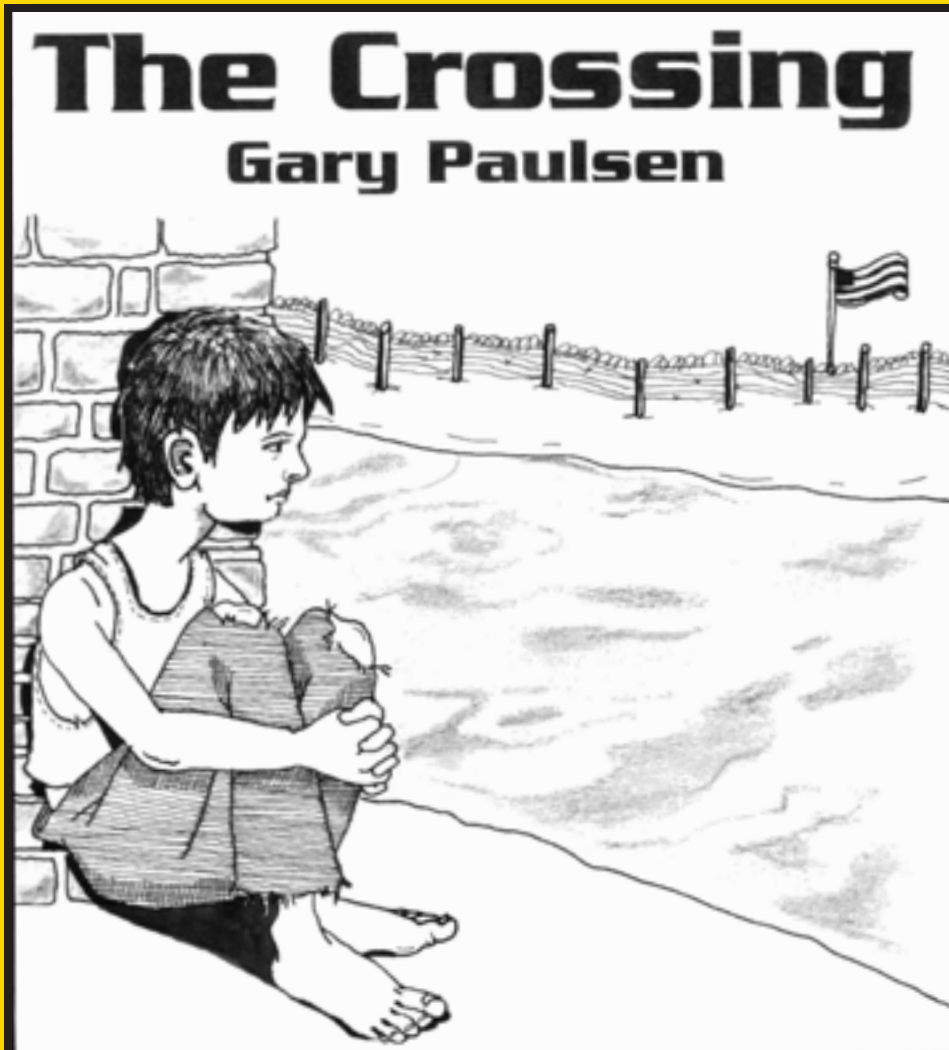


# Novel·Ties



## 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 a specific novel. 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 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.

## PRE-READING ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Preview the book by reading the title and author's name and by looking at the illustration on the cover. What do you think the book will be about? Where and when do you think it takes place? Have you read any other books by the same author?
2. Read the Background Information on page two of this study guide and do some additional research about Mexico. Fill in a K-W-L chart, such as the one below. In the first column, record what you know. In the second column, tell what you want to find out. After you finish the novel, return to the chart and record what you have learned.

<b>Mexico</b>		
<b>What I Know — K —</b>	<b>What I Want to Know — W —</b>	<b>What I Learned — L —</b>

3. Set up a class display of maps, objects, pictures, and books about Mexico and Texas.
4. The two main characters in *The Crossing* want to escape their problems. Write a personal narrative telling of a time you decided to improve your life in some way. Did you accomplish your goal? If you weren't able to accomplish your goal, what do you think prevented it? Share these personal stories with your classmates before you begin reading the book.
5. Conduct a class survey to find out the countries of origin of your classmates, their parents, grandparents, and ancestors. Make a bar graph showing the results. What percentage of your class are first generation Americans, second generation, etc.? What is the country of origin of the majority of your classmates and their families?
6. Brainstorm with your classmates to make a list of reasons people might have for moving to a new country. Discuss the challenges people might face when they arrive.
7. If you know someone who has immigrated from elsewhere, interview that person to find out what it was like to arrive in a new country. Tape record your interview; then write it out and put it into a class book.
8. *The Crossing* focuses on illegal immigration issues and cultural differences along the United States-Mexican border. Start a class collection of newspaper and magazine articles about problems along the southern border of the United States. With a group of classmates, choose a single border issue to discuss. What is the point of view in the article? Write the same article from the opposite point of view.
9. Look up the meanings of the word "crossing." Predict which meanings might be used in this book. Give reasons for your choice.
10. Pancho Villa is an important influence in the life of one of the characters in *The Crossing*. Research the life of Pancho Villa. Find out why he was popular in Mexico, but unpopular in the United States.
11. Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome can affect anyone who has had a deeply traumatized experience. Research the events that can trigger this response and make a list of its symptoms.

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**CHAPTERS 1, 2**

**Vocabulary:** Choose a word from the Word Box to replace the underlined word or phrase in each of the following sentences. Then write the word you choose on the line below the sentence.

<i>WORD BOX</i>					
automatic	bridle	perpetual	rotating	scorched	trailed

1. Sara would take offense whenever she was kept off an athletic team just because she was a girl.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. If you leave thin slices of bread in the toaster at the “dark” setting, they will become slightly burned.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. After years of near-starvation, the boy’s hunger seemed never ending.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Blinking your eyes and crouching low is an unthinking gesture when a ball is thrown too near your face.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. As the boat pulled away from the dock, my parents’ voices gradually became fainter in the growing distance.

\_\_\_\_\_

6. We stood at the barbecue watching a rack of whole chickens turning in circles on the steel rods.

\_\_\_\_\_

**Questions:**

1. Why would Manny remember so many details of a meal he ate when he was only five years old?
2. Why did Manny want to cross the border? What qualities did Manny believe he had that would make him successful?