

# Novel·Ties

## WORDS BY HEART

Ouida Sebestyen



## 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 *Words by Heart*. 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.

**CHAPTERS 1, 2**

**Vocabulary:** Draw a line from each word on the left to its definition on the right. Then use the numbered words to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 1. quote    | a. silly or nervous giggles   |
| 2. overstep | b. place where cotton is processed by using a machine to separate the seeds and hulls from cotton |
| 3. gin      | c. repeat the exact words of another person or from a piece of writing                            |
| 4. smarting | d. person who is against another person in a fight, game, contest, etc.                           |
| 5. titters  | e. feeling upset from being hurt or angry   |
| 6. opponent | f. go beyond the limits   |

.....

1. When Bob learned that he was much younger than his \_\_\_\_\_ in the contest, he withdrew his name.
2. There were \_\_\_\_\_ from the audience when Ellen forgot her lines.
3. You may be a team manager, but be careful not to \_\_\_\_\_ your authority.
4. He worked at the \_\_\_\_\_ in a small town in Louisiana.
5. They were surprised to hear the old man \_\_\_\_\_ Shakespeare.
6. Even though three weeks have passed, Jill is still \_\_\_\_\_ from your insults.

**Questions:**

1. What did Lena mean when she claimed to have a “Magic Mind”? Why did she want to win the Bible-quoting contest?
2. What did Tater Haney do to show his hostility toward Lena and her family as they drove to the schoolhouse? Why was Tater still “smarting”?
3. Describe Lena’s only real opponent in the Bible-quoting contest.
4. The first Bible verse that Lena quoted was: “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.” Why do you think Lena chose that particular verse?

**CHAPTERS 3, 4**

**Vocabulary:** Synonyms are words with similar meanings. Use the context of the sentences below to find the best synonym for each underlined word. Circle the letter of the word you choose.

1. She always carried her books in a satchel.  
a. bag                      b. bunch                      c. strap                      d. heap
2. It took audacity for him to speak up to the principal.  
a. stupidity                      b. boldness                      c. anxiety                      d. influence
3. Jim was appalled to learn that someone had broken into his home.  
a. confused                      b. overjoyed                      c. pleased                      d. dismayed
4. The old man looked gaunt and pale after his stay in the hospital.  
a. thin                      b. ugly                      c. sick                      d. odd
5. Andrea felt chastened by his rebuke; she knew she deserved it.  
a. punished                      b. weakened                      c. slapped                      d. hurt
6. Several men gawked at the small woman as she climbed into a huge tractor trailer and drove away.  
a. frowned                      b. yelled                      c. stared                      d. laughed
7. Lenny was apprehensive about taking a test for which he hadn't studied.  
a. joyful                      b. fearful                      c. secretive                      d. angry

**Questions:**

1. Why was Lena delighted with an old outdated newspaper?
2. How did Lena's papa feel about war? On what did he base his conviction?
3. Why did Lena's papa take her down by the cottonwood trees to talk to her?
4. What did Claudie mean when she said, "The hoping time is over again"?
5. Why wouldn't Papa allow Lena to display hatred toward Tater?
6. What was the "life-and-death real worry" that Papa "was struggling with in his soul"?
7. Why did Lena dread working for Mrs. Chism?
8. What did Lena learn about Mrs. Chism's relationship with her husband and children? Do you think Mrs. Chism was a happy woman? Explain your answer.