Contents

Teaching Guidelines

TEACHER PREPARATION:

A. Thoroughly read these Teaching Guidelines.

B. Read the Introductory Essay that follows the Teaching Guidelines.

C. Contemplate the Essential Questions after the Introductory Essay, which should guide major discussions for this book.

D. Read through the textual evidence lists in the Appendix.

E. Read through Elements of Story and familiarize yourself with the Plot Diagram of this novel in the Appendix. Filling in the plot Diagram will be assigned in the last chapter of the study guide. Young students (3rd-5th) will need this modeled for them on the board, and then they should copy it into their guides. Older students will also benefit from discussion and guidance before completing the Plot Diagram.

PREPARING TO READ:

I. Review

A. Review the plot of the book as read so far.

B. Periodically review the concepts of character, setting, and plot (see Appendix).

II. Study Guide Preview

A. Reading Notes: Read aloud together. This section gives students key characters, places, and terms that are relevant to a particular time period, etc.

B. Vocabulary: Read aloud together so that students will recognize words when they come across them in their reading.

C. Comprehension Questions: Read through these questions with students to encourage purposeful reading.

READING:

I. Mark Your Book

A. Appreciation: Have students mark something that is True, Good, or Beautiful with a double line in the margin (this could be different for each student).

B. While reading, have students mark each vocabulary word as they come across it. This shouldn't interrupt the flow of reading once students get used to marking the words. (In a classroom, students can be taught to raise their hands when they come across a word so that everyone sees it, and then students can mark it without disrupting the reading.) Students can also mark answers to comprehension questions, but this should not interrupt the flow of their reading either.

C. Don't put undue pressure on students to find vocabulary words and comprehension answers if it is interfering with their enjoyment of the story, but this is an important skill to teach. It is worth helping students to go back and mark their books as they work through their comprehension questions in the guide if they struggle to complete this task as they read.

II. Reading

A. Have younger students read the chapter aloud. You can alternate between teacher-read and student-read passages. Older students can read silently, but ideally they would also read sections aloud as you discuss. Reading aloud is a skill that continues to be important as the content students are reading elevates in difficulty. Reading aloud even after students are good independent readers prepares them for the difficulty of reading Shakespeare, Homer, Dante, etc. Reading aloud trains students to become good orators. Model good reading skills. Encourage students to read expressively and smoothly. You may occasionally take oral reading grades.

AFTER READING:

I. Vocabulary

A. Look at each word within the context that it is used and help students come up with the best synonym or short phrase that defines the word. Refer to the book to see the words within a larger context as needed and use students' knowledge of Latin and other vocabulary to decipher meanings. Make sure you choose synonyms students know the meaning of.

B. Have students record the word's meaning in the study guide.

II. Comprehension Questions

A. Older students can answer these questions independently, but younger students (3rd-4th) need to answer the questions orally, form a good sentence, and then write it down using correct punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Write the sentence on a board after students form it orally, and then students should copy it perfectly. Toward the end of 4th grade, or when you feel students have mastered forming a good sentence, after you have discussed the answer to each question, transition to only putting key words on the board and let students form their own full-sentence answers.

B. The goal is to write an answer for every comprehension question, but if time does not permit this, be sure to answer the questions on the test (denoted with an asterisk) and answer the rest orally.

C. Thorough answers are supplied for the teacher in the teacher guide, but student answers will probably be shorter and simpler, which is fine as long as the answers are complete.

D. Consider comprehension questions to be composition exercises. Require students to answer in complete sentences with proper spelling, punctuation, and grammar. It is important that students practice forming their own unique sentences as answers to the questions so that they will acquire the skill necessary to do this work independently.

III. Quotations and Discussion Questions

A. Use the Quotations and Discussion Questions section of each lesson as a guide to your oral discussion of the key concepts in the chapter that may not be covered in the comprehension questions.

B. These talking points can take your oral discussion to a more elevated level than covered in the students' written work. Use this time as an opportunity to introduce higher-level thinking. You can introduce concepts the students may not be mature enough to fully understand yet but that would be beneficial for them to begin thinking about.

C. A key to the Discussion Questions is in the back of the *Teacher Guide*.

IV. Enrichment

A. The Enrichment activities include poetry work, literary terms, theme development, cross-subject connections, and more.

B. These activities can be completed as time and interest allow. Do not feel you need to complete all of these activities. Choose the ones that you feel are the best use of your students' time.

V. Essential Questions & Evidence Lists

A. The major themes of the work—the Essential Questions that the text is contemplating—are explored in both the Discussion Questions and the Enrichment activities. The Discussion Questions will lead students to notice and think deeply about the Essential Questions, while the Enrichment activities will prompt students to gather Evidence Lists as they read that pertain to the Essential Questions. In the grammar school years students are not required to write analytical literary essays, but completing these sections of the grammar school guides will prepare them for doing so in high school. Ideally the Essential Questions would be posted in your classroom and referred to repeatedly while students read.

VI. Unit Tests

A. There is a unit review and a quiz or test following every few lessons (varies by individual guide).

B. On the weeks that have these reviews and tests, you may want to do the review early in the week, and then drill it orally a couple of times before giving the test at the end of the week.

C. A final comprehensive test is also included.

Introductory Essay

"Once upon a time, a very long time ago now, about last Friday, Winnie-the-Pooh lived in a forest all by himself."

This silly old Bear has been beloved by generations of children who have trekked with him on misguided adventures through the Hundred Acre Wood, laughing at his upside-down antics and endearing commentary. The episodic stories in *Winnie-the-Pooh* are delightful and deceptively lighthearted, hiding within the humor and absurdity mature lessons on friendship and community. The complex mechanics of the story—the frame narrative and fourth wall breaking—are navigated so effortlessly by Milne, and the acrobatic use of language executed so charmingly, that the novel can serve as a playful bedtime read-aloud and also withstand repeated readings to mine the depth of the humor and the wisdom to be found in the stories.

The humor in this book depends largely on wordplay, absurdity, and irony. Odd, half-correct things are often stated as fact and never explained (you are familiar with this if you've ever met a four-year-old), leaving it to the reader's imagination to connect the dots and draw meaning from the nonsense. There is a noticeable gap between literal and figurative language that an astute and attentive reader will notice at once, but which the characters themselves almost never do. Errant capitalization, words with double meanings, and cleverly-orchestrated misunderstandings—Milne's ability to tell an uncomplicated children's story while offering multiple levels of meaning is masterful. The wise, adult narrator seems to be telling the stories with a wink to the reader, forging a shared, secret amusement.

But embedded in this silly world we find true friendships, and the community fashioned from them, which are the real, enduring treasures of the book. Each denizen of the Hundred Acre Wood is a distinct and fully-drawn character (albeit with exaggerated characteristics) who plays a unique part in the life of the community. In each we are given examples of what it means to be a genuine friend—honesty, selflessness, love, patience, forgiveness—packaged in whimsy and mirth.

Sweet, simple, creative Pooh, literal in all things and living like a goldfish in only his present moment, is frequently the cause of his own problems and at the center of many of the characters' humorous conversations and encounters. But he is also caring, forgiving, and surprisingly thoughtful for a Bear of Very Little Brain. He is a steadfast friend, diligently searching for Eeyore's lost tail, persisting during the Flood to rescue Piglet, and trying very hard to be an attentive listener to his friend, Owl, even when he struggles to understand him. The others, too, give us tangible, practical examples of genuine friendship. Christopher Robin selflessly spends an entire week reading to Pooh when he's stuck half in and half out of Rabbit's house. He is always patient with everyone and, most importantly, is dependably present when common sense must come to the rescue. Piglet bravely faces his many fears over and over again to help his friends. Rabbit, Owl, and Eeyore always show up when their friends are truly in need or to share in their joy. The relationships between the characters are central to the stories and their friendships make them braver, happier, more compassionate people.

In spite of these friendships, the members of the Hundred Acre Wood community could not have more distinct or disparate personalities. Each has a unique perspective, unique talents, unique struggles—and

because of this the community as a whole is stronger, richer, more vibrant. Each part of the whole is wholly individual and wholly necessary. Rabbit, Pooh, Piglet, Owl, Christopher Robin, Eeyore, Kanga, and Roo each benefit from exposure to qualities they do not themselves possess. And perhaps, each even learns patience and humility in learning to appreciate and accept one another.

Might, for example, Eeyore's pessimism be trying sometimes? Probably. But his perspective also causes him to be particularly grateful for even the smallest kindnesses, an example which might benefit a person with a penchant for complaining. Pooh's simplemindedness is played for humor throughout the novel, but his simplicity is also a blessing to the others in the community because it offers an easy-going and easily contented nature that the others often lack. Piglet is nervous about most everything, but his caution often tempers his more reckless friends. Owl, misguided know-it-all though he is, grounds the group and at least gestures toward the importance of intellect as a companion to impulse. Without Christopher Robin, would Piglet feel as though everything would eventually be all right? Together they shore up each others' weaknesses, expand one anothers' understanding of the world, find joy in fellowship, and learn patience and compassion from living in communion with one another.

Winnie-the-Pooh is a classic because it delights the adult and the child equally—and never at the other's expense. It has endured because Milne is a great writer, but it has flourished because his simple stories are about deeply true things and his characters are flawed and empathetic and kind. You will surely meet the characters of the Hundred Acre Wood in real life somewhere, sometime, and, as with all great literature, Milne will have prepared you to better understand them, or to better understand yourself.

Essential Questions

1. What is genuine friendship?
2. How does accepting and appreciating the uniqueness of others make a community stronger?

Literary Devices

- **Frame Narrative**: A story within a story. (Introduction)
- **Hyperbole**: A literary device that employs exaggeration to bring an understanding of truth, or for emphasis, or for humor. (Ch. 1, Enrichment #1)
- **Dramatic Irony**: A literary device in which the audience (or another character) knows more about a situation than a character does. This can create suspense or humor. (Ch. 1, Enrichment #2)
- **Personification**: Attributing human characteristics to an inaminate object or idea. (Ch. IV, DQ #2; Ch. X, Enrichment #1)
- **Epithet**: An adjective or brief phrase used to characterize a person, place, or thing. It can be used in place of a name. (Ch. IV, Enrichment #1)
- **Alliteration**: The intentional repetition of a beginning consonant sound. (Ch. V, Enrichment #1)

Chapter I

In Which We Are Introduced to Winnie-the-Pooh and Some Bees, and the Stories Begin

READING NOTES

gorse-bush a thorny shrub

"A pity." "That's too bad."

VOCABULARY: Write the meaning of each bold word or phrase.

1. "Was that me?" said Christopher Robin in an **awed** voice amazed
2. one of Rabbit's **relations** had had a big blue one family members
3. That will **deceive** them. trick
4. But something tells me that they're ***suspicious***! *distrustful

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS: Answer the following in complete sentences.

1. Why does Pooh climb up the tree? What happens as he climbs?
   Pooh hears bees buzzing and hopes to find the bees' honey in the tree. As he is climbing, a branch breaks and he falls into a gorse-bush.

2. Where does Pooh go next? What is his plan?
   Pooh goes to Christopher Robin's house and asks for a balloon. He plans to use the balloon to float up to the bees instead of climbing.

3. How does Pooh plan to trick the bees? How does Christopher Robin help?
   *Pooh disguises himself as a rain cloud, rolling in mud to look like a black rain cloud and pretending the blue balloon is the sky. Christopher Robin helps by walking around with an umbrella and saying that it looks like it will rain, to help convince the bees.

4. Why does Pooh decide to come down? How does he get down?
   When Pooh realizes he is unable to get the honey, he decides they are the wrong sort of bees and he decides to come down. Christopher Robin shoots the balloon, allowing Pooh to fall slowly as the balloon deflates.

QUOTATIONS

"It all comes, I suppose," he decided, as he said good-bye to the last branch, spun round three times, and flew gracefully into a gorse-bush, "it all comes of liking *honey so much."*

Christopher Robin nodded.
"I do remember," he said, "only Pooh doesn't very well, so that's why he likes having it told to him again. Because then it's a real story and not just a remembering."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read the second quotation above. What is the difference between "a real story" and "a remembering"?
2. The tone of this novel is humorous and lighthearted. How does the author achieve this effect? Give examples.

ENRICHMENT

1. Explain why the two bolded parts of this quote are funny: "Once upon a time, **a very long time ago now**, about last Friday, Winnie-the-Pooh lived in a forest all by himself **under the name of Sanders**"?

   In practical terms, "last Friday" can't be all that long ago, no matter what day it currently is. "Under the name of Sanders" would usually mean that is his last name. But Pooh is literally living underneath a sign with "Sanders" written on it. The author is using the phrase in two ways at the same time. Teacher note: The first is an example of **hyperbole**, a literary device that employs exaggeration to bring an understanding of truth, or for emphasis, or for humor.

2. **Dramatic irony** is a literary technique an author uses to create a dramatic effect in which the audience (or another character) knows more about a situation than a character does. This can create suspense or humor. How does Milne use dramatic irony at the end of this chapter when Christopher Robin is taking Pooh upstairs? What effect does this have on the reader?

   Right before this, the listener Christopher Robin asks the narrator if he had hurt Pooh when he shot him in the story. It's ironic that he is so worried about hurting Pooh in the story but not worried at all about dragging him up the stairs and bumping his head on each one. This creates humor for the reader. This literary device will be used often in this novel, so watch out for more examples.

3. In the Appendix, begin filling in the list of Genuine Friendship.

Chapter VI

In Which Eeyore Has a Birthday and Gets Two Presents

READING NOTES

riddle	a tricky question presented in a way that a person must guess the answer
many happy returns of the day	a birthday wish for a long, happy life
bonhomie (bon-hommy)	friendliness

VOCABULARY: Write the meaning of each bold word or phrase.

1. **"Pathetic,"** he said. sad; something to feel sorry for
2. **Gaiety.** Song-and-dance. Here we go round the mulberry bush. *joy
3. Pooh looked on **admiringly.** proudly

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS: Answer the following in complete sentences.

1. What does Pooh do to try and cheer Eeyore up before he knows why he is sad?
   Pooh sings Eeyore a song that he has made up called "Cottleston Pie." Pooh freely offers his humble talents in the service of his friends, even if they do not ask for them.

2. What reasons does Eeyore give for being sad? Why is Eeyore really sad on this day?
   He says he's sad because "We can't all, and some of us don't … Gaiety. Song-and-dance. Here we go round the mulberry bush." He is really sad because no one has remembered that it is his birthday.

3. What do Pooh and Piglet decide to give Eeyore for his birthday?
   Pooh decides to give him a pot of honey and Piglet decides to give him a balloon.

4. How do Pooh and Piglet's plans go wrong?
   *Pooh eats the honey in the pot on the way to give it to Eeyore and the balloon bursts when Piglet falls while running to Eeyore.

5. What is the solution to the problem of the ruined the presents?
   *Pooh's empty pot becomes a Useful Pot for putting things in and Piglet's deflated balloon becomes something to put in the Useful Pot.

6. How does Christopher Robin celebrate Eeyore's birthday?

Christopher Robin gives Eeyore a painting set and throws him a party.

7. At the end of the chapter, is it the listener Christopher Robin or the character Christopher Robin who asks, "And didn't *I* give him anything?"

It is the listener Christopher Robin who asks the question. He is breaking the fourth wall. Milne is reminding us that we are listening to a story within a story.

QUOTATIONS

But Eeyore wasn't listening. He was taking the balloon out, and putting it back again, as happy as could be….

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is Eeyore's reaction to the presents he receives from Pooh and Piglet? What can we learn from his reaction?

ENRICHMENT

1. In the Appendix, add to the list of Genuine Friendship.
2. In the Appendix, add to the list of Community.