

Teacher Guide

Grades 7–8

# Across Five Aprils

Irene Hunt

NOVEL UNITS<sup>®</sup>



NEW WAYS TO TEACH READING,  
WRITING, & CRITICAL THINKING



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# ACROSS FIVE APRILS

by  
Irene Hunt

## Teacher Guide

Written by  
Anne Troy

### Note

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**Please note:** Please assess the appropriateness of this book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading and discussing it with your class.

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## Skills and Strategies

### Thinking

Brainstorming, classifying  
and categorizing, comparing  
and contrasting, evaluating,  
analyzing details

### Comprehension

Predicting, sequencing,  
cause/effect, inference,  
story mapping

### Writing

Response journal, chapter  
titles, diary

### Vocabulary

Word maps, antonym/  
synonym, context

### Listening/Speaking

Participation in discussion,  
participation in dramatic  
activities

### Literary Elements

Character, setting, plot  
development, point of view,  
conflict, tone, figurative  
language, dialect

## Chapter-by-Chapter

### Chapter 1

Pages 7-26

#### Vocabulary

reverberations 8	apathy 11	inmate 22	comeuppance 12
tariffs 14	seceding 14	inclination 15	dissipate 17
intervention 17	waver 18	peplexities 18	amiable 21
coveted 21	rampaging 22	contempt 22	elicited 24
buoyancy 25			

#### Vocabulary Activity

List the vocabulary words on the board or on a sheet of paper in the form of a table. Pronounce the words. Ask the students to rate their knowledge of each of the words as a group or individually.

Word I Can Define      I Have a Good Idea      I Don't Know

#### Discussion Questions and Activities

1. What is a narrator? (*the person who tells a story*.) Who is the narrator of this story? The angle from which a narrator tells the story is called the point of view. The three main points of view are:
  - a) First Person: Narration of the story by a character who uses the pronoun "I" in referring to himself.
  - b) Omniscient: The narration of a story is though by an all-knowing character who can see into the minds of all the characters.
  - c) Omniscient Third Person: The narrator is all-observing but limits himself primarily to what one of the characters can know and experience. (*Across Five Aprils* was written in this point of view.)
2. How is Jethro helping his mother when the story begins? (*page 7, planting potatoes*) What kind of a boy is Jethro? Begin an attribute web for him. (See page 32 of this guide.)
3. Where and at what time does their story take place? (*page 7, Southern Illinois, 1861*)
4. Many of the characters in this book speak a Southern country dialect. A dialect is regional variation of language distinguished by pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary. Keep a list of words that differ from standard English. (e.g., hev = have, fer = for, reckon = suppose)

5. What does Jethro think about war? (*Page 12, It is exciting and his brothers think the North will win quickly and easily.*) How do Jethro's feelings about war differ from his mother's? (*Jethro's mother fears war and what it can do to her family.*)
6. The author, Irene Hunt, introduces and gives the background of many characters in the first chapter. Make a list of them and their physical and special characteristics. How does Jethro feel about each character?

### Chapter 1

Character	Physical and Special Characteristics	Jethro's Feelings About Character
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7. The tragedy of Mary's death and the Burdow family story captivates Jethro. He questions his father's sense of justice. **Prediction:** What might change his feelings about the Burdows?
8. How does Jethro compare his father to Abraham Lincoln? (*Page 18, He feels anger toward his father for not bringing the Burdows to justice and anger toward the President for not getting the war started and on with.*)
9. Who has come from Kentucky for a visit? (*Cousin Miss Graham from Kentucky comes with news.*) Why is the family so eager for news of the outside world? (*Page 26, They don't get much company and they want to hear news about the possibility of war and other political happenings.*)

### Supplementary Activities

1. Locate Kentucky and Southern Illinois on a map of the United States.
2. A story map is an outline that helps you to understand and remember the story better. What do you know about the story after reading only the first chapter?
  - What is the setting?
  - Who is the main character?
  - What is the problem?

As the story is read, more characters may be added and the setting and the problem may change, so additions may be made. Start the story map on page 33.

3. Chapter Titles: This novel does not have chapter titles. A writer usually uses chapter titles to indicate something that might happen or to create suspense to encourage the reader. After you read a chapter, write what you think would be the best chapter title. The teacher will collect titles and the class will vote for the best. The best chapter titles will be listed on the bulletin board.

## Chapter-by-Chapter

### Chapter 1

Pages 7-26

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9. Who has come from Kentucky for a visit? ( <i>Cousin Miss Graham from Kentucky comes with news.</i> ) Why is the family so eager for news of the outside world? ( <i>Page 26, They don't get much company and they want to hear news about the possibility of war and other political happenings.</i> )		

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## Attribute Web

The attribute web below is designed to help you gather clues the author provides about what a character is like. Fill in the blanks with words and phrases which tell how the character acts and looks, as well as what the character says and what others say about him or her.

