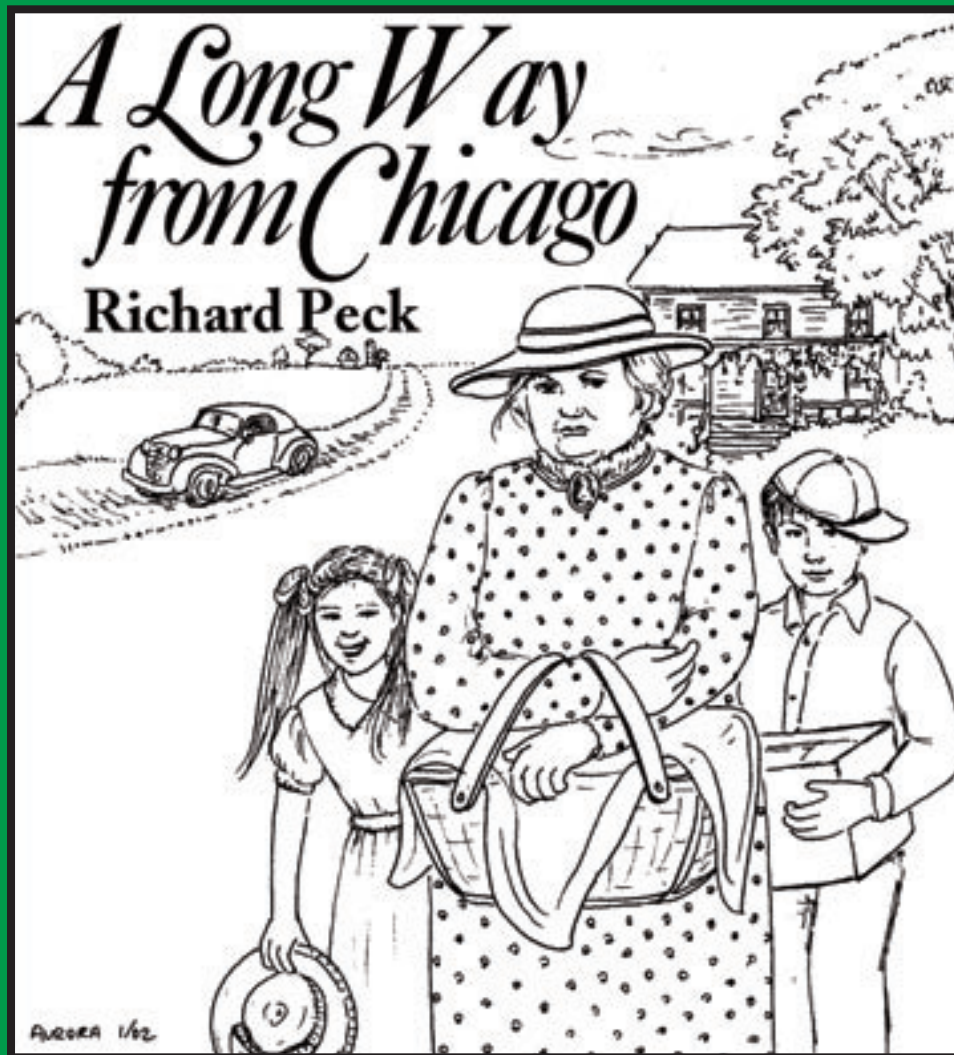


Novel•Ties



A Study Guide

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LEARNING LINKS

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For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide consists of instructional material to use in conjunction with the book *A Long Way From Chicago*. 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 at 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 QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Preview the book by looking at the title, the author's name, and the illustration on the cover. Look at the Table of Contents at the beginning of the book. What do you think the book will be about? Do you think it takes place in the present or in the past? Have you read any other books by Richard Peck, the author of this book?
2. **Social Studies Connection:** Read the Background Information on page two of this study guide and do some additional research on the Great Depression. Brainstorm with a small group of classmates to fill in a K-W-L chart, such as the one below. Record what you know in the first column. List your questions in the second column. When you finish the book, record what you learned in the third column.

The Great Depression		
What I Know -K-	What I Want to Know -W-	What I Learned -L-

3. Have you read any other books or seen any films that took place in the United States during the Great Depression of the 1930s? What do these books and films show about life during this time?
4. One of the main characters in this novel often bends the rules to make events come out right. When do you think it might be right to bend rules or stretch the truth? Can you think of a time when someone you know did this for a good reason?
5. Joey, the narrator, discovers that his grandmother has some unusual qualities and abilities. As he gets older, he appreciates her even more. Is there an older person in your life whom you admire or who is an inspiration to you?
6. **Social Studies Connection:** The narrator mentions some of the notorious gangs that disrupted Chicago life during the 1920s and 1930s. Do some research to find out about Chicago gangsters, particularly Al Capone and Bugs Moran. Why were these people so powerful? What was the St. Valentine's Day Massacre?
7. **Pair-Share:** With a partner, discuss ways in which small-town life and big-city life might differ. How would you expect people to work and play in the two different environments? Where would you prefer to live?
8. Find photographs and illustrations that show life in a rural town in the period from 1929 to 1935. Notice the interiors and exteriors of rural homes, the clothes people wore, and the kinds of recreational activities in which they engaged. If possible, locate pictures of automobiles of the time, particularly the Hupmobile that is referred to in the book. Display these pictures on a bulletin board in the classroom.

Prologue; Shotgun Cheatham's Last Night Above Ground; The Mouse in the Milk (cont.)

Read to find out about Joey and Mary Alice's unconventional grandmother.

Questions:

1. What did Joey mean when he said of his grandmother, "She was so big, and the town was so small"?
2. Why did Mary Alice dislike visiting Grandma Dowdel?
3. Why did Grandma tell a fib to the newspaper reporter?
4. Why did the reporter make a rapid exit through Grandma Dowdel's parlor window?
5. How did Grandma Dowdel explain the mischief done to her mailbox and Elfie Wilcox's privy?
6. Why did Grandma Dowdel tell Ernie Cowgill that she and her grandchildren would be out of town for a day?
7. Why did Grandma put a mouse in the milk bottle?

Questions for Discussion:

1. Based upon what you have read so far, how did rural life in 1929 differ from rural life today?
2. Do you think the Cowgill children received a just punishment?
3. Would you enjoy spending a week with Grandma Dowdel? What would she like about you? What might bother her about you?

Literary Element: Characterization

Place a check [✓] in the box next to each word that describes Grandma Dowdel's character. Then choose five of the checked words and provide an example of Grandma's behavior that illustrates each of these qualities.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> affectionate | <input type="checkbox"/> ignorant | <input type="checkbox"/> shrewd |
| <input type="checkbox"/> amusing | <input type="checkbox"/> practical | <input type="checkbox"/> shy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> bossy | <input type="checkbox"/> proud | <input type="checkbox"/> talkative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> confident | <input type="checkbox"/> quiet | <input type="checkbox"/> weak |
| <input type="checkbox"/> gregarious | <input type="checkbox"/> reclusive | <input type="checkbox"/> wicked |