

# ***The Witch of Blackbird Pond* by Elizabeth George Speare**

(Published by Random House)

Approved for use in Communication Arts, Grade 6

## **Summary**

Katherine (Kit) grows up in Barbados where she has a prosperous life. After her parents and grandfather die, Kit must go to live with her aunt in the Connecticut Colony. The year is 1687, and she must learn about the Puritan ways of her aunt and uncle. Kit is a free spirit who encounters people with who are not like her. She befriends Widow Tupper, a woman everyone else believes is practicing witchcraft.

## **Connection to the Curriculum**

*The Witch of Blackbird Pond* is an historical novel set in the 1600's. This novel deals with topics of US history such as the Puritans, Salem witch trials, and the times of the early colonies. The struggle is of a young girl, 14 years of age, losing her immediate family and being thrown into a culture that is foreign to her. This novel enables students to contrast the characters' feelings and examine ideas about the different cultures in our history and world.

## **Standards**

### **Course Objectives (Benchmarks)**

**Reading:** 1.3- The students expand vocabulary. 1.4- The students comprehend a variety of texts.

**Literature:** 2.1- The students use literary concepts to interpret and respond to text. 2.2- The students understand the significance of literature and its contributions to various cultures.

### **Possible Skills Taught (Indicators)**

#### **Reading:**

1.4.9- The student identifies characteristics or narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive texts.

1.4.12- The student uses prior knowledge, content, text type, and text features to make, revise, and confirm predictions.

1.4.13- The student generates and responds logically to literal, inferential, and critical thinking questions before, during, and after the reading of the text.

1.4.14- The student uses information from the text to make inferences and draw conclusions.

1.4.20- The student identifies and describes the author's purpose (e.g., to inform, to give directions, to entertain) and basic techniques the author uses to achieve that purpose.

#### **Literature:**

2.1.1- The student describes different aspects of major and minor characters (e.g. their physical traits, personality traits, feelings, actions, motives) and explains how those aspects influence characters' interactions with other characters and elements of the plot, including resolution of the major conflict.

2.1.2- The student identifies and describes the setting (e.g., environment, time of day or year, historical period, situation, place) and explains the importance of the setting to the story or literary text.

2.1.3- The student identifies major and minor events related to the conflict in a story (e.g., crisis/turning moment, climax, resolution) and explains how one event gives rise to another.

2.1.4- The student understands aspects of theme (e.g. moral, lesson, meaning, message, author's ideas about the subject) and supports with implicit and/or explicit information from the text.

2.1.5- The student understands the use of literary devices (e.g., foreshadowing, flashback).

## **A Note on the Text**

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

*This novel deals with the Puritan society. It contrasts Kit's free spirit with the conservative culture of the new world. One character is assumed a "witch" due to her behavior.*

## **Additional Unit Design Connections**

Coming soon:

To be completed during future curriculum development activities