



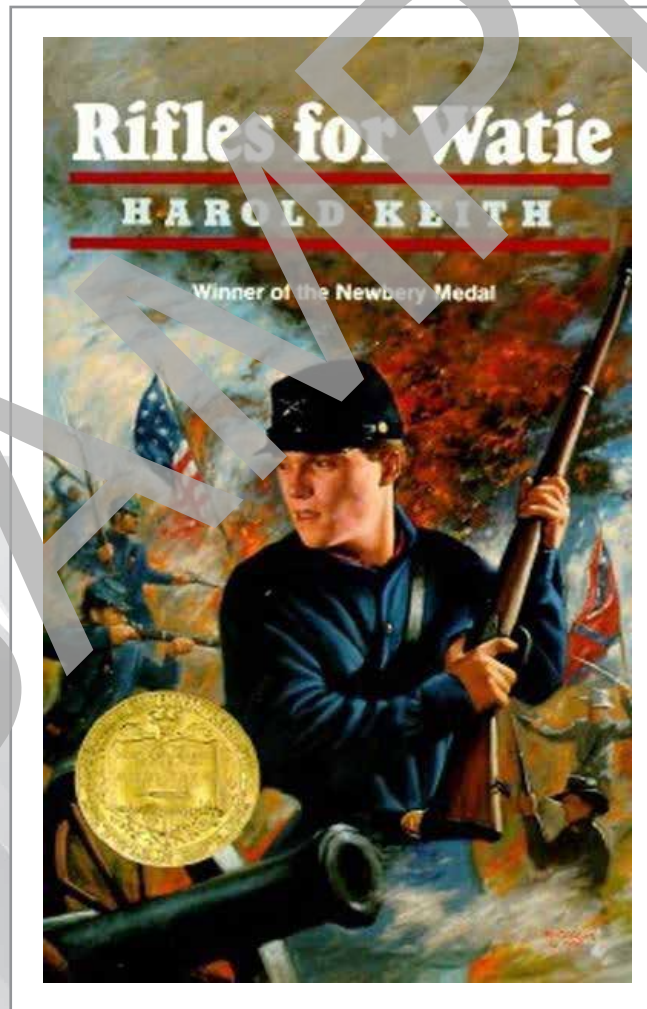
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

Rifles for Watie

Harold Keith



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

Rifles for Watie

Harold Keith

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

Research, codes

Comprehension

Predicting, inference,
comparison/contrast

Writing

Persuasive, descriptive,
poetry

Vocabulary

Analogies, synonyms, word
mapping, antonyms

Listening/Speaking

Discussion

Literary Elements

Characterization, story
elements

Summary

Sixteen-year-old Jeff Bussey learns that the hard reality of war imposes a life that is nothing like the one that he had envisioned when he enlisted in the Union cause. Exhausted and nearly starved, he must continue the marching and the fighting, knowing that at any time he may also incur the wrath of the vindictive Captain Clardy. Sent behind the enemy lines of Cherokee General Stand Watie as a scout, Jeff discovers that here, too, there are people that he can admire. Eventually, Jeff must make a choice between the causes of the North and the South. What will he do?

About the Author

Harold Keith was born April 8, 1903 in Lambert, Oklahoma Territory. He received a B.A. degree from the University of Oklahoma in 1929, and received an M.A. in 1938. He was a seventh grade teacher, an assistant to a grain buyer, and a sports publicity director. In addition to writing sports fiction and sports articles for magazines, Harold Keith wrote several novels for children. His novel, *Rifles For Watie* won the John Newbery Medal for the Most Distinguished Contribution to Literature for American Children in 1958. (See *Previewing the Book for Newbery* information.)

Introductory Information and Activities

Note:

Please be selective, and use discretion when choosing the activities that you will do with the unit. It is not intended that everything be done, but that discretionary choices made are the most appropriate for your use and group of students. A wide range has been provided, so that individuals as well as groups may benefit from these selections.

Initiating Activity:

Weapons of the Civil War: The American Civil War took place at a particularly interesting period in the history of weapon development. Until the early part of the 19th century there had been very little improvement in firearms since their first inception. The 1850's saw the beginning of a great deal of experimental work on artillery and firearms which was later to bear prolific fruit. However, the new developments were largely, in today's language, "Production Prototypes." As a result, the Civil War was fought with possibly the most heterogeneous collection of weapons seen in any war. A basic knowledge of this diverse situation will provide the reader of *Rifles For Watie* with an understanding of the importance of the theme suggested by the title. (See Teacher Information section for some weapon details, and information about Stand Watie.) You may wish to have students choose weapons to research during the reading of this novel. The sharing of the information would provide an appropriate culminating activity. (See also Supplementary Activities, Firearm Safety.)

Collect books, pictures, posters, and other information for use and display in the room. Some weapons to consider: Colt Percussion Revolver, Tip-up Smith and Wesson Revolver, Smith and Wesson 'Old Model No. 2 Revolver, Colt .30 Police Model Revolver, Short Barreled .36 Navy Revolver, Short Barreled .44 Colt Revolver, .44 Remington New Army Revolver, Starr, Manhattan Revolver, Le Mat Revolver, U.S. Musket Model 1855, Spencer Carbine, Henry Rifle, Gatling 5 Machine Gun, canon and howitzer artillery, Hale's war rocket, and hand grenades.

Display and read to those using this novel the poem by Walt Whitman, "An Army Corps on the March."

**With its cloud of skirmishers in advance,
With now the sound of a single shot snapping like a whip, and now an irregular volley,
The swarming ranks press on and on, the dense brigades press on,
Glittering dimly, toiling under the sun—the dust—cover'd men,
In columns rise and fall to the undulations of the ground,
With artillery interspers'd—the wheels rumble, the horses sweat,
As the army corps advances.**

Point out the bulletin board, and do a Civil War Weapons KWL. The responses given by the students may indicate the course that you wish to take for this activity. Keep the chart current, crossing out incorrect information as it is discovered by the students during the research, and concurrently adding to the L section.

You may also wish to play some music composed during the Civil War years at this time. See the Bibliographies for sources, as well as the Teacher Information section.

Bulletin Board Idea:

Cover the bulletin board with plain background paper. Divide the space into three sections. Make this into a large KWL chart.

What They KNOW	What They Would LIKE TO KNOW	What They LEARNED

Recommended Procedure:

This book may be used in several ways: a) read to the entire class; b) read with the class; c) read in reading groups; d) read individually. This book may be read a section at a time, using the DRTA, Directed Reading Thinking Activity, method. This technique involves reading a section, and then predicting what will happen next. The questions and activities at the end of each chapter, as well as any supplementary activities, are provided so that you may, using discretion, make selections from them that will be suitable for use by the students in the group.

Graphic Organizers:

Included in the Novel Unit are several types of graphic organizers, such as the Venn Diagram, the T-Diagram, and brainstorming or cluster circles. A variety of possible answers should be listed by the teacher either on large sheets of paper or the chalkboard. Only then should the students be asked to develop their own graphics. Students are encouraged to express their opinions, and to state what they know about a topic. The teacher lists these opinions and "facts" and later, as the students read and research, discovery may be made that some of their ideas are incorrect. These ideas may be crossed out on the sheets or board. Students should be encouraged to elaborate on their answers, justify their opinions, prove their predictions, and relate what they have read to their own lives.

Chapter 13: "Expedition to Van Buren"—Pages 140 through Mid 159
Chapter 14: "The Cow Lot"—Pages Mid 159 through 174

Vocabulary:

edifice 141	conspicuously 142	intrepidly 142	vellum 146
forded 147	obliquely 148	guidons 149	rifle 161
beaux 162	obstinately 163	covered 163	truculently 164
exhalation 165	spasmodically 166	clambering 166	composure 166
solicitude 167	scruples 169	endowed 170	inalienable 170
execrable 170	tremulous 172	indecisively 173	prostrate 174

Vocabulary Activity:

Put the vocabulary words in alphabetical order. Define one-third of the words.

Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. Some of the soldiers give Clardy "the treatment." What is it? (*page 154*) Is it effective? Why? Do you think that you would join them in the line if given the opportunity? Why?
2. Lucy and Jeff discuss politics, pages 169-73. Lucy explains to Jeff why the Indian Nation made a treaty with the Confederacy. Reread that explanation, page 172, the first full paragraph, starting with, "Lucy lifted her chin proudly." Having gained knowledge of the *Trail of Tears*, and of other incidents regarding the treatment of Indians by the government of the United States, along with Jeff, what is your reaction to Lucy's explanation?

Postreading Activities:

1. Jeff and Noah are each awarded the Medal of Honor. (*page 142*) Do some research. Find out more about this Medal.

During the Civil War, Congress authorized the first permanent U. S. military decoration or medal—the Medal of Honor, awarded for gallantry in action. Currently, this award, often called the Congressional Medal of Honor, is the highest military decoration that the United States grants to members of its armed forces. Congress approved the Navy Medal of Honor in 1861, and the Army Medal of Honor in 1862. Originally, the Army Medal of Honor was awarded only to noncommissioned officers and privates. In 1863, this honor was also given to officers. The Air Force Medal of Honor was approved by Congress in 1963. Before then, Air Force personnel received the Army Medal of Honor because the Air Force was originally a division of the Army. (Source: *The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1991.)

2. Lucy has to sew "Southern buttons" on to Jeff's coat. (*page 169*) Create a button that is distinctly your own. Choose the material to be used for the button itself, the color, design, size, use, etc. List the specifics, as well as make an illustration of the button. If possible, make a prototype.