

# **Anne of Green Gables Study Guide**

**Anne of Green Gables by Lucy Maud Montgomery**

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## Overview

By modern standards, Montgomery's emphasis on good manners and moral lessons may seem heavy-handed, but Anne's life is far from dull, and most readers see encouraging parallels between themselves and her. Montgomery captures the happy side of childhood: the excitement of finding a "bosom friend," creating a romantic fantasy world, and receiving small privileges.

Anne experiences the dark side of childhood as well: the loneliness of the outsider, the sense of being unattractive, and the grief of losing someone very dear. Most of Anne's triumphs follow extreme embarrassment. Her imagination, impulsiveness, and tendency to talk too much lead to one misadventure after another. Still, through a combination of resourcefulness and good luck, Anne manages to avoid any dire consequences.



## About the Author

Lucy Maud Montgomery, called Maud by her friends, wrote more than twenty books for young adults, the most famous of which are *Anne of Green Gables* and its sequels. She designed the Anne series for teen-age girls, and she drew many of Anne Shirley's experiences from her own life.

Montgomery was a native of Prince Edward Island, Canada, born in Clifton on November 30, 1874, to Hugh John and Clara Woolner Macneill Montgomery. A few months before Montgomery's second birthday, her mother died, and she was sent to live with her maternal grandparents on a farm much like *Green Gables*. After her father moved to Saskatchewan, Montgomery experienced the kind of extreme loneliness Anne describes having felt in early childhood.

At the age of twelve, she went to live with her father and new stepmother, and devoted much time to helping with her half-brother and half-sister. But conflicts with her stepmother led Montgomery to return to her grandparents' home.

At nineteen, Montgomery entered Prince of Wales College. Receiving two teaching certificates, she taught for three years until she went to care for her grandmother.

Montgomery had written articles and verse since her teens, and by 1901 U.S.

publishing houses had begun to accept her work. L. C. Page Company of Boston published *Anne of Green Gables* in 1908. The novel quickly went through four editions, and Mark Twain wrote Montgomery a personal note praising the central character.

On July 5, 1911, Montgomery married Ewan Macdonald, a Presbyterian minister. They had two sons—Chester Cameron (1912) and Ewan Stuart (1915)—and another son (1914) was stillborn. Montgomery's belief that her personality and values were incompatible with those required of a minister's wife, combined with her husband's declining mental health, made the marriage unhappy.

Conflict plagued Montgomery's professional career as well. From 1920 to 1928 she was involved in a series of lawsuits with the Page Company, primarily about royalties and publication rights. She won all the suits and appeals but at great financial and emotional expense.

Following nervous breakdowns in 1937 and 1940, her health remained poor, and she died in Toronto on April 24, 1942.



## Plot Summary

Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert make plans to adopt an orphan boy to help with chores on their family farm named Green Gables. On arriving at the train station, Matthew finds instead a little redheaded orphan girl waiting on the platform. Matthew, normally shy and timid around females of any age, is charmed by the little girl and her precocious chatter. The little orphan girl, Anne Shirley, is a great romantic of eleven. Anne delights in the buggy ride and is soon enchanted by the environs of Green Gables. There is no hiding Marilla Cuthbert's dismay when she discovers the mix up. Marilla archly rejects Matthew's suggestion of keeping young Anne Shirley. Only after learning of Anne's hard luck life does Marilla acquiesce to Matthew's wishes to keep the girl.

A clever girl with a heart full of youthful sentiment and romance, Anne's imagination is as mischievous as it is endearing. Anne's first years at Green Gables are a series of misadventures and theatrics, comical but enlightening to the spirited girl. Her penchant for drama is tempered by her desire to do good things and see the best in all people. Sensitive to her manner of dress and her redheaded tresses, Anne's vanity is often the source of fits of temper. After a time she grows into her own person, comforted by the many dear people in her life. A lifelong desire for a bosom buddy is met in the person of Diana Barry, a kindred spirit. Timid Matthew forms a gentle union with the grateful Anne, and Anne's maturation grows in equal measure to Marilla's fondness for her.

Soon, Anne's life is to expand and grow in new directions. With the arrival of Mrs. Allan, the new minister's wife and a new kindred spirit, and Miss Stacey, the new school mistress, Anne's life takes a new turn. Her interest in school and desire to do good things flourish under their encouragement. Miss Stacey forms a study group for the Queen's entrance exam. Anne is thrilled at the possibilities it presents and after a winter of earnest study she enjoys the most golden summer of her life. After the summer, Anne is two inches taller, markedly quieter, and is not so inclined to use big words when small ones will do. All her hard work not in vain, Anne discovers her name at the top of the Queen's entrance exam pass list, tied with Gilbert Blythe.

As Anne sets to leave for Queen's, the usually much reserved and undemonstrative Marilla is moved to tell Anne how much she will miss her presence at Green Gables. She soon sets her sights on winning the Avery scholarship to Redmond College. Anne regrets her prideful scorn of Gilbert Blythe and grows jealous of his companionship with Ruby Gillis. The morning comes for Anne to check the results of final examinations posted on a bulletin board, only to learn Gilbert Blythe has been awarded Class Medalist. Feeling a pang of disappointment, Anne is soon cheered as the winner of the Avery scholarship.

Soon after Anne returns to Green Gables, Matthew suffers a fatal heart attack. Anne awakens in the middle of the night overcome by grief and falls to tears at the memory of Matthew's words, "my girl that I'm proud of." Marilla visits the eye doctor the next day and learns that she must give up sewing and reading if she is to save her eyesight. Having lost all the family savings at the failed Abbey Bank, Marilla is forced to consider



selling Green Gables. Anne decides that she will stay to help Marilla and save Green Gables. Anne resolves to teach at a neighboring town, giving up the Avery scholarship for correspondence school. Gilbert Blythe withdraws his teaching application so that Anne may teach in Avonlea. Meeting Gilbert in the road that evening, they form a lasting friendship after many years of rivalry. That night, alone in the east gable sitting by her window, Anne is content that whatever may await her in that bend in the road, the rewards of hard work and valued friendships will always be hers.





# Chapter 1

## Chapter 1 Summary

Mrs. Rachel Lynde, a small town busybody and self-appointed guardian of personal decorum, sits at her kitchen window, perfectly perched to take note of all of the peninsular Avonlea's comings and goings. And so, on this very sunny June afternoon when Matthew Cuthbert was not sowing his turnip seed as expected, but instead driving his buggy and sorrel mare up the hill away from Avonlea in his very best clothes, Mrs. Lynde took due notice. Perplexed and confounded by Matthew Cuthbert's actions (for he never goes out of town, and certainly not in his best suit), Mrs. Rachel Lynde *must* know the "wherefores and where-hows." Venturing over to Green Gables, Mrs. Lynde was set to inquire. On learning the astonishing news that the aging brother and sister, neither of whom had ever married or reared a child, were to adopt an orphan boy to help Matthew tend the farm, Mrs. Lynde was dumbfounded. Recovering her senses, Mrs. Lynde recounts sensational stories of orphans as bad seeds and counsels strongly against the plan. Marilla keeps quiet about her own reservations and remains firm.

## Chapter 1 Analysis

The novel's satirical but loving tone in depicting small town life is present from the onset. We are introduced to Mrs. Rachel Lynde, a bundle of small town propriety, intrusiveness and neighborly concern. The many flourishes in describing the natural surroundings of Avonlea, a small town on Canada's Prince Edward Island also prove to be a consistent presence in the book. The reader is also forewarned of heart troubles (Matthew), headaches (Marilla) and, *aghast*, the possibility of a girl orphan.



# Chapter 2

## Chapter 2 Summary

Matthew Cuthbert travels by horse and buggy to retrieve the "boy" orphan from the train station of a neighboring town. Along the way, we learn of Matthew's painful shyness and discomfort around girls and women (save his sister and Mrs. Lynde), and watch with sympathy as it dawns on Matthew that through doings not of his understanding, that is exactly who he has found waiting for him on the station platform. Unsure of what to do, Matthew resolves to take the little orphan girl home to Green Gables, leaving Marilla with the unpleasant task of deciding the girl's fate. As Matthew Cuthbert, at 60 years of age a gentle and awkward man, drives the girl to Green Gables he is charmed by the girl's precocious and florid chatter. A great romantic, the orphan girl delights in the beauty of her surroundings. Anne renames The 'Avenue,' a scenic stretch of road arched over by apple trees, the "White Way of Delight." A pond becomes the "Lake of Shining Waters." Matthew's young charge is already tantalized by the prospect of friendship with a neighboring girl as they approach Green Gables, the home she so longs for: "'However, it *is* real, and we're nearly home.' With a sigh of rapture, she relapsed into silence."

## Chapter 2 Analysis

In Chapter 2, we meet the timid, docile Matthew who is charmed and perplexed by the young girl in his company. The orphan girl, soon to be known to readers as Anne Shirley, is an emotional and distracted romantic who sets her heart on a proper home. The reader is soon treated to Anne's beguiling imagination, a retreat from the harsh upbringing she has had to navigate as a child. Her upbringing is perhaps reflected in her self-image, one distorted by her disdain for the red tresses that adorn her freckled face and in her unflattering description of the asylum's natural surroundings (in sharp contrast to her effusive descriptions of Green Gables).



# Chapter 3

## Chapter 3 Summary

There is no hiding Marilla Cuthbert's dismay when she discovers the odd turn in events. Anne, discerning the predicament before her, falls into despair and fits of emotion: "I might have known it was all too beautiful to last. I might have known nobody really did want me." Softening, Marilla asks the little orphan girl her name. Anne asks her to call her Cordelia because it is such a lovely name, which the stern Marilla refuses. At the very least, Marilla is asked to call the girl Anne spelled with an 'e.' After supper, which Anne barely nibbles on due to being in the "depths of despair," Marilla shows her to the east gable room, a bare and unadorned bedroom that gives the sensitive young girl "shivers." Marilla, washing the supper dishes, discusses the quandary with Matthew, who faintly intimates he would like to keep the little girl. Marilla archly rejects the notion of keeping young Anne Shirley, as the little orphan girl pines away in the east gable.

## Chapter 3 Analysis

Anne displays her flair for dramatics and sentiment on learning she may well be sent back to the asylum. Her sense of despair is matched by the barren east gable room she is escorted to, with its bare floor and old-fashioned low-turned posts, as if her own sense of abandonment were reflected in the whitewashed walls. Anne's preoccupation with dress, fretting over the "skimpy" nightgown made for her by the asylum's matron, is in evidence. And there are hints of Marilla's stifled emotional life when she admits to the poor orphan girl that she cannot *imagine* what it feels like to be in the depths of despair.



# Chapter 4

## Chapter 4 Summary

Anne wakes confused by the cherry sunshine, not sure of where she is. At first delighted by her surroundings, and then crushed by the recollection that she is to be returned, she is animated by the lovely morning. Lifting the window sash — pulled shut for some time — cherry blossoms, the apple tree orchard and lilac trees purple in flower greet her. The beauty of Green Gables lifts Anne's spirits as she surveys all that surrounds her. Over breakfast, as Marilla feels Matthew's silence gnawing at her, Anne declares the sympathetic Matthew a kindred spirit. The orphan girl proves herself useful washing the dishes but stops short when Marilla permits her to go outdoors, not wanting to become too fond of the "trees and the flowers and the orchard and the brook." Marilla is befuddled by the talkative girl, but she reluctantly acknowledges Anne's charms. Matthew announces he will hire a local boy to help on the farm, making it possible to keep Anne. Nonetheless, Marilla sets off in a fury with the orphan girl to Mrs. Spencer's (who was to have delivered the boy) for an explanation of their present circumstances.

## Chapter 4 Analysis

A sensitive, precocious girl, Anne retreats from the precariousness of her circumstances into the world of fantasy: "Wasn't it a lovely place? Suppose she wasn't really going to stay here! She would imagine she was. There was scope for imagination here." Anne, all feeling and wild exuberance, has found a way to revel in sentiment without feeling the real sting of truly felt emotion.



# Chapter 5

## Chapter 5 Summary

Anne intently tries to enjoy the drive to White Sands despite it all. Marilla suggests the talkative Anne tell her about herself, since she is "bent on talking" anyway. We learn that Anne, lately turned 11, was the daughter of two high school teachers in Bolingbroke, Nova Scotia, both of whom died from fever when she was just three months old. The orphaned Anne lived with Mrs. Thomas and her drunken husband until she was eight-years-old, looking after the four younger Thomas children. When Mr. Thomas was killed by "falling under a train" the family was taken in by Mr. Thomas's mother — save for Anne. Anne went up the river to live with Mrs. Hammond to care for her eight children, twins three times over. After two years, Mr. Hammond died and Anne was sent to the Hopeton asylum, where Mrs. Spencer found her four months later.

Despite little formal education and her hard-luck life, Anne thrills over the books and poetry she has read. Marilla cautiously asks the girl if the women whose service she had been in were good to her. Anne, as is her nature, struggles to find the good in everyone. Marilla pities the girl and wonders if she ought not keep the curious little red-headed girl as Matthew wishes.

## Chapter 5 Analysis

Having at her young age already endured a life of hardship and disappointment, we see Anne's unfailing optimism and good manners; her striving to be a "model child" despite all odds. Showing an uncommon enthusiasm for learning and respectful of people who treated her shamefully, Anne shows an inner strength even in her eagerness to please and desire for goodness. The remote Marilla, genuinely affected by the girl's life's history, relents a little.



# Chapter 6

## Chapter 6 Summary

Marilla inquires at Mrs. Spencer's about the mix-up, having sent word to Mrs. Spencer's brother that they were in need of a boy orphan. Mrs. Spencer, feeling defensive and "distressed," explains the message that the Cuthberts were in need of a *girl* orphan was relayed to her by her niece Nancy, who is both flighty and unreliable. Marilla concedes it was her fault for not seeing out such an important errand herself. Mrs. Spencer suggests a resolution to the difficulty. A Mrs. Blewett was just inquiring the day before about an orphan girl to help her care for her children, and there would be no need to send the girl back to the orphanage.

Uneasy about the prospect of shipping Anne off to Mrs. Peter Blewett, a woman known for her harshness and pettiness with servant girls, Marilla hesitates. By chance, Mrs. Blewett happens by the Spencer residence to borrow a recipe. Marilla at last takes pity on Anne, who turns pale and quiet at the sight of the shrewish woman. Marilla is not able to bear the thought of handing over such a "sensitive, high-strung" girl over to the likes of Mrs. Peter Blewett. It is decided that Marilla will return to Green Gables to discuss the matter with Matthew. Anne, barely able to contain herself, elicits a covert smile from the outwardly stoic Marilla. To her surprise, Marilla finds herself the new guardian of a little orphan girl; and even more to her surprise, Matthew □ painfully wary of females of all types □ "should be at the bottom of it."

## Chapter 6 Analysis

Marilla accepts Anne into her home on the condition that she be left to raise the child in her own way, telling Matthew that if she fails "there will be time enough to put your oar in." In Marilla, we find a rigid, undemonstrative woman put upon to raise a spirited young girl in her latter spinster years. She assumes the responsibility as a challenge to shape the girl into a well-behaved, morally upright lady, and she aims to see that Anne learns life's daily lessons to that end.



# Chapter 7

## Chapter 7 Summary

That night Marilla discovers that Anne does not know how to say her nightly prayers. As enchanted as the young girl is by words and poetry, Anne has as much enthusiasm for prayer as she does for her own red hair. A life of toil and hardship has little space for prayer in Anne's estimation. Obliging Marilla, Anne makes an earnest attempt at prayer, thankful for the Lake of Shining Waters and the White Way, asking to remain at Green Gables and to be good-looking when she is all grown up. Marilla is stricken by the youthful prayer, but reasons that it is ignorance and not wickedness that made the young girl pray so. In exasperation, Marilla deems Anne to be "next door to a perfect heathen," and sets to take Anne to Sunday school and begin her proper religious education.

## Chapter 7 Analysis

Religion and moral virtue play a central role in the lives of the inhabitants of this fictionalized town of Avonlea. Anne has a longing to be good, if only to please, but in her is also a genuine ambition to embody the goodness and wholesomeness as exemplified by Marilla's rectitude and religious scrutiny. We are also reminded of a little girl's vanity and her suffering self-image in Anne's preoccupation with her red hair. Even Marilla feels slightly shamed by the girl's clothes and deems not to send her to Sunday school until she has clothes suitable to the occasion.



# Chapter 8

## Chapter 8 Summary

Marilla forestalls telling Anne that she is to stay at Green Gables until the following afternoon. Anne, smart and mindful but adrift in her daydreams until grounded by rebuke or calamity, is at her wits end to know her fate. The girl's prayers are answered and she succumbs to tears, unable to contain herself. Anne promises to be good, even though it will be "uphill work" owing to the fact that she is "desperately wicked," or so Mrs. Thomas told her. Despite Anne's entreaties to call her new guardian Aunt, Marilla will have none of it; after all, she is not the girl's aunt. Anne wishes that Marilla could imagine she were her aunt, just as Anne herself imagined her reflection in Mrs. Thomas's bookcase and her very own echo as her dear and intimate friends. Learning The Lord's Prayer for Marilla's sake, Anne wonders aloud if she will ever have a bosom friend, "a really kindred spirit to whom I can confide my inmost soul." Fortuitously, a girl just about Anne's age lives across the way at Orchard Slope. Diana Barry is "good and smart, which is better than being pretty," Marilla tells Anne, who is enthralled by the hope of a bosom friend. Marilla sends the orphan girl to her room to finish learning the prayer that, despite her chatter, she has by now well-learned. Instead, seated in a chair by the window of the east gable, Anne luxuriates in the freedom to imagine, her surroundings becoming regal and her hair of "midnight darkness." While Marilla cannot stretch her imagination so far as to think herself to be Aunt Marilla to the orphan girl, Anne can imagine herself to be Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald. Despite it all, it is her own reflection she finds in the looking glass. "However, it's a million times nicer to be Anne of Green Gables than Anne of nowhere in particular, isn't it?" she reasons.

## Chapter 8 Analysis

Anne Shirley has consoled herself for years with dreams. And now she is nearly living a dream, one occupied by a place to call home, a proper education and the prospect of a bosom buddy. Anne's yearning, and her flights of fantasy to satisfy those yearnings, clash with Marilla's sense of propriety and wish to give the girl a proper upbringing. In return for that upbringing Anne need only strive to be a good girl and grateful. Anne seems content now not to find Lady Cordelia in her looking glass, but Anne of Green Gables, which is a million times better than Anne of nowhere in particular.





# Chapter 9

## Chapter 9 Summary

As soon as providence and her doctor would allow, Mrs. Rachel Lynde hurried herself to Green Gables full of curiosity about the new orphan girl. A fortnight having passed since the girl's arrival, Anne had since explored every corner of the orchard, the brook and bridge. Anne was in the raptures of doing so when Mrs. Lynde arrived, having lately recovered from the grippe. Marilla reveals more of herself than she intends in telling Mrs. Lynde that she and Matthew have taken a fancy to the girl, who she finds to be a bright little thing. Anne, her windblown red hair a fright and dressed in the short wincey dress provided by the asylum, darts into the room alighted by the pleasures of the afternoon only to be called up short by the presence of a stranger. Mrs. Lynde finds the redheaded girl odd-looking, and says so.

"Well, they didn't pick you for your looks. She's terrible skinny and homely. Lawful heart, did anyone ever see such freckles?" asks Mrs. Lynde. "And hair as red as carrots!" All a tremble, Anne calls Mrs. Lynde a "rude, impolite, unfeeling woman," and is sent to her room in a fit of anger. Surprising even herself, Marilla can not help but tell Mrs. Lynde that she had been too hard on the girl. Marilla rejects Mrs. Lynde's suggestion to swat Anne with a birch switch, deciding instead that the girl must stay in her room until ready to apologize to Mrs. Lynde for her misbehavior.

## Chapter 9 Analysis

The sensitivity of a little girl to her appearance and Anne's struggle with vanity is a recurring motif of the book. While Anne readily admits to many faults, she is pained to be told by others what she so plainly believes herself; that she is a homely redheaded girl. The narrator is sympathetic to Anne's youthful anxiety about appearance, and responds to Mrs. Lynde's belittlement with a bit of her own: "Mrs. Rachel swept out and away — if a fat woman who always waddled *could* be said to sweep away." We also learn that Marilla was likewise hurt as a child by the remarks of an aunt about her unattractiveness, a hurt that stayed with her well into adulthood. It is a vulnerability she does not share with Anne, but one that shows her trying to be sympathetic to Anne and understand her strange ways..



# Chapter 10

## Chapter 10 Summary

The next evening while Marilla brings the cows in from the back pasture Matthew creeps up the stairs to the east gable. Mustering all his courage, Matthew enters the little girl's room where Anne is still being confined for her fitful tantrum. Matthew, whispering lest he be discovered by Marilla, implores Anne to smooth things over. Anne, willing to do anything for the softhearted Matthew, agrees. Marilla walks down the lane to Mrs. Lynde's house with a dejected Anne at her side. Lifting her head, her mood elevated and looking "rapt and radiant," Anne says only that she is thinking on what she should say to Mrs. Lynde. Arriving at Mrs. Lynde's, the penitent Anne drops to her feet and confesses her wickedness with outstretched hands, begging Mrs. Lynde to forgive a poor orphan girl such as herself. Heartened by the girl's performance, Anne wins Mrs. Lynde's approval. Marilla, suspicious of the degree to which Anne thoroughly enjoyed her "abasement," cannot help but be amused by the mere thought of it. Walking with the little girl's hand in her own, Marilla struggles to not allow her heart to swell as Anne talks of the fondness she feels for her new found home, Green Gables.

## Chapter 10 Analysis

Anne's dramatic gesture thoroughly charms Mrs. Lynde. While her sincerity is not doubted by even the amused Marilla, Anne clearly finds not only redemption in her penance, but exaltation as well. Her abasement was an apology drawn out of Anne by the quiet Matthew, the man who suffered so in the presence of girls, and who is now growing nicely into fathering the little orphan.



# Chapter 11

## Chapter 11 Summary

With material purchased from a peddler, bought at a bargain store and an ugly blue print from a store in Carmody, Anne's new dresses were serviceable though aching plain and out of fashion. Responding to Anne's protests about the handmade clothes, Marilla sniffs: "I don't believe in pampering vanity, Anne." It is Anne's fondest wish to have just one dress with puffed sleeves. The next morning Anne, in her black and white stiff sateen dress, having adorned her plain sailor hat with buttercups and wild roses, sets out to Sunday school. Marilla quizzes Anne on her first day of Sunday school, which Anne found to be a rather dull experience: Mr. Bell's prayers were long and absent of feeling, Anne felt, Miss Rogerson asked far too many questions while not answering any of her own, and the minister just plum lacked imagination. Marilla felt very much that she should disapprove of Anne's observations, but she secretly was much in agreement with the little orphan girl.

## Chapter 11 Analysis

A little girl's vanity should not be coddled, thus Anne, feeling frightfully out of fashion, sits among the girls and their puffed sleeves in her tight sateen dress. Concern over fashion and curbing a young girl's vanity are given sympathetic treatment by the author. Marilla may find Anne's concerns over fashion to be frivolous, but she finds herself quite in agreement in some of her observations. Outwardly rigid and unbending, Marilla's real sympathies are once again revealed to the reader, showing that she is indeed bending to, or has a growing sympathy towards, Anne's way of thinking.



# Chapter 12

## Chapter 12 Summary

Marilla, warning Anne not to make any startling speeches or to use such long words, walks Anne to Orchard Slope to meet Diana Barry. Trembling at the prospect of meeting a bosom friend, Anne fears the Barry girl will not like her. Diana Barry, with her mother's black eyes and hair, is bashful with the new girl, but in a gush Anne asks the just-acquainted girl to swear to be her bosom friend for ever and ever. Glad-hearted to have a new playmate, the bookworm Diana takes the solemn oath of friendship. Anne declares to Marilla that she has a kindred spirit in Diana and that they plan to build a playhouse in Mr. Bell's birch grove. Matthew, coming home with chocolates for Anne, is blissful. Anne asks to share half the chocolates with Diana, because in so doing "the other half will taste twice as sweet to me." Marilla grants that the girl is not stingy, and admits to Matthew how fond she has grown of her.

## Chapter 12 Analysis

Eager to say her prayers, having much to be thankful for, Anne's heart begins to flourish in the care of the Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert. In addition, like the Barry garden, wild and riotous in delight, Anne is overjoyed in having a friend. Marilla's affection grows for the girl that she could not now imagine having turned away.



# Chapter 13

## Chapter 13 Summary

Anne Shirley flies into the kitchen, where Marilla waits impatiently for the girl to do her patchwork. Breathless, Anne bubbles over with excitement about the Sunday school picnic. Marilla scolds Anne for her tardiness, who apologizes, explaining that the fascination of Idlewild (a patch of birch trees, home to her and Diana's playhouse) was too great for her. Never having tasted ice cream, it being beyond imagination, nor having been to a picnic, Anne is wild with anticipation. Marilla gives her permission and promises to bake Anne a basket. Anne lovingly kisses Marilla on the cheek, who is deeply touched but guards her emotions. As the picnic nears and Anne's excitement grows, Marilla cautions Anne that she sets her heart too much on things; so much so, she is bound for disappointment. To which Anne responds, "Oh, Marilla, looking forward to things is half the pleasure of them." As they continue on their way to church, Anne admires Marilla's amethyst brooch, given by a seafaring uncle to her mother, and then bequeathed to Marilla herself.

## Chapter 13 Analysis

Marilla counsels Anne on setting her heart too much on something, but in Anne we see a determined optimist, one who is always looking to find the best in people and her surroundings. Guarding her emotions, Marilla can't help but be touched by the girl.



# Chapter 14

## Chapter 14 Summary

Anne slowly tells Marilla how she was drawn to the glimmering purple stones in answer to Marilla's worried queries about her amethyst brooch. After a thorough search, Marilla is convinced that Anne has taken the brooch out to play with and misplaced it, despite Anne's insistence that she only pinned it on her breast and then put it back. Certain that Anne is telling falsehoods, Marilla confines the girl to her room until she is ready to confess. Stricken by the thought of missing the Sunday school picnic, Anne confesses the next morning. Having pinned it to her breast, says Anne, and overcome by an irresistible temptation, she wished to take the brooch to Idlewild to imagine herself as Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald, but it slipped from her fingers at the bridge over the Lake of Shining Waters, and sank all purply-sparkling. Feeling a hot anger at Anne's telling of her story, Marilla forbids her the Sunday school picnic even though she has confessed. When Marilla later prepares to mend a small rent in her best shawl, she discovers the shimmering violet of the amethyst brooch caught on a thread of the black lace. Anne wearily explains that she was bound to get to the picnic, and Marilla was set on keeping her until she confessed. Marilla supposes that Anne's confession was a falsehood but owes that Marilla drove her to it. Marilla fills a basket for Anne, who on her return from the picnic, declares ice cream to be "sublime."

## Chapter 14 Analysis

Anne, the redheaded orphan girl who so wants to please, does not always find it an easy thing to dispose of her natural eccentricities for the sake of fulfilling Marilla's expectations of how a good girl behaves herself. Marilla, on realizing that she was at fault for having misplaced the brooch, apologizes to Anne for having doubted her, and inches closer to understanding and accepting Anne's peculiarities.



# Chapter 15

## Chapter 15 Summary

Marilla sends Anne off to her first day of school with many misgivings about how the odd little girl is going to get on with other children. Much to Anne's pleasure, she is seated next to Diana. Ruby Gillis gave her an apple, Sophia Sloane lent her a pink card, Tillie Boutler let her wear a bead ring, and Sara Gillis told Prissy Andrews that she had a pretty nose. Even if the master, Mr. Phillips, did mock her spelling, and she was only in the fourth book (other students being in the fifth), it was a splendid day. Three weeks pass without incident, but then Gilbert Blythe, who Anne thinks is handsome but bold for winking at her, returns from visiting with his cousins. When Gilbert, not used to having to put himself out to get a girl to look at him, pulls at one of Anne's braids and calls her "carrots," Anne is indignant to say the least. She calls the boy hateful and brings her slate down on Gilbert's head. Gilbert takes responsibility for the ruckus, telling Mr. Phillips that he teased the girl. However, it is Anne who must stand on a platform in front of the blackboard for the rest of the afternoon, and despite his apologies, Anne vows never to forgive Gilbert. When Anne sweeps in late with the rest of the boys the following afternoon, Mr. Phillips singles Anne out for punishment, making her sit with Gilbert Blythe. Mortified, Anne clears her desk with the intention of never returning to school. Marilla and Mrs. Lynde agree that Mr. Phillips was in the wrong, and taking Mrs. Lynde's advice Marilla decides not to say another word about Anne going back to school until she is ready to go back on her own accord. Learning her lessons at home, Anne soon comes to miss her bosom friend Diana and sobs to Marilla about the day Diana will marry and be taken from her. Marilla collapses in hysterics at the young girl's theatrics.

## Chapter 15 Analysis

Anne's flair for melodrama has at last brought Marilla to her knees in a fit of laughter. Humorless and unyielding when first introduced to the reader, Marilla now accepts Anne's melodrama with good nature, and is willing to let her return to school in her own good time, warming her maternal instincts. Meanwhile, Anne is showing herself to be an amiable, if spirited, youth.



# Chapter 16

## Chapter 16 Summary

At an afternoon meeting at the Aid Society on her agenda, Marilla proposes that Anne invite Diana for tea. Refusing Anne the rosebud spray tea-set and use of the parlor, Marilla offers Anne the half-full bottle of raspberry cordial. Diana, dressed in her second best dress, shows up at Anne's door just as Marilla is off to Carmody, shaking hands with Anne. After exchanging pleasantries and retreating to the orchard for Red Sweetings and gossip, Anne searches for the raspberry cordial in the pantry. Anne, having had her fill of Red Sweetings, pours a tumbler of the cordial for Diana, who drinks three generous cupfuls. Putting her hand to her head, Diana declares that she must go home because she is feeling awfully sick. That following Sunday Anne learns from Mrs. Lynde that Mrs. Barry blames Anne for getting Diana drunk. Mrs. Barry says that she will never allow Diana to play with the wicked little girl again. Marilla investigates and realizes she is to blame, finding a bottle of homemade currant wine on the pantry shelf, the cordial having been placed in the cellar. Marilla sets out to Mrs. Barry's to set things right but returns in a huff, declaring Mrs. Barry a most disagreeable woman. Determined to take fate into her own hands Anne pleads her case to Mrs. Barry, who declares her unfit to play with her little Diana. Marilla laughs in telling of Anne's youthful crisis, but her heart melts at the sight of her: "' Poor little soul,' she murmured, lifting a loose curl of hair from the child's tear-stained face. Then she bent down and kissed the flushed cheek on the pillow."

## Chapter 16 Analysis

Growing up proves to be a series of trials for the young Anne Shirley. Accidentally having gotten her best friend drunk there is nothing to be done, as Mrs. Barry is suspicious of her eloquence and her theatrics. Anne retreats not into fantasy, dissolving that night into tears □ but has a newfound ally in Marilla.





# Chapter 17

## Chapter 17 Summary

Anne is given ten minutes to say goodbye at Dryad's Bubble to her bosom friend the next day. Each pledges to love the other devotedly, Diana offering a clip of her raven curls to console Anne during their tortured separation. That Monday Anne bravely returns to school, telling Marilla "That is all there is left in life for me, now that my friend has been ruthlessly torn from me." Anne's return to school is met with poems and plums and a yellow pansy cut from a catalogue: all of which she heartily enjoys save the strawberry apple from the Blythe orchard, scorning all things having relation to Gilbert Blythe. Like two star-crossed lovers, Diana and Anne pass notes expressing their undying affection for one another. Throwing herself into her studies, Anne proves herself to be a star pupil, rivaled only by Gilbert Blythe. However, it is in geometry that the young scholar has found her foe.

## Chapter 17 Analysis

Much to Marilla's relief, her strategy has paid off, and Anne returns to school on her own accord. Devoting herself to her studies, the dedicated student in Anne begins to appear. However, the romantic, sentimental flame in Anne still burns, mourning the loss of her best companion in life. However, "□one can't stay sad very long in such an interesting world, can one?" she concludes.



# Chapter 18

## Chapter 18 Summary

Nearly all the men, and a good many of the women including Marilla, having traveled thirty miles to Charlottetown to see the Premier, Anne and Matthew were left to enjoy each others company at Green Gables. Dropping her candle and plate in surprise, Anne is startled by the white-faced Diana. In a panic, she explains that her baby sister Minnie May is awfully sick with the croup and there is no one to help, her parents being away at town. Matthew goes to fetch the doctor while Anne, having cared for Mrs. Hammond's twins three times over, fetches the ipecac bottle and hastens to the Barry's to care for the child. Matthew came much delayed, having gone all the way to Spencervale to find a doctor not in town for the Premier. The doctor told the Barrys plainly that the little redheaded girl had saved their baby Minnie Mae. Forever grateful to Anne, Mrs. Barry meets the girl the next afternoon with great emotion and affection, treating her to tea with her very best china. Reunited with her best bosom friend, Anne feels mightily like saying her prayers that night, having much to be grateful for herself.

## Chapter 18 Analysis

Overcoming yet another "tribulation" in her young life, Anne proves herself in a moment of calm and grace as a resourceful and levelheaded girl. As Anne grows up, she is impatient for the day when she is truly grown, "when just being treated as if you were is so nice." Marilla is skeptical, knowing that there is more to being grown up than being treated to tea and using big words. As Anne's life blossoms, she begins to embrace Marilla's religious mores.



# Chapter 19

## Chapter 19 Summary

Anne and Diana arrange to signal each other from their bedroom windows with flashes of a candle. Five flashes show in the window, meaning "Hurry over - I have an important message." Anne runs out the door. She returns with the important news that Diana has invited her to a school concert and a sleepover at the Barrys, with the rare honor of sleeping in the spare room. Having her doubts but swaying to Matthew's wishes, Marilla consents. The night "a series of 'thrills'" for Anne, from the tinkle of the sleigh-bells to the evening recitations (save that of Gilbert Blythe), the two girls return to the Barry home sated by the evening's events. Girlishly racing through the parlor, bounding onto the bed in the spare room they are met by a gasp and a cry. Escaping up the stairs, Diana explains that they have just pounced upon Mr. Barry's Aunt Josephine. Mrs. Lynde informs Anne the following morning that the ill-tempered aunt is determined to cut short her visit and return to town, denying Diana the music lessons she promised to pay for. Anne sets off yet again to reason with an adult and set things right. Anne's disarming chatter delights the elderly aunt and in her she finds a possible kindred spirit, or at least one who thoroughly enjoys her company. Aunt Barry stays the month and invites Anne to visit her in town.

## Chapter 19 Analysis

Anne succeeds in another trial of youth, through charm, intelligence and loyalty to her dear friend. While spirited and rambunctious as usual, she takes pause to consider her behavior □ and in Miss Josephine Barry she has won over another fan with her wit and the sincerity of her apology.



# Chapter 20

## Chapter 20 Summary

Anne and Diana celebrate the arrival of spring, making wreaths of Mayflowers for their hats. Green Gables is in full bloom, and Anne sits in her east gable room enraptured by the cherry blossoms, unable to study in the evening light. Marilla enters to deliver the girl her school aprons when she is stricken with one of her headaches. Anne aches for Marilla, who tells Anne what a help she has become, despite her many distractions. Anne reminds Marilla that it was one year ago that she came to Green Gables, asking her if she was sorry for it: "No, I can't say I'm sorry," said Marilla, who sometimes wondered how she could have lived before Anne came to Green Gables." Marilla wishes to send Anne to Diana's to borrow an apron pattern, but Anne refuses on account of The Haunted Wood, much to Marilla's dismay. Anne explains that "The Haunted Wood" is the spruce wood over the brook that Diana and herself imagined being haunted; so powerfully that they were now both mightily afraid of it. Marilla orders Anne to run her errand: "I'll cure you of imagining ghosts into places. March, now." Goblins lurking in every shadow, it was a lesson Anne would never forget: "Bitterly did she repent the license she had given to her imagination."

## Chapter 20 Analysis

As the expression of Marilla's headaches become more intense, Anne shows the depths of her compassion and a maturing, daughterly concern, helping Marilla as best she can. As she grows, we see her being relieved of some of the extravagances of her fertile imagination.



# Chapter 21

## Chapter 21 Summary

If not entirely forgiving Mr. Phillips for the time he spelled her name with an 'e' on the blackboard and having called her a dunce at geometry, Anne cried with all the girls at his departure. His departure is alleviated by the arrival of a new minister and his wife. Anne pronounces the new minister's wife, Mrs. Allan, "perfectly lovely" and praises her for encouraging Anne to ask any question she likes. In Mrs. Allan, the enchanted Anne has found yet another *kindred spirit*. So affected by the bright young minister's wife is Anne that she warms greatly to the notion of being a Christian, if only she could be one like Mrs. Allan. Marilla proposes to have the new minister and his wife for tea, consenting to let Anne make a layered cake for the occasion. Rising at sunrise out of excitement for the day, Anne is a bundle of nervousness as she attends to every detail of the layered cake with much care. The table was decorated with roses and ferns with much flair by Anne. When the time came for the layered cake to be passed to the guests, Mrs. Allan takes a generous triangle of cake, as well as the minister and Marilla. Mortified, Anne's cake is declared a disaster, the young girl having made use of an old bottle of vanilla filled with anodyne liniment by Marilla. Fleeing to the east gable room, in tears Anne tells the approaching footsteps what a disgrace she is, and how ashamed she shall always be in front of the minister's wife. To Anne's great surprise it was Mrs. Allan all along that she had been speaking to. Mrs. Allan comforts the young girl, relieving her of her great misery, and entreats Anne to show her the garden. Anne later remarks to Marilla: "Marilla, isn't it nice to think that tomorrow is a new day with no mistakes in it yet?"

## Chapter 21 Analysis

Anne, ever the optimist, shines to the sunny warm-hearted Mrs. Allan, who casts a warm glow of maternal affection on the girl. She eagerly seeks the young Mrs. Allan's approval, greatly anticipating the afternoon tea, which in all its preparation Marilla regards as a "serious and important undertaking."



# Chapter 22

## Chapter 22 Summary

Receiving a letter posted to Miss Anne Shirley, Anne is invited to tea by Mrs. Allan. Marilla, worried about Anne's tendency to take life's ups and downs with "trebled excitement," urges Anne to take things calmly. Marilla further counsels Anne, anxious over the tea, to worry less about herself and just think of what might be nicest for Mrs. Allan. The tea being a great success, "without any serious breach of 'etiquette,'" Anne finds herself thoroughly infatuated with Mrs. Allan and her good nature. The prospect of a new teacher in two weeks, Miss Muriel Stacy, further thrills her.

## Chapter 22 Analysis

Anne, orphaned as a baby, is devoted to Marilla. However, she is equally drawn to young Mrs. Allan, declaring her as "naturally good," so desirous of her affection and encouragement she will sing in the Sunday-school choir. Mindful of Anne's growing anxiety about the upcoming tea, Marilla tells Anne: "The trouble with you, Anne, is that you're thinking too much about yourself. You should just think of Mrs. Allan and what would be nicest and most agreeable for her." Anne, an eminently teachable and open-minded young girl, agrees.



# Chapter 23

## Chapter 23 Summary

Diana gives a "small and select" party for all the girls in their class, for whom "daring" has become all the rage. Carrie Sloane dares Ruby Gillis to climb an old oak tree, Josie Pye dares Jane Andrews to hop on one leg around the Barry garden, and Anne Shirley dares Josie Pye to walk the board fence. Anne, sniffing at Josie Pye's great success on the board fence, tells the pugnacious girl that she knew a girl that walked the ridge-pole of a roof. So it was that Josie Pye dared Anne Shirley to walk the ridge-pole of Mrs. Barry's roof. Anne bequeaths her pearl bead ring to Diana should she perish in defense of her honor. Slipping off the roof into the Virginia creeper beneath, the pale-faced Anne gives the girls a terrible fright. Marilla spots Mr. Barry carrying Anne across the bridge to Green Gables: "In the sudden stab of fear that pierced to her very heart she realized what Anne had come to mean to her□ However, now she knew as she hurried wildly down the slope that Anne was dearer to her than anything on earth." Anne, having broken her ankle, reassures Marilla that she might have broken her neck. Homebound, Anne's much anticipated introduction to Miss Stacy, the new school mistress, is forestalled. In her confinement, the young girl exults in the many visitors she receives, even Superintendent Bell, whose prayers she is now sorry she criticized.

## Chapter 23 Analysis

Ever the optimist, Anne reckons that she could have broken her neck, not just her ankle: "Let us look on the bright side of things." Marilla, pierced to her heart at the sight of the girl in Mr. Barry's arms, fears the worst, and reveals how deeply she has grown to love Anne. This is a remarkable expression of emotion from the woman previously so restrained in emotion (and in her affection for Anne).



# Chapter 24

## Chapter 24 Summary

Returning to school in the fall, Anne develops a sure and fast fondness for the new school mistress, Miss Stacy, who she is quite sure pronounces her name properly, with an 'e.' Anne thrives under Miss Stacy, who allows the boys and girls to climb the big trees to retrieve crows' nests, promotes physical exercise, requires composition, and even gives light to geometry, at which Anne until now has been such a "dunce." In November, Miss Stacy proposes a concert for the scholars of Avonlea. Marilla scoffs at the notion, thinking all the fuss over recitations and tableaux to be "rank foolishness," but receives welcome encouragement from Matthew, who reasons that "a little 'appreciation' does quite as much good as all the conscientious 'bringing up' in the world."

## Chapter 24 Analysis

Drawn to women of good spirit and energy, Anne comes into her own as a student under the encouragement of Miss Stacy. Marilla and Matthew, fulfilling different parenting roles, create a balance of structure and affection in Anne's life.





# Chapter 25

## Chapter 25 Summary

Matthew shyly watches Anne among her friends as they put on caps and jackets. Unsure of how but being sure of it just the same, Matthew notices that Anne is unlike her friends in some respect. After much reflection and two hours of smoking his pipe, Matthew hits on it: Anne was dressed differently than other girls due to Marilla keeping "her so plainly and soberly gowned." Matthew resolves to give Anne a dress for Christmas. Flustered in his attempt to shop for a dress, coming home with twenty pounds of brown sugar and a garden rake in its stead, Matthew petitions Mrs. Lynde to make a dress "in the new way." Mrs. Lynde is pleased to make the dress, having noticed the plain style of dress that Marilla makes for Anne. The woman is touched that Matthew would be the one to take notice: "That man is waking up after being asleep for over sixty years." Marilla feels the dress is frivolous and will only flatter Anne's vanity, but on Christmas morning the dress, a brown gloria with lace at the neck and puffed sleeves with silk ribbon, delights Anne beyond imagination. Further delighted on receiving slippers with buckles and bows from Aunt Josephine, Anne goes on to revel in her performance at the Christmas concert. The Cuthberts attend their first concert in twenty years. Marilla is proud of Anne, although she won't tell her. Matthew is proud of Anne as well, and does tell her so. One thing the brother and sister do agree on is that they need to think of her education beyond Avonlea.

## Chapter 25 Analysis

Anne has brought new light into Matthew's life, waking him up after sixty years in Mrs. Lynde's estimation. And while Marilla cannot see her way to flatter Anne's vanity, even she feels a swell of pride in her performance and appearance in the concert she previously disdained as frivolous. The two must now set their minds to the best course for the bright young girl's education.



# Chapter 26

## Chapter 26 Summary

Anne turns thirteen, and looks forward to the day when she is really grown up and can use big words. Gossiping with Diana, Anne is disdainful of Ruby Gillis's girlhood crushes, but relishes writing a swirling romance for a school composition. Diana says she feels stifled in trying to write a story entirely out of her own head, so Anne proposes a story club where they are to write compositions to "cultivate" their imaginations. Anne adopts the *nom de plume* Rosamond Montmorency, Marilla finding the whole business to be nonsense. Anne explains that every story has a moral, elevating their purpose to a "wholesome effect." Unable to convince Marilla of the value in her work, Anne takes heart in Mrs. Allan's admission that she was herself once a mischief making little girl.

## Chapter 26 Analysis

Anne and Marilla's sensibilities once again clash in the writing of Anne's florid compositions: "Marilla is such a sensible woman. It must be a great deal better to be sensible; but still, I don't believe I'd really want to be a sensible person, because they are so unromantic." In Mrs. Allan, Anne has found someone who not only indulges her imagination but encourages it, channeling it into writing compositions. Anne takes further comfort in knowing that Mrs. Allan, her ideal of perfect goodness, was not always so good herself as a child.



# Chapter 27

## Chapter 27 Summary

Discovering that Anne has not readied tea for Matthew, Marilla is in a state of much irritation, thinking Anne disobedient. To her dismay, Marilla finds Anne in the east gable, face buried deep into her pillows. Rising, at Marilla's insistence, Anne's source of despair is ever apparent in the green tint of her hair. Looking affright, Anne explains a peddler was by that afternoon and promised the dye he sold would turn her a raven black. Learning of the peddler's plight to bring his wife and children from Germany, Anne was moved to buy the black dye with her chicken money. After a week, it is decided that the locks must be shorn, a most unromantic circumstance for one to lose her hair, in Anne's estimation. Anne quickly comes to terms with her close shaven crop, seeing it as just penance for her vanity and a trial in her quest for goodness. As she prattles on, Anne worries she is tiring Marilla, who answers that she does not mind the chatter so much (her way of saying she is glad to hear it), but that her head aches.

## Chapter 27 Analysis

Anne faces the vexation of youth: vanity. Ever striving for goodness equal to Mrs. Allan's, Anne embraces her newly cropped hair as penance to that end. The appearance of the peddler, a German Jew trying to bring his family from Germany, is a rare moment of the realities of the outside world intruding on bucolic Avonlea. The persistence of Marilla's headaches is a shadow in Anne's sunny life much closer to home.



# Chapter 28

## Chapter 28 Summary

Anne's Idlewild being no more (Mr. Bell having cut down the patch of birch trees), Anne gives leave to her childhood playhouse and conspires with Diana, Ruby Gillis and Jane Andrews to dramatize Tennyson's *Elaine*. Anne reluctantly agrees to the role of Elaine, who is to be cast on a flat from a landing under the bridge, onto a bank at a curve in the river. Guinevere, King Arthur and Lancelot proceed to the bank to receive the lily maid Elaine. Meanwhile, the flat, having been punctured by a stake is quickly taking on water. Anne, grasping the situation at hand, determines to climb onto one of the bridge piles as she passes in the flat, and in doing so strands herself on the slimy pile. Supposing the worst, she is soon rescued by Gilbert Blythe passing by in a borrowed dory. She begrudgingly accepts his help. Gilbert proposes to Anne that they form a friendship. Anne scorns Gilbert's apology, still nursing the hurt of that long ago insult of "carrots." Anne later proclaims herself cured of her predilection for romance. Matthew bids her to keep a little of it; a little being a good thing.

## Chapter 28 Analysis

Anne recounts her tribulations since arriving at Green Gables as trials to cure her of her natural shortcomings. The Haunted Woods curing her of her imagination, the liniment cake of carelessness, dying her hair of vanity, and the lily maid of Camelot of her romantic notions. The big girl of thirteen going on fourteen feels her way through the maturation process into young adulthood, but Matthew encourages her to hold onto some of the little girl inside her.



# Chapter 29

## Chapter 29 Summary

Anne is greeted by Diane while bringing home the cows from the back pasture. With much excitement, Diane extends an invitation from Aunt Josephine to visit with her in town for the Exhibition. The two girls conspire to have Mrs. Barry ask for Marilla's permission, being harder to say no to Mrs. Barry than Anne. Anne, wearing a dress hand sewn by Marilla who makes them in the latest fashion now, hurried over to the Barrys the following Tuesday morning. Enchanted by the elegance of Aunt Josephine's house, the many competitions, the horse races viewed from the grand stand, and a man taking flight in a balloon and fortunes told by the whims of a little bird the two girls return to Miss Barry's in a state of exhaustion to retire to the spare room. The next evening Aunt Josephine treats the girls to a concert at the Academy of Music, where Anne is so transported that ice cream at the restaurant across the street is required to bring her back to "common life." Diana declares she is born for city life but Anne, after much thought, decides she would rather know "even in my sleep that the stars were shining outside and that the wind was blowing in the firs across the brook." Returning to Marilla and Matthew, and the familiar warmth of Green Gables, Anne is as glad to be home as Marilla and Matthew are to receive her.

## Chapter 29 Analysis

At last, Anne enjoys the privilege of the spare room, only to be disappointed by her girlish expectations, and the maturing Anne supposes that growing up means leaving behind some childhood fantasies. Anne returns to Green Gables exhilarated by all that she has seen and experienced in town. While her senses were delighted, she is most glad to have met Mrs. Lynde's familiar face amongst a sea of strangers, and admits that ice cream at a restaurant is nice on occasion but she would miss the stars and the brook. As the buggy nears Green Gables, you can feel Anne stir. The trip "marks an epoch" in Anne's life, but "the best of it all was the coming home."



# Chapter 30

## Chapter 30 Summary

Miss Stacy visits with Marilla while Anne, who is now near fourteen, is off at The Haunted Woods with Diana. Anne and Diana now have many "solemn" conversations, having to be careful of the habits they form as they grow into their teens. Marilla tells Anne that Miss Stacy is forming a study group for the Queen's entrance exam, and she wishes Anne to attend. Anne thrills at the prospect of being a teacher and joins the class with Jane Andrews, Ruby Gillis, Josie Pye, Charlie Sloane, Moody Spurgeon and Gilbert Blythe. For the first time since intoxicating Diana with Marilla's homemade currant wine, the two bosom buddies must part company. Gilbert and Anne's rivalry continues on, but Anne admits, if only to herself, that all of the old ire is gone. She regrets that she must mask her true feelings out of shameful pride. A winter of earnest study over, Anne locks her textbooks in an old trunk in the attic, telling Marilla she is just going to let her imagination "run riot" all summer long. Mrs. Lynde visits with Marilla when she fails to show at an Aid meeting to discover that Matthew has suffered a bad spell with his heart. Marilla praises Anne, the young girl being such a comfort and a true help. Mrs. Lynde is very much in agreement, remarking on how much improved the girl has become in these three years, even in looks.

## Chapter 30 Analysis

Studying for the Queen's entrance exam gives Anne a sense of purpose and sets her off on a path that parts from Diana's, with whom she has many "solemn" conversations on growing up. As Anne's future starts to take shape, Matthew's spell causes Marilla to reflect on Anne's maturation and just how much she has come to rely on her.



# Chapter 31

## Chapter 31 Summary

Anne enjoyed the most golden summer of her life, free to frolic and wile the days away. Anne is two inches taller, and markedly quieter, preferring to keep her thoughts in her heart "like treasures." Now that Anne is old enough to use big words, she is not so inclined to use big words when small ones will do. She dotes over the new dresses Marilla has sewn for her as she prepares for the new school year. Anne worries over her stumbling block, geometry, and the entrance exam looming while Marilla worries about how greatly she will miss the girl.

## Chapter 31 Analysis

Anne comes into her own, and she and Marilla find a very warm middle ground, discussing their mutual discomfort in the presence of Mrs. Lynde and agreeing that it is worth the flounce, if it gives Anne a "comfortable feeling deep down." A girl taller than herself, Anne has grown into "a serious-eyed girl of fifteen, with the thoughtful brows and the proudly poised little head," grown from the precocious little girl to the thoughtful, centered young woman she has become.



# Chapter 32

## Chapter 32 Summary

Miss Stacy takes her leave from Avonlea at the end of the school year, leaving Anne and Diana teary-eyed and wistful. Anne travels to town to take the Queen's entrance exam, keeping Diana informed by post. After three weeks of agony, Diana rushes to Anne's room with the results published in the day's paper in hand. Anne's name is at the top of the pass list tied with Gilbert Blythe, all having passed, even Josie Pye. Anne rushes to the hayfield to tell Matthew, who always knew she would top the list. That night, she has a serious talk with Mrs. Allan at the manse and says a prayer of gratitude: "There was in it thankfulness for the past and reverent petition for the future."

## Chapter 32 Analysis

Summer comes, and it is a time for change and looking towards the future. Miss Stacy moves on, and soon so will Anne. Anne, so nervous about the future, and so momentous is the occasion; she compares taking the entrance exam to asking to stay on Green Gable three years prior. Matthew always knew she would pass the list, but Anne's doubts and humility seem genuine, and her hopes for the future sincere.





# Chapter 33

## Chapter 33 Summary

Diana lends her special flair for style, as the two girls dress Anne for a concert at White Sands. The invitation for Anne to recite at the charity event is an honor that sends Matthew into seventh heaven out of pride. Showing herself to be quite a handsome young woman, with her hair pulled back and dressed in organdies and pearls bestowed on her from Matthew, Anne and Diana ride with Billy and Jane Andrews to the big event. Once at the big concert hall she feels more plain in her dress, surrounded by girls in silk and other expensive fabrics. Feeling the scorn of one such girl in white lace, Anne feels scrutinized as a country bumpkin. Daunted by the performance of a professional elocutionist, Anne is paralyzed by nerves. Spotting Gilbert Blythe in the audience, she regains her composure and gives a performance worthy of an encore. After the concert, the girls discuss Anne's great success and the admiration she earned from an artist in the audience who wished to paint the girl with the Titian hair. While Jane is a little envious of the women and the diamonds they wear that so dazzle, Anne reckons that she is rich in all that she has, and she would rather be Anne of Green Gables than any girl in white lace with a sour look on her face.

## Chapter 33 Analysis

Both Marilla and Matthew are brimming with pride in the accomplishments of Anne, who they now fondly refer to as "their girl." And "their girl" has grown into a young woman that has an air in the way she carries herself, who no longer has visions of velvet carpet and silk curtains for the east gable but instead has the comforts of a wicker rocker and a few good pictures from Mrs. Allan. For a moment, Anne's confidence falters in a sea of silk and diamonds at the big concert, but her great success only reminds her more so of who she is: not a woman of Titian hair, but "plain red," rich in imagination, grateful to be Anne of Green Gables, with a string of pearls that Matthew lovingly bestowed upon her worn around her neck.



# Chapter 34

## Chapter 34 Summary

Proposing an evening dress made of a delicate pale green material, Marilla no longer objects to Matthew's impulses to indulge Anne, and extends a few of her own. With just a few weeks until Queen's, Marilla is moved to tell Anne how she has grown, and how she misses the queer girl of Anne's youth. Anne tenderly tells Marilla that she will always be the little girl that loves Marilla, Matthew and Green Gables, "just pruned down and branched out." Anne elects to enroll in the Second Year work, making a First Class teacher's license possible in one year in place of two. Gilbert Blythe, her fierce academic rival, does the same. Anne is so lonesome her first night at the boardinghouse that she is even comforted to see Josie Pye who arrives at her door, followed by Jane Andrews and Ruby Gillis, with the news that an Avery scholarship is to be awarded to a Queen's student. Anne sets her sights on winning the scholarship, making four years study at Redmond College possible.

## Chapter 34 Analysis

Marilla sobs at Anne's leaving, and then reproaches herself for the wickedness for feeling so much sentiment. However, in three years Marilla's rigid nature has given way to her love for Anne. At Queen's while feeling lonesome for Marilla, Matthew and Green Gables, Anne soon feels the pull of her own ambition, filled with thoughts of attending Redmond College on the Avery scholarship.



# Chapter 35

## Chapter 35 Summary

Diana and other Avonlea chums greet the Queen's scholars home on weekend visits. Gilbert Blythe is carrying the satchel of Ruby Gillis, thought to be prettiest girl at the Academy. Anne is puzzled by Gilbert's attachment to Ruby, not thinking Ruby the sort of girl who could appreciate Gilbert. Anne is also lonesome herself for the kind of conversation she could have with a "clever young fellow" like Gilbert Blythe. The end of term nears and Anne feels content that she has tried her hardest, "the joy of strife" her reward.

## Chapter 35 Analysis

The bitterness Anne had felt for Gilbert Blythe and her prideful competitiveness having faded, Anne now secretly wishes for the companionship for a boy such as Gilbert. Her future in the making, Anne relaxes as the term draws to a close. While other girls worry over dresses and exams, Anne is satisfied by her efforts and thoughts of Green Gables, her future "a rose of promise."



# Chapter 36

## Chapter 36 Summary

The morning comes for Anne and Jane to check the results of final examinations posted on a bulletin board. Anne finds Gilbert Blythe being hailed as the class Medalist. Feeling a pang of disappointment, Anne is soon cheered as the winner of the Avery scholarship. Anne sets her sights on attending Redmond in the fall just as she learns Gilbert Blythe will accept a position as the new Avonlea teacher. Anne, looking forward to a summer of not being so studious or serious, worries over the tired-looking Marilla and Matthew, who has had some bad spells with his heart. Marilla has an appointment with an oculist to help relieve the headaches that pain her but she is preoccupied with the financial state of Abbey Bank, where she and Matthew have placed all their savings. Anne spends her one glorious day revisiting all her favorite haunts, in conversation with Mrs. Allan. In the evening, Anne sits with Matthew in the back pasture. Matthew has a hired hand to help with the farm, the doctor insisting he lighten his load. Even so, Anne regrets that Matthew cannot take it easier, if only she had been a boy. Matthew pats her hand, and tells the deeply touched Anne, "Well now, I'd rather have you than a dozen boys, Anne—my girl—my girl that I am proud of."

## Chapter 36 Analysis

Anne's return to Avonlea is bittersweet. Triumphant as the winner of the Avery scholarship, her good fortune and bright future is soon overshadowed by the harsh reality of age and circumstance. Gilbert Blythe will not attend Redmond because of finances. Even more grim, Marilla and Matthew both are showing signs of age, and concerns over the Abbey Bank hint at what is to come. Anne enjoys a tender moment with Matthew, a memory she will hold near to her heart.



# Chapter 37

## Chapter 37 Summary

Matthew is stricken and falls to the ground. Anne and Marilla try to recover the unconscious Matthew, while Martine (the hired man) fetches the Barrys and Mrs. Lynde. Searching for a pulse, Mrs. Lynde cautions Anne and Marilla to look at Matthew's pale face and they all realize he is gone. The doctor arrives and determines that death had been painless and quick, probably the result of some great shock, most likely the news of Abbey Bank's failure in the paper he clutched as he fell. Anne retreats to the east gable that evening. Refusing Diana's offer to stay and comfort her, Anne wishes to be left in solitude to better understand the events of the day. Disturbed that she is unable to cry, Anne awakens in the middle of the night overcome by grief and falls to tears at the memory of his words, "my girl that I'm proud of." Marilla tells Anne not to cry, that it is all God's work. Anne asks Marilla to stay and comfort her, that only she can understand her grief. Marilla tells Anne she has been strict and harsh with her, but that she loved her as dear as if she were her own flesh and blood. Two days later, Marilla tells Anne of her appointment with the eye specialist and the two discuss the plans of all of Anne's chums. Anne learns from the conversation that Marilla and Gilbert Blythe's father once had a youthful romance, but they quarreled and she had been too stubborn to forgive him. And that she had always felt rather sorry for it.

## Chapter 37 Analysis

In Matthew's death, Anne and Marilla create a bond through shared grief. Marilla does not believe in crying for her departed brother, for whom she felt much love. However, moved by the loss, she is able to tell Anne how deeply she feels for her, as if she were her own blood. Anne, who cannot share her grief with the sweet Diana, can only be comforted by Marilla, who shares her loss. In their new closeness, Anne learns that the matronly Marilla had a youthful romance. Marilla remarks that "□you never can tell about people from their outsides."



# Chapter 38

## Chapter 38 Summary

Marilla visits the oculist the next day and learns that she must give up sewing and reading. If she takes care not to cry and wears the glasses he has prescribed she may save her eyesight. If not, she faces the possibility of going blind in six months. All the family savings having been lost at the failed Abbey Bank and limitations imposed on her by failing eyesight forces Marilla to consider selling Green Gables. Anne decides that she will stay at Green Gables to help Marilla. Resolving to teach at a neighboring town, she will give up the Avery scholarship and continue her education through correspondence, telling Marilla, "When I left Queen's my future seemed to stretch out before me like a straight road. I thought I could see along it for many a milestone. Now there is a bend in it. I don't know what lies around the bend, but I'm going to believe the best does."

Knowing Anne's stubbornness, Marilla does not try to dissuade her. Anne learns that her plans are to be slightly altered. Gilbert Blythe has withdrawn his teaching application so that Anne may teach in Avonlea, and choosing to instead teach at White Sands, earning his way through college. Meeting Gilbert in the road that evening, they form a lasting friendship after many years of rivalry. That night, alone in the east gable sitting by her window, Anne is content. "The joys of sincere work and worthy aspiration and congenial friendship were to be hers; nothing could rob her of her birthright of fancy or her ideal world of dreams. And there was always the bend in the road!"

## Chapter 38 Analysis

The dreamy, starry-eyed little girl full of sentiment and romantic notions is forever altered by the circumstances that befall her as a young woman of sixteen. Ever the optimist, even at the saddest moment in her young life Anne determines to make good on her gratitude to Marilla, her love of Green Gables and her own ambitions. Anne draws on her well of inner-strength and the redheaded, freckled girl who arrived at Green Gables an orphan now peers down that bend in the road, in anticipation.



# Characters

## Anne Shirley

Anne, who arrives at the Cuthberts at the age of eleven, was the daughter of two high school teachers, both of whom died from fever. The Cuthberts expect an orphan boy to help with farm chores, but Marilla reluctantly acquiesces to her brother Matthew's desire to keep Anne. Soon, all of Anne's fondest wishes are realized, discovering a bosom friend in Diana Barry, and kindred spirits in Matthew and the new minister's wife, among other cherished kinships. Anne has a fertile imagination, is deeply sentimental and being a romantic at heart has a flair for the dramatic. She both charms and delights with her precocious chatter. The little girl who had a hard luck life previous to making her home at Green Gables, struggles to be good and see the best in everyone, and is sensitive to the beauty of her natural surroundings. A clever girl, she excels as a young scholar, and while ambitious in temperament she remains true in her gratitude to the Cuthberts and love of Green Gables.

## Marilla Cuthbert

Marilla is rigid and undemonstrative, and governed by a strict moral code. As her fondness for Anne grows, Marilla's heart begins to swell with her love and admiration for the spirited little girl. Even so, she restrains her affection and encouragement, mindful to not spoil or indulge the girl. As Anne grows, Marilla finds herself more and more in agreement with Anne's outlook on life, amused by her many tribulations, and more and more at a loss as to what she would do without her. As her hair grays and her eyesight fails, she softens; moved by the death of her brother, she is able at last to express her love for Anne.

## Matthew Cuthbert

Matthew Cuthbert is the shy, reticent brother of Marilla Cuthbert. He dreaded all girls except for Marilla and Mrs. Rachel until taking an immediate fondness for the redheaded orphan. His "long iron-grey hair" fell to his stooped shoulders and he wore the same soft brown beard that he did at twenty. It was the quiet Matthew who could sway Marilla with his silence and steadfastness into taking a more generous and less rigid approach to raising Anne. It is Matthew who notices that Anne's dresses are not fashionable like the other girls and who is unflinching in his admiration and encouragement. And it is Matthew's words of love and pride that haunt and move Anne: "My girl □ my girl that I'm proud of."



## Diana Barry

Diana Barry is the bosom buddy who lives across the way at Orchard Slope that Anne so longed for and whose friendship she so cherished. With her mother's black eyes and hair, and her father's rosy complexion, Diana is a partner to Anne in her many escapades and a kindred spirit. It is Diana who Anne accidentally intoxicates on Marilla's homemade currant wine and Diana who shares in Anne's story club, falls equally victim to the Haunted Wood, pounces on Aunt Barry with Anne in the spare room, and who turns to Anne in desperation to save her baby sister Minnie from the croup. When the two chums are parted by Mrs. Barry, Diana gives Anne a "raven curl," a symbol of their cherished friendship that endures even as the two girls follow different paths in life.

## Gilbert Blythe

Gilbert Blythe calls the little redheaded girl "carrots," causing Anne to bring a slate down on his head. The incident sparks a fit of anger in Anne (sensitive to her appearance, like many little girls) and a rivalry that lasts through their young adult life. To her mortification, it is Gilbert who rescues the stranded Anne from a slimy bridge pile and makes an overture of friendship. Gilbert's affection and admiration for Anne is obvious, but pride and stubbornness prevent her from reciprocating the friendship. Gilbert Blythe is class Medalist at Queen's, but it is Anne who wins the Avery scholarship, setting her sights on Redmond College. When Matthew's death upturns Anne's plans, it is Gilbert who gallantly declines a teaching position in deference to Anne so that she may remain with Marilla. The gesture touches Anne, and the warm friendship she had often desired and hoped for with the bright, thoughtful Gilbert, is quickly formed.

## Mrs. Allan

Anne pronounces the new minister's wife, Mrs. Allan, "perfectly lovely" and praises her for encouraging inquisitiveness. In Mrs. Allan, the enchanted Anne has found yet another *kindred spirit*; a kind, caring soul. So affected is Anne by the bright young minister's wife that she warms to Christianity, if only she could be one like Mrs. Allan. The new minister's wife is a well of encouragement, approval and guidance for the orphan girl who struggles so hard to be good and kind. It gives Anne heart that Mrs. Allan, by her own account, was once a mischievous and incorrigible little girl.

## Mrs. Rachel Lynde

Mrs. Rachel Lynde is a small town busybody and self-appointed guardian of personal decorum who takes note of all of Avonlea's comings and goings. A bundle of small town propriety, intrusiveness and neighborly concern, Mrs. Lynde is at first horrified by the young Anne, but is soon won over by the girl's many charms and talents.





## Aunt Josephine Barry

Diana's great aunt, the rambunctious girls pounce upon the elderly matron in the Barry spare room. The "prim and proper" wealthy spinster is entertained by Anne's chatter and soon becomes one of her most ardent fans. It is Aunt Barry who invites the girls to the Exhibition in town, and introduces them to the culture and pleasures of big city life.



# Objects/Places

## Green Gables

The fabled home of Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert based on the Cavendish north shore farm owned by L.M. Montgomery's cousins and where the author frequented as a child, now part of Prince Edward Island National Park.

## East Gable

Anne's room at Green Gables with whitewashed walls and barren floors that sends shivers to the marrow of Anne's bones. Over the years, her room becomes a very different place of pretty matting, soft curtains, and a few good pictures from Mrs. Allan and a photograph of her teacher, Miss Stacey.

## Idlewild

A patch of birch trees, home to Anne and Diana's playhouse.

## Amethyst Brooch

Marilla's amethyst brooch, given to her mother by a seafaring uncle and then bequeathed to Marilla. Marilla suspects Anne has thoughtlessly lost the brooch and the incident sparks the Sunday school picnic drama.

## Haunted Wood

The spruce wood over the brook that Diana and Anne imagined being haunted so powerfully that they were now both afraid of the gloomy spruce grove.

## White Way of Delight

Anne's affectionate name for the 'Avenue,' a scenic stretch of road arched over by apple trees.

## Setting

Anne of Green Gables and all but one of its sequels take place in the Canadian province of Prince Edward Island, near the end of the nineteenth century.

Montgomery consistently emphasizes place; each book in the series contains a thorough and affectionate description of Prince Edward Island. But Montgomery leaves the temporal setting vague, possibly because she wants her work to seem timeless, equally applicable in any age, or possibly because she wants to create in Avonlea a magical place outside the realm of ordinary times. Montgomery refers only twice in the entire series to events that place her fiction in historical context: the Crimean War (which ended in 1856) has occurred a generation or two in the past, and World War I (which began in 1914) is an event of the remote future. Montgomery captures the innocence of peaceful times in simple farm communities where political awareness is limited to contests between the Liberal and Conservative parties for control of the province and where even the best informed citizens seem oblivious to the intrigue of world politics.

# Social Sensitivity

Anne of Green Gables addresses social problems of the early twentieth century, some of which remain relevant today.

Writing before American women even had the right to vote, Montgomery reiterates that boys and girls are equally intelligent and talented. Although she portrays gender roles that could be considered stereotypical today—Anne goes on to become a teacher later in the series—her ideas were progressive for 1908. For instance, all the capable graduates of the Avonlea school, whether male or female, continue their studies at Redmond College.

Montgomery also stresses the importance of a good education and the need for enthusiastic, caring teachers. Miss Muriel Stacy's sympathy and encouragement motivate her students far more effectively than does Mr. Phillips's sarcasm. Other books in the series explore teachers' qualifications and the process of teacher selection.

Anne of Green Gables also reflects some of the negative attitudes of 1908.

Although some characters leave Avonlea, many residents believe that people should spend their entire lives in the same place. Most townspeople not only are convinced that Prince Edward Island is the best place in the world but are suspicious of any idea or person not native to the area. Townspeople especially dislike "Yankees"; they consider French-speaking Canadians intellectually and socially inferior, and treat them with a condescension that is unacceptable today.



## Literary Qualities

Anne of Green Gables features an episodic plot; that is, the narrative consists of a series of minor conflicts, most of which are quickly resolved. Sometimes the resolutions to these conflicts seem to be too dependent on chance or coincidence, but as a whole, Anne's varied adventures keep the plot interesting and create suspense.

The many details that Montgomery provides about Anne reveal the character's good qualities and her faults.

Overall, Anne is very much like the children in other early twentieth-century novels, but some modern readers may find her a little too agreeable, too optimistic, or too talented. Also, the narrative focuses on Anne to such an extent that minor characters lack depth, a fault typical of young adult literature at the time the novel was written.

Montgomery's novel falls into the literary tradition established by Horatio Alger, an author who published during the last third of the nineteenth century a series of extraordinarily popular "ragsto-riches" stories. Alger's works describe the successes of young orphans who are intelligent, hard-working, ambitious, good-natured, and honorable—in short, ideal young people according to the standards of the time. Although Anne Shirley never quite becomes the "model child" she wants to be, her triumphs in Avonlea follow the Horatio Alger pattern, as she starts out as an unwanted orphan and becomes one of the most beloved children in Avonlea. Like Alger's orphans, Anne wins the acceptance of others through her unyielding determination to develop all of her talents.



# Themes

## Mores

Anne Shirley is an exuberant girl of eleven when she arrives at Green Gables. This, despite a hard luck life, having lost both her parents to fever when she was only three months old and arrived at the Hopeton orphanage only after spending her earliest years caring for children in troubled homes. She perseveres, trying to see the good in everyone and imbued with an optimistic heart that made her "all spirit, fire and dew." Anne's moral sensibilities are grown from her own precocious intelligence, an innate desire to be good and kind, and how she understands the world about her. These loosely formed sensibilities are in direct conflict with Marilla's rigid moral strictures. Marilla's reserved, strict religious mores shape her relationship with Anne.

"She had an uneasy feeling that it was rather sinful to set one's heart so intensely on any human creature as she had set hers on Anne, and perhaps she performed a sort of unconscious penance for this by being stricter and more critical than if the girl had been less dear to her." Marilla pardons many of the young Anne's outbursts and faux pas as a lack of religious training, accepting the girl as a challenge. In turn, Anne opens both Marilla's heart and her mind, and the matronly spinster guardian finds herself increasingly sympathetic towards Anne Shirley's unorthodox behavior and opinions.

## Belonging

The little orphan girl's great longing to belong to family and community is at the very heart of much of Anne's motivation. We feel her ache when she cries out, "You don't want me! Nobody ever did want me. I might have known it was all too beautiful to last." Her romantic idealism, daydreaming and over-sentimentalizing of natural surroundings often reveal a lonely, isolated girl escaping into a world populated by her own imagination. She befriends the cherry tree in full bloom outside her window in the east gable when it appears she will return to the orphanage. Katie Maurice (her own reflection) and Violetta (the little girl's echo) take the place of playmates when she becomes the servant girl for Mrs. Thomas and her drunken husband □ or Mrs. Hammond and her twins three-times over. Anne's preoccupation with being good and trying to please, tempering her opinions if not her theatrics, show a young girl seeking companionship, acceptance and love in the female role models she seeks out, the community that raises her and the Cuthberts who have opened their home to her. As Anne matures and comes into her own as a bright, talented young woman, she becomes markedly quieter and surer of herself, prepared for that bend in the road, assured that it is "a million times nicer to be Anne of Green Gables than Anne of nowhere in particular."



## Appearance

A young Anne wonders aloud: "Do you suppose it's wrong for us to think so much about our clothes? Marilla says it is very sinful. However, it is such an interesting subject." A youthful girl sensitive to her appearance, Anne throws fitful tantrums when she feels scorned for her red hair. She also envies the puffed sleeves of other girls, while she is left to wear the plain, serviceable dresses Marilla sews for her, and she is uncommonly flattered to be told that she has a pretty nose. Anne's preoccupation with her appearance is tempered by a distrust of vanity as she ages. Even as a small orphan girl, she values Diana Barry for being "good and smart, which is better than being pretty." As she grows not only in maturity, but in beauty, Anne reckons that she is rich in all that she has, and that she would rather be Anne of Green Gables than any girl in white lace with a sour look on her face.



## Themes/Characters

Anne of Green Gables begins as an orphanage mistakenly sends eleven-year-old Anne Shirley to the Cuthberts, who want to adopt a boy. Matthew Cuthbert takes pity on Anne and insists that she stay at Green Gables. Anne finds a "kindred spirit" in Matthew, and she changes his life. A reticent bachelor, his concern for Anne forces him to overcome his overwhelming shyness with girls and women and to be more sensitive to others' feelings. His pride in her motivates Anne to excel, and his death devastates her.

Matthew's undemonstrative sister Marilla reluctantly agrees to adopt Anne. A self-described "old maid," Marilla has no experience in raising children.

Believing that she must be especially strict to compensate for her brother's "softness," Marilla never expresses amusement, praises Anne, or misses an opportunity to teach a lesson in morals or etiquette. Although she actually feels as much love and pride as Matthew does, she hides her feelings until Anne is hurt.

The residents of the rural village Avonlea, Anne's new home, frequently misunderstand her active imagination and the sophisticated vocabulary that she insists on showing off. Her impulsiveness and quick temper further complicate her relationships with neighbors and classmates. But she is thrilled to have a home of her own, and the vivid imagination that sometimes gets her in trouble also consoles her when she is lonely or bored, enables her to see the best in others, and helps her to adjust to her new life.

When Anne first arrives in Avonlea, her harshest critic is the Cuthberts' nearest neighbor, the ultimately good-hearted gossip Mrs. Rachel Lynde. Although she never fully understands Anne or appreciates her unusual beauty, Mrs. Lynde eventually accepts the girl almost as one of her own children.

Two of Anne's schoolmates figure prominently in the novel as well. Diana Barry, her first Avonlea friend of her own age, is Anne's opposite in physical appearance and embodies Anne's ideal of beauty. Diana has dark hair, dimples, and a plump figure. More conventional and less imaginative than Anne, she readily submits to her friend's leadership. On the day they meet, Anne and Diana exchange a vow of "bosom friendship" that remains strong throughout the series. Another schoolmate that plays a role in Anne's development is Gilbert Blythe, who becomes more important as the series progresses.

Anne's only intellectual equal in the Avonlea school, he teases her so incessantly that she refuses to speak to him throughout much of Anne of Green Gables. Their competition spurs both on to greater academic achievement, and Anne's anger gradually fades until, in the closing chapter, they become friends.

Anne's remarkable intelligence and imagination launch Montgomery's theme that girls are every bit as capable as boys. After getting to know Anne, the Cuthberts wonder why





they were ever so intent on adopting a boy. They learn that people should be judged on their individual merits, regardless of their gender.

Throughout the novel, Montgomery emphasizes that appearances and first impressions can be deceiving. For instance, Mrs. Lynde initially calls Anne an ugly child, and Anne herself believes it. She is pale, tall, thin, clumsy, and her eyes are too big and her hair too red. But by the end of the book, others regard Anne as graceful and beautiful.

Montgomery also develops the contrast between real goodness and the appearance of goodness. Anne is a good person because she is both truthful and thoughtful. On the other hand, the thoughtless tattletale Josie Pye uses truth to hurt others. Because of her lack of sensitivity, Josie cannot be considered a good person.

Like many other writers of the early twentieth century, Montgomery includes some blatant lessons in proper behavior. In *Anne of Green Gables*, she advises readers against harboring excessive pride. Anne's pride often causes unhappiness for herself and others.

Each time she overcomes her pride, she gains a new friend and achieves some desired goal.



# Style

## Points of View

*Anne of Green Gables* is written in the third-person omniscient, a point of view that shifts to show the sympathies and motivations most often of Anne and Marilla. As readers, we know Marilla's deep love for the girl she has come to think of her own, even when Anne questions her affections. As readers, we learn of Anne's driving ambitions tempered by her gratitude and obligations to the Cuthberts, as Marilla copes with the loss of her brother, health and financial problems. The shifts in perspective give the reader a greater understanding, and a more sympathetic view of character behavior and action.

## Setting

The principle setting for the action is the home of Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert, Green Gables. Much of the charm of the novel is author L.M. Montgomery's loving portrayal of Prince Edward Island's natural beauty as embodied by Green Gables and Avonlea. Inspired by the family farm of cousins on the north shore of Cavendish, Anne Shirley's glowing appreciation of her environs are an extension of her romantic idealism and offer communion, consolation, and companionship in moments of isolation and loneliness.

## Language

Wry and often satirical, *Anne of Green Gables* is written for a juvenile audience, but with a wit and intelligence suitable to an adult readership. The language is often as colorful and florid as Anne's imagination, and knowing and wise as her heart.

## Structure

The opening vignettes of the novel trace Anne's history and her arrival at Green Gables. Anne triumphs through a series of youthful trials and mishaps, each chapter a little life's lesson learned on the perils of vanity or the treachery of an overactive imagination. The ensuing chapters show a more serious and determined Anne, focused on her education and gaining a strong sense of self, seeking out role models and coming into her own. She matures into a young woman free of her youthful insecurities, and assured in her ability to succeed, nurtured by the townspeople of Avonlea, the beauty of Green Gables and the good graces of Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert.



## Quotes

"Matthew dreaded all women except Marilla and Mrs. Rachel; he had an uncomfortable feeling that the mysterious creatures were laughing at him." Chapter 2, p.11.

"Like most quiet folks he [Matthew] liked talkative people when they were willing to do the talking themselves and did not expect him to keep up his end of it."

Chapter 2, p.18

"'You don't want me!' she cried. 'You don't want me because I'm not a boy! I might have expected it. Nobody ever did want me. I might have known it was all too beautiful to last.'" Chapter 3, p. 29.

"The whitewashed walls were so painfully bare and staring that she thought they must ache over their own bareness□. The whole apartment was of a rigidity not to be described in words, but which sent a shiver to the very marrow of Anne's bones." Chapter 3, p. 33

"Wasn't it a lovely place? Suppose she wasn't really going to stay here! She would imagine she was. There was scope for imagination here." Chapter 4, p. 37

"However, the worst of imagining things is that the time comes when you have to stop, and that hurts." Chapter 4, p. 39.

"That was Matthew's way — take a whim into his head and cling to it with the most potent and effectual in its very silence than if he had talked it out." Chapter 4, p. 41.

"□her most serious shortcoming seemed to be a tendency to fall into day-dreams in the middle of a task and forget all about it until such time as she was sharply recalled to earth by a reprimand or a catastrophe." Chapter 8, p.65.

"I'll try to be so good. It will be uphill work, I expect, for Mrs. Thomas often told me I was desperately wicked." Chapter 8, p. 65

"You're only *Anne of Green Gables*," she said earnestly, "and I see you, just as you are looking now, whenever I try to imagine I'm the Lady Cordelia. However, it's a million times nicer to be Anne of Green Gables than Anne of nowhere in particular, isn't it?" Chapter 8, p. 73

"Something warm and pleasant welled up in Marilla's heart at the touch of that thin hand in her own — a throb of maternity she had missed, perhaps. Its very unaccustomedness and sweetness disturbed her. She hastened to restore her sensations to their normal calm by inculcating a moral." Chapter 10, p. 91.

"It was the first time in her whole life that childish lips had voluntarily touched Marilla's face. Again that sudden sensation of startling sweetness thrilled her. She was secretly



vastly pleased at Anne's impulsive caress, which was probably the reason why she said brusquely: 'There, there, never mind your kissing nonsense.'" Chapter 13, pp. 108-9.

"Miss Barry was a kindred, spirit after all," Anne confided to Marilla. "You wouldn't think so to look at her, but she is.... Kindred spirits are not so scarce as I used to think. It's splendid to find out there are so many of them in the world." Chapter 19, p. 192.

"Marilla, isn't it nice to think that tomorrow is a new day with no mistakes in it yet?" Chapter 21, p. 212.

"However, have you ever noticed one encouraging thing about me, Marilla? I never make the same mistake twice." Chapter 21, P. 113.

"For Anne to take things calmly would have been to change her nature. All 'spirit and fire and dew,' as she was, the pleasure and pains of life came to her with trebled intensity." Chapter 21, pp. 214-5.

"Don't be frightened, Marilla, I was walking the ridge-pole and I fell off. I expect I have sprained my ankle. However,, Marilla, I might have broken my neck. Let us look on the bright side of things." Chapter 23, p. 224.

"Marilla is such a sensible woman. It must be a great deal better to be sensible, but still, I don't believe I'd really want to be a sensible person, because they are so unromantic." Chapter 26, p. 247.

"Do you suppose it's wrong for us to think so much about our clothes? Marilla says it is very sinful. However, it is such an interesting subject." Chapter 29, p. 278.

"It was an elegant room, Marilla, but somehow sleeping in a spare room isn't what I used to think it was. That's the worst of growing up, and I'm beginning to realize it. The things you wanted so much when you were a child don't seem half so wonderful to you when you get them." Chapter 29, p. 282.

"She had an uneasy feeling that it was rather sinful to set one's heart so intensely on any human creature as she had set hers on Anne, and perhaps she performed a sort of unconscious penance for this by being stricter and more critical than if the girl had been less dear o her. Certainly Anne had no idea how Marilla loved her." Chapter 30, p. 287.

"She sometimes thought wistfully that Marilla was very hard to please and distinctly lacking in sympathy and understanding. However, she always checked the thought reproachfully, remembering what she owed to Marilla." Chapter 30, p. 287.

"She could see Matthew's face smiling at her as he had smiled when they parted at the gate that last evening □ she could hear his voice saying, 'My girl □ my girl that I'm proud of.' Then the tears came and Anne wept her heart out." Chapter37, p. 355.

"The joys of sincere work and worthy aspiration and congenial friendship were to be hers; nothing could rob her of her birthright of fancy or her ideal world of dreams. And there was always the bend in the road!" Chapter 38, p. 369.

# Adaptations

Montgomery wrote six sequels to *Anne of Green Gables*: *Anne of Avonlea*, *Chronicles of Avonlea*, *Anne of the Island*, *Anne of Windy Poplars*, *Anne's House of Dreams*, and *Anne of Ingleside*.

Generally considered the best novel in the series, *Anne of Green Gables* introduces several important characters who reappear in the sequels. *Anne of Avonlea* relates Anne's two years as the Avonlea schoolmarm and the developing friendship between Anne and Gilbert Blythe. *Anne of the Island* depicts Anne's four years at Redmond College in Nova Scotia. During this period Diana Barry marries and has children, and Anne and Gilbert become engaged. In *Anne of Windy Poplars*, Anne recounts her experiences as principal of Summerside High School in a series of letters to Gilbert, who is attending medical school at Redmond College. Through a combination of charm, intelligence, and good luck, Anne again succeeds in befriending almost everyone in the community. The novel ends as she departs for Avonlea to marry Gilbert. *Anne's House of Dreams* describes Anne and Gilbert's wedding and their first three years together in a small rented house halfway between Glen St. Mary and Four Winds Point. In the closing pages Gilbert purchases Ingleside, a house in Glen St.

Mary. *Anne of Ingleside* relates the experiences of Gilbert, Anne, and their six children. The other book in the Anne series, *Chronicles of Avonlea*, is a collection of stories about other residents of the Avonlea area. Anne appears as a minor character in a few of these stories.

Several novels in the Anne series have been adapted to other media. The first adaptation of *Anne of Green Gables* was a silent film produced by Realart Pictures in 1919. RKO Radio Pictures released a movie version of *Anne of Green Gables* in 1934, followed by *Anne of Windy Poplars* in 1940. The National Film Board of Canada produced a filmstrip adaptation of *Anne of Green Gables* in 1953.

In 1937 the Samuel French Company published Wilbur Braun's dramatic adaptation of *Anne of Green Gables*, and in 1972 the same company published Donald Harron's musical version, which had been presented annually since 1965 at the Charlottetown Summer Festival in Prince Edward Island.

A television version, adapted by Julia Jones and produced by the British Broadcasting Company, also was released in 1972, followed in 1975 by a second series adapted from *Anne of Avonlea* and *Anne of the Island*. In 1985 Public Broadcasting's *Wonderworks* and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation sponsored television adaptations produced and directed by Kevin Sullivan and starring Megan Fellows as Anne, Colleen Dewhurst as Marilla, and Richard Farnsworth as Matthew.



## Topics for Discussion

Compare attitudes over physical appearance depicted in the novel to contemporary attitudes among girls and boys of Anne's age today.

Describe the relationship between the depiction of nature and Anne's sentiments towards places and events.

What makes Anne such an enduring character of world fiction?

In what ways does Anne conform? In what ways does she remain fiercely independent?

What tone does the author create in her portrayal of religion?

*Anne of Green Gables* was hugely popular in post-WWII Japan. What qualities do the book and the title character embody that make it such a source of inspiration in the face of adversity?

How do Marilla's sensibilities change  or not change  over the course of the book?

1. One criticism of *Anne of Green Gables* is that, although Montgomery claims that Anne has a number of flaws, her faults are minor ones, such as daydreaming and talking too much. Is Anne a believable character, or does she possess more talents, virtues, and knowledge than could be reasonably expected in a girl her age?

2. Before the end of the novel Anne has silenced all of her critics and won almost all the honors for which she has competed. Are her successes believable, or does good luck play too big a role in her conquests?

3. Throughout the book Anne uses her imagination, at times improving her situation and on occasion causing trouble for herself and others. Using specific examples, discuss the positive and the negative effects of her imagination.

4. Even though Anne is relatively independent in her attitudes, conformity or the sense of belonging is important to her. In what ways does she want to be like others, and in what ways is she willing to be different? Would a girl today share her attitudes?

5. What was Anne's life like before she came to Green Gables? How do her past experiences affect her personality?

6. How does Anne make friends at the Avonlea school? Would an eleven-yearold like Anne be accepted as quickly in a modern school? Why or why not?

7. Anne makes many friends in Avonlea, but some of these friendships are very special. Who are her "special" friends, and why are these relationships unique?



8. Anne is changed by her contact with Marilla Cuthbert, Rachel Lynde, Muriel Stacy, and Mrs. Allen. How do the personalities and attitudes of these women differ? How do they influence Anne?

9. Anne and Gilbert always compete for the top position in their class. Would either be as successful without the spur of their competition?

10. When people meet Anne, they react in different ways. How does Montgomery  
Illustration by Jody Lee for Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery. Grosset and  
Dunlap: New York (1983).

use such reactions to reveal the personalities of these other characters?

11. Some of Anne's "accidents" are caused by her romantic daydreaming, but not all of them are totally her fault.

In which episodes does Anne cause her own problems, and in which is she more or less a victim of circumstances?





## Ideas for Reports and Papers

1. The educational system described in *Anne of Green Gables* is clearly different from today's. Compare the schools you have attended with the Avonlea school.

2. In some ways Anne and her friends seem very much like eleven-year-olds today, but there are major differences in attitudes, experiences, and pastimes.

Compare the attitudes and activities of Anne and her friends with those of modern eleven-year-olds.

3. *Anne of Ingleside*, the final novel in the Anne series, relates the experiences of Anne's children. How are their lives different from hers as described in *Anne of Green Gables*? How does each child resemble Anne?

4. Sometimes a writer uses the differences between the central character and other characters as a way of revealing the central character's personality.

Explain how Montgomery uses this device in *Anne of Green Gables*.

5. A frequent literary theme is the difference between appearance and reality.

How does *Anne of Green Gables* develop this theme?

6. Gilbert says he admires Anne for her "lack of sameness." Discuss both the admirable and the unpleasant elements in Anne's personality. Does Anne seem more like a real person because of this combination of negative and positive characteristics?

## Further Study

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