

The Pendle Witch Trilogy – Chapter Guides

The Betrayal of the Pendle Witch

Overview

Suggested use

This resource has been put together to accompany the book, The Betrayal of the Pendle Witch – the second book in Rachel Helen's Pendle Witch Trilogy. This book can be read as part of the trilogy or as a stand-alone book for use with topics linked to the Pendle Witches or Lancashire history.

For each chapter there is a guide suitable for Upper Key Stage Two, which includes a chapter summary as a quick reference for the teacher/adult; a suggested list of new or unfamiliar vocabulary from the chapter; questions which can be used in verbal discussion or to be answered in written sentences; and an activity ideas section of additional short writing ideas.

Each of the chapters are short and can be read aloud within ten minutes. It would be suitable to read one chapter per lesson and to follow it with discussion, vocabulary work and one of the written tasks. Alternatively, you could divide the book into five days by reading two or three chapters per day and focusing on a couple of discussion points then either vocabulary work or a short written task.

The final page of this guide has a suggested plan for how the book can be used to produce a longer piece of writing with a five day exemplar for planning, modelling, writing and editing.

Vocabulary

Each vocabulary list contains a suggestion of words from the chapter which may be new or unfamiliar to the children. Doing work around their meaning can assist with children's understanding of the book, as well as helping them to expand their own vocabulary.

A suggested approach would be

- after each chapter, discuss some of or all the words from the list – talking about possible meanings and looking these up in a dictionary or using a website such as Word Hippo.
- Words and their meanings should be added to a working wall or vocabulary display.
- One or more of the words could be focused on with children writing the meaning in their own words, writing a list of synonyms, or writing their own sentences containing the words.

Prompts and activities

The prompt questions are designed to enable children to explore and deepen their understanding of the book and of authorial devices. By pre-selecting one of the writing activities or one to two of the questions to focus on in writing, discussions can then be built around the most relevant areas to support children in their learning and understanding.

Children's ideas could form a working wall throughout the reading stage and be referred to when children are developing their own ideas and producing their own extended written work.

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Chapter One

Chapter Summary

- The prologue introduces the setting and the era
- Introduction to the main characters – Agnes and Margaret, two friends who live in Pendle Forest
- Introduction to the setting of Pendle Forest, Black Hill and Pendle Hill
- Margaret tells Agnes that one of their neighbours, Alizon Device, has put a curse on a pedlar (travelling salesman)
- Agnes doesn't believe her at first then Margaret explains that Alizon's sister has told her so she starts to believe it is true
- It begins to rain and the only nearby house is that of Alizon so they head there

Vocabulary

- Shrouded
- Pedlar
- Unkempt
- Wretched
- Coarse
- Disintegrated
- Flank
- Menacing
- Wince

Activity ideas

- Using details from the prologue and chapter one, sketch the setting and label it with noun phrases from the book
- Rewrite a portion of the dialogue using standard English instead of dialect.
- Write a prediction about what might happen in the next couple of chapters.

Prompts for discussion / writing

- What does the prologue tell us about the time in which the book is set?
- If you have recently read book one (The Curse of the Pendle Witch), compare the way in which the books are written – Curse is written in first person, present tense; Betrayal is written in third person, past tense.
- What do we learn about the characters?
- What do you think the relationship is like between Margaret and Agnes?
- What do we learn about the setting?
- Why does the author use dialect?
- Can you summarise what happens in the chapter in your own words?
- Would you want to go to Alizon's house knowing what she has done?

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Chapter Two

Chapter Summary

- Agnes and Margaret arrive at Malkin Tower but there doesn't appear to be anyone there
- They let themselves in, worrying that the family might have been detained by the magistrate
- They decide to leave, but hear a noise within the house

Vocabulary

- Notable
- Mullions
- Isolated
- Hefty
- Mizzle

Activity ideas

- Sketch Malkin Tower and label it using noun phrases from the chapter.
- Write the start of the next chapter in the style of the author (past tense, third person, dialect), based on what you think the noise might be and how Margaret and Agnes will react to whatever is there.

Prompts for discussion / writing

- How do you think Agnes and Margaret feel when they get to the house?
- What do they think might have happened to Alizon and her family?
- What do you think the noise might be?
- Can you summarise the chapter in your own words?
- What do you predict will happen in the next chapter?

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Chapter Three

Chapter Summary

- The noise was Old Demdike (Alizon's grandma) entering the room
- She asks Agnes and Margaret why they are there
- The girls explain that they wanted to shelter from the rain, and that they heard about Alizon
- James (Alizon's brother) arrives home with three dead hares
- The girls are uncomfortable being there and want to leave
- Demdike holds out some human teeth that she has taken out of her pocket and implies Agnes' uncle should know about them
- The girls leave Malkin Tower

Vocabulary

- Gaunt
- Rasping
- Remedies
- Foes
- Accusation
- Scrawny
- Hoarsely

Activity ideas

- Write your own description of Demdike, using the information we learn about her in this chapter.
- Thinking about 'show, not tell', write the feelings that one or more of the characters feels in the chapter and list the evidence from the chapter which shows this.

Prompts for discussion / writing

- What do we learn about Demdike in this chapter?
- How do the girls react to meeting her and how do you know?
- What does Old Demdike take out of her pocket?
- What does Demdike tell the girls about the teeth?
- Can you summarise the chapter in your own words?

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Chapter Four

Chapter Summary

- The girls go to Margaret's house
- Agnes falls asleep but has a nightmare
- Jennet (Alizon's sister) turns up at Margaret's house and tells them that Alizon and Demdike have been taken away
- Margaret's Mum tells Margaret and Agnes to take Jennet back home
- When they get to Malkin Tower, Elizabeth (Alizon and Jennet's mum) invites them to a party she is throwing

Vocabulary

- Ushered
- Piercing
- Prospect
- Huffily

Activity ideas

- Sketch Elizabeth based on what we learn about her in this chapter. Describe her in your own words.
- Create a character profile for each of the characters – Agnes, Margaret, Demdike, Jennet and Elizabeth. Describe their appearance, relationship to the other characters and their personalities, referring to evidence in the book.

Prompts for discussion / writing

- Where do Margaret and Agnes go after leaving Malkin Tower?
- Why does Agnes struggle sleeping? What happens in the nightmare?
- Who arrives at Margaret's house and why?
- What are Margaret and Agnes asked to do, and how do they feel about it?
- Would you have taken Jennet back home? Give your reasons.
- What do we learn about Elizabeth?
- Why is Elizabeth throwing a party, and what are the girls' reactions to it?
- Can you summarise the chapter in your own words?

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Chapter Five

Chapter Summary

- It is the day of the party at Malkin Tower
- Margaret's mum insists that Margaret goes to show support for their 'neighbours'
- Agnes arrives at Margaret's to go to the party with her, but says her aunt is unhappy with her for going to the party
- We learn that Agnes' uncle was cursed by James Device and his spirit animal
- They arrive at Malkin Tower. Margaret and Agnes sit apart from everyone else
- James arrives with a dead sheep which is then roasted
- Some of the party-goers threaten to blow up the gaol to rescue Alizon and Demdike
- Margaret's mum takes the girls home

Vocabulary

- Pleadingly
- Inevitable
- Almighty
- Blotches
- Associating
- Transfixed
- Triumphant
- Raucous
- allegiance

Activity ideas

- Write a diary in role as Agnes or Margaret, recounting the party and how you felt about it.
- Vocabulary focus – revisit the new/unfamiliar vocabulary discussed so far. Write sentences using a selection of the words.

Prompts for discussion / writing

- How do Margaret and Agnes feel about going to the party?
- Why does Mrs Whitaker insist they go?
- What do we learn about Agnes' uncle?
- What do the girls do when they get to Malkin Tower? Why?
- How would you have felt about having to go to the party and what would you have done when you were there?
- What do some of the party-goers threaten to do?
- Can you summarise the chapter in your own words?

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Chapter Six

Chapter Summary

- After an uneventful two weeks, the locals hear that Magistrate Nowell is investigating the 'coven' (party) at Malkin Tower
- Margaret overhears her mum talking about it and runs to tell Agnes
- Agnes says it will be best for them to run away, but Margaret says they should talk to her mum
- Agnes grabs a cloth bag and starts to head away from her home
- Margaret follows her, not knowing where they are going
- It is raining heavily and the girls find a cottage to shelter in

Vocabulary

- Tranquillity
- Frustratedly
- Declaration
- Unleash
- Gallows
- Uncharted territories

Activity ideas

- What would you suggest to Margaret that she should do when Agnes sets off away from the village? Write out the conversation you would have with her and what you think she would say.
- Write a prediction for what you think will happen in the second half of the book.

Prompts for discussion / writing

- What is Magistrate Nowell going to do?
- How do Margaret and Agnes react to hearing about it?
- What does Agnes decide to do? What does Margaret suggest?
- How do the girls' opinions about the investigation differ?
- Why do you think Agnes is so determined to get away from the village?
- What would you have done if you were Margaret?
- What does this chapter tell us about the relationship between Agnes and Margaret?
- Can you summarise the chapter in your own words?
- What do you predict will happen in the second half of the book?

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Chapter Seven

Chapter Summary

- The cottage they find at the end of chapter six is empty, so they decide to sleep there
- They collect firewood and light the fire to dry their clothes
- Margaret notices Agnes holding the object she has brought with her and questions what it is
- Agnes replies that it's 'nothing', but Margaret suspects Agnes is hiding something from her
- They fall asleep

Vocabulary

- Gaping
- Impassively
- Cautiously
- Longingly
- Eerily

Activity ideas

- Write a paragraph explaining what you would do if you were Margaret and you thought your best friend was keeping a secret from you. Write lists for and against your suggestion, thinking of all the possible consequences of this action.
- Write a paragraph describing what you think Agnes has and why she is keeping it a secret.

Prompts for discussion / writing

- What do the girls decide to do?
- What does Margaret notice Agnes has got with her?
- What does Agnes say about it?
- How does this make Margaret feel?
- How would you feel if you felt like your friend was keeping a secret from you?
- What do you predict Margaret will do? What would you do?
- Can you summarise the chapter in your own words?

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Chapter Eight

Chapter Summary

- Margaret wakes up and is concerned that Agnes is hiding something from her and questions whether she should trust her
- Margaret finds the bag that Agnes had brought with her and loosens the knot. In the bag is a locked wooden box with something inside
- Margaret returns the box to its hiding place, then wakes Agnes
- They set off again

Vocabulary

- Oblivious
- Vivid
- Indecipherable
- Obedience
- Squally

Activity ideas

- Write a letter to Margaret, offering her advice on what she should do about her friendship with Agnes.
- Write an acrostic poem about trust, thinking about why it is important and how a lack of it can make people feel.

Prompts for discussion / writing

- How is Margaret feeling about Agnes and their friendship?
- What does Margaret decide to do? Would you do the same?
- What does she find?
- What is trust and why is it important?
- Have you ever felt like you could no longer trust someone? How did it make you feel? How did you react to it?
- Do you think Margaret is right to continue the journey with Agnes? Why do you think she does so?
- Can you summarise the chapter in your own words?

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Chapter Nine

Chapter Summary

- The girls set off walking again, and Margaret realises Agnes has made all the decisions about where they are going
- Agnes crosses a stream, but Margaret says she wants to turn back and go home
- They hear horses approaching
- Margaret follows Agnes across the stream
- They hide in some trees, and see the horses with their well-dressed riders passing, and fear it is the magistrate
- Margaret questions Agnes about what she is hiding. They argue, but go together to a barn to shelter
- Agnes reflects on Chattox telling her what she needed to do to break Demdike's evil

Vocabulary

- Tentative
- Frantically
- Sodden
- Cantering
- Nausea
- Hoarsely
- Yonder
- Aroma
- Pangs

Activity ideas

- Write a diary entry from Agnes' point of view about the way Margaret is treating her and how she feels about it. Think carefully about what we learn about Agnes at the end of the chapter.
- Write a paragraph explaining what you think Margaret plans to do.

Prompts for discussion / writing

- How is Margaret feeling about her decision to leave the village with Agnes?
- What does Margaret want to do?
- What makes her change her mind?
- Who do the girls think was on the horses? How does this make them feel?
- How does Agnes react when Margaret asks her what she is carrying?
- Do you think Margaret was right to challenge her friend about it?
- Do you think Margaret is right to no longer trust her friend?
- *In her mind, she already knew what she needed to do.* What do you think Margaret's plan is?
- What do we learn at the end of the chapter about Agnes?
- How is Agnes feeling about hiding things from Margaret?
- Can you summarise the chapter in your own words?
- What do you predict will happen next?

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Chapter Ten

Chapter Summary

- The chapter starts with a description of someone in a woodland, and of a fire
- We realise that it is Agnes' dream
- Agnes wakes up and calls out for Margaret but there is no one there
- Agnes sets out to find her
- Agnes recalls how she went to Chattox for advice and that Chattox had taught her a spell
- Agnes realises that maybe this makes her a witch
- She opens the box. In it, are herbs, a rabbit bone and a clay figure

Vocabulary

- Acrid
- Accustomed
- Silhouette
- Adrenaline
- Frail
- Vying
- Conspirators
- Incantation
- Rasping

Activity ideas

- Summarise what we have learnt in the last paragraph of chapter nine and in this chapter about Agnes and what she intends to do.
- What do you think has happened to Margaret? Write a couple of paragraphs in the style of the author (third person, past tense) which could have been included in the chapter to explain where you think she is.

Prompts for discussion / writing

- What happens in Agnes' dream?
- Where do you think Margaret is?
- How do you think Agnes feels when she realises Margaret isn't there?
- What thoughts cross Agnes' mind about where Margaret might be?
- What do we learn in this chapter about Agnes' plan?
- What is inside Agnes' box?
- What do you think Agnes is intending to do and why?
- Can you summarise the chapter in your own words?
- What do you predict will happen next?

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Chapter Eleven

Chapter Summary

- Agnes sets out again with the box and its contents, determined to complete the plan Chattox told her about
- She is missing Margaret, but thinks it is better to do it without her
- The focus of the chapter switches to Margaret, who whispered goodbye to Agnes whilst she was still sleeping in the barn
- Margaret wants to go home but is filled with pain caused by the separation from Agnes and the thought that she can't trust her anymore
- Margaret is walking along a lane when she is stopped by Magistrate Nowell

Vocabulary

- Trudge
- Ultimate
- Presence
- Yield
- Frail
- Resenting
- Majestically
- Halt
- Intimidating

Activity ideas

- Write emotion lists– one for Agnes and one for Margaret – to show how the girls each feel about what is happening.
- Write a prediction for what you think will happen in the final two chapters.

Prompts for discussion / writing

- What does Agnes decide to do?
- How is she feeling about Margaret and about the plan?
- What do we learn about where Margaret is?
- Do you think Margaret was right to leave Agnes and try to return home? Why?
- How does Margaret feel about leaving her friend?
- What happens at the end of the chapter to Margaret?
- Can you summarise the chapter in your own words?
- What do you predict is going to happen next?

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Chapter Twelve

Chapter Summary

- Agnes is heading for Worsaw Hill, as instructed by Chattox
- She enters the woods near the hill and takes out the box
- She begins to chant the spell Chattox has taught her. But she hears a noise behind her

Vocabulary

- Ought
- Hamlet
- Regal
- Parched
- Instinctively
- Reassurance
- Penetrate

Activity ideas

- Write a set of instructions for the spell Agnes does. Include the things she has taken with her, where she has gone, the words she says and the outcome she is hoping for. Remember to include time connectives and imperative verbs.
- Write the opening of the final chapter, based on what you think the noise was and how you predict the book will end.

Prompts for discussion / writing

- Where is Agnes going and why?
- What does Agnes do when she gets to the woods?
- What does she believe will happen if she goes through with the plan?
- How does she feel as she is saying the words Chattox had taught her?
- What happens at the end of the chapter?
- What do you think the noise is?
- Can you summarise the chapter in your own words?
- What do you predict will happen in the final chapter?

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Chapter Thirteen

Chapter Summary

- Agnes turns around to see Magistrate Nowell behind her. Margaret is standing next to him, crying
- Margaret sees what is in the box and is in shock that Agnes really could be a witch
- Agnes denies being a witch, but says she is doing what Chattox had told her to do
- Agnes then confesses to stealing the box and learning a spell
- Agnes thinks Margaret has brought Nowell to arrest her and runs away
- She trips and screams – there is blood on her head and a pain in her left ankle
- Margaret runs after Agnes and realises she is dead
- Margaret gathers the box and objects together and whispers to Agnes that she never betrayed her

Vocabulary

- Wicker
- Triumphant
- Audible
- Smirked
- Retorted
- Gnarled
- Agonising
- Surged
- Inevitable
- Associate

Activity ideas

- Write a review of the book – include a summary of the plot, your favourite part, how much you enjoyed it, and who you would recommend it to.

Prompts for discussion / writing

- How do you think Agnes feels when she sees Margaret and Magistrate Nowell?
- What do you think Agnes thinks about why Margaret is with the magistrate?
- What do you think Margaret feels about the objects Agnes has and what she tells them?
- Do you think Agnes was right to try to run away?
- In what ways did Agnes' dreams in previous chapters foretell what happened to her in this one?
- How does Margaret feel when she finds Agnes?
- Thinking about what Margaret says at the end of the book, what do we learn about her feelings towards Agnes and about what happened between them?
- Can you summarise what happened in the chapter?

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Writing Plan

Day one

Refer back to the chapter summaries and children's responses after each chapter.

Create a boxed plot/story map/story mountain for the book, picking out the key events (an example is available to download from the website: www.rachelhelenauthor.co.uk)

Give children parameters for what needs to stay the same and what can be changed for them to create their own story. For example, things they could change might be: who the main characters are, the objects that one of them is hiding, the places they travel and stay at, and what one of them needs to do to take revenge on one of the witches. And things they might need to keep the same, could be the need to get away from the village, the lack of trust between the main characters, the fact that one of them is wanting revenge on a witch – and of course the historical elements (Alizon cursing the pedlar, her family being sent to Lancaster gaol, and the Good Friday meeting).

Model this to them by creating a plan which will be used to model writing during the week.

Day two

Refer back to the model plan. Recap the style of writing used by the author – third person and past tense, combining historical facts with fiction.

Write the opening paragraph / two paragraphs, modelling the writing and collecting children's ideas to assist with this. During this, also include modelling reading back and self-correcting. Set objectives which relate to work the children have done during the reading of the book – ideas for these are included in the boxed plot download.

Children then write the first two boxes from their plan, with an emphasis on achieving the relevant objectives.

Day three

Read back what was written on day two. Model the writing of the next part of the story, including self-correcting.

Children then write the next two boxes from their plan, again with an emphasis on achieving the relevant objectives.

Day four

Read back what was written on day three. Model the writing of the final part of the story, including self-correcting.

Children then write the final boxes from their plan, again with an emphasis on achieving the relevant objectives.

Day five

Model how to edit and improve work. Children should check their work against the objectives and against examples taken from the book. Focus on the objectives chosen for the children to work towards. They should use a dictionary to check spellings, check punctuation is correct against any non-negotiables set, and use a thesaurus or Word Hippo website to improve vocabulary.

Once children have edited and improved their own work, they could swap with a partner who could write 'two stars and a wish', focused on the objectives.

Designed and written by Rachel Helen for use with her book, *The Betrayal of the Pendle Witch*.

Books can be purchased, and resources can be downloaded from www.rachelhelenauthor.co.uk

Follow Rachel Helen on Facebook and Instagram @rachelhelenauthor for latest updates.