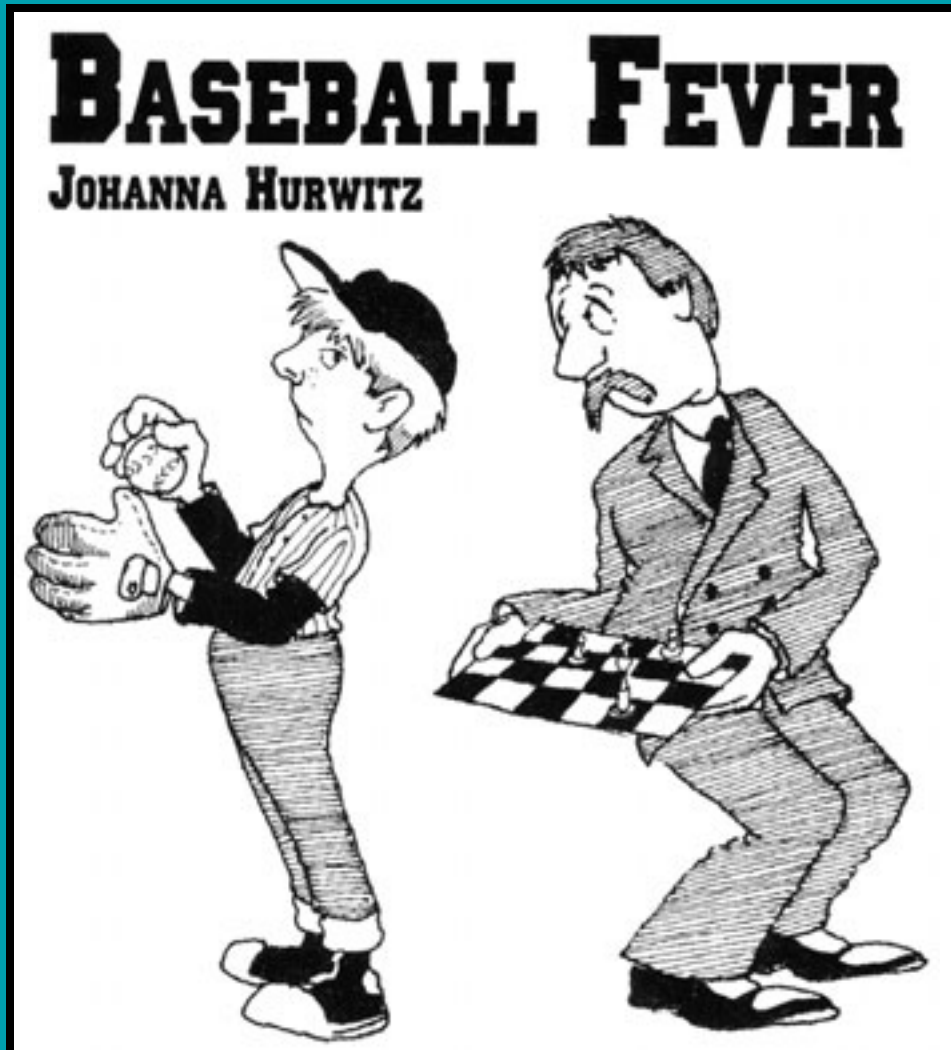


Novel·Ties



## A Study Guide

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**LEARNING LINKS**

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## For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide to use in conjunction with the book *Baseball Fever* 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 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 student's 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.

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## PRE-READING 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? Do you think it will be serious or humorous? Have you read any other books by the same author?
2. *Baseball Fever* describes ten-year-old Ezra Feldman's preoccupation with baseball. Ezra spends much of his time watching, talking, and thinking about baseball. Are you or someone you know preoccupied with a hobby or sport? What are the advantages and disadvantages of such a preoccupation?
3. Ask community coaches, players, and fans why they are interested in the game of baseball. Tape record their answers. Share your tape with your classmates. Discuss how the responses are alike and how they are different.
4. With your classmates, create an exhibit of baseball photos, cards, caps, pennants, and souvenirs to display in your classroom while you read *Baseball Fever*.
5. Think about what you enjoy doing more than anything else in the world. Now, suppose your parents wanted you to give up your favorite activity because they thought it was a waste of time. How would you react? How might you solve the problem?
6. Johanna Hurwitz, the author of *Baseball Fever*, is known for her positive portrayals of family life. One example of this is the Sossis family which she features in several of her books, such as *Aldo Applesauce*, *Aldo Ice Cream*, and *Aldo Peanut Butter*. If you have read any of these books, discuss these stories with your classmates. Then as you read *Baseball Fever*, note times when the Feldman family members relate to each other with humor, optimism, and kindness.
7. Write a letter requesting information about the Baseball Hall of Fame to this address:

National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum  
25 Main Street  
Cooperstown, NY 13326

Then write and illustrate a travel brochure to encourage people to visit the Hall of Fame.

8. Become familiar with the Glossary of Baseball Terms that you will find on page three of this study guide. As you read the book, refer back to the glossary when these words appear in the text.

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## Chapter 1 (cont.)

### Questions:

1. How do you know that Ezra is preoccupied with baseball?
2. What effect does living in Flushing, New York have on Ezra's love of baseball?
3. What makes Ezra think that his father should be able to understand baseball?
4. How does Mrs. Feldman explain her husband's lack of appreciation for baseball?
5. How does Ezra feel about the electronic chess game? How do you know this?
6. How do Mr. and Mrs. Feldman differ in their attitudes toward Ezra's obsession with baseball?
7. How can you tell that Ezra has no intention of spending less time on baseball?

### Questions for Discussion:

1. Why do you think Mr. Feldman compares Ezra to his older brother, Harris? Do you think he should make this comparison?
2. Do you think Ezra deals with his father's disgust over his baseball card collection in the best way? What would you do in such a situation?

### Literary Device: Simile

A simile is a figure of speech in which two unlike objects are compared, using the words "like" or "as." For example:

"Baseball." Mr. Feldman shuddered. "It's like a disease with you.  
I just can't understand it."

What is being compared?

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What does this tell you about Mr. Feldman's attitude toward baseball?

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### Writing Activity:

Ezra says that he will never "recover" from baseball because he likes it too much. Write about your favorite activity or hobby. Describe why you like it so much and if you think you will ever "recover."