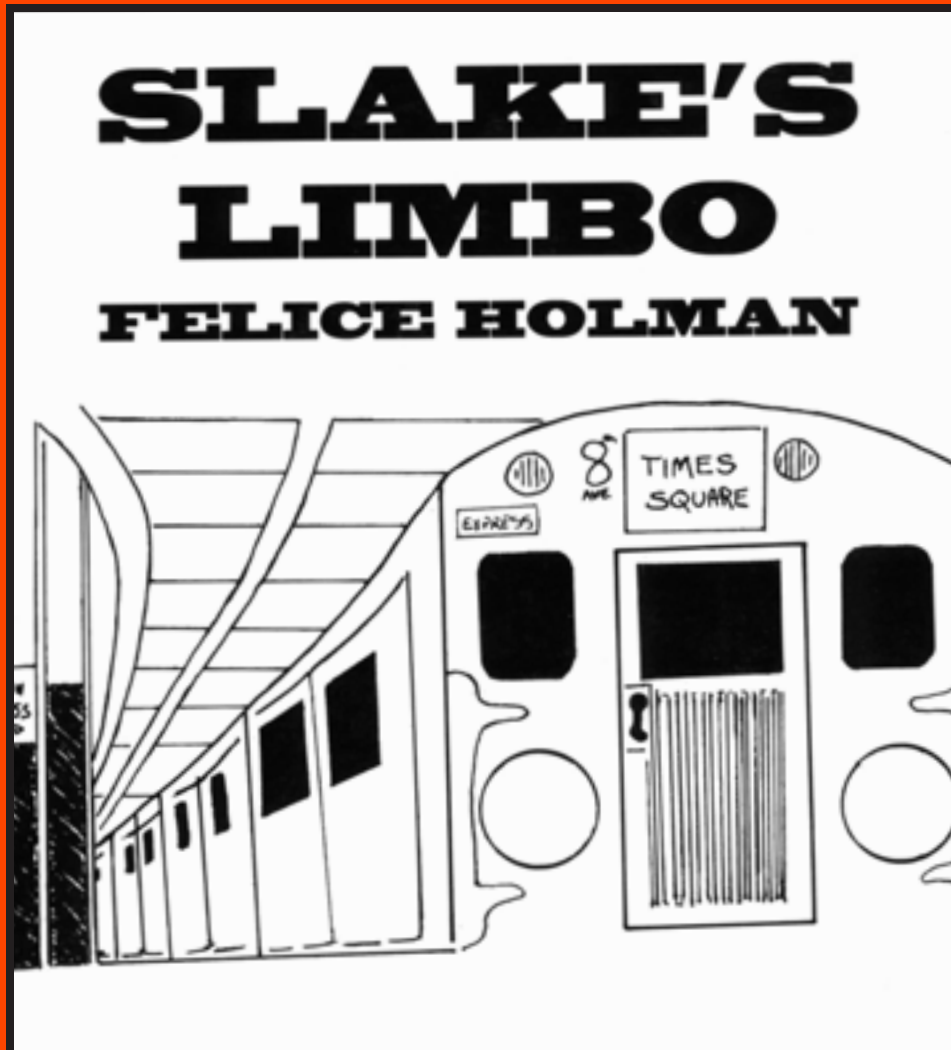


Novel•Ties



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 a specific novel. 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.

NOVEL-TIES are either for whole class instruction using a single title or for group instruction where each group uses a different novel appropriate to its reading level. Depending upon the amount of time allotted to it in the classroom, each novel, with its guide and accompanying lessons, may be completed in two to four weeks.

The first step in using NOVEL-TIES is to distribute to each student a copy of the novel and a folder containing all of the duplicated worksheets. Begin instruction by selecting several pre-reading activities in order to set the stage for the reading ahead. Vocabulary exercises for each chapter always precede the reading so that new words will be reinforced in the context of the book. Use the questions on the chapter worksheets for class discussion or as written exercises.

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 the book will be about? Where and when does it take place? Have you read any other books by the same author?
2. **Cooperative Learning Activity:** Work with a small group of your classmates to discuss and then chart the ways a person might survive in any one of the following environments:
 - remote mountain
 - tropical island
 - metropolitan city
 - frigid tundra

Consider the basic elements of survival such as food, clothing, and shelter, as well as additional needs for physical protection and recreation.

3. Imagine that you are a runaway—alone, without food or money, and with only the clothes you are wearing. List the kinds of practical and academic skills you would need to survive alone on the streets of a city.
4. Read the Background Information on the New York City subway system on page two of this study guide. Find photographs, if possible, of some of the larger and more famous underground stations, such as Times Square and Grand Central Station, with their maze of arcades, tunnels, and platforms. Do you think a person could live in one of these cavernous areas?
5. Do some research on a rapid transit or other public transportation system in your local area or in a nearby city. Find out when it was built, how much the construction project cost, and how many passengers use the system. If possible, obtain a map of the system. Plan a two or more hour route that would include places of interest.
6. Imagine that you are standing in the middle of a railroad track, viewing the lines of the track to the distant horizon. What happens to these separate tracks as they recede into the distance? Do they really meet or is it only an optical illusion? Now skim through *Slake's Limbo* and notice the story-within-a-story called "On Another Track." As you read the book, keep in mind the visual image of the receding tracks.
7. Obtain a map of the New York City subway system by signing on to the following website: www.mta.nyc.ny.us/nyct/maps. As you read *Slake's Limbo* use the map to trace the routes of Slake's subway journeys.

Chapters 1, 2 (cont.)

Language Study: Multiple-Meaning Words

Many words in English have more than one meaning. For example, *limb* can mean “jointed animal parts, such as a leg or arm.” *Limb* can also mean “a large branch of a tree.” Read the following sentences and circle the appropriate definition for each underlined word.

1. Slake was surprised that the buildings downtown didn't have front stoops where the people could gather.
 - a. platforms with steps at the entrance of a building
 - b. bends forward
2. The boy would weave and tack toward the subway while trying to get away from his attackers.
 - a. fasten with short, broad nails
 - b. zigzag from one direction to another
3. The boy dreamed that he was running on a track bed as a train approached him head on.
 - a. flat base on which something rests
 - b. place where a person sleeps
4. The runners were panting when they reached the last lap of the race.
 - a. front part from the waist to the knees of a person sitting down
 - b. part of any course traveled

Questions:

1. Why did Aramis Slake keep a subway token in his pocket?
2. Why was Slake useless to any gang?
3. Why did Slake often awake gagging?
4. Who was Joseph? What happened to him?
5. How did Slake's teachers, classmates, and others regard him?
6. What drove Slake back down to the subway that first afternoon?
7. Where did Slake find a new home? How long did he stay there?
8. Who were Mr. Coggins and Mr. Murone?