



Teacher's Guide

Charlie

A complete guide to teaching the ManWrites short-story lesson

LEVEL
B1-B2

FORMAT
Flexible lesson sequence

AUDIENCE
**Teenage and adult
learners**

1. Lesson at a Glance

Teaching principle The full pack is a flexible resource bank. Select the activities that suit your class; it is not necessary to complete every exercise in one lesson.

Story type	Darkly comic mystery / twist story
Main characters	The narrator and a little old lady
Core language level	B1-B2
Core lesson time	Approximately 90 minutes
Extended sequence	Two or three lessons, including speaking and writing
Main skills	Reading, vocabulary, speaking, critical thinking and writing

Learning objectives

- Understand the sequence, character relationships and final twist in an original short story.
- Use contextual clues and targeted exercises to develop vocabulary knowledge.
- Support answers and interpretations with evidence from the text.
- Discuss love, grief, loneliness and attachment respectfully.
- Develop fluency through role play, debate, presentation and extended discussion.
- Plan and produce a short creative text connected to animals and companionship.

Before the lesson

- Read the story and choose the questions and vocabulary items most appropriate for the class.
- Open the required presentations before class and test the story and lesson videos.
- Decide whether students will read individually, in pairs, or follow the teacher reading aloud.
- Print or share only the pages required for the chosen lesson route.

2. Choose a Teaching Route

Route A: Focused 60-minute lesson

1. Introductory questions - 5 minutes
2. Read or watch the story - 10 minutes
3. Selected reading comprehension questions - 15 minutes
4. One vocabulary activity - 10 minutes
5. Selected discussion questions - 15 minutes
6. Exit reflection - 5 minutes

Route B: Complete 90-minute lesson

1. Introductory questions - 10 minutes
2. First reading or story video - 10 minutes
3. Comprehension check - 20 minutes
4. Vocabulary practice - 20 minutes
5. Discussion - 20 minutes
6. Review and follow-up task - 10 minutes

Route C: Extended sequence

Lesson	Focus	Suggested content
1	Story and understanding	Introduction, story, reading comprehension and True or False
2	Language and interpretation	Vocabulary activities, discussion and role play
3	Critical and creative response	Debate, presentation, writing, peer response and review

Homework option Students can complete one vocabulary activity or plan the writing task between lessons.

3. Teaching the Core Lesson

A. Introduce the theme

Use the four introductory questions to activate ideas about pets, family and attachment. Keep this stage exploratory; do not reveal what Charlie is or how the story ends.

B. Read or watch the story

- First encounter: ask students to follow the story for general meaning without stopping for every unknown word.
- Second encounter: reread key passages or pause the story presentation to clarify sequence and inference.
- Prediction: before the old lady unbuttons her coat, ask students who or what they think Charlie might be.

C. Check comprehension

The pack contains 43 questions. For a shorter lesson, select 12-18 questions covering the opening, the narrator's reaction, the old lady's grief, the narrator's isolation, the approaching bus and the final revelation. For a complete lesson, divide the questions among pairs, then confirm answers as a class.

Efficient correction Ask students to give the answer and point to the words or event in the story that support it. Use the dedicated answer presentation for whole-class checking.

D. Teach vocabulary

The Essential Vocabulary list contains 45 words, phrases and idioms from the story. Pre-teach only items that block understanding; allow students to infer the rest from context before checking meanings.

- Vocabulary notebook: definition, part of speech where useful, and one original sentence.
- True or False: fast comprehension review before deeper vocabulary work.
- Synonyms and antonyms: focus on meaning relationships rather than translation.
- Words and Meanings: use pairs, followed by whole-class justification.
- Gap Fill and Vocabulary Practice: complete individually, compare in pairs, then check as a class.

4. Speaking, Debate and Writing

Discussion questions

There are 32 discussion prompts. Choose 6-10 rather than attempting all of them. Begin with reactions to the characters, move to interpretation, and finish with broader questions about pets, grief, loneliness and unconditional love.

- Give students one minute to think or make notes before speaking.
- Use pairs first, then invite selected answers in whole-class feedback.
- Ask follow-up questions such as “What makes you think that?” and “Which detail supports your view?”

Role play: The Narrator and His Friend

Pairs reconstruct the conversation on the day after the bus stop encounter. The narrator tells his one close friend about Charlie. The friend decides whether to take the story seriously, laugh it off, or question what the encounter revealed about the narrator’s isolated life. Allow 8-10 minutes to prepare and 2-3 minutes per performance.

Debate

Motion: “This house believes that keeping a taxidermied pet is a strange and unhealthy way to grieve, not a loving tribute.” Use the full two-team format with confident classes or the simplified class-discussion option with smaller or less experienced groups.

- Require each side to address the old lady’s grief and her bond with Charlie.
- Encourage students to distinguish personal choice from concern about unhealthy attachment.
- Judge clarity, evidence and response to opposing arguments rather than the opinion itself.

Presentation and creative writing

For The Perfect Pet, groups choose an animal and persuade the class that it would make the ideal pet. For the writing task, students write a poem about an animal in any style. Rhyming is optional, but it can help learners notice the sounds and patterns of English.

Safeguarding note The story includes death, grief, loneliness and taxidermy. Avoid requiring personal disclosure about bereavement, and offer an alternative pet-themed task if these ideas may be distressing.

5. Classroom Presentation Directory

The presentation collection mirrors the lesson plan. Open only the decks needed for the chosen route.

No.	Presentation	Best use
1	Introductory Questions	Activate background knowledge before the story.
2	Story and Reading Comprehension Questions	Present the story in sections and check understanding.
3	Discussion Questions	Support pair, group or whole-class speaking.
4	True or False	Run a quick comprehension review.
5	Synonyms	Practise words with similar meanings.
6	Antonyms	Practise contrasting meanings.
7	Words and Meanings	Match key vocabulary with definitions.
8	Gap Fill	Apply vocabulary in new sentence contexts.
9	Role Play	Set up the narrator's conversation with his friend.
10	Debate	Present the motion, roles and debate stages.
11	Writing	Guide the animal-poem writing task.
12	Reading Comprehension Answers	Check the 43 comprehension questions.
13	Answer Keys	Check vocabulary and True or False activities.

6. Differentiation and Classroom Management

Support for B1 learners

- Pre-teach 8-12 essential items and provide sentence starters for discussion.
- Use shorter sections of the story and check the sequence after each one.
- Allow preparation in pairs before answers are shared publicly.
- Use the simplified debate discussion rather than formal rebuttal rounds.

Challenge for B2 learners

- Ask students to distinguish the narrator's assumptions from details stated in the story.
- Require textual evidence and alternative interpretations in discussion.
- Extend the debate with rebuttals and audience questions.
- Ask students to use precise imagery, sound patterns and a clear emotional viewpoint in the poem.

Mixed-level classes

- Give different pairs different comprehension questions, then create mixed groups for feedback.
- Assign speaking roles by confidence: chairperson, note-taker, evidence finder and reporter.
- Offer core and extension vocabulary lists rather than one identical target for everyone.

Assessment suggestions

- Reading: accuracy plus evidence for inference questions.
- Speaking: clarity, interaction, relevant detail and responsiveness.
- Writing: organisation, language control, imagery and effectiveness of the ending.

Answer keys

Complete answers appear at the end of the lesson plan and in the two answer presentations. Accept equivalent wording when the meaning is accurate and supported by the story; discussion, role play, debate, presentation and creative writing tasks are open-ended.

Final reminder Choose a route, prepare the required files, and keep the story central. The exercises are there to deepen understanding and communication, not to crowd out the reading experience.