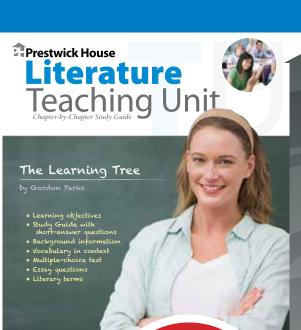


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Literature Teaching Unit Chapter-by-Chapter Study Guide



Prestwick House

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The Learning Tree TEACHING UNIT

The Learning Tree

Objectives

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

- 1. recognize examples of foreshadowing; speculate on what each example might be fore-shadowing.
- 2. identify the point of view used by the author and cite examples.
- 3. using examples from the story, compare and contrast the two different worlds (black and white) of this novel and where they intersect.
- 4. define important vocabulary words used in the novel and be able to use them correctly in context.
- 5. explain why *The Learning Tree* is considered a coming of age novel; trace the development of the main character of the novel and be able to argue, based on information from the novel, whether or not this character has successfully "come of age."
- 6. recognize examples of dialect and be able to explain why the author would choose to use dialect.
- 7. explain the importance of word choice; cite several examples where the author uses a particular word or phrasing to create a powerful image or feeling or avoid racially explosive wording.
- 8. list several symbols used in the novel and be able to explain the symbolism of each.
- 9. pick out significant events, scenes, or speeches and explain their significance to the novel as a whole.
- 10. be able to compare different characters who share similar roles.
- 11. cite several instances of prejudice including examples of other types of prejudice besides racial.
- 12. recognize crucial events in the novel including important conflicts (rising action) which lead to the climax.
- 13. explain how the author resolves or does not resolve the various conflicts brought up during the course of the novel.

6 OBJECTIVES

The Learning Tree TEACHING UNIT

The Learning Tree

Questions for Essay and Discussion

- 1. Discuss the title Gordon Parks has chosen for this novel. Explain why it is an appropriate name for the story.
- 2. During the course of the novel, the reader meets Newt Winger at age twelve and says goodbye to him when he is almost fifteen. A lot has happened to this young man in this time period. Choose what you believe to be the three or four most important events in his life during this time and explain why you have chosen each.
- 3. Newt's mother, Sarah Winger, is a very important character both in Newt's life and to the novel as a whole. Briefly describe Sarah and discuss her influences on her son and on the town of Cherokee Flats.
- 4. Each character in this story plays an important role in helping Newt mature and develop into a responsible, honest, young man. Choose one male and one female character (not including anyone in his family) and show how each one is influential in Newt's growth and development.
- 5. Religion plays an active role in the novel, and although it is more evident in the beginning than toward the end, there are many religious references. Choose several situations or characters that reveal spiritual or religious attitudes and briefly describe each. What type of influence does each character or situation have on Newt?
- 6. Describe the marriage between Rende and Clint. Include in your discussion a short history of their courtship, their status in the novel, and Sarah's role in keeping the marriage together.
- 7. Jack Winger is an interesting character. Pick out two or three significant scenes where Jack says or does something seemingly out of character. Briefly address the relationship he has with his wife.
- 8. There are many times in this novel when people—both black and white—are treated unfairly. Focusing on three instances where there is injustice, explain the situation briefly and state why you believe each situation to be unjust.
- 9. The Wingers have developed good relationships with nearly everyone in town. Find several examples where it is evident that people think highly of the family in general or its members specifically. How do these positive relationships help the family throughout troubled times?

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The Learning Tree

Chapter 1

VOCABULARY

demeanor – attitude, behavior, conduct
disconsolately – hopelessly, forlornly, inconsolably
incongruous – incompatible, inappropriate, absurd
listless – lethargic, sluggish, lacking spirit
lope – jog, canter, amble
maliciousness – hatred, spite, malevolence
ominous – forbidding, hopeless, threatening
pious - devout, holy, reverent
shimmied – danced, gyrated, reverberated
terrain – ground, turf, region

How old is	Newt?			
Why is ever	yone looking for h	im in this chap	ter? Who finds h	im?

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The Learning Tree STUDENT COPY

Chapter 5

VOCABULARY

contemptuously – scornfully, arrogantly, haughtily
droned – chanted, intoned
elated – excited, thrilled, joyful
illusive – possible, apparent, presumable
mackinaw – a kind of a raincoat
spectral – supernatural, otherworldly, mysterious

t is Rob's view of "colored	" people?			
t is Rob's view of "colored	" people?			
t is Rob's view of "colored	" people?			
t is Rob's view of "colored	" people?			
t kind of trouble does Ne	wt find when h	ne helps Rob i	n the white p	oart of towr
		lls his uncle v	hat he would	d like to be
	, · 			
	conversation on the way ł		conversation on the way home, Newt tells his uncle w	conversation on the way home, Newt tells his uncle what he would

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	we have seen Sarah Winger stand up to her son-in-law, her husband, and the board. Why then are her actions toward Polly surprising?
	Chapter 11
	VOCABULARY
	ent – rude, disrespectful, insolent
pessin	nistic – negative, cynical, distrustful
	nistic – negative, cynical, distrustful ttracts Arcella's attention their first day at the white high school?
Who a	
Who a	ttracts Arcella's attention their first day at the white high school?
Who a	ttracts Arcella's attention their first day at the white high school?

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