

5th Grade Literature

Fifth grade holds the Middle East and Africa as the focus for Literature, History, and Geography, though Adventure would perhaps be a better descriptor of the overall theme of the main texts read in 5th Grade Literature. Studying the Middle East and Africa also ties in well with Catechesis for 5th grade in which the students study the Old Testament. The adventures in Literature will abound as students journey through various texts through the course of the year. We encourage you to join your students on their literary adventures so as to also join them in meaningful conversation about their reading. The worst thing we can do for students is deconstruct literature so much that they cannot even see the story for the words. Certainly literature deconstruction allows for "convenient" busywork, but it can kill a child's love of reading. If a child reads, they will naturally pick up on character development, plot development, etc. These things can also come up naturally in conversation.

In addition to encouraging your child to read and providing him with good literature to read, be sure to let your child see you reading, too. Reading isn't something we just do for school, it is something we can do for fun our entire lives!

While the 5th Grade Literature curriculum calls for the reading of certain texts, students should certainly be encouraged to read other books throughout the year as well.

Main texts for 5th Grade Literature:

- Arabian Nights
- Rip Van Winkle by Washington Irving
- Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson
- Around the World in Eighty Days by Jules Verne
- Swiss Family Robinson by Johann Wyss

Teachers should make every effort not to make reading laborious for the student. However, students should be encouraged, for example, if they come across a word that cannot be surmized by context, to pause in their reading and look up the word in the dictionary. Again, at the risk of making reading laborious, students should be encouraged to keep a literature notebook that contains newfound words or words they find interesting. This same notebook could also be a place to record questions they have about what they are reading, names of characters (especially if there are many characters to remember), etc.

Being able to recall what one has read in narrative fashion should be a skill well-honed by 5th grade. Use these recollections as the start of casual conversation about what the student is reading (much like a book club). If a student recalls something particularly interesting or strange that happened in the story, probe deeper with questions like "why do you think _____ did that?" or "why do you think that happened?" If these conversations are commonplace, it will reinforce for the student to be an attuned reader, even when reading literature for pleasure.



Swiss Family Robinson



Topics:

- Family
- Overcoming adversity
- Ingenuity
- And more!

Textbook reference and written work:

- Swiss Family Robinson
 - [Link to an electronic version](#)

Suggested Daily Schedule:

- Day 1: Individual reading
- Day 2: Read aloud by teacher and informal discussion
- Day 3: Individual reading
- Day 4: Read aloud by student and informal discussion
- Day 5: Individual reading

Activity Ideas:

- **Rescuing animals**

- The Robinson family had to rescue their animals from the shipwreck. (Ch. 5-6)
 - If you have plastic/rubber toy animals, try to help them float to safety much as the Robinson's did
 - Just as the Robinson's did, look around your house to see what you could use to rescue the animals in a similar fashion to the methods used in Chapter 6.
 - Suggested materials:
 - Plastic/rubber toy animals (or something that could take the place of toy animals)
 - Glue (make sure you let the glue dry before testing!) or tape
 - Corks or any small, hollow, plastic device (such as toy baby beads)
 - Small strips of cloth or leather
 - Directions
 - Using your assembled materials, construct flotation devices for the animals (or "animals")
 - When you have all the flotation devices constructed and fitted to the animals, test them out in a bucket or basin of water
 - If your animals start to sink or capsize, make adjustments to their flotation devices
 - Discussion:
 - Was it easy to rescue the animals?
 - What sort of challenges did you have to overcome?
 - How did this compare to the challenges faced by the Robinson's when they were trying to rescue the animals?

Rip Van Winkle



Topics:

- Family
- Marriage
- Adventure
- And more!

Textbook reference and written work:

- Rip Van Winkle
 - [Link to an electronic version](#)

Suggested Daily Schedule:

- Day 1: Individual reading
- Day 2: Read aloud by teacher and informal discussion
- Day 3: Individual reading
- Day 4: Read aloud by student and informal discussion
- Day 5: Individual reading

Activity ideas:

- **Imagine if...**

- Rip Van Winkle woke up twenty years after he fell asleep. A lot had changed!
- Narrative: a re-telling of a story from given facts
 - Directions for Composition Take a factual or fictional story from the poets or historians and retell it in their own words, attempting to be clear as to the facts:
 - Who did it
 - What was done
 - When it was done
 - Where it was done
 - How it was done
 - Why it was done
- Writing Activity 1: Using the steps of narrative, write a story about you waking up twenty years from now.
- Writing Activity 2: Using the steps of narrative, write a story about a member of your family waking up twenty years from now.
- Writing Activity 3: Using the steps of narrative, write a story about you or a family member waking up in Egypt during the 12th dynasty (or another dynasty of your choosing).

Around the World in Eighty Days

Topics:



- Friendship
- Travel
- Adventure
- And more!

Textbook reference and written work:

- Around the World in Eighty Days
 - [Link to an electronic version](#)

Suggested Daily Schedule:

- Day 1: Individual reading
- Day 2: Read aloud by teacher and informal discussion
- Day 3: Individual reading
- Day 4: Read aloud by student and informal discussion
- Day 5: Individual reading

Activity ideas:

- **Map it out!**
 - Using a map or globe, map Phileas Fogg's journey
 - If you need a map, [try this one](#)
 - If using a globe, try using string or yarn to map the route
 - If using a map, use a pencil/pen and ruler to map the route
- **Plan a trip**
 - Phileas Fogg had few resources to use in planning his trip. In fact, the only thing he took with him was a book that had the timetables of steamers and railways.
 - There are many ways to go from one destination to another. How you choose to get from one place to another impacts how quickly you get to your intended destination.
 - Choose two locations: a start and a finish. These locations should be a considerable distance apart (opposite sides of a country, in two different countries, etc.)
 - Plan a trip from Location A to Location B using only a car (unless you have to cross a body of water, then you may fly across the ocean and resume road travel when arriving on the other side). Which roads will you take? How long (in days and hours) will it take you to get from Location A to Location B?
 - Plan a trip from Location A to Location B using only a train (unless you have to cross a body of water, then you may fly across the ocean and resume railroad travel when arriving on the other side). Which route will you take? Remember, not all trains carry passengers, so you may not have a very direct route from Location A to Location B. How long (in days and hours) will it take you to get from Location A to Location B?
 - Plan a trip from Location A to Location B using only air travel. Which route will you take? Will you use major airports or will you have to find small airports, too? Remember, not all locations have direct flights, so you may have to be creative in getting from one location to another. How long (in days and hours) will it take you to get from Location A to Location B?
 - Discuss:
 - Which mode of transportation was the shortest (in days and hours)? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each mode of transportation?
 - Now that you have planned trips with single modes of transportation, plan a trip from the same Locations A and B you used before, but this time use a combination of all three. How short (in days and hours) can you make the trip using all three modes of transportation? Do different combinations make a difference in the length of the trip?

Treasure Island



Topics:

- Friendship
- Trust
- Adventure
- And more!

Textbook reference and written work:

- Treasure Island
 - [Link to an electronic version](#)
 - This book has six parts. If possible, aim to read one part per week (this comes out to roughly a chapter a day if some reading is done on the weekend or if slightly more than a chapter is covered each day Monday through Friday)

Suggested Daily Schedule:

- Day 1: Individual reading
- Day 2: Read aloud by teacher and informal discussion
- Day 3: Individual reading
- Day 4: Read aloud by student and informal discussion
- Day 5: Individual reading

Activity ideas (more coming soon):

- **Buried Treasure**
 - This activity can be done with the student burying the treasure or with the teacher burying the treasure.
 - Part of the fun of finding buried treasure is following a map.
 - In your house or outside, bury or hide a treasure.
 - Create a map for the treasure hunter to follow. Don't make it too easy!
 - Once the treasure is found, the treasure hunter should become the treasure hider and bury or hide a treasure and create a map for another treasure hunter to find the treasure (a different treasure).
 - Note to treasure hider: be sure the treasure is worth hiding!

Captains Courageous

Not available

The Arabian Nights: Their Best-known Tales

Topics:

- Friendship
- Trust
- Adventure
- And more!

Textbook reference and written work:

- The Arabian Nights
 - [Link to an electronic version](#)
 - This book has ten stories, all of which are relatively short. It may not take a week to read story, but aim for about a story a week.

Suggested Daily Schedule:

- Day 1: Individual reading
- Day 2: Read aloud by teacher and informal discussion
- Day 3: Individual reading
- Day 4: Read aloud by student and informal discussion
- Day 5: Individual reading

Activity ideas (coming soon):

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Week 7

Not available

Week 8

Not available

Week 9

Not available

Week 10

Not available

 Week 11

Not available

 Week 12

Not available

 Week 13

Not available

 Week 14

Not available

 Week 15

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 Week 16

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 Week 34

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 Week 35

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 Week 36

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