

---

# LITERACY THROUGH LITERATURE — BOOK 2

**A transition program from Primary School language activities to Secondary School literature studies**

## **Who Can Benefit?**

This reading development program was written for Year 8 students who have reading achievement levels of Year 6 or 7 students. They have similar abilities and interests to their peers, but for a variety of reasons, their reading development has not kept pace with their physical, intellectual, spiritual and psychological growth.

## **Contents of the Program**

There are four Study Guide Activity Units. Three are based on the novels:

**The Silver Sword** by Ian Serrailier

**So Much to Tell You** by John Marsden

**I am David** by Anne Holm

The other unit is a guide to the content and structure of short stories and is not based on any particular text.

Each Study Guide is a complete entity with its own goals, methodology and resources, but for maximum skill development, the entire program is recommended. Literature topics such as plot and structure, character, mood and theme are pursued while the learning activities develop the following reading, comprehension, study and research skills:

- skimming and scanning
- reading signs in index books
- researching information
- locating main ideas and supporting details
- categorising, classifying, organising
- analysing and synthesising
- drawing conclusions
- making decisions
- judging, criticising, evaluating
- speculating, predicting
- summarising and paraphrasing
- following written directions
- interpreting signs and symbols

## LITERACY THROUGH LITERATURE

---

Other learning activities include discussion; dramatisation; storytelling and story writing; giving talks to classmates; drawing illustrations and maps; play acting and play writing; expressing self through signs and symbols; sharing life histories and personal stories; expressing self through movement and music; interpreting/expressing mood through music and movement.

### **The Role of the Teacher**

This role is best described as that of a team captain and coach. Experience has shown that progress is made when the teacher and students work together. The teacher is a participant, guide, facilitator and director.

### **The Program's Potential for Development**

Students who have entered this program with low levels of reading development have quickly displayed:

- interest and enjoyment
- enthusiastic participation
- improved reading, comprehension, oral, listening and writing skills
- self-confidence

Poor readers have been able to participate fully through the art and drama activities. The enjoyment of novels has been assured because the teacher has read each book to/with the class before commencing a detailed study of each story. Students who have difficulty reading alone can be aided by tape recordings. Permission for this can be obtained from the publishers of the individual works.

### **The Theories Behind the Program**

The reading and comprehension components have been developed from the writings and research of the following people.

#### **Reciprocal Teaching of Comprehension-Fostering and Comprehension-Monitoring Activities**

by A.M. Palincsar and A. L. Brown  
Illinois University, U.S.A. 1984.

#### **The Teaching of Reading Comprehension**

by D. Pearson and D. Johnson  
Holt, Rinehart, Winston 1980.

---

## Table of Contents

Study Guide and Activity Unit: <b>The Silver Sword</b> by Ian Serraillier .....	8
Study Guide and Activity Unit: <b>So Much to Tell You</b> by John Marsden Self-discovery through Story .....	27
Study Guide: Examining and Evaluating Short Stories .....	42
Study Guide and Activity Unit: <b>I am David</b> by Anne Holm .....	49
Conclusion: Essay Writing .....	67

---

## The Silver Sword

by Ian Serraillier

### AIMS

The aim of this literature study is to enable the students to do the following:

- enjoy the learning activities and improve their reading and comprehension skills
- survey the book and develop expectations about its content
- develop their abilities as critical thinkers by engaging in plot criticism
- learn a variety of study and research skills
- conduct information research from maps, encyclopaedias, newspapers, magazines, books
- follow written directions
- study topics and issues relating to war and peace — past and present
- relate appropriate findings from research, themes and issues to their own lives and to society

### KNOWLEDGE GOALS

At the end of this unit the students will know:

- how to survey a book
- how to identify key words, main ideas and supporting details
- how to determine the suitability of chapter titles
- how to summarise paragraphs and chapters
- how to paraphrase
- how to study important characters
- how to recognise primary and secondary sources of information
- how and where to find information for research tasks
- how to find references in atlases and encyclopaedias
- how to follow written directions

The students will learn:

- about some important political leaders in World War II
- about the destructiveness of that war
- about present day war-related topics and issues — Refugees; Trade Fairs of Weapons; Nuclear War; Disarmament; War Trials
- about peace organisations — The United Nations; Amnesty International; Greenpeace
- about peace-makers — past and present

- 
- about signs of hope in society and how students can create a peaceful environment at home, school and in their town or city
  - about videos that will relate to the topics, themes and issues studied

**SKILL GOALS**

During this unit students will exercise the following skills:

- reading and comprehension, spelling and writing
- surveying, skimming and scanning text
- identifying language features
- classifying and categorising information
- analysing sentences, paragraphs and chapters

Students will:

- follow directions
- research information
- summarise and paraphrase
- identify themselves with characters
- apply ideas to self
- transfer ideas to other suitable situations
- criticise the plot
- make decisions, judge and evaluate

**RESOURCES**

Each student requires an **individual copy** of the novel and a Study Guide Activity Unit. She or he must have access to encyclopaedias, newspapers, magazines and books that contain material to be studied. Videos that explore topics and issues include — *Cry Freedom*; *Ghandi*; *The Music Box*; *The Girl Who Spelt Freedom*; *The Diary Of Anne Frank*.

**METHODOLOGY**

Before the first reading, students should do Exercise 1, in the Study Guide Activity Unit: Surveying the Novel and Recording Expectations.

An expressive and fluent reader should read the story to the students whilst they follow the text by reading their individual copies. This practice ensures that students have maximum opportunity to know and understand the plot.

After the first reading, students can do the exercises in this book. The teacher's role is to introduce each activity. She or he clarifies the directions and provides help and extra skill practice when necessary. The teacher is a resource person, a modifier and a director. She or he can lead or participate in group discussions.