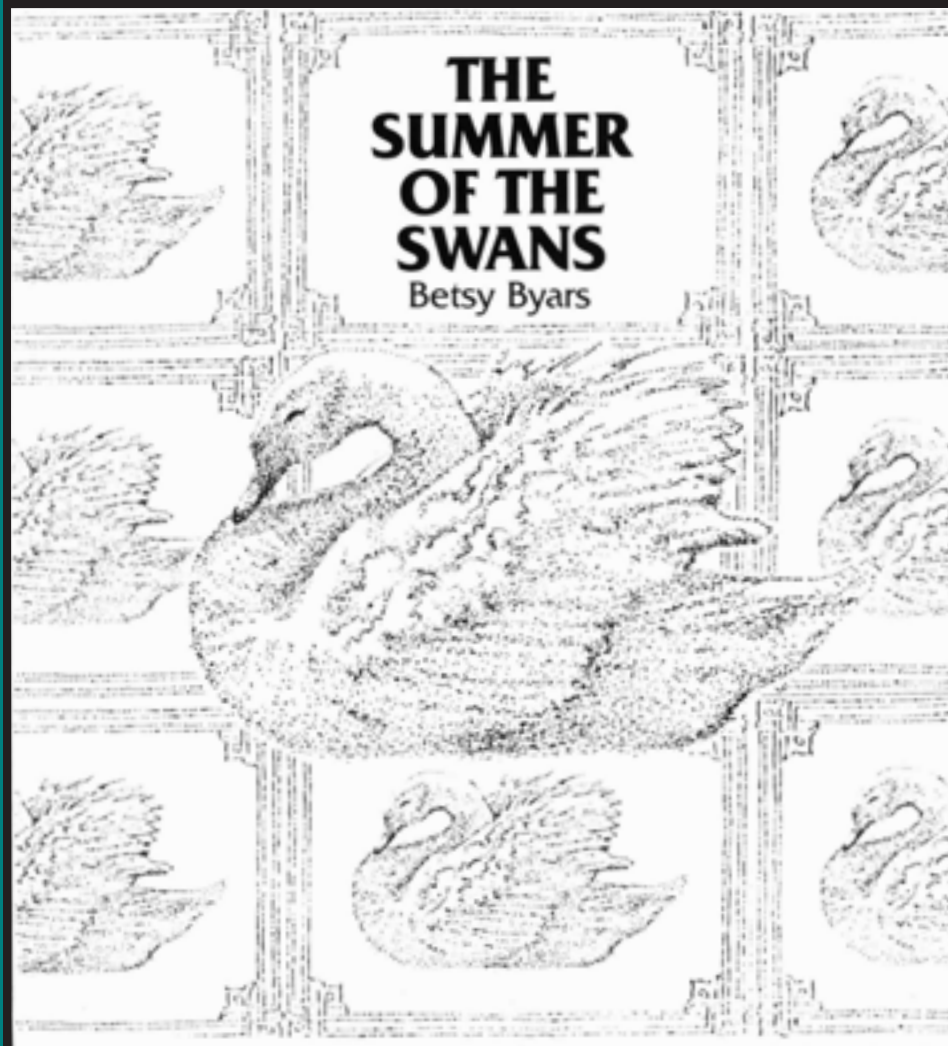


Novel·Ties



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 *The Summer of the Swans* 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.

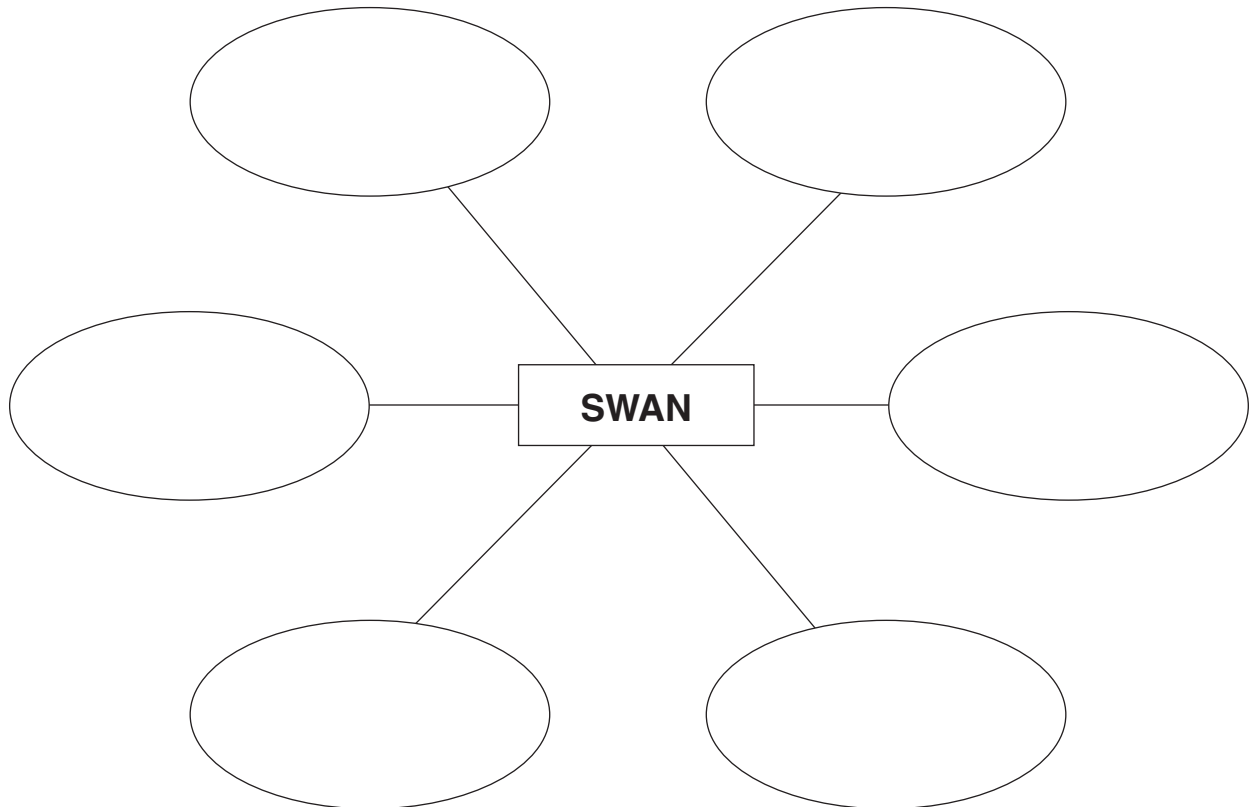
In a homogeneous classroom, whole class instruction with one title is appropriate. In a heterogeneous classroom, reading groups should be formed: each group works on a different novel at its own reading level. Depending upon the length of time devoted to reading in the classroom, each novel, with its 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 Questions and Activities (cont.)

9. What words come to mind when you think of a swan? On the word web below, write a word in each circle that describes a swan. After you finish the novel, compare your feelings about swans with those of Sara and Charlie. Create another web to show Sara and Charlie's feelings about swans.



Chapters 1 – 4 (cont.)

3. Although Charlie cannot answer her, Sara talks to him about her feelings. What does this reveal about Sara’s feelings for her brother?
4. Contrast the different ways that Wanda and Sara deal with their brother’s mental retardation outside the family.
5. What doesn’t Sara like about Aunt Willie? What evidence shows that Aunt Willie isn’t really a bad person?

Questions for Discussion:

1. Do you think Sara’s feelings of inferiority, as she compares herself to Wanda, are realistic?
2. Why do you think Sara uses Charlie as a sounding board for her problems?
3. Do you think it is fair for Aunt Willie to make Sara take Charlie along with her to see the swans?

Literary Device: Simile

A simile is a figure of speech in which two unlike objects are compared using the words “like” or “as.” For example:

She [Aunt Willie] held the dish towel in front of her, like a matador taunting a bull.

What is being compared?

What does this reveal about Aunt Willie?

Find another example of a simile. Tell what is being compared and the effect of the comparison.
