

# Novel·Ties

## Cheaper By the Dozen

Frank B. Gilbreth, Jr. & Ernestine G. Carey



## 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 *Cheaper By the Dozen* consists of instructional material 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.

NOVEL-TIES are either for whole class instruction using a single title or for group instruction where each group uses a different novel appropriate to its reading level. Depending upon the amount of time allotted to it in the classroom, each novel, with its guide and accompanying lessons, may be completed in two to four weeks.

The first step in using NOVEL-TIES is to distribute to each student a copy of the novel and a folder containing all of the duplicated worksheets. Begin instruction by selecting several pre-reading activities in order to set the stage for the reading ahead. Vocabulary exercises for each chapter always precede the reading so that new words will be reinforced in the context of the book. Use the questions on the chapter worksheets for class discussion or as written exercises.

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.

## CHAPTERS 1, 2

**Vocabulary:** Draw a line from each word on the left to its meaning on the right. Then use the numbered words to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 1. bedlam     | a. lacking excitement, interest, or distinction    |
| 2. composure  | b. touse or dishevel                               |
| 3. bland      | c. flimsily built hut or cabin                     |
| 4. dire       | d. set free or remove from difficulty              |
| 5. rumple     | e. place or condition of wild uproar and confusion |
| 6. quadrupeds | f. not returned in kind                            |
| 7. shanty     | g. dreadful; horrible                              |
| 8. unrequited | h. self-control; calmness                          |
| 9. extricate  | i. furious; enraged                                |
| 10. livid     | j. animals having four feet                        |

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- The town condemned the \_\_\_\_\_ as an unsafe dwelling.
- Playing with matches often results in \_\_\_\_\_ consequences.
- The Emergency Response Team was trained to never lose their \_\_\_\_\_, but to remain calm during any crisis.
- It was difficult to \_\_\_\_\_ the cat from behind the stove.
- The wind will soon \_\_\_\_\_ Jean's neatly combed hair.
- Mom became \_\_\_\_\_ when she discovered that the dog had stolen the steaks off the barbecue.
- Dogs and cats are \_\_\_\_\_ but birds are not.
- Jim knew his affection was \_\_\_\_\_ when Jennifer began dating someone else.
- The plot of the adventure story was so \_\_\_\_\_ that it put me to sleep.
- It was \_\_\_\_\_ in the dressing room during the three minutes allotted for the cast to change costumes.

### Questions:

- Who was the focus of the first chapter? What details did you learn about this character?
- In what ways did the Gilbreth home become a laboratory for Dad to test his principles of scientific management?

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

- II. *Slapstick Comedy*—Slapstick is a form of low comedy which makes its appeal through the use of violent or exaggerated action. Classic examples of slapstick are found in the movies of Charlie Chaplin, the Marx Brothers, and the Three Stooges. Many television cartoons also feature slapstick humor. Reread the “Watch the Birdie” episode in Chapter Two. Does this meet the criterion for slapstick? In what way?

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Pretend you are filming the scene. What stage directions would you give the actors to capitalize on the humor?

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**Writing Activity:**

1. Study the real estate ads in a local newspaper or in a realtor’s brochure. Then write an ad describing the Gilbreths’ house at 68 Eagle Rock Way in Montclair, New Jersey. Be sure to include the details mentioned in the book but feel free to add some embellishments of your own to describe this house.
2. The story about Bill and the birdie became one of Dad’s favorite family stories. Write about an incident in your family or in a family that you know in which one family member played a joke on another. Try to include dialogue. In addition, don’t forget to describe the aftermath of the joke in which you tell how different family members reacted.