



HEARTH & STORY

HOMESCHOOL LANGUAGE ARTS

THE FIRST STATE OF BEING

BY ERIN ENTRADA KELLY

STUDY GUIDE SAMPLE PAGES



GUIDE
BY LINDSEY SODANO

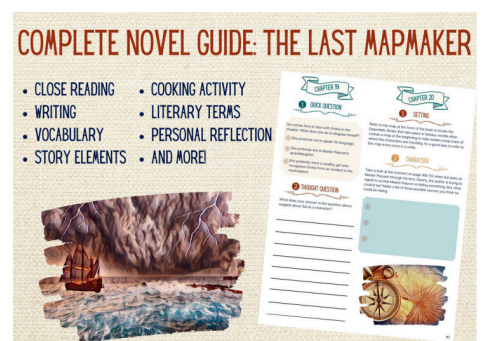
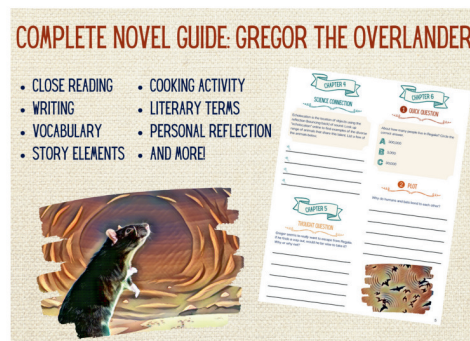
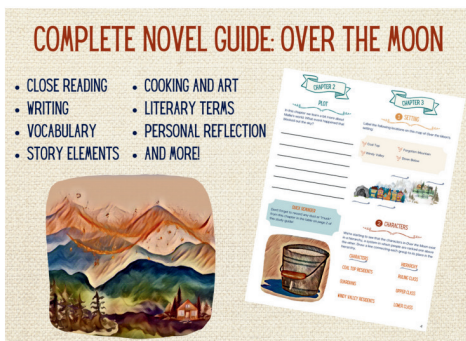
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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Thank you for choosing this resource, excerpted from *Hearth & Story Complete Fourth Grade*, to guide you Erin Entrada Kelly's beautiful novel.

Recommended Schedule: As part of a full language arts program, students using the *Hearth & Story* Language Arts curriculum complete roughly one chapter per day. We have combined particularly short chapters, so some lessons instruct the student to read more than one chapter.

MATERIALS

Here's what you need to complete the course:

-  This study guide, printed (store in a binder or folder)
-  Pen or pencil
-  Stapler
-  Computer (optional)
-  Printer (optional)
-  Dictionary (book or online)
-  Recipe Ingredients: flour, salt, butter, shortening, ice water, egg wash ingredients (see page 20), strawberry jam, confectioner's sugar, milk, vanilla extract, rainbow sprinkles

STANDARDS

For those who follow Common Core standards, this study guide meets the following fourth grade language arts standards:

Reading: Literature

RL.4.1 RL.4.2 RL.4.3 RL.4.4 RL.4.6
RL.4.10

Reading: Informational Text

RI.4.3 RI.4.5 RI.4.6 RI.4.10

Reading: Foundational

RF.4.3.A RF.4.4.A RF.4.4.B RF.4.4.C

Writing

W.4.3.A W.4.3.B W.4.4 W.4.8 W.4.9.A

Speaking and Listening

SL.4.1.A SL.4.1.C SL.4.1.D SL.4.2

Language

L.4.2.D L.4.3.A L.4.4.A L.4.4.C L.4.5.A
L.4.6



CHAPTERS 2-3

THOUGHT QUESTION

How old is Michael?

What is Gibby's relationship to Michael?

In your opinion, how old should kids (typically) be before they can stay home alone without a babysitter?

What do you think is an appropriate age to be a babysitter?

DISCUSSION

While each family is different, of course, it would have been considered somewhat unusual for an incoming 7th grader in the 1990s to have a babysitter. In fact, most of the babysitters in a popular turn-of-the-century book series called *The Baby-Sitters Club* were around age 13, just one year older than Michael. Knowing this history, does Michael's mom's decision to hire a babysitter seem unusual? What does it suggest about Michael or his mom, if anything?

You may want to consult your 90s dictionary for the following terms:

CD Red Hot Chili Peppers

Circuit City Dr Pepper



CHAPTER 4

SLANG

This chapter has a lot of slang terms. You may want to look these up in your 90s dictionary:

Scrunchie Not even Let's bounce

Later No duh Word Bad

So... let's talk about *your* generation's slang vocabulary. It gets a lot of attention in memes and YouTube videos. You can even buy socks with your generation's slang vocabulary printed all over them! Below, write three slang terms people in your generation use. Then write definitions in a style similar to those you saw in the book—as if someone from the future were reading about our current time period.

1

2

3

CHAPTER 12

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

Let's take a moment to consider Michael's anxiety about the unknown future. How do you suppose he became so fixated on Y2K? There are no right or wrong answers since this happened before the start of the book.

Are the other people around Michael also worried about the turn of the millennium?

YES!

NO!

Have you lived through a time of worldwide worry about something scary happening? What was it?

DISCUSSION

How should people determine when to be worried about possibilities like Y2K and when to let it go? What responsibilities should parents have toward their kids in these situations?

CHAPTER 13

Consult your 90s **Raising Arizona** dictionary about:

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Why was Michael's mom fired from her job? Circle one.

- A** She took a sick day to care for Michael.
- B** She took a sick day due to a shoulder injury.
- C** Michael was caught shoplifting at the store.
- D** She was late too many times.

TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

Take a look at the transcript of the conversation between Maria and Shale. Can you find anything in the text that implies that Maria is extremely worried about Ridge? Write down an example below. Don't forget to note the page number.

What is Mr. Mosley's mother's advice?

CHAPTER 17

Consult your 90s dictionary about the following:

Waldenbooks

Bowser

Mario Kart

The Giver

Our Angry Earth

POINT OF VIEW

Stories can be written from many different perspectives, or points of view. Here are the main types:

FIRST PERSON

The narrator is a character in the story. They use words like "I" and "me" to tell the tale. We get to see and hear the story through that character's personal experience.

SECOND PERSON

The story talks directly to "you." The story tells you what you're doing, thinking, or feeling. This point of view is not very common in most stories, but it makes you feel involved in the action.

LIMITED THIRD PERSON

The narrator is not a character in the story, but knows what one character is thinking and feeling. The parts of *The First State of Being* that take place in 1999 use limited third person.

OMNISCIENT THIRD PERSON

The narrator is all-knowing. They can tell us about every character's thoughts, feelings, and secrets.

GIVE IT A TRY

Partway through the chapter, Michael notices Gibby is gone. Moments later, she returns with her friend Teresa and Teresa's younger sister Paige. Because the majority of this book is told from Michael's perspective, we don't experience this moment through Gibby's eyes.

On the next page, try rewriting those "missing moments" from Chapter 17 from Gibby's point of view. You can use either first person (speaking as if you were Gibby) or limited third person (speaking as a narrator who knows what Gibby is thinking and feeling).

Think about Gibby's motives. Why did she walk away? Why did she return with Teresa and Paige? What was she trying to accomplish? Was it risky to introduce the girls to Ridge? What made Gibby think it was worth it to have this conversation?

There is room for you to write on the next page, but you should feel free to type if you prefer.

Consult your 90s dictionary about the following:

Answering machine

Johnny Rockets

The Ricki Lake Show

iMac

Super Smash Bros.

Nintendo 64

A MYSTERY



Ridge says many scientists like to theorize about the mysterious document encased in glass with the word "Ridge" written on it. What's your best explanation? There are no right or wrong answers.



ANSWER KEY

Chapter 1:

His name is Michael Rosario.

He lives in the year 1999.

He has a mother who loves peaches (and her son).

He loves his mother/wants her to be happy.

He fears an apocalypse will happen on 1/1/2000.

B

Chapters 2-3

12

She is his babysitter.

Answers will vary.

Answers will vary.

Chapter 4:

Answers may vary, and might include such gems as “rizz” and “W” (depending on when you are reading this).

Chapter 5:

Answers may vary, but it should be a very low number, perhaps around 3 days.

Answers will vary.

Chapter 6:

Answers may vary, but at the time of the writing of this guide in late 2024, estimates were well over 3 million homeschooled students in the U.S.

Chapter 7:

Answers may vary.

Spurious: false, phony, fake

Chapter 8:

N/A

Chapter 9:

Answers may vary.

Answers may vary but one good example would be *Jurassic Park*.

Answers may vary.

Chapter 10:

Answers may vary.

Answers may vary. It’s possible the author thought this metaphor choice was OK for the book’s younger audience, many of whom may not have encountered the phrase very many times yet.

Chapter 11:

There is a space between the end of one section and the start of the next.

-Gibby borrows clothes from Beejee to give to Ridge.

-The kids run into Mr. Mosely, who is taking a sick day due to the pain in his arm.

- The Prince brothers ask Michael to play basketball, but he declines.

Chapter 12:

Answers may vary, but perhaps he saw many sensational news stories that caused him to worry.

No

Answers may vary, but some students may mention the Covid-19 pandemic.

Chapter 13:

A

Answers may vary but might include Maria’s worry about car accidents (page 105) or crime statistics (page 107).

“Before you go to sleep at night, ask yourself: was I the best person I could be today? If the answer is no, do better tomorrow.”

Chapter 14:

Answers will vary.

This is a hint that Ridge is about to break many time travel rules by going to the mall, a place with “large groups of NTIs.”

Chapter 15:

the present moment

Some or Almost none of the time (either is acceptable since this is an informed opinion question). Michael spends very little time in the first state of being. He is almost always worrying about the future, whether it’s the Y2K catastrophe or the prospect of feeling uncomfortable at the mall.



ANSWER KEY

Chapter 16:

Answers will vary depending on what the interviewee reveals.

Chapter 17:

Answers may vary but might include Gibby realizing that Paige is in the same grade as Michael and wanting them to meet. Gibby may be aware that Michael has a crush on her and wants to encourage him to turn his attentions toward someone his own age. Gibby may also have had to weigh the risk of introducing more people to Ridge vs. the reward of helping Michael form a new friendship.

Chapter 18:

Answers may vary, but many readers will probably guess what's going on here.

Chapter 19

C

For every bad outcome you can imagine, train yourself to imagine one positive outcome.

Chapters 20-21:

Theories may vary, but there are several hints in Chapter 18 that Ridge is getting sick, a feeling that would likely be extremely unfamiliar and unpleasant to him. In Chapter 9, we learn that time travelers might be susceptible to past illnesses that no longer exist in the future.

Chapter 22:

Michael empathizes with Ridge because he often feels the same way. He advises Ridge to use the Conklin Principle and to use first-state thinking.

Nope!

Chapter 23:

Answers may vary but may include that he is too afraid of Beejee to return.

Discussion: Instead of choosing between these two alternatives, Kelly thought of a creative third option! She added an aspect to Michael's character, describing him as a person who is not comfortable with cuss words. Since we're experiencing the story through Michael's perspective, he shows us how he changes the words in his mind. This way, it is clear that Beejee says the cuss word, but the word doesn't have to appear in the book!

Chapters 24-25

No assignment.

Chapters 26-27

Answers will vary but might include the idea that the author wanted to show how worried and upset Maria is and/or to highlight to the readers that Ridge is in significant danger.

Chapter 28:

diverge: to separate, to go in a different direction

Chapter 29:

A

Chapter 30:

Since we know Mr. Mosley's mother gave him a jar of money she had set aside, this gift implies that Mr. Mosley viewed Michael like a son.

Chapters 31-32:

N/A

Chapter 33:

"Not knowing is a part of life."

Chapters 34-35:

B

A

Chapters 36-37:

Sample paragraph

In Chapters 36 and 37 of *The First State of Being*, Michael tries to decipher the code in Ridge's sumbook, hoping the book can ease his fears about the future for good. Michael tries for many hours to crack the code, but he is not able to do so. When Michael's mother returns home for work, he is startled to realize he has just wasted an entire day. Michael thinks about some of the bad things he has done in service of his worries and resolves to do better in the future, just like Mr. Mosley had suggested. These chapters are important because we see Michael finally come to terms with his worries and make a choice to move forward in a healthy way.