



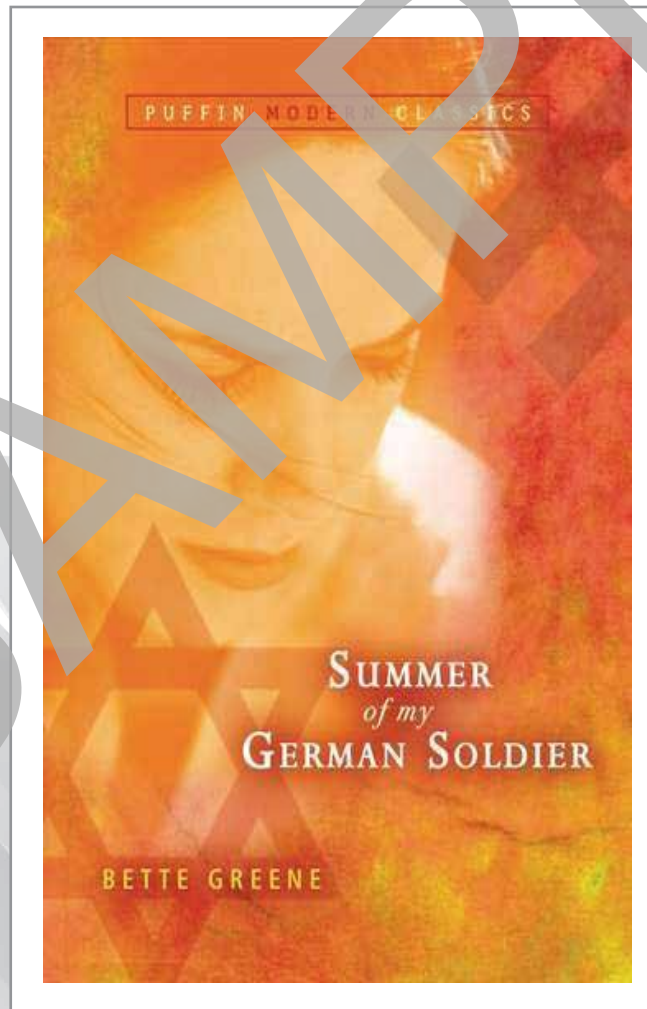
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 9-12

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Summer of My German Soldier

Bette Greene



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Summer of My German Soldier

Bette Greene

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

Literary Elements

Historical fiction as a genre, story elements, characterization, conflict

Writing

Journaling, chapter titles, newspaper articles, letter writing, expository

Vocabulary

Context clues, word mapping, etymology

Comprehension

Predicting, comparison/contrast, cause/effect

Thinking

Brainstorming, categorizing, synthesis, research, identification, visualization, main idea

Listening/Speaking

Songs, reader's theater

Summary of *Summer of My German Soldier*

Patty Bergen was twelve the summer when the German prisoners were brought to the POW camp outside Jenkinsville, Arkansas. Patty was at an awkward age without good friends and at odds with her parents. Patty meets the POWs and Anton when they come into the family store.

The beginning of a friendship with a German soldier and a Jewish girl was trouble filled in a wartime patriotic community. It could only lead to tragedy, especially after Anton escaped from the prison camp. Yet after it was all over, after the whole country had discovered what Patty had done, and everything she loved was taken from her, one thing remained: the knowledge that she was, as Anton said, "a person of value."

Bette Greene's novel is a powerful, painful story of a young girl's search for the strength to survive in a bitterly unhappy family, evoked against the background of a small southern town in the 1940's.

About the Author

Summer of My German Soldier is Bette Greene's first novel. Based on her own painful experiences growing up in Arkansas during World War II, it has received wide critical acclaim. A 1973 ALA Notable Book, it was also a 1973 National Book Award finalist, one of *The New York Times* Outstanding Books of the Year, 1973, and winner of the Golden Kite award.

Other books by Bette Greene include:

- *Morning Is a Long Time Coming*
- *Philip Hall Likes Me, I Reckon Maybe*
- *The Drowning of Stephan Jones*
- *Get on Out of Here, Philip Hall*
- *Them That Glitter and Them That Don't*

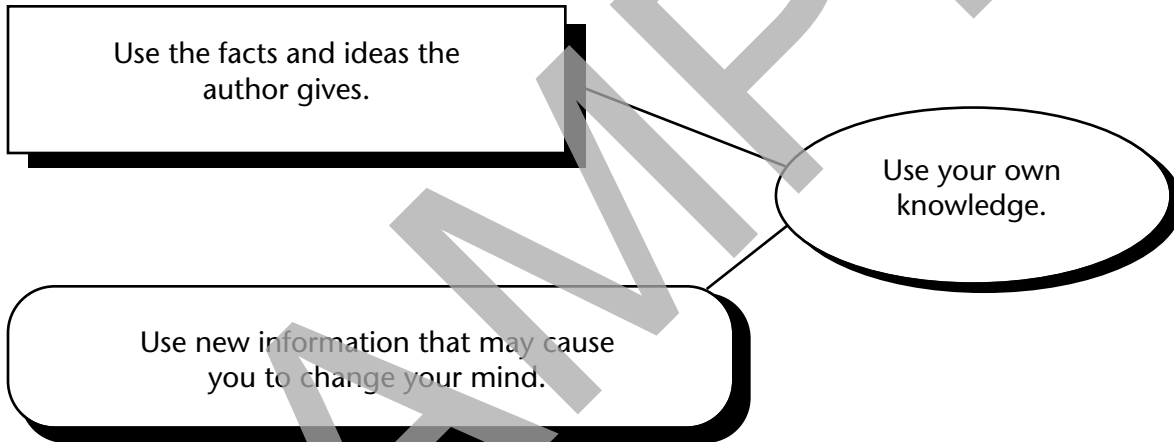
Note: Please be selective and use discretion when choosing the activities that you will do with this unit. It is not intended that everything be done, but that the discretionary choices made are most appropriate for your use and group of students. A wide range has been provided, so that individuals as well as groups may benefit from these selections.

You may wish to choose one or more of the following Prereading Discussion Questions/ Initiating 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.

Using Predictions in the Novel Unit Approach

As we read, we all make predictions—little guesses about what will happen next, how the conflict will be resolved, which details given by the author will be important to the plot, which details will help to fill in our sense of a character. Students should be encouraged to predict, to make sensible guesses. As students work on predictions, these discussion questions can be used to guide them: What are some of the ways to predict? What is the process of a sophisticated reader’s thinking and predicting? What clues does an author do to help us in making our predictions? Why are some predictions more likely than others?

A prediction chart is for students to record their predictions. As each subsequent chapter is discussed, you can review and correct previous predictions. This procedure serves to focus on predictions and to review the stories.



Predictions:

Chapter 1 — Pages 1-18

Vocabulary

ravaged 4
priority 8
lavished 14

formidable 6
jubilee 8

ferociously 6
brogue 12

fastidious 6
symmetry 14

Vocabulary Activity

Place the words for the day in categories:

Things

Descriptive

Actions

Feelings

People

Places

Categories may be added as new words in the unit are introduced. The words and categories may be placed on a Word Wall.

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. What are the words the townspeople use to describe the Nazis? (*war criminals, Jerries*)
What does *Jerries* mean? (*slang for a German*)
2. How does Patty feel about her father? (*Pages 7-8, She tries to impress him but she does not have a warm or loving way of talking to him. She does not want him to hear Christian prayer and she worries about being liked.*)
3. What was gasoline rationing? What were ration stamps? How did people get them?
What was rationed in WWII besides gasoline?
4. Why do you think Patty talks about her father rather than her daddy? (*Page 10, "...daddies act one way and fathers act another."*)
5. What does Patty say about her mother that indicates how she feels about her? (*page 14*)
— "Couldn't she [Mother] at the very least, do me the courtesy of talking behind my back?"
— "Sometimes I think God lavished so much beauty on her outsides that when he got around to her insides there just wasn't much of anything left over."
6. Brainstorm ideas related to the word **prejudice**.

-
7. Can you name a character in this story who is prejudiced? (*Page 16, Mrs. Benn*) Prove it. (*She says Ruth is uppity and gets ahead of her at the meat counter. She wants Patty's mother to fire her.*)
 8. What does Mr. Lee's sudden closing of his business show? (*Page 18, That people in town are not only prejudiced about blacks but also the Chinese.*)
 9. Why does Patty's father give a weak laugh when he hears about Mr. Lee's farewell party? (*Page 18, If the town could turn against a Chinese, they could also turn against him, a Jew.*)
 10. A story map is an outline that helps you to understand and remember the story better. What do you know about the story after reading only the first chapter?
 - What is the setting?
 - Who is the main character?
 - What is the problem?
 Begin a story map. As the story is read more characters may be added and the setting and the problem may change, so additions to the story map may be made. (See page 10 of this guide.)
 11. What have we learned about Patty? Begin an attribute web for her. (See page 13 of this guide.)

Supplementary Activities

1. Locate Jenkinsville, Arkansas, on a United States map. Find Germany on the world map.
2. Chapter Titles: This novel does not have chapter titles. A writer usually uses chapter titles to indicate something that might happen or to create suspense to encourage the reader. After you read a chapter, write what you think would be the best chapter title. The teacher will post all titles and the class will vote for the best. The best chapter titles will be listed on the bulletin board.
3. Writing: Assume the role of Patty. After each chapter, jot down an entry about what has happened and how you feel about it in your "diary."

Chapter 2 — Pages 19-31

Vocabulary

impulse 21	spur of the moment 21	reproachfully 24	resolute 24
ottoman 25	matzo balls 25	relented 25	damask 26
L'chayim 30	dire 30	uppercut 31	knishes 31

Vocabulary Activity

Students may pick two words from the displayed lists and tell how they might be related. (*e.g. impulse—spur of the moment = synonyms; matzo balls—knishes = Jewish foods*)