

Name _____ Date _____

GHOST CADET
by Elaine Marie Alphin

Use this reading guide as you read Chapters 9 - 16.

VOCABULARY - USING CONTEXT CLUES

Study the way these words are used in the sentences from the story. Use the context clues to determine their meaning.

1. "Even in the shadowy moon light the old cemetery failed to look sinister."

Sinister means:

- | | |
|-------------|-----------|
| a. evil | c. lonely |
| b. friendly | d. light |

2. "I've got too much to do to delve into family records this minute."

Delve means:

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| a. march | c. write |
| b. dig | d. phone |

3. "His eyes widened, and he tilted the watch so that the delicate, ornate script caught the light better." **Ornate** means:

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| a. heavy | c. gold |
| b. large | d. fancy |

4. "Benjy couldn't help laughing. 'Maybe she's turning over a new leaf, Miss Leota.' "

What does Benjy mean when he said Fran was **turning over a new leaf**?

5. "Hugh looked up at Benjy, his face shining. 'I believed going into battle with my friends would finally set me free, and make me a man at last instead of a mama's boy.' "

What does Hugh mean when he called himself a **mama's boy**?

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Think About It

Answer these questions about the book in complete sentences.

1. Why is Benjy so anxious to make friends with the cadet?

2. How are Benjy and Fran different?

3. Why is the watch so important to Hugh?

4. What do you think of Miss Leota? Would you enjoy her company?

5. What does Benjy think of Miss Leota?

6. Did Benjy's and Fran's vacation turn out as each expected? Explain your answer.

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Answer these questions about the book in complete sentences.

7. Chapter 15 was called "Time Runs Out." Why was time so important after Benjy discovered the pocket watch?

8. Read the Author's Note again. How was the story of the real Cadet Hugh McDowell the same as the book, *Ghost Cadet*?

9. How was the real story different from the book, *Ghost Cadet*?

10. *Ghost Cadet* is a story about how Hugh's friendship changed Benjy. How was Benjy different at the end of the book?

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ANSWER KEY

CHAPTERS 1 - 8

1. c
2. a
3. a
4. d
5. An heirloom is a possession that has meaning for the members of a family.
6. New Market, Virginia
7. Virginia Military Institute
8. William Hugh McDowell
9. "The Soldier's Farewell"

CHAPTERS 9 - 16

1. a
2. b
3. d
4. A new leaf means changing a way of behaving especially something that might have been a bad habit.
5. A mama's boy would be easily scared instead of bold.

Think About It

1. Benjy does not make friends easily. He wanted a new friend. He also wanted to help someone else.
2. Fran is very social with lots of friends. Benjy is shy and prefers to read. He was moved into a higher grade because of his academic ability.
3. The watch was important to Hugh's family. He believes he disappointed them when he lost it.
4. Answers will vary.
5. The vacation turned out differently. Fran met new friends even while following the rules of her grandmother. Benjy made a friend as well and helped him find a lost heirloom. They grew to love their grandmother and did not resent their mother leaving them for a week as much as they had.
6. In order for Hugh to march with the cadets, the watch needed to be returned to his family in time.
7. Hugh was a real cadet who died at the Battle of New Market. He also had a family watch that was lost. The ceremony described in the book does occur each year at VMI.
8. Hugh never met anyone named Benjy asking him to find the watch. The real watch was never recovered. The ghosts of the cadets do not participate in the ceremony.
9. Benjy gained a lot of confidence because of his friendship with Hugh. He gets along better with his sister and has come to know his grandmother.
10. Benjy is at first surprised that Miss Leota seems to like him. He likes the way she stays calm and treats both him and his sister fairly. He shares her interest in history.