



 Prestwick House

Activity Pack

ACROSS FIVE APRILS

BY IRENE HUNT



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Written by Sharon Davis

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading

Determining Knowledge

Objective: Assessing group knowledge of the Civil War and what life was like for those not fighting the war

Activity

In order to understand a historical novel, it is helpful to have some background knowledge of the era and the people who experienced the events. As a class, make a list of what you know about the Civil War and a second list with questions you would like answered.

Copy these three headings and write what you think life would have been like during the Civil War for the families living in each geographical area. What kinds of hardships would the citizens have faced in each area? What are the similarities and the differences that geography would influence? Consider types of crops, businesses, the effects of fighting on each region, and personal opinions regarding the war.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 1

Civil War Vocabulary

Objective: Familiarizing readers with nicknames associated with each side of the Civil War

Activity

Frequently in wars, numerous names or nicknames evolve to describe the opponents and to refer to incidents, people, equipment, etc. Keeping the terms straight can sometimes be rather confusing. As a class, brainstorm all the names you have heard that relate to the Civil War. Keep this list as you read through the book to clarify the story and help alleviate confusion. Begin by making three columns—one titled South, one North, and the third General.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1 – 2**Foreshadowing****Objective:** Predicting plot details based on information given**Activity**

In the first two chapters, several characters are introduced and many stories are told in order to set up the plot and prepare you for events to come. Using your knowledge of human nature and the Civil War, make predictions about the novel.

1. In Chapter 1, you learned about Ellen Creighton's favoritism toward her youngest son, Jethro. When three of his siblings died the year he was born, his mother felt "...as if, somehow, Destiny had marked him." What great events could the future hold for Jethro? What role will he play, as a young boy, in the Civil War?
2. In Chapter 1, Jethro remembers the events of his sister Mary's death. Travis Burdow was part of the Burdow family, whose members were "...commonly despised throughout the countryside as a shiftless lot with a bad background." Jethro's father, Matt, intervenes before an angry mob sets out to hunt down Travis. Why do you think the author include this story so early in the novel? How might the Burdow and Creighton families relate to each other later in the story?
3. In Chapter 2, Wilse Graham, Jethro's cousin from Kentucky, visits the Creighton farm. What starts out as a welcomed family reunion soon turns argumentative as discussion of the South's secession from the Union progresses. What could the author be foreshadowing with this family visit? What sort of family conflict could Wilse's visit be foreshadowing?

Save your predictions so that you can compare your ideas to the actual plot as you continue with the novel.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 3**Debate**

Objective: Understanding both sides of the Civil War

Activity

The Civil War has often been referred to as the war where brother fought brother. In Chapter 3, the author sets the scene for Bill and John to choose opposite sides of the conflict.

Half the class will represent the South and Bill's ideals while the other half will take the viewpoint of John. Review the first three chapters to familiarize yourself with each man's reasons for fighting on the side of his choice. You may also use other resources to support your position.

Remember: The best way to succeed in a debate is to understand both sides of the issue, recognize the validity of each other's points, and support your views with as much fact and detail as possible.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1 – 5**Character Identification**

Objective: Identifying the major characters and their relationship to the protagonist, Jethro

Activity

As you read through the first five chapters, many characters are introduced. Using the following character web, record the relationships each of the main characters has with Jethro. Then note two major character traits for each person.

Once the character web is completed, it can be made into a mobile. Cut the pieces out and glue them onto pieces of colored construction paper slightly larger than each oval. With Jethro on the top, connect the other nine to his oval with yarn or sturdy string. Attach Jethro's oval to the neck of a hanger or simply punch a hole at the top and add yarn.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 7**Literary Terms**

Objective: Understanding, identifying, and rewriting literary terms

Activity

Locate the literary terms in this chapter. In the following chart, quote the terms in the first column, including the page number. In the second column, label each one you find according to what type it is. In the third column, explain the meaning of the author's words. In the last column, rewrite the term in your own words, keeping the meaning the same and using the same type of literary device Irene Hunt uses. We have completed one for you as an example.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 8**Letter Writing****Objective:** Writing from the home front**Activity**

Throughout the story, the main means of communicating with loved ones on the battlefield was through letter writing. Those at home received several critical letters that gave them greater insight into the war.

Take on the persona of one of the Creightons still on the farm and write to one of the enlisted men. What kind of news would the soldier like to hear? What details are going on at home that you can share with your relative? What emotions should be expressed by your character? These are just a few of the ideas to consider for your letter.

In your letter, be descriptive and show that you have a clear understanding of the viewpoint of your character as well as the events of the time.

As the person who received the letter, respond to the letter you have just received. Would you be totally truthful about the difficult situations you are in? Would it be a good or bad choice to give those at home the “gory” details? What are your daily activities that would interest your family? How do you feel about your commanding officer? Any other subjects you feel appropriate would be fine too.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 9

Theme: Internal Struggle

Objective: Identifying a time in your life when you have faced an internal struggle

Activity

A common theme in literature is to have the character struggle with him or herself over a moral issue. This theme is often called *man versus himself*. Frequently, humans engage themselves in self-destructive behaviors that do not seem to provide a clear solution. In Chapter 9, Jethro is faced with the greatest dilemma of his young life. When his cousin Eb deserts the Union Army and returns home, Jethro is the one to discover him. As a result of this, Jethro faces several moral dilemmas. Should he help his cousin even if it means breaking the law? Should his loyalty be to his desperate and starving cousin or to his brothers and all the other young enlisted men who are fighting or have already died in this war? Should he tell anyone else and involve them in the scandal? These are serious questions for a young boy, and Jethro doesn't take them lightly.

Many times throughout our lives, we are faced with dilemmas that have no easy answer. Perhaps you have felt forced to lie about something, someone has told you a secret that you feel you need to share with someone else for your friend's safety, or you've cheated at something and now the guilt won't leave you.

Think of a time that you have been faced with a problem that didn't have an easy answer. Write a journal entry describing your situation, the various sides to the problem, and how you solved it. If you haven't solved it, think of at least one way in which you can take action to resolve the problem.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 11

Visual Interpretation

Objective: Creating visuals to extend the meaning of the text

Activity

The Civil War battles have been recreated and played out over the years in many forms from drawings, to scale models, to actual live drama productions. Americans are fascinated with the war fought on our own soil. The author, Irene Hunt, goes to great detail to depict the fierceness of the battle of Chickamauga. In Chapter 11, we learn that Jethro carefully copies John's letter so that Shadrach and Jenny in Washington can read his description of the battle. Then Jethro "...made mountains of chips and stones out in the wood lot and showed John's little boys how their father...had scaled Missionary Ridge and had so broken the center of the Confederate line..."

Review Chapter 11 carefully, paying close attention to the descriptions of the battle and the strategies involved. The following are a few passages that deserve special attention:

"...the map of Chattanooga down on the Tennessee River, with Lookout Mountain to the southwest, Missionary Ridge facing on the east, and beyond the Ridge, the line of water labeled 'Chickamauga Creek.'"

"John wrote of how near the army had been to starvation after Chickamauga; how the snipers located all along the slopes of Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge made it impossible for a wagonload of food or provender to get through to either men or animals."

"... Hooker would strike at one end of the Confederate line on Lookout Mountain; Sherman would hit the other end on Missionary Ridge. The Army of the Cumberland would attack the center..."

"...Missionary Ridge, which towered like a steep wall opposite Lookout."

Using these quotes and other images you have collected from the chapter, design a visual depiction of the battle. You can create a drawing, painting, comic strip style progression of events, or even a diorama to reconstruct the battle.