

Novel•Ties

Dear Mr. Henshaw

Beverly Cleary



A Study Guide

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LEARNING LINKS

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For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide consists of lessons to use in conjunction with the book *Dear Mr. Henshaw*. 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.

PAGES 1 - 19 [HarperTrophy Edition]

Vocabulary: Organize each group of three words into a series. Number the words from 1 to 3 and tell why you have grouped them this way. For example:

pink ¹	maroon ³	red ²	—	light to dark
viola ²	cello ³	violin ¹	—	small to large

1. howl cry whimper

2. transitory permanent mobile

3. quadruplicate duplicate triplicate

4. adolescent infant grownup

Figurative Language:

There are many expressions in our language that do not mean exactly what they say. For example, Leigh writes, “If my Dad was here, he would tell you to *go climb a tree*.” Dad wouldn’t want Mr. Henshaw to actually climb a tree. What does he actually mean?

Give some examples of other figurative expressions that do not mean exactly what they say.

Read to find out how Leigh began to write to an author.

PAGES 20 - 37

Vocabulary: There are many words in English that have several shades of meaning. A knowledge of one meaning or an understanding of one part of a word can sometimes unlock a new meaning. Try to answer the following questions, using a dictionary only if necessary.

1. If the prefix “du” means two, how many floors has a duplex apartment?

2. If being “thrifty” means to budget your money carefully and not waste it on unnecessary luxuries, what is a thrift shop?

3. If overeating rich food could cause stomach “cramps,” what could cause writer’s cramp?

4. If a foundation “supports” a building, and legs “support” a table top, what is a monthly support payment?

Read to find out how divorce affected Leigh’s life.

Questions:

1. How did Leigh’s life change after his parents’ divorce?
2. Why did Leigh continue to answer Mr. Henshaw’s questions?
3. What advice did Mr. Henshaw give Leigh about becoming an author? Why would keeping a diary be one way of following this advice?
4. Why did Leigh enjoy helping Mr. Fridley with the flags?
5. What problems did Leigh have at lunchtime?
6. How were Leigh’s and Mr. Henshaw’s feelings about letter-writing changing? How do you know?

Questions for Discussion:

1. If Leigh wrote to you and not Mr. Henshaw, what advice would you give him?
2. Why do you think Mr. Henshaw’s attitude about his correspondence with Leigh is changing?