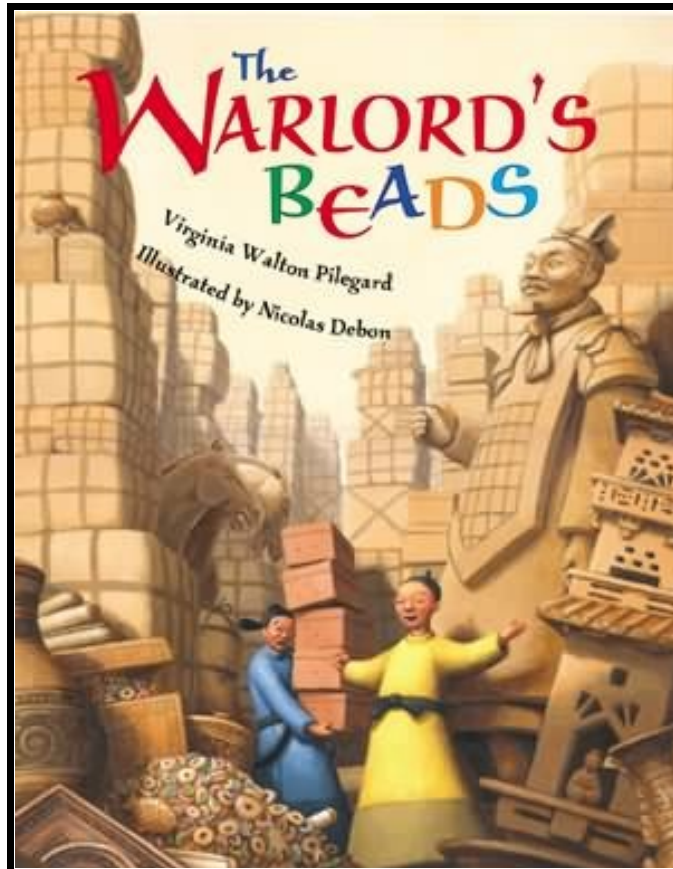




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Study Guide for *The Warlord's Beads*

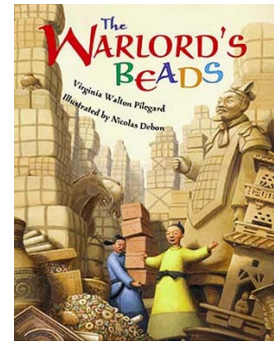


This Study guide includes:
Comprehension and critical thinking exercises
Number sense Chinese style
Chinese history
Creating the Warlord's treasures

Study guide created by
Virginia Walton Pilegard

☞ Work sheets are reproducible ☞

Study Guide for
The Warlord's Beads
By Virginia Pilegard



Comprehension & Critical Thinking

Suggested Materials: O shaped cereals, pipe cleaners, cardboard, tracings of counting frame pattern in *The Warlord's Beads*.

Background:

Chinese children are named with special care. It is said boys have names of the "head," words that symbolize bravery and strength such as "sturdy pine." Girls are given names of the "heart" which include words relating to beauty and grace, such as "flower." A young woman in Beijing helped the author select the name "Li Xiao Chuan" for the leading character of *The Warlord's Beads*. His last name, "Li", (pronounced "Lee") is written first by Chinese custom and is one of the 100 most common surnames in China. "Xiao," his middle name, is pronounced "siau" and would be used by his family as an endearment and later by himself as a way to show humility. It means "little." Only his given name "Chuan" is used in the story. It may be pronounced "Chwan," "Chu'an," or "Chun," depending on the speaker's particular dialect, and means "river."

(Before the story is read)

1. What can you tell about the characters in this book by the pictures on the cover?
2. Can you guess from the title what the story is about?
3. What can you tell from the way the man and the little boy are dressed?

(As the story is read)

1. If listeners are familiar with *The Warlord's Puzzle*, the reader may pause after the first few pages and ask how the lives of the boy and his father have changed. (Although they have more material comforts, instead of spending their days together fishing, now they are separated with Father going to work and Chuan avoiding the warlord's bullying sons.)
2. In what ways is Chuan's life good? In what ways is it difficult?
3. The picture of Chuan peeking into the counting room is an appropriate place to conjecture about what will happen next.

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(After reading the story)

1. What may have made Chuan brave enough to search the palace to find Father? How do you suppose he thought he could help?
2. Why did the warlord suspect Father of stealing?
3. Why was Father unable to make an accurate count?
4. How did that make the other palace workers nervous?
5. Did the things the servants brought help Father? Why or why not?
7. What kinds of things did Chuan do to help Father? (Hint: don't forget he comforted his father by caring and listening and following instructions as well as by discovering a useful invention.)
8. Paper is another invention from China. Find the picture in which Father and Chuan are using paper scrolls to record their counting.
9. Why would it have been a good thing for a child in medieval China to be apprenticed to a fine teacher?
10. Provide O-shaped cereal and pipe cleaners for children to assemble counting frames as clues are read again.



Number Sense Chinese Style

Materials needed designated in bold print.

1. Provide **several hundred thrift-store necklaces or craft-store beads**. Have students count 100 and 200 beads. Have them count again using fingers and toes, as Chuan did.
2. Looking at pictures of stacked boxes in *The Warlord's Beads* for clues, have students **glue beads (or paper pictures of boxes) on construction paper** to illustrate patterns of ones, tens, and hundreds.
3. To create durable counting frames, use one of the bead recipes in the "treasures" section, study guide page. Thread **beads on pipe cleaners or wood dowels** and **glue** into **cardboard frames, constructed from the pattern in *The Warlord's Beads***. After helping students master counting, by moving beads to the top of the frame, encourage them to discover for themselves how to add and subtract. Record discoveries using both pictures of the frame and mathematical equations. (Hint: This is a great cooperative learning project. Each child makes fewer beads and has group input to discover bead-math techniques.)
4. More advanced students may enjoy the following challenge: Chuan used his ten fingers and ten toes as a base for his counting frame. What would his counting frame have looked like if he had used two for his ears and eyes as a base? (Hint: In base ten, there are nine number symbols and a zero. In base two, there is only one number symbol and a zero.)
Using **two strips of lined paper** side by side, have students write the number symbols for base ten and those for another base such as two or three.

5. Find pictures of Chinese abacus and Japanese soroban in the **encyclopedia**. How are they the same? How are they different? How do they compare with Chuan's counting frame?
6. Someone may wish to take the challenge of counting all the beads pictured in *The Warlord's Beads*. Although she won't give you a treasure, Mrs. Pilegard would love to hear your total. E-mail her at goatmountain@cvip.net or write in care of Pelican Publishing Company.

Chinese History & Geography Come Alive

Materials needed designated in bold print.

1. Help students find China on **globe** and draw maps with **colored pencils or crayons** on construction paper. Topics for discussion might include: size, population, ethnic diversity, and distance from your school. Include discussion of the International Date Line.
2. The sweetmeats that tempted Chuan are an ancient treat mentioned in Asian and Near-Eastern writings and still enjoyed in China today. For a western variation on the recipe, (using **hand grinder or food processor**) grind **dried peaches or apricots**. Moisten with a drop of **honey**, shape into balls, and roll in **ground nuts**. Place on **cookie sheet** to set up.
3. Research some other foods enjoyed by Chinese children. Plan a potluck to share students' family favorite or traditional ethnic foods.
4. Intermediate grade children may do research projects concerning the foods of China. Encourage students to discover how the Chinese diet during the Tang Dynasty was influenced by traders coming over the "silk road" from Persia and the west.
5. Students may be encouraged to write their own stories with such story-starters as: "Imagine taking a time machine to ancient China to meet Chuan. Tell of your adventures." Mrs. Pilegard's next Warlord book, due out in 2002, takes Chuan on an adventure with a caravan on the trade route from China to Persia!

Lessons on Living Harmoniously

1. Discuss Chuan's problems with the three little boys who bully him. What would you do if you were in his situation?
2. *The Warlord's Beads* tells of many things to be enjoyed by the five senses: bright sunlight, the song of a bird, ripe peaches, spices, incense, sweetmeats, and carved boxes to name a few. Go on a treasure hunt for things to enjoy by seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, or tasting.
3. Discuss how appreciating these simple pleasures enriches our lives.



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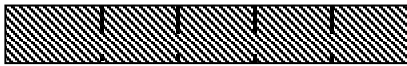
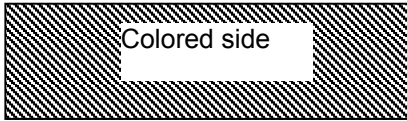
Creating the Warlord's Treasures

Materials needed are in bold print.

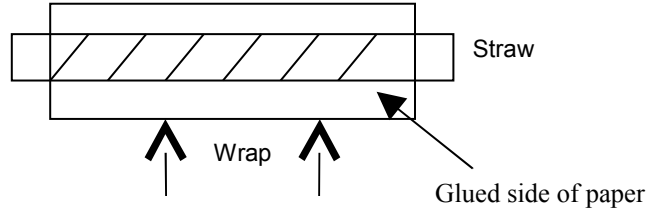
1. Create beads from one of the following recipes:

Drinking straw beads:

Using **crayons or felt pens**, color one side of **1½" x 8" paper rectangles** to wrap around **drinking straws** with a generous overlap. Spread a light coat of **glue** on blank side and wrap around the straw. Allow glue to dry and then cut covered straw into 1-inch beads.



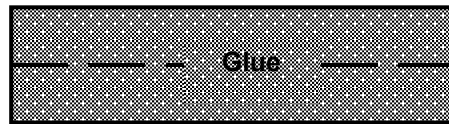
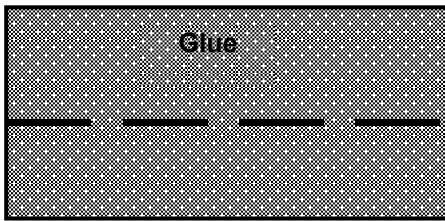
Cut covered straw in 1-inch pieces



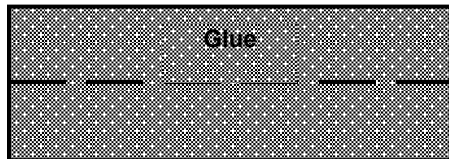
Papier-mâché beads:

- *For each bead, tear long strip of **newspaper** 3-inches wide.
- *Lightly cover one side with **glue** and fold in half making the long strip 1½" wide.
- *Glue and fold twice more leaving a long strip almost ½" wide.
- *Glue one side again starting 1" from the top. Roll the strip around a **pencil**, starting with the unglued portion of the gluey side. Use a small piece of **masking tape** to secure bead-end of paper if necessary.
- *Jiggle to make sure the "bead" doesn't stick to the pencil. When glue is dry, remove bead from pencil. Paint using a **water-based tempera paint** in "jade" colors. Coat finished bead with **clear varnish spray** if desired.

3 inches



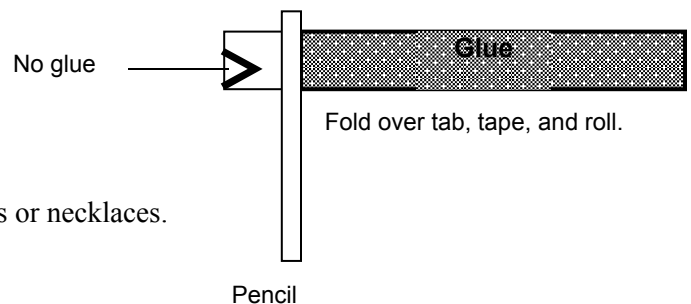
Fold
¾ inches



Fold
1 ½
inches



.375 inches



Pencil

2. Use yarn or string to thread beads for bracelets or necklaces.



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THE WARLORD'S BEADS

By Virginia Walton Pilegard

Illustrated by Nicolas Debon

**A NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2001 BOOKSENSE '76 SELECTION
ACCELERATED READER PROGRAM SELECTION**

"Debon's distinctive artwork adds to the fairy tale feeling of this story." --Children's Literature

"It's a perilous situation, but Chuan saves the day with a device of carved beads strung onto sticks--a forerunner . . . of the abacus." --Kirkus

Reviews

"Debon's well-composed, often dramatic, and sometimes comical paintings bring the story to life. With or without the math lesson, a good picture book for reading aloud." --Booklist

Young Chuan lives with his father in the beautiful palace of a powerful Chinese warlord. As a reward for his cleverness in solving the warlord's puzzle, Father is given the job of tallying the warlord's treasure--brilliant jewels, rich brocades, and spices from a thousand lands. Life at the palace is luxurious but filled with so many interruptions Father often loses count! The varying totals lead the suspicious warlord to accuse him of stealing, and Father is about to lose hope. Just in time, Chuan discovers a special use for the warlord's lovely jade beads--a use that will help Father keep an accurate tally and cause the warlord to pronounce Chuan as clever as his Father.

Often used by teachers of the primary grades to illustrate the powerful concept of "base ten," various types of counting frames appeared in China during the Middle Ages. *The Warlord's Beads* is a valuable tool for introducing young readers to the wonder of numbers as well as the beauty and mystery of ancient China.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Virginia Walton Pilegard studied elementary mathematics and completed both a B.A. and M.A. in education. She created the **Warlord's Series** to provide children with tales of adventure that illustrate mathematics concepts. Ms. Pilegard is also the author of the acclaimed *The Warlord's Puzzle* (\$15.95), which was selected by the California Department of Education as recommended reading for grades K-12; *The Warlord's Fish* (\$15.95); *The Warlord's Puppeteers* (\$15.95), and *The Warlord's Kites* (\$15.95). She lives with her husband in the foothills of California's central Sierra Nevada Mountains below Yosemite National Park.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

After working in cultural administrations in both Canada and France, Nicolas Debon lives as a freelance illustrator in Versailles, France. In addition to his illustrations for the **Warlord's Series**, he is also the author/illustrator of several other books, including a 2003 Canadian Governor General's Literary Award finalist.

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