8. Which of the following statements is **not** true of a **sharecropper**? A sharecropper (A) gives part of the crops he raises to a landlord, (B) does not own the land he farms, (C) works as a supervisor for the person who owns the land.
- _____ 9. A correct definition for **scarred** is (A) showing a mark left by a healed wound, (B) being extremely frightened, (C) showing or compelling a feeling of reverence.
- _____ 10. The *least likely* place for **spires** is (A) atop a large church, (B) in a new elementary school, (C) in a forest of tall trees.
- _____ 11. Choose the word that can change the meaning of the sentence if it replaces **gruff**.
*Mrs. Gillespie spoke to the class in a **gruff** manner.*
(A) courteous, (B) surly, (C) brusque
- _____ 12. A **bramble** is (A) a group of noisy animals, (B) a prickly shrub or bush, such as a blackberry, (C) a row of landscaped, flowering shrubs.
- _____ 13. Which phrase is the *best* example of the correct use of **constrained**? (A) **constrained** by a tall fence, (B) **constrained** with enthusiasm, (C) **constrained** for a good friend.

Short Answer Questions**I (Pages 1-11)**

1. What time of the year was it when the man and the boy stood on the cabin porch with Sounder?
2. Besides the boy, how many younger children were there in the family?
3. Who lived in the other cabins that were scattered over the fields?
4. Why did the boy's mother encourage him to give up going to school that was far away at the edge of town?
5. Explain how Sounder got his name.
6. How were Sounder's skills as a hunter helpful for the family?
7. Explain why the family had only corn mush for their supper.
8. When the boy's father left the cabin, what did he **not** take with him?
9. How much did the boy's mother get for the walnut kernels that she picked from the shells?
10. What story did the boy's mother tell before he went to bed?

I—Continued Pages 11-18

1. What two purposes were served by the cabin's chunk stove?
2. Why was the boy surprised to see that there were pork sausages in the skillet?
3. What was boiling in the possum kettle?
4. How did the boy know that his mother was worried about something?
5. What was the only other time the boy remembered when the oak slab had ham on it?
6. Which part of the ham did the boy's father say was to be saved for Sounder?
7. What did the boy's father do toward evening?
8. What did the boy's mother do before she began picking walnuts?
9. Instead of telling a story, what did the boy's mother do as she picked walnuts?
10. What did the boy wish for his mother and his father and for himself?

/

Pages 1-11

Write either **True** or **False** in the blank before each statement.

- _____ 1. Sounder had been given to the boy's father as payment for work he had done.
- _____ 2. There were three children in the family younger than the boy.
- _____ 3. The sharecroppers' cabins were built side by side on the edge of a huge field.
- _____ 4. The boy had to walk eight miles to and from school.
- _____ 5. The past two Octobers, the boy had given up trying to get to school because the trip was too long and too cold.
- _____ 6. In addition to going to school, the boy liked hunting with Sounder.
- _____ 7. Sounder got his name from his loud hunting voice.
- _____ 8. Sounder was a purebred Georgia redbone hound.
- _____ 9. In the winter, the boy's family made money selling the possums and skins from the raccoons that Sounder caught.
- _____ 10. Everyone in the countryside recognized Sounder's voice when he was hunting.
- _____ 11. The boy's father explained that animals didn't move about when it was windy because hunting dogs could easily catch their scent.
- _____ 12. The boy's father promised to take him along if he went hunting.
- _____ 13. For supper, the boy and the younger children ate wedges of browned corn mush.
- _____ 14. The crop and the hunting had been better for the boy's family this year than last year.
- _____ 15. When he left the cabin and went out into the night, the boy's father was alone.
- _____ 16. Each year after the first hard frost, the boy's mother picked kernels from the walnuts she gathered and sold them at the store.
- _____ 17. Before the boy went to bed, his mother told a story of the days of slavery.
- _____ 18. The boy's mother did washing for the people who lived in the big house down the road.
- _____ 19. The boy's pillow and mattress were stuffed with straw.
- _____ 20. The boy dreamed about his cabin floating into a town where he wouldn't be lonesome anymore.



WHOLE BOOK TEST



Write either **True** or **False** in the blank before each statement.

- _____ 1. The boy and his family were poor sharecroppers.
- _____ 2. Sounder was a full-blooded redbone hound.
- _____ 3. Sounder got his name from the sound of his voice.
- _____ 4. Everyone in the area knew when Sounder was hunting because they recognized the sound of his barking.
- _____ 5. Sounder had been given to the boy as a birthday present.
- _____ 6. The boy's father often brought pork home when he helped with the butchering at the big house, and the boy was not surprised when he smelled ham bone cooking in the possum pot one morning.
- _____ 7. The boy's mother hummed when she was worried and sang when she was not worried.
- _____ 8. The boy's mother read Bible stories to her family each night after supper.
- _____ 9. Before his father was taken away, the boy did not go to school because it was too cold and too far to walk.
- _____ 10. The boy's father was arrested and sent to a prison camp for stealing a ham and sausage.
- _____ 11. The deputy shot Sounder because the dog bit him.
- _____ 12. The boy was an only child.
- _____ 13. The boy, instead of his mother, took the cake to his father because women weren't allowed in the jailhouse.
- _____ 14. The sheriff's deputy ruined the cake the boy's mother baked for his father.
- _____ 15. The sheriff came to the cabin to let the boy's mother know when his father was sentenced and sent away to prison camp.
- _____ 16. Sounder came back to the cabin two weeks after he had been shot.
- _____ 17. To heal Sounder's wounds, the boy's mother made a special medicine from herbs she gathered.
- _____ 18. The boy's mother did laundry for the people who lived in the big house.
- _____ 19. The boy and his mother did not know how long his father would be in prison.

Think, Write, Create

Chapter Activities

I Pages 1-11

When the story begins, the boy is standing on the porch in the cold with his father and Sounder. He pets the dog and listens to his father tell how the dog had come to him along the road when he was no more than a pup.

- Write Sounder's history before he found the boy's father. Where had he been born? Why was he wandering alone along the road?
- The boy says that he and Sounder must be about the same age. What age do you suppose they are?
- How do you know that both the boy and his three younger siblings loved Sounder.

Sounder was a mixture of Georgia redbone hound and bulldog. *His ears, nose, and color were those of a redbone. The great square jaws and head, his muscular neck and broad chest showed his bulldog blood.*

- Find a picture or an illustration of a Georgia redbone hound and of a bulldog.
- Use the picture(s) and/or illustration(s) as guides to draw a picture of what you believe Sounder probably looked like.

The boy finally agreed with his mother and gave up walking the eight miles morning and evening to get to the school located far away at the edge of town.

- Why do you suppose the boy was willing to make such an arduous journey to get to school?
- If school buses and all motor vehicles suddenly disappeared, what would happen to the way we live? How would it affect school?
- Would you be willing to ride a bicycle from your home to your school? Why or why not?
- Would you agree to walk or ride a bicycle to places you enjoy, such as your favorite restaurant? Elaborate on your answer.
- Speculate as to whether computers and the internet might some day make it unnecessary for people to travel from place to place. What would be some advantages of such a system? What problems would it create?

When the boy said, "*There ain't no dog like Sounder,*" he was making a bold statement. He was not exaggerating, however.

Explain how the dog was an important part of the boy's life. Find evidence to prove that Sounder was not only a hard-working, contributing member of the family, he was also well-respected in the community.

Organize your ideas, and then write a composition to prove that the boy was telling the truth—***There Ain't No Dog like Sounder.*** (See **Graphic Organizer #1**)

On page 6 the author wrote, *At the door, the father took down the lantern that hung on the wall beside the possum sack and shook it. "There's plenty of coal oil," he said.*

- What is coal oil? Where does it come from?
- Besides providing fuel for a lantern, what were other uses for this substance?
- Do we still use coal oil for anything? Elaborate on your answer.

Think, Write, Create

Whole Book Activities

Even before his father was taken away, the boy felt a profound sense of loneliness. It came to him again when he went to visit his father in jail.

Loneliness is an emotion normally associated with being alone. As part of a loving family, the boy was not alone. So, what exactly was the loneliness that came over him?

- Which of the following do you believe explain the boy's loneliness? Use facts from the story to support your choices.

living in extreme poverty
living in isolation from other people
being separated from mainstream society
having limited access to travel and exploration
lack of opportunity for improving one's life
enduring discrimination
lack of education and educational opportunities
feeling disconnected from the world

Reluctantly, the boy's mother agreed that he could go looking for his father.

- Speculate as to how the boy's story would have been different if his mother hadn't allowed him to leave. Think about how his travels were life-changing experiences.
 - The boy read in his book, "*Only the unwise think that what has changed is dead.*" When the boy became a man, how did this statement prove to be true?
-

Though he did not specifically name the place where *Sounder's* story takes place, the author included many clues that can lead an observant reader to determine correct location.

- Use the following facts to identify the **state** where you believe the boy and his family lived. Explain how each item helped you reach a conclusion.

There were four seasons and the ground froze during the winter.
Wild animals of the area included raccoons, possums, dry-land moccasins, and copperheads.
There was swampland and bog water nearby.
The area was lowland woods and foothills.
People lived in "big houses" and cabins—leftovers from the plantation system.
The author mentions Gilmer County and Bartow County as places where the boy searched for his father.

- Once you have identified the state, name the region—southeast, northeast, etc.. Include a list of towns—large ones and small ones—where you think the boy might have traveled or lives as a man.
-

The author did not include a single date that would pinpoint the time of *Sounder's* story. However, he did plant clues that can narrow the time frames of the story.

Based on the following facts, decide what **decade(s)** could be a logical time for *Sounder's* story. Explain how you used each item to eliminate or include various time periods.

The boy's family worked as sharecroppers.
Hunting was a major source of food for the boy and his family.
Racial discrimination was a fact of life.

(Continued on next page)

*The boy's family used wood for heating and cooking. The "big house" **could have** had electricity.
 The sheriff came to arrest the boy's father with horses and a buggy.
 The boy's mother could sell her walnut kernels at the store for fifteen cents a pound.
 The boy followed railroad tracks on his travels.
 People had guns.
 The cabin had no mailbox like there was on the wider road nearer town.
 There were courts, jails, labor camps (chain gangs), and newspapers.
 There were schools available for black children, but the boy was not forced to attend.
 The school the boy found had one room and one teacher.*

While his father was away doing hard labor, the boy went to the fields to work. A man from one of the big houses asked him how old he was, but the boy did not remember his age. *He knew he had lived a long, long time.*

- How old do you think the boy was when the story began? Explain your answer.
 - What was the boy's probable age when he met the teacher and began his education in earnest?
 - How old do you believe the boy was when his father and Sounder died? Add details to your answer.
-

The boy read in his book, "*Only the unwise think that what has changed is dead.*" Later, when he grew into a man, he remembered his father walking upright, and Sounder, the great coon dog bouncing after him. The memories that came flooding back brought meaning to the author's words.

What is your fondest memory? Why is this particular event or person stronger than all the other elements of your experience? Ten years from now, do you think this memory will still be important?

Use the questions above to organize your ideas, and then write a composition about **A Memory**. (See **Graphic Organizer #5**)

The boy convinced his mother that he should go searching for his father by arguing that people in Bible stories went on long journeys and everything turned out as it should.

- Choose one of the boy's favorite Bible characters—Joseph or David—and explain how his journeys were like the experiences of his Bible hero. Use the following questions as a guide: How did they compare in age and social status?
 What foes did they face?
 What were they seeking?
 How did determination help solve their problems?
 How did each one succeed in their quest?
 - How do you imagine the boy's life would have been different if his mother had forced him to stay home and wait patiently for his father's return?
-

In your opinion, was the boy's father responsible for the harm that befell Sounder and the family? Explain your thinking.

Though they were very poor, do you think the boy and his family lived a life of *dignity*? Use the word's meaning and events from the story to support your answer.

There Ain't No Dog Like Sounder

When the boy said, “*There ain't no dog like Sounder*,” he was making a bold statement, but he was not exaggerating.

Explain how the dog was an important part of the boy's life. Find evidence to prove that Sounder was not only a hard-working, contributing member of the family, he was also a well-respected in the community.

Organize your ideas below, and then write a composition to prove that the boy was telling the truth—***There Ain't No Dog like Sounder***.

Sounder was important to the boy because . . .



Sounder contributed to his family by . . .



Sounder was well known and respected in the community because . . .

