

Novel·Ties

The War Between the Classes Gloria D. Miklowitz



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 a specific novel consists of instructional material 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.

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.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – JAPANESE INTERNMENT CAMPS

When the bombing of Pearl Harbor by Japan in 1941 thrust the United States into World War II, many Japanese Americans suffered a terrible consequence. At the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor, there were approximately 127,000 people of Japanese ancestry living and working in the United States. This number included loyal first-generation immigrants as well as Japanese-American citizens born and raised in the United States. Even though the Japanese community had contributed significantly to the economy of the United States since the late 1800s, Japanese Americans had always faced racial discrimination in the United States. The events of World War II served to escalate this hatred and intolerance.

As the war intensified, a Japanese attack on the West Coast of the United States was feared. Japanese Americans living on the coast quickly came under suspicion. Many were thought to be security risks and were detained or arrested. Strategic areas were declared off-limits to all Japanese Americans. Finally as pressure from politicians, the press, and the general public grew, the U.S. government made a decision to set up “relocation” camps to house the Japanese-American population of the West Coast.

It was in these crude, desolate internment camps that thousands of Japanese Americans were forced to live during the war. Driven to sell or forfeit property and personal belongings, unable to control their own lives, the Japanese Americans suffered both physical and emotional hardships at the camps. It was an experience that destroyed families and brought shame and anger to a proud group of people. It was an experience that would continue to influence the lives of Japanese Americans long after the war ended.

Pre-Reading Activities (cont.)

6. As a class, discuss the role that tradition plays in modern families. Talk about traditions that can strengthen family bonds and create feelings of pride. Give examples of traditions that are old-fashioned and inappropriate in today's society. Do you think tradition is important to people? Cite personal examples to support your opinion.

7. Keep a weekly journal for yourself. In the journal, describe any examples of discrimination or social injustice that you encounter during the week. Your findings might include real-life situations as well as examples of discrimination portrayed on television or in the movies. You might also find material for your journal in books, magazines, or newspapers that you read during the week. As you write, explain how each situation made you feel and how the situation could have been corrected. After a week is over, meet with a group of your classmates. Discuss and compare the journal entries that you made.