Novel•Ties

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle
Avi

A Study Guide
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LEARNING LINKS INC.
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For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide to use in conjunction with the novel *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* 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.

*Novel-Ties® are printed on recycled paper.*
### CHAPTERS 1, 2

**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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>decrepit</td>
<td>a. foul odor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gesticulated</td>
<td>b. having no like or equal; one of its kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loathsome</td>
<td>c. spread throughout; pervaded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>permeated</td>
<td>d. dilapidated; broken down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stench</td>
<td>e. apprehension; anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trepidation</td>
<td>f. separated into loose raveled threads at the edge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unique</td>
<td>g. exceedingly disgusting; abhorrent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>frayed</td>
<td>h. made or used emphatic or expressive gestures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. As soon as he heard the name of Mrs. Pritch, his fifth-grade teacher, it became a ____________ reminder of his years of failure in elementary school.

2. The police officer ____________ wildly to stop drivers from heading down a one-way street in the wrong direction.

3. Meat and dairy foods left unrefrigerated on the pier produced an overwhelming ____________.

4. Unable to afford a new shirt, the young man hoped that his employer would not notice its ____________ collar.

5. The woman’s perfume was so strong, it ____________ the air even after she left the room.

6. It is unfair to ask an elderly, ____________ worker to lift bags of cement when a strong, young worker is nearby.

7. Being the only bass voice in the chorus, put Charles in a ____________ position among the other singers.

8. The little girl followed her brave friend across the rickety suspension bridge with great ____________.

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Read to find out whether the *Seahawk* meets Charlotte’s expectations.

### Questions:

1. Why wouldn’t the porter carry Charlotte’s trunk all the way to the *Seahawk*?
2. How did the second porter react when he saw that the trunk was destined for the *Seahawk*?
3. What attracted Charlotte’s attention as she stood on the pier waiting to board the ship?
Chapters 1, 2 (cont.)

4. Why was Charlotte distressed to discover that she would be the only passenger aboard the ship?

5. Why did Charlotte complain that Mr. Grummage treated her like a bale of cotton?

6. Why didn't Charlotte think she could be comfortable in the cabin she was given?

7. Why couldn't Charlotte heed Barlow's warning to get off the ship?

8. How did Zachariah provide some comfort to Charlotte? How did he also increase her worries?

Questions for Discussion:

1. What do you think will be Charlotte’s greatest challenges aboard the Seahawk?

2. What did you learn about British class consciousness in 1832? Do you think social class will be important on board the ship?

3. What kind of person do you expect to find when Charlotte finally meets the captain?

4. What do you think will happen when Charlotte wakes up the next morning?

Literary Analysis: The Significance of Names

Authors select names of characters with care. In these two chapters Charlotte meets men named Mr. Grummage and Mr. Keetch, and she sees two men run from the mere mention of Captain Jaggery. What images do the names Grummage, Keetch, and Jaggery create in your mind? Another character with an unusual name is Zachariah. In the Book of Kings in the Bible, Zachariah is a prophet. What is the role of a prophet? Does his name give more or less weight to the old sailor’s advice to Charlotte?

Literary Devices:

I. Foreshadowing—Foreshadowing refers to the clues an author provides to suggest what may happen later in the novel. What might the following description of the figurehead foreshadow?

   Indeed, the one unique aspect of this ship was a carved figurehead of a pale white seahawk beneath the bowsprit. Its wings were thrust back against the bow; its head extended forward, beak wide-open, red tongue protruding as if screaming. In the shadowy light that twisted and distorted its features I was struck by the notion that this figure looked more like an angry, avenging angel than a docile bird.
Chapters 1, 2 (cont.)

II. *Point of View*—Point of view in literature refers to the voice telling the story. It could be a character telling the story (first-person) or the author (third-person) telling the story.

From whose point of view is this story told?

__________________________________________________________________________________

Why do you think the author chose this point of view?

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Writing Activity:

Imagine you are Charlotte. Write a letter to your former schoolmistress, Miss Weed, before you go to sleep aboard the *Seahawk*. Describe your feelings as well as the events of the day.
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