



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

Across Five Aprils

based on the book by  
Irene Hunt

Written by  
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## A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Irene Hunt

Irene Hunt was born May 18, 1907 in Newton, Illinois. In 1939 she received her A.B. degree from the University of Illinois, and in 1946 she received her M.A. degree from the University of Minnesota.

Ms. Hunt spent most of her career as a teacher: 1930-1945 in Oak Park, Illinois public schools, 1946-1950 at the University of South Dakota, and 1950-1965 in Cicero, Illinois public schools.

*Across Five Aprils* (1964) was Irene Hunt's first novel, for which she won the Charles W. Follett Award, the American Notable Book Award, and was the sole runner-up for the Newbery Medal. About *Across Five Aprils* Ms. Hunt said, "I didn't plan my first book for a certain age group. I don't want to aim at a special age of reader. I write when I have something to say, and I hope to say it as well and as gracefully as I can."

In 1966, *Up a Road Slowly*, a Newbery Medal winner, was published, followed by *Trail of Apple Blossoms* in 1968 and *No Promises in the Wind* in 1970.

## INTRODUCTION

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, and language skills through exercises and activities related to *Across Five Aprils* by Irene Hunt. It includes eighteen lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to some background to the novel through a discussion with a guest speaker. Following the introductory activity, students are given a transition to explain how the activity relates to the book they are about to read. Following the transition, students are given the materials they will be using during the unit. At the end of the lesson, students begin the pre-reading work for the first reading assignment.

The **reading assignments** are approximately thirty pages each; some are a little shorter while others are a little longer. Students have approximately 15 minutes of pre-reading work to do prior to each reading assignment. This pre-reading work involves reviewing the study questions for the assignment and doing some vocabulary work for 8 to 10 vocabulary words they will encounter in their reading.

The **study guide questions** are fact-based questions; students can find the answers to these questions right in the text. These questions come in two formats: short answer or multiple choice. The best use of these materials is probably to use the short answer version of the questions as study guides for students (since answers will be more complete), and to use the multiple choice version for occasional quizzes. If your school has the appropriate machinery, it might be a good idea to make transparencies of your answer keys for the overhead projector.

The **vocabulary work** is intended to enrich students' vocabularies as well as to aid in the students' understanding of the book. Prior to each reading assignment, students will complete a two-part worksheet for approximately 8 to 10 vocabulary words in the upcoming reading assignment. Part I focuses on students' use of general knowledge and contextual clues by giving the sentence in which the word appears in the text. Students are then to write down what they think the words mean based on the words' usage. Part II nails down the definitions of the words by giving students dictionary definitions of the words and having students match the words to the correct definitions based on the words' contextual usage. Students should then have an understanding of the words when they meet them in the text.

After each reading assignment, students will go back and formulate answers for the study guide questions. Discussion of these questions serves as a **review** of the most important events and ideas presented in the reading assignments.

There is a **vocabulary review** lesson which pulls together all of the fragmented vocabulary lists for the reading assignments and gives students a review of all of the words they have studied.

A lesson is devoted to the **extra discussion questions/writing assignments**. These questions focus on interpretation, critical analysis and personal response, employing a variety of thinking skills and adding to the students' understanding of the novel.

There is a **group activity** in which students work in small groups to gather and present information about the people and places mentioned in the book.

There are three **writing assignments** in this unit, each with the purpose of informing, persuading, or having students express personal opinions. The first assignment is to inform: students write a short informative composition about the topic they have researched. This doubles as a preparation for the one-minute oral presentation students must give about their topics. The second assignment is to express personal opinions: students write letters to elected officials asking questions or expressing personal views about topics of the students' choice. The third assignment is to persuade: students write a letter to the man who said to Jethro, "Be glad you're a boy, young feller, and don't hev to pester yoreself with all these troubles that men be sufferin' through these days" persuading him that his statement was untrue.

In addition, there is a **nonfiction reading assignment**. Students are required to read a piece of nonfiction related in some way to *Across Five Aprils*. After reading their nonfiction pieces, students will fill out a worksheet on which they answer questions regarding facts, interpretation, criticism, and personal opinions.

The **review lesson** pulls together all of the aspects of the unit. The teacher is given four or five choices of activities or games to use which all serve the same basic function of reviewing all of the information presented in the unit.

The **unit test** comes in two formats: multiple choice or short answer. As a convenience, two different tests for each format have been included. There is also an advanced short answer test for students who need more of a challenge.

There are additional **support materials** included with this unit. The **extra activities section** includes suggestions for an in-class library, crossword and word search puzzles related to the novel, and extra vocabulary worksheets. There is a list of **bulletin board ideas** which gives the teacher suggestions for bulletin boards to go along with this unit. In addition, there is a list of **extra class activities** the teacher could choose from to enhance the unit or as a substitution for an exercise the teacher might feel is inappropriate for his/her class. **Answer keys** are located directly after the **reproducible student materials** throughout the unit. The student materials may be reproduced for use in the teacher's classroom without infringement of copyrights. No other portion of this unit may be reproduced without the written consent of Teacher's Pet Publications, Inc.

## UNIT OBJECTIVES - *Across Five Aprils*

1. Through reading *Across Five Aprils* students will better understand the American Civil War.
2. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical, and personal.
3. Students will discuss family relationships, the theme of coming of age, the importance of education, the difficulties of war, and the relevance of the story to life today.
4. Students will be given the opportunity to practice reading aloud and silently to improve their skills in each area.
5. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *Across Five Aprils* as they relate to the author's theme development.
6. Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the novel through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with the novel.
7. The writing assignments in this unit are geared to several purposes:
  - a. To have students demonstrate their abilities to inform, to persuade, or to express their own personal ideas  
NOTE: Students will demonstrate ability to write effectively to inform by developing and organizing facts to convey information. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to persuade by selecting and organizing relevant information, establishing an argumentative purpose, and by designing an appropriate strategy for an identified audience. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to express personal ideas by selecting a form and its appropriate elements.
  - b. To check the students' reading comprehension
  - c. To make students think about the ideas presented by the novel
  - d. To encourage logical thinking
  - e. To provide an opportunity to practice good grammar and improve students' use of the English language.
8. Students will read aloud, report, and participate in large and small group discussions to improve their public speaking and personal interaction skills.

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET - *Across Five Aprils*

Date Assigned	Chapters Assigned	Completion Date
	1-2	
	3-4	
	5	
	6-7	
	8-9	
	10-12	

UNIT OUTLINE - *Across Five Aprils*

<b>1</b>  Introduction PV 1-2	<b>2</b>  Library	<b>3</b>  Study ?s 1-2 Writing Assignment #1 PV 3-4	<b>4</b>  Reports Read 3-4	<b>5</b>  Study ?s 3-4 Reports PV 5
<b>6</b>  Read 5 PVR 6-7	<b>7</b>  Writing Assignment #2	<b>8</b>  Study ?s 5-7 PVR 8-9	<b>9</b>  Study ?s 8-9 Grammar Worksheet PV 10-12	<b>10</b>  Read 10-12
<b>11</b>  Study ?s 10-12 Extra ?s	<b>12</b>  Extra ?s	<b>13</b>  Vocabulary	<b>14</b>  Writing Assignment #3	<b>15</b>  Newspaper
<b>16</b>  Newspaper	<b>17</b>  Review	18  Test		

Key: P = Preview Study Questions V = Prereading Vocabulary Worksheet R = Read



## LESSON ONE

### Objectives

1. To introduce *Across Five Aprils*
2. To distribute books and other related materials

NOTE: Prior to this lesson, you need to have invited a guest speaker. Almost every state has a group of Civil War buffs who re-enact battles and have costumes. Check with your local historical society, museums, or chamber of commerce to find the contact people for the group in your state. If your state has no such group, the historical society should be able to tell you the names of some people in your area who are Civil War buffs. If not, check with the universities in your area--they usually have someone on staff who is very knowledgeable about the Civil War. If all else fails, find a good film about the Civil War as an introduction to the book, *Across Five Aprils*.

### Activity #1

Invite a guest speaker in to discuss the background for the American Civil War. Concentrate primarily on the causes of the war and its effects on the nation. Students will research information about the specific battles and the leaders of the armies, so you need not spend much time on those specifics in the introduction.

### Activity #2

Tell students that they are to preview the study questions, do the related vocabulary work, and read chapters one and two prior to Lesson Three. (Give students a day and date.)

### Activity #3

Distribute the materials for the unit: books, study guides, reading assignment sheets, etc. Explain to students how they should use these materials.

Study Guides Students should read the study guide questions for each reading assignment prior to beginning the reading assignment to get a feeling for what events and ideas are important in the section they are about to read. After reading the section, students will (as a class or individually) answer the questions to review the important events and ideas from that section of the book. Students should keep the study guides as study materials for the unit test.

Vocabulary Prior to reading a reading assignment, students will do vocabulary work related to the section of the book they are about to read. Following the completion of the reading of the book, there will be a vocabulary review of all the words used in the vocabulary assignments. Students should keep their vocabulary work as study materials for the unit test.

## WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 - *Across Five Aprils*

### PROMPT

You have been assigned to find information about a person or place relating to the Civil War, and you will soon be asked to give a short oral presentation about the information you have found. To help you prepare for that presentation, you are to write a composition about the information you found. If you were assigned more than one person or place, you now will need to choose one person or place to write about.

### PREWRITING

Most of your prewriting was done in the last class period when you did your research. Now look at the notes you took and organize them into a logical sequence. If you researched a person, you should have background information, information about his/her life during the war, and information about the person's life after the war (unless the person was killed during the war). If you researched a place, you should have background information about the place and information about what happened at that place during the war.

### DRAFTING

Write an introductory paragraph in which you introduce your person or place and give basic background information.

Write a paragraph about that person/place during the war.

Write a concluding paragraph about the person/place after the war.

### PROMPT

When you finish the rough draft of your paper, ask a student who sits near you to read it. After reading your rough draft, he/she should tell you what he/she liked best about your work, which parts were difficult to understand, and ways in which your work could be improved. Reread your paper considering your critic's comments and make the corrections you think are necessary.

### PROOFREADING

Do a final proofreading of your paper double-checking your grammar, spelling, organization, and the clarity of your ideas.