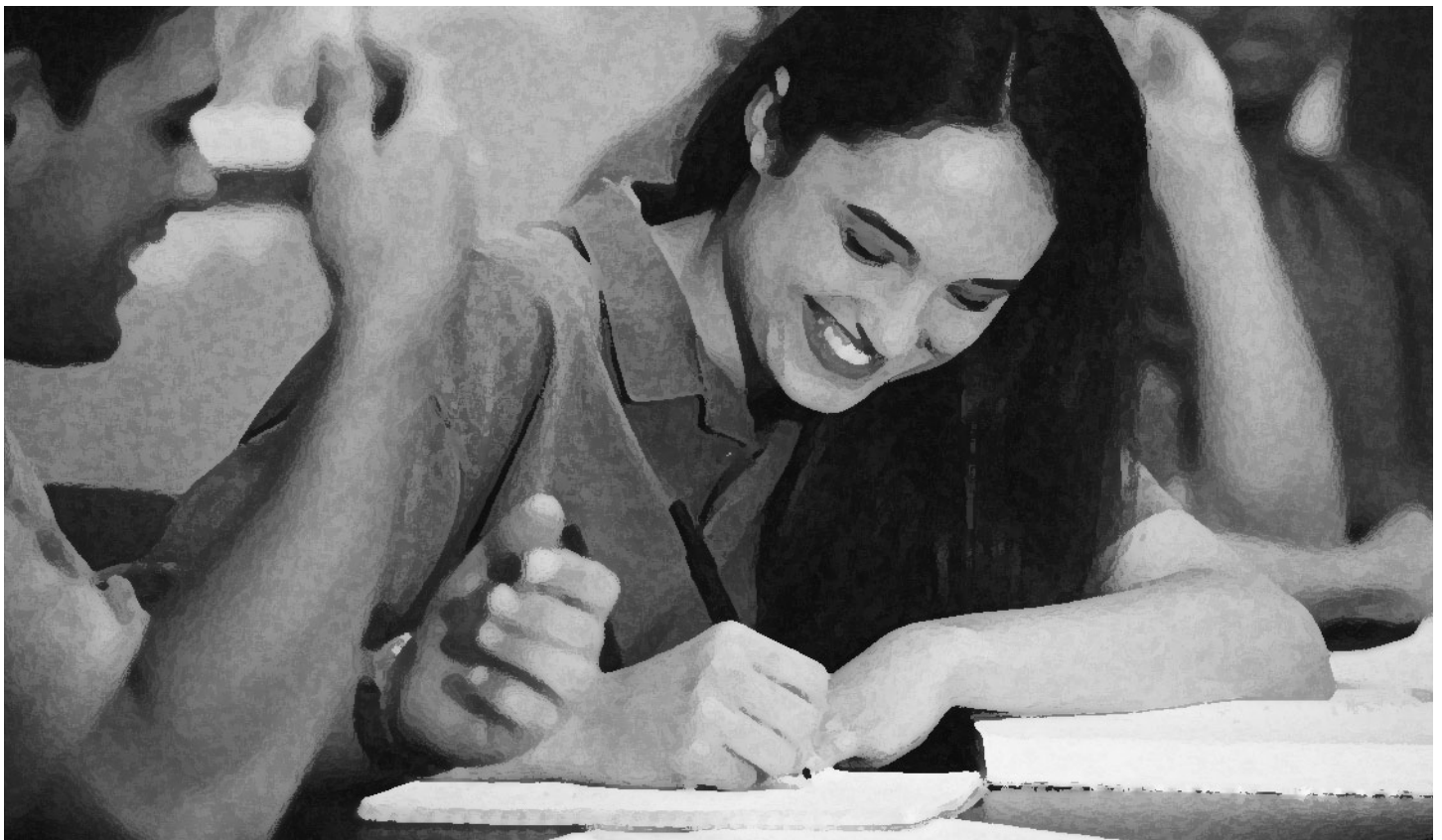


PRESTWICK HOUSE

Activity Pack

SILAS MARNER

BY GEORGE ELIOT



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Reorder No. 201431

Written by Kelley Stewart McConathy

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading**Author Study**

Objectives: Understanding an author's life, writings, and motivations
Researching biographical information
Compiling a biography of an author
Composing formal, Standard English using correct grammar, mechanics, and usage

Activity

Did you know that George Eliot is not the author's given name? From the name, do you think George Eliot is a male or female author? Did you know that the author had a scandalous relationship that is still viewed negatively by today's standards? Were you aware that the author did not believe in God and Christianity as it was taught at the time? What else do you not know about George Eliot?

Research the life and writings of George Eliot using resources in the library and on the Internet. Write a brief biography of the author's life. In addition to other facts in your biography, be sure to include the author's relationship to the following people:

- Queen Victoria
- G. H. Lewes
- Mr. and Mrs. Evans
- John Walter Cross
- Adam Bede

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1-4**Character Log**

Objectives: Identifying characters in a novel
Recording characters' actions and character traits

Activity

Silas Marner includes many characters. To help you remember each character's part in the novel, keep a CHARACTER LOG where you list important facts about each character. Here are examples of information you may wish to include:

- the character's relationship to Silas or another character
- the character's place in society and occupation
- important quotes by the character
- description of the character
- actions and thoughts of the character
- important character traits

The characters that have been introduced in chapters 1-4 are included on your log. Fill in facts for each character. A few facts about Silas have been provided for you.

As you continue reading the novel, add additional characters and facts to your log. Since there are many minor characters in *Silas Marner*, this log will be valuable when completing writing assignments or studying for tests.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 5-9**Writing Dialogue**

Objectives: Writing dialogue based on facts from a novel
Writing in appropriate dialect
Punctuating dialogue and dialect
Creating character traits for created characters

Activity

Write a dialogue between two or more residents of Raveloe who are not portrayed in the novel. The dialogue should focus on the events that have occurred in either Lantern Yard or Raveloe. Write in the appropriate dialect to make the dialogue seem realistic. Follow George Eliot's style: Use dialect for people in the lower class, and use more formal English for members of the upper class. Begin by listing the incidents you wish to discuss from chapters 1-9, such as Silas' cataleptic fits, his conviction by drawing lots in Lantern Yard, the loss of his fiancée Sarah, his curing of Sally Oates, Dunstan's killing of Wildfire, or Silas' robbery. These are only a few of the incidents that you can refer to in your dialogue.

Then, identify the character traits that you want your characters to possess. Consider their gender, age, job, and family when choosing traits. Your created character may be a relative of the Lammeter's, for example. Finally, write your dialogue, but make sure that each character's traits are revealed through his or her words.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 10-11

Journal Entries

Objectives: Composing a series of journal entries for a character
Inferring character traits through dialogue and narration
Understanding a character's thoughts, actions, and motivations

Activity

In the early 1800s, the journal or diary was a popular method of recording thoughts, observations, and fears on important events. Your assignment is to create a journal for one of the main characters in the book: Silas, Godfrey, or Nancy. You will compose at least 6 dated entries based on the events in the novel. Pretend you are the character, and use first-person point of view. You should comment on the major events of the plot and include information on the following:

- Any meeting your character has with other characters
- Any changes in your character, especially psychological changes
- Any important event in the novel
- His or her relationship with other characters

Begin creating your dates in the early 1800s. Be sure to mention other characters in each journal entry, and remember to pretend you are your character and are living in Raveloe in the early 1800s. Here is a sample journal entry for Silas based on Chapter 5:

March 11, 1812

I came home today only to find that my gold has been stolen. My savings for the last 15 years is gone, as is my purpose in life! It brought me great pleasure to admire my gold each evening. It was also a way for me to spend my well-earned spare time. How will I now fill my evenings? What is my purpose in life? Where is my gold now? Who stole my gold on such a dreary evening? I am filled with only grief, despair, and sudden loneliness, as my gold was my only companion.

Try to write in the style of your character. Write 1-2 entries for chapters 10-11. If you have chosen either Silas or Godfrey, you can include entries pertaining to earlier chapters if you wish. Even though you have only just met Nancy, she plays an important part in the rest of the novel. Continue adding entries throughout the remainder of the novel. Revise for grammatical errors. Be creative and try to write in the style of the characters in *Silas Marner*.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 12-15

Drama

Objectives: Performing scenes from a novel
Understanding major events and characters in a novel

Activity

Working in your groups, choose a scene to perform for the class. Memorize your lines, and practice your scene before performing for your class. Be sure to say your lines with feeling and really try to become the character you are portraying. If possible, it would be beneficial for your audience if you could use a few props.

Approve your selected scene with your teacher. Although there are many scenes in the novel, here are some suggestions:

- Chapter 1: William Dane frames Silas for theft of the church's money; Silas is convicted by drawing lots.
- Chapter 3: Dunstan convinces Godfrey to sell Wildfire to pay debts.
- Chapter 4: Dunstan sells Wildfire at the hunt, kills the horse, and steals Silas' money.
- Chapter 6: People at the Rainbow share light-hearted stories and various conversations.
- Chapter 7: Silas accuses Jem Rodney of stealing his gold, and people at the Rainbow decide to help Silas find his gold.
- Chapter 8: Bryce and Godfrey discuss Dunstan's sale of Wildfire.
- Chapter 9: Godfrey tells his father about Wildfire's death and Dunsey's disappearance. Squire Cass questions Godfrey about his interest in Nancy Lammeter.
- Chapter 10: Mr. Macey and Dolly Winthrop visit Silas and advise him to attend church.
- Chapter 11: Nancy and Priscilla chatter with the Miss Gunns. Godfrey and Nancy talk about their feelings for one another; Nancy rips her dress.
- Chapter 13: Silas carries Eppie to the Red House to get help from the doctor for Molly; Silas declares he intends to keep Eppie.
- Chapter 14: Dolly gives Silas advice on how to care for Eppie.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 16-21**Symbolism**

Objectives: Interpreting general literary symbols
Interpreting symbolism in a novel

Activity 1

In literature, authors regularly use symbols to represent larger ideas. Using the clues, unscramble the following common literary symbols on the LITERARY SYMBOLS worksheet. Look for colors, seasons, animals, and other common literary symbols. The first has been done for you.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Wrap-up

Creative Writing

Objectives: Composing creative writings based on events in a novel
Writing using proper grammar, mechanics, and usage

Activity

Choose one of the following creative writing topics to complete.

- A. Convert the events of the novel into a song. Write the lyrics and original music or adapt the words to a melody of a popular song. If necessary, you may focus on only a portion of the novel.
- B. Rewrite the story of Silas Marner in today's world or sometime in the future. Adapt the setting, dialect, character occupations, and other aspects of the novel accordingly. To narrow this writing assignment, you may choose to focus on a particular segment of the novel.
- C. Write an "I Am" poem for one of the characters in *Silas Marner*. The following page includes a pattern with three stanzas for you to follow.
- D. Godfrey tells Nancy that he will tell no one else that he is Eppie's father. He decides to "put it in [his] will" to prevent more heartache for the present time. (Pg. 166) Try to think like Godfrey, and write his last will and testament. Along with telling his secret about Eppie, you will need to take care of other business, such as dividing property among your benefactors. Begin with this statement: "I, *Godfrey Cass*, declare this to be my last will..."
- E. In the novel, Christmas comes, and Silas chooses to spend it alone in his cottage, as he grieves over his missing gold. Since it is Christmas time, your task is to create and explain a gift list for any seven characters in the novel. Gifts may be abstract or concrete.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Wrap-up

Analyzing Events in a Novel

Objectives: Analyzing events in a novel.
Writing using formal, Standard English using correct grammar, mechanics, and usage.

Activity

Write a response to each of the following questions in paragraph form:

1. Trace Eliot's use of plant imagery throughout the novel. For example, when Godfrey talks to Nancy about Eppie's choice to live with Silas, he uses images of nature to talk of affection and says, "...the trees have been growing—" (Pg. 165) Paraphrase and cite specific examples of Eliot's use of plant imagery in the novel. Explain the effectiveness of this technique.
2. In the novel, Silas' and Godfrey's lives and stories are parallel. Their narratives intersect three times in the novel. At each meeting, Silas becomes less isolated and a greater part of the community of Raveloe. First, identify the three meetings. Then, discuss Silas' transformation upon each meeting.
3. Compare one of the following pairs of characters: Paraphrase and cite specific examples from the novel to support your comparisons.
 - Godfrey and Dunstan
 - Dolly Winthrop and Priscilla Lammeter
 - William Dane and Dunstan Cass
 - Nancy and Eppie