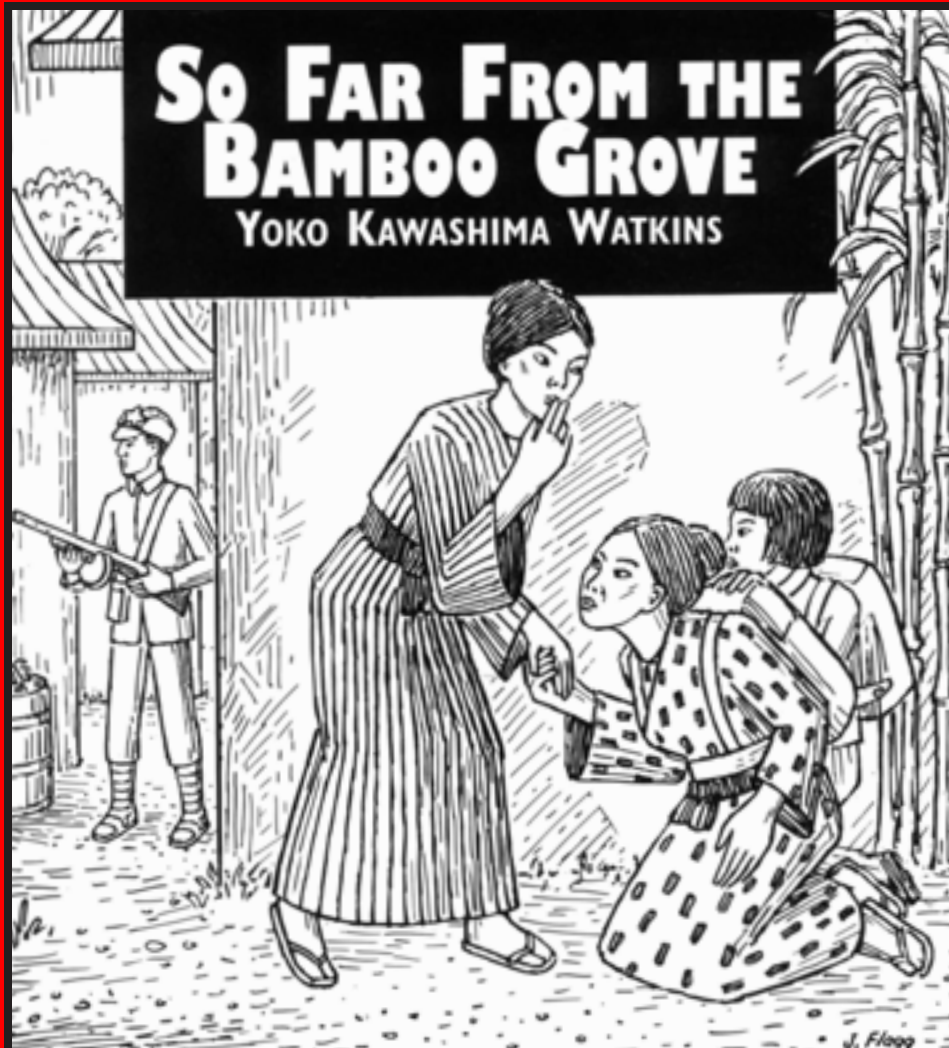


Novel·Ties



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 the book *So Far From the Bamboo Grove*. 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 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 ACTIVITIES

1. Locate Korea on a world map. Then look at the map of Korea at the beginning of the book. Find the 38th parallel which divides Communist North Korea from South Korea. Locate Nanam, the town in North Korea where the Kawashima family lives when the story opens. As you read the story, use the map to help you trace the family's journey. Also locate Manchuria, a part of China, and the Russian port cities of Vladivostok and Nakhodka. Notice their proximity to North Korea.
2. Read the publisher's notes at the end of the book and do some additional research on the history of Korea. Learn about its relationship with Japan. Why did the Koreans have grievances against the Japanese? As you read the book, continue to refer to the publisher's notes to gain a historical perspective on the story as it unfolds.
3. This novel will help you gain a better understanding of what life is like for civilians in a war-torn country. Before you begin to read, collect some newspaper and magazine articles which describe the effects of war or violent conflict on a civilian population. Share your findings with your classmates.
4. If you had to leave home suddenly, taking with you only what you could carry in a backpack, what items would you take with you? Make a list containing items you would need for survival, as well as some special items with personal meaning for you.
5. Yoko, the main character in this novel, must enroll in a new school in a new city when she arrives in Japan. Have you ever had to change to a new school? What are some fears or worries you had before you made the change?
6. Read the author's dedication at the beginning of the book. What role do you think Catherine Woolley played in Yoko Kawashima Watkin's life?
7. Find some examples of calligraphy, or Chinese brush writing. Try to determine why this form of writing is considered a fine art in China. Then do some research to learn about the role of calligraphy in Imperial China and its importance in modern China.

Chapter 1 (cont.)

4. What news does Mr. Enomoto give his students? Why isn't Yoko as upset as some of her classmates?
5. Why does Corporal Matsumura feel grateful to Yoko's family? How does their relationship with him prove to be helpful to the family?
6. How do Yoko's parents feel about Japan's war policies?
7. What important decision does Hideyo make? How does Ko try to convince her brother not to do this? How effective is her plea?
8. Why must the three women flee to the train station?

Questions for Discussion:

1. Why do you think Japanese soldiers treated Mother, Yoko, and Ko so brutally?
2. Why do you think Yoko's parents make sure their children's education continues during wartime, particularly emphasizing calligraphy and the tea ceremony?
3. Do you think Mother should have waited for Hideyo's return before leaving? How do you think she and her daughters will manage on their own?

Literary Devices:

- I. *Simile* — A simile is a figure of speech in which two unlike objects are compared using the words "like" or "as." For example:

So tiny, this hand. Like a miniature maple leaf.

What is Corporal Matsumura comparing?

What is the effect of this comparison?

Complete each of the following phrases with a simile of your own.

1. The air raid siren was as loud as _____

2. The shovel which Yoko used to dig ditches was as heavy as _____

3. Yoko danced as gracefully as a _____
