

the whipping BOY study guide

by Rebecca Gilleland

For the novel by Sid Fleischman



Progeny Press

Table of Contents

Study Guide Author	3
Peer Review Panel	4
Note to Instructor	6
Synopsis	7
Background Information	8
About the Novel's Author	9
Pre-reading Activities	10
Chapters 1–4	11
Chapters 5–8	18
Chapters 9–12	22
Chapters 13–16	26
Chapters 17–20	31
After-You-Read	39
Wordsearch	42
Additional Resources	43
Answer Key	45

Synopsis

When the prince is a brat and you aren't supposed to punish him, what is a king to do?

Call the whipping boy! He takes the whippings the prince's guardians aren't allowed to give to "Prince Brat"!

This high-paced story begins with the prince making trouble—again. Jemmy, the whipping boy, is called for and receives the prince's punishment—again. This becomes the pattern: The prince refuses to learn his school lessons and Jemmy gets punished. The prince pulls a prank, and Jemmy gets punished. But Jemmy figures as long as he is there, he might as well learn proper manners and how to read and write, even if the prince won't.

Then, one fateful day, the prince decides to run away and needs someone to carry his basket. Jemmy is drafted and their adventures begin. They are captured by thieves who plan to ransom the prince. Grasping the chance to escape, Jemmy runs, the Prince follows, and a grand chase is begun.

A chase that will change both of them, forever.

The Whipping Boy Study Guide

Questions:

1. At the end of Chapter 13, why does the prince forgive Jemmy? How does Jemmy respond? Why?
2. When Jemmy mentions that the king must be worried, the prince answers resentfully. Look up and define *resentfully*. Why does Prince Brat feel resentful?
3. Why does Jemmy have the potato man stop to pick up the prince?
4. When Cutwater and Hold-Your-Nose Billy catch them, they whip the prince because they think he is the whipping boy. What does the prince do as he is whipped? What is Jemmy's reaction to the whipping?

Thinking About the Story:

5. At the end of Chapter 14, the prince tells Jemmy, "Maybe I'll never go back. This is the best time I ever had!" Why do you think the prince enjoyed their experiences so far? (Remember the reason the prince ran away in the first place.)

The Whipping Boy Study Guide

6. Do you think Jemmy and the prince are becoming friends? List examples to support your answer.

7. Define *friendship* in your own words.

Digging Deeper:

8. Read Proverbs 17:17, 18:24, 27:6, 27:9, and Ecclesiastes 4:10. These verses describe what a true friend is like. Paraphrase these verses (write them in your own words). What are the most important qualities of a friend?

9. Why wouldn't the prince yell when he was whipped? Would yelling really have mattered?

The Whipping Boy Study Guide

13. These verses tell us we are supposed to treat others as we want them to treat us. It does not matter if they are nice to us or not, we are to treat them well. The prince doesn't treat anyone as he expects them to treat him. He expects total obedience and honor, but he treats everyone else as if they are there just to serve him. He doesn't listen to or honor anyone.

Chapters 5–8

Vocabulary:

1. d, 2. f, 3. a, 4. e, 5. h, 6. g, 7. b, 8. c.

Questions:

1. Answers will vary, but may mention that he is inexperienced, he has been protected from consequences all his life and therefore sees no need to consider his actions, he is proud and cannot imagine people not doing what he says.
2. "Scribblement" is handwriting, and the prince ends up in trouble and unable to prove who he is because he can't read or write, though Jemmy can.
3. Possible answers include: Billy—big, evil-smelling, garlicky, raw-faced, red-eyebrowed, yellow-toothed. Cutwater—rattle-boned, bone thin, flea-ridden, bony, hollow-cheeked, big nosed. Accept other reasonable answers.
4. Answers may vary, but it seems to be pride in sounding dangerous.

Thinking About the Story:

5. At first, the outlaws only wanted to take the boys' horse and food, and they were going to let the boys go. Once the outlaws realize they have the prince, they won't let him go.
6. Students' speculation will vary. It should contain the idea that Jemmy will take the prince's place to protect the prince or give a chance to escape.
7. Answers will vary. Note that there is a difference between saying someone *is* a fool and saying someone has *acted* foolishly. The prince has acted foolishly.
8. That which follows something on which it depends; a result; an effect; the outcome or fruit of ones' actions. Something that happens because of something else.

Dig Deeper:

9. A fool will ignore his parents' discipline and not learn from it; a fool will bring grief to others, and no joy to his/her father. Answers will vary.
10. Answers will vary. Some mention should be made of wisdom coming from God, seeking his word, and obeying him.

Chapters 9–12

Vocabulary:

1. parley, 2. contrary, 3. contemplated, 4. insolent, 5. leery, 6. pretense, 7. ration, 8. smirk, 9. blanched, 10. fathom

Questions:

1. He writes a ransom note and tries to convince Billy and Cutwater to send the whipping boy back to the palace with the note and his crown to prove its validity.
2. The prince realizes that he might have to take a whipping himself.
3. Arrogance is a feeling of superiority and an overbearing manner. Answers may vary. This does seem to describe the prince's actions.
4. He talks Billy and Cutwater into using the prince's horse to carry the message. The horse will return to the castle.

Thinking About the Story:

5. Answers may vary. This was actually quite clever on Billy's part. If Jemmy had written something other than what he had said, he wouldn't be able to recite it backwards very well. He certainly could not have done it twice and gotten it the same!
6. He thinks that his father won't miss him, and if he does he can just wait. Answers will vary. The king probably will miss the prince, but the rest of the prince's answer seems to show that Prince Brat does not care very much about other people's feelings.
7. Jemmy fears the king will punish him when the note is received because the king will believe that Jemmy is trying to get the ransom gold for himself. The prince offers Jemmy protection from the king. The prince might have offered to protect Jemmy because the prince is growing in character and growing fond of Jemmy as a friend or because he thinks he still needs Jemmy's help.