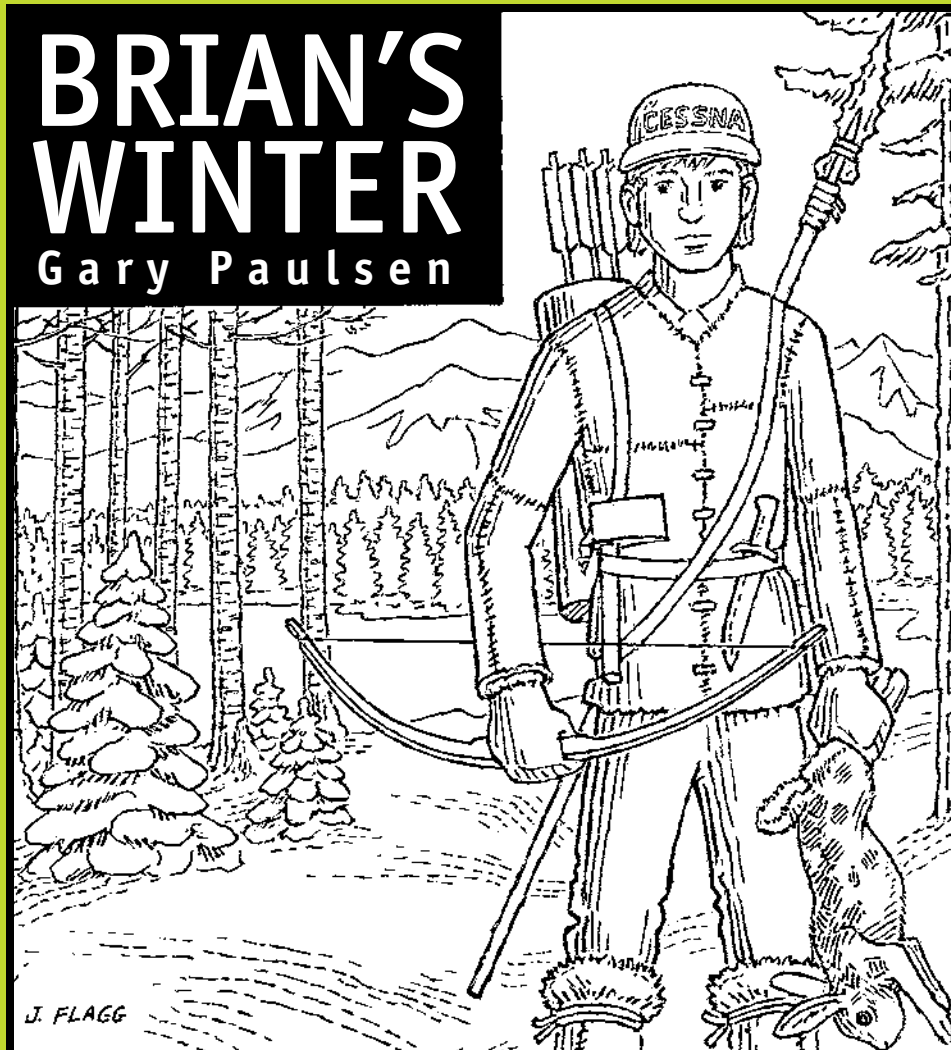


Novel·Ties



A Study Guide

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For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide to use in conjunction with *Brian's Winter* 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 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 AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Preview the book by reading the title and author's name and by looking at the illustration on the cover. What do you think the book will be about? When and where does it take place? Have you read any other books by the same author? Have you read *Hatchet* or *The River*?
2. Read the author's "Foreword" at the beginning of the book to learn why Gary Paulsen wrote *Brian's Winter*.
3. Read the Background Information on page two of this study guide and do some additional research to learn more about the Canadian wilderness. Find out about the topography, climate, human civilizations, and wildlife populations of this region. Record information in the first two columns of a K-W-L chart, such as the one below. Fill out the third column after you finish the book.

- K - What I Know	- W - What I Want To Know	- L - What I Learned

4. With your classmates, discuss books and films that explore the ordeal of survival in the wilderness. Make a list of these works, noting whether they are based on fact, fiction, or both.
5. In this novel, a character finds himself in a life-threatening situation. With a group of classmates, discuss what you might do if you found yourself in similar circumstances.
6. Find maps and photographs of the northern Canadian wilderness. Display these in your classroom as you read the book. Discuss how the environment affects animal, plant, and human life, and how living things adapt to the harsh conditions.
7. The main character in this novel survives by making a primitive shelter, clothing, and tools. Do some research to discover how people lived long ago, before the machine age. If possible, obtain some photographs or illustrations of early shelters and artifacts and post these around the classroom to consider while reading the novel.
8. In the novel, Brian finds himself in circumstances that will permanently alter his view of life. What event or situation has changed your own perspective? Write a narrative that details these circumstances and their effect on you.
9. With a group of classmates, discuss possible situations that might test a person's inner resources, such as courage, imagination, and inventiveness. Make a list of these situations. Which ones seem most challenging? Why?
10. In *Brian's Winter*, the main character spends many months without human companionship. What do you think you might discover about yourself and the world if you were completely alone for a long period of time?

CHAPTERS 1 – 3

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. boundary | a. opponent |
| 2. elude | b. animal that lives by hunting |
| 3. famished | c. line or point that fixes a limit |
| 4. grimaced | d. avoid; escape |
| 5. adversary | e. extremely hungry |
| 6. marooned | f. made an expression of disgust |
| 7. predator | g. left in isolation with little hope of escape |

.....

- Having skipped breakfast and lunch, I was _____ by dinnertime.
- The fox, afraid for its life, ran into the woods to _____ the hounds.
- When the ship foundered just offshore, the surviving crew members were _____ on the tiny island.
- The starving wolf, a fierce _____, was drawn to the sheep pen by desperate hunger.
- In the wilderness without a clue on how to survive, the boy became his own worst _____.
- The farmer built a stone wall at the northern _____ of his property.
- When shown the pictures of the accident scene, the witness _____ and turned her head away.

Read to find out how Brian begins to prepare for winter in the wilderness.

Questions:

- Why was Brian somewhat relieved when the emergency rations of food from the plane finally ran out?
- What did Brian's dreams indicate about his state of mind?
- How did the damage to the rifle raise the stakes in the game of survival in the wilderness?