

# The Hundred Dresses

by Eleanor Estes

Classroom Favorites



Teacher's Guide by Jody Hamm

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*Note to the Teacher: This guide is not intended to be followed exactly. Feel free to pick and choose among the suggested activities based on the needs and interests of your particular group. You are encouraged to make adaptations, or to supplement the guide with activities of your own creation. Page references are followed by a T, M, or B, indicating the top, middle, or bottom of the page. The vocabulary words that will be tested are marked with an asterisk.*

## Objectives

1. The student will have the opportunity to recall details as well as read critically.
2. The student will gain comprehension on character study.
3. The student will be able to apply knowledge and comprehension in discussions of the different characteristics of the characters in the study.
4. The student will be able to analyze and compare relationships of the characters.
5. The student will be able to compose or create something new as a result of reading this book.
6. The student will be able to judge different characteristics and verify their judgments with documentation.

### Chapter 1 Wanda pp. 2-7

**Synopsis:** Wanda Petronski was a girl from Boggins Heights which happens to be the "wrong side of town." The children liked to make fun of her because of her name and where she lived. She had to walk to school over muddy country roads and her shoes were usually caked with mud.

Peggy and Madeline (called Maddie) were the main instigators of this teasing. They would sometimes wait on a corner for her "to have fun with her" on the way to school. This particular week Wanda was absent.

**Vocabulary:** scuffling (p.3T); on the contrary (p.3M; apt (p.3B); auburn (p.5M); askew (p.6T); reciting (p.6B); unison (p.6B); precarious (p.6T).

**Discussion Questions:** (encourage skimming to find answers.)

1. Who noticed that Wanda was absent from school?  
(Nobody)
2. What is the most probable reason that Wanda sat in the corner of the room?  
(Her feet were usually caked with dry mud.)
3. When did the children think most about Wanda?  
(When they were outside and could tease her.)
4. Who sat behind Wanda?  
(Bill Byron)
5. Where did Peggy and Maddie sit?  
(in the front row)
6. Describe Peggy.  
(pretty with curly auburn hair)
7. How did Wanda make Peggy and Maddie late to school?  
(They had waited on the corner for her and she hadn't come.)

### Chapter 2 The Dresses Game pp. 8-18

**Synopsis:** The beginning of this chapter gives a good description of where and how Wanda lives and why the other children teased her. Wanda wore the same dress to school every day, yet she would say she had a hundred dresses in her closet. Peggy and Maddie continually teased her about this. Maddie, however, began to feel they were not treating Wanda well. She was afraid to say anything to Peggy because Maddie herself was poor and of course Peggy was the most "popular" girl in school and she wanted to remain Peggy's best friend.

**Vocabulary:** intruders (p.8B); disgracefully (p.9B); strewn (p.9B); circulated (p.9B); incredulously (p.12B); stolidly (p.13B); shrieks (p.13B); peals [of laughter] (p.13B); derisively (p.13B); fringe (p.16T); disperse (16T); inseparable (16T).

**Discussion Questions:** (encourage skimming)

1. Who was old man Svenson?  
(An old dirty man who lived in Boggins Heights. His house and yard were dirty. People said it smelled around his house.)

2. What else, beside dresses, did the girls tease Wanda about?  
(coats, hats, shoes)
3. Why was Maddie beginning to worry about the way they teased Wanda?  
(Maddie was poor herself and usually wore hand-me-down clothes. She was afraid they might "turn" on her.)
4. How did Maddie act sometimes when Peggy was teasing Wanda?  
(She felt embarrassed and would "study the marbles in her hand.")

### Chapter 3 A Bright Blue Day pp. 19-33

**Synopsis:** Maddie's conscience begins to bother her. A flashback tells how the hundred dresses game began. One of the girls had come to school with a new dress and everyone was admiring it. After a while Wanda said she had a hundred dresses. This begins the teasing.

**Vocabulary:** puckered (p.20T); impatiently (p.20M); vividly (p.21T); crimson (p.21B); admiring (p.22B); precious (p.22B); granite (p.23T); toboggan cap (p.24T); jaunty (p.24T); timid (p.25T); impulsively (p.28B); finery (p.30M); suspiciously (p.30M); pursing (p.31B)

#### Discussion Questions:

1. What was the thing that happened to begin the hundred dresses game?  
(Cecile had a new red dress and everyone was admiring it.)
2. What special talent did Cecile have?  
(She was a toe dancer.)
3. Who did Wanda tell first about having a hundred dresses?  
(Peggy)
4. Why do you think she told Peggy?  
(It could be because she was standing next to her, or possibly because Peggy was the most popular girl in school and she wanted Peggy to like her.)
5. On page 31 Peggy speaks like a grown up. Have you ever known someone who talks or acts like this?  
(Answers may vary.)
6. This whole chapter is a "flashback." What was Maddie doing all the time she was recreating the beginning of the hundred dresses game?  
(She was sharpening her pencil.)

### Chapter 4 The Contest pp. 34-39

**Synopsis:** A drawing and coloring contest—the girls for designing dresses and the boys for designing motor boats—occupies the thoughts of the children. Everyone thinks Peggy will probably win for the girls.

**Vocabulary:** disguise (p.35M); accord [of her own accord"] (p.35B); cerise-colored (p.38T)

#### Discussion Questions:

1. Why was Maddie afraid to say anything to Peggy about the wrongness of teasing Wanda?  
(She was afraid Peggy would turn on her.)
2. When did the students most often notice Wanda?  
(When she was doing oral reading.)
3. At this point in the book do you think Wanda is dumb? Why or why not?  
(Answers may vary.)
4. What usually happened before the teacher would have Wanda sit down after oral reading?  
(The teacher would try to help Wanda.)
5. Who did Maddie think would win the drawing contest for the girls?  
(Peggy)

### Chapter 5 The Hundred Dresses pp. 40-50

**Synopsis:** With dress designs hung all over the room the announcement is made that Wanda won the contest for designing dresses. Peggy and Maddie realize that the hundred dresses Wanda had talked about were all in the drawings.

The class also finds out that the Petronskis are moving. Their father wanted them to move to a bigger city where their name would not be so strange and they would not get teased. Maddie now feels very guilty for not trying to stop the teasing. She decided to go to Wanda's house and try to see her before she left. Peggy has the same idea.

**Vocabulary:** lavish (p.41B); exquisite (p.45T); monitor (p.45B); tense (p.46B); expectant (p.46B); deliberately (p.46B); coward (p.49T).

#### Discussion Questions:

1. Why did Maddie and Peggy NOT wait for Wanda?  
(It was raining.)
2. What did the girls see as they entered the room?  
(dress drawings all over the room)
3. Where were the boys' drawings?  
(room 12)
4. What did the class do after the teacher announced that Wanda had won?  
(They burst into applause and the boys stamped their feet and whistled.)
5. What were Peggy's feelings as she looked at the dresses?  
(admiration)
6. Why did Maddie feel she had been worse than Peggy?  
(She realized they were doing wrong and had been too cowardly to do anything about it.)
7. Do you think Peggy had been thinking about the wrongness of what they did? Why?  
(Yes. She was the first to suggest they go to Wanda's house.)

8. What are your feelings toward Peggy?  
(Answers may vary.)

## Chapter 6 Up On Boggins Heights pp. 51-63

**Synopsis:** The girls walk to Boggins Heights in a cold rain. When they get to Wanda's house they realize the Petronskis are gone. Maddie really feels badly about the way they had treated Wanda. At the end of the chapter she decides ". . . she was never going to stand by and say nothing again."

**Vocabulary:** forbidding air (p.51B); assailed (p.52B); consoled (p.52B); forlorn (p.53M); sparse (p.54B); frail (p.57M); dilapidated (p.59T); loping (p.59B); disconsolate (p.61M).

### Discussion Questions:

1. What was Peggy's excuse for teasing Wanda?  
(She "never thought she had the sense to know" they were making fun of her.)
2. How did Maddie console herself?  
(She imagined what she would do to protect Wanda if she didn't move.)
3. What was the only sign of life at the Petronskis' house?  
(a yellow cat)
4. What does it mean when it said the door "furnished frail protection against the cold?"  
(The door did not keep out the cold.)
5. Do you think the girls were afraid of "old man Svenson?" Why or why not?  
(Answers may vary—possible answers might include a fear of the unknown.)
6. What was probably the reason Mr. Svenson's words were unintelligible?  
(Possible answers might be that he spoke a foreign language.)
7. Compare Peggy and Maddie's reactions when they couldn't find Wanda.  
(Peggy rationalized if she hadn't teased her, Wanda might not have made all those drawings. Maddie felt guilty. She couldn't sleep.)
8. What conclusion did Maddie come to?  
(She was never again going to stand by and say nothing when she knew something was wrong. She never wanted to make anyone feel unhappy again.)

## Chapter 7 The Letter To Room 13 pp. 64-80

**Synopsis:** Maddie and Peggy write Wanda a letter in hopes the post office will forward it. They waited and waited for an answer but one did not come. At Christmas Wanda writes to Miss Mason, their teacher. In the letter, she asks that one particular drawing be given to Peggy and another to Maddie. The girls realize later that their particular drawing resembled themselves. They then think that Wanda really must have liked them anyway.

**Vocabulary:** transparent (p.73B); cornucopia (p.73B); finality (p.76T); hastily (p.77B); intently (p.78T); vivid (p.78T).

### Discussion Questions:

1. When Maddie and Peggy write to Wanda, do they apologize to her?  
(no)
2. How did they address the envelope since they didn't know where Wanda was living?  
(They put 'PLEASE FORWARD' on the envelope.)
3. Why do you think Wanda did not answer their letter?  
(Answers may vary.)
4. At the Christmas party at school, what was in the place of the teacher's desk?  
(a piano)
5. List the things the children did at the party.  
(1. They acted out the story of Tiny Tim.  
2. They sang songs.  
3. Cecile danced in different costumes.)
6. The paragraph at the top of page 73 states that Wanda's letter was decorated with a "picture of a Christmas tree lighted up in the night in a park surrounded by high buildings." Can you guess where this might be?  
(Possibly New York City)
7. What did Maddie do with her drawing?  
(She pinned it over a torn place in the wallpaper in her bedroom.)
8. What did Maddie discover about her drawing?  
(The face looked like her face.)
9. What did they discover about Peggy's drawing?  
(Its face and hair looked like Peggy's.)

### Extension Activities

The questions and/or activities are based on the higher levels of thinking. They can be used individually, as a group or both in order to give all children the opportunity to be exposed to higher level thinking.

1. List the good things about Maddie and another list of the good things about Peggy.
2. Compare and contrast the characteristics of Maddie and Peggy.
3. Imagine that you are Peggy. How could you act differently?
4. Write another chapter to the book making a new ending.
5. Write a play based on this book and be prepared to act it out.
6. Design a dress or a motor boat.
7. Which of the characters in the book would you like to be? Support your answer.

8. Have you ever been in a situation like Maddie where you knew something was wrong and chose not to say anything? Do you think this was right or wrong? Support your answer.

### ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

#### Vocabulary (2 points each—Total 40)

- |      |       |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. b | 6. b  | 11. d | 16. a |
| 2. a | 7. d  | 12. b | 17. b |
| 3. c | 8. c  | 13. a | 18. d |
| 4. c | 9. b  | 14. c | 19. c |
| 5. a | 10. a | 15. b | 20. b |

#### Comprehension (2 points each—Total 50)

- |      |       |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. b | 7. c  | 13. c | 19. c |
| 2. d | 8. d  | 14. a | 20. d |
| 3. a | 9. c  | 15. d | 21. a |
| 4. d | 10. a | 16. b | 22. c |
| 5. c | 11. c | 17. c | 23. d |
| 6. b | 12. b | 18. b | 24. b |
|      |       |       | 25. c |

#### Essay Questions (5 points each—Total 10)

Should be scored according to teacher's judgement.

## VOCABULARY TEST

Choose the word that best fits the sentence. Write the letter of the correct answer in the blank. (2 points each)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. There were \_\_\_\_\_ of feet going down the hall.  
a. peals                      b. scuffling                      c. pursing                      d. forbidding
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. At many schools the children \_\_\_\_\_ the Pledge to the flag.  
a. recite                      b. disperse                      c. shriek                      d. sparse
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Jenny had on a bright \_\_\_\_\_ colored dress.  
a. stolid                      b. vivid                      c. cerise                      d. transparent
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. If someone is shy, we sometimes say they are \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. jaunty                      b. impatient                      c. timid                      d. intent
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Someone who is \_\_\_\_\_ is so unhappy that nothing will comfort them.  
a. disconsolate                      b. intent                      c. tense                      d. exquisite
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The cat had a deserted or \_\_\_\_\_ look.  
a. happy                      b. forlorn                      c. coward                      d. tense
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. He forgot to do his homework and \_\_\_\_\_ tried to finish it at breakfast.  
a. sparsely                      b. timidly                      c. tensely                      d. hastily
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. She asked herself \_\_\_\_\_ when the dresses game had begun.  
a. crimson                      b. consoled                      c. impatiently                      d. intently
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. *Crimson* and *cerise* are both shades of \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. blue                      b. red                      c. green                      d. purple
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. When he awoke from his nap, his hair was \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. askew                      b. precarious                      c. shrieks                      d. fringe
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. He was rude and acted \_\_\_\_\_ to his teacher.  
a. vividly                      b. strongly                      c. disperse                      d. disgracefully
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. When a group says something together they say it in \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. granite                      b. unison                      c. disguise                      d. accord
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Peggy and Maddie were \_\_\_\_\_; they were always together.  
a. inseparable                      b. apt                      c. contrary                      d. jaunty
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. \_\_\_\_\_ is a hard rock sometimes used in buildings.  
a. cornucopia                      b. vivid                      c. granite                      d. accord
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. He studied the picture \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. sparsely                      b. intently                      c. timidly                      d. finery
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. The barn was \_\_\_\_\_ with many parts falling down or broken.  
a. dilapidated                      b. frail                      c. deliberate                      d. consoled
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. He felt sorry for his friend when he lost his dog and tried to \_\_\_\_\_ him.  
a. disguise                      b. console                      c. admire                      d. pucker
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. The jewelry was \_\_\_\_\_ because it was very expensive.  
a. stolid                      b. jaunty                      c. accord                      d. precious
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. There were \_\_\_\_\_ of laughter when the jokes were finished.  
a. intruders                      b. fringes                      c. shrieks                      d. pursing
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. She acted \_\_\_\_\_ when she made unkind remarks about the teacher.  
a. admiring                      b. impulsively                      c. vividly                      d. jauntily

## COMPREHENSION TEST

Choose the best answer to each question. Write the letter of the correct answer in each blank. (2 points each)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Wanda sat in the corner of the room probably because (a) she was smart (b) her feet were usually caked with mud (c) she was rough and noisy (d) she was quiet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How are Peggy and Maddie alike? (a) they both have auburn hair (b) they were both poor (c) they could both draw well (d) they were best friends.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. What kind of person is Wanda? (a) quiet and timid (b) smart (c) popular (d) bossy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. How was Maddie like Wanda? (a) she lived on Boggins Heights (b) she didn't have a mother (c) she could draw well (d) she was poor.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. How did Maddie sometimes feel when Peggy would tease Wanda? (a) happy (b) confident (c) embarrassed (d) silly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Chapter 3 "A Bright Blue Day" is mainly about (a) a pretty day in October (b) how the hundred dresses game began (c) Maddie sharpening her pencil (d) none of the above.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Jake was (a) Cecile's brother (b) Wanda's brother (c) Maddie's brother (d) Peggy's brother.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Which of the following is true about Peggy? (a) she was smart (b) she could draw well (c) she was sure of herself (d) all of the above.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. According to the story, which sentence is most likely true? (a) Wanda was happy after she moved (b) Cecile would become a famous dancer (c) Maddie would never again be a part of teasing anyone (d) Peggy would apologize to Wanda.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Why did Jake usually go to school early? (a) to help the janitor (b) to play ball with the boys (c) to get away from home (d) to feed the fish.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Why did Maddie think Wanda originally made the statement about the hundred dresses? (a) just to be smart (b) to brag about what she had (c) to try to be one of the girls (d) because she really had a hundred dresses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Who teased Wanda the most about the dresses? (a) Maddie (b) Peggy (c) Cecile (d) Jake.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. All the time Maddie was trying to remember when the hundred dresses game began, what was she doing? (a) her math (b) pretending to read a book (c) sharpening her pencil (d) day dreaming.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. When did the children most notice Wanda? (a) when it was her turn for oral reading (b) when her dress was clean (c) when she fixed her hair differently (d) when she came to school with her brother.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. How many dress designs did most girls turn in? (a) one hundred (b) ten (c) five (d) one or two.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. How did Peggy feel when the winner of the dress designs was announced? (a) angry (b) admiring (c) jealous (d) hurt.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. According to the story what were Mr. Petronski's reasons for moving to a big city? (a) the children wouldn't holler "Polack" (b) no one would ask why they had a funny name (c) both of the above (d) neither of the above.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. What was Miss Mason's reaction to the letter from Wanda's father? (a) she was mad at the class (b) she didn't believe any of her boys and girls would deliberately hurt anyone (c) she was ashamed (d) she had a sick feeling in her stomach.

- \_\_\_\_\_19. What did Peggy and Maddie find at Wanda's house? (a) several thin wet kittens (b) a dirty, junky yard (c) a half-grown yellow cat (d) their furniture in the house.
- \_\_\_\_\_20. After Peggy and Maddie walked to Boggins Heights, what did they do the following Saturday? (a) couldn't sleep (b) picked bayberries (c) made fun of Mr. Svenson (d) wrote Wanda a letter.
- \_\_\_\_\_21. In their letter to Wanda, which of the following did Peggy and Maddie NOT say? (a) they apologized for teasing Wanda (b) they told she had won the dress design contest (c) they told her what they were studying in school (d) they asked her if she liked her new school.
- \_\_\_\_\_22. What did Maddie and Peggy put on the envelope? (a) lots of X's for love (b) Wanda's new address in the city (c) Wanda's old address with "Please forward" (d) all of the above.
- \_\_\_\_\_23. At the Christmas party the students (a) acted the story of Tiny Tim (c) sang songs (c) watched Cecile dance in different costumes (d) all of the above.
- \_\_\_\_\_24. What did Maddie do with the drawing Wanda had given her? (a) she had it framed and hung it in her room (b) she pinned it over a torn place in the wallpaper in her bedroom (c) she put it away in a safe place (d) she threw it face down on her bed.
- \_\_\_\_\_25. According to the story which of the following is true about the dress designs Wanda gave Maddie and Peggy? (a) they were the two best designs (b) they were the only ones in color (c) they looked like each of the girls (d) all of the above.

### ESSAY QUESTIONS

Choose two of the characters below and write a descriptive paragraph about each. Use any information from the story and then add your opinion about the person. (5 points each)

Peggy  
Maddie  
Cecile

Wanda  
Mr. Svenson  
Miss Mason



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