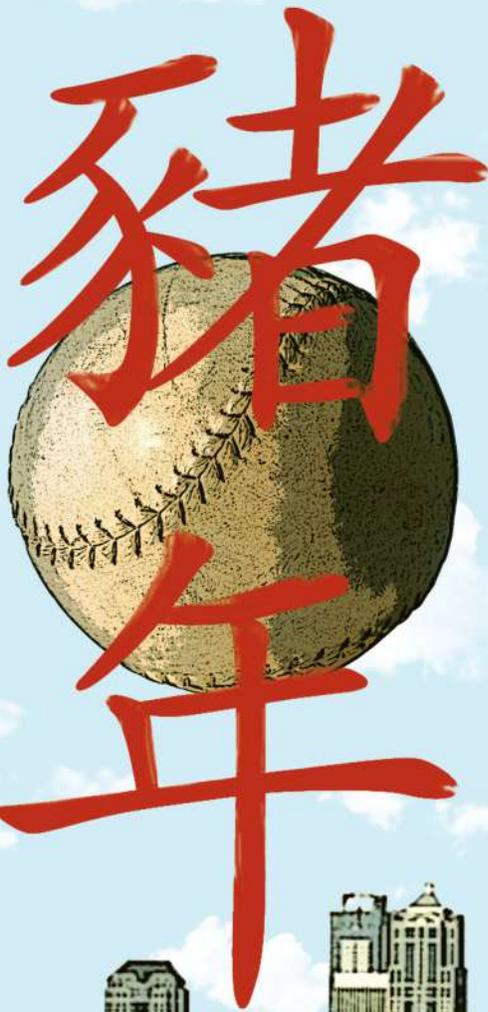


In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson Study Guide

by Andrew Clausen

*For the novel by
Bette Bao Lord*



Progeny Press

Table of Contents

Note to Instructor	4
Synopsis	5
About the Author	6
Background Information	7
Before-you-read Activities	8
January	9
February & March	14
April	21
Background Information	27
May & June	28
July & August	34
September	41
October, November & December	46
Summary	52
After-you-read Activities	55
Additional Resources	57
Answer Key	58

Synopsis

In the year 1947, Shirley Temple Wong and her mother receive a letter from her father. He asks them to come and join him halfway around the world in New York City where he has been working and preparing a home for them. New York is a long way from Chungking, China, but Shirley is excited that her family will be together again at last.

To Shirley, America is a strange new country, but she is anxious to prove to her parents—and to herself—that she can adapt. Although she receives a warm welcome at her new school, Shirley has trouble making friends. She doesn't speak English well, and she doesn't understand many of the customs.

Then Shirley discovers baseball, and she learns about Jackie Robinson, the first African American to play baseball in the major leagues. Shirley begins to understand that America is truly a land of opportunity, and how, in America, one person can make a difference.

In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson Study Guide

9. It dwarfed the bamboo cane the teacher in Chungking had used to punish Four Hands whenever he stole a trifle from another.

Your Definition:

Dictionary Definition:

10. What if the teacher found out about her escapade? There would go her ambassadorship.

Your Definition:

Dictionary Definition:

Point of View:

In this section of reading, Shirley arrives in a new country and encounters many unfamiliar things. To help readers understand and perhaps experience Shirley's confusion, the author describes familiar things from Shirley's point of view.

The underlined words below describe some of these new things that Shirley encounters. Try to identify each of these objects based on its description from the novel. One is done as an example:

Example: A stamp with an ugly, bald bird on it.

A bald eagle

1. A large white box that is very cold inside. (Chapter 2: February)
2. A smaller white box out of which comes blue flame. (Chapter 2: February)
3. A white tub with a metal can inside that bounces and bangs against the walls of the tub. (Chapter 2: February)

In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson Study Guide

Dig Deeper:

9. Look again at the meeting between Shirley's mother and father at the train station. Notice that they do not embrace or kiss. How can we tell they love each other? (Write down the words or phrases that tell you this.)

10. Because it is not a Chinese custom, Shirley's father teases her about embracing in public. How do you express love to members of your family? Do you think it's possible to express love for someone without embracing or other physical contact? Explain your answer.

11. Shirley's mother tells her,

 "Remember, my daughter, you may be the only Chinese these Americans will ever meet. Do your best. Be extra good. Upon your shoulders rests the reputation of all Chinese. . . . You are China's little ambassador."

What is an *ambassador*? In what way is Shirley an ambassador for China?

12. Read 2 Corinthians 5:20, Ephesians 6:19, 20, and Colossians 3:17. In what way are we ambassadors for Christ? As ambassadors for Christ, how should we act?

In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson Study Guide

Dig Deeper:

12. Our words should be free of obscenity or foolishness. Instead our words should build others up instead of tearing them down.
13. Answers will vary.
14. Shirley covered over the offense and refused to tattle on Mabel. Because of this, Shirley and Mabel became friends.

July & August

Vocabulary:

Part 1:

1. b; 2. c, d; 3. a; 4. d; 5. c; 6. d; 7. a

Part 2:

1. refrain: to restrain or hold oneself back; acquiring: to gain possession of
2. lolled: reclined in a relaxed manner
3. jaunty: stylish, dapper, or self-confident
4. alchemy: the seeming magical power of changing one thing into another; ingenuity: cleverness; transmuted: changed from one thing into another
5. adept: skilled
6. meticulous: extremely careful
7. vermin: various small animals or insects that are considered destructive, annoying, or hazardous to health; callously: carelessly, without careful consideration
8. talisman: some object said to have magical powers
9. gallows: a structure from which a noose is suspended and which is used for executions
10. figment: something invented or imagined

Drawing Conclusions:

1. e; 2. b; 3. g; 4. h; 5. a; 6. j; 7. d

Questions:

1. Shirley decides to take Toscanini for a walk. She cleans his cage and takes him outside to soak up the sunshine.
2. The Señora says that if she leaves there will be no one to care for the building or collect the rent. Shirley says that she and her family will care for the building so that Señora Rodriguez can visit her family.
3. Shirley and her father go to work on the basement of the building, cleaning it, repairing what can be repaired, throwing out what can't, and then painting the hallways.
4. The "treasure" was old junk that had been discarded. Shirley's father had fixed what he could and presented various items to the residents of the building.
5. The sticky goo was wet paint.

Dig Deeper:

6. Shirley's family is very kind and generous. They are willing to do much more than is required of them.
7. Shirley's father was an engineer, and according to Shirley, he "knew how everything worked." He put his skills to use repairing things in the basement, and turned a lot of discarded junk into useful items for people in the building.
8. Answers will vary.

September

Vocabulary:

1. progressives; 2. solemn; 3. sanitize; 4. cello; 5. counterfeit; 6. molt; 7. alms; 8. precautions; 9. chamber music; 10. vials; 11. solace; 12. valor

Questions:

1. Shirley recognized that she had changed over the summer, and she was afraid her friends had changed, too.
2. Shirley shows Emily where to buy lunch tickets, she takes Emily through the cafeteria line, she lets Emily know which counter ladies give the most generous portions, and what is good to eat. Shirley sits with Emily at lunchtime.
3. Answers will vary. Accept reasonable responses. Some suggestions: troublesome, distracting, noisy, difficult.
4. Shirley earns 30 cents each time she babysits. She saves the money in a piggy bank.