

# Literacy Skills Teacher's Guide for Anne of the Island (Unabridged) by L.M. Montgomery

## Book Information

L.M. Montgomery, Anne of the Island (Unabridged)  
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Book Level: 6.3  
Interest Level: MG

Eighteen-year-old Anne goes off to college and finds new friends, new romances and new insights into life and the people around her. Book #3

**Topics:** Adventure, Life Changes; Classics, Classics (All); Community Life, School; Family Life, Away Alone; Series, Anne of Green Gables

## Main Characters

Anne Shirley a young woman who deals with the rigors of college and romance  
Aunt Jamesina the girls' caretaker at Patty's Place  
Charlie Sloane one of Anne's suitors  
Christine Stuart Gilbert's friend whom Anne mistakenly assumes has become his fiancée  
Davy and Dora Keith the twins at Green Gables  
Diana Barry one of Anne's best friends, who gets married and starts a family  
Gilbert Blythe Anne's friend, whom she finally realizes is the man of her dreams  
Janet Sweet the woman who has waited for twenty years for John Douglas's proposal  
John Douglas the man who cannot propose to Janet Sweet until his mother dies  
Jonas Blake the man who becomes Philippa Gordon's husband  
Marilla Cuthbert the woman who raised Anne and is caring for the twins at Green Gables  
Philippa (Phil) Gordon Anne's indecisive housemate at Patty's Place  
Priscilla Grant one of the Patty's Place housemates  
Rachel Lynde Marilla's new housemate, and the town gossip

Royal (Roy) Gardner the man whom Anne at first believes to be the man of her dreams  
Ruby Gillis Anne's friend from Avonlea who dies of consumption  
Stella Maynard one of Anne's housemates at Patty's Place

## Vocabulary

**homogeneous** of the same or similar nature  
**manse** a clergyman's house and land  
**phalanx** a close knit or compact body of people  
**proxy** the authority to act for another person  
**relegate** to refer or assign  
**thistledown** the silky material attached to the seeds of a thistle

## Synopsis

*Anne of the Island* is a novel that deals with the maturation of Anne Shirley, a young woman from Avonlea, a small town on Prince Edward Island in Canada. Anne was an orphan who was taken in by Marilla Cuthbert and raised in Green Gables, a home to which she is much attached. At the beginning of the novel, Anne grapples with the decision to go to college. She is distraught because some women in Avonlea have expressed their doubts about her future. Eventually Anne decides to continue with her plan, and she leaves her beloved home for school.

When Anne arrives at Redmond, her friend Priscilla, who is going to be her roommate, greets her. The two girls venture to their new residence, a boardinghouse that is owned by elderly twin ladies. Anne and Priscilla learn the rules of the house and begin to settle in. The next day, Anne and Priscilla register for classes and meet Philippa Gordon (Phil), a superficial and indecisive young woman. They all become fast friends and begin the rigors of life at college together.

During Anne's college days, she receives several marriage proposals. She refuses all of these proposals politely, as she is waiting for the man of her dreams. Her good friend, Gilbert Blythe, also

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asks Anne to be his wife and is saddened by her refusal. Anne has mixed feelings because everyone in Avonlea believes she and Gilbert would be a good match. Gilbert becomes a good friend with another girl, Christine, and Anne becomes slightly jealous.

Then at the end of their first year at school, Anne and her friends decide to find a home to rent for the next year. They are lucky enough to secure Patty's Place, a charming home in a very wealthy neighborhood. The women who own the home plan to travel to Europe and are grateful to have the girls care for their home. After summer break, the girls move into Patty's Place. They add their own personal touches to the charming cottage, and Stella's Aunt Jamesina comes to live with them. Aunt Jamesina's role is to help care for the girls, but she also advises the girls about love.

During the summer break, Anne discovers that Ruby Gillis, a close friend, is dying. Anne rekindles her friendship with Ruby and helps her friend understand that death need not be frightening. Anne is changed forever by this experience, and the entire town is saddened by Ruby's death. Anne and her friends then return for their second year at Redmond.

Anne eventually visits Bolingbroke, the city of her birth, to spend a short holiday at Phil's home. While she is there, she visits the home where her parents once lived. The woman of the home gives Anne some history of her parents and some letters written by them. Anne is thrilled and, for the first time, feels somewhat complete. On her way out of town, Anne pays a visit to her parents' graves. After spending the remainder of her summer at Green Gables, Anne returns to school.

After Anne turns down proposal after proposal, she meets Royal Gardner, a handsome man she believes may be the man of her dreams. Anne and Royal date for two years before he eventually proposes. The proposal is sweet and romantic, unlike many of her previous proposals. However, Anne realizes that she does not love Royal. She refuses his proposal politely and becomes very

discouraged with love.

Anne returns home to Green Gables after graduation from Redmond and learns from Davy that Gilbert is very sick and may die. Anne finally realizes that she truly loves Gilbert and that he is the man of her dreams. When Gilbert gets well, he visits Anne. The two take a walk and Gilbert asks Anne if her response to his proposal is still the same. Anne admits she thought Gilbert and Christine were engaged. Gilbert tells Anne that he and Christine are just friends, as she is engaged to someone else. The young lovers agree to marry, and they walk home in the dusk.

## Open-Ended Questions

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

### Initial Understanding

In the story, many suitors propose to Anne, but she refuses them all because she is convinced that the man of her dreams will come someday. How well does Anne handle her refusals? Explain.

*The answers to this question will vary. Some students may feel that Anne is very polite with her refusals. She states her reasons without being too harsh. However, some students will feel that Anne is unreasonably harsh on her suitors. They may feel that it is unfair for her to lead Royal Gardner to believe that they will be married.*

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## Literary Analysis

In the beginning of the novel, why does Anne question her decision to go to college?

*Anne is told by many people from her community that women should not go to college. Normally, Anne is not prone to believing the opinions of other people, but the number of opinions she receives overwhelms her. Anne begins to question if she should get her B.A. She begins to believe that her strength may not hold up through the school year, just as Mrs. Sloane suggests. Anne also allows Mrs. Wright to convince her that she may be squandering Marilla's money.*

## Inferential Comprehension

Throughout the course of the novel, Anne is waiting for the man of her dreams. When she meets Royal Gardner, she is almost convinced she has found him. How do you think Anne's future would have been different if Anne had married Royal?

*If Anne had married Royal, it is likely that Gilbert and Anne's friendship would have suffered. It is also possible that the people of Avonlea would be disappointed in Anne because they have always felt she and Gilbert would be a match. They might also assume that Anne would think she is better than they because of her husband's wealth. Also, Anne and Roy would probably live near his family, and Anne would miss Green Gables and Avonlea terribly.*

## Constructing Meaning

In the beginning of the novel, Anne becomes very homesick at Redmond. Have you ever felt homesick? Describe a time when you may have felt as Anne did when she left for college.

*The answers to this question will vary. Some students may have had summer camp experiences in which they have left their homes for weeks or months at a time. Other students may have visited relatives or friends for extended periods of time. The feelings elicited by these experiences may be very similar. Students may describe feeling lonely, abandoned, afraid, nervous, and shy.*

## Teachable Skills

**Recognizing Setting** Ask your students to create their own map of Kingsport, Redmond, or Avonlea. They must search the book for details and construct their maps based on the narration of the novel.

**Understanding Hist/Cultural Factors** In the novel, Anne and her friends discuss graveyards and tombstones. They describe the inscriptions and decorations of several of the headstones they see in the cemetery. Ask your students to visit a cemetery and copy down ten epitaphs from older tombstones. Compare and contrast them in class. What conclusions can be drawn? What things are most important to people -- their relationship to their families? Their accomplishments in life? Have students write their own epitaph indicating what they want others to remember about them.

**Making Predictions** In the novel, Anne goes to college. Ask your students to predict what will happen to Anne in the years after she graduates from school. The students could read or skim *Anne of Windy Poplars* or other sequels to test the accuracy of their predictions.

**Responding to Literature** Throughout the novel, Anne receives many letters from home. These letters are a great comfort to her as they remind her of Avonlea. Ask your students to write a letter to Anne. They can choose whatever topic they would like to write about. If they choose, they can share their letters with the class.