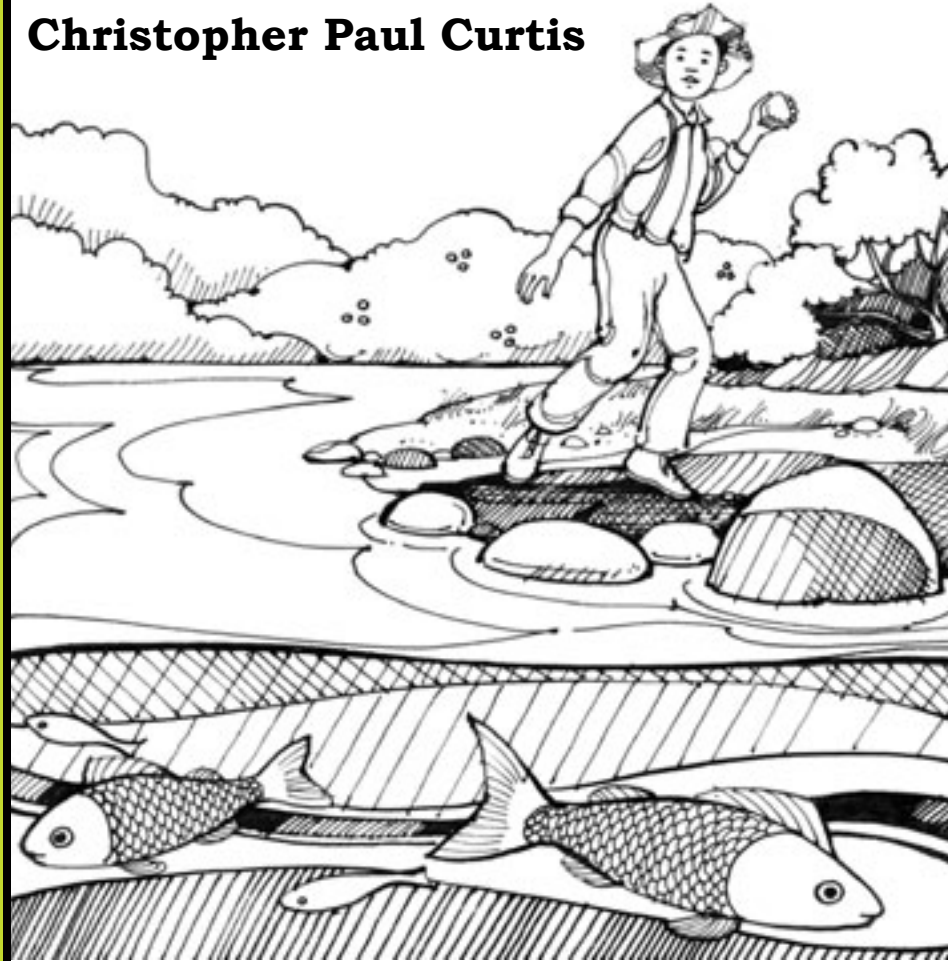


Novel•Ties

ELIJAH OF BUXTON

Christopher Paul Curtis



A Study Guide

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LEARNING LINKS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Synopsis	1
Background Information	2 - 3
Historical People Mentioned in the Novel / Glossary	4
Pre-Reading Activities	5 - 6
Chapters 1 - 3	7 - 9
Chapters 4 - 7	10 - 13
Chapters 8 - 10	14 - 16
Chapters 11 - 13	17 - 18
Chapter 14 - 16	19 - 21
Chapter 17 - 20	22 - 23
Chapters 21 - 24	24 - 27
Cloze Activity	28
Post-Reading Activities.....	29 - 30
Suggestions For Further Reading.....	31
Answer Key	32 - 34

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For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide to use in conjunction with the book *Elijah of Buxton* 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 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 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.)

Dialect

To make the story seem more realistic, the author has made some of the characters in this novel speak in a colorful dialect. Dialect is a form of speech characteristic of a class or region that differs from standard language in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammatical form. If you have trouble with a section of dialect, reread it a few times. Try reading it aloud, perhaps with a partner, to figure out the meaning. As you get used to the dialect, it will become easier for you to read. Here are some examples of the dialect used in this novel:

Dialect	<i>'bout</i>	<i>gunn</i>	<i>you's</i>	<i>caint</i>	<i>et</i>	<i>ax</i>	<i>hisself</i>
Standard English	<i>about</i>	<i>going to</i>	<i>you're</i>	<i>can't</i>	<i>ate</i>	<i>ask</i>	<i>himself</i>

Since the novel takes place in Canada, the author also used Canadian spellings of words. Some words that end in *-or* in the United States, may end in *-our* in Canada.

United States	<i>color</i>	<i>parlor</i>	<i>neighbor</i>
Canada	<i>colour</i>	<i>parlour</i>	<i>neighbour</i>

PRE-READING QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Preview the 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? Will it be serious, humorous, or both? When and where do you think it takes place? Have you read any other books by the same author?
2. In the "After Words" at the end of the novel, read "A Brief History of the Elgin Settlement at Buxton" and "Buxton through the Years: A Timeline." Make a list of any questions you have. Then, as you read the book, see if you can find the answers to these questions.
3. **Social Studies Connection:** Read the Background Information on slavery on page two of this study guide. Do some additional research to learn about slavery in the Southern United States before the Civil War. Then brainstorm with a small group of classmates to fill in the first two columns of a K-W-L chart, such as the one below. When you finish the book, return to the chart to fill in the third column.

Slavery in the United States

What I Know -K-	What I Want to Learn -W-	What I Learned -L-

4. **Geography Connection:** Locate Buxton, Canada, on a map. As you read the novel, use the map to find various locations mentioned in the book.
5. *Elijah of Buxton* is a work of historical fiction—one that uses history as a background for imagined events. The characters in such a work may be fictional, or historical, or both. Discuss with your classmates other works of historical fiction they have read and what periods of history they covered. Look at the "Historical People Mentioned in the Novel" on page four of this study guide.
6. Have you ever read a novel in which the author tried to recreate the speech people used in another time and in another place? Read the section on Dialect in the Background Information on page three of this study guide to prepare you for the language you will encounter in this book.
7. Have you read any other books set in the United States during the period before the Civil War? If so, when and where were these stories set? What problems did people in these books face?
8. Learn the words in the Glossary on page four of this study guide. The meanings of these words will help you understand the events that occur in the book.