

A Teaching Unit for Jerry Spinelli's

Stargirl



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Stargirl Teaching Unit

Table of Contents

Pre-reading Activity	4
Chapter Titles for <i>Stargirl</i>	5
Chapter 1 Point of View / Meet Stargirl	7
Chapter 2 Hyperbole / Imagery	8
Chapters 3-4 Figurative Language	9
Chapter 5 Strong Verbs	11
Chapter 6 Dashes / Predictions	12
Chapter 7 Characterization	13
Chapter 8 Author's Writing Style	14
Chapter 9 Writing Opportunity	15
Chapters 10-11 Discussion	17
Test on Chapters 1-11	18
Chapters 12-13 Characterization	21
Chapter 14 Allusion	22
Chapters 15-16 Symbolism & Discussion	23
Chapter 17 Figurative Language/Extended Metaphor	24
Chapters 18-19 Conflict	26
Chapters 20-21 Writing Opportunity	27
Chapters 22-23 Understanding Stargirl/Her Family	28
Test on Chapters 12-22	29
Chapters 23-24 Internal Conflict	32
Chapter 25 Symbolism	33
Chapter 26 Compare/Contrast / Tone	34
Chapter 27 Mottos	35
Chapters 28-29 Sequence	36
Chapters 30-31 Discussion/Comic Strip	37
Chapter 32 Discussion	40
Chapter 33-Epiloque	41
Character Analysis	42
Theme	43
Cinquain	44
I Am Poem	45
Final Test	46
The ABCs of Stargirl	50
Book Review	51

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Stargirl

Chapters Three and Four – Figurative Language

Name _____

Date _____

Figurative Language- Writers use figurative language to make their writing more interesting and effective. By using a simile, metaphor, idiom, or personification, the writer is able to paint a picture in the mind of the reader. Chapters three and four of the novel contain several examples of figurative language.

Idiom- an expression that means something totally different than what it says

Page 14 – *The rat she brought to school was only the tip of the iceberg.*

What does the underlined idiom mean?

Simile – compares two things using the words *like* or *as*

Pages 13-14 – *We both thought the prickly pear cactus looked like Ping-Pong paddles with whiskers, and that saguaros looked like dinosaur mittens.*

What things are being compared with these similes? _____ and

_____ ; _____ and _____

Why are these similes effective?

Metaphor - compares two things by calling one thing another

Page 15 – *She was the faintest scent of a cactus flower, the flitting shadow of an elf owl.*

Underline the metaphors.

What is being compared with these metaphors?

Personification - nonhumans are given human traits or attributes

Page 18- *The sun lay down behind the mountains.*

What is being personified in this sentence? _____

Write a sentence including your own personification for the moon or a star.

Oxymoron - putting two contradictory words together Examples: hot ice, wise fool

Read the following passage:

What could I say? That Parr was a worthy subject precisely because he did nothing, because he was so monumentally good at doing nothing? I had only vague insight, not the words. I just shrugged.

Underline the words in the passage that form an oxymoron.

Write a sentence about one of the characters from the novel using an oxymoron.

Complete the following chart to examine other examples of figurative language.

Page #	Passage	Type of figurative language	What it means
15	In our minds we tried to pin her to a corkboard like a butterfly, but the pin merely went through and away she flew.		
16			He watches her but does not interact with her.
17		personification	
18		personification	
19	... I did not realize this until years later; he was grand marshal of our daily parade.		

Stargirl
Chapter Fourteen – Allusion

Name _____

Date _____

Allusion - a literary device that provides a brief reference to a person, event, place, or phrase. The writer assumes the reader will recognize the reference. Allusions in writing help the reader to visualize what's happening by providing a mental picture. They are commonly made to the Bible, nursery rhymes, myths, famous fictional or historical characters or events, and Shakespeare. They can be used in both prose and poetry.

Here are some examples:

A. *The insurance adjuster was as reliable as George Washington.*

The allusion in sentence A is to George Washington. The reader is expected to recognize the reference to George Washington and his honesty.

B. *She was a Scrooge and never spent money on gifts for her friends or family.*

This allusion is to Scrooge, a character in *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. He was a stingy man who did not like to spend any money.

Read the following passage:

...While Sun Valley's team was not as good as ours, they did have one thing we did not: a superstar. A kid named Ron Kovac. He stood six-foot-eight and averaged thirty points per game. Our players looked like Davids flailing against Goliath.

What is the allusion to in this passage? _____

The allusion is made to _____.

- a. the Bible
- b. a nursery rhyme
- c. Shakespeare
- d. a myth

This allusion also contains _____.

- a. a simile
- b. a metaphor
- c. personification
- d. an idiom

The allusions in the example sentences (both A and B) contain figurative language.

What type of figurative language is used in sentence A? _____

What type of figurative language is used in sentence B? _____

Write a sentence of your own that contains an allusion. _____

Stargirl
Chapters Eighteen & Nineteen – Conflict

Name _____

Date _____

Conflict – a struggle or clash between opposing characters or forces (external conflict) or the character’s emotions (internal conflict)

Complete the following chart to analyze the conflicts that are present in the novel.

Character	Conflict	Passage from the book that proves or supports that conflict	Type of conflict (internal or external)
Stargirl			
Leo			
Students at Mica High School			
Hillari Kimble			

Discussion

1. Do you think that the “silent treatment” is affecting Stargirl? _____ Why or why not?

2. Read the passage: *A small pipe cloud left the corner of his mouth. He smiled sadly. "Poor dolphin. Caught in a net."* To whom is Archie referring? _____ Why is this an appropriate comparison? _____

3. Whose affection will Leo value more? _____ Why do you feel this way?

Stargirl
Test Two: Chapters Twelve – Twenty-two

Name _____

Date _____

1. What was thrown at Stargirl while she cheered at a basketball game?
 - a. a tomato
 - b. a banana
 - c. rotten potatoes
 - d. rose petals

2. What type of figurative language is used in the following sentence?
They pumped their arms and shouted and did everything that cheerleaders are supposed to do, but their gestures were empty, their hearts were not into it.
 - a. idiom
 - b. metaphor
 - c. personification
 - d. simile

- Cacti should be placed under adequate sunlight and sowed in pots having good drainage. It is helpful to have gravel around the top of the pot. The soil used to plant a cactus needs to be a mixture of sand, peat, and perlite.*

3. If an article included the information above, it would be most likely found under which of the following headings?
 - a. Growing Regions of Cacti
 - b. Cactus Appearance
 - c. How to Care for a Cactus
 - d. Types of Cacti

4. The novel is set in the state of _____.
 - a. South Carolina
 - b. Florida
 - c. Nevada
 - d. Arizona

5. Who gave Leo the porcupine tie at the start of the novel?
 - a. Kevin
 - b. Archie
 - c. Stargirl
 - d. Hillari

6. Which of the following characters dislikes Stargirl?
 - a. Leo
 - b. Kevin
 - c. Archie
 - d. Hillari

7. Which of the following words best describes Archie?
 - a. lazy
 - b. hostile
 - c. wise
 - d. stubborn

This is only a portion of the test. There are 14 questions on the complete test.

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