

Novel·Ties

# The Boy in the Striped Pajamas

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## 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 the novel *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* 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 own 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 QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Preview the book by reading the title and the author’s name and by looking at the illustration on the cover. What do you think this book is about? Will it be serious or humorous? When and where do you think it takes place?
2. **Cooperative Learning Activity:** Read the Background Information on page two of this study guide and do some additional research to find out more about the Holocaust. Then brainstorm with a small group of classmates to fill in the first two columns of a K-W-L chart, such as the one below. When you finish the book, return to the chart and complete the third column.

**The Holocaust**

What I Know -K-	What I Want to Learn -W-	What I Learned -L-

3. **Social Studies Connection:** On a map of Europe and a globe, locate Germany and the city of Berlin, Poland and the city of Krakow, Denmark, and Switzerland, all places that are referred to in the book.
4. *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* relates to the Nazis treatment of the Jews during the Holocaust. Make a list of books and movies that portray this tragic time in history. What purpose do these books and movies serve? Do you think it is important to continue to remember the Holocaust?
5. Have you read any other books about the Holocaust set in Europe during World War II? If so, when and where did these stories take place? What did you learn about life at the time?
6. How would you characterize the Nazis who carried out the persecution and murder of the Jews? Can you imagine that these same people might have been loving and kind to their families and friends? How might this make their crimes seem even more horrible?
7. **Cooperative Learning Activity:** Work with a small cooperative learning group to discuss the meaning of the word *prejudice*. What does the word mean to you? What causes it? How can it be prevented or overcome?

### Pre-Reading Questions and Activities (cont.)

11. In the Anticipation Guide that follows, write *T* in the “Before Reading” column if the statement is true in your opinion. Write *F* if you feel the statement is false. After completing the book, mark your answers again in the “After Reading” column to see if your opinion has changed.

Statements	Before Reading	After Reading
1. It is difficult to adjust to living in a new place.		
2. When you see someone being mistreated, you should always try to help.		
3. Sometimes it is better not to know if something horrible is going on around you.		
4. It is difficult for children to see the faults of their parents.		
5. A person can be kind to some people and cruel to others.		
6. Betrayal of a friend is unforgivable.		
7. People are more alike than they are different.		
8. It is possible to judge someone even before you get to know that person as an individual.		