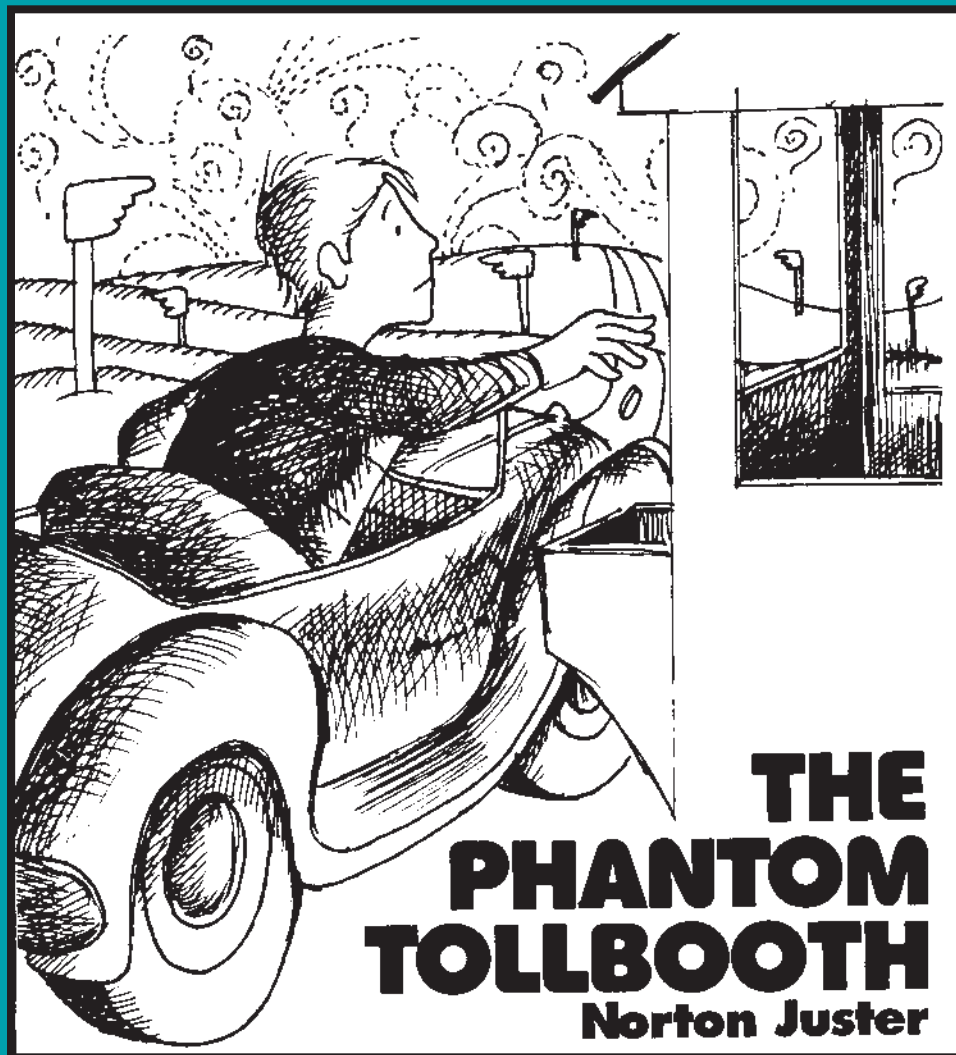


# Novel•Ties



## A Study Guide

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### LEARNING LINKS

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## For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide to use in conjunction with the novel *Phantom Tollbooth* consists of lessons for guided reading. 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 at its own 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 reading development 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; 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, formed by practice in focusing on interpretive comprehension and literary techniques, will be transferred to the books students read independently. Passive readers become active, avid readers.

## PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

1. Preview the book by reading the title and author's name and by looking at the illustration on the cover. What do you think this book will be about? Do you think the book depicts reality or is it a fantasy? Is it serious, humorous, or both?
2. Have you ever complained that you are bored? Under what circumstances might you feel bored? What can you do to avoid being bored? Do you know anyone who complains about being bored all the time? What might this person do to reduce boredom?
3. Before you read *The Phantom Tollbooth*, make yourself aware of the many ways that language is used in a non-literal way. For example, if someone told you not *to rock the boat*, chances are you are not literally aboard a boat, but you are being warned not to create difficulties. Assign each of your classmates the task of collecting at least five examples of non-literal language from everyday speech, commercials, written advertisements, and newspaper articles. Collect these findings in a class album.
4. Much of the humor in *The Phantom Tollbooth* involves plays on words. In a chart, such as the one below, explain each term and provide additional examples as you read the book.

Term/Definition	Example	Other Examples
pun	spelling bee	
idiom	square meal	
figurative language	bee in your bonnet	
nonsense words	Insecticus Humbugium	

5. How does language reveal a person's character? Do you think it is fair to judge someone by his or her speech and use of language? What criteria might be used instead?
6. Discuss the characteristics of a fantasy: imaginary setting, exaggerated characters, personified animals, curious occurrences, people with special powers. Which books of fantasy have you read? What was "fantastic" about them?
7. *The Phantom Tollbooth* is a fantasy which takes place in an imaginary land. Discuss other fantasies in books and films in which a character enters an imaginary land in an unusual way. You might include Lucy entering Narnia through a wardrobe, Alice falling into a rabbit hole to enter Wonderland, and Dorothy being blown into Oz by a cyclone.
8. **Cooperative Learning Activity:** Divide the class into two groups. Each group should choose a leader and a recorder or conduct a brainstorming session in preparation for a class debate. One group will elicit support for the position that words are more important than numbers, while the other group will elicit support for the position that numbers are more important than words. When each group has collected enough supporting arguments, conduct a class debate. Afterwards, the entire class can vote on which group presented the more convincing arguments. As you read the book, discuss whether this issue ever seems settled.

## Chapters 1, 2 (cont.)

### Questions for Discussion:

1. Milo finds himself in a land called “Expectations.” What are your expectations for this book? For this year? Do expectations change?
2. Describe a time when you have been in “the doldrums.” How did you get out?

### Language Study: Homophones

Homophones are words that have the same sound but different meanings. For example: *whether* and *weather*. Confusion of one homophone for another can result in amusement or confusion. Choose the appropriate homophone in each sentence below. Then write a sentence using the other word in each homophone pair.

1. Go \_\_\_\_\_ at the corner. (*right, write*)  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Find a \_\_\_\_\_ of shoes that look comfortable and try them on. (*pear, pair*)  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_ out your claim so no one will dig on your land. (*steak, stake*)  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. After I ate a big meal, the \_\_\_\_\_ on my skirt felt tight. (*waist, waste*)  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. The gym was a \_\_\_\_\_ of great excitement when our team won the championship. (*seen, scene*)  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Readers Theater:

Read Chapter Two aloud as though it were a play. Classmates should read the roles of narrator, Milo, the Whether Man, several Lethargians, and the Watchdog. Characters read only the parts of the text within quotation marks, while the narrator reads the connecting text.

### Writing Activity:

Suppose Milo met a different group of people on this part of his journey. Write an account of a visit he might have had with a group called the Busyniks, the Contraries, the Latelies, the Hurriers, or a group of your choice.