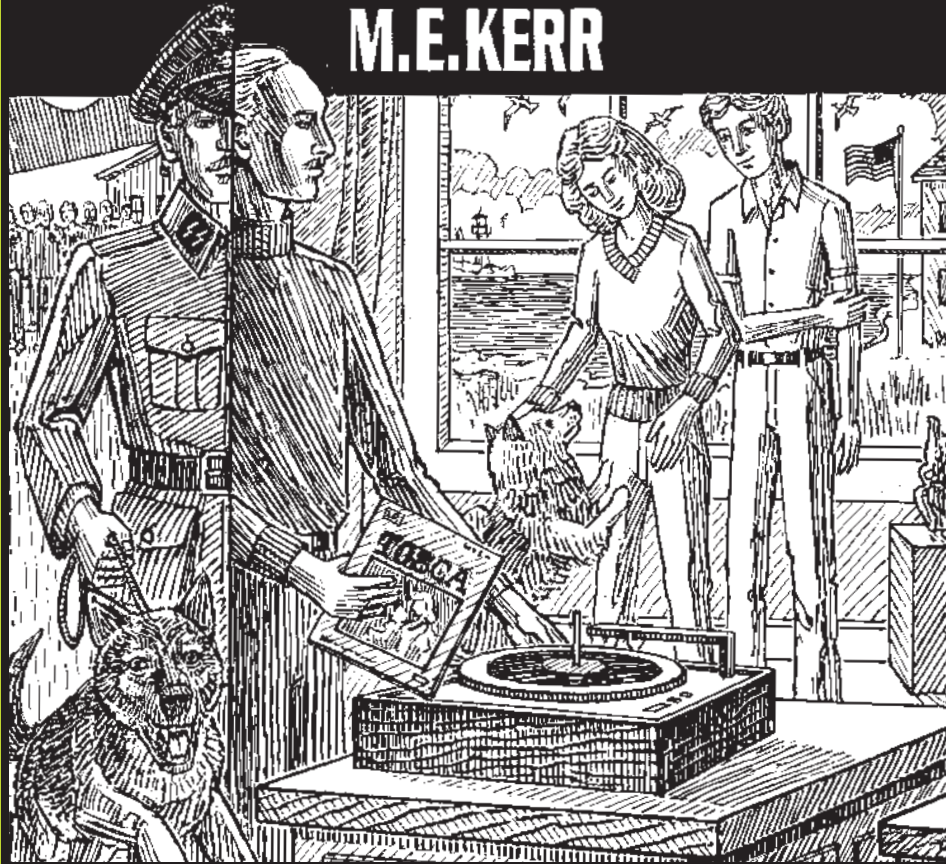


Novel·Ties

GENTLEHANDS

M.E.KERR



A Study Guide

Written By Estelle Kleinman

Edited by Joyce Friedland and Rikki Kessler

LEARNING LINKS

P.O. Box 326 • Cranbury • New Jersey 08512

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Synopsis	1 - 2
Background Information	2
Pre-Reading Activities	3
Chapters 1, 2	4 - 5
Chapters 3, 4	6 - 7
Chapters 5 - 7	8 - 9
Chapters 8, 9	10 - 11
Chapters 10 - 12	12 - 13
Chapters 13, 14	14 - 15
Chapters 15 - 17	16 - 17
Chapters 18, 19	18 - 20
Cloze Activity	21
Post-Reading Activities	22 - 23
Suggestions For Further Reading	24
Answer Key	25 - 26

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For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide to use in conjunction with the book *Gentlehands* 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 student. 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 student's 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 ACTIVITIES

1. Preview this book by reading the title and the author's name and by looking at the illustration on the cover. What do you think the book will be about? What time and place will be the setting for this book? Have you read any other books by M.E. Kerr, the author of this book?
2. Read the Background Information on page two of this study guide and do some additional research on the Holocaust. 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?
3. *Gentlehands* relates some of the atrocities committed by the Nazis against 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? Explain your answer.
4. In this novel a young man tries to change himself in order to impress his wealthy girlfriend. Do you think a person should change to please someone else? What problems might this create?
5. **Cooperative Learning Activity:** The young man in *Gentlehands* has problems communicating with his parents. In a cooperative learning group, make a list of the ten most important aspects of being a good communicator. Be sure to include points that relate to listening as well as to getting your ideas across. Compare your list with those compiled by other groups in your class.
6. In this novel the main character finds out that people are not always what they seem to be. Think of a time when a person you believed in was in fact unworthy of your good thoughts. How did you feel? Explain. What effect, if any, did this have on your future relationships with people?
7. **Geography Connection:** The family in this novel lives in a fictitious town called Seaville, but many other locations are real. Obtain a map of Long Island, New York. As you read the book, locate places on the map. Then use this information to narrow down approximately where Seaville might be located.
8. The author of *Gentlehands*, Marijane Meaker, writes young adult novels under the pen name M.E. Kerr. Meaker relates the following about her reading habits:

I read like a fat person eats. I read everything from magazines . . .
to the best-sellers.*

What effects do you think being an avid reader has on a writer?

*From "M.E. Kerr," *Something about the Author Autobiography Series*. (Detroit: Gale Research, 1986.)

Chapters 1, 2 (cont.)

Questions:

1. Why are Buddy's parents worried about their son dating Skye? Do you think these concerns are justified? Explain.
2. What evidence shows that Buddy's father has trouble expressing himself?
3. How do Mrs. Boyle and Skye each react to Buddy's white outfit? What does each reaction reveal?
4. Why does Nick De Lucca's manner irritate Buddy? In what way might his manner be consistent with his profession?
5. What does Buddy mean when he says that Skye is too much and he isn't enough?
6. Why would Buddy want to take Skye to his grandfather's house?

Questions for Discussion:

1. What is your impression of Nick De Lucca? Explain what effect, if any, his physical appearance has on your impression.
2. Do you think Buddy would have been as charmed by Skye if he were more self-confident?
2. From what you have read so far, do you think Buddy and Skye make a good couple? Why or why not?

Literary Devices:

- I. *Setting*—The setting refers to the place and time in which a story occurs. What is the setting of this novel?

How do the main characters reflect their settings?

- II. *Point of view*—In literature the point of view is the voice telling the story. When one of the characters acts as the narrator, this is called a first person point of view. When the author as an outside observer tells the story, it is called a third person point of view.

From whose point of view is this story told?

Writing Activity:

Retell the events in one of these two chapters using a different point of view.