

## Nightjohn Study Guide

A young boy spends his tenth summer on his aunt and uncle's farm, where he is constantly involved in crazy escapades with his cousin Harris. "On the Larson farm, readers will experience hearts as large as farmers' appetites, humor as broad as the country landscape and adventures as wild as boyhood imaginations. All this adds up to a hearty helping of old-fashioned, rip-roaring entertainment."--Publishers Weekly

After having survived alone in the wilderness, Brian finds that he can no longer live in the city but must return to the place where he really belongs.

Cut off from the life of ranching he has come to love by his grandfather's death, John Grady Cole flees to Mexico, where he and his two companions embark on a rugged and cruelly idyllic adventure

Twelve-year-old Ann Maria Weems works from sunup to sundown, wraps rags around her feet in the winter, and must do whatever her master or mistress orders--but she has something that many plantation slaves don't have. She has her wonderful family around her. To Ann, her teasing brothers, her older sister, and her protective and loving parents are everything. And then one day, they are gone. Separated from her family by her master and shipped off as a housemaid, Ann learns something about independence and about love before the opportunity for escape arrives. A white man risks his life for Ann, cuts her hair short, dresses her like a boy, and launches her on her journey on the Underground Railroad to Canada, her family, and finally to freedom. Until she was a teenager, Ann Maria Weems lived in the mid-1800s near the author's home in Maryland. This fictionalized account of her extraordinary life is ideal for students, teachers, and parents hungry for interesting and informative reading in African-American history and the Underground Railroad.

The first and most terrifying monster in English literature, from the great early epic Beowulf, tells his own side of the story in this frequently banned book. This classic and much lauded retelling of Beowulf follows the monster Grendel as he learns about humans and fights the war at the center of the Anglo Saxon classic epic. This is the book William Gass called "one of the finest of our contemporary fictions."

When Ellie and six of her friends return home from a camping trip deep in the bush, they find things hideously wrong -- their families gone, houses empty and abandoned, pets and stock dead. Gradually they begin to comprehend that their country has been invaded and everyone in the town has been taken prisoner. As the horrible reality of the situation becomes evident they have to make a life-and-death decision: to run back into the bush and hide, to give themselves up to be with their families, or to stay and try to fight. This reveting, tautly-drawn novel seems at times to be only a step away from today's headlines.

NightjohnLaurel Leaf

Use Novel-Ties® study guides as your total guided reading program. Reproducible pages in chapter-by-chapter format provide you with the right questions to ask, the important issues to discuss, and the organizational aids that help students get the most out of each book they read.

For a rugged outdoor man and his family, life in northern Minnesota is a wild experience involving wolves, deer, and the sled dogs that make their way of life possible. Includes an account of the author's first Iditarod, a dogsled race across Alaska.

A critically acclaimed tearjerker from a master storyteller: On one side of the border is brutality and heartache; on the other side--a new life. 14yo Manny is an orphan in Juarez, Mexico. He competes with his bigger, meaner rivals for the coins American tourists throw off the bridge between Texas and his town. Across that heavily guarded bridge await a different world and a better existence. On the night when Manny dares the crossing--through the muddy shallows of the Rio Grande, past the searchlights and the border patrol--the young man encounters an old stranger who could prove to be an ally or an enemy. Manny can't tell for certain. But if he is to achieve his dream, then he must be willing to risk everything--even his life.

This riveting novel of love and mystery from the author of *The Things They Carried* examines the lasting impact of the twentieth century's legacy of violence and warfare, both at home and abroad. When long-hidden secrets about the atrocities he committed in Vietnam come to light, a candidate for the U.S. Senate retreats with his wife to a lakeside cabin in northern Minnesota. Within days of their arrival, his wife mysteriously vanishes into the watery wilderness.

Told in short, gripping chapters, this is an unforgettable true story of survival. The author was featured in Steven Spielberg's *Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation*. At just 15, her mother, and brother were taken from their Romanian town to the Auschwitz-II/Birkenau concentration camp. When they arrived at Auschwitz, a soldier waved Elly to the right; her mother and brother to the left. She never saw her family alive again. Thanks to a series of miracles, Elly survived the Holocaust. Today she is dedicated to keeping alive the stories of those who did not. Elly appeared on CBS's *60 Minutes* for her involvement in bringing an important lawsuit against Volkswagen, whose German factory used her and other Jews as slave laborers.

An adult slave named Nightjohn teaches twelve-year-old Sarny, also a slave, how to read, in spite of the grim consequences that could result if they are discovered. Reprint. AB. SLJ. PW.

John M. Ford's *The Scholars of Night* is an extraordinary novel of technological espionage and human betrayal, weaving past and present into a web of unbearable suspense.

Nicholas Hansard is a brilliant historian at a small New England college. He specializes in Christopher Marlowe. But Hansard has a second, secret, career with *The White Group*, a "consulting agency" with shadowy government connections. There, he is a genius at teasing secrets out of documents old and new—to call him a code-breaker is an understatement. When Hansard's work exposes one of his closest friends as a Russian agent, and the friend then dies mysteriously, the connections seem all too clear. Shaken,

Hansard turns away from his secret work to lose himself in an ancient Marlowe manuscript. Surely, a lost 400 year old play is different enough from modern murder. He is very, very wrong. At the Publisher's request, this title is being sold without Digital Rights Management Software (DRM) applied.

Francis Tucket now feels more confident that he can handle just about anything. A year ago, on the wagon train, he was kidnapped from his family by a Pawnee hunting party. Then he escaped with the help of the mountain man Mr. Grimes. Now that he and Mr. Grimes have parted ways, Francis is heading west on his Indian pony, crossing the endless prairie, trying to find his family. After a year with Mr. Grimes, Francis has learned to live by the harsh code of the wilderness. He can cause a stampede, survive his own mistakes, and face up to desperadoes. But when he rescues a little girl and her younger brother, Francis takes on more than he bargained for. All of a sudden he's in charge of Lottie and Billy, a family of his own. Fast-paced and exciting, *Calling Me Francis Tucket* continues the journey begun in *Mr. Tucket*, taking readers deeper into the American West, and deeper into Francis's changing knowledge of what it takes to survive on a new frontier.

"Having been born a freeman, and for more than thirty years enjoyed the blessings of liberty in a free State—and having at the end of that time been kidnapped and sold into Slavery, where I remained, until happily rescued in the month of January, 1853, after a bondage of twelve years—it has been suggested that an account of my life and fortunes would not be uninteresting to the public." -an excerpt

Two boys, separated by the canyons of time and two vastly different cultures, face the challenges by which they will become men. Coyote Runs, an Apache boy, takes part in his first raid. But he is to be a man for only a short time. More than a hundred years later, while camping near Dog Canyon, 15-year-old Brennan Cole becomes obsessed with a skull that he finds, pierced by a bullet. He learns that it is the skull of an Apache boy executed by soldiers in 1864. A mystical link joins Brennan and Coyote Runs, and Brennan knows that neither boy will find peace until Coyote Runs' skull is carried back to an ancient sacred place. In a grueling journey through the canyon to return the skull, Brennan confronts the challenge of his life.

Colson Whitehead's Pulitzer Prize-winning, National Book Award-winning, Oprah-anointed, #1 New York Times bestselling novel that explores America's troubled racial past as only he can--soon to be an original Amazon Prime Video series directed by Barry Jenkins. Cora is a young slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. An outcast even among her fellow Africans, she is on the cusp of womanhood--where even greater pain awaits. And so when Caesar, a slave who has recently arrived from Virginia, urges her to join him on the Underground Railroad, she seizes the opportunity and escapes with him. In Whitehead's ingenious conception, the Underground Railroad is no mere metaphor: engineers and conductors operate a secret network of actual tracks and tunnels beneath the Southern soil. Cora embarks on a harrowing flight from one state to the next, encountering strange yet familiar iterations of her own world at each stop. As Whitehead brilliantly recreates the terrors of the antebellum era, he weaves in the saga of our nation, from the brutal abduction of Africans to the unfulfilled promises of the present day. The Underground Railroad is both the gripping tale of one woman's will to escape the horrors of bondage and a powerful meditation on the history we all share. Look for Colson Whitehead's new novel, *Harlem Shuffle*, coming this September!

Winner of the Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction \* ALA Best Book for Young Adults \* ALA Notable Children's Book In this brilliant fictional tour de force, which the New York Times called "a deft, poignant novel," Newbery Medal-winning author Paul Fleischman re-creates the first great battle of the Civil War from the points of view of sixteen participants. Northern and Southern, male and female, white and black. Here are voices that tell of the dreams of glory, the grim reality, the hopes, horror, and folly of a nation discovering the true nature of war.

"To know things, for us to know things, is bad for them. We get to wanting and when we get to wanting it's bad for them. They thinks we want what they got . . . That's why they don't want us reading." -- Nightjohn "I didn't know what letters was, not what they meant, but I thought it might be something I wanted to know. To learn."--Sarny Sarny, a female slave at the Waller plantation, first sees Nightjohn when he is brought there with a rope around his neck, his body covered in scars. He had escaped north to freedom, but he came back--came back to teach reading. Knowing that the penalty for reading is dismemberment Nightjohn still returned to slavery to teach others how to read. And twelve-year-old Sarny is willing to take the risk to learn. Set in the 1850s, Gary Paulsen's groundbreaking new novel is unlike anything else the award-winning author has written. It is a meticulously researched, historically accurate, and artistically crafted portrayal of a grim time in our nation's past, brought to light through the personal history of two unforgettable characters.

A Time Best YA Book of All Time (2021) In this "searing work of historical fiction" (Booklist), Coretta Scott King Award-winning author Sharon M. Draper tells the epic story of a young girl torn from her African village, sold into slavery, and stripped of everything she has ever known—except hope. Amari's life was once perfect. Engaged to the handsomest man in her tribe, adored by her family, and fortunate enough to live in a beautiful village, it never occurred to her that it could all be taken away in an instant. But that was what happened when her village was invaded by slave traders. Her family was brutally murdered as she was dragged away to a slave ship and sent to be sold in the Carolinas. There she was bought by a plantation owner and given to his son as a "birthday present". Now, survival is all Amari can dream about. As she struggles to hold on to her memories, she also begins to learn English and make friends with a white indentured servant named Molly. When an opportunity to escape presents itself, Amari and Molly seize it, fleeing South to the Spanish colony in Florida at Fort Mose. Along the way, their strength is tested like never before as they struggle against hunger, cold, wild animals, hurricanes, and people eager to turn them in for reward money. The hope of a new life is all that keeps them going, but Florida feels so far away and sometimes Amari wonders how far hopes and dreams can really take her.

A white writer recounts his experiences in the American South following treatments that darkened his skin and shares his thoughts on the problems of prejudice and racial injustice.

*Dancing Carl*, Gary Paulsen's first novel, was a ALA Best Book for Young Adults and a Notable Children's Trade Book for the Language Arts. In the winter, life in McKinley, Minnesota, revolves around the rinks, where kids play hockey and grown-ups skate to scratchy phonograph records. Then, the year Marsh and his best friend, Willy, are twelve, Carl appears at the rink, wearing a battered, old leather flight jacket and doing a strange dance that is both beautiful and disturbing to watch. It is Marsh and Willy who discover the terrible secret behind Carl's dance, a secret that threatens to destroy him. But a small miracle occurs, and Carl's dance becomes a fragile and tentative expression of hope and the healing power of love.

Only 13, John must track a deer in the Minnesota woods for his family's winter meat, and in doing so finds himself drawn to the doe he's been tracking and hating his role as hunter.

*Jonah's Gourd Vine*, Zora Neale Hurston's first novel, originally published in 1934, tells the story of John Buddy Pearson, "a living exultation" of a young man who loves too many women for his own good.

Lucy, his long-suffering wife, is his true love, but there's also Mehaley and Big 'Oman, as well as the scheming Hattie, who conjures hoodoo spells to ensure his attentions. Even after becoming the popular pastor of Zion Hope, where his sermons and prayers for cleansing rouse the congregation's fervor, John has to confess that though he is a preacher on Sundays, he is a "natchel man" the rest of the week.

And so in this sympathetic portrait of a man and his community, Zora Neale Hurston shows that faith, tolerance, and good intentions cannot resolve the tension between the spiritual and the physical. That she

makes this age-old dilemma come so alive is a tribute to her understanding of the vagaries of human nature.

One of the best-selling young adult books of all time, written by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Paul Zindel. John Conlan is nicknamed “The Bathroom Bomber” after setting off firecrackers in the boys’ bathroom 23 times without ever getting caught. John and his best friend, Lorraine, can never please their parents, and school is a chore. To pass the time, they play pranks on unsuspecting people and it’s during one of these pranks that they meet the “Pigman.” In spite of themselves, John and Lorraine soon get caught up in Mr. Pignati’s zest for life. In fact, they become so involved that they begin to destroy the only corner of the world that has ever mattered to them. Can they stop before it’s too late?

This study of black images in American motion pictures, is re-issued for its 30th anniversary in its 4th edition. It includes the entire 20th century through black images in film, from the silent era to the unequalled rise of the new African American cinema and stars of today. From *The Birth of a Nation*, *Gone with the Wind*, and *Carmen Jones* to *Shaft*, *Do the Right Thing*, *Waiting to Exhale*, *The Hurricane*, and *Bamboozled*, Donald Bogle reveals the way the image of blacks in American cinema has changed - and also the shocking way in which it has often remained the same.

Critically acclaimed when it was first published, *Tuck Everlasting* has become a much-loved, well-studied modern-day classic. This anniversary edition features an in-depth interview conducted by Betsy Hearne in which Natalie Babbitt takes a look at *Tuck Everlasting* twenty-five years later. What if you could live forever? Is eternal life a blessing or a curse? That is what young Winnie Foster must decide when she discovers a spring on her family’s property whose waters grant immortality. Members of the Tuck family, having drunk from the spring, tell Winnie of their experiences watching life go by and never growing older. But then Winnie must decide whether or not to keep the Tucks’ secret—and whether or not to join them on their never-ending journey. Praise for *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt: “A fearsome and beautifully written book that can’t be put down or forgotten.” —*The New York Times* “Exciting and excellently written.” —*The New York Times Book Review* “With its serious intentions and light touch the story is, like the Tucks, timeless.” —*Chicago Sun-Times* “Probably the best work of our best children’s novelist.” —*Harper’s* “Natalie Babbitt’s great skill is spinning fantasy with the lilt and sense of timeless wisdom of the old fairy tales. . . . It lingers on, haunting your waking hours, making you ponder.” —*The Boston Globe* “This book is as shapely, crisp, sweet, and tangy as a summer-ripe pear.”

—*Entertainment Weekly* This title has Common Core connections.

“Anne Lamott is my Oprah.” -*Chicago Tribune* From the bestselling author of *Help, Thanks, Wow* comes an inspiring guide to restoring hope and joy in our lives. In *Dusk, Night, Dawn*, Anne Lamott explores the tough questions that many of us grapple with. How can we recapture the confidence we once had as we stumble through the dark times that seem increasingly bleak? As bad news piles up—from climate crises to daily assaults on civility—how can we cope? Where, she asks, “do we start to get our world and joy and hope and our faith in life itself back . . . with our sore feet, hearing loss, stiff fingers, poor digestion, stunned minds, broken hearts?” We begin, Lamott says, by accepting our flaws and embracing our humanity. Drawing from her own experiences, Lamott shows us the intimate and human ways we can adopt to move through life’s dark places and toward the light of hope that still burns ahead for all of us. As she does in *Help, Thanks, Wow* and her other bestselling books, Lamott explores the thorny issues of life and faith by breaking them down into manageable, human-sized questions for readers to ponder, in the process showing us how we can amplify life’s small moments of joy by staying open to love and connection. As Lamott notes in *Dusk, Night, Dawn*, “I got Medicare three days before I got hitched, which sounds like something an old person might do, which does not describe adorably ageless me.” Marrying for the first time with a grown son and a grandson, Lamott explains that finding happiness with a partner isn’t a function of age or beauty but of outlook and perspective. Full of the honesty, humor, and humanity that have made Lamott beloved by millions of readers, *Dusk, Night, Dawn* is classic Anne Lamott—thoughtful and comic, warm and wise—and further proof that Lamott truly speaks to the better angels in all of us.

Many readers of *Nightjohn* have wanted to know what happened to Sarny, the young slave whom *Nightjohn* taught to read. Here is Sarny’s story, from the moment she leaves the plantation in the last days of the Civil War, suddenly a free woman in search of her sold-away children. Her search takes her to New Orleans and the home of the mysterious and remarkable Miss Laura. Like *Nightjohn*, Miss Laura changes Sarny’s life, and she helps Sarny pass *Nightjohn*’s gift on to new generations. This riveting saga follows Sarny until her last days in the 1930s and gives readers a panoramic view of America in a time of trial, tragedy, and hoped-for change.

On September 28, 2000, former Indiana State Trooper David Camm made a frantic call to his former colleagues in the state troopers office: He’d just walked into his garage, and found lying on the floor the bodies of his 35-year-old wife, Kim, and their two children, Brad and Jill, ages 7 and 5. This was the kind of crime that could tear the heart out of a community. The Camms lived the American Dream. They had what seemed like a loving marriage, a nice little house with a white picket fence, and two adorable children. To top it all off, David Camm was a pillar of the community who had dedicated his career to the enforcement of the law and the sanctity of human life. Then, this happened. Three days later, it got worse when police arrested David Camm for the triple murder. Soon, new stories started emerging: stories about mistresses and violent bursts of temper. And as the ugly truth about the Camms’ marriage got uglier and the evidence against David started piling up, two families—and the community at large—took positions at opposite sides of a yawning and bitter divide. Was David Camm a dedicated, conscientious public servant—the victim of unspeakable tragedy, railroaded by an unfair system? Or was he a cold-hearted murderer who earned his three murder convictions and every one of the 195 years behind bars to which he was sentenced? Investigative journalist John Glatt finds out in this gripping new book.

The classic postapocalyptic thriller with “all the reality of a vividly realized nightmare” (*The Times*, London). Triffids are odd, interesting little plants that grow in everyone’s garden. Triffids are no more than mere curiosities—until an event occurs that alters human life forever. What seems to be a spectacular meteor shower turns into a bizarre, green inferno that blinds everyone and renders humankind helpless. What follows is even stranger: spores from the inferno cause the triffids to suddenly take on a life of their own. They become large, crawling vegetation, with the ability to uproot and roam about the country, attacking humans and inflicting pain and agony. William Masen somehow managed to escape being blinded in the inferno, and now after leaving the hospital, he is one of the few survivors who can see. And he may be the only one who can save his species from chaos and eventual extinction . . . With more than a million copies sold, *The Day of the Triffids* is a landmark of speculative fiction, and “an outstanding and entertaining novel” (*Library Journal*). “A thoroughly English apocalypse, it rivals H. G. Wells in conveying how the everyday invaded by the alien would feel. No wonder Stephen King admires Wyndham so much.” —*Ramsey Campbell* “One of my all-time favorite novels. It’s absolutely convincing, full of little telling details, and that sweet, warm sensation of horror and mystery.” —*Joe R. Lansdale*

Gary Paulsen introduces readers to Charley Goddard in his latest novel, *Soldier’s Heart*. Charley goes to war a boy, and returns a changed man, crippled by what he has seen. In this captivating tale Paulsen vividly shows readers the turmoil of war through one boy’s eyes and one boy’s heart, and gives a voice to all the anonymous young men who fought in the Civil War.

In this historical novel set in the Virgin Islands of 1733, Raisha escapes from her Dutch “owners” in time to witness the mass suicide of her fellow slaves, who prefer death to recapture.

A bestselling modern classic—both poignant and funny—about a boy with autism who sets out to solve the murder of a neighbor’s dog and discovers unexpected truths about himself and the world. Nominated as one of America’s best-loved novels by PBS’s *The Great American Read* Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. He relates well to animals but has no understanding of human emotions. He cannot stand to be touched. And he detests the color yellow. This improbable story of Christopher’s quest to investigate the suspicious

death of a neighborhood dog makes for one of the most captivating, unusual, and widely heralded novels in recent years.

"Terrifying... Eloquent... A heart-rending drama of human yearning." --New York Times In April 1992 a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. He had given \$25,000 in savings to charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet, and invented a new life for himself. Four months later, his decomposed body was found by a moose hunter. How Christopher Johnson McCandless came to die is the unforgettable story of *Into the Wild*. Immediately after graduating from college in 1991, McCandless had roamed through the West and Southwest on a vision quest like those made by his heroes Jack London and John Muir. In the Mojave Desert he abandoned his car, stripped it of its license plates, and burned all of his cash. He would give himself a new name, Alexander Supertramp, and, unencumbered by money and belongings, he would be free to wallow in the raw, unfiltered experiences that nature presented. Craving a blank spot on the map, McCandless simply threw the maps away. Leaving behind his desperate parents and sister, he vanished into the wild. Jon Krakauer constructs a clarifying prism through which he reassembles the disquieting facts of McCandless's short life. Admitting an interest that borders on obsession, he searches for the clues to the drives and desires that propelled McCandless. Digging deeply, he takes an inherently compelling mystery and unravels the larger riddles it holds: the profound pull of the American wilderness on our imagination; the allure of high-risk activities to young men of a certain cast of mind; the complex, charged bond between fathers and sons. When McCandless's innocent mistakes turn out to be irreversible and fatal, he becomes the stuff of tabloid headlines and is dismissed for his naiveté, pretensions, and hubris. He is said to have had a death wish but wanting to die is a very different thing from being compelled to look over the edge. Krakauer brings McCandless's uncompromising pilgrimage out of the shadows, and the peril, adversity, and renunciation sought by this enigmatic young man are illuminated with a rare understanding--and not an ounce of sentimentality. Mesmerizing, heartbreaking, *Into the Wild* is a tour de force. The power and luminosity of Jon Krakauer's storytelling blaze through every page.

Eleven-year-old Samuel was born as Master Hackler's slave, and working the Kentucky farm is the only life he's ever known—until one dark night in 1859, that is. With no warning, cranky old Harrison, a fellow slave, pulls Samuel from his bed and, together, they run. The journey north seems much more frightening than Master Hackler ever was, and Samuel's not sure what freedom means aside from running, hiding, and starving. But as they move from one refuge to the next on the Underground Railroad, Samuel uncovers the secret of his own past—and future. And old Harrison begins to see past a whole lifetime of hurt to the promise of a new life—and a poignant reunion—in Canada. In a heartbreaking and hopeful first novel, Shelley Pearsall tells a suspenseful, emotionally charged story of freedom and family. *Trouble Don't Last* includes an historical note and map.

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