



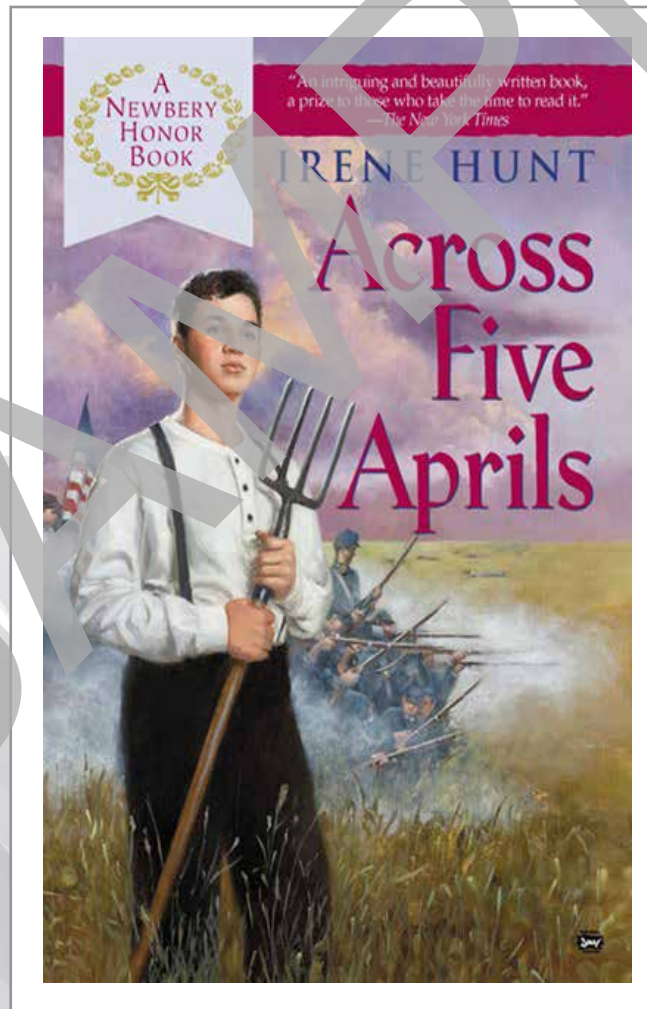
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Across Five Aprils

Irene Hunt



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Across Five Aprils

Irene Hunt

TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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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

Summary of *Across Five Aprils*

Across Five Aprils is a memorable story of the tragic years of the Civil War as experienced by a boy, his family, and neighbors in a backwoods community in southern Illinois. Through conversation and experience, the issues in the war gradually become clearer to Jethro. The main theme of the book is the effect of outside events upon a child growing up. One of Jethro's brothers joins the Confederate side and the others fight for the Union. Some members of the community turn against the family because they have a son fighting on the Confederate side. The family barn is burned and the well water filled with oil. The story emphasizes the futility of aggression. The details of battles and campaigns are integrated into letters and conversations. The author paints a believable young boy whose adolescence coincides with the period of the American Civil War.

About the Author

Irene Hunt was born and raised in Illinois. She attended the University of Illinois, A.B. 1939 and the University of Minnesota, M.A. 1946. She taught French and English, 1930-1945 in the Oak Park, Illinois public schools. Between 1946 and 1950, she taught at the University of South Dakota. Ms. Hunt returned to Illinois to act as a teacher and consultant in the Cicero, Illinois public schools.

Irene Hunt received the Charles W. Follett Award in 1964, the American Notable Book Award in 1965, and was the sole runner-up for the Newbery Medal, 1965, for *Across Five Aprils*. In 1967, she received the Newbery Medal for *Up a Road Slowly*.

Other Books by Irene Hunt

The Everlasting Hills; No Promises in the Wind; The Lottery Rose; Up a Road Slowly

Instructions Prior to Reading

You may wish to choose one or more of the following Prereading Discussion Questions and Activities. Each is designed to help students draw from their store of background knowledge about the events and themes they will meet in the story they are about to read.

Prereading Discussion Questions and Activities

1. Previewing

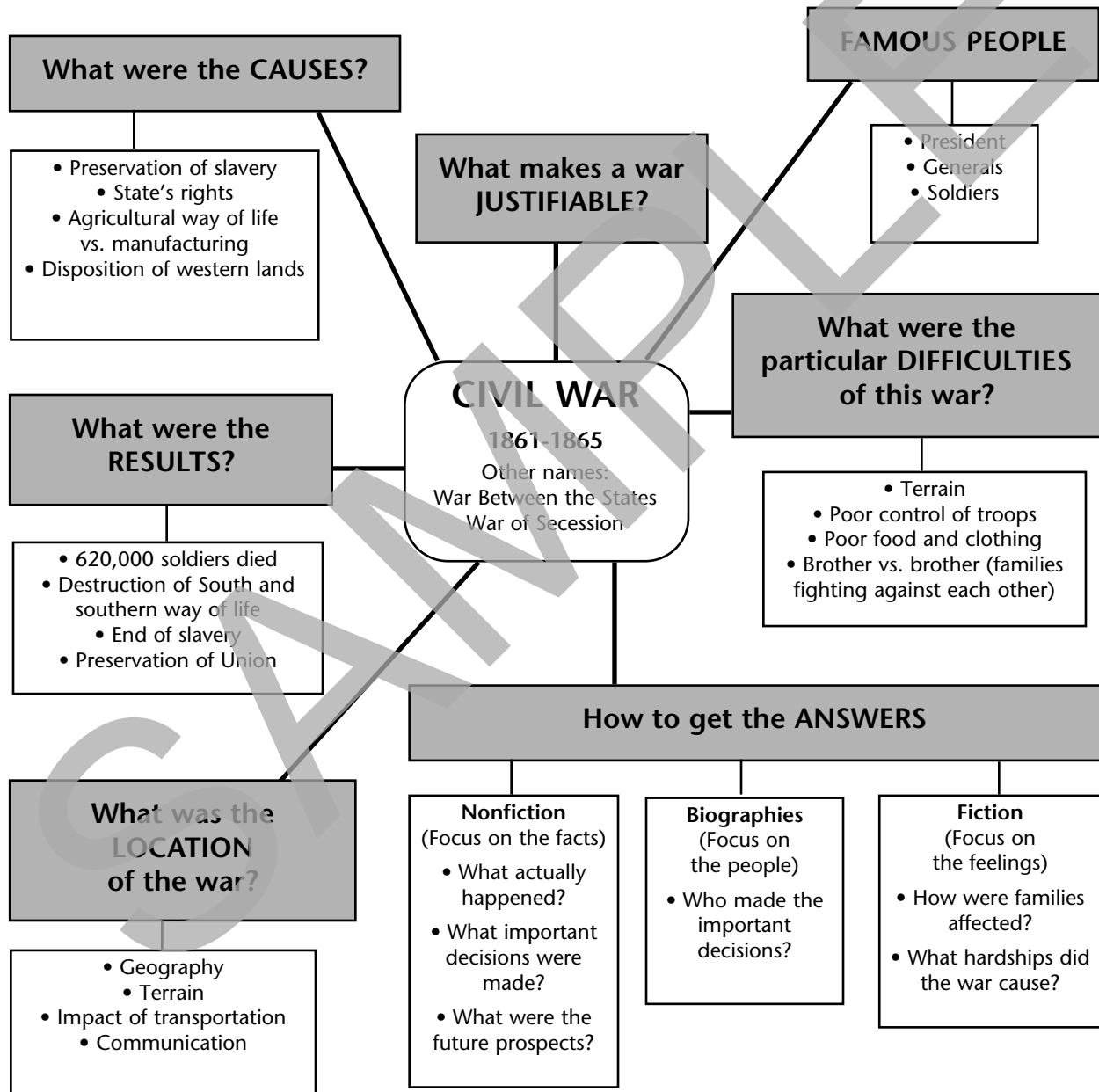
Have the students examine the title and cover illustration. Also suggest that they look at the back cover. What do you think the story will be about? What do you think the title, *Across Five Aprils*, means?

2. Map

Post a large map of the United States with Union and Confederate States marked by appropriate colors. (A small map is included on page 10 of this guide.)

3. Concept Map

Write "Civil War" at the center of a large piece of paper. Brainstorm. Have students generate any ideas that come to mind when they hear the term, helping students organize them into categories such as: President, famous soldiers; time of the war; famous people in the Civil War, causes, effects, etc. Draw "wagon spokes" around the central concept to connect with the supporting ideas. Encourage students to add to the chart during and after their reading of the novel.



Chapter 8

Pages 119-127

Vocabulary

plummeted 125

obscurity 125

dissuaded 126

Vocabulary Activity

In cooperative groups make bingo cards using the vocabulary words from all the chapters completed. The cards may be added to as the book is read. The caller of the game may use the vocabulary word or the word definitions.

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. How much time has passed since the story started? (*one and a half years*) How old is Jethro now? (*10 years old*) How has Jethro changed?
2. Why is it so important for the Union to win the piece of the Mississippi River between Baton Rouge and Vicksburg from the Confederates? (*page 119, doing so will cut the Confederacy in half*)
3. Why does Dave Burdow send a load of logs with Ross Milton? (*Page 121, He wants to show he is sorry for all the tragedies of the Creightons and he knows Ross Milton will deliver the logs and the right message.*)
4. Why does Jethro have to force himself to be quiet as he listens to discussion of the war? (*Pages 123-124, He doesn't agree with things the men say but he knows that a boy has no right to contradict a man's opinion.*)
5. How does the Battle of Antietam affect Shad? (*Page 124, He is very disturbed to see death and suffering.*)
6. What does Shad think of General McClellan? (*Pages 125, He doesn't dislike him, but feels that McClellan needs to be less fearful of making decisions, must show more brutal tenacity.*)
7. Why are there so many deserters? (*Page 127, The men are disillusioned; there is no end to the war in sight.*)

Supplementary Activity

Develop a Cause and Effect Chart. (See page 35 of this guide.)