

# The Perilous Road

## Reading Guide

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For the book by William O. Steele



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## Overview

According to the Logos Curriculum Guide, “A Christian literature program is one in which the students are taught to read great literature and to think while they read, as Christians. As they do, our children must be taught to appreciate a finely-crafted sentence to the glory of God. As Christians, we are people of the word, and consequently, we should be people of words. We should understand words and use them well.”

C.S. Lewis says, “Literature exists to teach what is useful, to honour what deserves honour, to appreciate what is delightful. The useful, honourable and delightful things are superior to it: it exists for their sake; its own use, honour, or delightfulness is derivative from theirs.”

At Logos School, our desire is for the students to love the truth, the goodness, and the beauty in great literature, and in this learning, to be encouraged in their faithfulness to God. In order to do this, the teacher must also be faithful, and love the literature. If the teacher loves the literature, then the students will love the literature as well.

## Suggestions For Use

This guide has been written specifically for a fourth grade class, but could easily be used for third and fifth graders. In general, we read 8-12 books in one school year, depending on the length and difficulty of the books chosen. My rule of thumb is to assign up to twenty pages per day. We read aloud four days a week, reading through one chapter or up to twenty pages in each session. On the off day the students will have a reading assignment for homework, with a comprehension quiz the next day. (This encourages the students to be accountable, and gives me the opportunity to assess each student’s comprehension.)

Before beginning any new book, we will pre-read the book. This means to peruse the front and back covers, making predictions about the story line and setting. On the inside pages we search for the author, illustrator, publisher, and copyright date. We then turn to the table of contents and I ask the students questions about the chapters.

The students will have one comprehension sheet (front and back), ten vocabulary words, and one vocabulary quiz per week. Occasionally there will be a puzzle or other activity included. On Wednesdays students will write five to ten sentences using the vocabulary words. Sentences should be descriptive and clearly show an understanding of the meaning of the word. I encourage the students to use vocabulary words in creative writing assignments, requiring five vocabulary words from recent lists. Comprehension questions and vocabulary sentences are graded based on content, restating the question, and correct grammar. I use a five point scale, awarding one point each for restating the question, beginning with a capital letter, and ending with the proper end mark. The students receive two points for having the correct answer.

Typically we read for forty-five minutes, allowing ten minutes at the end of the session for the comprehension questions. In the fourth grade the students are encouraged to be independent in this task, although we will discuss questions as we read. Although fourth graders are in the grammar stage, in addition to literal questions, I do include questions which require students to make inferences and evaluations as well.

Answer keys are included in the back of the book to help you get started.

Blessings!

# Perilous Road

Pre-Reading

## *Before Reading the Book*

Complete the following information:

AUTHOR: \_\_\_\_\_

PUBLISHER: \_\_\_\_\_

COPYRIGHT (When was this book written?): \_\_\_\_\_

This book is an example of: (circle one)

FICTION

NON-FICTION

POETRY

BIOGRAPHY

Open the book to the dedication page. It reads as follows:

*To the staff of the Library of the University of Chattanooga for favors granted  
and service rendered, and now will you be quiet?*

Discuss under what circumstances the author might have written this story.

Read the introduction together. Discuss the idea of historical fiction. Is everything in the story true?

Enjoy the story.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Grade — Literature

Lesson Plan: *Perilous Road, Ch 1-8*

**OBJECTIVE:** *The teacher must know the truth or lesson ...*

**SWBAT:** Pre-read book (back), finding title, author, copyright, etc.

Make predictions regarding contents of book.

Describe main character and his behavior.

Articulate 'sides' and 'players' in the war.

<p><b>SUPPLIES:</b> For each student: 1 book Vocabulary list Comprehension sheet Voc quizzes-Friday</p> <p><b>GENERAL PLAN:</b> Mon: Ch 1 Tues: Ch 2-3 Wed: Ch 4-5 Vocab work Thurs: Ch 6-7 Fri: Ch 8 Review Vocab quiz</p>	<p><b>INTRODUCTION:</b> <i>The learner attends with interest to the lesson given.</i></p> <p>Ask students to tell of a scary or dangerous situation they have been in. Choose a student to look up the word dangerous in a thesaurus. Define <i>perilous</i> and then orally use it in a sentence. Have 3-4 students do this.</p>
<p>*As you read, take note of good style, figurative language, story line, and vocabulary. *Gradually require these things in student writing.</p>	<p><b>REVIEW:</b> <i>Unknown must be explained by the known...</i></p> <p>Pre-read. Look at the cover. What do you think is happening? What war might this be? Dates? Do we know who commands the country? The armies? Do we know what this war is about? Why are the sides fighting? Discuss, from history class, the basic causes, etc. Times are hard — What do you think it would be like to live on a farm and have little food. What other books have we read where things were tough? (Charlie, diaries)</p>
<p><b>REMINDERS:</b>  For next Tuesday: Compose figurative language worksheet.  Upcoming Events:  *Character sheet</p>	<p><b>LESSON:</b> <i>The language used as a medium must be common to both...</i></p> <p>Hand out vocab list — discuss each word together. Choose students to use each word in a sentence. Begin reading, paying close attention to description of main character. Note descriptive language throughout-similes, etc.</p> <p><b>Chapter 1</b> -After reading chapter 1, discuss setting. Describe Chris's home and surrounding countryside. What types of trees are around? -Chris hates the Yankees, although he hasn't met many, if any. Why do you think he hates them so much? Discuss his attitude. What would you be like? *Orally summarize and answer comprehension questions.</p> <p><b>Chapters 2-3:</b> Review vocab, story line thus far, and any figurative language noted. -How does Chris respond to the thieves at his house? Discuss this. How would you respond? -How does Silas help him at that moment? -Where do we leave Chris at the end of chapter 2? -What does Chris's family think of Silas? *Discuss Jethro and his plans. Begin character sheet and continue adding to it daily. *Begin character sheet, adding to it daily.</p> <p><b>Chapters 4-5:</b> Review vocab, story line thus far, and any figurative language noted. -How do we 'see' that Chris is filled with hate? Discuss emotions and thoughts and how it shows physically.</p>

*Lesson plan continued on next page*

<p>SUMMARY:</p> <p>See chapter summaries.</p> <p>Chris is safely home after his perilous freeing of the mules.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Why is he so unhappy?</li> <li>-The Yankees have made life more difficult for the Brabsons. Discuss ways.</li> <li>-Lukie called Chris a blue-belly. What does he mean?</li> </ul> <p><b>Chapters 6-7</b> Review vocab, story line thus far, and any figurative language noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-What is the biggest reason that Chris and Lukie struggle with each other? Lukie’s brother joined the Rebels, but Chris’s brother joined the Yanks.</li> <li>-What is Chris’s plan? Do you think he is wise, brave, foolish, etc.</li> <li>-Who does Chris find himself with at the end of the chapter?</li> </ul> <p><b>Chapter 8</b> Review vocab, story line thus far, and any figurative language noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Talk about favorite foods. Chris=worms.</li> <li>-What is a ‘dumb supper’?</li> <li>-At the end of chapter 8, what does Chris see outside?</li> </ul> <p>*Orally summarize chapter.</p>
	<p>ASSESSMENT: <i>Require student to reproduce in own language...</i></p> <p>Students will answer pre-reading questions orally.</p> <p>Teacher will visit each reading group, listening for fluid reading.</p> <p>Whole group reading — call on students randomly, grade once per week.</p>
	<p>TEST AND PROOF: <i>Re-view, re-think, re-know, and re-produce the knowledge taught...</i></p> <p>Choose students to give oral summaries of scenes or chapters.</p> <p>Vocab quiz on Friday.</p> <p>Vocab sentence work-good use of words in sentences — neat, spelling and grammar.</p> <p>PREVIEW:</p> <p>Chris will find himself needing to make decisions because of his actions recently. He will find himself in a <i>perilous</i> situation. He will discover that there are good and bad men on both sides of a conflict...</p>

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Perilous Road

Vocabulary List  
Chapters 1-8

With a partner, look up the following words and write a short definition on the line. Be prepared to share your answers with the class.

1. eccentric \_\_\_\_\_
2. lurch \_\_\_\_\_
3. smidgen \_\_\_\_\_
4. perilous \_\_\_\_\_
5. whittle \_\_\_\_\_
6. strutting \_\_\_\_\_
7. taut \_\_\_\_\_
8. haze \_\_\_\_\_
9. crave \_\_\_\_\_
10. flinch \_\_\_\_\_

Choose 3 words from the list. Write one sentence for each word chosen. You must show that you understand the meaning of the word. Please underline the vocabulary words.

11. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

12. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

13. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Perilous Road

Chapters 1-8

After reading each chapter, answer the following questions.

## Chapter 1

1. Define *perilous* and then write it in a good sentence. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What are sweet gums, black gums, and sourwoods? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Why did Chris hate the Yankees so much? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Find the simile on page 10 and write it in the blank. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What does Chris see at his house on his return? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Chapters 2-3

1. The plan to get back at the Yankees who stole food from the Brabsons goes awry and Chris flees for his life. What happens to him at the end of chapter 2? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ rescued Chris. What does he say about Silas? (bottom of pg32)

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Jethro plans to join the \_\_\_\_\_ side.

## Chapters 4-5

1. When Chris looks down into the spring, what does he see? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_