

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Book Number \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

***The Wednesday Wars, by Gary D. Schmidt***

# Study Guide

As you read *The Wednesday Wars*, add notes about each character using the chart below. Write a brief description about who they are and why they are important to the story. Using specific details and page numbers will help you later!

Character	Description
Holling Hoodhood	
Mr. Hoodhood	
Heather Hoodhood	
Mrs. Baker	
Mrs. Sidman	
Doug Swieteck	
Meryl Lee Kowalski	
Danny Hupfer	
Mai Thi	
Mrs. Bigio	



1. What is the setting of the novel?
2. What are your first impressions of the following characters: Holling Hoodhood, Mrs. Baker, Mr. Hoodhood, and Mr. Guareschi?
3. Holling uses the word “perfect” a lot when describing his house, why do you think he does this? Describe the irony.
4. Holling likes to read, and he mentions several books that he enjoys. With which character from *Treasure Island* does Holling identify, and why?
5. Holling complains to his family that Mrs. Baker hates him, yet they are unsympathetic. Why do you think this is?
6. Explain why Holling has to spend Wednesday afternoons alone with Mrs. Baker. What does he think Mrs. Baker is planning?
7. Who is Lieutenant Tybalt Baker, and where is he going?

## OCTOBER

1. Why doesn't Holling complain to Mrs. Baker about cleaning erasers and straightening her classroom?
2. What are the priorities for Holling's father?
3. What happens to the cream puffs? Why doesn't Holling tell anyone about them?
4. What is the conflict between Mr. Hoodhood and his daughter, Heather?

5. On page 37, Heather said, “I want support for believing in something bigger than me.” What was she referring to?
6. What does Mrs. Baker mean when she says to Holling that “we have been wasting our opportunities”?
7. Who are Sycorax and Caliban? What happens to them?
8. Which Shakespearean play does Holling read first? What does Holling think Mrs. Baker’s intentions are in getting him to read this play? Does he think she succeeds?
9. What are Holling’s final thoughts about the character Shylock?



## NOVEMBER

1. What is the second Shakespeare play Holling reads?
2. Why does the character Caliban fascinate Holling?
3. How does it come about that Holling takes part in the *Long Island Shakespeare Company’s Holiday Extravaganza*?
4. What are Mrs. Baker’s thoughts on how *The Tempest* ends? What are your feelings about Mrs. Baker’s comments? (pages 70-71)
5. Based on the ending of *The Tempest*, Holling disagrees with Mrs. Baker and feels that “Defeat doesn’t help you to grow.” Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
6. Mrs. Bigio comes in at the end of the chapter and Holling hears sounds of sadness. What has happened?





## DECEMBER

1. Everyone at Camillo Jr. High is decorating for the holidays, except for Mrs. Baker. Why do you think she doesn't?
2. What part does Holling get in the Shakespeare Company's Holiday Extravaganza? How does he feel about it?
3. How does Holling's performance go? List the events that happen between the end of his performance and his arrival at the Baker Sporting Emporium.
  - a. What do Danny Hupfer's actions during the incident at the Baker Sporting Emporium tell you about him?
  - b. How do you feel about Holling's parents not watching his performance? How does Holling seem to feel?
4. "When gods die, they die hard" (page 93). What is the metaphorical death here?
5. Why is Mrs. Bigio mean to Mai Thi in the lunch line?
6. How does Mrs. Baker make up for what happened at the Baker Sporting Emporium?


## JANUARY

1. What trick does Doug Swieteck's brother play on Hollis?
2. Why did Mrs. Baker give Mai Thi her cup of hot chocolate on the day there was no heat in the school?



3. What is the third Shakespeare play that Holling reads?
4. Why does Holling disagree with Mrs. Baker about how “malice is a small and petty thing”?
5. During the snowstorm, Holling saw a chance for revenge against Doug Swieteck’s brother. What does Holling do?
6. Explain Holling’s allusion to Macbeth. (pages 128 and 129)

## FEBRUARY

1. Based on the events in this chapter, what is ironic about Mr. Hoodhood receiving the award for the Chamber of Commerce Businessman of 1967?
2. Explain why Holling thought that Romeo and Juliet were stupid. Why then does he choose to go see the play? How does he get the tickets? 
3. How does Holling’s viewpoint about *Romeo and Juliet* change by the end of February?
4. What happens with the design for the new junior high? How did Holling play a part in Kowalski and Associates’ design? How did Meryl Lee feel about this?
5. Why does Holling compare his father to Shakespeare’s character, Shylock? How have others in the book so far filled the “father” role for Holling?
6. The last two lines on page 155 read, “DOWNED HELICOPTER TRANSPORT STOP KHESANH STOP LT T BAKER MISSING IN ACTION STOP.” What was the telegram reporting?

# MARCH

1. Holling uses a metaphor to explain Mrs. Baker and the classroom. What is this metaphor at the bottom of page 157?
2. What happened when Mr. Vendleri replaced the bulging ceiling tiles?
3. Holling has two experiences of foretelling the future in March. What were these?
  - 1.
  - 2.
4. Mrs. Baker's classroom is visited by the school board.
  - a. First, Holling recites Shakespeare (p. 174). Please interpret the poem.
  - b. Second, what unexpected event interrupted the inspection and how did everyone in the room react?
5. Why did the discrimination against Mai Thi escalate with the finding of the class pets?
6. Explain the following allusion: "Julius Caesar's army wouldn't have left such a mess after crossing the Rubicon." (page 177)
7. Holling made the varsity cross country team. What are the reasons for his success?
8. Why is Danny Hupfer suspended, and how does his family respond? What does this tell you about his family values?
9. What do Danny Hupfer and Mai Thi have in common?



## APRIL

1. Mrs. Sidman, Mr. Guareschi, President Johnson, and Mr. Kowalski all have something in common at the beginning of this chapter. What is it?
2. What does Mr. Hoodhood mean when he says that architecture is a blood sport?
3. As Holling and Meryl Lee are working on their project, Mr. Kowalski tells them about a historical event. Which event is he referring to?
4. Describe the events that happen on the New York Yankees Opening Day. What do you think Mrs. Baker wanted to talk with the boss about?
5. During practice, Holling is careful not to run faster than any of the eighth grade boys on the cross country team. Why?
6. What reasons do you think Mr. Hoodhood has for saying Heather is not going to college?
7. How does Holling respond when Mrs. Baker tells him to “Pass those boys.”?



## MAY

1. Holling feels that several people need comforting at the beginning of this chapter. Name the reason for each of the following characters:
  - a. Mrs. Sidman
  - b. The eighth grade cross country runners
  - c. Mr. Hoodhood



2. Explain this line on p. 211: *Local Architect Firm to Renovate Yankee Stadium*
3. Where does Heather Hoodhood go in this chapter?
4. What thoughts and feelings are provoked in Holling while reading *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*?
5. How does Mrs. Baker respond to Holling's questions about why they practice for the atomic bombs?
6. How does Holling respond to his father's question to his sister, "Did you find yourself?"
7. What historical event happens in this chapter?
8. What are Holling's final thoughts on Hamlet? (page 234)
9. What news does Mrs. Baker receive at the end of this chapter?



## JUNE

1. Mrs. Baker says "A comedy isn't about being funny." What insight does she give Holling on comedy? (page 262)
2. Where does Mrs. Baker's seventh grade class go for their class trip? What mistake does Holling make that results in Mrs. Sidman's injured fingers?
3. Mrs. Bigio joins the class on the second day. What does she ask Mai Thi? What is Mai Thi's response?



4. How does Danny Hupfer's Bar Mitzvah go?
5. What does Mrs. Baker suggest about Holling's future?
6. Although Holling does not experience a Bar Mitzvah, how has he become a man by the end of the book?

## ***People to Know***

### ***Characters***

1. Mrs. Baker
2. Holling
3. Sycorax & Caliban
4. Mr. Goldman
5. Mickey Mantle
6. Doug Swieteck
7. Meryl Lee
8. Mr. Guareschi
9. Dan Hupfer
10. Mrs. Baker's husband
11. Mrs. Bigio
12. Mai Thi
13. Heather

## ***Events & Things to Know***

1. Opening Day at Yankee Stadium The Cold War
2. President Kennedy
3. Robert Kennedy
4. Martin Luther King Jr.
5. LBJ (President Johnson)
6. Long Island Shakespeare Company
7. Shakespeare Plays mentioned in the novel
8. Baker Sporting Emporium

