

Literacy Skills Teacher's Guide for

Anne of Avonlea

by

L.M. Montgomery

Book Information

L.M. Montgomery, Anne of Avonlea
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Sixteen-year-old Anne, mischievous and spirited as ever, returns to Avonlea on Prince Edward Island, to teach in the village school where she herself was taught.

Topics: Canadian Content, Canadian Content (All); Careers, Teacher; Classics, Classics (All); Countries/Regions, Canada; Family Life, Orphans; Series, Anne of Green Gables; Series, Puffin Classics; Series, Scholastic Classics; What Kids Are Reading, 2014, 75 Most Read Fiction, ATOS Book Levels 7.0-10.0

Main Characters

Anne Shirley a highly imaginative teenage girl who becomes a school teacher

Anthony Pye one of Anne's students, who initially does not like her

Davy Keith one of the twins who comes to live at Green Gables; he is very mischievous

Diana Barry Anne's closest friend

Dora Keith one of the twins; she is very well behaved

Gilbert Blythe Anne's good friend, who has romantic intentions toward her

Marilla Cuthbert the woman who watches over Anne at Green Gables

Miss Lavendar a middle-aged single woman whom Anne meets at Echo Lodge; she becomes a kindred spirit to Anne

Mr. James A. Harrison a neighbor who has a secret

Mrs. Morgan one of Anne's favorite authors, who comes to Green Gables for a visit

Mrs. Rachel Lynde the local gossip who comes to live at Green Gables after her husband dies

Paul Irving Anne's star pupil, who shares a special connection with her

Stephen Irving the man Miss Lavendar finally marries years after losing him because of an argument

Vocabulary

blithe joyful

gingham a cotton cloth usually woven in checks, stripes or plaids

odiferous giving off an odor

taciturn almost always silent; not talkative

Synopsis

Anne of Avonlea is a romantic story about a whimsical teenage girl from Prince Edward Island who is becoming a woman. Anne Shirley is a sixteen-year-old who is embarking on a new profession -- teaching. In the beginning of the novel, Anne befriends a cranky neighbor, Mr. Harrison, after she accidentally sells his cow. Before school begins Mr. Harrison gives Anne advice on how to treat her students. After a disheartening first day, Anne almost reconsiders her career choice, but she eventually settles into the school and earns the respect of almost all her pupils. After Anne's loving disciplinary approaches are unsuccessful with an infamous student, Anthony Pye, she is forced to punish him by spanking him with her pointer. Though she is disappointed in herself, Anthony begins to respect her.

During Anne's tribulations at school, she is forced to deal with new boarders, six-year-old twins Davy and Dora, when Marilla, Anne's guardian, agrees to take in the orphans. Dora is a model child, whereas Davy gets into trouble every chance he gets. Anne is fond of both children, but she tends to favor Davy because he gets into many "scrapes" just as she had done in her early days at Green Gables.

After Anne and her friend Diana take a wrong turn in the woods, they meet a fanciful woman at Echo Lodge, Miss Lavendar. She becomes a good friend of the girls and eventually tells Anne of her lost love,

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Stephen Irving. Anne knows of him as he is the father of her star pupil, Paul Irving. Stephen Irving, upon hearing that Miss Lavendar is not married, returns to Avonlea, and the two are wed in the garden of the Echo Lodge.

Throughout the novel, Anne endures her friends' questions about her feelings for Gilbert Blythe. She and Gilbert have been good friends for several years, but everyone is convinced they should be romantically involved. Anne, though, has continued to say she only feels friendship for Gilbert. By the end of the novel, Gilbert finally hints to Anne about his feelings for her and, for a moment, she is intrigued. However, Anne says nothing, and she and Gilbert walk home in silence.

Over the course of the novel, Anne has matured into a young woman who plans to attend college, despite the opinions of her neighbors. Anne, who is normally saddened to leave Green Gables, looks forward to her new adventures with anticipation and a little trepidation.

Open-Ended Questions

Use these open-ended questions as the basis for class discussions, student presentations, or extended writing assignments.

Initial Understanding

How does Anne respond when Diana asks her about her feelings for Gilbert? How do you feel about Anne's answer?

Anne and Gilbert have been good friends for a long time, but she has never considered Gilbert as a suitor. Anne is quite surprised when Diana asks her the question and is quick to answer that she does not have romantic feelings for Gilbert. Anne claims she is waiting for the ideal Prince Charming to come into her life. Many students may believe Anne truly loves Gilbert without realizing it. Others may feel that Anne is too young to understand romantic love.

Literary Analysis

Avonlea is a small town where the citizens cling to traditional values and allow their opinions to flow freely. Why do some of the people of Avonlea dislike Anne's desire to go to college?

In the time period of the story, it is not very common for women to attend college. In a small town like Avonlea, many women who choose to become wives and mothers may be offended by Anne's choice because they believe she will consider herself above them. Similarly, many men may be against Anne's decision to go to college because they believe that a woman's place is in the home, so further education would be a waste of time and money.

Inferential Comprehension

Anne and her friends come upon a beautiful garden during one of their walks. Diana explains that the garden had once belonged to Hester Gray, a woman who died young. Why does Anne identify with Hester?

Anne is a very romantic girl who finds poetry in everything she sees. The sad story of Hester Gray strikes a chord with Anne because Hester was like many of the romantic women in the novels that Anne has read.

Constructing Meaning

In the story, Paul Irving, Anne's star pupil, tells Anne about his rock people. What are these "people" like? What significance do they hold?

Paul describes his imaginary rock people as his friends who live on the shore. Paul uses his intelligence and imagination to create these friends since he probably does not have many real friends.

Teachable Skills

Recognizing Setting Avonlea is described as a very quaint place to live. Ask your students to draw their conception of Avonlea. Have them choose one of the following places: Green Gables, Mr. Harrison's house, Lover's Lane, the

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blue town hall, the school, and Hester Gray's garden.

Recognizing Feelings One morning, Anne wakes in a bad mood. Her day is horrible. There is an explosion in her classroom, and Anne has to punish one of her students with a swat, which upsets her terribly. She describes this day as a "Jonah" day. Ask your students if they have ever had a "Jonah" day. Then, ask them to write a short story about their bad day.

Deriving Word or Phrase Meaning Throughout the story, Anne refers to quotes from literature to describe her feelings. Ask your students to choose their favorite quotes and illustrate short reactions to the quotes.

Responding to Literature In the story, Anne and her friends create an improvement society. They try to cultivate the pride in their community and beautify their surroundings. Ask your students to make a list of ten things they would like improved in their community or school and have them suggest ways they could be improved.