

# Literature Study Guide for

## Anne of Green Gables



by L. M. Montgomery

Study Guide by Sabrina Justison



Revised Edition 2017

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**Anne of Green Gables**

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## Background Information

Lucy Maud Montgomery was born in 1874 in Canada on Prince Edward Island, and her books about Anne have brought her PEI home to life for countless readers over the years. The first book in the series, *Anne of Green Gables*, was published in 1908. Her red-headed heroine has inspired and delighted generations of readers, male and female alike, and even Mark Twain called the “Anne books” “the sweetest creation of child life yet written.”

The “Anne books” and the many film and television mini-series adaptations of them have been popular worldwide. Tourism on Prince Edward Island resulting from Montgomery's books has become an important part of their economy. Canada even issued two postage stamps in 2008 honoring Anne and the Green Gables house.

*Anne of Green Gables* is a book rich with character development; it is on these **characters** that we will focus in this study guide. The questions and suggested activities in the guide are aimed at different age groups, but feel free to use whatever elements seem to fit well with your student's interest and abilities. Don't kill a wonderful book with busywork, but at the same time get the most you can out of the reading and analysis!

**Vocabulary:** A list of words (in the order in which the words appear in the text) is provided for vocabulary expansion for all ages. There are different activities suggested for each age group from elementary through high school on the Vocabulary page of this study guide.

**Comprehension Questions:** For each chapter there are comprehension questions that will help younger students follow the plot, keep the characters straight, and notice important pieces of information they might otherwise miss. Older students (middle school and up) might want to skip these questions altogether, perhaps writing a one or two-sentence summary of each chapter as they read.

**Going Deeper:** These questions and suggested activities will help older students get more from the book than just a good story. They will highlight respected writing devices that make Montgomery's book strong and be encouraged to use these devices in their own creative writing. They will help students take note of **life-lessons** woven through the story, encouraging them to think about these ideas more deeply and write about them in response. Younger students may prefer to omit these questions and activities altogether; follow your student's lead. If you are “losing” your student, you need to scale back the amount of work accompanying the reading.

## Vocabulary

(Following each word is the chapter number in which it appears.)

### For elementary students:

Discuss the meaning of words as they arise in the text. Try to discern the meaning from the context. Gently expand vocabulary understanding for your student, but don't kill the story by stopping to look up every word on this list.

### For middle school students:

Practice dictionary skills by choosing some of the words below to look up and define. Talk about multiple meanings for one word if the definition your student finds doesn't seem to be a great fit when you get to that word in context. Build understanding of word usage, but don't overdo it; the story is too good to choke it with vocabulary.

### For high school students:

Practice paraphrasing skills with the vocabulary words listed below. Before beginning the book, assign all or some of the words for your student to look up and write a definition in his or her own words rather than copying the definition from the dictionary. Perhaps have the student use the word in a sentence as well.

gable (I)	ebullition (XV)
patriarchal (I)	drollery (XV)
qualms (I)	suppliant (XVI)
ingenuously (II)	capricious (XX)
ruminated (II)	inexorable (XX)
deprecatingly (III)	inveigled (XXI)
inculcate (V)	discomfiture (XXIII)
gimlet (VI)	ridgepole (XXIII)
catechism (VII)	deprecatory (XXV)
fortnight (IX)	coruscations (XXVII)
deprecation (IX)	epoch (XXIX)
furbelows (XI)	abashed (XXIX)
beatification (XIV)	unregenerate (XXXI)

**Characters** on whom we will focus in this study guide:

Anne Shirley

Matthew Cuthbert

Marilla Cuthbert

Mrs. Rachel Lynde

Diana Barry

Gilbert Blythe

*Personified Story Elements that act almost as characters:*

Green Gables

The fields and woods around Green Gables

## **Questions**

### **Chapter I: “Mrs. Rachel Lynde is Surprised”**

1. Mrs. Rachel Lynde went to visit Marilla Cuthbert. What had her curiosity aroused?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What news surprises Mrs. Rachel Lynde?

### **Chapter II: “Matthew Cuthbert is Surprised”**

1. What does Matthew pick up from the train station?

### **Chapter III: “Marilla Cuthbert is Surprised”**

1. Why does Anne want to be sure her name is spelled “A-n-n-E”?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What is Marilla's reaction to Anne?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What is Matthew's reaction to her?

### **Chapter IV: “Morning at Green Gables”**

1. Why does Anne like to name things?

2. Why does it matter that Matthew told Marilla he had decided to hire little Jerry Buote for the summer?

**Chapter V: “Anne's History”**

1. Briefly explain what Anne's life had been like up until her arrival at Green Gables.

**Chapter VI: “Marilla Makes up Her Mind”**

1. What makes Marilla decide that Mrs. Blewett should not adopt Anne?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What agreement do Matthew and Marilla make about how Anne shall be brought up?

**Chapter VII: “Anne Says Her Prayers”**

1. What are the two reasons Anne gives for never saying prayers?

**Chapter VIII: “Anne's Bringing-up is Begun”**

1. Who were Katie Maurice and Violetta?

**Chapter IX: “Mrs. Rachel Lynde is Properly Horrified”**

1. What does Mrs. Rachel Lynde say that so offends Anne?

**Chapter X: “Anne's Apology”**

1. What makes Anne decide to apologize to Mrs. Rachel Lynde?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How does Anne find a way to actually enjoy apologizing?

**Chapter XI: “Anne's Impressions of Sunday School”**

1. How does Anne react to the new dresses Marilla makes for her?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Why doesn't Marilla scold Anne for the things she criticized at Sunday School?

**Chapter XII: “A Solemn Vow and Promise”**

1. How do Anne and Diana get along?

**Chapter XIII: “The Delights of Anticipation”**

1. Why is Marilla concerned that Anne is too excited looking forward to the picnic?

2. What item of Marilla's catches Anne's fancy at the end of this chapter?

**Chapter XIV: “Anne's Confession”**

1. Why does Marilla remove Anne's punishment even though she lied?

**Chapter XV: “A Tempest in the School Teapot”**

1. What does Gilbert Blythe do that so upsets Anne at school?

2. What is it reminiscent of from early in the book?

3. Why does Marilla agree to let Anne stay home from school?

**Chapter XVI: “Diana is Invited to Tea with Tragic Results”**

1. What happens to Diana when she comes to tea?

2. How does Diana's mother respond to Anne's apology?

**Chapter XVII: “A New Interest in Life”**

1. With whom does Anne develop a rivalry in school?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What is the basis for their competition?

**Chapter XVIII: “Anne to the Rescue”**

1. What happens at the Barry home that restores Anne in Mrs. Barry's sight?

**Chapter XIX: “A Concert, a Catastrophe, and a Confession”**

1. What do Anne and Diana do to offend Miss Josephine Barry?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How do they earn her forgiveness?

**Chapter XX: “A Good Imagination Gone Wrong”**

1. Why doesn't Anne want to walk to Diana's after dark?

**Chapter XXI: “A New Departure in Flavorings”**

1. How does Mrs. Allan respond to Anne's baking mistake?

**Chapter XXII: “Anne is Invited Out to Tea”**

No questions.

**Chapter XXIII: “Anne Comes to Grief in an Affair of Honor”**

1. Why does Anne walk on the ridgepole of the Barrys' house?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What is Marilla's startling reaction when Anne is carried home to Green Gables?

**Chapter XXIV: “Miss Stacy and Her Pupils Get Up a Concert”**

No questions.

**Chapter XXV: “Matthew Insists on Puffed Sleeves”**

1. Why does Matthew ask Mrs. Rachel Lynde to sew a dress for Anne?

**Chapter XXVI: “The Story Club is Formed”**

1. Why does Marilla think the Story Club is a bad idea?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What is Anne's defense of the Club to Marilla?

**Chapter XXVII: “Vanity and Vexation of Spirit”**

1. Where is Anne when Marilla thinks she should be setting the table for tea?

2. Why does Anne declare that she will look at herself in the mirror every time she enters her room?

**Chapter XXVIII: “An Unfortunate Lily Maid”**

1. Why won't Anne accept Gilbert's apology even when he rescues her from the pond?
2. How does Anne explain to Marilla that her “prospects of becoming sensible (are) brighter now than ever”?

**Chapter XXIX: “An Epoch in Anne's Life”**

1. What does Anne decide about city life after attending the Exhibition?

**Chapter XXX: “The Queen's Class is Organized”**

1. Why does Miss Stacy organize an extra class for some of the students?

2. What does Anne realize about herself and her feelings about Gilbert and his “Carrots” remark?

**Chapter XXXI: “Where the Brook and River Meet”**

1. How does Anne answer when Marilla notes that she doesn't use as many big words as she used to?

**Chapter XXXII: “The Pass List is Out”**

No questions.



**Chapter XXXVII: “The Reaper Whose Name is Death”**

1. What does Matthew learn about Abbey Bank in the newspaper?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What is Marilla finally able to put into words as she and Anne cry together in the night?

**Chapter XXXVIII: “The Bend in the Road”**

1. What does Anne say about her ambitions after she changes her plans and decides to stay and teach in Avonlea instead of going to Redmond College?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What causes Anne to finally reconcile with Gilbert?

## Going Deeper

### Classifying Characters

The characters in this book are rich and memorable. When analyzing literature, characters are typically classified as **Flat or Round**, and as **Static or Dynamic**.

#### Flat Characters:

These characters are “2-dimensional.” They do not seem very real to the reader. We learn only superficial information about their personalities, their backgrounds, their struggles. We do not find an easy connection with them on an emotional level.

#### Round Characters:

These characters seem almost real to the reader. We not only observe their actions and words from the outside, but are allowed inside their thinking processes and feelings. We learn important things about their background that help us understand their motivation for behaving as they do. Whether or not we LIKE them, we can (at least to a degree) understand them.

#### Static Characters:

These characters do not change in any significant way over the course of the story. They may observe change and development and growth or decay all around them, but they remain the same. Whether they are inspiring in their solid faithfulness or annoying in their stubborn refusal to bend, we can predict their behavior near the end of a story based on their behavior from its beginning.

#### Dynamic Characters:

These characters are on the move. They grow; they learn and adapt; they face difficulties and behave in new ways as a result. They are hard to accurately predict, because even while we may have learned a lot about them, we are not sure which direction they will choose to go when faced with an obstacle in their path. We don't want to take our eyes off of them for fear that we will miss something fascinating.

#### Write in Response:

Think about the characters in *Anne of Green Gables*.

How would you classify each? Flat or round? Static or dynamic? Why?

Anne Shirley

Matthew Cuthbert

Marilla Cuthbert

Mrs. Rachel Lynde

Diana Barry

Josie Pye

Jane Andrews

Miss Josephine Barry

Mrs. Allan

Miss Stacy

Gilbert Blythe

## **Character Development**

While Anne is the child who grows from age 11 to age 16 in the course of this book, she is not the only character to mature and develop. Any character, regardless of age, may be shown to develop if the author chooses. L.M. Montgomery wrote rich character development into other characters in addition to Anne Shirley.

Think about it:

- In what ways did Matthew Cuthbert grow and develop throughout the story? (Consider his self-image, his ability to talk to others, his relationship with Marilla, with Anne, and with others in Avonlea.)
  
- In what ways did Marilla Cuthbert grow and develop throughout the story? (Consider her self-image, her ability to talk to others, her relationship with Matthew, with Anne, and with others in Avonlea, and her vulnerability when sick or emotional.)

### **Write in response:**

Write a paragraph exploring one of the following ideas, and use specific examples from the story, or expand into a 3-5 paragraph essay for a greater challenge.

- The “scope for imagination” that Anne saw in everything around Green Gables taught Marilla to see important things previously unnoticed, even as her physical eyesight began to fail.
- Anne's loquaciousness (talkativeness) initially charmed Matthew and irritated Marilla, but eventually helped both of them learn to express feelings they never expected to have.
- The entire community of Avonlea was changed by Anne's presence there; there was no way to simply ignore the red-haired orphan who came to live at Green Gables

## Personification

L.M. Montgomery also chose to create “characters” out of Green Gables itself (the house) and the fields and woods surrounding the house.

**Personification** is a literary device that ascribes human characteristics to something that is not human; eg: *The weathered door with its rusty hinges angrily defied anyone who wanted to enter through it.*

**Here are some quotes** (chapter numbers are in parentheses next to each) **to help you notice this subtle personification of the house and its surroundings:**

“Don't you feel as if you just loved the world on a morning like this? And I can hear the brook laughing all the way up here. Have you ever noticed what cheerful things brooks are? They're always laughing. Even in wintertime I've heard them under the ice.” (IV)

“I don't dare go out,' said Anne, in the tone of a martyr relinquishing all earthly joys. 'If I can't stay here there is no use in my loving Green Gables. And if I go out there and get acquainted with all those trees and flowers and the orchard and the brook I'll not be able to help loving it. It's hard enough now, so I won't make it any harder. I want to go out so much – everything seems to be calling to me, “Anne, Anne, come out to us. Anne, Anne, we want a playmate” – but it's better not.” (IV)

“...a garden it was where sunshine lingered and bees hummed, and winds, beguiled into loitering, purred and rustled.” (XII)

“...the Madonna lillies in the garden sent out whiffs of perfume that entered in on viewless winds at every door and window, and wandered through halls and rooms like spirits of benediction. The birches in the hollow waved joyful hands as if watching for Anne's usual morning greeting from the east gable.” (XIV)

“Yet the whole character of the room was altered. It was full of a new vital, pulsing personality that seemed to pervade it and to be quite independent of schoolgirl books and dresses and ribbons, and even of the cracked blue jug full of apple blossoms on the table. It was as if all the dreams, sleeping and waking, of its vivid occupant had taken a visible although immaterial form and had tapestried the bare room with splendid filmy tissues of rainbow and moonshine.” (XX)

### Write in response:

Write a sentence or two describing an element of your house or someplace you love to go using the literary device of **personification**.

## **Motif**

A **motif** in literature is a **recurring symbol or theme**.

An object or an image, a sound or a smell, a series of similar events – things like this that appear repeatedly in a story often point to an underlying meaning or idea. There are a number of recurring motifs in *Anne of Green Gables*. Take a moment to remember their appearances in the story.

Dresses - symbolizing Anne's growing-up process and the deepening of her relationship with Marilla and Matthew

- too-small wincey dresses
- plain dresses with tight sleeves
- a dress with puffed sleeves
- a fashionable coat and hat
- dresses with flounces and frills

Apologies and Confessions - symbolizing Anne's growing relationships with the people of Avonlea

- apology to Mrs. Rachel Lynde
- Confession to Marilla
- Apology to Mrs. Barry
- Confession to Miss Josephine Barry
- Refusing Gilbert Blythe's apology
- Complete Confession to Gilbert Blythe

## **Write in response:**

There are many other motifs in *Anne of Green Gables*. Write a sentence or two explaining what the following might symbolize.

- **Sleeping in the Spare Room** (first at Diana Barry's – chapter XIX, and then at Miss Josephine Barry's – chapter XXIX )
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **Using the wrong bottle by accident** (first at tea with Diana – chapter XVI, and then at tea with the Allans – chapter XXI)



### Suggested Supplemental Activities

- \* The 1986 movie version starring Megan Follows as Anne and Colleen Dewhurst as Marilla is widely regarded as a beautiful adaptation of L.M. Montgomery's vision for **Anne of Green Gables**. Watch the movie, then discuss or write about the elements that were more powerful on the page than on the screen (or vice versa) and why.
- \* Research Prince Edward Island then and now, and the impact that the Anne books have had on this little corner of Canada. Prepare a project about it, or write a short paper.
- \* Research about one-room schoolhouses, Queen's College for teacher training, and the educational system portrayed in Avonlea in the late 1800's. Prepare a project about it, or write a short paper.
- \* Anne Shirley was delighted by poetry; you can be, too! Choose one of the poems referenced in the book and learn about it, memorize some or all of it, and hold a dramatic recitation of your own!

*The Battle of Hohenlinden* (Thomas Campbell)

*Edinburgh after Flodden* (William E. Aytoun)

*Bingen on the Rhine* (Caroline E. Norton)

*Lady of Shalott* (Alfred, Lord Tennyson)

*The Seasons* (James Thompson)

*The Downfall of Poland* (Thomas Campbell)

*The Dog at His Master's Grave* (Mrs. Sigourney)

*Mark Antony's oration over the dead body of Caesar from Julius Caesar* (Shakespeare)

*The Maiden's Vow* (Carolina Oliphant)