
Teacher's Introduction

Educational Objectives

The primary goal of these materials is to develop students' appreciation of literature and to enrich their understanding of its historical context. Secondary objectives include the improvement of reading skills, expansion of vocabulary and appreciation of the rich texture of Brontë's prose.

In educating students to become culturally literate, teachers should encourage the reading of the classics of literature, such as *Wuthering Heights*. Students in this way will become familiar with such important fictional characters as Catherine and Heathcliff, with elements of Victorian literature and with the work of one of the world's greatest novelists.

About This Workbook

The student workbook is intended to supplement the reading of *Wuthering Heights* and to meet the educational objectives outlined above. With the exception of the vocabulary words themselves, the general vocabulary should be familiar to students working at the year seven level and above.

The **Reading Comprehension Exercises** encourage careful and critical reading by asking students both to recall details of the story and to pick out the main themes or ideas. Some questions require students to make inferences and to draw conclusions about what they have read. The exercises also identify special vocabulary used in the book, offer practice in interpreting difficult or idiomatic phrases, and help to prepare students for taking standardised objective tests.

The **Vocabulary Exercises** introduce students to new words and to new forms of familiar words. The exercises are designed so that vocabulary words are judged in context. The level of the defining vocabulary varies among the exercises, but is in general no higher than the suggested lowest year level at which the book should be read.

The **Stop and Think Exercises** encourage the students to summarise the material of the chapter; describe and explain particular events, personalities and problems; look forward and backward in the story, understanding and anticipating its development; discuss important themes; infer motivation of both characters and author; put the story into its historical context; compare situations in the story with current events; and look for connections between the story and their own lives. These exercises also offer an opportunity for a creative response to the literature and suggest ideas for related imaginative projects. The Stop and Think Exercises may be used as written work assignments or as the basis for classroom discussion.

The **Reviewing the Story Exercises** are to be used after the student has finished reading the book. Both the objective and open-ended exercises ask students to review the plot and characters; recall and develop the story's themes; and compare the story, its characters and ideas with other works of literature and the arts. In answering, students make inferences about the motivations of both author and characters, examine the writing style and its relation to the story's content, and place the book in its literary and historical contexts. The exercises also invite students to discuss the wider connections of the story's themes with current events, and to explore their own creative potential.



About the Author

Emily Brontë (1818–1848) was the daughter of an impoverished Yorkshire minister, Patrick Brontë. She, her four sisters and her brother were raised by their mother's sister. Though devout and hardworking, their aunt did not understand the intelligent, highly imaginative children in her charge. When the two older girls took ill at their boarding school and died, Patrick basically concluded his children's outside schooling. Later attempts at education away from home were brief, ending at the first signs of unhappiness or ill health.

As a result of the lack of intellectual sympathy from their aunt, the isolation of their parsonage, and their lack of contact with other children, Charlotte, Emily, Anne and Branwell grew very dependent on one another. They created an imaginary world, Angria, about which they wrote detailed and often melodramatic histories. Emily and Anne later seceded from Angria to form their own kingdom of Gondal. The Gondal writings were the workshop in which Emily honed her writing skills.

Of the three sisters, Emily was perhaps the most reserved. As long as she had her family and Gondal, she seemed to have no need of others. She was fiercely independent, loving the Yorkshire moors across which she could tramp for hours away from the sound of human voices. Once grown, Emily attempted to earn a living as a governess (the proper occupation for genteel Victorian spinsters of limited means). However, she abandoned this effort with relief after a short time. Only at her father's parsonage was there privacy, freedom and time to write.

Emily wrote poetry—terse, vigorous, unsentimental and often gloomy. This poetry she kept hidden even from her sisters. By accident, Charlotte discovered it. After soothing Emily's outraged sense of invaded privacy, she prevailed on her sister to publish some of her poems. Their publication under the pseudonym Ellis Bell led to the publication of *Wuthering Heights* in 1847.

Wuthering Heights did not meet with immediate accolades. Critics and readers alike were disturbed by the ferocity of the love and hate it portrayed. People only slowly began to recognise the novel for what it is—a story of stunning simplicity and strength, which neither praises nor condemns its passionate characters but simply presents them and their inevitable doom.

Emily Brontë did not live to hear her novel hailed as one of the masterpieces of Victorian literature. Catching a cold at her brother's funeral, she seemed to welcome the ensuing illness, refusing to rest or to seek medical help. In December 1848, she died, the pseudonym of Ellis Bell still protecting her from the world.

Activities

1. Have students read Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. Discuss the similarities and differences between the two novels.
2. Read some of Emily Brontë's poetry to the class. Discuss the common themes.
3. Have students read and prepare reports on other Victorian novels, particularly those by female writers.
4. Read portions of Brontë's story aloud to the class. Ask students also to read aloud. Then ask students how their appreciation of the story and of Brontë's writing style are altered by hearing rather than seeing the text.
5. Have students write a play based on *Wuthering Heights*. Discuss how they change the story in the process of dramatising it.

Chapters 1–3

Reading Comprehension Exercises

1–8: Supply the correct answers from the story.

1. Who is the narrator of the story?

2. What is the relationship between Heathcliff, Mrs Heathcliff and Hareton Earnshaw?

3. Where do the Heathcliffs live? Where does Lockwood live?

4. When Lockwood is planning to walk home in the storm, who is willing to let him walk alone? Who thinks he should be given a ride?

5. In whose room does Lockwood spend the night?



6. What is Edgar's chief consolation in his grief at his wife's death?

7. How does Heathcliff keep Hareton at Wuthering Heights?

8. How does Hareton react to Cathy when they first meet?

9. How does Cathy react to the news that Hareton is her cousin?

10. How does Heathcliff raise Hareton?

11. Why does Joseph "spoil" Hareton?
