

Novel•Ties

CHASING VERMEER

BLUE BALLIETT



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 *Chasing Vermeer* 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 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.

Background Information (cont.)

Art experts now regard Vermeer as the greatest of the Dutch colorists. He was meticulous in his preparation of paints and experimented with different formulas in order to create a variety of textures on canvas. He tended to prefer vibrant yellows and blues. Working sometimes with thick, rich color, at other times with thin glazes that allowed greater transparency, Vermeer created thirty-five paintings, a small but stunning collection. He is best known for interior scenes and portraits; in many of his paintings, the figures of one or two women dominate a scene. The human figures are typically engaged in some ordinary activity, which Vermeer manages to transform into something both graceful and profound. In his later works, color effects are achieved by attention to the way that light from a window plays on objects in a room.

Today we can study Vermeer's techniques with the help of any of a number of written and on-line guides to his work. His paintings are displayed in some of the world's great art museums, in reproductions, and on the Internet where several websites are devoted to his art.

CHAPTERS 1 – 4

Vocabulary: Antonyms are words with opposite meanings. Draw a line from each word in Column A to its antonym in Column B. Then use the words in Column A to complete the sentences below.

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. amply | a. calm |
| 2. flattered | b. gentle |
| 3. pretentious | c. insufficiently |
| 4. agitated | d. wavering |
| 5. gullible | e. insulted |
| 6. brutal | f. natural |
| 7. determined | g. modest |
| 8. artificial | h. suspicious |

.....

- The _____ young man was soon cheated out of his money by the clever con man.
- Everyone was fooled into thinking that the _____ silk roses were real.
- When attacked, an ordinarily gentle person may react in a(n) _____ way.
- Once they had rested and been _____ fed, the hikers continued on their way.
- Everyone in the building became _____ when the alarm sounded.
- The artist was _____ to receive an excellent review from an important art critic.
- The _____ salesman rang doorbells up and down the block until he found a customer for his set of encyclopedias.
- I didn't want my home to be so _____ that my friends would feel uncomfortable visiting me.

Read to find out how Ms. Hussey got Petra and Calder to think about art.