



Companion Teaching Activities

*To the historical fiction
serialized story for young readers*

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“An Elementary Teacher's Heart” Guide to “A Hunter's Heart”

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Do you need to boost your students' standardized skills? This is the perfect opportunity.

For each chapter in “A Hunter's Heart,” the pages that follow feature open-ended constructed response items that assess various skills including: predicting, cause/effect, problem/solution, clue words, summarizing and more.

A Hunter's Heart
Chapter 1

Name _____
Date _____

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. How does Sam feel about tracking? Use details from the chapter to explain your answer.

2. What did the first sign of snow mean to Sam? What does it mean to you?

3. Why did Sam's dad wait until it was almost winter to set up traps?

4. Predict what will happen in the next chapter.

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. How does Sam feel about tracking? Use details from the chapter to explain your answer.

2 pts. Student uses 2 or more details to describe Sam's feelings about tracking.

1 pt. Student uses 1 detail to describe Sam's feelings about tracking.

Example of a 2 pt. response: Sam enjoys tracking. He hurried to the kitchen because he didn't want to be left behind when his father went out to hunt. He dreamed of becoming a real hunter one day.

2. What did the first sign of snow mean to Sam? What does it mean to you?

2 pts. Student explains what the first sign of snow means to Sam **and** himself.

1 pt. Student explains what the first sign of snow means to Sam **or** himself.

Example of a 2 pt. response: The first sign of snow meant Sam would get to rabbit hunt with his dad. The first sign of snow means I get to go sledding.

3. Why did Sam's dad wait until it was almost winter to set up traps?

2 pt. Student states at least 2 accurate reasons why Sam's dad set traps in the winter.

1 pt. Student states 1 accurate reason why Sam's dad set traps in the winter.

Example of a 2 pt. response: The snow made it easier for Sam's dad to see animal tracks, and the animals had thicker coats in the winter.

4. Predict what will happen in the next chapter.

2 pt. Student makes a plausible prediction based on the text.

1 pt. Student makes a prediction.

Example of a 2 point response: Sam and his dad will find a dog howling at some rabbits, then they'll hunt the rabbits.

A Hunter's Heart
Chapter 2

Name _____
Date _____

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Read the title and look at the picture. Predict what will happen in this chapter.

2. How did Sam feel about his dad fighting in the Civil War? Explain your answer.

3. Use details from the story to describe Old Drum.

4. Do you think Sam will ever get a dog? Explain your answer.

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Read the title and look at the picture. Predict what will happen in this chapter.

2 pts. Student uses the chapter title and picture to make a plausible prediction.

1 pt. Student uses the title or picture to make a prediction.

Example of a 2 pt. response: Sam will scare the rabbits out of the brush. His dad will shoot the rabbits, and then they'll walk home.

2. How did Sam feel about his dad fighting in the Civil War? Explain your answer.

2 pt. Student explains how Sam felt about his dad fighting in the war and uses details from the chapter to explain his answer.

1 pt. Student explains how Sam felt but does not support his answer with details from the story.

Example of a 2 pt. response: Sam didn't like his dad fighting in the war. He said he was glad his dad was hunting rabbits instead of hunting rebels in the war.

3. Use details from the story to describe Old Drum.

2 pts. Student uses at least 2 details from the story to describe Old Drum.

1 pt. Student uses 1 detail from the story to describe Old Drum.

Example of a 2 pt. response: Old drum was the best hunting dog in the neighborhood. His voice was unusual. His howl was a sound no one could forget.

4. Do you think Sam will ever get a dog? Explain your answer.

2 pt. Student gives an opinion based on the text.

1 pt. Student gives an opinion but does not explain answer.

Example of a 2 pt. response: I think Sam will get a dog because he is a good helper and likes to hunt. If Sam and his dad keep finding rabbits to sell, they should have enough money to buy a dog.

A Hunter's Heart
Chapter 3

Name _____
Date _____

1. Complete the chart below. Using details from the story, compare the late 1800s to present time.

	1800s	Present
Transportation		
Chores of Children		
Jobs of Adults		
Food		

2. Do you think life is easier or harder now? Explain your answer.

3. What part of this chapter supports the saying, "*You can't judge a book by its cover?*" Explain your answer.

1. Complete the chart below. Using details from the story, compare the late 1800s to present time.

4 pts. Student includes accurate examples for each category.

3 pts. Student includes accurate examples for 3 categories.

2 pts. Student includes accurate examples for 2 categories.

1 pt. Student includes accurate examples for 1 category.

Example of a 4 pt. response:

	1800's	Present
Transportation	Horse and wagon	Car
Chores of Children	Put sheep in barn	Pick up toys
Jobs of Adults	Trap animals	Factory worker
Food	Rabbit	Hamburger

2. Do you think life is easier or harder now? Explain your answer.

2 pt. Student states whether life is easier or harder and gives an explanation for his answer.

1 pt. Student answers only part of the question.

Example of a 2 pt. response: Life is easier now because we have cars that can get us places much faster. We don't have to hunt for our food, because we can just buy it at the store.

3. What part of this chapter supports the saying, "You can't judge a book by its cover?" Explain your answer.

2 pt. Student describes the appearance of the dog in the wagon bed then explains how it turned out to be Old Drum.

1 pt. Student answers only part of the question.

Example of a 2 pt. response: When Sam discovers the ugly, lean, floppy ear dog is Old Drum, it proves you can't judge a book by its cover. Old Drum was a really good hunter even though he didn't look like a very good dog.

A Hunter's Heart
Chapter 4

Name _____
Date _____

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. How did Sam feel when he discovered the dog was Old Drum? Why did he feel that way?

2. Name at least two ways Sam's family used rabbits.

3. What is a coverlet? What clue words helped you to figure out what coverlet means?

4. What does it mean to have a "hunter's heart?"

PROMPT

Don't Judge a Book By Its Cover

Write a short story telling about a time when you judged someone or something by its looks.
Describe what you learned from your experience.

Complete the chart on Response Sheet #1.
Write your story on Response Sheet #2.

Response Sheet #1

Who? Who did you judge?	
What? What did you do?	
Where? Where did it happen?	
When? When did it happen?	
Why? Why did you judge?	

Use this information to write your rough draft.
Remember to include what you learned from this
experience.

A Hunter's Heart
Chapter 4

Name _____
Date _____

Response Sheet #2

Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. How did Sam feel when he discovered the dog was Old Drum? Why did he feel that way?

2 pt. Tells how Sam feels and gives a logical explanation for his feelings.

1 pt. Tells only how Sam feels.

Example of a 2 pt. response: Sam was mad at himself because he didn't recognize Old Drum. He judged him by his looks rather than getting to know him.

2. Name at least two ways Sam's family used rabbits.

2 pt. Names 2 or more ways Sam's family used rabbits.

1 pt. Names 1 way Sam's family used rabbits.

Example of a 2pt. response: Sam's family eats rabbit. Sam's mother makes gloves and caps from rabbit's fur. (Sam's family also sells rabbit fur.)

3. What is a coverlet? What clue words helped you to figure out what coverlet means?

2 pts. Gives accurate definition of coverlet and uses clue words from the story to support answer.

1 pt. Gives accurate definition or names clue words describing coverlet.

Example of a 2 pt. response: A coverlet is a blanket. The story says it's for his bed, and it will keep him warm all night long.

4. What does it mean to have a "hunter's heart?"

2 pt. Student gives a detailed opinion of the meaning of a "hunter's heart."

1 pt. Student gives an opinion of a "hunter's heart."

Example of a 2 pt. response: A "hunter's heart" means that Old Drum is good at hunting. That's what he loves to do, so it's in his heart.

A Hunter's Heart
Chapter 5

Name _____
Date _____

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Why did Charles Burden visit the Pitman family?

2. List 4 details from the story that prove the setting takes place in the past.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

3. Complete the chart. Describe each character's problem, then describe a possible solution.

	Problem	Solution
Mr. Pittman		
Sam		

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Why did Charles Burden visit the Pitman family?

1 pt. possible

Example: Mr. Burden wanted to warn everyone that sheep were being killed in the daytime now.

2. List 4 details from the story that prove the setting takes place in the past.

1pt. for each correct detail (4 pts. possible)

Possible answers:

It was after the Civil War.

People rode mules with wagons.

People hunted for food.

Mother spun wool into thread.

Mother used rabbit fur to make gloves and caps.

They milked cows.

3. Complete the chart. Describe each character's problem, then describe a possible solution.

1 pt. for each problem and solution (4 pts. total)

	Problem	Solution
Mr. Pittman	He needs to keep the sheep from being killed.	Get a watchdog. Set a trap for the animal that's killing sheep.
Sam	Sam wants a dog.	Ask dad for a watchdog. Work to earn money for a dog.

A Hunter's Heart
Chapter 6

Name _____
Date _____

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Is Sam a brave boy? Use details from the story to support your answer.

2. Complete the following chart. Fill in each missing cause and effect.

CAUSE	EFFECT
	Sam went outside to get firewood.
The moon was very bright.	
	Sam raised his stick of wood in the air.
Sam's father shot his gun in the air.	

3. Would you have reacted the same way Sam did when he saw the animal? Explain your answer.

4. Predict what will happen in the next chapter.

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1. Is Sam a brave boy? Use details from the story to support your answer.**

2 pts. Student states that Sam is a brave boy and uses details from the story to prove he's brave.

1 pt. Student states that Sam is brave but does not use details from the story to support his answer.

Example of a 2 pt. response: Sam is brave because he didn't run when he heard the animal growling. He raised a stick of wood in the air to hit the animal.

- 2. Complete the following chart. Fill in each missing cause and effect.**

CAUSE	EFFECT
Sam's mom asked him to bring in an extra load of firewood.	Sam went outside to get firewood.
The moon was very bright.	Sam went outside without a lantern.
The animal howled and faced Sam head on.	Sam raised his stick of wood in the air.
Sam's father shot his gun in the air.	The animal ran away.

- 3. Would you have reacted the same way Sam did when he saw the animal? Explain your answer.**

2 pts. Student states whether he'd act the same way and gives an explanation for his answer.

1 pt. Student answers only part of the question.

Example of a 2 pt. response: I wouldn't have acted like Sam. I would have run away, because the animal could have been very dangerous.

A Hunter's Heart
Chapter 7

Name _____
Date _____

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Summarize the chapter. List at least three important events in order.

2. How do you think Old Drum died? Explain your answer.

3. How do you think Sam will react to the news of Old Drum's death?
Explain your answer.

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Summarize the chapter. List at least three important events in order.

3 pts. List more than 3 important events in order.

2 pts. List 2-3 important events in order.

1 pt. List 1 important event or events that are not in order.

Example of a 3 pt. response: Mr. Pittman told Sam that he was more important to him than his sheep. When Sam went to bed he could not stop thinking of the scary animal. He dreamed that he had a dog like Old Drum to protect him, then he woke up to the sound of a howl and a gunshot. Mr. Burden told them that Old Drum was dead.

2. How do you think Old Drum died? Explain your answer.

2 pts. Gives a detailed explanation based on the story.

1 pt. Gives an explanation that may lack details.

Example of a 2 pt. response: I think Old Drum was attacked by the sheep killer, then someone shot the sheep killer.

**3. How do you think Sam will react to the news of Old Drum's death?
Explain your answer.**

2 pt. Gives a detailed answer based on the story.

1 pt. Gives an explanation that may lack details.

Example of a 2 pt. response: Sam will be sad. He really liked Old Drum, and he was hoping to have a dog just like him. He'll miss Old Drum.

A Hunter's Heart
Chapter 8

Name _____
Date _____

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. You are in charge of engraving Old Drum's gravestone. What will you write?

2. Why do you think Mr. Burden decided to give Sam Old Drum's pup? Use details from the story to explain your answer.

3. If you could get any pet, what would it be? Why would you choose that pet?

4. Use a Venn diagram to compare Old Drum to _____. Include at least 3 corresponding details.
(Teachers: Choose another dog your class has read about)

PROMPT

We'll Never Forget Old Drum

Old Drum was a real dog, and there was a trial over his death. The trial was held in Warrensburg, Missouri, and there is a statue of Old Drum on the courthouse lawn.

The mayor of Warrensburg would also like a mural of "A Hunter's Heart" painted on a wall in the courthouse. There is a contest to find the best design.

On Response Sheet #1, design a mural using pictures and words that depict at least 5 important events in the story. Use arrows or numbers to indicate the order the events happened.

Response Sheet #1

Design a mural using pictures and words that depict at least 5 important events in the story. Use arrows or numbers to indicate the order the events happened.

A Hunter's Heart
Chapter 8

Name _____
Date _____

Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1. You are in charge of engraving Old Drum's gravestone. What will you write?**

2 pts. Student uses accurate details that describe Old Drum.

1 pt. Student uses limited or general details to describe Old Drum.

Example of a 2 pt. response: Old Drum

A Hunters Heart
Distinguished Howl
Loved by All

- 2. Why do you think Mr. Burden decided to give Sam Old Drum's pup? Use details from the story to explain your answer.**

2 pts. Student uses details to explain why Mr. Burden gave Sam the pup.

1 pt. Student uses limited details explain why Mr. Burden gave Sam the pup.

Example of a 2 pt. response: Mr. Burden gave Sam the pup because he knew he'd take care of him well. Sam was a hard worker. He did all of his chores and took care of the sheep. Mr. Burden also knew how much Sam wanted and needed a puppy. Now he'd have a dog to protect him.

- 3. If you could get any pet, what would it be? Why would you choose that pet?**

2 pts. Student names a pet and gives a reason why he chose that pet.

1 pt. Student names a pet or tells a reason why he chose that pet.

Example of a 2 pt. response: If I could get any pet, I'd get a cat. They are soft and furry, and they like to cuddle. They can also use a litter box.

- 4. Use a Venn diagram to compare Old Drum to _____.**
Include at least 3 corresponding details.

3 pts. Student lists more than 3 corresponding details.

2 pts. Student lists 2-3 corresponding details.

1 pt. Student lists 1 corresponding detail.

A Hunter's Heart Secondary Activities

Created by Jennifer Wirthwein
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Chapter One

- A. (discussion) Define setting. What is the setting of this story? What year do you think it was at this time? What clues does the author give you?
- B. (discussion) Sam and his father were avid hunters. What animals are most hunted in your area? Do you agree or disagree with hunting? Why?
- C. This chapter ends with Sam hearing a haunting howl. What do you think made the noise? Write a short paper with your creative ideas and share it with the class.
- D. Sam and his father are experiencing the chills of winter. Create an illustration of a winter scene to share with the class.

Chapter Two

- A. (discussion) Do you think Sam should be able to carry a gun? Why or why not?
- B. (discussion) Do you think Sam will ever get a dog? Why or why not?
- C. Dogs play a major role in today's society. Not only are they cherished family pets, they can also be working dogs. Research three roles of working dogs and write a short report to share with the class.
- D. Sam and his father are hunting rabbits. What types of rabbit are prevalent in your area? Research that particular type of rabbit and make a poster which describes the following: physical characteristics, habitat, nutritional needs, etc. Be sure to include illustrations.

Chapter Three

- A. (discussion) Sam had many chores on the farm. What chores are you responsible completing for your family? Do you think children should complete chores? Why or why not?
- B. (discussion) Were you surprised the dog was Old Drum? Why or why not?
- C. In Sam's society, wagons were a popular form of transportation. Create a timeline of the progression of transportation from wagons to modern society.
- D. Sam and his father housed sheep. How much living space do sheep require? Calculate the perimeter and area of a pen needed to house 15 sheep? 40 sheep? 100 sheep?

Chapter Four

- A. (discussion) Do you think Sam should be mad at himself for not recognizing Old Drum? Have you ever been surprised by someone's appearance?
- B. (discussion) Sam's mother was using the yarn from the wool to make a bed covering. What projects have you seen that are made from yarn? What projects have you made (or wish to make) from yarn?
- C. Sam learned not to judge a book by its cover. Ask a parent, teacher, or other respected adult to share another wise saying with you. Ask them how it impacted their life. Share this wise saying with the class.
- D. When Sam evaluated the dog's hunting abilities by its appearance, he was guilty of a form of prejudice. How has prejudice affected people throughout history? Find an example and write a short paper.

Chapter Five

- A. (discussion) Mr. Burden had to travel from house to house to warn neighbors about the dog. How has communication changed today? Do you think it has improved? Why or why not?
- B. (discussion) It was said that Old Drum gave stray animals a "rough welcome". What does that mean?
- C. Mr. Burden's mule "loped" into the yard. Look in the paper to find 10 different ways to move (i.e. hop, jump, gallop). Circle the words and share them with the class.
- D. The sheep are being attacked. What types of animals attack sheep? Research the predator/prey relationship of sheep. Create a list of 5 different animals that you think could be attacking the sheep. Which of these do you predict it is? Why?

Chapter Six

- A. (discussion) What type of animal do you think was in the shadows? What clues helped you form that hypothesis?
- B. (discussion) Sam relied on a lantern to light his path. What types of methods are available today to illuminate the path? Research who created one of these methods and when it was invented.
- C. Sam's mother had cooked hot stew and biscuits. Look in a recipe book or paper and find a recipe you would like to try for dinner. Then look in the local paper to find a grocery ad and determine how much it would cost to cook the meal.
- D. Sam was ready to fight the mysterious creature to protect his sheep. Write a poem about a time you have felt protective of someone or something.

Chapter Seven

- A. (discussion) Sam has just learned that Old Drum is dead. What do you think caused this? What clues did the author give you?
- B. (discussion) Sam was being praised for his bravery. Tell about a time that you showed bravery. How did your friends and family respond? How did you feel?
- C. Sam describes the animal as a “villainous creature”. Look in the paper to find 10 adjectives to describe the animal that Sam saw.
- D. Sam was rescued from the “villainous creature” by his father’s gunshot. Create a list of 10 people in your neighborhood that could be described as a rescuer.

Chapter Eight

- A. (discussion) How did you feel when Sam got the puppy? What do you think he named the puppy? Do you think the puppy was a good hunter?
- B. (discussion) Do you think the sheep owner that shot Old Drum should be brought to trial? Why or why not?
- C. Recent years and trials have brought about animal cruelty laws. Research laws in your area and share them with your class.
- D. With your classmates, gather items for a local animal shelter (food, newspaper, toys, etc.) and make a donation in memory of Old Drum.

