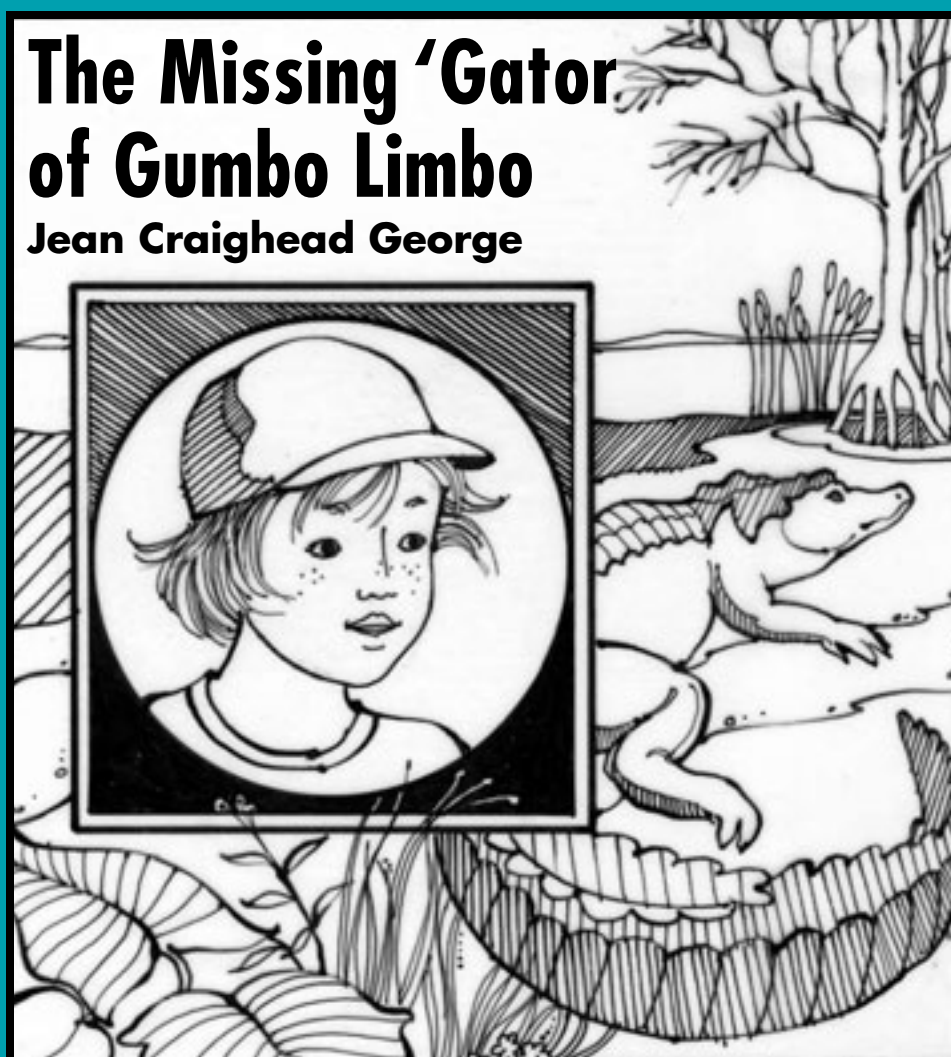


Novel·Ties



The Missing 'Gator of Gumbo Limbo

Jean Craighead George

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 the novel *The Missing 'Gator of Gumbo Limbo* 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.

GLOSSARY

algae	group of living things, usually found in water, that can make their own food
alkali	chemical compounds that dissolve in water, neutralize acids, and form salts with them
borrow pit	hole dug for road material
chrysalis	stage in the development from a caterpillar into a butterfly when it develops a hard shell around itself
culvert	small pipe or channel for water crossing under a road, railroad, or other such structure
desalinator	industrial business that takes salt out of sea water
drought	long period of dry weather
ecosystem	physical environment with its community of living things, and their relationship with each other
environment	all the surrounding things, conditions, and influences affecting the growth of living things
fungicide	any substance that destroys fungi—plants without flowers, leaves, or green coloring matter
hammock, or hummock	elevated tract of land rising above the general level of a marshy region
invertebrate	animal without a backbone
larva	wormlike form of an insect from the time it leaves the egg until it becomes a pupa
lepidopterist	person who collects butterflies
limestone	rock consisting of mainly calcium carbonate, often composed of the remains of sea animals
nitrogen	chemical element which in pure form is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas
pentachlorophenol (PCP)	white powder used as a fungicide, herbicide, and wood preservative
pesticide	any chemical used to kill harmful animals or plants
phosphorus	highly reactive, poisonous element
prey	animal hunted and killed for food by another animal
pupa	form of an insect while it is changing from a wormlike larva into an adult; chrysalis
scavenger	animal that feeds on dead or decaying plant or animal matter
scute	external bony or horny plate, as on some fish and many reptiles
slough	stagnant swamp, bog, or marsh
solution pit	sinkhole made by the acid from decaying plants eating into limestone bedrock

Pre-Reading Questions and Activities (cont.)

10. Do some research to find biographical information about the author of this novel, Jean Craighead George. You can find information at her website <http://www.jeancraigheadgeorge.com>. Learn about her professional life and family life. What was the inspiration for *The Missing 'Gator of Gumbo Limbo*?
11. In the Anticipation Guide that follows, write *T* in the “Before Reading” column if the statement is true in your opinion. Write *F* if you feel the statement is false. After completing the book, mark your answers again in the “After Reading” column to see if your opinion has changed.

Statements	Before Reading	After Reading
1. Homeless people are not fit company for children.		
2. Individuals do not have the power to protect the environment.		
3. Ecological problems are complex, making them hard to solve.		
4. Young people do not know enough to help solve ecological problems.		
5. The death of one animal is not very significant to an ecosystem.		
6. Human beings cause most ecological problems.		
7. It is not the government’s responsibility to solve ecological problems.		