



Bill Wallace:

Author of Adventure and Animal Stories
by Jane McKellips

Instructional Guide for Teachers



Bill Wallace: Author of Adventure and Animal Stories

Jane McKellips has lived in Oklahoma all her life. She is a former elementary school teacher and has been a freelance writer for educational publishers for over three decades. A lifelong voracious reader, she read Bill Wallace's *A Dog Called Kitty* many years ago and loved it. So, when she was able to interview Bill Wallace in 2008 for this book, she was delighted to meet him. "I found him as warm and personable as are his books for children," she said. "Bill's love of animals was evident with his house and grounds swarming with dogs wagging their tails, a cat winding around my legs, and a bird chirping in its cage on his back patio." After his death in 2012, Jane said, "His thousands of fans lost their favorite author and will now miss out on reading the books he would have written. The world has lost a gentle, caring soul. He will be truly missed."

Jane McKellips also has an historical fiction picture book titled Dust Storm coming out in the fall of 2015. It is about a northern Oklahoma farm girl who, despite being crippled from polio, keeps her little brother and farm animals safe when a massive 1930's dust storm threatens their farm. Like Bill Wallace: Author of Adventure and Animal Stories, it will be published by Oklahoma Heritage Association Publishing.

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Note for Teachers

This teacher's guide for *Bill Wallace: Author of Adventure and Animal Stories* is designed for use in classrooms of third through fifth-grade students. However, teachers of other grades can easily modify the lessons and activities to match the level of their students.

This guide was created to be used in the classroom to supplement subjects of English language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science. Many activities also use music, visual arts, and drama to engage students in the learning process.

Although many other states use the Common Core State Standards in their schools, Oklahoma schools currently use the Oklahoma Priority Academic Student Skills. Oklahoma Hall of Fame Publishing purposely tried to integrate relevant standards and skills from both into the lessons and activities for this teacher's guide.

English Language Arts

Reading Comprehension

Hold up the book *Bill Wallace: Author of Adventure and Animal Stories*. Have students answer the following questions:

Q: What is the title of this book?

A: *Bill Wallace: Author of Adventure and Animal Stories*

Q: What is an author?

A: a person who writes books, short stories, poetry, etc.

Q: Who is the author of *Bill Wallace: Author of Adventure and Animal Stories*?

A: Jane McKellips

Ask students to describe what they see in the photo on the front cover. (a boy and a dog)
Ask students to tell who the boy might be and why a photo of the boy with a dog was used on the cover. (Bill Wallace; the book might be about Bill's love of animals)

Have students identify the following parts of the book: front cover, title page, copyright page, table of contents, spine, back matter, and back cover. Discuss the need for each part of the book. Help students understand how the different parts of the back matter can be used to better understand the text and to give more information about Bill Wallace. Point out that boldfaced words in the text are words listed in the glossary at the back of the book.

Tell students this book is a biography, a true, nonfiction text about a real person's life. Ask students to tell what facts they think might be included in a biography. Then open the book to its table of contents. Have volunteers read aloud the titles of the book's chapters.

Read aloud the book to the students or ask volunteers to read aloud passages from the text.

Ask students to answer the following questions about the text:

1. How is the text organized? For example, is it written in chronological order (from Bill's younger years through to his older years) or written according to his favorite times in life or written in another way? (in chronological order)
2. Where did Bill live most of his life? (in or near Chickasha, Oklahoma) Why do you think Bill did not live in a lot of other places during his life? (He had family and friends in and near Chickasha.)
3. What was one of Bill's great loves? (animals) What makes you think this? (Many chapters in the book told about his love of animals.)
4. What can you infer as the reason most of his books contained animals in them? (Because Bill himself loved animals, he wanted to write about them.)
5. What caused Bill to write his first books? (His students asked him to write stories like *Old Yeller* since there were not many stories like that.)
6. How are biographies the same and different from fiction books? (Both

Biographies and fiction books can have chapters. Biographies are about true events in a real person's life; fiction books have made up events about characters who are not real.)

7. Why do you think the Chickasha School System named one of their schools after Bill? (They are proud of his achievements and wanted to honor him.)
8. Many of Bill's books are adventure stories about children having to overcome obstacles in nature. Do you like to read adventure stories? Why?
9. Which of Bill's books have you read? Which did you enjoy the most? Why?

Activity #1: Drama

Have students choose a passage from the book to dramatize. Passages they might choose include:

- when Bill was given Toy, his first dog, as a present
- Bill and Gary hiking in the woods and thinking they heard a panther nearby
- Bill's students asking him to write stories for them

Activity #2: Visual Arts

Ask students to draw a picture of a scene from one of Bill's fiction books. Then have students write a caption under their illustration, describing the scene and telling which book it is from.

Activity #3: Using Back Matter as a Reference Tool

Have students use the back matter to answer the following questions:

1. Chapter 3 includes the word **reptiles** in boldfaced letters. What part of the back matter explains the meaning of this word? (glossary) What is the meaning of this word? (cold-blooded animals that have dry, scaly skin, such as lizards, snakes, turtles, and crocodiles)
2. What part of the back matter tells the years that events in Bill's life occurred? (Timeline of Events in Bill Wallace's Life) Using the timeline, when was Justin Keith, Bill's third child, born? (1977)
3. What part of the back matter lists the books Bill wrote? (Children's Books Written by Bill Wallace) During which year was *True Friends* first published? (1994)

Activity #4: Writing

Ask students to choose one of the following prompts to write a paragraph with complete sentences:

- Think of a fiction adventure story you would like to read. Describe its main plot and characters.
- Think of a person's biography you would like to read. Tell why you would like to read about this person's life.
- What animal would you like to know more about? Why? Describe which reference materials you could use to locate various facts about this animal.

Social Studies

Remind students that *Bill Wallace: Author of Adventure and Animal Stories* includes two maps within the chapters. Open the book to the first map in Chapter 2.

Have students answer the following questions:

Q: What state's outline is shown on the map?

A: Oklahoma

Q: What Oklahoma town is shown on the map?

A: Chickasha

Q: What symbol on the map shows the location of Chickasha?

A: a star

Q: Most maps are shown with north at the top of the map, south at the bottom, east at the right, and west at the left of the map. In which part of Oklahoma is Chickasha located?

A: in the western part

Open the book to its second map in Chapter 5.

Have students answer the following questions:

Q: What state's outline is shown on the map?

A: Oklahoma

Q: What two Oklahoma towns are shown on the map?

A: Norman, Lawton

Q: Why is it necessary to indicate the location of the towns with stars? Why can't the names of the towns show their locations?

A: The stars show the towns' exact locations; The names are too long to pinpoint the exact locations.

Q: In which parts of Oklahoma are the towns located?

A: Norman is located in central Oklahoma; Lawton is located in southwestern Oklahoma.

Activity: Maps

Ask students to draw their own outline map of the state (or country if not born in the U.S.) in which they were born. Then ask them to place a star on the location of the town (or area) in which they were born and to label it with the town name.

Mathematics

Word Problems

Ask students to listen to the following word problems and to use a pencil and paper to figure out the answers:

Q: Bill graduated from high school in 1965. In 1971 he graduated from the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma in Chickasha, known today as the

Oklahoma College of Liberal Arts. How many years separated the two graduations?

A: six

Q: After quitting public school life, Bill's goal was to write four pages a day. If he wrote four pages every day for 30 days, how many pages would he have at the end of the 30 days?

A: 120 pages

Q: If Bill wanted a book of his to be 200 pages long and he wrote four pages every day, how many days would it take him to write 200 pages?

A: 50 days

Activity: Multiplication Game

Divide the class into three groups. Tell them they are going to play a multiplication game in which one group at a time will go to the whiteboard and together answer a question, such as one of the following. Each team that answers a question correctly gets 1 point. If a team answers incorrectly, 1 point is taken away from them. At the end of the game, tally the points and name the winning group.

Q: If Bill had 3 dogs in 1999 and he had twice as many in 2003, how many dogs did he have in 2003?

A: 6

Q: If Bill went to 22 school visits in 1988 and went to four times as many in 2005, how many school visits did he attend in 2005?

A: 88

Q: If each of Bill's 6 grandkids drink 2 glasses of milk a day. How many glasses of milk will they drink in 30 days?

A: 360

Science

Remind students that animals were one of Bill Wallace's great loves. The first book he read that he loved was about reptiles. Discuss with students how reptiles are different from other kinds of animals.

Activity #1: Researching and Writing About Reptiles

Ask students to use reference materials or go online to find the names of other reptiles not listed in the glossary of *Bill Wallace: Author of Adventure and Animal Stories*. Then have each student choose a reptile to research and write a page using complete sentences that tell facts about the animal, including its natural habitat, what it eats, how big it can get, and how long it can live. Pin the pages to a wall under the heading "Radical Reptile Research" or "Really Cool Reptiles." Allow time for students to read the pages.

Activity #2: Compose Lyrics about Reptiles

Tell the class the following lyrics to the song *She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain*:

She'll be comin' round the mountain when she comes.

She'll be comin' round the mountain when she comes.

She'll be comin' round the mountain,
She'll be comin' round the mountain,
She'll be comin' round the mountain when she comes.

Have the class sing the song *She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain* with you. Then help the class as a group use the facts they have learned about reptiles to compose original lyrics to go along with the melody to the song. Write the lyrics on the whiteboard. Ask the class to sing the new reptile lyrics with the song's melody along with you.