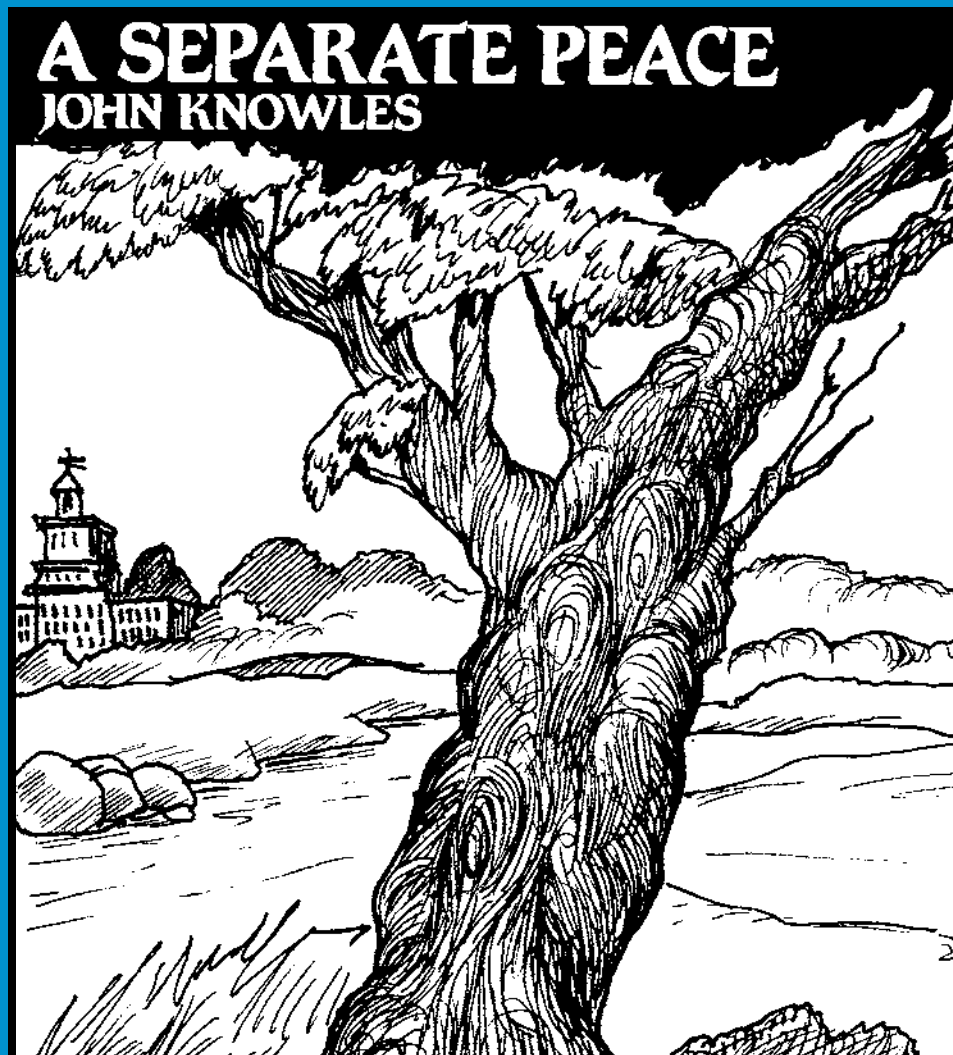


# Novel·Ties



## **A SEPARATE PEACE** **JOHN KNOWLES**

### A Study Guide

Written By Joyce Friedland and Rikki Kessler

**LEARNING LINKS**

P.O. Box 326 • Cranbury • New Jersey 08512

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## For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide consists of instructional material to use in conjunction with the novel *A Separate Peace*. 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. Conduct interviews with grandparents or adult friends in order to learn about the effects of World War II on life at home. You might use some of the following sample questions:
  - Did you or anyone you know fight in the war? Describe the experience.
  - Was there any preparation for war in the school you attended?
  - Was your school life altered in any way because of the war?
  - How did you receive your information about the progress of the war (newspaper, radio broadcast, word-of-mouth)?

If necessary, use the Korean War, the Vietnam War, or the War in Iraq as a reference point instead of World War II.

2. Do some research about World War II and learn how America became involved. View any videos that are available to you on the subject.
3. Consider the parallel that exists between war on the international level and rivalries on an interpersonal level. Describe a personal war you experienced with one of your peers. What caused the rivalry? What were the effects of the conflict? How was it resolved? Was anything learned from this experience?
4. Since this novel takes place at the Devon School, a typical Eastern preparatory school, go online to learn about schools such as Choate or Phillips Exeter Academy. If you have never attended or visited a prep school, look at photographs and read descriptions of several of these schools. This will give you some understanding of life at a boarding school.
5. Is there a person whom you would consider your best friend? If so, do you have similar interests and personalities? Do you discuss problems and share good times together? Even though this is your closest friend, could you imagine a time when you might have feelings of jealousy or rage against this person? What could trigger such negative feelings?
6. The “point of view” in literature refers to the voice who is telling the story. These are the possible points of view in a novel:
  - Third person omniscient narrator
  - Third person limited narrator
  - First person narrator

Each point of view has distinct advantages and limitations for the author. For example, the third person omniscient narrator has the advantage of being able to view all of the characters’ actions with some objectivity, but sometimes suffers from a lack of involvement or immediacy. Quickly skim the first two pages of the novel to determine the point of view offered in this novel. Consider the advantages and shortcomings of this form of presentation.

## Chapter 1 (cont.)

### Questions for Discussion:

1. What do you think Phineas meant when he shouted, “Here’s my contribution to the war effort” as he swung from the line into the river?
2. Why do you think Gene jumped?

### Literary Devices:

- I. *Metaphor*—A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a comparison between two unlike objects is suggested or implied. For example:

The tree was tremendous, an irate, steely black steeple beside the river.

What two things are being compared?

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What visual image and what mood does this language create?

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- II. *Flashback*—A flashback is a scene or series of scenes showing events which happened at an earlier time. At what point in Chapter One did the flashback begin? What visual image triggered the switch to past time?
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### Writing Activity:

As the narrator walked around the Devon campus, he mused, “I had always felt that the Devon School came into existence the day I entered it, was vibrantly real while I was a student there, and then blinked out like a candle the day I left.” Write about a time when you had a similar thought about a school you attended, a house you lived in, or any other place that elicited a similar emotion.