

BEAUTIFUL FEET BOOKS HISTORY

Modern American and World History

A Literature Approach for Intermediate Grades

TEACHER GUIDE

BY REA BERG AND JONATHAN CRABTREE



Modern American and World History: A Literature Approach for Intermediate Grades 2nd Edition by Rea Berg and Jonathan Crabtree

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Cover image is Portrait of Orleans by Edward Hopper, 1950. Courtesy of D Alderman / Alamy Stock Photo.

Hopper's mid-century impression of the small Cape Cod village of Orleans depicts Main Street where it branches to 6A in an iconic representation of the changing world of small-town America. The ubiquitous automobiles at the end of the street, the tilting utility pole, and the Esso gas station all represent the effects of modernization, and the shifting perspectives of life. The lone pedestrian is barely visible while the viewer of this work seems to be seated in a car looking down the street through a car windshield. The imposing Esso station creates the right frame of this work, reflecting the way large corporate firms are shaping American life. Esso is the sound made when one speaks "S" and "O,"—the symbols of the powerful Standard Oil company. The empty town, save one lone pedestrian, reflects the era when many small towns suffered the migration of populations to urban settings and intimates wistfully at the bygone beauty and simplicity of a coastal town.

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CONTENTS

Introduction	v
Start Here	vi
Required Literature and Resources	viii

LESSON PLANS

Part I-The Civil War	1
Study Notes	
Rabbit Trails	13
Historic Table	
Part II-Reconstruction, Industrial Revolution,	
and Turn of the Century	16
Study Notes	17
Rabbit Trails	29
Historic Table	30
Part III-The First World War, the Great Depression,	
and Segregation.	
Study Notes	32
Rabbit Trails	53
Historic Table	55
Part IV-Building towards War, the Second World War,	
and the Atomic Age	
Study Notes	57
Study Notes	
Rabbit Trails	75
Rabbit Trails Historic Table	
Rabbit Trails Historic Table Part V–The Struggle for Freedom in the	77
Rabbit Trails Historic Table Part V–The Struggle for Freedom in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries	
Rabbit Trails Historic Table Part V-The Struggle for Freedom in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries Study Notes	
Rabbit Trails Historic Table Part V–The Struggle for Freedom in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries Study Notes Rabbit Trails	
Rabbit Trails Historic Table Part V-The Struggle for Freedom in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries Study Notes	
Rabbit Trails Historic Table	
Rabbit Trails Historic Table Part V-The Struggle for Freedom in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries Study Notes Rabbit Trails Historic Table Answer Key	
Rabbit Trails Historic Table Part V-The Struggle for Freedom in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries Study Notes Rabbit Trails Historic Table Answer Key Glossary	
Rabbit Trails Historic Table Part V-The Struggle for Freedom in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries Study Notes Rabbit Trails Historic Table Answer Key	

INTRODUCTION

This read-aloud curriculum is designed as a literary approach to the study of history based on the paradigm developed by the nineteenth-century educational reformer Charlotte Mason. Miss Mason promoted an education rich in classical, historical, and biographical literature for young people. Beautiful Feet Books is committed to using literature, or "living books," that will lead students and teachers on a course designed to provide, in the words of Cervantes, "instruction and delight."

Sadly, the twentieth century was the bloodiest century in history, as totalitarian forces—set on a conquest of the world—drew countless millions into their webs of darkness, destruction, and death. Because this view of humanity can become distressing to readers, we have attempted to balance the otherwise overwhelming turmoil of the period with inspiring stories of heroic individuals who, amid great challenges, stood for justice, truth, equality, and freedom. Their stories will hopefully inspire in students an understanding of the tremendous sacrifices made by men and women devoted to something bigger than themselves.

This study will introduce students to some extraordinary men and women, like George Washington Carver, Teddy Roosevelt, Sergeant Alvin York, Susan B. Anthony, the Wright brothers, Frederick Douglass, Eleanor Roosevelt, Mother Teresa, and Ronald Reagan. Stories of young people the same ages as the readers of this guide will inspire and challenge students to a deeper understanding of peoples and cultures outside the American framework. The true story of young Sook Nyul Choi, who has grown up under Japanese occupation in Korea and must now make a daring escape to South Korea as the Russians move in, will inspire readers with her courage and wisdom. Huynh Quang Nhuong is growing up in a mountain village of Vietnam just prior to the war. His adventures with his family's water buffalo, Tank, will open up a new world to modern American readers. The dramatic story of the Danish people's unified mission to save their Jewish citizens during the Nazi invasion will become real through *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry.

Our hope for this study is that the works of literature curated here will help students and their teachers ask themselves the big questions history presents the serious student. History is not merely an accumulation of dates, facts, and events, but rather is the story of nations and communities, of men and women, boys and girls, making their way in the world through the challenges, dilemmas, and injustices that confront them. Studying history through first-person accounts provides the opportunity to develop moral imagination—the ability to see and feel things as others see and feel them. History is seldom one-sided but is a multifaceted and nuanced story that can open our minds and hearts to better understand ourselves and even those we consider very different from ourselves. Studying history from the perspectives of those who were there can better equip us to see and understand the geopolitical events of our day with wisdom and understanding.

Start Here



Scan the QR code to access an introductory video with the author, free downloads, and specific tips on how to best use this teacher's guide.

For those of you who prefer to read through instructions, we've summarized most of the information from the video below. You will notice other QR codes interspersed throughout the study. Access them for helpful tips, encouragement, check-in videos, and other resources to help you along your journey!

Reading & Discussion

We encourage you to read aloud as much as you can with your student, as this provides a learning environment that encourages a child's natural curiosity and fosters an atmosphere of inquiry. Reading with your student also allows you to take full advantage of the discussion prompts provided in nearly every lesson. These discussions foster deep learning and critical thinking. Use these discussions to help students learn from the triumphs and mistakes of history. An answer key (page 97) is provided for comprehension questions and to help if you cannot read aloud every book with your student. Discussion prompts do not have answers provided.

Parental Discretion

This study covers both inspiring moments in history as well as events of great tyranny and injustice. Learning about these events as part of the great human drama prepares us to understand humanity's capacity for good and evil and cultivates empathy for victims of injustice wherever it occurs. This study has been designed for sixth through eighth grade and contains literature at various reading levels—some books are easier and others more challenging. The easier books provide historical context, true stories, and paint a picture of the wide variety of human experience. The books that deal with heavier topics ought to be approached with care for those working with a sensitive student. The realities brought about by the world wars, Jim Crow, totalitarianism and more, should be disquieting, but the goal of this guide is to aid and facilitate discussion in a respectful and thoughtful manner, keeping in mind how nuanced and multifaceted history can be. Parental warning notes have been added throughout the guide to make it more convenient to preview challenging content

Student Portfolio

Your student will need a notebook or portfolio in which to keep their work throughout this course. This may be a three-ring binder, a blog, or a composition notebook. Use what works best for your student to collect their work throughout the course.

Vocabulary

Although we all have dictionaries at our fingertips, a broad and varied vocabulary is an important asset to develop. Additionally, it is excellent preparatory work for college exams. Some of the books used in this study contain arcane or old-fashioned words. To make sure that students understand the material they are reading, vocabulary lists have been provided. We strongly encourage students to look up each word in a printed dictionary and write out the definition. Because some words have multiple uses, a brief definition of each vocabulary word is provided on page 114.

Rabbit Trails

These are additional recommended books to check out from your library. None of these titles are required, we simply provide these lists to help you sift through the hundreds of books available on the many topics covered in this study. Feel no obligation to include any of these titles; you'll have plenty of information from the required reading. However, if you want to dig deeper, these books are a great place to start.

Flexibility

There are 116 lessons in this study. While we suggest three-to-four lessons per week, make the schedule work for you. Please don't feel bound by a preset schedule. You might also wonder, "Do I have to do every assignment, embark on every activity, read every library book?" No, not at all. We provide you with a feast of options from which you choose what is in alignment with your child's curiosity and desire, to fit comfortably with your family's learning culture.

Helpful Hints for Assessment:

During fifth through eighth grade, children are building their critical thinking and resourcefulness. We've intentionally omitted highly specific directions on "where to find" and "how to find" some of the information for their maps and reports. We hope you will also encourage them to think about where they might look. It's easy for us to show them the way, but it's better for them to have safe opportunities to find their own way.

To the question "How do I know if my student is learning this?" remember the key indicators:

- Are they asking good questions? Are you having lively discussions? Do they bring up the modern world at dinner and share what they've discovered? Do they randomly mention World War II or the civil rights movement?
- Are they willing and able to share their thoughts and ideas about the characters and events in the stories they are reading? Can they apply some of those aspects to their own life experiences?
- Are they showing up eager for the next story?

We hope you enjoy the adventure of learning about this period of American and world history! Share your work with us **@beautifulfeetbooks**. We love to see how you make our studies your own.

Required Literature and Resources

A CHILD'S FIRST BOOK OF American History By Earl Schenck MIERS



A Child's First Book of American History by Earl Schenck Miers

This is America! And this is its glowing, epic story from the days of the Viking expeditions to the birth of the Atomic Age. Here are the explorers, the settlers and fur trappers, the soldiers, the statesmen—the men and women who have shaped this country and its destiny. It is a continuous tale of adventure, wars, industry and invention, hardship and growth; it is an unparalleled story of courage, high ideals, hard work, and a precious experiment in freedom.

Modern American and World History Timeline published by Beautiful Feet Books

Ranging from the bombardment of Fort Sumter in 1861 to the Great Recession of 2007, this timeline features twenty-eight beautiful, dated illustrations to help students visualize the chronology of history.





Across Five Aprils by Irene Hunt

This Newbery Honor title is the unforgettable story of young Jethro Creighton who comes of age during the turbulent years of the Civil War. It is a poignant, heartwarming, and heartbreaking account of an Illinois farm family and their saga during the Civil War, and of how war affects even the closest families.

Escape from Slavery: The Boyhood of Frederick Douglass in His Own Words, edited and illustrated by Michael McCurdy

For the first time, the most important account ever written of a childhood in slavery is accessible to young readers. From his days as a young boy on a plantation to his first months as a freeman in Massachusetts, here are Douglass's own firsthand experiences vividly recounted, expertly excerpted, and powerfully illustrated.





Carver: A Life in Poems by Marilyn Nelson

This Newbery Honor winner is a moving biography in poetry by award-winning writer Marilyn Nelson. It provides young readers with a compelling lyrical history of the life of the revered Black botanist, agricultural genius, and inventor, George Washington Carver.

Theodore Roosevelt by Genevieve Foster

Teddy Roosevelt was a force at a time in American history when the country needed his clearheaded leadership. But as a child he was so sickly his parents weren't sure he would survive childhood. In typical Teddy fashion, the young boy takes on his infirmities and determines to make his body strong. He takes that fighting spirit into everything he does, whether it's studying at Harvard, cattle-ranching in the Dakotas, buffalo hunting in Wyoming, or running for political office. Roosevelt becomes one of America's most effective presidents and a beloved leader around the world.





The Wright Brothers: Pioneers of American Aviation **by Quentin Reynolds**

Young Orville and Wilbur Wright love building things. From the fastest sled in town to the highest-flying kite, the Wright brothers' creations are always a step ahead of everyone else's. They grow up learning all about mechanics from fixing bicycles, and they study math and physics. On December 17, 1903, Orville takes off in one of the world's first flying machines!

Rascal: A Memoir of a Better Era by Sterling North

This beloved book is a classic memoir of a childhood growing up in a small town in Wisconsin where young Sterling is constantly outdoors reveling in the wonder of nature. When Sterling befriends a racoon kit, his world takes on an entirely new sense of fun and adventure as he and his new companion, whom he names Rascal, become inseparable. Set during WWI, the story tells of Sterling's older brother fighting overseas, and when the Spanish Influenza hits, Sterling contracts a mild case. The Newbery Medal winner of 1964, this true story gives a window into life on the home front during WWI.





Sergeant York by John Perry

This illiterate backwoodsman becomes a beloved hero of WWI through his sharpshooting ability. A succinct and gripping account of Sgt. York's remarkable life, the book includes details from exclusive interviews with the sergeant's three surviving children and information drawn from battlefield eyewitness reports and original film studio archives—fresh reminders of the legacy of one of America's great patriots.

The Singing Tree by Kate Seredy

Life changes drastically for one Hungarian family when World War I breaks out, upsetting their peaceful existence. When Hungary must send troops to fight in the Great War, Jancsi's father is called to battle and the children are left in charge of the farm. Jancsi and his cousin Kate must grow up quickly as they navigate the realities of war, including caring for refugees, hosting Russian soldiers, and watching the destructive power of anti-Semitism rising in their town. They face these challenges with perseverance and courage.





Out of the Dust by Karen Hesse

Winner of the Newbery Medal, this book chronicles the life of one Dust Bowl family as they face the loss of everything they've worked so hard to build. This fictional tale is based on events that really happened to families in the Oklahoma Panhandle during the worst of the Dust Bowl days.

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor

The land is all-important to the Logan family, but it takes time for Cassie and her three brothers to understand just how fortunate they are to have it. They must learn the hard way that having a place they can call their own in rural Mississippi permits the Logans the luxuries of pride and courage that their fellow sharecropper neighbors can't afford.





The House of Sixty Fathers by Meindert DeJong

Tien Pao is all alone in enemy territory. His family has escaped from the Japanese army, fleeing downriver by boat. Then comes the terrible rainstorm. Tien Pao is fast asleep in the little sampan when the boat breaks loose from its moorings and drifts right back into enemy territory. With only his lucky pig for company, Tien Pao must begin a long and dangerous journey in search of his home and family.

War Boy: A Wartime Childhood by Michael Foreman

This book about World War II touches on British life during wartime with humor, candor, and factual information. The author tells of his childhood in Suffolk during the war, including one of his earliest memories of an incendiary bomb landing in his room and missing him by inches. *War Boy* is a rare book that blends facts with an exciting and wonderful story.





Number the Stars by Lois Lowry

This is the story of a ten-year-old Danish girl who courageously helps to save the family of her Jewish friend. Lowry was inspired by the letter of a young Dane, who, on the eve of his execution reminded young and old to remember, and from that remembering "to create an ideal of human decency." *Number the Stars* is a story of Denmark and its people, whose resistance to the Nazis was so effective in saving the Jews.

Air Raid-Pearl Harbor! by Theodore Taylor

On December 7, 1941, Americans were stunned to learn that Japanese forces had launched an attack on Pearl Harbor. In this engrossing and extensively researched account, Theodore Taylor examines both sides of the battle, taking a close look at the events leading up to it and providing compelling insight into the motives and operations of the brave men and women swept up in the fight.





Bomb: The Race to Build–and Steal– the World's Most Dangerous Weapon by Steve Sheinkin

This Newbery Honor book tells the gripping story of the discovery of fission and the secret race between the United States, Russia, and Germany to build the first atomic bomb. With a remarkable crew of brilliant characters including Robert Oppenheimer, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Albert Einstein, Otto Hahn, and Lise Meitner, the heroes and anti-heroes often become blurred. The anti-heroes include the many spies working at Los Alamos and beyond to sell the secrets to Russia and Germany.

Year of Impossible Goodbyes by Sook Nyul Choi

It is 1945, and courageous ten-year-old Sookan and her family must endure the cruelties of the Japanese occupation of Korea. Police captain Narita does his best to destroy everything of value to the family, but he cannot break their spirit. Sookan's father is with the resistance movement in Manchuria and her older brothers have been sent away to labor camps. Then Sookan must escape to the south with only her little brother as companion.





Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom: My Story of the 1965 Selma Voting Rights March by Lynda Blackmon Lowery

The civil rights movement was a defining moment in American history. Though the work of racial reconciliation continues, there were key figures and heroes that played a significant role in breaking down the injustices of the past and granting Black Americans the rights to which they had been due since emancipation. This book tells the story of a young teenager—Lynda Blackmon—who participated fully in the voting rights movement, and her dramatic experiences.

A History of US: All the People by Joy Hakim

All the People, the last volume in a series, covers US history from the end of World War II to the present. This updated fourth edition covers, for the first time, events that have taken place in the early twenty-first century. All the People focuses on civil rights in the last half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first, ensuring that readers will have a firm grasp of the groundbreaking nature and lasting importance of this movement.





Stealing Home: The Story of Jackie Robinson by Barry Denenberg On April 15, 1947, Jackie Robinson stepped onto Ebbets Field as a Brooklyn Dodger and changed American baseball forever. The first Black man to play in the white major leagues, he had the courage to confront racism and fight for the rights of all Black people both on and off the baseball diamond.

Water Buffalo Days: Growing Up in Vietnam by Huynh Quang Nhuong

As a young boy growing up in the hills of central Vietnam, Nhuong's companion was Tank, the family water buffalo. Nhuong gives readers a glimpse of himself when he was their age and tells a thrilling story of how he and Tank together faced the dangers of life in the Vietnamese jungle on the eve of war.





Ronald Reagan: Our 40th President by Winston Groom

In this biography, bestselling author Winston Groom—author of *Forrest Gump*—gives us a complete portrait of Reagan. Readers will follow Reagan from his midwestern boyhood to his early career as a radio sports announcer, and from his days as a Hollywood star to his extraordinary political career as a union leader, governor of California, and president of the United States.

Ground Zero by Alan Gratz

In this fictional tale of 9/11 in the Twin Towers, everything that takes place is based upon actual events of that fateful day. Brandon has recently been suspended from school, so he must go to work with his father at Windows on the World—the restaurant at the top of the Twin Towers. On the other side of the world, in Afghanistan, young Reshmina has grown up in the shadow of war, but she loves school and longs for peace. When she encounters a wounded American soldier, her faith compels her to help. How these stories connect brings to life the events of 9/11 and the War on Terror.



part i The Civil War



Bombardment of Fort Sumter, Currier & Ives, 1861.



The Battle of Shiloh by Thure de Thulstrup, restored by Adam Cuerden, 1888.

In this section of the study, two seminal works of literature will be covered. The first is *Across Five Aprils* by Irene Hunt. This book is based upon the stories that Irene's grandfather told her as a child that were reminiscences of his experiences during the Civil War. In this tale Jethro Creighton is nine years old when the war breaks out and is living in Illinois (see the sidebar for the key role this state played in the Civil War drama). The Creightons are a loving and tight-knit farming family, used to working together and being an integral part of their community. But the war causes divisions even in the most loving families, and Jethro comes of age watching and living out these realities. Set solidly within the historic timeline of the unfolding battles, readers are given a clear lens to understand the issues of the war through the tender and poignant eyes of a boy on the cusp of manhood. This book won numerous awards and was the runner-up for the Newbery Medal in 1965.

The next book is *Escape from Slavery: The Boyhood of Frederick Douglass*, edited and illustrated by Michael McCurdy. Taken as an excerpt from Douglass's entire work, which is the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself*, Mr. McCurdy has provided an important work for students looking to understand what enslavement was truly like. Frederick Douglass not only managed to escape his chains, he also became one of America's most ardent and famous abolitionists.

Factors Leading to Civil War

As in all great human conflicts, key factors played a part in causing states in the southern United States to secede from the Union in 1860 and 1861, eventually leading to the Civil War. As Miers notes in A Child's First, the Yankees in the North fought for "the Union and the abolition of slavery," whereas "Johnny Reb fought for states' rights and the ability to do with their 'property' as they wished" (200). Though about two-thirds of Southerners did not own slaves, many of these citizens identified more strongly as Virginians or Georgians than they did as Americans. In this sense, protecting their rights as Virginians was more important than preserving a Union with which they disagreed. The Bible they read in church on Sunday didn't condemn slavery, so they believed there was justification for the institution. But the obvious fruit of chattel slavery practiced in the South found no justification in the Bible or Christianity. Chattel slavery resulted in rape, murder, the breakup of families, and inhumane cruelty-all evils

soundly condemned in the Scriptures. As Frederick Douglass so poignantly stated, "Between the Christianity of this land and the Christianity of Christ, I recognize the widest possible differenceso wide that to receive the one as good, pure, and holy, is of necessity to reject the other as bad, corrupt, and wicked! I love the pure, peaceable, and impartial Christianity of Christ; I therefore hate the corrupt, slave-holding, women-whipping, cradle-plundering, partial and hypocritical Christianity of this land. Indeed, I can see no reason but the most deceitful one for calling the religion of this land Christianity." Though Southerners in general justified breaking the Union over "states' rights," the Confederate Constitution made clear that the key "right" the Confederacy was looking to uphold was the right to own and enslave Blacks. It stated, "No bill of attainder, ex post facto law, or law denying or impairing the right of property in negro slaves shall be passed" (Article 1, Section 9).

"A house divided against itself cannot stand."

ABRAHAM LINCOLN quoting Matthew 12:25

Lesson 1

1. Introduce and read Chapters 29–31 in Earl Schenck Miers's *A Child's First Book* of *American History*, hereafter referred to as *A Child's First*. If you have joined us from our Intermediate Early American study, it may be helpful to review these chapters. Discussion prompts:

. Watch *The Battle of Palo Alto* on The History Channel and discuss why Abraham Lincoln was so opposed to the Mexican-American War.

- b. From Chapter 30, discuss how Lincoln's humor and self-deprecation made him popular.
- c. From the same chapter, identify what political event brought Lincoln out of retirement.

2. Chapter 29 mentions the American idea of "manifest destiny." This notion drove much of the expansionist impulses of this era. For a brief explanation, watch "What is Manifest Destiny" on the Pursuit of History YouTube channel.

3. Set up the student notebook and reserve about fifteen pages at the back as a glossary.

4. In the notebook, record a definition of "manifest destiny." Include how this belief led to the Mexican-American War and the expansion of US territory.

Lesson 2

- 1. Read Chapter 32 of A Child's First. Discussion prompt:
 - a. Describe the ways in which Southerners justify the enslavement of Blacks and the causes of the Civil War.

2. On the PBS website, look for the video "Southern Abolitionist Angelina Grimké." Through the Grimké sisters, this brief video explains the work that was being done in the South against slavery prior to the Civil War.

3. In preparation for reading *Across Five Aprils* by Irene Hunt, read the discussion and comprehension questions below for each lesson prior to reading the chapters.

4. Define the following words and record in your glossary:

folly tariff

As you read you may encounter some unfamiliar words, words that were commonly used in southern Illinois in the 1860s. Make a guess on their meaning based on the context. Here is a guide to help you understand some of the midwestern dialect the author uses:

```
ary – any
spell – a rest; or, a short period of time
Kaintuck – Kentucky
secesh – to secede, the act of secession
allow – to say, to think
dast – dust; or, dare
```

5. Read Chapters 1–2 in Across Five Aprils. Discussion prompts:

What does nine-year-old Jethro Creighton think of the prospect of war?

- b. How does Wilse Graham respond to Uncle Matt's comment that separation would leave them two "puny pieces" of a nation?
 - Why does Bill Creighton disagree with his brother John during the dinner discussion?
- d. Discuss whether President Lincoln is right in sending rations to his men at Fort Sumter rather than evacuating the men.

6. Cut out, color, and paste on the timeline: **Bombardment of Fort Sumter.**

"War is a beast with long claws."

Lesson 3

1. In preparation for your reading, define the following words and record in your glossary:

bunting wastrel nullification parson wanly

Illinois

Illinois was one of the most important states in the Union in the years leading up to the Civil War. It was the state from which President Lincoln hailed. Also, it had many natural resources, it produced goods necessary for the Northern war effort, and it provided around a quarter of a million soldiers. However, the soils in the northern and southern parts of the state were very different in their ability to produce crops. For more information on Illinois and its agriculture, go to the following website:

www.museum.state.il.us/ exhibits/agriculture/htmls/land/ glaciers/land_glaciers.html

"What a cruel thing war is ... to fill our hearts with hatred instead of love for our neighbors."

ROBERT E. LEE



This lithograph of Chicago during the 1800s shows the city from Lake Michigan up the Chicago River. Why were all early American cities built upon waterways or near oceans?

- 2. Read Chapters 3-4 in Across Five Aprils. Discussion prompts:
 - a. What happens that summer to cause the people of southern Illinois to think that the war will go on much longer than anticipated?
 - b. When does the war become a reality for southern Illinois?
 - c. Why does Bill choose to join the war despite the fact that he does not think anyone wins?
 - d. Why does General Ulysses S. Grant give the North hope?

4. Chapters 3 and 4 in *Across Five Aprils* mention some important battles. For more information on many of these battles, visit www.battlefields.org. Navigate to the tab "Learn." Select "Bull Run" under "Battles" and then view the Bull Run Animated Map for a short video detailing this battle. (NOTE: Parental discretion advised with all animated maps from www.battlefields.org, as they may contain battle reenactments that include some predictable violence.)

Lesson 4

1. In preparation for your reading, define the following words and record in your glossary:

passel	pallor	
stoic	chagrin	
ravine		

- 2. Read Chapters 5-6 in Across Five Aprils. Discussion prompts:
 - a. What payment does Jethro use in Newton to purchase the items from his list?
 - b. How does Jethro show love for his brother Bill? Why does this enrage Guy Wortman?
 - c. In the scene at the General Store, Ross Milton and Sam Gardiner show Guy Wortman to be a coward and a hypocrite. Discuss.