



**TEACHER GUIDE**

**GRADES 6-8**

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

# The Return of the Indian

Lynne Reid Banks



**READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT**

# The Return of the Indian

Lynne Reid Banks

## TEACHER GUIDE

**NOTE:**

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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## Skills and Strategies

### Thinking

Identifying attributes, compare/contrast, pros/cons, brainstorming, identifying stereotypes, research

### Comprehension

Predicting, sequencing, summarizing, cause and effect, inference, main idea, Venn diagrams

### Writing

Compositions, descriptions, ghost chapter, mottos, analogies, essays, letter writing, short stories

### Vocabulary

Target words, context clues, synonym, antonym, homophones, word maps

### Listening/Speaking

Pantomime, staging, role play, interviews, finger puppets, monologues

### Literary Elements

Characterization, setting, plot development, foreshadowing, humor, similes, figurative expressions, double meanings, allusion, cliffhangers

### Across the Curriculum

Art—portraits, drawing, dioramas, posters, illustrations, mini museum; Math—drawing to scale, proportions; Social Studies/History—timelines, maps; Culinary—recipes; Science—medical treatments

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## Summary

This is the exciting sequel to *The Indian in the Cupboard*, in which Omri first discovers that he can magically bring to life any plastic figure he chooses by locking it in an old cupboard with a special key. (When Omri transforms a Native American—Little Bear, and a cowboy—Boone, Omri discovers what an awesome responsibility it is to take care of tiny living people.) At the end of the first book, Omri and his best friend Patrick agree that it is best to send the little people back to their own time.

At the beginning of *The Return of the Indian*, Omri finds that he has won a prize for his story, “The Plastic Indian.” He decides to reactivate the magic so that he can share his pleasure with the ones who inspired the story, and puts Little Bear and his pregnant wife Bright Stars into the cupboard. Euphoria quickly turns to horror, though, when Omri discovers that Little Bear is gravely injured—shot in the back by soldiers. Further, when Omri tries to bring back the WWI medic Tommy for assistance, he finds that Tommy is dead. Desperate, Omri goes to see his friend Patrick, whose parents have divorced since the time of the last book. Omri and Patrick try to “nick” some of the plastic medical personnel belonging to Patrick’s cousin, Tamsin, but she catches them. As a result, they must rely on the assistance of a WWII matron, who turns out to be crusty and sharp-tongued, but kind-hearted and efficient. With her help, Little Bear recovers and demands to see his “blood brother” Boone. Although Patrick is reluctant to admit that he still keeps the plastic cowboy in his pocket, Boone is finally produced and transformed in the cabinet. When Boone hears what the French have done to Little Bear and his villagers, he comes up with an idea for helping the Iroquois: Transform plastic British soldiers with guns and have them help fight the French. Omri elaborates on the idea: They could transform a group of plastic Indians. After making sure that the forty plastic Indians are Iroquois, and not their enemy, Algonquins, the boys bring them to life. They also bring back a few redcoats, with the idea of snatching their guns, but the British soldiers try to kill Little Bear so they are sent back. Instead, a Royal Marine Corporal (Willy Fickits) is brought to life and convinced to train the Indians in how to use guns (which the boys obtain by making soldiers real, snatching their weapons, and quickly returning the men to plastic).

The Indians are sent back in time with their guns, but Bright Stars remains behind to have her baby, which she does with Boone’s assistance. Boone has a brainstorm: If the boys want to do some time travel, why not try locking themselves into the big chest they have? First Omri sends Patrick back for a short time, then Patrick sends Omri back, along with Boone and Bright Stars. Omri is bewildered to find that he has become part of the tepee—and chilled by the realization that the Algonquins are about to attack the village and he is powerless to move. Indeed, the tepee is set aflame and Omri and Boone are about to be incinerated when Patrick brings them back; exhausted, Omri falls asleep on the couch.

As if this isn’t enough for one night, Omri awakens and discovers that some of the same “skinheads” who persecute him on the street are robbing his house. While Omri was asleep, Patrick brought back the Indian party; sadly, several have been killed and others wounded by the guns with which the boys provided them. Matron has set up an infirmary and is tending the injured. Omri transforms Fickits and about forty other Royal Marines, who launch an artillery attack on the unnerved “skinheads” and they flee in panic.

The boys admit to a distraught Little Bear that they should not have interfered by giving him guns; he disagrees and demands more “now-guns,” but finally gives in to the boys and to Bright Stars, who

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tells him that braves will forget their skill with bows and arrows, and lose their honor, if they use guns. Just as Omri was named after a chief, Little Bear's son is named after the chief his father has become (Tall Bear). Little Bear tells Omri to explain the whole story to Tall Bear someday, so that even when Little Bear is gone, he will live on in memory.

**Prior to Reading:**

You may wish to choose one or more of the following prereading discussion questions/activities. Each is designed to help students draw from their store of background knowledge about the events and themes they will meet in the story they are about to read.

**Pre-reading Discussion Questions:**

**On Fantasy Play:** Have you ever pretended that toys were real? Which toys? What kind of things did you pretend? How old were you? Do you now? What did you like about this sort of fantasy play? Did you play alone or with other children?

**On Caring for Living Things:** Are you responsible for taking care of any living things? pets? plants? little brothers or sisters? How do you feel about it? What is hard about it? What problems come up if you make a mistake or neglect your responsibility?

**On Native Americans:** What do you know about Native Americans (Indians) in this country? Why do you think they prefer to be called "Native Americans" rather than "Indians"? Are you familiar with the Iroquois and Algonquins? (Show students on a map the Northeastern region in which these tribes were found.) What problems did the white man make for the Native American?

**On Friendship:** What qualities does a friend of yours usually have? Once you have made a friend, how do you keep that friend? Have you ever done something you didn't want to in order to protect your friend? When is that a good idea? When is that a poor idea?

**On Other Books by the Author:** Have you read any other books by Lynne Reid Banks? What were they like? What do many of her books have in common?

## Chapters 1-3: pp. 7-29

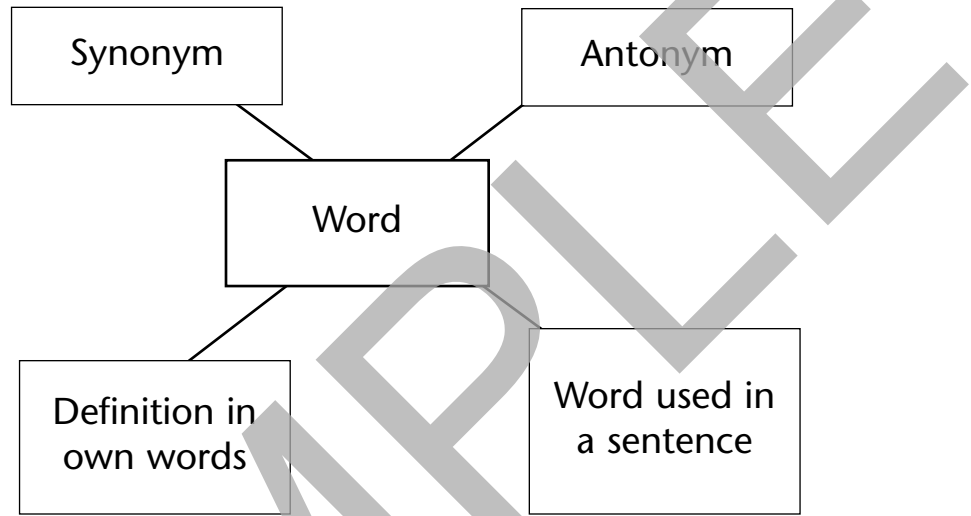
### Vocabulary:

hovel (7)  
 concerted (9)  
 petered (12)  
 stalwart (21)  
 domineering (26)

gauntlet (8)  
 evasive (9)  
 communed (16)  
 eaves (23)  
 respective (27)

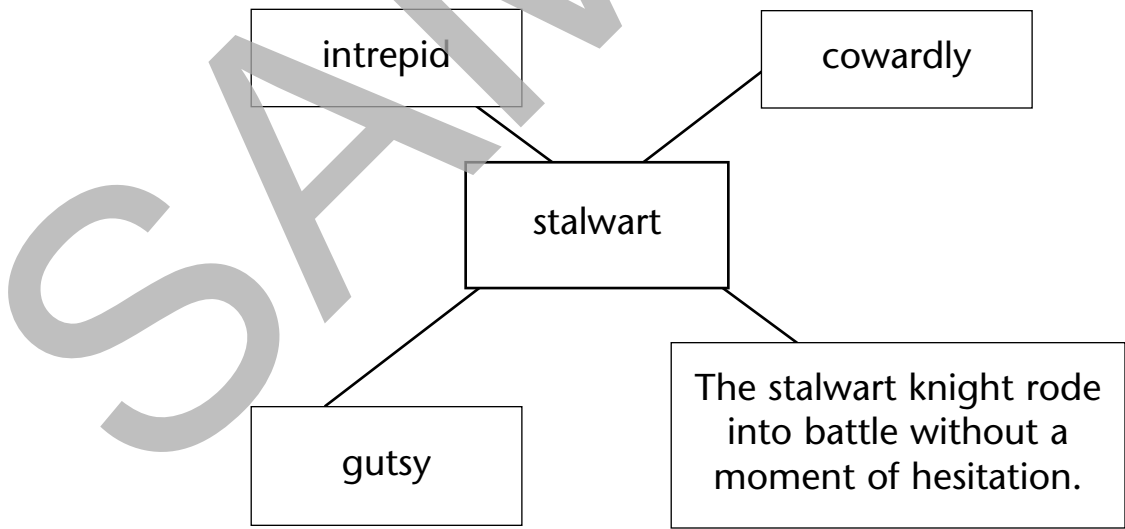
skinhead (9)  
 hampered (9)  
 reverently (18)  
 acquisition (24)  
 tormented (28)

detoured (9)  
 sneering (10)  
 magnanimous (21)  
 submit (26)  
 reactivate (29)



### Vocabulary Activities:

1. Develop word maps for several of the vocabulary words using the framework given.



A sample map is provided for "stalwart"

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## Chapters 4-6: pp. 30-56

### Vocabulary:

gibbering (30)	cynically (31)	noncommittally (31)	transformed (35)
papoose (35)	reverently (36)	withers (36)	forelock (37)
unshod (37)	puttees (39)	khaki (39)	trenches (40)
poignantly (42)	succession (42)	incredulous (49)	disloyalty (51)

### Vocabulary Activity:

Continue the synonym chains begun below.

1. cynically—skeptically—pessimistically—
2. noncommittal—reserved—restrained—
3. transformed—changed—altered—
4. poignantly—touchingly—heartbreakingly—
5. incredulous—doubtful—uncertain—

### Discussion Questions:

1. How does Omri's family react to his getting the prize? Would your siblings' good opinion matter to you, as it does to Omri? What does his mother mean when she calls him the "darkest little horse" she ever knew? (*All are happy for him; his mother seems to expect such things from the other boys more than from Omri.*)
2. Why did Omri send the little people back to their own time? (*When he thought the key was lost, he realized what an immense responsibility it would be to care for them, and that they were better off living in their own world; now he wants to celebrate the prize with them, since the story was based on them.*) Do you think this is a good idea? Why or why not?
3. Why is chapter 5 called "From Dangerous Times"? (*When Omri brings back Little Bear, he finds that he has been shot in the back by the French; when he tries to bring Tommy back, he finds that Tommy was killed in the war.*)
4. Why does Omri tell Patrick he has to see him? How does he convince Patrick to admit he remembers the little people? (*Omri wants Patrick's help in getting medical attention for Little Bear; he shows Patrick Bright Stars' tiny shoes.*)
5. Why does Omri feel "as if he were looking into Aladdin's cave" (p. 52) when he peers into the box of plastic figures? (*Like the cave, the box is full of treasures—professional people of all kinds, including medical personnel.*)
6. Who is Tamsin and why does she hit Omri? Does she have a right to? Could Omri have handled this situation differently? Does a life-or-death situation make stealing okay? (*Tamsin, Patrick's cousin, is angry that the boys were taking the toys without her permission; there is probably no way they could have convinced her to lend them willingly.*)

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**Prediction:** Will the boys succeed in getting Tamsin’s doctor into the cupboard?

**Literary Analysis/Characterization:**

As in real life, we find out what a person in a story is like by watching what the person does, looking at how the person appears, listening to what the character says, and listening to what the storyteller and other characters say about the character.

1. Find a passage in which the author tells you what Tamsin’s personality is like. (Example: Omri calls her “revolting” on page 47.)
2. Find a passage in which the author shows you what Tamsin’s personality is like. (Example: She is “big” and “scowling” on p. 53.)

**Research Activity:**

Find out how much a “quid” and a “pound” (mentioned in the story) are. Use the almanac or other resources to find out about other denominations of money in England. Then make a chart to use in converting amounts of money mentioned in the story.

**Writing Activity:**

Write about a time when you won an award or honor. Describe the situation, and how each member of your family reacted.

**Chapters 7-9: pp. 57-81**

**Vocabulary:**

- |                 |                    |                   |                  |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| proprietor (58) | pacify (59)        | beseechingly (60) | transported (61) |
| organdy (62)    | buttresses (62)    | formidable (62)   | haughtily (62)   |
| profess (64)    | etiquette (64)     | antiquated (66)   | enigmatic (67)   |
| minutely (67)   | disinfectant (67)  | hygienic (68)     | deliverance (74) |
| stodgy (75)     | derelict (76)      | paddock (77)      | pinioned (78)    |
| bandanna (80)   | imbecilically (81) |                   |                  |

**Vocabulary Activity:**

Match five of the words in the vocabulary list with the word or phrase which means the same thing in the synonym box below.

fastened	arrogantly	shopowner
closely and carefully	intimidating	

*(fastened-pinioned; arrogantly-haughtily; shopowner-proprietor; closely and carefully-minutely; intimidating-formidable)*