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Before the Book

Before you begin reading *The Secret Garden* with your students, do some pre-reading activities to stimulate interest and enhance comprehension. Here are some activities that might work well in your class.

1. Predict what the story might be about just by hearing the title.
2. Predict what the story might be about just by looking at the cover illustration.
3. Discuss other books by Frances Hodgson Burnett that students may have read or heard about. For example: *Sara Crewe*; *A Little Princess*; *Little Lord Fauntleroy*.
4. Answer these questions:
 - Are you interested in:
 - stories about children who become very close friends?
 - stories about reaching difficult goals?
 - stories about secrets?
 - stories that involve animals?
 - stories about plants and gardens?
 - stories about mysterious houses?
 - Would you ever:
 - try to find something that you weren't supposed to find?
 - become good friends with a member of the opposite sex?
 - work very hard on something you are committed to?
 - be able to keep a special secret?
 - Have you ever planted anything before?
5. Work in groups or as a class to write a story that involves an animal helping the characters reach a goal.



Vocabulary Activity Ideas

You can help your students learn and retain the vocabulary in *The Secret Garden* by providing them with interesting vocabulary activities. Here are a few ideas to try.

- ❑ Challenge your students to a **Vocabulary Bee**. This is similar to a spelling bee, but in addition to spelling each word correctly, the game participants must correctly define the words as well.
- ❑ As a group activity, have students work together to create an **Illustrated Dictionary** of the vocabulary words.
- ❑ Play **20 Clues** with the entire class. In this game, one student selects a vocabulary word and gives clues about this word, one by one, until someone in the class can guess the word.
- ❑ Play **Vocabulary Charades**. In this game, vocabulary words are acted out.
- ❑ Encourage students to keep a **Vocabulary Journal** where they can list words they are unfamiliar with, but which did not appear on the vocabulary list.
- ❑ Have students locate the vocabulary word in the story. Proceed to have them guess the meaning by using **Context Clues**.
- ❑ Challenge students to find **Synonyms or Antonyms** for the vocabulary words from within the story.
- ❑ Play **Vocabulary Memory**. The goal of this game is to match vocabulary words with their definitions. Divide the class into groups of 2–5 students. Have the students make two sets of cards the same size and colour. On one set have them write the vocabulary words. On the second set, have them write the definitions. All cards are mixed together and placed face down on the table. A player picks two cards. If the pair matches the word with its definition, the player keeps the card and takes another turn. If the cards don't match, they are returned to their places face down on the table, and another player takes a turn. Players must concentrate and use their memory to locate the words and their definitions. The game continues until all matches have been made. This is an ideal activity for free exploration time.
- ❑ Have students complete the **Crossword Puzzle** contained in this unit.

Quiz Time!

1. Write a one-paragraph summary of the major events in each chapter of this section. Then complete the rest of the questions on this page.
2. Why does Mary have to live with her uncle? _____

3. What is Mary's first impression of Misselthwaite Manor? _____

4. What does Martha think of Mary? _____

5. Who is Dickon and what is he like? _____

6. Why did Mr Craven lock the garden? _____

7. What did Mary do when it rained and she could not play outside? _____

8. What did Mrs Medlock do when she found Mary wandering around? _____

9. Where does Mary want Martha to take her? _____

10. Draw either the inside or outside of Misselthwaite Manor.

Picture This!

The secret garden has been locked up for ten years now. No one has been inside to care for the grass, trees and flowers. What do you suppose the garden looks like after all the years of neglect? Draw a picture of what you think the garden may look like right now. Be sure to keep this picture after you finish. It will be needed for a later assignment.

