

T E A C H E R ' S G U I D E

Janko and the Giant

A Tale of Old Slovakia

*A serialized story
for newspapers*

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D I S T R I B U T E D B Y :

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Introduction

This *Janko and the Giant* Teacher's Guide gives students an opportunity to interact with literature, art, and the newspaper through this story by Joseph Bruchac. The illustrations are provided by Anna Vojtech. *Janko and the Giant* is a tale about a young man from the luckless town of Dedina. Janko yearns for adventure – a fight with a dragon, an encounter with a wizard, an opportunity to do great deeds. His exploits begin with the arrival of a giant at a nearby castle. Janko encounters a talking horse, a wizard's book, and other magical objects. He is guided throughout the entire adventure by his memory of his grandmother's proverbs.

Lesson Plans

The lesson plans for each chapter are divided into these parts:

Vocabulary identifies important vocabulary words in the chapter. Teachers may use the vocabulary instructional activities they choose, such as identifying phonics elements, using root words and affixes, or determining meaning from context.

Let's Discuss questions provide an opportunity to discuss the story with students. Most of the questions require students to obtain meaning across text and to think critically.

Newspaper Activities offer real-world explorations that relate to the topics and content of each chapter.

Additional Activities

These activities help students explore proverbs and adventure tales.

Puzzles

A crossword puzzle and a word search are provided.

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Long Ago in Dedina

Let's Discuss

1. What event caused Janko's grandmother to leave Dedina?
2. What items did Janko borrow from Cierny, the blacksmith, and Gazda, a family friend?
3. What tells you that Dedina was a poor and unfortunate town?
4. How had Janko's reading influenced his thinking?
5. What event made Janko think he at last had a chance for adventure?
6. What proverb did Janko's parents use to show they didn't want to travel? What did the proverb mean?
7. Why were Cierny and Gazda happy to help Janko?
8. How do you know Janko is brave?
9. Explain how one of his grandmother's proverbs helped Janko.
10. Make a prediction: What will happen at the castle?



NEWSPAPER ACTIVITY

Look in the travel section of the newspaper. Find a place you would like to visit on an adventure. Write a paragraph explaining why you would like to visit that location.

VOCABULARY

cringe, v

to contract the muscles involuntarily in reaction to an unpleasant experience

grated, v

irritated

proverb, n

a brief saying that expresses a general truth

ventured, v

went forward with fear of risk or danger

Let's Discuss

1. What was the giant's name?
2. How many houses did Dedina have?
3. What tells you that the giant was very big?
4. How do you know that Janko was frightened?
5. How was the giant different from what Janko expected?
6. Why would a giant demand tribute from the people of Dedina?
7. What new information tells you more about the sad life in Dedina?
8. What did you expect Janko to find when he went to the giant's castle?
9. Explain how one of his grandmother's proverbs helped Janko.
10. Make a prediction: What will happen to Janko?

**NEWSPAPER ACTIVITY**

Look in the classified ad section of the newspaper for accountant or bookkeeper positions. Then write a classified ad for someone to help the giant keep track of his tributes.

VOCABULARY

ledger book, n

a book in which people keep track of accounts, usually financial dealings

looming, adj

hanging over and suggesting danger

tribute, n

payment for protection

weevil, n

a type of beetle, often found in grain

The Giant's Huge Hand

Let's Discuss

1. What did the giant do with Gazda's mule?
2. What shocked Janko about the giant's behavior?
3. What new problem had Janko's adventure caused for the people of Dedina?
4. What was Janko's plan for getting food and lodging at the inn?
5. Why wasn't Janko surprised when the horse Kon talked?
6. What other magical qualities did Janko discover?
7. Why wasn't the wizard Blaznivy able to defeat the outlaws?
8. What other magical qualities do you think Kon might have?
9. Explain how one of his grandmother's proverbs helped Janko.
10. Make a prediction: What is about to happen to Janko?



NEWSPAPER ACTIVITY

Find an animal in the comic pages that would make a good magical companion. Write a paragraph describing your animal's magical qualities.

VOCABULARY

dejectedly, adv
in a sad way

enchanted, adj
changed by magic

indecisive, adj
unable to make a decision

quadruped, n
an animal with four legs