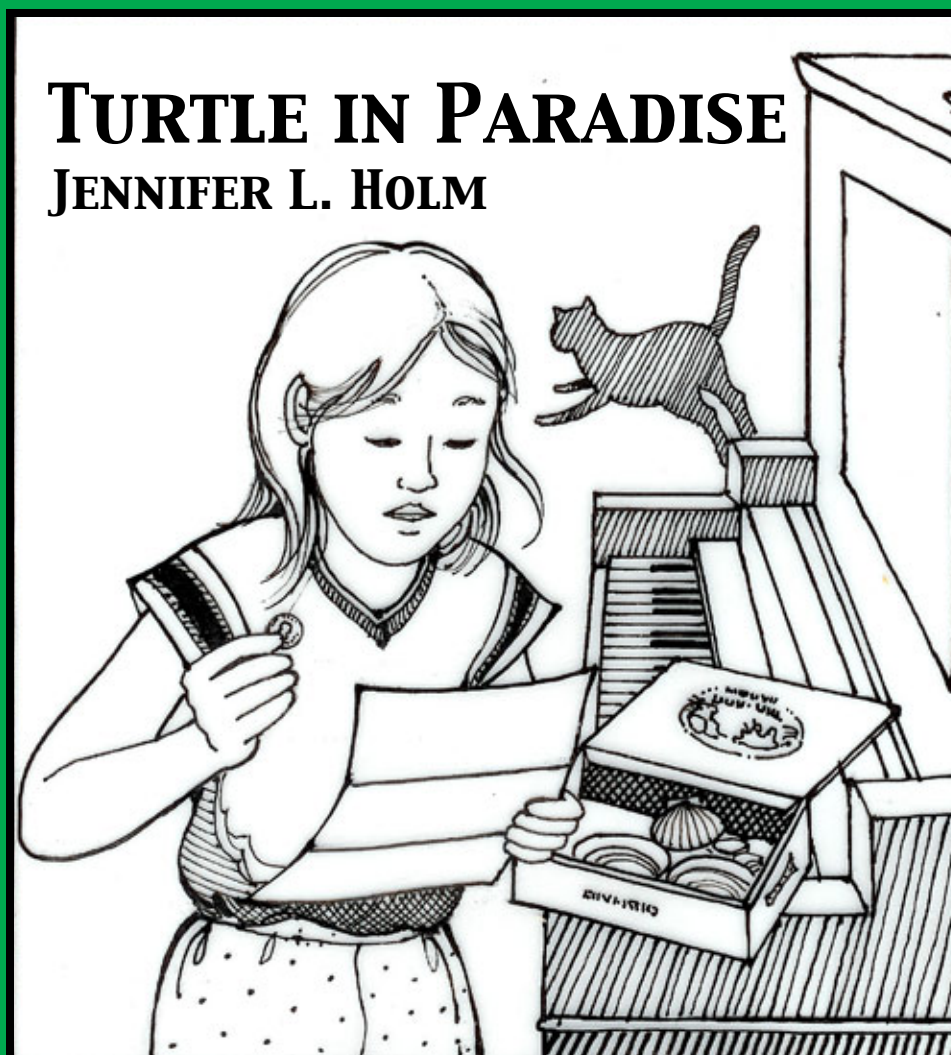


Novel·Ties

TURTLE IN PARADISE

JENNIFER L. HOLM



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 book *Turtle in Paradise* 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.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Key West, Florida

Key West is an island in the Straits of Florida at the southernmost tip of the Florida Keys and is about 90 miles from Cuba. Many Cubans moved to Key West during Cuba's unsuccessful war for independence in the 1860s and 1870s. Because of its proximity to the island nation, Key West is home to a large Cuban population.

Many of the residents of Key West were immigrants from the Bahamas, known as Conchs, who arrived in increasing numbers after 1830. In the twentieth century, many residents of Key West started referring to themselves as "Conchs," and the term is now generally applied to all residents of Key West.

Major industries in Key West in the early nineteenth century included fishing, turtling, salt production, and salvage. A number of the inhabitants worked salvaging shipwrecks from nearby Florida reefs. In 1860, wrecking made the city of Key West the largest and richest in Florida. In the late nineteenth century, when salt and salvage declined as industries, Key West gained a thriving cigar-making industry. Sponging was also a part of the Key West economy for a short period of time beginning at the end of the nineteenth century. Although the waters around the Florida Keys held many thriving sponge beds, Key West's remote location made it difficult and expensive to get the product to market.

Another Florida Keys industry was born in the 1920s with the passage of Prohibition, a national ban on alcohol. Smuggling of contraband alcohol from Cuba and the British Isles via Nassau was easy, and many Key West citizens became wealthy from the profits.

The Great Depression

The economic hard times that lasted from 1929 to 1941 are known as the Great Depression. On October 29, 1929, later called Black Tuesday, the stock market crashed. Following this, the economy slid into a severe depression, a serious reduction in business activity. Many Americans experienced the despair of joblessness. Families could not pay their rent and had little money for food and clothing.

Private charities did what they could to help. Churches and groups such as the YMCA fed the hungry at soup kitchens. The number of destitute, however, often became overwhelming. People would stand on "breadlines" for hours just to get a hot meal.

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? Have you read any other books by this author?
2. Read the Background Information about Key West, the Great Depression, and the Labor Day Hurricane of 1935 on pages 3 and 4 of this study guide. Then read the Author's Note at the back of the novel to find out more information. Make a list of any questions you have about the material. Then, as you read the novel, see if you can find the answers to these questions.
3. **Cooperative Learning Activity:** Most of this book takes place in Key West, Florida. After reading the Background Information on pages three and four of this study guide and the Author's Note at the back of the novel, do some additional research to find out more about this region. 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.

Key West

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

4. **Geography Connection:** Locate a map of the Florida Keys. As you read the novel, use the map to find the locations mentioned in and around Key West.
5. Have you read any other books set in the United States in the 1930s? If so, when and where were these stories set? What types of problems did people in these books have to face?
6. The main character in the novel is sent to live with relatives she has never met. Suppose you were in a similar situation. What problems do you see arising? What steps might you take to adjust to your new situation? What would you expect to gain from the experience?
7. *Turtle in Paradise* is a book of historical fiction—one that uses history as a background for imagined events. The characters in such a work may be fictional or historical or both. Discuss with your classmates other works of historical fiction they have read and the periods of history they covered. What do they enjoy about this type of book? What challenges does an author face when writing such a work?