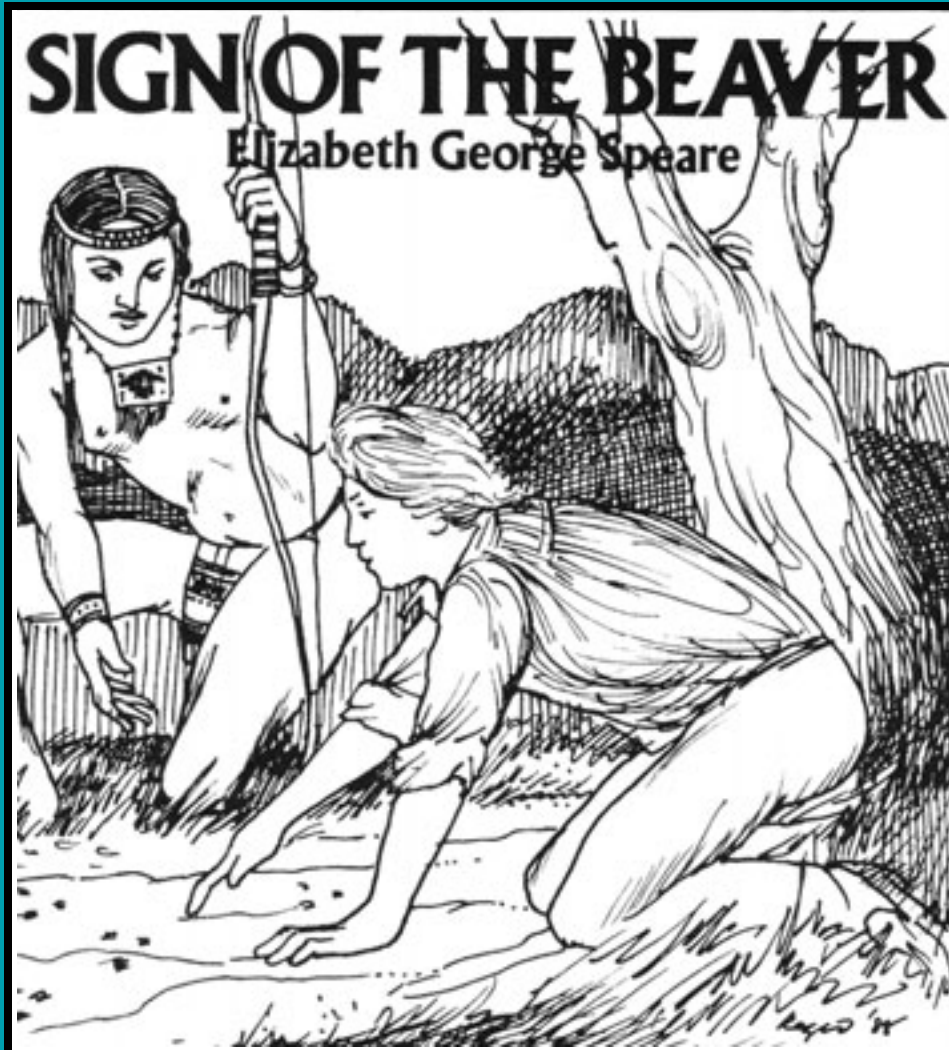


Novel·Ties



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 book *The Sign of the Beaver* 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 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 student. 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 student's 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 the author's name and by looking at the illustration on the cover. What do you think the story will be about? Where and when do you think this story takes place?
2. Read the Background Information on page two of this study guide and do some additional research to learn about the French and Indian War. Find out how the war affected the settlers and the Native Americans.
3. Do some research in the library or on the Internet to learn about the life of Native Americans in the Northeast. Learn about the Iroquois and the Algonquins; notice what they wore and the shelters they used. Find out how they lived in harmony with their environment.
4. Have you ever had a friend who came from a background totally different from your own? Has this difference caused you to have any misunderstandings? What aspects of your personalities helped you to remain friends despite these differences?
5. How are Native Americans discriminated against in America today? How did this attitude come about? How do many school textbooks, novels, and films depict Native Americans? In what ways has the media reinforced false notions of the Native American character?
6. **Cooperative Learning Activity:** With a small group of your classmates, imagine that you were left to survive on your own in the woods. Your shelter would be a log cabin without electricity or running water. Your only tool would be a hatchet, and you would possess only the clothes you were wearing. Have one group member record how you would obtain food, light a fire, obtain additional clothing, and protect yourselves against foraging or predatory animals. Compare your responses to those of other groups in your classroom.
7. Historical fiction is a type of literature in which fictional characters play out their roles against a background true to a historical period. As you read *The Sign of the Beaver*, try to determine which details are historical and which ones are made up by the author.
8. In a class discussion, brainstorm the ways people today could live in better harmony with their environment. What are some of the ways people in your locality work to preserve the environment? What are some of the ways people in your locality pollute the environment? What are some possible solutions to these environmental problems?

CHAPTERS 1, 2

Vocabulary: Synonyms are words with similar meanings. Draw a line from each word in column A to its synonym in column B. Then use the words in column A to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

- | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. matchlock | a. explore |
| 2. chinking | b. lone |
| 3. rummaging | c. searching |
| 4. mournful | d. musket |
| 5. solitary | e. awful |
| 6. proprietor | f. owner |
| 7. horrid | g. sad |
| 8. venture | h. filling |

.....

1. We felt sad as we observed the _____ swan that had lost its mate.
2. No one could forget the _____ tales of fishermen losing their lives in severe storms.
3. _____ in the spaces between the logs in a cabin will keep out the wind and rain.
4. The clanging of the trash can cover alerted us that a raccoon was _____ through the garbage.
5. The _____ sound of the fog horn made me feel homesick.
6. People living on the frontier believed they needed a _____ for protection.
7. When I had a problem with my purchases, the clerk sent me to the _____ of the store.
8. Beware of snakes as you _____ into the woods.

Read to find out how Matt's father prepared his son to be on his own.

Questions:

1. Why was Matt left alone at the log cabin in Maine?
2. Why did Matt need to keep track of the days?