

# **The Witch of Blackbird Pond**

By Elizabeth George Speare

**1959 Newbery Medal Winner**



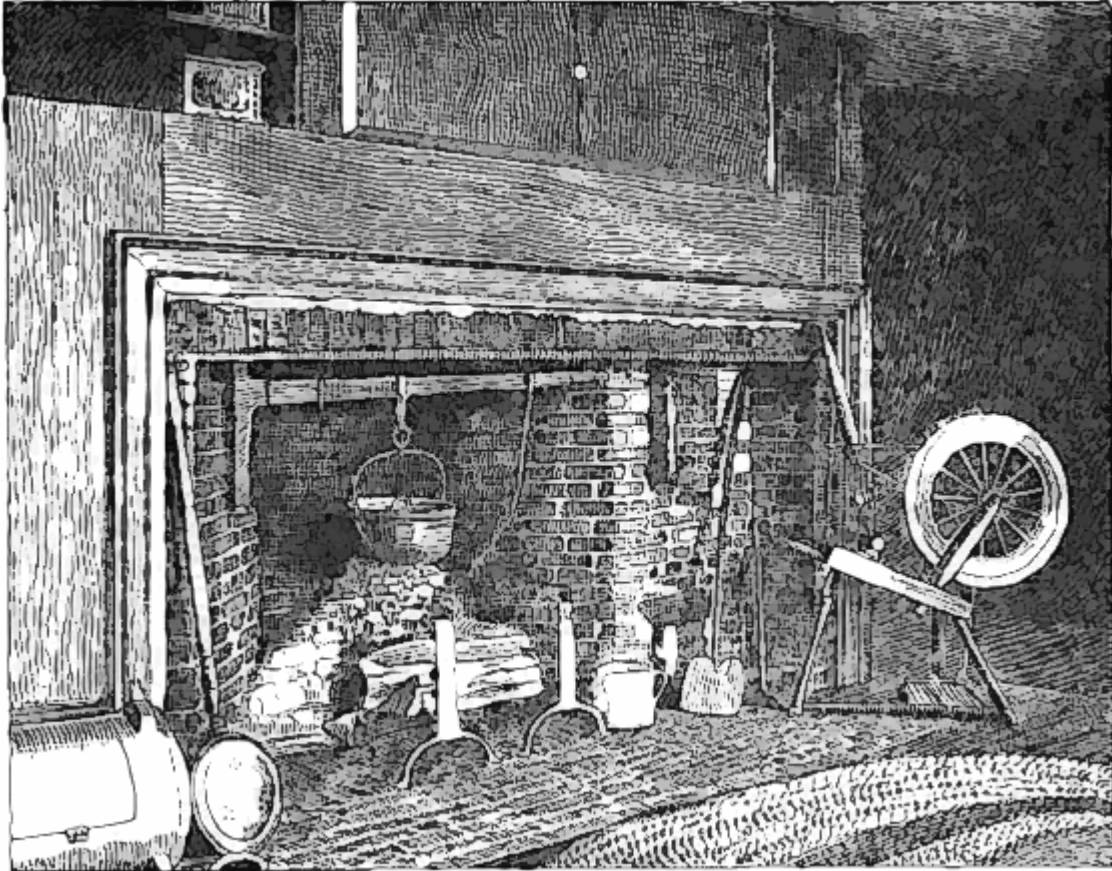
## **Objective Tests Teaching Guide**

By Margaret Whisnant

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# The Witch of Blackbird Pond

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## Chapter 1 Pages 1-14

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

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. This story took place in (A) 1887, (B) 1787, (C) 1687.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Kit Tyler had been at sea for (A) a month, (B) five months, (C) five weeks.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Kit's first glimpse of America was (A) disappointing, (B) a relief, (C) beautiful.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Kit had left her home in Barbados to come to (A) Jamestown colony, (B) the Hudson River Valley, (C) Connecticut colony.



- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Nathaniel Eaton's father owned a shipyard in (A) Charleston, (B) Saybrook, (C) Havana.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Kit had (A) never been on a sailing ship, (B) sailed on small ships all her life, (C) been sick the whole voyage.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. There was an unbearable stench aboard the *Dolphin* because (A) it had carried a load of horses on its previous voyage, (B) all the food had spoiled, (C) they were carrying a cargo of pigs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Kit was (A) one of only two women aboard the *Dolphin*, (B) the only woman on the ship, (C) one of several dozen women making the voyage.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Mistress Eaton came back to Saybrook every spring to (A) get away from the heat of Barbados, (B) visit with the captain, (C) tend to her house and garden.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Kit was (A) fourteen, (B) sixteen, (C) eighteen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Kit went ashore with Mistress Eaton because she (A) couldn't bear the ship any longer, (B) didn't want to be left alone, (C) couldn't wait to set foot on America.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. On the way back to the *Dolphin*, what object did the little girl drop from the longboat? (A) a doll, (B) her shoes, (C) a basket of food.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. When Kit went into the water, she was surprised to find (A) it was not salt water, (B) the current was really strong, (C) it was terribly cold.

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## Chapter 2

Pages 14-28

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

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The *Dolphin* made a quick journey from Saybrook to Wethersfield.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Prudence's mother was a loving woman who treated her child with kindness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Kit noticed that Prudence took the doll with her wherever she went aboard the ship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. John Holbrook spent a lot of time reading.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Like the other passengers on the ship, John ignored and avoided Kit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. John didn't go to Harvard as he had hoped because his family couldn't afford it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. John was jealous of the carefree life Kit had led.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Both of Kit's parents had moved back to England when she was very young.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Kit's Aunt Rachel fell in love with a Puritan and left England for America with her father's blessing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Kit had to come to live with her Aunt Rachel because her grandfather died.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Aunt Rachel wrote a letter to Kit every year.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. In the technique called "walking up the river," the sailors used a rope attached to an anchor to pull the *Dolphin* along the river.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Because there was no water for a bath, Kit dove into the water with Nat and two other sailors.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Kit's family had owned more than a hundred slaves who worked their plantation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Nat and his father refused to use the *Dolphin* to transport slaves.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Kit thought the book that John was always reading was a wonderful, entertaining story.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Kit tried to explain to John how much she loved the books she had read and the place where she had lived.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Kit was deeply disappointed when she saw Wethersfield.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Goodwife Cruff invited Kit to come visit with Prudence as soon as she could.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Kit's Aunt Rachel did not know that she was coming to Wethersfield.

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## Chapter 4 Pages 38-50

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

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Did Aunt Rachel appear to be nervous after her husband left?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Was Judith proud of her mother for the way she cared for needy people?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Did Judith and Mercy have clothing like Kit carried in her trunks?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Did Mercy show the same enthusiasm for Kit's clothing as Judith?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Did Kit give Judith her peacock blue dress?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Was Aunt Rachel terribly upset when she saw Judith in the blue dress?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Did Judith and Mercy seem surprised when Kit described her aunt Rachel as being beautiful?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Did Aunt Rachel and her daughters continue wearing Kit's clothes when Uncle Matthew came back into the house?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Did Aunt Rachel tell her husband the truth about Kit's clothes?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Was Uncle Matthew willing to let Judith keep the blue dress?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Did Uncle Matthew tell Katherine she would fit herself to their ways?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Was Kit hurt and angered by Uncle Matthew's attitude?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Did Kit realize that Uncle Matthew had a soft spot for Mercy?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Was Kit surprised to learn there were no servants in the house?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Did Kit enjoy carding wool with Mercy?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Had Kit left Barbados to escape marrying an older man?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Did Kit prove herself to be skillful and patient in doing the household chores?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Was Judith happy that her cousin Kit had come to live with them?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Did Kit allow Judith to hear her crying?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Was Kit startled by the sound of a wolf howling?



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## Whole Book Test

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

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Kit came to New England from (A) Cuba, (B) Haiti, (C) Barbados.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Kit arrived in New England in the year (A) 1897, (B) 1787, (C) 1687.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Kit's aunt and uncle lived in (A) Massachusetts, (B) Connecticut, (C) Rhode Island.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Kit met Nathaniel Eaton (A) in Saybrook, (B) on board the *Dolphin*, (C) in Wethersfield.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Nat's family owned (A) a shipyard in Saybrook, (B) land in Barbados, (C) a sugar cane plantation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. In the spring, Nat's mother always came home to (A) Charleston, (B) Saybrook, (C) Wethersfield.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. When Kit arrived to live with her aunt and uncle, she was (A) fourteen, (B) sixteen, (C) eighteen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Which of the following had **not** been true of Kit's grandfather? (A) He owned slaves. (B) He owned a plantation. (C) He was a sea captain.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. On her way back to the *Dolphin* from Saybrook, Kit jumped into the water to (A) retrieve Prudence's doll, (B) rescue Prudence, (C) take a bath.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Nat warned Kit to keep her ability to swim a secret because people would think she was (A) too bold, (B) possessed, (C) a witch.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. John Holbrook went to Wethersfield to study to be (A) a clergyman, (B) a surveyor, (C) a teacher.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. To pay for her passage aboard the *Dolphin*, Kit had (A) sold her clothes, (B) sold her personal slave, (C) worked as a teacher.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Uncle Matthew and Aunt Rachel (A) had been waiting for Kit to arrive, (B) didn't know Kit was coming, (C) no longer lived in Wethersfield.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. A sickness had left Mercy Wood (A) lame, (B) partially deaf, (C) blind.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Uncle Matthew disapproved of Kit's (A) superior attitude, (B) unwillingness to do work, (C) clothes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Aunt Rachel and Kit's mother had been (A) best friends when they lived in England, (B) sisters, (C) cousins.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Kit's parents (A) were in England, (B) were dead, (C) had disappeared on a long sea voyage.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Uncle Matthew and Aunt Rachel were (A) Puritans, (B) Quakers, (C) Calvinists.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Wethersfield was (A) a large sea port, (B) white buildings and green lawns, (C) no more than a village.



# About Your Teaching Guide. . .

The primary goal in creating this objective tests teaching guide is to provide a **classroom-ready**, non-threatening method for checking student comprehension and stretching thinking skills. This material also aligns with CCSS by helping students identify and recall story details needed for making inferences, citing facts, etc.

When used as a basic guide for teaching a novel, the materials can provide many and varied opportunities for learning.

Use your teaching pack as a guide and lead your students into discovering new ideas about . . . .

## THE PLOT

Each test page is actually an outline of the plot. In your teaching pack, the chain of related events that tell the story has been pulled from the novel and reformatted into a series of questions. Whether they are aware of their ability or not, all good readers sense the **rhythm** of the **connected** events that compose the plot; and consequently **comprehend** the story. This “plot rhythm” is the basic structure of the tests.

To further your students’ understanding of plot, try the following activities:

**Summarizing the Story:** Using only the chapter questions as a guide, have your students write a summary of the chapter. For a set of ten questions, limit the number of sentences they may write to seven. For twenty questions, allow no more than twelve sentences.

**Reporting the News:** Have students write a newspaper article, based on the events from a set of questions, and add the *who, what, when, where, why* format. Some needed information may be located in previous chapters.

**Twisting the Plot:** Choose one or two questions from each chapter and change its answer—true to false, no to yes, or a different answer—and explain how changing a single (or several) events would change the story. To further illustrate the rhythm of a good story, try changing the answers to one complete set of questions. Your students will see how difficult, if not impossible, it is to tell a sensible story from a tangled set of events.

## 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.

## READING BETWEEN THE LINES (Implied Meaning)

Because the primary goal for the objective questions is **basic comprehension**, items requiring a student to **interpret** an event or a character’s behavior are not included. Always included, however, are questions that



establish the existence of a story component carrying an implied meaning.

## **MAKING PREDICTIONS**

(Recognizing Story Clues)

Authors subtly place clues in the story line giving the reader hints as to what is about to happen. Like the implied meaning, these clues are brought to the reader's attention in the form of a question. Once a student learns to spot the gems, his/her ability to comprehend and enjoy a story tends to leap forward.

Use "thinking-out-loud" class discussions to list all the possible meanings of the clue questions. Have your student write their individual predictions (no sharing or telling), store the papers until the novel is finished, and then retrieve them for reading. Sometimes, a wrong prediction makes a story as good as the original.

## **OTHER FUCTIONS**

The objective test pages are excellent discussion guides for both whole groups and small groups. They work well as homework reading guides and as conferencing tools. They are also useful management tools for teachers who wish to use multiple titles in one classroom.

## **IMPROVING/DEVELOPING LISTENING SKILLS**

Rather than always requiring your students to answer test questions on a printed page, surprise them (and save paper!!) by occasionally doing the test orally.

Try this technique:

### **Student Rules for an Oral Test:**

The teacher will read each question *two times*. No comments or questions that interrupt this initial phase of the test are allowed.

When all questions have been read, individual students may ask for repeats of any question he/she wishes to hear again.

No interruptions/comments during the re-reading part of the test.

### **Teacher Rules for an Oral Test:**

The teacher will read each question *two times*. Except to remind students that a re-reading phase will following after the last question, he/she will not respond to comment/question during this period.

The teacher will repeat **any** and **all** questions (even if it results in reading the same question multiple times).

(The second teacher rule is a *vital* part of the exercise. Asking for multiple repeats of a question does not mean students aren't paying attention. It does indicate their desire to *understand* and *answer* the question correctly.)

As students become more comfortable and experienced with oral test-taking, the number of requests for repeated questions will diminish. An added bonus to this technique is that skills learned in these testing periods tend to translate into other situations where teacher-talking and student-listening are required components of learning.

## **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 loaded with 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 Whisnau,

