

LESSON PLAN

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THE SECRET GARDEN

- Aim:**
- to develop reading skills and expand vocabulary
 - to predict the continuation or outcome of a story
 - to identify a literary genre
 - to encourage the pleasure of reading
- Level:** Teenagers and young adults – B1.1
- Time:** 50-60 minutes
- Materials:**
1. front cover illustration of the graded reader **THE SECRET GARDEN**
 2. worksheet

INTRODUCTION

Hope is one of the most prevalent and powerful of human emotions. It is often the theme of many stories. There are many kinds of hope: the hope to find love, to find friendship, to recover one's health, to save a person from a dangerous situation, to survive. This lesson plan introduces *The Secret Garden*, one of Frances Hodgson Burnett's most popular stories. The short extracts chosen will draw students into the plot, encourage them to ask questions, develop their vocabulary and predict what will happen next. All of this with the aim of increasing their pleasure in reading.

BACKGROUND NOTES ON THE STORY

After the death of her parents in India, Mary Lennox goes to live with her uncle on his enormous estate, Misselthwaite Manor, in Yorkshire, England. Mary is ten years old and has always lived a privileged life. She has become a spoilt, unpleasant girl with a bad temper and a sad, thin face. She has no friends and is very lonely. Mrs Medlock is her uncle's housekeeper and Mary doesn't like her, but Mrs Medlock doesn't like Mary either! Her uncle has no time for her, so she begins to explore the gardens of the estate by herself. One morning she meets Ben, the old gardener, who is working in the gardens.

At this point there are some questions that must be answered:

- a. How does Mary feel in her new home?
- b. What can Mary do all day long?
- c. Are there any other children at Misselthwaite Manor?

PROCEDURE

- Before the lesson:
- make a copy of the worksheet (one per student)
 - download a photo of a typical 19th-century English manor and estate
 - tell your students you're going to be speaking about a book called ***The Secret Garden***
 - read the background notes on the story to the class
 - write the title of the graded reader on the board



LESSON PLAN

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First Step – 10 minutes

Ask the students to comment on their first impressions and ask them these questions:

- What genre do you think it is? Why?
- Show the students the cover illustration; then ask them these questions:
 - What does the wooden door represent?
 - Whose shadow is that?

Second Step - 30 minutes

Give the students the worksheet and explain that the text comes from Chapter One of the story.

- Ask them to do Exercise 1, Before you read.
[KEY: 1c, 2d, 3e, 4a, 5b, 6f]
- Ask them to work in pairs to check their answers.
- Read **EXERCISE 2, EXTRACT PART 1**. You could read it out loud the first time to make the dialogue more dramatic.
- Then ask your students to read it alone or in pairs for a more detailed understanding the second time.
- Ask students to comment with their opinions, predictions, feelings and observations. Ask them this question: What does Mary hope for?
- Ask students to read **EXTRACT PART 2 (Exercise 3)**

Last Step – 10 minutes

– **EXERCISES 4 and 5.**

These can be done in pairs or in small groups. If there is no time in class, these exercises could be written homework.

