

THE MAYOR OF CASTERBRIDGE:  
A UNIT PLAN

*First Edition*

Based on the book by Thomas Hardy  
Written by Mary B. Collins

**Teacher's Pet Publications, Inc.**

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## INTRODUCTION *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

This unit plan for the novel *The Mayor of Casterbridge* contains a variety of class activities for a fourteen lesson unit. It includes:

### A Lesson Plan Outline

#### Fourteen Lesson Plans including

- a. An Introductory Lesson
- b. Two In-Class Reading Sessions
- c. Two Writing Assignments
- d. Two Discussion/Reading Lessons
- e. One Group Activity Lesson
- f. One Review Lesson
- g. Three Discussion Lessons
- h. One Vocabulary Lesson
- i. One Test Session

#### Reading Assignments

#### Study Guide Questions

#### Unit Test

#### Bulletin board Suggestions

#### Extra Activities Packet

#### Extra Writing Assignments/Discussion Questions

UNIT OUTLINE *Mayor Of Casterbridge*

1 Unit Intro Distribute Unit Materials Assign 1-5	2 Study ??s 1-5 Read 6-15	3 Read 16-20 Assign 21-24	4 Study ??s 6-24 Read 25-34	5 Vocabulary Assign 35-39
6 Read 40-45	7 Study ?? 25-45	8 Writing Assignment 1	9 Extra ?s Reports & Discussion	10 Extra ??s Continued
11 Group Activity	12 Writing Assignment #2	13 Review	14 Test	

## UNIT OBJECTIVES *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

1. Through reading *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, students will see the tremendous impact that one person's life can have on the many people with whom he comes in contact.
2. Students will consider whether man or fate controls one's destiny.
3. Students will compare and contrast characters to gain a better understanding of Thomas Hardy's portraits of human nature.
4. Students will be given the opportunity to practice reading aloud, silently, independently and as a group to improve their skills in each area.
5. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* as they relate to the author's theme and character development.
6. Students will practice writing through a variety of writing assignments.
7. The writing assignments in this are geared to several purposes:
  - a. To check the students' reading comprehension
  - b. To make students think about the ideas presented by the novel
  - c. To encourage critical and logical thinking
  - d. To provide the opportunity to practice good grammar and improve students' use of the English language.
8. Students will read aloud, report, and participate in large and small group discussions to improve their public speaking and personal interaction skills.

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET *Mayor of Casterbridge*

Date Assigned	Chapters	Completion Date
	1-5	
	6-10	
	11-15	
	16-20	
	21-24	
	25-29	
	30-34	
	35-39	
	40-45	

### TEACHER'S NOTE:

The Study Guide questions are intended to point out the main events or characters in each section of the novel. Students should be advised to read the appropriate question section prior to reading the corresponding chapters in the novel, so they will know what they are reading to find.

Going over the answers to the questions in class is one way to review the events and some important ideas.

You may, on occasion, want to use the study guide questions as a short quiz at the beginning of the period, particularly if your students are not doing the required reading.

Otherwise, the questions should also provide a reasonable review guide for students at the end of the unit.

For questions requiring more critical thinking skills, see the Extra Writing Assignments/Discussion Questions towards the end of this packet. For more advanced classes, you may wish to circle and use some of those questions as additional study questions.

## STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

### Chapters 1-5

1. What does the fact that Michael would sell his wife tell us about his character?
2. Why does Michael's wife accept the sale?
3. Why is Michael angry with Susan on "the morning after"?
4. How do we know that Michael is ashamed of what he has done?
5. How does Michael's pride inhibit his search for Susan and Elizabeth-Jane?
6. What information does Mrs. Newson hear from the furnity woman?
7. What is wrong with the bread in Casterbridge?
8. In what state do Mrs. Newson and Elizabeth-Jane find Mr. Henchard?
9. How is Henchard's attitude concerning the bad wheat like his attitude years ago when he sold his wife?

### Chapters 6-10

1. What does the Scotchman's note say?
2. Why does Henchard seek out the Scotchman?
3. Why does Farfrae refuse Henchard's offer?
4. How do we know Mrs. Newson has changed her mind about contacting Henchard?
5. Explain "It's Providence!"
6. Why is Joshua Jopp angry?
7. Why would Henchard ask Susan to meet him on a road at eight in the evening instead of asking her to his house?

### Chapters 11-15

1. How do Susan and Henchard intend to resolve their problem?
2. Describe Henchard's "other" problem.
3. What piece of advice from Farfrae does Henchard reject? Why?
4. Who is "The Ghost"?
5. What causes the very first rift between Henchard and Farfrae?
6. Why does Henchard now think of Farfrae with dread?

### Chapters 16-20

1. What was "a cannibal deed!"?
2. How does Henchard reveal the deep need for the intimacy he feels for Elizabeth-Jane?
3. Why does Henchard "cool" towards his daughter?
4. Why does Elizabeth-Jane agree to become a companion to the mysterious lady?



## *Mayor of Casterbridge Study Questions*

### Chapters 21-24

1. What causes Henchard to soften towards Elizabeth-Jane just as she is leaving his house?
2. Why does Lucetta send Elizabeth-Jane off for the day?
3. How do Farfrae and Lucetta react upon meeting each other?
4. Why does Lucetta ask Elizabeth-Jane's advice concerning the obligation she owes the man she promised to wed?

### Chapter 25-29

1. How does Elizabeth-Jane feel about the attraction between Farfrae and Lucetta?
2. Why does Henchard buy all the grain he can?
3. What motivates Henchard's actions?
4. Why is Jopp fired?
5. What was Jopp's actual advice to Henchard?
6. How does Henchard get Lucetta to agree to marry him?
7. Who is on trial for disorderly conduct?
8. How does Henchard react when the furmity lady reveals that he once sold his wife? Why do you think he reacts that way?
9. Who rescues Elizabeth-Jane and Lucetta from the bull?
10. Henchard apologizes to Lucetta for forcing her into a promise of marriage and decides to give her more time; then, he threatens her and orders her home. What caused his change of temper?

### Chapters 30-34

1. Why does Elizabeth-Jane insist that Lucetta should marry only Mr. Henchard?
2. How does Henchard conduct himself during his bankruptcy?
3. To what does Elizabeth-Jane fear Henchard's temper might drive him?
4. Given Henchard's hatred of Farfrae and feelings of rejection by Lucetta, why is he unable to disclose the identity of his correspondent?

### Chapters 35-39

1. Why does Henchard agree to return Lucetta's love letters?
2. Who is the proposed object (victim) of a skimmity-ride?
3. What is a skimmity ride?
4. Why does Jopp compromise Lucetta?
5. What do Coney, Buzzford, and Longways decide about the skimmity-ride?
6. Who plans to make sure the skimmity-ride occurs?
7. What stops Henchard from injuring Farfrae?
8. Describe the skimmity-ride.
9. How does Lucetta react to the skimmity-ride?

*Mayor of Casterbridge* Study Questions

Chapters 40-45

1. Is Farfrae unreasonable in not believing Henchard's entreaty to return home? Why or why not?
2. What is the final result of the skimmity-ride?
3. Why does Henchard lie to Newson?
4. What does Henchard mean when he says, "That performance of theirs killed her, but kept me alive!"
5. How has the relationship between Henchard and Elizabeth-Jane changed since they last lived in a house together?
6. Why does Elizabeth-Jane say she "ought to forget" Henchard?
7. What does Henchard do after he leaves Casterbridge?
8. Why does Henchard return to Casterbridge?
9. Why do Farfrae and Elizabeth-Jane bury Henchard as he wished?

ANSWER KEY: STUDY QUESTIONS *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

Chapters 1-5

1. What does the fact that Michael would sell his wife tell us about his character?  
His boast that he would sell his wife is in bad taste and shows that he is a man to take out his misfortunes on others. He obviously thinks all of life's downturns are someone else's fault and that their marriage has ruined any of his chances for success. He perfectly exhibits his cowardice in his inability to back down when his bluff is called and his wife is bought. Rather than showing himself to have integrity for holding to his ground (and offer) he is revealed as foolish and stubborn. The rum he had drunk has not created his faults but merely intensified them.
2. Why does Michael's wife accept the sale?  
She tells Michael that she is tired of his humiliations and will take him at his word if he continues. She appears to be docile yet shows a bit of strength when she steers him from the ale tent to the furnity tent. She also shows her strength in calling his bluff and leaving with the sailor who has purchased her.
3. Why is Michael angry with Susan on "the morning after"?  
He holds her responsible for having been sold since she knows how he becomes when he drinks. He is irritated with her for taking him seriously.
4. How do we know that Michael is ashamed of what he has done?  
He finds a church and vows a solemn oath that he will not touch strong liquors for twenty-one years.
5. How does Michael's pride inhibit his search for Susan and Elizabeth-Jane?  
He is unwilling to reveal how he came to lose them, so his "quiet" search yields little information.
6. What information does Mrs. Newson hear from the furnity woman?  
She hears that a year after selling his wife, Michael Henchard returned to the fair and told the furnity vendor that if the woman should ever return and ask for him that she would find him in Casterbridge.
7. What is wrong with the bread in Casterbridge?  
It is made from "growed wheat," presumably wheat that has gone to seed. This evidently inhibits the leavening process.
8. In what state do Mrs. Newson and Elizabeth-Jane find Mr. Henchard?  
He is the mayor of Casterbridge and obviously a rich and important man.

9. How is Henchard's attitude concerning the bad wheat like his attitude years ago when he sold his wife?

He refuses to accept the responsibility for the wheat just as he could not accept full responsibility for selling Susan. He held her partly to blame and now he points his finger at those who sold the bad wheat to him.

#### Chapters 6-10

1. What does the Scotchman's note say?

It contains some plan or idea concerning the improvement of the bad wheat.

2. Why does Henchard seek out the Scotchman?

He thinks the Scotchman is the manager for whom he has advertised.

3. Why does Farfrae refuse Henchard's offer?

He has planned to settle in America and would like to see the world.

4. How do we know Mrs. Newson has changed her mind about contacting Henchard?

She worries that the news of Elizabeth-Jane's serving at the inn would seriously embarrass him.

5. Explain "It's Providence!"

It is Farfrae's explanation for his meeting and budding friendship with Henchard, which causes him to alter his plans and remain in Casterbridge as Henchard's manager.

6. Why is Joshua Jopp angry?

He was to have been Henchard's manager. He arrives and finds Farfrae already hired.

7. Why would Henchard ask Susan to meet him on a road at eight in the evening instead of asking her to his house?

First, he is unsure of Susan's intentions or her identity. He knows that the truth concerning their relationship would ruin him in Casterbridge and probably wants to see what she intends. Also remember Farfrae is staying at his house.

#### Chapters 11-15

1. How do Susan and Henchard intend to resolve their problem?

He will court and marry the widow Mrs. Newson and thereby have his family again.

2. Describe Henchard's "other" problem.

He has been calling on and is somewhat engaged to a woman in another town and must call off his plans with her in order to do the right thing and "remarry" his first wife.

3. What piece of advice from Farfrae does Henchard reject? Why?

Farfrae suggests that he tell the truth to Elizabeth-Jane and take the chance that she will forgive him. Henchard's pride will not allow him to take that chance.

4. Who is "The Ghost"?

Mrs. Henchard is. She is so named because she is thin and pale.

5. What causes the very first rift between Henchard and Farfrae?

Henchard punishes Abel Whittle for lateness by making him work without his breeches. Farfrae contradicts Henchard in the presence of the men, and this deeply wounds Henchard's pride.

6. Why does Henchard now think of Farfrae with dread?

He regrets telling Farfrae of his secrets and is now afraid and uneasy, not knowing what Farfrae might do with the information.

#### Chapters 16-20

1. What was "a cannibal deed!"?

Christopher Coney dug up the pennies that were laid on dead Mrs. Henchard's eyes, and he spent them on drinks.

2. How does Henchard reveal the deep need for the intimacy he feels for Elizabeth-Jane?

He begs Elizabeth-Jane to accept him as her father and begs her not to "take against" him. He confides that he ill-treated her mother but promises to be kinder to her.

3. Why does Henchard "cool" towards his daughter?

He discovers that she is actually Newson's child; that his Elizabeth-Jane died long ago.

4. Why does Elizabeth-Jane agree to become a companion to the mysterious lady?

The lady is kind to her at a time when she feels her father is disappointed in her and dislikes her.

#### Chapters 21-24

1. What causes Henchard to soften towards Elizabeth-Jane just as she is leaving his house?

He sees the evidence in her room of her attempts to educate and civilize herself, and he feels that perhaps he has been too hard on her.

2. Why does Lucetta send Elizabeth-Jane off for the day?  
She fears that Elizabeth-Jane's presence inhibits Henchard from calling.
3. How do Farfrae and Lucetta react upon meeting each other?  
They're both charmed and a bit smitten by each other; so much so in fact, that Lucetta's feelings for Henchard are quite diminished and Farfrae completely forgets it was Elizabeth-Jane he had set out to call upon.
4. Why does Lucetta ask Elizabeth-Jane's advice concerning the obligation she owes the man she promised to wed?  
Lucetta knows it would not be honorable to dismiss the first man in favor of the more recent man, but she wants sympathy and understanding in her dilemma. She is asking Elizabeth-Jane to advise her to follow love rather than duty.

#### Chapter 25-29

1. How does Elizabeth-Jane feel about the attraction between Farfrae and Lucetta?  
She is disappointed and a bit hurt yet has become so familiar to rejection, given her father's treatment of her, that she accepts their relationship. Her fondness of Lucetta does not permit an ugly jealousy to rise as does her regard for Farfrae prohibit dislike to occur.
2. Why does Henchard buy all the grain he can?  
He wishes to buy low and sell high in an effort to hurt Farfrae's business.
3. What motivates Henchard's actions?  
He is jealous that Farfrae has won Lucetta (besides being jealous of Farfrae's successful business), so he wishes to cause Farfrae's downfall if he can.
4. Why is Jopp fired?  
Henchard blames him for letting him speculate when it was obviously not a wise thing to do.
5. What was Jopp's actual advice to Henchard?  
He told Henchard to do as he thought best.
6. How does Henchard get Lucetta to agree to marry him?  
He threatens to expose their past relationship in Jersey.
7. Who is on trial for disorderly conduct?  
The furmity lady from the Weydon Fair is on trial.

8. How does Henchard react when the furnity lady reveals that he once sold his wife? Why do you think he reacts that way?

Henchard admits the crime at once and adds that it proves he is no better than she and can therefore not judge her. Although Henchard is stubborn and pigheaded in almost every conflict or disagreement with another person, he also is a truthfully blunt man. He feels the selling of his wife is his "original sin" and he always tries to atone for it or attempts to right it. This is why he was eager to remarry Susan. Of all the unkind or unfair deeds that Henchard commits, only to this one does he quietly admit his guilt. In all other conflicts he characteristically fights, cusses, rages, and tries to get even (or better than even).

9. Who rescues Elizabeth-Jane and Lucetta from the bull?

Henchard does.

10. Henchard apologizes to Lucetta for forcing her into a promise of marriage and decides to give her more time; then, he threatens her and orders her home. What caused his change of temper?

Lucetta admits that she has already married Farfrae during the past week.

#### Chapters 30-34

1. Why does Elizabeth-Jane insist that Lucetta should marry only Mr. Henchard?

Elizabeth-Jane's sense of propriety demands that Lucetta honor her first promise; also, Elizabeth-Jane can't deny her own feelings for Farfrae.

2. How does Henchard conduct himself during his bankruptcy?

He is completely honest with his creditors and endeavors to give up as much property as he has to them, down to his watch. That he is shamed and despairing is obvious by his going to live with Jopp.

3. To what does Elizabeth-Jane fear Henchard's temper might drive him?

She fears that in a moment of despair he may injure or perhaps kill Farfrae.

4. Given Henchard's hatred of Farfrae and feelings of rejection by Lucetta, why is he unable to disclose the identity of his correspondent?

As Hardy points out, Henchard would be able to hurt both Farfrae and Lucetta in the heat of angry action, but he is unable to coolly destroy them in calculated speech. Henchard feels greatly wronged, but not without a touch of guilt and responsibility for his own actions.

## Chapters 35-39

1. Why does Henchard agree to return Lucetta's love letters?  
He is disposed to feel guilt at being the cause of suffering to a member of the frail and weaker sex. Their meeting at the Ring brings back to his memory his past meeting there with Susan, and he is touched and pitying.
2. Who is the proposed object (victim) of a skimmity-ride?  
Lucetta and Henchard are the victims.
3. What is a skimmity ride?  
It is a practical joke played upon a woman who has had a "past." It is a public joke.
4. Why does Jopp compromise Lucetta?  
Remember Jopp had been to Jersey and knew there was a romantic connection between Lucetta and Henchard. He also is disappointed with Lucetta because she will not intervene for him with Farfrae. Also, it must be noted that Jopp is not a character of the highest quality.
5. What do Coney, Buzzford, and Longways decide about the skimmity-ride?  
They agree it is too cruel and harsh a joke, especially since Lucetta has never done any wrong since coming to Casterbridge and they think Farfrae a kind and fair man.
6. Who plans to make sure the skimmity-ride occurs?  
Jopp does.
7. What stops Henchard from injuring Farfrae?  
Henchard's heart stops him. He loved Farfrae as a dear friend and cannot bring himself to truly hurt him.
8. Describe the skimmity-ride.  
A loud, musical procession leads a donkey upon which sit effigies of Henchard and Lucetta. They are tied back to back; she is facing the head and he is facing the tail. This is a very coarse joke which accuses Lucetta of not being a lady and of having been Henchard's mistress.
9. How does Lucetta react to the skimmity-ride?  
She falls to the floor in a kind of an epileptic seizure.



## Chapters 40-45

1. Is Farfrae unreasonable in not believing Henchard's entreaty to return home? Why or why not?

He is not, really. Farfrae has been attacked that day by Henchard in an intended wrestling duel to the death. Granted, Farfrae is familiar with Henchard's extreme mood shifts, yet he has no reason to believe him.

2. What is the final result of the skimmity-ride?

Lucetta miscarries her child and dies.

3. Why does Henchard lie to Newson?

He cannot bear the thought of losing Elizabeth-Jane. She is the only human being that he has a chance to feel close to and who will return his feelings.

4. What does Henchard mean when he says, "That performance of theirs killed her, but kept me alive!"

He is disclosing that he came to the water to drown himself, but he was stopped and saved by the effigy of himself floating in the water. The sight of what he thought to be his drowned body was too much for Henchard's superstitious nature.

5. How has the relationship between Henchard and Elizabeth-Jane changed since they last lived in a house together?

When they lived in his house while he was mayor, Henchard was sharp and critical to Elizabeth-Jane, finding fault with her speech and actions. Now that he fears losing his last bond of love, Henchard is always kind and gentle in his treatment of her. Now Henchard keeps himself well-groomed and clean for Elizabeth-Jane and allows her to make all the decisions. Their roles are reversed as she is now the dominant one and he quietly bows to her wishes.

6. Why does Elizabeth-Jane say she "ought to forget" Henchard?

Henchard's lie to Newson hurts Elizabeth-Jane very much. It has kept her natural father from her company for almost a year longer than needed to be, and she finds it hard to forgive Henchard.

7. What does Henchard do after he leaves Casterbridge?

He goes back to work as a hay-trusser.

8. Why does Henchard return to Casterbridge?

He wants to be near Elizabeth-Jane. He hopes she will forgive his lie to Newson and allow him to have some contact with her.

9. Why do Farfrae and Elizabeth-Jane bury Henchard as he wished?

Elizabeth-Jane knows Henchard well enough to see him buried exactly as he wished, even though he was in a state of despair when he wrote the instructions. To do otherwise would do no good to Henchard; it would merely cause others to think that Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae were generous and forgiving toward someone who had not been kind to them. Elizabeth-Jane senses that this would somehow not be right to do.

## LESSON ONE

### Objectives

1. To introduce the *The Mayor of Casterbridge* unit
2. To distribute books and other related materials
3. To give students some background information about Thomas Hardy, his times and his works

### Activity #1

Distribute the books, study guides, reading assignment sheets and any other materials students will need for the unit. Explain how students will use these materials.

### Activity #2

Show a film(strip) about Thomas Hardy and *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.

Make a fill-in-the-blank worksheet for students to fill out while watching the film(strip). This will keep students focused on the film and give them a study guide for background information.

### Activity #3

Discuss the "answers" to the film(strip) worksheet.

### Activity 4

Have students begin reading chapters 1-5 silently in class if time remains. Students should complete this assignment on their own prior to the next class period.

## LESSON TWO

### Objectives

1. To review the main events and ideas of chapters 1-5
2. To read chapters 6-15

### Activity #1

Do the study guide for chapters 1 - 5 in class together. Ask the questions and let the students answer. Allow time for any necessary discussion. Write the correct answers to the questions on the board or overhead projector so students can copy them down for study use.

TEACHER'S NOTE: Depending on the students, I have let different students write the answers on the board or even ask the questions to lead the group. I would then jump in as necessary to guide the discussion. Use whatever techniques your particular students will handle best.

### Activity #2

Have students read chapters 6 - 15 silently in class. If students do not finish reading chapters 6-15 in class, they should do so prior to the next class period.

## LESSON THREE

### Objectives

1. To read chapters 16-20
2. To assign chapters 21-24
3. To give students the opportunity to practice reading orally

### Activity 1

Have students read chapters 16-20 orally. Either choose readers or ask for volunteers; you know what method works best for your class.

### Activity 2

Assign students to read chapters 21-24 prior to the next class period. If time remains in this period, they may begin reading silently.

## LESSON FOUR

### Objective

1. To review the main events and ideas of chapters 6-24
2. To read chapters 25-34

### Activity #1

Do the study guide for chapters 6-24 in class together as directed previously.

### Activity #2

Have students read chapters 25-34 silently in class. If students do not finish reading this assignment in class, they should do so prior to the next class period.

## LESSON FIVE

### Objectives

1. To enrich students' vocabulary and their understanding of the novel *The Mayor of Casterbridge*
2. To read chapters 35-39

### Teacher's Note:

Enclosed with this lesson is a list of vocabulary words taken from *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. This list could be used in several ways. First, you could simply go through the list and pick out words you feel would be appropriate for your students' level and make a "traditional" vocabulary lesson with a test to follow about a week later. Second, you could do an oral quiz of all of the words with your class. Strike any words for which someone in the class gives a correct definition. Use the remaining words as a vocabulary list. Third, you could make a game with teams using both spelling and meaning of the words as questions. This lesson is based on the second option and the unit test includes a vocabulary section for testing students' knowledge of ten of the vocabulary words.

### Activity #1

Explain to the class that you will be doing some vocabulary work today. Ask students to clear their desks and prepare for an oral quiz about the meanings of various words from the novel.

Begin asking for definitions of the words on the enclosed vocabulary list. Strike any words for which someone in the class gives a correct definition. Feel free to write the words on the board or overhead projector so students can see the word; that may help them recognize it.

Write on the board a list of 10 words for which students could not give definitions. If there are fewer than ten words, that's fine. If there are less than five words your class did not know, reward them by not having the vocabulary section on the unit test.

### Activity #2

If sufficient class time remains, have students look up the words they did not know, and have them jot down the definitions for study. (Note: Instead of having every student look up each word, you might want to keep a student handy with a dictionary as you give the oral quiz. Have that student look up the unknown word(s) as you go through the list. Write the definitions on the board for students to copy.) Remind students that these (10) words will be a part of the unit test.

VOCABULARY LIST *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

SWARTHY  
APERTURE  
PROTRUDE  
DESULTORY  
CYNICAL  
RECIPROCITY  
DISCERN  
IRKSOME  
TACITURNITY  
APATHETIC  
NIMBUS  
EXTRANEOUS  
ABJURE

TRITE  
SUNDRY  
CONTINGENT  
SUMMIT  
ANTIQUATED  
CURSORY  
MAELSTROM  
IMPRUDENT  
VOLUMINOUS  
TANTALIZING  
LURID  
STOLID

## LESSON SIX

### Objective

To read chapters 40-45

### Activity #1

Tell students to read chapters 40-45 silently during this class period.

### Activity #2

If students finish the in-class reading assignment early, they may begin formulating answers for the study guide questions for chapters 25-45.

## LESSON SEVEN

### Objective

To review the main ideas and events of chapters 25-45

### Activity

Do the study guide questions for chapters 25-45 as directed previously.

## LESSON EIGHT

### Objectives

1. To have students think about the ideas presented by the novel
2. To prepare students for a class discussion of the novel
3. To give the teacher the opportunity to evaluate students' writing skills and their understanding of the novel

### Activity #1

Assign one of the Extra Writing Assignments/Discussion Questions to each of the students in your class. Explain that each student should write a complete essay answering the question using appropriate examples or illustrations from the novel.

### Activity #2

Explain to students that during Lesson Ten (give them a date) they will be responsible for standing in front of the class and answering the question from notes they have made (not from their essays), and that they should be prepared to lead any discussions which arise. The essay papers will be collected at the end of Lesson Ten.



## LESSON NINE

### Objectives

1. To study the characters of the novel more closely
2. To give students the opportunity to practice their personal interaction skills in a small group setting
3. To give students the opportunity to practice their public speaking skills as they report their small group findings

### Activity #1

Divide the class into groups. Each group should be assigned one of the following:

1. Henchard
2. Susan
3. Elizabeth-Jane
4. Donald Farfrae
5. Lucetta

Each group should:

- a. Compile a character sketch
- b. Explain their character's role in the book
- c. Trace the development (note any progression of changes) of that character through the book

One group member should be designated "secretary" to jot down the group's ideas. Another should be designated "spokesperson" to report the group's ideas to the class.

### Activity #2

The groups will each report their findings and conclusions to the whole class. The teacher or a student should write down on the board or overhead all of the findings and conclusions. Students should copy notes from the board for later study.

## LESSONS TEN AND ELEVEN

### Objectives

1. To discuss the ideas presented in the book in more detail
2. To give students the opportunity to practice speaking before a group

### Activity

Have students come to the front of the class to give their answers to the Extra Writing Assignments/Discussion Questions. They may use notes but should not simply read their essays.

Use these answers as springboards for discussion. Have students take notes for study use.

## LESSON TWELVE

### Objectives

1. To give students the opportunity to practice writing in a letter format.
2. To check students' knowledge of the characters roles in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.
3. To give the teacher a chance to evaluate students' individual writing.
4. To give students the opportunity to correct their writing errors and produce an error-free paper.

### Activity

Distribute Writing Assignment #2. Discuss the directions orally in detail. Allow the remaining class time for students to complete the activity.

If students do not have enough class time to finish, the papers may be collected at the beginning of the next class period.

Follow-Up: When the writing assignments are graded, keep those original grades. Give students the follow-up assignment of correcting their mistakes and submitting the original and error-free versions back in to you. Give the revision a grade value as well. I suggest an A (done well/all errors corrected), C (done but still some errors), E (not done or still many errors) system which will require minimal grading time and yet give the students credit for their work. The point is to get them to look at your suggestions and to use them on a piece they are already familiar with.

## WRITING ASSIGNMENT #2 *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

Your assignment is to write one of the following letters:

- a. A letter from Susan to Henchard left with the furmity lady to be given to him on the morning after she is sold to Newson
- b. A letter from Henchard to Susan left with the furmity lady to be given to her if she would ever return
- c. A letter from Elizabeth-Jane to Henchard left in her room for him to find after she moves in with Lucetta, the kind, mysterious woman
- d. A letter from Henchard to Susan, left with the bird
- e. A letter from Elizabeth-Jane to Henchard following her marriage to Farfrae
- f. A letter from Jopp to Lucetta just prior to the skimmity-ride
- g. A letter from Henchard to Farfrae just after the Abel Whittle incident

Your letter will not only be judged on your writing skills, but also on your ability to create a letter credible for the characters and circumstances involved.

## LESSON THIRTEEN

### Objective

To review the main ideas presented in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.

### Activity #1

Choose one of the review games/activities included in the packet and spend your class period as outlined there.

### Activity #2

Remind students of the Unit Test for the next class meeting. Stress the review of the Study Guides and their class notes as a last minute, brush-up review for homework.

## REVIEW GAMES/ACTIVITIES

### #1

Ask the class to make up a unit test for *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. The test should have 4 sections: multiple choice, true/false, short answer and essay. Students may use 1/2 period to make the test, including a separate answer sheet, and then swap papers and use the other 1/2 class period to take a test a classmate has devised. (open book) You may want to use the unit test included in this packet or take questions from the students' unit tests to formulate your own test.

### #2

Take 1/2 period for students to make up true and false questions (including the answers). Collect the papers and divide the class into two teams. Draw a big tic-tac-toe board on the chalk board. Make one team X and one team O. Ask questions to each side, giving each student one turn. If the question is answered correctly, that student's team's letter (X or O) is placed in the box. If the answer is incorrect, no mark is placed in the box. The object is to get three marks in a row like tic-tac-toe. You may want to keep track of the number of games won for each team.

### #3

Take 1/2 period for students to make up questions (true/false and short answer). Collect the questions. Divide the class into two teams. You'll alternate asking questions to individual members of teams A & B (like in a spelling bee). The question keeps going from A to B until it is correctly answered, then a new question is asked. A correct answer does not allow the team to get another question. Correct answers are +2 points; incorrect answers are -1 point.

### #4

Allow students time to quiz each other (in pairs) from their study guides and class notes.

## LESSON FOURTEEN

### Objective

To test the students' understanding of the main ideas and themes in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.

### Activity #1

Distribute the *The Mayor of Casterbridge* Unit Tests. Go over the instructions in detail and allow the students the entire class period to complete the exam.

### Activity #2

Collect all test papers and assigned books prior to the end of the class period.

UNIT TEST *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

I. Vocabulary: Write the words (given orally) then go back and write the words' definitions.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

*Mayor of Casterbridge* Unit Test

II. Short Answer

1. What does the fact that Michael would sell his wife tell us about his character?
2. How do we know that Michael is ashamed of what he has done?
3. Why would Henchard ask Susan to meet him on a road at eight in the evening instead of asking her to his house?
4. Why does Henchard "cool" towards his daughter?
5. How does Elizabeth-Jane feel about the attraction between Farfrae and Lucetta?
6. How does Henchard get Lucetta to agree to marry him?
7. How does Henchard conduct himself during his bankruptcy?



*Mayor of Casterbridge* Unit Test

8. Why does Henchard agree to return Lucetta's love letters?
  
9. Is Farfrae unreasonable in not believing Henchard's entreaty to return home? Why or why not?
  
10. Why does Henchard lie to Newson?
  
11. What does Henchard mean when he says, "That performance of theirs killed her, but kept me alive!"
  
12. What does Henchard do after he leaves Casterbridge?

*Mayor of Casterbridge* Unit Test

III. Essay

In chapter 1, Susan is described: "She had the hard, half-apatetic expression of one who deems anything possible at the hands of Time and Chance, except, perhaps, fair play. The first phase was the work of Nature, the second probably of civilization." Explain what that means in relationship to the whole novel.

ANSWER KEY: UNIT TEST *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

I. Vocabulary: Choose ten words from the vocabulary list to dictate to your students.

II. Short Answer

1. What does the fact that Michael would sell his wife tell us about his character?

His boast that he would sell his wife is in bad taste and shows that he is a man to take out his misfortunes on others. He obviously thinks all of life's downturns are someone else's fault and that their marriage has ruined any of his chances for success. He perfectly exhibits his cowardice in his inability to back down when his bluff is called and his wife is bought. Rather than showing himself to have integrity for holding to his ground (and offer) he is revealed as foolish and stubborn. The rum he had drunk has not created his faults but merely intensified them.

2. How do we know that Michael is ashamed of what he has done?

He finds a church and vows a solemn oath that he will not touch strong liquors for twenty-one years.

3. Why would Henchard ask Susan to meet him on a road at eight in the evening instead of asking her to his house?

First, he is unsure of Susan's intentions or her identity. He knows that the truth concerning their relationship would ruin him in Casterbridge and probably wants to see what she intends. Also remember Farfrae is staying at his house.

4. Why does Henchard "cool" towards his daughter?

He discovers that she is actually Newson's child; that his Elizabeth-Jane died long ago.

5. How does Elizabeth-Jane feel about the attraction between Farfrae and Lucetta?

She is disappointed and a bit hurt yet has become so familiar to rejection, given her father's treatment of her, that she accepts their relationship. Her fondness of Lucetta does not permit an ugly jealousy to rise as does her regard for Farfrae prohibit dislike to occur.

6. How does Henchard get Lucetta to agree to marry him?

He threatens to expose their past relationship in Jersey.

7. How does Henchard conduct himself during his bankruptcy?

He is completely honest with his creditors and endeavors to give up as much property as he has to them, down to his watch. That he is shamed and despairing is obvious by his going to live with Jopp.

8. Why does Henchard agree to return Lucetta's love letters?

He is disposed to feel guilt at being the cause of suffering to a member of the frail and weaker sex. Their meeting at the Ring brings back to his memory his past meeting there with Susan, and he is touched and pitying.

9. Is Farfrae unreasonable in not believing Henchard's entreaty to return home? Why or why not?

He is not, really. Farfrae has been attacked that day by Henchard in an intended wrestling duel to the death. Granted, Farfrae is familiar with Henchard's extreme mood shifts, yet he has no reason to believe him.

10. Why does Henchard lie to Newson?

He cannot bear the thought of losing Elizabeth-Jane. She is the only human being that he has a chance to feel close to and who will return his feelings.

11. What does Henchard mean when he says, "That performance of theirs killed her, but kept me alive!"

He is disclosing that he came to the water to drown himself, but he was stopped and saved by the effigy of himself floating in the water. The sight of what he thought to be his drowned body was too much for Henchard's superstitious nature.

12. What does Henchard do after he leaves Casterbridge?

He goes back to work as a hay-trusser.

III. Essay: Answers will depend upon your class discussions.

## EXTRA ACTIVITIES

One of the difficulties in teaching a novel is that all students don't read at the same speed. One student who likes to read may take the book home and finish it in a day or two. Sometimes a few students finish the in-class assignments early. The problem, then, is finding suitable extra activities for students.

One thing that helps is to keep a little library in the classroom. For this unit on *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, a biography of Thomas Hardy would be interesting for some students. You can include other related books and articles about English life in the 1840's - 1860's, American life during the same period, farming techniques of the past and present, the worldwide grain market, problems of feeding the world and the poor, or critics' articles about *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.

Other things you may keep on hand are word search puzzles. We have made two of them relating directly to *The Mayor of Casterbridge* for you. Feel free to duplicate them for your students.

Some students may like to draw. You might devise a contest or allow some extra-credit grade for students who draw characters or scenes from *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. Note, too, that if the students do not want to keep their drawings you may pick up some extra bulletin board materials this way. If you have a contest and you supply a prize, you could, possibly, make the drawing itself a non-refundable entry fee.

WORD SEARCH #1 *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

**F O S R E S S U R T Y A H G O N K L**  
**S T A E H W A V N O S W E N R F L L**  
**F A T H E R I G W I L L N O M U A A**  
**Q O W P B S L D L E I F C Z B R W H**  
**N S A H I T O N K Z O Y H Y U M R E**  
**D E S T F N R M A Y O R A R N I C C**  
**K F R J H E H B Y S L Y R A S T U A**  
**D I E A T T E C U L U E D N R Y X L**  
**S W N G J T L G Y D L S W A U A S P**  
**X H I G H S T V D R K R D R M R O H**  
**E I R J S A F E R I Y E J G O P M G**  
**S M A S H A M E M N R J D I J R U I**  
**S N M O M O R M U K K B R D R I B H**  
**E N E M Y A I M G P J P R C N C S A**  
**W A E E Y T H F S P N Y O E R E S D**  
**A N R A Y E N O C O E T A P T X Z A**  
**G I H F X G H I D J D S H E Z S D N**  
**O A T G R E E Y D S R E T T E L A A**  
**N R I A F A E N N R A B A Y O L A C**  
**S G N O R W F S I N G W B O O K S N**

CASTERBRIDGE	HENCHARD	CUXSOM	MAYOR	GIG
SAILOR	JOPP	CONY	FAIR	CORN
ELIZABETHJANE	KINGSARMS	NEWSON	SUSAN	SNUB
WEYDONPRIORS	FARFRAE	FURMITY	ENEMY	BATH
THREEMARINERS	LUCETTA	GUINEAS	WHEAT	TENT
HIGHPLACEHALL	LETTERS	HIGHST	WAGONS	BIRD
HAYTRUSSER	GRANARY	WESSEX	GARDEN	WALK
OATH	DRINK	WIFE	HAY	HAM
TRADE	RUM	PRICE	CANADA	WILL
BULL	BARN	FIELD	GRAIN	BARN
SKIMMITY	WRONG	SAFE	NOTE	SING
SHAME	JERSEY	VISIT	BOOKS	FATHER

WORD SEARCH #2 *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

**D R A H C N E H T H H A R D Y M E N E E**  
**T O D E S L O E H A U G A R D E N R C M**  
**Z A N M D Y M P Y M S Y E S R E J I T A**  
**N T O A E P A S N U B O O K S E R A R H**  
**O H S N L L V W H D A K A U L P G F A S**  
**S B R E A D I M G N N E T T N I L R D L**  
**W S T S E B S Z E N D H T A B R R E E E**  
**E O K S T E I L A I O I E P E T O N X T**  
**N L R X C V T R R B H L C Z W W N C O T**  
**O D O E M O R Y D W E L U H C R U H C E**  
**G E Y P O L T K L A W T L C A C O S G R**  
**U F A L L I W C O N E Y H B U L L N I S**  
**I A M R M I W D H L L O X J O P P O G A**  
**N S Z M F H M L A M E R I C A X R G N I**  
**E F I W E R I E X N A S U S K N P A I L**  
**A K U A G R A I N G J N X E S S E W S O**  
**S Y T I M R U F G R A N A R Y J U M U R**

SKIMMITYRIDE	CORN	SNUB	SHAME	NAME
ELIZABETHJANE	GIG	WILL	REGRET	LOVE
SCOTCHMAN	BATH	BOOKS	FRENCH	VISIT
TEMPLETON	JERSEY	HAM	WALK	SING
CHURCH	GARDEN	NOTE	LETTERS	BIRD
HENCHARD	SUSAN	SAFE	ROME	HAY
WRONG	GRANARY	MAYOR	GRAIN	OATH
LONGWAYS	FIELD	HUSBAND	BARN	BULL
WAGONS	WESSEX	AMERICA	PRICE	RUM
GUINEAS	TRADE	ENEMY	SAILOR	WIFE
LUCETTA	WHEAT	FURMITY	CONEY	FAIR
WHITTLE	JOPP	NEWSON	DONALD	SOLD
FARFRAE	HARDY			

Words are hidden in all compass directions.

## BULLETINBOARD IDEAS *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

1. Save one corner of the board for the best of students' *The Mayor of Casterbridge* writing assignments.
2. Take one of the word search puzzles from the extra activities packet and with a marker copy it over in a large size on the bulletin board. Write the clue words to find to one side. Invite students prior to and after class to find the words and circle them on the bulletin board.
3. Title the board *The Mayor of Casterbridge: A NOVEL FULL OF CHARACTERS*. Find pictures in magazines (or perhaps your library has a file of pictures) of people who look like the various characters in the novel. Place the picture on colorful paper, write the character's name under the picture (or next to it) and write a brief description of the character by it. You may wish to arrange these pictures on a genealogical table to show the relationships among the characters.
4. In bold magic marker or on colorful construction paper, write brief descriptions of the relationship between Henchard and each of the other characters his life affects. Place Henchard in the center with all the other characters around him, showing he is central to all of their lives and to the book. Title the board **THE MAYOR OF CASTERBRIDGE**.
5. Do a bulletin board about Thomas Hardy. Place a picture of him (if you can find one on file at the library, etc.) with a brief biography of him in the center of the board. Around him, place cut-out "books" with the covers showing the titles of his major works and with a brief plot summary of each written inside.
6. Do a bulletin board about world hunger or feeding the poor.



## EXTRA WRITING ASSIGNMENTS AND/OR DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

1. Describe the relationship between Henchard and Farfrae.
2. How does pride rule Henchard's actions?
3. Is the story of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* believable? Explain why or why not.
4. Characterize Thomas Hardy' style and explain how it affects our perception of his work.
5. Compare and contrast Henchard and Farfrae.
6. Explain Hardy's description of Henchard "as a vehement gloomy being, who had quitted the ways of vulgar men without light to guide him in a better way."
7. Are the characters in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* stereotypes? If so, explain the usefulness of employing stereotypes in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. If they are not, explain how they merit individuality.
8. Why did Henchard choose to live with Jopp?
9. Why is it impossible for Henchard to forget or forgive Farfrae's success?
10. Compare and contrast Susan and Elizabeth-Jane.
11. Compare and contrast Elizabeth-Jane and Lucetta.
12. Who is responsible for Henchard's downfall?
13. Explain why Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae make a good couple.
14. Is there any humor in the story? If so, where? If not, why not?
15. Where is the climax of the story? Explain your choice.
16. Explain Henchard's effect on Susan's life.
17. Explain Henchard's effect on Elizabeth-Jane's life.
18. Explain Henchard's effect on Farfrae's life.
19. Explain Henchard's effect on Lucetta's life.
20. Explain Henchard's effect on Newson's life.
21. Suppose Henchard had told Elizabeth-Jane the truth about her real father when he read Susan's letter. How would she have reacted, and how would that have changed the book?
22. Explain why Hardy "killed off" Lucetta.
23. Explain how *The Mayor of Casterbridge* shows the full cycle of Henchard's life.
24. According to Hardy's work, does man control his own destiny?
25. All of the main characters make comments about education and/or being educated. Explain the significance of education in the novel.
26. Hardy emphasizes several times that Casterbridge is a natural part of the country, not a thing unto itself. Why?
27. What kind of a picture of society does Hardy paint?
28. What are the conflicts in the story, and how are they resolved?
29. Explain the importance of the firmity woman.
30. What gothic elements are present in this story?

MORE ACTIVITIES *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

1. Pick a chapter or scene with a great deal of dialogue and have the students act it out on a stage. (Perhaps you could assign various scenes to different groups of students so more than one scene could be acted and more students could participate.)
2. Show a film version of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* to the class after you have completed reading the novel. Have students evaluate the movie and compare/contrast it with the book. If the students have tried writing a chapter into a scene in a play, you may wish to discuss how the problems they encountered in changing the form were handled in the movie.
3. Have students design a book cover (front and back and inside flaps) for *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.
4. Have students design a bulletinboard (ready to be put up; not just sketched) for *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.
5. Use some of the related topics (noted earlier for an in-class library) as topics for research, reports or written papers, or as topics for guest speakers.
6. Have students keep a journal of their reactions to and thoughts about Henchard. They should make an entry after each reading assignment. When they finish reading the novel, they should reread all of their entries to see how (if at all) their opinions of his character changed.
7. Have the class plan and carry out a project to help those who need food.
8. Have students write about someone who has affected their lives.