



Night of the Twisters

by Ivy Ruckman

A Teaching Guide

with
Objective Tests
Thinking and Writing Prompts

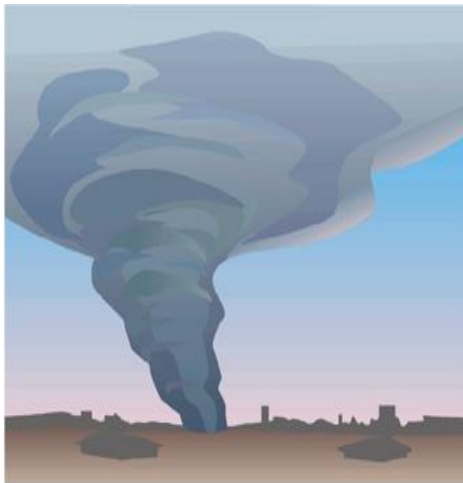
by Margaret Whisnant

Objective Tests
with
Thinking and Writing Prompts
and Answer Keys

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Table of Contents

Objective Tests

Chapter Tests

| | Page |
|--|-------|
| <i>As Told by Dan Hatch—Five O'clock</i> | 1-2 |
| <i>Six O'clock</i> | 3-4 |
| <i>Seven O'clock</i> | 5-6 |
| <i>Eight O'clock</i> | 7-8 |
| <i>Nine O'clock.</i> | 9-10 |
| <i>The Next Hour or So</i> | 11-12 |
| <i>Later On.</i> | 13-14 |
| <i>Eleven O'clock.</i> | 15-16 |
| <i>Midnight</i> | 17-18 |
| <i>Early Morning</i> | 19-20 |
| <i>As Remembered One Year Later</i> | 21-22 |

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Whole Book Test | 23-26 |
|----------------------------------|-------|

| | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Answer Keys | 27-28 |
|------------------------------|-------|

| | |
|---|-------|
| Something to Think About. . . | |
| Something to Write About | 29-33 |

| | |
|--|-------|
| About Your Teaching Guide | 33-34 |
|--|-------|

NIGHT OF THE TWISTERS

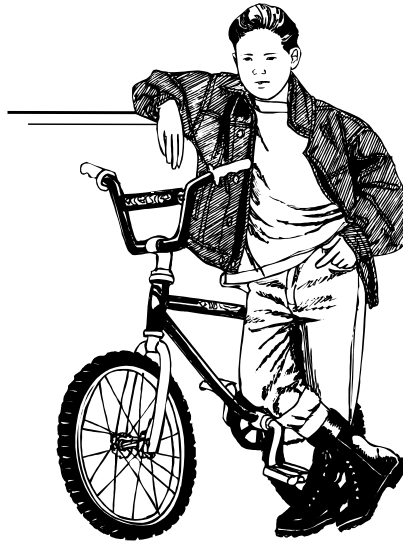
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As Told by Dan Hatch Pages 3-6

Five O'clock Pages 7-16

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. Dan's red-letter day happened on a Saturday when he (A) got his first bicycle, (B) hit a winning home run in a baseball game, (C) won five hundred dollars in cash and merchandise.



- _____ 2. Dan was sure that, if he were in charge of the world, (A) black-letter days would be announced, (B) everything would be a surprise, (C) he would never allow unpleasant things to happen.
- _____ 3. On June 3, the weatherman said there was a (A) good possibility of tornadoes, (B) twenty percent probability of thunderstorms toward evening, (C) good chance of severe weather.
- _____ 4. Dan and Arthur lived in south-central (A) Kansas, (B) Nebraska, (C) Missouri.
- _____ 5. That day in June, when the tornadoes struck, there was (A) a strange darkness in the sky, (B) an unusual calmness in the air, (C) no warning.
- _____ 6. Arthur was (A) a lazy student, (B) smart, (C) somewhat sassy.
- _____ 7. What Indian craft idea did Arthur take to Aunt Goldie's class? (A) a bull-roarer, (B) a type of rope basket weaving, (C) sand painting.
- _____ 8. Dan thought his friend Arthur could, if he had to (A) win almost any game, (B) really make Aunt Goldie mad, (C) live on his own fat cells for a month.
- _____ 9. In addition to teaching at the Riverside Dance Studio, Dan's Aunt Goldie conducted personal fulfillment classes each summer because she (A) loved arts and crafts, (B) thought the local children needed the class, (C) was divorced and had a hard time supporting herself.
- _____ 10. Which of the following was **not** something that happened to Dan when the weather began changing? (A) Goose bumps rose on his bare belly. (B) He felt that something was wrong. (C) He began to shiver.

NIGHT OF THE TWISTERS

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Six O'clock
Pages 17-26

Write either **True** or **False** in the blank before each statement.

- _____ 1. When Dan arrived home, his baby brother was not in his high chair because he was napping.
- _____ 2. Dan and Arthur looked enough alike to be mistaken for brothers.
- _____ 3. Dan's Mom didn't seem to mind that he had invited Arthur to supper without first clearing it with her.
- _____ 4. After the birth of his baby brother, Dan noticed that his mother was much happier than she used to be.
- _____ 5. Dan had been the only child for eleven years.



- _____ 6. While she was on the phone with Arthur's mother, Mrs. Hatch asked if he could stay and watch TV after supper.
- _____ 7. Dan's mother prepared beans and wieners for supper.
- _____ 8. When he learned that Arthur was in the house, Dan's father lost his temper.
- _____ 9. When he remembered that his new bike was outside, Dan put it in the garage without being told.
- _____ 10. Arthur did not put his bike in the garage.
- _____ 11. Dan remembered how nice and peaceful meals were before Ryan was born.
- _____ 12. Dan felt that, to his parents, he rated second to his baby brother.

NIGHT OF THE TWISTERS

By Ivy Ruckman
Seven O'clock
Pages 27-37

Write either **Yes** or **No** in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. Was Dan bothered by his dad's statement "the sun doesn't rise and set on you"?
- _____ 2. Did Arthur refuse to help Dan fold diapers?
- _____ 3. Did Aunt Goldie understand how difficult it had been for Dan since Ryan was born.
- _____ 4. Was Aunt Goldie really happy at the possibility of going bowling?
- _____ 5. Did Aunt Goldie sometimes stay home and actually straighten her hair?
- _____ 6. When Dan and Arthur left the house to ride bikes, was there a strong wind?
- _____ 7. Did Arthur and Dan live almost three miles apart?
- _____ 8. As he waited for Arthur to catch up, did Dan notice how beautiful Sand Crane Drive looked in the weird half-light?



- _____ 9. Was anyone in the neighborhood aware that a big storm was coming?
- _____ 10. Did Belle Smiley live in a friendly, inviting old house?
- _____ 11. Was Mrs. Smiley a large woman?
- _____ 12. Did Dan notice Mrs. Smiley's new door right away?
- _____ 13. Did Mrs. Smiley decide to get rid of her old screen door because she was tired of seeing all the mismatched patches?

NIGHT OF THE TWISTERS

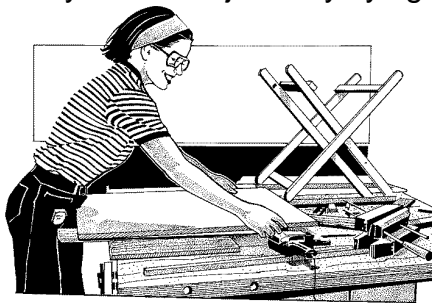
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WHOLE BOOK TEST

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Dan | Arthur | Nebraska | Grand Island | Dan's mom |
| Dan's dad | black-letter days | Ryan | the Darlings | Aunt Goldie |
| a bull-roarer | racing bike | Sand Crane Drive | Mrs. Smiley | Stacey |
| Grandpa Hatch | Ronnie Vae | Kmart | Minerva | Black Tuesday |
| Meves Bowl | a screen door | the armory | Officer Kelly | a jail |
| birthday dress | explosions | California | the basement | the shower |
| old bedsprings | Phillips | Jimmy Carter | Grandpa Hatch's farm | |
| Insurance and government loans | | Fonner Park Racetrack | | |

From the list above, choose the name, word, or phrase that fits each of the clues below and write it in the blank. **All** answers will be **used at least once**. **Some** answers will be **used more than once**.

- _____ 1. The name of the state where the night of the twisters occurred on June 3.
- _____ 2. Dan and Arthur used these to build a ladder for Mrs. Smiley to climb.
- _____ 3. It served as both a shelter for storm victims and a command center.
- _____ 4. She taught personal fulfillment classes each summer.
- _____ 5. His eyes were injured by flying glass.



- _____ 6. He was Dan's best friend.
- _____ 7. When the storm struck, she took shelter under Mrs. Smiley's heavy dining room table.
- _____ 8. He was Dan's baby brother.
- _____ 9. Dan wished God would announce these ahead of time.
- _____ 10. Aunt Goldie was here when the storm hit.
- _____ 11. The night of the storm, Dan's dad went to help this person repair the tractor.
- _____ 12. Dan won one of these in a Dairy Queen contest.

NIGHT OF THE TWISTERS

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Something to Think About . . .
Something to Write About. . .



Dan said if he were in charge of the world, black-letter days would be announced for sure.

- In your opinion, would it be helpful for people to know when something bad was going to happen? Why or why not?
 - How about red-letter days? Would life be better for people if they always knew what events were on their way? Explain your answer.
-

Dan said his friend Arthur was no ordinary human.

- Based on the things he said and did, do you agree or disagree with Dan's statement? Explain your choice.
 - How about Arthur's family? Do you think it was ordinary? Why or why not?
-

Dan thought his mom wasn't happy staying home with her baby and sewing machine.

- What clues can you find to prove that Dan was right? What do you think his mom meant when she said "I miss me."?
 - You may have heard someone talk about keeping **balance** in his or her life. What is a **balanced** life? Did Dan's mom have one? Explain.
-

In the beginning, Dan thought his life was much better before the arrival of his little brother Ryan.

- What things changed because of Ryan's birth to make him think so?
- In what ways did Dan show that he really loved his little brother?
- How did Ryan help Dan get through the ordeal of the tornados?

About Your Teaching Pack

Objective Tests

The objective tests have multiple functions. In addition to their obvious application, they also serve as tools that can *improve **comprehension skills** by providing practice in understanding plot structure and recognizing important story elements.*

Rationale:

Focus on the Plot. . .

Whether they are aware of their ability or not, all good readers sense the **rhythm** of the **connected** events that compose the plot of a novel, and consequently **comprehend** the story. They are in tune with cause and effect, behavior and consequence, sequence—the heartbeat of the narrative.

This “plot rhythm” forms the framework for the objective tests. The chain of events that tell the story have been pulled from the novel and reformatted into a series of sequential questions, none of which require **interpretation**. They are intended to **draw student attention to the fact that something happened**, not to what the incident means. That comes later.

In addition to their testing function, teachers may use the pages to strengthen their students’ ability to **Summarize**: With only the questions as a guide, have students write a summary of the chapter. For a set of ten questions, limit the number of sentences they may write to seven or fewer. When they work with twenty or more questions, allow no more than twelve sentences.

Report the News: Ask your students to write a newspaper article based on the events identified in a set of questions and the *who, what, when, where, why* elements. Some information needed to complete this assignment may be located in previous chapters.

Twist the Plot: Choose one or two questions from each chapter and change its answer—true to false, no to yes, etc.—to demonstrate how changing a single (or several) events would (or would not) change the story. This process can be used to help students become proficient in distinguishing major plot movers from minor story details.

The Characters. . .

Questions that illustrate character motivation and personality are purposely included. Too often, when they are asked to tell what kind of person a story character is, the only answer many of our students can muster is “nice.”

In your efforts to remove “nice” from your students’ literary vocabulary, try this idea:

Character Charts: Display individual charts for the main characters. As the chapters are read, record **facts, behaviors, or events** that relate to the each character. Then connect the items with several appropriate words such as **empathetic, brave, calloused, bold, untrustworthy**, etc. The teacher can take the lead by contributing the first few words and then assigning the task of identifying more terms to students. Record the word collections on the charts with the story facts.

This information is a valuable student resource when displayed in the room for all to see and use during a writing assignment. In creating and using character charts, students will soon begin writing more fluently and insightfully about story personalities.

Use the charts to encourage your students to try some “predicting” or “detective” writing about what the character(s) might do next or what might have happened after the story ended. Let the charts help your students recognize **CHARACTER CHANGE (dynamics)**.

Another fun activity with the charts is to match a book personality with a zodiac sign. Students must justify their reason for thinking a character is a particular sign by citing his/her behaviors, words, reactions to situations, etc. that prove the match.

Implied Meaning and Story Clues. . .

The objective tests include items that establish the existence of story components carrying ***implied meaning***. ***Story clues*** that tantalize the reader with hints of future events also appear as question. At this point in the novel study, as before, **interpretation** is not the goal. **Awareness** of the **facts** is the target.

Developing/Improving Listening Skills. . .

Listening skills are rightfully included on every list of state competency requirements. Rather than always requiring students to answer test questions on a printed page, why not surprise them occasionally by doing the test orally and meeting competency goals at the same time?

Discussion Guide Capability. . .

The objective tests are helpful discussion guides. Use individual items on these pages to draw student attention to sequence, cause and effect, story clues (foreshadowing), character traits, recognizing and interpreting implied meanings, etc. These “thinking out loud” sessions are an **important building block** for the next learning phase.

Something to Think About. . . Something to Write About. . .

In this section, students pack up what they already know about the novel and go exploring into its every nook and cranny. Some activities require the simplest interpretation or application, while others will challenge the most proficient thinkers.

Rationale:

Guidelines. . .

The in this section are based on the skills presented in the ***Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Bloom's Taxonomy)***. There are two reasons for this choice. First, it mirrors the Teaching Pack's primary purpose of building a variety of sophisticated thinking skills upon a foundation of basic knowledge. Second, in following the taxonomy guidelines, activities that correlate with many state educational standards emerge automatically.

Levels of Difficulty. . .

A variety **difficulty levels** to accommodate the needs of individual students, including the gifted, is an integral part of this component. However, **all** items from this section are intended to **challenge** and **sharpen** thinking abilities.

Options. . .

Something to Think About, Something to Write About gives teachers **pick-and-choose options** for

individualizing assignments
group work
whole class activities
capitalizing on student interest

homework assignments
short-term and long-term projects
differentiating assignments for two or more classes

Final Note

This teaching guide is designed for use as supplementary material that supports a total reading program. It is my goal to provide busy teachers with a classroom-ready, practical resource of motivational and learning opportunities for their students. It is my hope that your purchase will prove to be a hard-working instructional component for years to come. Thanks for choosing one of my products for your classroom.



Margaret Whisnant, Author