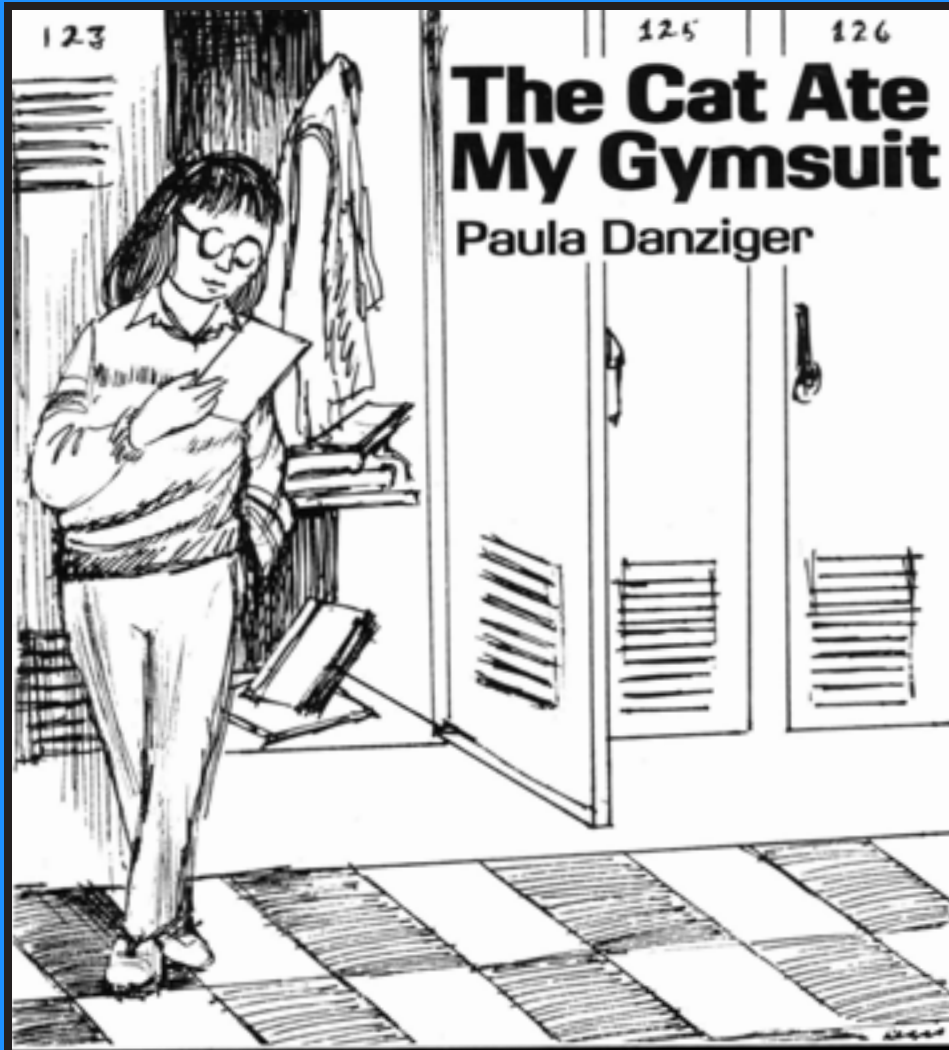


# Novel·Ties



## A Study Guide

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**LEARNING LINKS**

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## For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide consists of lessons to use in conjunction with the book *The Cat Ate My Gymsuit*. 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 on 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 guided reading 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 or group of chapters; 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 will be transferred to the books students read independently. Passive readers become active, avid readers.

**Pre-Reading Activities (cont.)**

8. Work with a partner to make a list of outrageous excuses to use at school or at home. The first one has been done for you. You may add several of your own ideas to the list.

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Excuse</b>
Bring your gymsuit to school on Monday.	The cat ate my gymsuit.
Do your homework.	
Take out the garbage.	
Walk the dog.	
Come to class prepared with two #2 pencils.	
Wear shoes, not sneakers, to the school concert.	

**Chapters 1, 2 (cont.)**

5. Why did some of the kids think Joel was strange?
6. What assignment did Ms. Finney give them on the first day?
7. What excuse did Marcy give the gym teacher for not participating in gym?

**Questions for Discussion:**

1. In what ways do you think Marcy is a typical teenager? In what ways is she like you? How is she different? Do you think her attitude toward school is similar to yours?
2. Do you think Joel was odd? Is it possible for students to follow the rules and be considered normal by their peers?
3. How would you characterize Marcy's self-image? Do you think she places too much emphasis on the way she looks?
4. According to Marcy, what was unusual about Ms. Finney? Does Ms. Finney remind you of any teachers in your school?

**Literary Device: Humor**

Part of the appeal of this book is the humorous way in which the story is told. The author uses several techniques of humor:

*Exaggeration* — stretching the truth; overstatement

*Irony* — stating or implying the opposite of what is expected

*Absurdity* — using outrageous or preposterous statements

The following statements are taken from the first two chapters. What is the type of humor used in each of the statements? Each statement may contain more than one type of humor. The first one has been done for you.

1. . . . I was convinced that I'd become an adolescent blimp with wire-frame glasses, mousy brown hair, and acne. exaggeration, absurdity  
exaggeration, absurdity
2. Father says that girl children should be born at the age of eighteen and married off immediately.