

## Core Skills Analysis

### English

- Nathan began exploring narrative structure by reading a historical novel, gaining insight into character development and plot progression in a meaningful context.
- Engagement with the novel 'Under the Hawthorn Tree' introduced Nathan to literary themes such as resilience, family bonds, and survival, enhancing comprehension and empathy.
- Vocabulary expansion occurred through the use of period-specific language and descriptive storytelling within the text.
- Discussion about the novel helps develop critical thinking, encouraging Nathan to infer motivations and emotions of characters based on textual evidence.

### History

- Nathan learned about the Irish Famine, gaining an understanding of its causes, effects, and impact on families and communities during that period.
- By connecting historical events with a personal narrative through the novel, Nathan contextualized the human experience of famine in 19th century Ireland.
- The activity encouraged comprehension of social history aspects, such as poverty and migration, through a relatable story format.
- Discussion fostered awareness of historical hardships and empathy for those who endured significant challenges, linking past with present compassion.

### Tips

To deepen Nathan's understanding, encourage him to create a timeline of key events related to the Irish Famine alongside the novel's storyline. Integrate a creative writing exercise where Nathan imagines a diary entry from one of the characters' perspectives to develop voice and empathy. Incorporate primary source materials such as letters or photographs from the famine era to connect fiction with real historical evidence. Consider a family research project about local history during that period or comparing it with other famines worldwide to broaden context.

### Book Recommendations

- [Under the Hawthorn Tree](#) by Marita Conlon-McKenna: A moving story of three siblings during the Irish Famine, highlighting courage and hope amidst hardship.
- [The Children of the Famine](#) by Mary Ellen Snodgrass: A historical account aimed at young readers, explaining the causes and consequences of the Great Irish Famine.
- [Fairy Tales from Ireland](#) by William Butler Yeats: A collection of traditional Irish fairy tales that provide cultural context and enhance literary appreciation.

### Learning Standards

- English Language: Reading for Enjoyment and Information (Strand Unit: 12-14-year-olds Literary Texts, Strand: Oral Language and Reading)
- History: Understanding Change over Time and Impact of Historical Events (Strand Unit: Early Modern Ireland 18th-19th Century)
- Personal and Social Education: Developing Empathy and Cultural Awareness

### Try This Next

- Worksheet: Create character diaries imagining life during the famine, detailing daily challenges and hopes.
- Quiz: Multiple-choice and short-answer questions on the Irish Famine and events in the novel.
- Drawing Task: Illustrate scenes depicting the setting or emotions experienced by characters to

foster visual literacy.

### **Growth Beyond Academics**

Nathan's engagement with this emotionally rich novel suggests growing empathy and an ability to connect intellectually and sympathetically with historical struggles. This activity likely also encouraged patience and perseverance in reading a complex text, enhancing confidence and focus.