



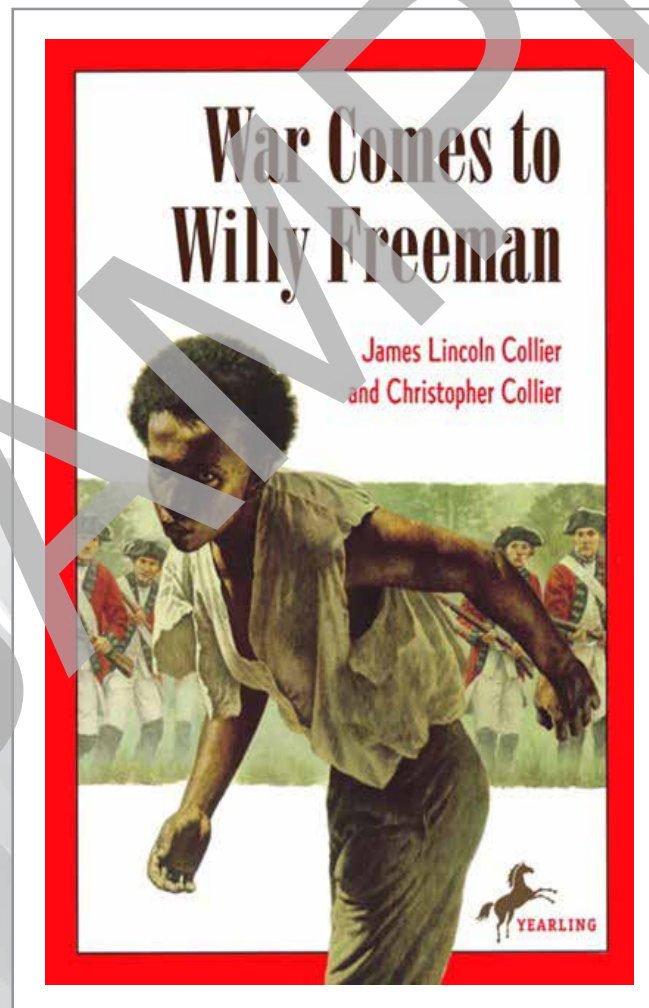
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

War Comes To Willy Freeman

James Collier



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

War Comes To Willy Freeman

James Collier

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, visualization,
research questions, problem-
solving

Comprehension

Predicting, comparison/
contrast

Listening/Speaking

Discussion, role play, drama,
interviewing

Vocabulary

Context clues, synonyms,
antonyms

Writing

Poetry, persuasion, narrative,
description

Literary Elements

Characterization, story
elements, alliteration

Summary

Willy, disguised as a boy, is trapped at Fort Griswold as the British advance. Allowed to escape after the Americans are massacred, her father being among the dead, Willy returns home to find that her mother has been taken to New York City as a British prisoner. Willy starts on a long search for her mother. Finding refuge at the famous Fraunces Tavern, she is continually reminded that being black, female, and free leave her vulnerable and open to constant danger. Although she eventually finds her mother, Willy's troubles and adventures do not end.

(Authors' comments taken from "How Much of This Book Is True?" pages 175-178. "The language used in this book...is almost certainly not how people spoke at the time...We have therefore tried to give something of the flavor of how an uneducated black person might have spoken then...we had to consider very carefully our use of the word *nigger*. This term is offensive to modern readers, and we certainly do not intend to be insulting. But it was commonly used in America right into the twentieth century, and it would have been a distortion of history to avoid its use entirely.")

About the Authors

Christopher Collier was born January 29, 1930 in New York, New York. He married Virginia Wright August 21, 1954. After the marriage ended, he married Binnie Bromberger on December 6, 1969. He attended Clark University, B.A., 1951; Columbia University, M.A., 1955, Ph.D., 1964. His hobbies and other interests include trumpet playing, figure skating, ice hockey, water skiing, and reading.

Mr. Collier has been a high school teacher and a college professor of history. He is a consultant to numerous public and private organizations including museums, historical societies, law firms, public utilities, and text, trade, and scholarly publishers.

James Lincoln Collier was born June 27, 1928, in New York, New York. He was educated at Hamilton College, A.B., 1950. "I have been deeply involved in jazz from youth, and continue to work as a jazz musician regularly."

James and Christopher Collier come from a family of writers. "We all do it because we like to, but we write also as a way of earning a living that makes it possible for us to set our own schedules, take our vacations when we please, and not have to take orders from anyone."

The Colliers fashioned a system of producing books wherein Christopher conceptualizes and provides historical details to the work while James creates the characters and story lines. Christopher chooses something that he wants to teach about, and James makes the stories interesting, exciting, and fun to read. He gives the individuals in the books character and personality. "Collaboration between historians and writers is necessary so that historical fiction can be read with enjoyment and so that history can be learned without young readers thinking that they're being taught history. The author of children's books can deliver more than just a good read, but also a view of the world."

Attribute Web

The attribute web below will help you gather clues the author provides about a character in the novel. 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.

The diagram is an attribute web. It consists of a central circle with a horizontal line through its middle. Four lines radiate from the circle to the corners of the page, each connecting to a rectangular box. The boxes are labeled 'Acts' (top-left), 'Feels' (top-right), 'Looks' (bottom-left), and 'Says' (bottom-right). Each box has a thick black border on its right and bottom sides. Below each box are four numbered lines (1. through 4.) for writing. A large, light gray 'SAMPLE' watermark is oriented diagonally across the entire page.

Acts

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Feels

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Looks

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Says

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Chapter 12—Pages 133-161

Vocabulary

rouse 137 dory 152

Vocabulary Activity

How many words can you rhyme with the vocabulary words?

Rouse: house, blouse, mouse...

Dory: lory (parrot), glory, story, hunky-dory (fine)...

Make up a plausible sentence that uses as many of the rhyming words as possible. For example: A girl named Lori read a hunky-dory story about a lory that won glory while out on a dory.

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. What is the story of Willy's mother? (*Page 141, Willy's mother was kept on a ship for two years to wash clothes for the officers. She got sick, and her health fluctuated from then on, as she was sometimes better, sometimes worse. When the peace treaty was signed, she was let off of the ship on Long Island. Uncle Jack was notified, and he came to get her, and brought her to the home of Captain Ivers.*) If you were Ma, what would you tell Willy to do?
2. Willy goes to get the doctor. What is the reason that the doctor gives to Willy for not going to see her mother? What does the doctor do instead? (*Page 146, "I can't go into a man's house if he doesn't want me there." The doctor gives Willy some medicine for her mother.*) What is your opinion of the doctor's reply regarding the visit to the house? Discuss the right of an individual to determine who may enter his/her house. (See Supplementary Activity #2.)
3. After Ma dies, Willy starts to run away, but then comes back to the Ivers' house (page 153). Why do you think that she returns?

Supplementary Activities

1. Uncle Jack tells Willy of his dilemma regarding Captain Ivers. Willy thinks, "Well, it was a terrible thing. It seemed like the black folks was bound to lose, no matter what happened" (page 142). Do some research. Does the Declaration of Independence address the problems of the slaves? (*The Declaration of Independence contained no provision for the manumission of the slaves. Two months after the Declaration, Massachusetts issued a proclamation calling slavery "utterly inconsistent with the struggle for liberty." Within the year, several Massachusetts towns abolished slavery. In the years following, Jefferson worked out an elaborate law for gradual emancipation and removal of Negroes from Virginia, but neither he nor any of his colleagues ever submitted it to the Virginia legislature. However, for black people, the War for Independence had little or no immediate meaning.*)
2. Invite a retired lawyer in to speak to the group regarding the law(s) that govern the rights of individuals in their homes, and who may enter and under what circumstances.
3. Do you think that Mr. Goodrich will be able to help Uncle Jack? Make a prediction.