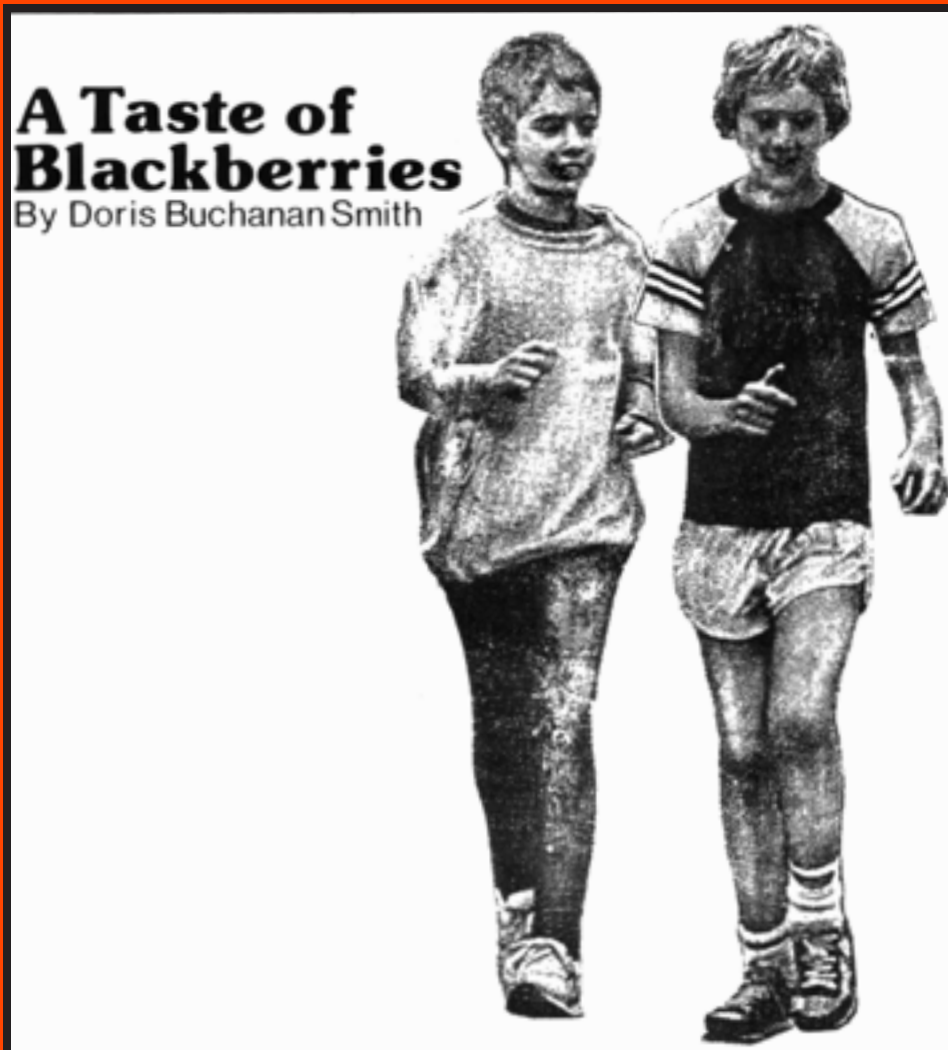


# Novel·Ties



## A Study Guide

Written By Marcia Tretler

Edited by Joyce Friedland and Rikki Kessler

**LEARNING LINKS**

P.O. Box 326 • Cranbury • New Jersey 08512

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Synopsis . . . . .	1
Background Information . . . . .	2
Pre-Reading Activities . . . . .	3
Chapters 1, 2 . . . . .	4 - 6
Chapters 3, 4 . . . . .	7 - 8
Chapters 5, 6 . . . . .	9 - 10
Chapters 7, 8 . . . . .	11 - 12
Cloze Activity . . . . .	13
Post-Reading Activities . . . . .	14
Suggestions For Further Reading . . . . .	15
Answer Key . . . . .	16

*Novel-Ties® are printed on recycled paper.*

---

*The purchase of this study guide entitles an individual teacher to reproduce pages for use in a classroom. Reproduction for use in an entire school or school system or for commercial use is prohibited. Beyond the classroom use by an individual teacher, reproduction, transmittal or retrieval of this work is prohibited without written permission from the publisher.*

## For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide consists of lessons to use in conjunction with the book *A Taste of Blackberries*. Written in chapter-by-chapter format, the guide contains a synopsis, pre-reading activities, vocabulary and comprehension exercises, as well as extension activities to be used as follow-up to the novel.

In a homogeneous classroom, whole class instruction with one title is appropriate. In a heterogeneous classroom, reading groups should be formed: each group works on a different novel on its reading level. Depending upon the length of time devoted to reading in the classroom, each novel, with its guide and accompanying lessons, may be completed in three to six weeks.

Begin using NOVEL-TIES for guided reading by distributing the novel and a folder to each child. Distribute duplicated pages of the study guide for students to place in their folders. After examining the cover and glancing through the book, students can participate in several pre-reading activities. Vocabulary questions should be considered prior to reading a chapter or group of chapters; all other work should be done after the chapter has been read. Comprehension questions can be answered orally or in writing. The classroom teacher should determine the amount of work to be assigned, always keeping in mind that readers must be nurtured and that the ultimate goal is encouraging students' love of reading.

The benefits of using NOVEL-TIES are numerous. Students read good literature in the original, rather than in abridged or edited form. The good reading habits will be transferred to the books students read independently. Passive readers become active, avid readers.

## PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

1. Did you ever experience the death of a friend or relative? If so, what was your first reaction to the event? Did you deny that it had happened? Did you feel anger mingled with sadness? For how long did your feelings of mourning last? What caused you to be able to feel happiness again?
2. When someone dies, some type of memorial is often designed so that the person can be remembered by those who live. This memorial can benefit a special charity or cause for humanity. What are some other ways people are remembered after they die? How do these memorials help the people who are grieving?
3. What makes a “best friend”? If you have a best friend, what is this person like? If you do not have a best friend, what qualities would you like in a very close friend? Do you think best friends are usually people who are alike or different from one another?
4. When an emergency or unexpected accident occurs, what kind of behavior is required of onlookers? What kind of emergency facilities are available in your own neighborhood? What would you do first in the event of an emergency?
5. In the Anticipation Guide below are some statements about death and dying. Before reading the novel, express your own opinion about each statement by placing a check [✓] next to each statement with which you agree in the “YOU” column. At the conclusion of the book, place a check [✓] next to each statement with which Jamie’s friend would agree.

Statements	You	Jamie’s Friend
1. Funerals are frightening.		
2. People always cry when someone they love dies.		
3. Adults can answer all questions children have about death.		
4. It is always possible to talk about your sadness when someone dies.		
5. It is hard to play and laugh again after someone dies.		
6. Memories of a person live on.		
7. Older people feel more sadness about death than children.		

## Chapters 1, 2 (cont.)

### Questions:

1. What do the two friends enjoy doing together?
2. Even though Jamie and the narrator are best friends, Jamie is not perfect in the eyes of his friend. What does he find annoying about Jamie?
3. Why does the game of stealing apples from the farm appeal to Jamie but not to his best friend?
4. Why do the neighborhood children agree to collect Japanese beetles from Mrs. Houser's garden?
5. What risk does Jamie take to get his best friend and his sister home during a thunderstorm?

### Questions for Discussion:

1. Do you think that Jamie's behavior at the apple orchard and then during the storm proved that he was a daring boy or a foolish boy?
2. Do you have a best friend? Why do you like to be with this friend and share things together? Are you similar or different? What are some of the activities the two of you do together?

### Literary Devices:

1. *Simile* — A simile is a figure of speech in which two unlike objects are compared using the words "as" or "like." For example:

I felt like glass.

What is being compared?

---

Why might a person who is being closely watched feel like glass?

---

---