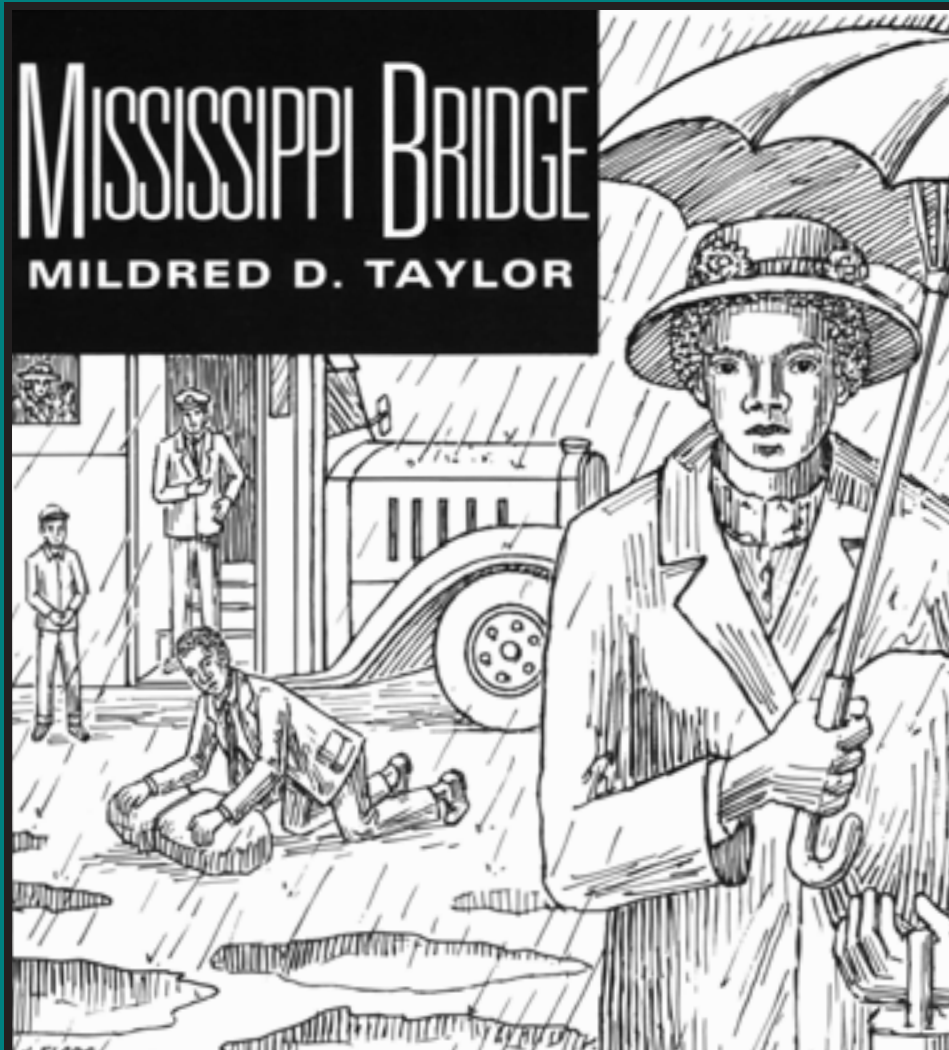


Novel·Ties



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 a specific novel 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 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 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 AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Preview the book by reading the title and looking at the illustration on the cover. What do you think *Mississippi Bridge* will be about? Where and when does it take place? Have you read any other books by the same author?
2. Read the Background Information on page two of this study guide to learn how the Reconstruction Era affected the lives of African Americans in the 1930s. As you read *Mississippi Bridge*, notice how the author weaves together this history with the fictional lives of the Logan family.
3. **Social Studies Connection:** On a map of the United States, locate the state of Mississippi. On a map of Mississippi, locate the city of Jackson and the Natchez Trace. Do some research to learn about these places.
4. Has anyone ever made fun of you because of a physical characteristic? How did their behavior make you feel? Have you ever made fun of another person? How did this make you feel?
5. **Cooperative Learning Activity:** Work with a cooperative learning group to discuss the meaning of the word “prejudice.” What does this word mean to you? Think of books you have read or TV programs you have seen that dealt with the subject of racial prejudice. Describe the effects of prejudice on its victims and its perpetrators.
6. **Social Studies Connection:** Do some research on the Great Depression, and write a list of questions you have about life during that time. Use your questions to interview adults who remember the 1930s or who heard stories about that time. Present the results of your interviews in an oral report to your class.
7. Look up the term *civil rights*. Read the Bill of Rights—the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution. What are your civil rights? Why are they important? How are they protected?
8. The author, Mildred D. Taylor dedicated this book to her “beloved father, the storyteller.” Elsewhere Taylor wrote:

From as far back as I can remember my father taught me a different history from the one I learned in school It was a history of ordinary people, some brave, some not so brave, but basically people who had done nothing more spectacular than survive in a society designed for their destruction.*

From this little bit of information, what can you conclude about the character of the author’s father and the role he played in his daughter’s life?

*From *Contemporary Authors*, Volumes 85–88, p. 579. (Detroit: Gale Research, 1980.)

PAGES 7 – 21 [Bantam Skylark Edition]

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. asserted | a. moving clumsily or heavily |
| 2. sharecropper | b. raised a lip to show contempt |
| 3. humiliation | c. claimed; declared positively |
| 4. lumbering (<i>verb</i>) | d. cutting and preparing timber |
| 5. lumbering (<i>adjective</i>) | e. tenant farmer who pays a part of the crop as rent |
| 6. slur | f. unkind remark; criticism |
| 7. sneered | g. disgrace |

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- I felt sorry for my brothers as I watched them _____ along under the weight of their heavy backpacks.
- The actor was insulted by the _____ he overheard coming from the audience.
- Even though the hike will be long and dangerous, I _____ my right to make an attempt.
- Being a(n) _____, my father worried that there would not be any vegetables left over for our family once he paid his portion as rent.
- My feelings were hurt when my classmates _____ at my old-fashioned clothes.
- If the forests are cut down, the people who work in the _____ business will lose their jobs.
- My _____ was complete when I lost my voice in the middle of my vocal solo.

Read to find out how African Americans are the object of prejudice at the Wallace store.

Questions:

- Why do the men spend so much time at the Wallace store?
- How is Mr. John Wallace's treatment of Rudine Johnson and her mama different from his treatment of Miz Hattie and Grace-Anne? What does this reveal about Mr. John Wallace?