

This guide was prepared using the Ballantine edition, ©1981. Other editions may differ.

SYNOPSIS

Chap. 1 The year is 1765. When he was four years old, John Cameron Butler was kidnapped by the Lenni Lenape Indians, renamed True Son, and raised as a member of the tribe. Now, the Lenni Lenape and Shawanose Indians have made a treaty and agreed to return all their white captives. True Son, now 15, is being returned to his birth family. He has learned to hate the white man. True Son resolves to maintain his Indian life, returning to his tribe as soon as possible. True Son's father, a great warrior, tells his son to go and not shame the tribe with his grief.

Chap. 2 White soldier Del Hardy has been assigned the task of returning the Indian captives to their birth homes. True Son, the most rebellious of all the prisoners, must be restrained with strips of buffalo hide so he does not try to escape.

Chap. 3 On the third day, True Son learns that tomorrow they will be leaving for Pennsylvania. Despondent, he resolves to commit suicide by eating a poisonous plant. That morning, his cousin Half Arrow comes to march with him. Greatly cheered, True Son sets aside his plan to kill himself. Half Arrow gives True Son gifts from his Indian family: a sack of parched corn, moccasins, and True Son's bearskin from home. True Son is overcome with love for his Indian family.

Chap. 4 On the way to Fort Pitt, Little Crane joins them. The Indians discuss how foolish the white man is about food, clothing, and shelter. The next day, they find the body of a scalped Mohawk near camp. Little Crane blames the soldiers and True Son feels even more bitterness toward his white captors. The next morning, True Son is forced to part from Half Arrow and Little Crane. True Son responds by trying to overpower the guard. Half Arrow counsels True Son to pretend to be agreeable and take his revenge later.

Chap. 5 The next morning, the Indian captives are reunited with their white families. Two girls and True Son are left unclaimed. True Son feels a surge of relief until his father claims him. True Son is appalled by his father, whom he perceives as an insignificant figure in foolish-looking clothing. He says, "He is not my father." Del Hardy accompanies True Son and his father to their home. True Son is bitterly disappointed because now he will not be able to escape as soon as he had planned.

Chap. 6 True Son is equally dismayed at the white man's housing. He perceives the neat homes, gardens, and fences as an unnatural use of land stolen from the Indians. True Son is introduced to his younger brother, Gordie. He also meets his Aunt Kate, who is appalled by his manner and garb. Then True Son is taken to meet his mother, an invalid who is also shocked that he looks like an Indian. She calls him John, but the boy asserts that his name is "True Son." His mother demands that he set aside his Indian clothing and dress in

white man's garb. True Son won't respond to his mother, but does look at Gordie with understanding and respect.

Chap. 7 In his bedroom, John feels as though he has been sealed in a grave. He recalls his Indian father's story about a massacre of Indians by a gang of settlers called the Paxton Boys. John hides his feelings as he meets his white relatives. Uncle Wilse claims that John will not be able to rejoin white society, because "once an Indian, always an Indian." When John's relatives deride the Delaware language, John defends it in English, to the astonishment of his family, who thought he could speak only Delaware. Uncle George Owens defends the white man's massacre of the Indians. When John accuses Uncle Wilse of being related to a white man who was a traitor to the Indians, Wilse strikes him and asserts that Indians are "vermin" who must be "gotten rid of."

Chap. 8 John gets new clothes and shoes and hates them. While he sleeps, Aunt Kate steals his Indian garb so he can no longer wear it. Every afternoon his mother tries to teach him to read, which John regards as a useless activity. John and Gordie visit the basket maker, an elderly black man named Bejance who had been taken prisoner by the Indians. He recalls his time with the Indians as the happiest part of his life. Months pass, and John decides to leave the settlement and visit Corn Blade. He is apprehended and brought back.

Chap. 9 Myra Butler recalls how John was snatched by the Indians as the rest of the family was working in the fields. The shock of losing her son turned her into an invalid. Since John is not adjusting well, Myra calls the formidable Parson Elder to speak to the boy. The parson counsels patience and tries to get John to understand the white man's point of view.

Chap. 10 John is very sick. While he lies feverish in bed, he overhears his father talking about two Indians lurking in the area.

Chap. 11 Although very weak, John escapes from the house and finds one of the Indians: Half Arrow. John learns that Little Crane, the second Indian, was shot, killed, and scalped. The boys resolve to return to their Indian home.

Chap. 12 They begin their journey. Soon, they steal a boat to speed their journey. We see the contrast between white and Indian attitudes toward personal property.

Chap. 13 The boys enjoy a restful idyll fishing and trapping game before they return to their Indian home.

Chap. 14 The Indians hold a great celebration to welcome True Son home. Their joy sharply contrasts his somber welcome from his white family. The Indians decide to stage a war party to revenge Little Crane's death. True Son finds himself caught between two cultures: eager to revenge his friend's murder yet unwilling to harm children. On the war party, True Son is appointed decoy to lure whites from their boat to the bank, where they will be slaughtered. At the last minute, he warns the whites of the trap and they escape.

Chap. 15 The Indians want to kill True Son for betraying them, but his father steps in and stands by his son's side.

THE LIGHT IN THE FOREST

True Son is exiled from the tribe and forced to return to his white family. With a heavy heart, True Son sets off for life as John Butler.

TIME LINE

- 1524** Lenape come into contact with European explorers.
1600s Clashes with Dutch and Swedish colonists, as well as frequent outbreaks of smallpox, severely weaken the Lenape.
1670 Iroquois take control of Lenape lands.
1736 British force Lenape to leave eastern Pennsylvania.
1754 **April 17** French build Fort Duquesne at the junction of the Allegheny and Monagahela rivers.
Aug. 9 Lenape participate in defeat of Braddock's expedition against Fort Duquesne.
1755 Lenape bands unite to form the Delaware nation.
1756 **May 15** Britain declares war on France.
1758 Delaware sign peace treaty with British.
Nov. 25 The British capture Fort Duquesne, which is renamed Fort Pitt.
1761 British capture remaining French outposts in North America.
1763 **June** Pontiac's Rebellion begins; Delaware besiege Fort Pitt.
Aug. 5-6 Colonel Henry Bouquet defeats the Delaware at the battle of Bushy Run.
Aug. 8 The siege of Fort Pitt ends.
December Paxton boys massacre Conestoga Indians.
1765 **summer** British troops force Indian tribes to turn over all captives.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Pulitzer Prize winner Conrad Richter was born in Pine Grove, Pennsylvania, in 1890 and died in Pottsville, Pennsylvania in 1968. He grew up in a series of tiny coal mining towns where his father served as a Lutheran minister. The family always struggled to make ends meet; as a result, Richter's formal schooling ended when he graduated from high school at the age of 15.

For the next four years, Richter tried his hand at many jobs. He worked on farms, cut timber, sold subscription magazines door-to-door, served as a bank teller, and clerked. At 19, he became editor of the *Patton Courier* and discovered that he enjoyed journalism. He left Patton for other reporting jobs, learning how to write in a clear, plain style.

Wanting to travel, Richter became a private secretary to a wealthy Cleveland family. During this time he started writing short stories; he also married and started a family.

Although convinced that he would never be able to support his wife and daughter on a writer's salary, Richter persevered. In 1924, he published a collection of short fiction, *Brothers of No Kin and Other Stories*. In 1928, his wife's ill health forced the family to move from Pennsylvania to Albuquerque, New Mexico. In the rugged Southwest, Richter came upon a new world that he was to make his own. Eight years later, he published a collection of Southwest stories, *Early Americana and Other Stories*. It was followed in 1937 by *The Sea of Grass*, a novel that brought him national recognition.

Even as he wrote about the Southwest, Richter continued to feel drawn toward the Pennsylvania Dutch country of his youth. His best-known and most highly regarded work, the trilogy *The Awakening Land*, describes the settlement of the

Ohio valley. Eventually, Richter wrote 14 novels, three book-length philosophical essays, and five volumes of short stories.

Richter spent most of the last 20 years of his life in Pennsylvania. According to critic Bruce Sutherland, Richter's chief contribution to literature "is a restrained realism which depends greatly on brevity and understatement for its effect. This, combined with an understanding of people, a feeling for historical things which transcends mere knowledge, and the ability to think and write in terms of his characters and their environment places him among the chosen few who have made the past of America come alive."

CRITIC'S CORNER

Richter received several of the most prestigious awards the literary community bestows. He earned a Pulitzer Prize in 1951 for *The Town*, the final volume of his highly successful trilogy collected as *The Awakening Land*, and in 1961 he was given the National Book Award for *The Waters of Kronos*. *New York Herald Tribune Weekly Book Review* contributor Louis Bromfield observed that Richter's fiction not only reflects scholarly attention and sympathetic interpretation, but also creates for the reader "a world as real as the one in which he lives, a world which the reader enters on reading the first page and in which he remains until the last."

According to Marvin J. LaHood in *University Review*, "Conrad Richter's greatest contribution to American letters [was] his tireless effort to put into fiction the setting and the people of an important moment in our nation's history. In the best of his novels and stories that moment lives again." *Saturday Review* contributor Granville Hicks noted that Richter's prose is "direct and unpretentious," and his stories are capable of amusing and instructing without sentimentality. "Although his books have often been popular," the critic observes, "[Richter] has never written down to the masses. He has gone his own way, and he has no reason to regret it."

OTHER WORKS BY CONRAD RICHTER

- Always Young and Fair* (1947)
The Aristocrat (1968)
The Awakening Land (1966)
Brothers of No Kin and Other Stories (1924)
A Country of Strangers (1982)
Dona Ellen (1959)
Early Americana and Other Stories (1936)
The Fields (1946)
The Free Man (1943)
The Grandfathers (1964)
Human Vibration (1925)
Individualists under the Shade Trees in a Vanishing America (1964)
The Lady (1957)
The Mountain on the Desert: A Philosophical Journey (1955)
Over the Blue Mountain (1962)
Principles in Bio-Physics (1927)
The Rawhide Knot and Other Stories (1978)
The Sea of Grass (1937)
A Simple, Honorable Man (1962)
Smoke over the Prairie and Other Stories (1947)
Tacey Cromwell (1942)
The Town (1950)
The Trees (1940)
The Wanderer (1966)
The Waters of Kronos (1960)

THE LIGHT IN THE FOREST

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Barnes, Robert J., *Conrad Richter*, Steck-Vaughn, 1968.
Contemporary Literary Criticism, Vol. 30, Gale, 1984.
Dictionary of Literary Biography, Vol. 9: American Novelists, 1910-1945, Gale, 1981.
- Edwards, Clifford Duane, *Conrad Richter's Ohio Trilogy: Its Ideas, Themes, and Relationships to Literary Tradition*, Mouton, 1971.
- Gaston, Edwin W., Jr., *Conrad Richter*, Twayne.
- LaHood, Marvin J., *Conrad Richter's America*, Mouton, 1975.
- Lee, L. L., and Merrill Lewis, *Women, Women Writers, and the West*, Whitston, 1979.
- Prescott, Orville, *In My Opinion: An Inquiry into the Contemporary Novel*, Bobbs-Merrill, 1952.
- Richter, Harvena, *Writing to Survive: The Private Notebooks of Conrad Richter*, Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1988.
- Stuckey, W. L., *The Pulitzer Prize Novels*, Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1966.

Periodicals

- American Review*, April 1937.
- Atlantic*, November 1943, June, 1946, April 1947, August 1950, June 1964.
- Books*, Feb. 7, 1937, March 3, 1940, Nov. 1, 1942.
- Book Week*, August 22, 1943, March 31, 1946, June 7, 1964, May 22, 1966.
- Boston Transcript*, March 2, 1940.
- Chicago Sunday Tribune*, April 23, 1950, May 26, 1957.
- Christian Science Monitor*, March 10, 1937, June 1, 1940, May 4, 1946, Nov. 5, 1968; Oct. 23, 1978.
- College English*, February 1947, November 1950.
- Commonweal*, Nov. 10, 1967.
- New Mexico Quarterly*, Winter 1945.
- New Republic*, March 18, 1940; Dec. 9, 1978.
- New York Herald Tribune Book Review*, March 30, 1947; April 23, 1950; May 17, 1953; July 3, 1955; May 19, 1957; April 17, 1960.
- New York Herald Tribune Books*, Aug. 2, 1936, Feb. 7, 1937, April 22, 1962.
- New York Herald Tribune Weekly Book Review*, August 22, 1943, March 31, 1946.
- New York Times*, March 3, 1940, August 8, 1943, March 31, 1946, March 30, 1947, April 23, 1950, June 5, 1955, May 1, 1960, Oct. 10, 1968.
- New York Times Book Review*, Aug. 2, 1936; Oct. 25, 1942; May 1, 1960; May 6, 1962; May 24, 1964; July 10, 1966; Sept. 18, 1966; Oct. 6, 1968, Dec. 24, 1978.
- Northwest Ohio Quarterly*, Autumn 1957.
- Old Northwest*, December 1975.
- San Francisco Chronicle*, May 1, 1950, May 15, 1953, June 22, 1955, April 18, 1960.
- Saturday Evening Post*, October 12, 1946.
- Saturday Review*, May 16, 1953; May 25, 1957; April 16, 1960; April 28, 1962; May 14, 1966; Dec. 21, 1968.
- Saturday Review of Literature*, Feb. 27, 1937; April 22, 1950.
- Southwest Review*, Summer 1958.
- Springfield Republican*, March 14, 1937; Nov. 8, 1942; June 23, 1957.
- Time*, May 1, 1950; April 18, 1960; Sept. 27, 1968.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze the nature of prejudice
2. To assess the effect of cultural dislocation on people's lives
3. To recognize the themes of loyalty and togetherness
4. To appreciate the power of friendship
5. To understand the novel's title
6. To explore the ways kindness can be shown
7. To find examples of bravery and courage
8. To understand culture clash
9. To describe the novel's mood or atmosphere
10. To predict what the future holds for True Son/John and his family

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To probe the relationship between the whites and Native Americans during the 18th century
2. To assess the Indian and white lifestyles in the 18th century
3. To understand the relationship between True Son and his Indian father
4. To see how True Son changes when he returns to his birth family
5. To explore why Indians took white children to raise as their own in the 18th century
6. To look into the relationship between Gordon and True Son
7. To understand the novel's symbols, especially, clothing, shoes, and names
8. To compare and contrast Native American and white views of the environment in the 18th century
9. To grasp the fear engendered by Indians in the 18th century
10. To explore why True Son betrays his Indian family in the end of the story

LITERARY TERMS AND APPLICATIONS

For a better understanding of Conrad Richter's style, present the following terms and applications to the novel:

figurative language uses words in fresh, new ways to appeal to the imagination. Figures of speech include *similes*, *metaphors*, *extended metaphors*, *hyperbole*, and *personification*. In *The Light in the Forest*, Richter created a vivid style by using figures of speech such as the simile "It is better to wait for your cause to be ripe like a persimmon on the snow before you fight back."

symbol is a person, place, or object that represents an abstract idea. For example, a dove may symbolize peace or a rose may symbolize love. In *The Light in the Forest*, names and clothing symbolize cultural identity.

conflict makes a story interesting because readers want to find out the outcome. There are two kinds of conflict. In an *external conflict*, characters struggle against a force outside themselves. In an *internal conflict*, characters battle a force within themselves. Stories often contain both external and internal conflicts. True Son experiences both external and internal conflicts: he battles against the white soldiers to escape and he battles against himself to avoid assimilating into white culture.

THE LIGHT IN THE FOREST

CROSS-CURRICULAR SOURCES

Novels

Patricia M. Beatty, *Wait For Me, Watch For Me, Eula Bee*
Sollace Hotze, *A Circle Unbroken*
Sally M. Keehn, *I Am Regina*
Katherine Kirkpatrick, *Trouble's Daughter*
Lois Lenski, *Indian Captive*
Mary Pope Osborne, *Standing in the Light*
Elizabeth George Speare, *Calico Captive*
James Alexander Thom, *Follow the River*

Nonfiction

Catherine Troxell Gonzalez, *Cynthia Ann Parker: Indian Captive*
Josh Wilker, *Lenape Indians*

CD-ROM

The American Indian (Facts on File)

Internet

"Delaware Indians," <www.delawareindians.com>
"Leni Lenape," <www.web-savvy.com/river/Schuylkill/lenape.html>
"The Lenape and the Red Record,"
<www.meyna.com/lenape.html>
"Native American History Archive,"
<www.ilt.columbia.edu/k12/naha>

Videos/DVDs

Follow the River (1993)
The Emerald Forest (1985)
The Light in the Forest (1958)

THEMES AND MOTIFS

A study of the central issues and situations in Conrad Richter's *The Light in the Forest* should include these aspects:

Themes

- betrayal
- bravery
- defiance
- friendship
- heritage
- identity
- loyalty
- rebellion
- revenge
- survival

Motifs

- clashes between whites and Indians
- the importance of cultural identity
- the significance of self-respect
- the reasons for being self-sufficient
- environmental concerns
- love between friends and siblings
- showing grace under pressure
- how easily misunderstandings occur
- cultural conflicts
- adjusting to radically new circumstances

MEANING STUDY

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the novel. Explain the meaning of each. Chapter and page numbers indicate the context from which the item is taken.

1. "Now, go like an Indian, True Son," he said in a low, stern voice. "Give me no more shame." (Chap. 1, p. 3)

(*True Son's father, the great chief Cuyloga, is justly respected among his people for his wisdom, judgment, and dignity. Here, he counsels his 15-year-old adopted son to act like a true warrior and show the same grace under pressure. True Son should be stoical, hiding his sorrow. He must not wail and fight his captors; rather, he should adjust to his situation as a man.*)

2. Sometimes Little Crane left his white squaw to walk with the cousins, and they talked of the foolish ways of the white people. (Chap. 4, p. 17)
(*Richter describes the same scenes from the point of view of the Indians and the whites, showing through this technique how each side differs in their essential outlook. Here, True Son and Little Crane deride the whites for their weak ways. The whites are so weak, Little Crane asserts, that the Great Being had to give them a Good Book and teach them to read so they could learn what is good and bad. The Indians, in contrast, know good and bad without having to read about it. A few pages later, readers see the white view of the Indians as brutal savages who do not know the Bible and lack the ability to read. Seeing both sides of the same issue shows readers how wide the gulf is between the settlers and the Native Americans.*)
3. "He is not my father," he said. (Chap. 5, p. 26)
(*True Son sees his birth father as a "fantastic and inferior figure in a long fawn-colored garment like a woman's." He is equally horrified at his birth father's willingness to show his feelings in front of everyone and not remain stoical, as he has been taught by his Indian father. Appalled by his birth father's appearance and behavior, True Son renounces him.*)
4. "True Son is my real name," he said in thick English, having trouble with the letter r. "My father and mother give me this name." (Chap. 6, p. 35)
(*Names are highly symbolic because they show how we define ourselves. John's assertion of the name "True Son" is symbolic because it shows that he believes himself to be the "true" or real son of his Native American parents, not his birth parents.*)
5. He must remember what his real father had said—to conceal his true feelings from his enemies. (Chap. 7, p. 41)
(*True Son is not adjusting well to his new life as a white teenager. On the contrary, he still very much considers himself an Indian and his "real parents" his Native American father and mother, not his white birth parents. As this passage shows, he considers his birth family to be his "enemies," people to fight and distrust.*)
6. "My father told me why white people give rum to the Indian," the boy answered. "Get Indian drunk. Buy his furs cheap. Afterward Indian gets sober. Kills them some day. Now Aunt Kate gives rum to Gordie. You want give rum to me. You want to make us hate you? You want to make us kill you someday?" (Chap. 9, p. 62)
(*True Son is appalled that the parson and Aunt Kate offer rum to Gordie and expect him to drink it. As an Indian, True Son is well aware of the tragic effects of rum on the Indian culture. He is shocked that a minister would not only condone giving rum to small children but also expect them to drink it. The parson defends his actions*

THE LIGHT IN THE FOREST

by saying that rum isn't evil; it's just sociable. True Son realizes that the parson is mistaken, that alcohol smashes lives—especially Native American lives.)

7. A pity his eldest son hadn't been raised to evaluate and enjoy the satisfaction and benefits of honest work, the solace and support of ready cash, and the remuneration and accumulation of active property.
(Chap. 10, pp. 70-71)
(When he is upset, Mr. Butler calms himself by going over his accounts. True Son finds the possession and accumulation of material possessions repugnant, because he has been taught that all things belong to all people. This passage underscores the wide gulf between Mr. Butler and his son, and by extension, between whites and Native Americans in the 18th century.)
8. "Take him back! It's an ambush!" he suddenly screamed.
(Chap. 14, p. 115)
(True Son is used as a decoy to ambush white travelers. At the last minute, however, True Son cannot go through with the plan because it would result in the death of a child. He links the child with his younger brother Gordie, with whom he has grown close. This passage thus reveals that True Son has become much more connected to his birth heritage and cut off from his Native American upbringing than he had been aware.)
9. "Why don't you bind and burn Cuyloga, for he is the father and responsible for the bad instruction?" (Chap. 15, p. 116)
(After True Son has betrayed the tribe, he is sentenced to death. His Indian father Cuyloga asserts that he, too, should be killed for he has clearly brought his son up poorly. This act shows Cuyloga loves his son and feels a life-and-death bond with him. It is clear that True Son's love for his Indian father is not misplaced.)
10. "Your heart is Indian. Your head is Indian. But your blood is still thin like the whites." (Chap. 15, p. 118)
(Here, Cuyloga asserts the truth that True Son has not wanted to face: although he desperately wants to be a Native American, he is a white. As such, he must return to his white family and be assimilated once again into the culture of his birth.)

COMPREHENSION STUDY

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the book.

Questions 1-5 (Literal Level)

1. When and where does the story take place? Why is the setting significant to the plot?
(The story takes place in Pennsylvania in 1765. The setting is important because the white settlers and Native American inhabitants are warring. The settlers have encroached on the Native American land and the Indians have responded with violence. Although both sides are currently enjoying a truce, violence flares often and usually without warning.)
2. How did True Son come to live with the Lenni Lenape Indians?
(When he was four years old, the Indians abducted John Cameron Butler, as he was then known, from a field

where he was playing while his family farmed. He was stolen to replace a dead Lenni Lenape child, as was the Indian custom. It has taken eleven years for a treaty to be worked out to return all the Indian captives.)

3. How does True Son feel about being returned to his birth parents?
(True Son violently resists being uprooted from his Native American home and returned to his white family. On the trip back "home," he tries to kill a guard; once back with the Butlers, he tries to escape, finally succeeding.)
4. How does True Son feel about Gordie, his younger brother?
(True Son feels a bond with Gordie, the only member of his white family with whom he connects. This bond betrays him when he links Gordie to the white child he is about to lure to his death on the river. He thinks of Gordie and so cannot kill the white boy.)
5. Where does True Son go in the end of the novel? Why?
(True Son goes back to live with his birth parents because his Native American father realizes that he will never be able to fully adjust to Indian life now that he has been with the whites again. His blood is "too thin," Cuyloga says, linking True Son to his birth heritage rather than his adopted culture.)

Questions 6-8 (Interpretative Level)

6. How do the whites feel about the Indians? Why do they feel this way?
(Some whites, such as True Son's prejudiced and cruel Uncle Wilse, hate all Native Americans and wish they were dead. Their feelings are based on Indian scalplings, attacks, and kidnappings. Others, such as True Son's other uncle and Parson Elder, realize that the Native Americans have been provoked into actions they otherwise might not have taken. These whites feel some resentment, but try to judge each Indian individually.)
7. How do the Indians feel about the whites? Why do they feel this way?
(All the Native Americans presented in the novel hate the whites and resent their encroachment on land. They point to ways the whites get Native Americans drunk on rum and swindle them out of their furs as well as outright attacks with rifles.)
8. What function does the basket weaver Bejance serve in the novel?
(Having been taken by the Indians when a child, just as John had been, Bejance recalls that time in his life as the most pleasurable. He liked fishing and hunting to the rhythm of the seasons. As such, Bejance shows the pleasures of the Native American life. He also shows that the Indian ways will never totally leave John's blood, no matter how thoroughly he assimilates back into white culture.)

Questions 9 and 10 (Critical Level)

9. What do clothes symbolize in the novel?
(The clothes represent culture. True Son feels free and comfortable in his Native American loincloth but confined and uncomfortable in his white breeches and boots. Aunt Kate disposes of True Son's Native American clothes to dispose of his culture; she returns the clothes as he lies ill, hoping this link to his past will revive him. True Son's

THE LIGHT IN THE FOREST

white clothes are made from cut-down clothes of his father's, showing how he is expected to step into his father's role.)

10. Is John's Indian name ironic? Why or why not? (John's Indian name is *True Son*. On one level, the name is ironic because John is not the "true son" of his Native American father; rather he is his adopted son. On another level, however, the name is not ironic, because John will remain true to his Native American heritage on some level no matter how much he appears to blend into white culture.)

Questions 11 and 12 (Creative Level)

11. Working with a small group of classmates, discuss some ways that you might have coped with John's situation had you been in his place.
12. Explain what motivated True Son to turn against his Indian family on the river.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Art and Music

1. John's Native American name is "True Son." Give yourself a name from nature that reflects your interests or abilities. Create an illustrated nameplate with your new name.
2. True Son's Indian parents send him off with gifts, including corn and moccasins. Draw or create another gift that he could bring with him as he begins his new life.
3. Create a model of Fort Pitt, using the description in the novel.
4. Select background music for an especially dramatic scene in the novel. Play the music as you read the scene to the class.

Foreign Language

1. Compile a glossary of words that have entered English from Native American languages. Possibilities include *opossum*, *moccasin*, and *squash*, for example.
2. True Son explains that Delaware is an Indian language the northeastern Indians use to communicate with each other. List ten phrases that travelers to the northeast in the 18th century would need to know. Then add ten phrases for today's travelers.
3. In Chapter 6, True Son's Indian father uses the British term for *jail*, *gaol*. Although American English and British English seem the same, each language has different words for the same things. For example, Americans have *trunks* in their cars, while the British have *boots*. Make a glossary of 10 British and American terms for the same things.

History and Social Studies

1. Make a map showing the Native American tribes in the Pennsylvania area in the 18th century and now.
2. Find out more about the Lenni Lenape and Shawanose tribes. In an oral report, share information about their past and present.
3. Did the Native Americans take white children to raise as their own children? Use reference books to verify this central fact of the novel.
4. Trace the resettlement of Indians in one section of the country, such as the northeast or southwest. Also explain the causes and effects of their relocation.

5. Select a Native American tribe in your region and report on them today. How many members of the tribe exist today? How do they support themselves? Do they live on a reservation?
6. A French visitor to America, Hector Crevecoeur, defined an American as "neither a European nor the descendant of an European." He concluded that in America, "individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men." Today, however, some people claim we have become a "salad bowl" rather than a "melting pot." With a small group of friends, debate this issue.
7. In a speech, explain the primary differences between Indian and white culture as expressed in this novel.

Language Arts

1. "All my life," Richter said in a radio broadcast, "I have been a reader, and one of my joys, especially as a boy and young man, was to come on a book in which I could lose myself." List your five favorite books and explain why they appeal to you.
2. The novel opens with a quotation from a poem by Wordsworth. Find the rest of the poem and explain how it fits the novel's theme.
3. Read one of the "Leatherstocking Tales" by James Fenimore Cooper, such as *The Last of the Mohicans*. Compare and contrast Cooper's vision of the Native American to Richter's description in *The Light in the Forest*.
4. In Chapter 5, True Son rejects his birth father. What makes a father? List at least 10 qualities that you believe a man must possess to be a real father to a child.
5. Evaluate the advice that the Parson gives True Son in Chapter 9.

Science and Health

1. In Chapter 1, True Son explains that he had been adopted to take the place of a son dead from the "yellow vomit." Find out what disease he is referring to here.
2. True Son plans to kill himself with poison plants rather than return to the whites. Find information about at least five wild plants that are poisonous and five that are good to eat. Present your findings on a chart.
4. True Son knows every tree in the region and how he can use its bounty. Make a poster showing the trees in your area and their uses.
5. John's birth mother, Mrs. Butler, became an invalid after John's kidnapping. Explain the illness she suffers from and offer some possible treatments.
6. John was kidnapped as his family was working in the field. Make a pamphlet to help protect children from being abducted.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Construct True Son's family tree, showing his relationship to each character in the novel.
2. Speaking as Parson Elder, write and deliver a monologue to help John adjust to his new life as a member of the Butler family.
3. True Son's Indian clothes have great meaning to him because they represent the life he wants to lead. Select an item that you treasure and explain its significance.
4. Using scenes from the novel, create a mural that shows its main themes.

THE LIGHT IN THE FOREST

5. Lead a debate about adoptions. Should adopted children have access to their birth records, even if those records are sealed? Why or why not?

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. Should True Son be returned to his birth parents at the end of this novel? Debate this issue with a small group of classmates.
2. Compile a list of actions that demonstrate how True Son is both white and Native American.
3. Explain the title. Then write three new titles for the novel. Be prepared to justify each one.
4. Make a character list and explain the strengths and flaws of each individual.

ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY TEST

- | | | | |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. M | 6. S | 11. L | 16. A |
| 2. T | 7. O | 12. P | 17. C |
| 3. N | 8. R | 13. F | 18. J |
| 4. H | 9. Q | 14. D | 19. B |
| 5. I | 10. E | 15. K | 20. G |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. I | 6. D |
| 2. B | 7. H |
| 3. E | 8. C |
| 4. J | 9. F |
| 5. G | 10. A |

Part II: True/False (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. T | 6. F |
| 2. F | 7. T |
| 3. T | 8. T |
| 4. T | 9. F |
| 5. F | 10. T |

Part III: Motivation (20 points)

1. he has heard many stories of their cruelty toward Indians
2. avoid being raised as a white man
3. "once an Indian, always an Indian."
4. he enjoyed the freedom of life in the wild
5. he will need these items when he escapes
6. time has passed and he adjusts to his new life
7. revenge Little Crane's death.
8. trap unsuspecting white travelers
9. he cannot bear the thought of innocent children being slaughtered and scalped
10. offering his life in addition to his son's life

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. John Cameron Butler | 6. basket maker |
| 2. Pennsylvania | 7. boat |
| 3. moccasins | 8. celebrate |
| 4. dead Indian | 9. white |
| 5. English | 10. enemies |

Part II: Matching (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. C | 6. E |
| 2. H | 7. I |
| 3. J | 8. A |
| 4. B | 9. G |
| 5. D | 10. F |

Part III: Identification (20 points)

1. True Son's Indian clothing is the outward representation of his identity. When Aunt Kate takes it, he feels like he has been stripped of his Indian identification.
2. In this novel, rum represents the way the white man has tried to destroy the Indian.
3. Gordon represent unquestioning love and allegiance.
4. Rifles represents evil, death, and killing.
5. Names represent identity. When True Son is forced to take his birth name, John Cameron Butler, he rebels because he correctly perceives that he is being forced to relinquish his sense of self.

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.

THE LIGHT IN THE FOREST

VOCABULARY TEST

Match each word on the left with its synonym on the right. Write the letter of your answer in the space provided.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| _____ 1. sapling | A. talk |
| _____ 2. varmint | B. lament |
| _____ 3. gloomy | C. Indian home |
| _____ 4. presumptuous | D. very old |
| _____ 5. barbarous | E. song |
| _____ 6. ordeal | F. without thought |
| _____ 7. ominous | G. offended |
| _____ 8. dumb | H. arrogant |
| _____ 9. pallid | I. inhuman |
| _____ 10. ditty | J. tightening |
| _____ 11. warrant | K. defiant |
| _____ 12. bolster | L. bet |
| _____ 13. instinctively | M. young tree |
| _____ 14. ancient | N. depressing |
| _____ 15. rebellious | O. doomed |
| _____ 16. palaver | P. pillow |
| _____ 17. wigwam | Q. pale |
| _____ 18. constriction | R. unable to speak |
| _____ 19. mourn | S. tribulation |
| _____ 20. affronted | T. creature |

THE LIGHT IN THE FOREST

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

Complete each of the following descriptions with a name from the list that follows. Place the letter of your answer in the blanks provided.

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| _____ 1. hides True Son's Indian clothing | A. Cuyloga |
| _____ 2. Indian killed by white settlers when he comes to rescue True Son | B. Little Crane |
| _____ 3. True Son's biological father | C. Uncle Wilse |
| _____ 4. True Son's favorite cousin | D. Parson Elder |
| _____ 5. True Son's biological brother | E. Harry Butler |
| _____ 6. offers True Son rum and tries to help him adjust to life with white people | F. True Son |
| _____ 7. True Son's birth mother | G. Gordie Butler |
| _____ 8. a white man who hates Indians | H. Myra Butler |
| _____ 9. John Cameron Butler | I. Aunt Kate |
| _____ 10. True Son's adoptive father | J. Half Arrow |

Part II: True/False (20 points)

Mark the following statements either **T** for true or **F** if any part is false.

- _____ 1. The novel is set in American in the mid-18th century.
- _____ 2. When he was seven, Gordie Butler had been kidnapped by Indians and raised as a member of their tribe.
- _____ 3. At first, True Son strongly dislikes all white people.
- _____ 4. When he first sees his birth father, True Son says, "He is not my father."
- _____ 5. True Son feels an instant bond with his birth mother.
- _____ 6. True Son's mother has been crippled since birth.
- _____ 7. With Half Arrow's help, True Son escapes and returns to the Indian village.
- _____ 8. The boys steal a canoe to use on their voyage home.
- _____ 9. On the war party, True Son lures whites from their boat to be slaughtered.
- _____ 10. At the end of the book, True Son goes to live with his birth family.

THE LIGHT IN THE FOREST

Part III: Motivation (20 points)

Complete each line below with a reason or explanation.

1. True Son hates white people because
2. On the march to the white village, True Son decides to kill himself to
3. Uncle Wilse claims that John will not be able to rejoin white society because
4. Bejance said that living with the Indians was the best time of his life because
5. True Son steals things from his birth parents because
6. True Son stops being so angry because
7. The Indians decide to stage a war party to
8. True Son is sent to be a decoy to
9. True Son warns the settlers because
10. True Son's adoptive father saves his life by

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Compare and contrast Indian and white life from True Son's point of view.
2. Which characters do you find most admirable? Why?
3. Describe how True Son's two fathers take care of their families.
4. Explain True Son's feelings toward Gordon.

THE LIGHT IN THE FOREST

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Underline a word or phrase to complete each of the following statements.

1. (John Cameron Butler, Gordie Butler) had been kidnapped by the Lenni Lenape Indians and raised as a member of the tribe.
2. On the third day of their trip, True Son learns that tomorrow they will be leaving for (California, Pennsylvania).
3. Half Arrow gives True Son gifts from his Indian family: (moccasins, a rifle).
4. On the trip, the boys find (cases of rum, a dead Indian).
5. True Son's relatives are shocked that he can speak (English, Delaware).
6. John and Gordie visit the (blacksmith, basket maker) and become friends with him.
7. As he travels back to the tribe, True Son steals a (boat, horse).
8. When True Son returns to the tribe, they immediately (send him back, celebrate).
9. True Son's Indian father says his blood is (white, Indian).
10. True Son and his Indian father part as (enemies, friends).

Part II: Matching (20 points)

Match the following quotations with names of characters from the list below. Place the letter of your response in the blank.

- | | | |
|-------|--|-----------------|
| _____ | 1. True Son's only white relative who defends the Indians | A. Cuyloga |
| _____ | 2. True Son's birth mother | B. Little Crane |
| _____ | 3. soldier assigned the task of returning Indian captives to their birth homes | C. George Owens |
| _____ | 4. shot, killed, and scalped | D. Parson Elder |
| _____ | 5. the man who tries to help True Son adjust to life among his people | E. Harry Butler |
| _____ | 6. True Son's birth father | F. True Son |
| _____ | 7. threatens to wash True Son if he won't do it himself | G. Bejance |
| _____ | 8. True Son's Indian father, a great warrior | H. Myra Butler |
| _____ | 9. an elderly black man who had been taken prisoner by the Indians | I. Aunt Kate |
| _____ | 10. a white boy kidnapped and raised by the Indians | J. Del Hardy |

THE LIGHT IN THE FOREST

Part III: Identification (20 points)

Explain why each is important in the story.

1. True Son's Indian clothing
2. rum
3. Gordie
4. rifles
5. names

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Why does True Son so strongly resist rejoining his birth family?
2. Why is there so much strife between the Native Americans and the white settlers in this novel?
3. Describe how True Son changes as he experiences the events described in the novel.
4. Trace the novel's plot. Include the rising action, climax, and resolution.



THE STRONGEST BOOKS YOU CAN BUY

PERMA-BOUND BOOKS • 617 East Vandalia Road • Jacksonville, Illinois 62650

Toll Free 1-800-637-6581 • Fax 1-800-551-1169

E-mail: books@perma-bound.com

PERMA-BOUND CANADA • Box 517, Station A • Willowdale, Ontario M2N 5T1

Toll Free 1-800-461-1999 • Fax 1-888-250-3811

E-mail: perma-bound.ca@sympatico.ca

VISIT OUR WEB SITE: <http://www.perma-bound.com>