



Literature of the U.S. Civil War

Curriculum Unit 97.02.02
by Thomas E. Holmes

INTRODUCTION

This literature unit, *Literature of the U.S. Civil War*, is designed to help fourth and fifth grade students to gain a greater appreciation for literature through reading novels that integrate with the social studies curriculum. The Civil War is covered in many textbook series with focus on main events and timelines of the war. However, little attention is brought to the wide spectrum of children's literature that is available for their reading enjoyment which puts a more enthusiastic spin on what might be mundane. I want students to not only acquire a knowledge of the Civil War facts, but also to tap the talents that lie within them, through integrated genres of drama, art, music, and creative activities. Students will come to appreciate the personalities and events of pre-Civil-War times through to the post-Civil-War times that changed our nation.

EDUCATIONAL GOALS:

I am a Magnet School Resource Teacher at Davis Street Magnet School in New Haven, Connecticut. The New Haven School System Standards, *A Vision for the Twenty First Century*, are in alignment with the national goals for education. These goals focus on meaningful, effective, and lasting education that prepares students for success in a world of increased diversity, technological change and global economic interdependence. My goals focus on interdisciplinary teaching with an understanding of cultural diversity that engages students and encourages their individual talents. My educational philosophy has always been that the child brings to the classroom a rich personal background and a multitude of abilities. This is where I begin to help students reach farther, celebrating their individual knowledge base and giving them additional tools to develop themselves.

In this unit students will establish concrete thinking processes in the investigation of characters, settings, and the plots. The activities will work wonderfully for the targeted grades; however, modifications can be made for students in upper and lower grades. Modifications should be made because of the cognitive development of children. Major shifts occur in children between ages five and seven and last until age 12. (Piaget's concrete operational stage.) This is where children internalize mental actions (operations) and fit them into a logical system and apply concrete thinking. Linked to students increased competence is pride in accomplishments. Howard Gardner (1989) implies that there are multiple intelligences: linguistic, musical, logical, mathematical, spatial bodily, and kinesthetic, all linked to interpersonal and intrapersonal outcomes. This suggests that each

child follows a different developmental path.

THE LITERARY THEMATIC APPROACH:

The Literary Thematic Approach, linked with social studies content standards, and coupled with the child development philosophy, to build on a child's prior knowledge base, is a good thing. Every student brings some powerful ability and varied learning style to the classroom. Integration of subject matter, collaborative learning, and organized investigative methods are all processes to help children assimilate information. This is seen clearly when students' reflection on books about slavery and the Civil War causes them to reflect on their own being as it relates to historical knowledge. Major elements in any literature/language arts program are that children are listening to books being read to them, reading good books themselves, talking about them, and writing about them. Whenever a classroom is rich in printed material and lots of talk is going on, rewards are plentiful to all children. Those who can orally express themselves but find reading a laborious task have wonderful things to say in a discussion group when the reading is shared.

As children develop methods for ascertaining skills to learn, my premise is not to teach them what to believe or think, but how to think. Exploration of literature that evolves around the issues of slavery and Civil War facts develops knowledge and awareness of characters, settings, and events. However, it isn't easy to get them to talk beyond these basics, especially the complacent or reluctant ones. I will present some strategies that have been successful for me in getting kids to talk comfortably with me and other students.

OVERVIEW OF CONCEPTS AND GOALS:

In approaching this unit of study students will use various skills in listening and reading comprehension, problem solving, and critical thinking. These skills are tested on the Connecticut Mastery Tests. Strategies to facilitate learning will be through whole group, small group, and individual activities. The Unit starts out with whole group book talks led by me. This process will then move into the realm of half group size, then to small groups of four or five. In small groups there is a job for everyone which will be discussed later. In the beginning we read books together so that I can model expected rules for holding a book discussion and interesting ideas can be heard by all as well as my positive responses to student's reflections. When I move to smaller group variations, students have a more personal stake in the discussions: they get more chances to talk. I group students heterogeneous in ability so they learn to respect and appreciate each other's value. With the mix the students who views themselves as slow in reading will perhaps be appreciated for superior responses. The faster readers, on the other hand, might realize that in their haste they missed some key passages in the book. However, there is still room for the homogenous group concept. These are good for equal level projects and healthy competition. In the individual work each student realizes they are responsible for their work in their reading/writing journals and portfolios of work, which is evaluated on a scale 0-6, 0 representing no effort and 6 reflecting outstanding work.

GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS:

Various types of graphic organizers to build background and organization of information are used as necessary tools for prior reading, during reading, and after reading activities. In using the integrated thematic approach, students will learn to use cooperative group skills. These skills will develop in whole group process and interface with the small group process including activities at learning stations. One of the most important goals of this unit is the shared strategies I use as I go through various processes of using the books discussed in the paper. A key ingredient to success is to have the activities fun, exciting, and challenging.

SETTING THE STAGE OBJECTIVES:

I need to find connections that will dispose children to certain attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge. I must be able to share in the teaching by hearing the connections students are making. Collaboration is strong and more powerful than any form of teaching in isolation. Integration of curriculum is more meaningful than confining learning to specific subjects. Facts and fragmented ideas do little to change values and views of the world. To build a network that supports important ideas is critical to today's educator and learner. This is why I create a classroom of learners who have the ability and tools for investigation, verification, and reflection.

Objectives for myself involve setting a tone for the environment where children are comfortable to talk about books with me and their classmates. I will not allow any one to belittle any one's ideas or unusual comments about a book. I will be sincerely interested in what each child has to say. I have found that the best questions and activities are sabotaged unless students feel that what they say and do is of value. I must make them feel secure and valued. Objectives for the students are to honor and respect each person's comments, ideas, and work. They will be risk takers and feel safe in expressing themselves. They will give only, "Put Ups, No Put Downs". They will give each other encouragement. This is confidence building for all; appreciative statements like, "That's a great thought, I never viewed it like that before" or "That's interesting, tell me more" are pleasurable to even the most confident student.

WHOLE GROUP APPROACH:

In the whole class approach, I lead the reading and discussions. I give the students models of how to read for enjoyment and how to dig for depth of meaning. I use this approach because many students still have difficulty and they need encouragement to believe they can think deeply about a book. I have found the best way to encourage this is by modeling the book reading and discussion.

I use books that I have liked at different levels to build this unit. My enjoyment and enthusiastic spirit are soon caught by even the most reluctant reader.

UNIT INTRODUCTION: *THE BOY'S WAR* , AND *TILL VICTORY IS WON*

Objectives: *Students will listen to and review books to understand the personal effect the Civil War had upon families both black and white, Confederate and Union alike. Students will choose a character to do research on using books, journals, and computers to gather information to write a report and character dramatization script which will be dramatized for the class.*

Materials: *Books, Reader's Journals, Graphic Organizers, Chart Paper Markers, research materials and computer access, Characterization Costumes and Props for Dramatization.*

Strategies: *Introduction to the Unit begins with whole class activities. Each student is given copies of the books, a Reader's Journal, and a KWL Graphic Organizer Chart, which is a 9"X11" sheet of paper with the following headings and examples:*

K	W	L
What I Know	What I Want To Know	What I Learned
Slavery of Blacks	What about their families?	
Slavery ended in the North in the 1840's	Why did it continue in the South?	

Process: *Students write what they know briefly about the Civil War and Slavery, under the K. They use brief descriptive words or sentences. A lot of brainstorming is done together. Everyone shares aloud what they know and a collective summary is made. They then formulate questions about what they would like to know, under the W column. The L column will be filled in as a cumulative activity to the lesson. Students will then follow my introduction making notes in their Reading Journals of settings, characters, events, and personal reflections.*

By way of introduction I present two books: *The Boy's War* by Jim Murphy and *Till Victory Is Won* by Zak Mettger. I use these two to make a clear connection that the Civil War was a war in which many boys, not too much older than the students I teach, fought and died in on both the Confederate and Union sides. Also, that the war was one in which many black soldiers and sailors both free and runaways, after gaining their freedom turned right around and fought on the Union side. It wasn't just a "White man's War." The vivid action pictures and the short stories of individual and collective groups help to get the learners attention. Now they are connected not by just facts but facts that embrace real people who faced real personal issues and feelings.

About the books: *Boy's War tells of first hand accounts of these boys from enlistment through training into the dark holes of the battlefield. They were underage boys who went to defend their homes, on both sides. Many of them went, though, merely for the thrill of an adventure which found them in the bowels of the most savage fighting ever engaged in by American Soldiers. The pictures and the writing of letters home tell the story of these boy's emotions, joys, sadness, and pain from their own hand and the writing hand of others. Till Victory Is Won tells clearly the story of black men and their families in a land of upheaval for freedom. Initially they were not allowed to fight in 1861. Eventually they would gain the right to fight and this book tells of the struggles and the stunning contributions they made on the battlefields as soldiers and on the waters as sailors. The author exemplifies the bravery of these men during and after the war and how it affected the historical path of this nation. The book is based on first hand accounts with*

photographs and drawings that illustrate how blacks influenced the outcome of the war and the decades that followed.

Character Dramatization: I will present to the students character dramatizations from these books and others depicting a character I read about. I create imaginary settings similar to real ones in the book and then portray a character using costumes, props and voice. I portray a Black Scout for the Union Army, A Confederate Officer, a Union Officer, A Slave Ship Captain, A Slave, and an Abolitionist. I do one character per week so that students will have a model of setting a stage, use of personal props, and how historical information is researched. Students work on their research for a character they would like to portray and present a written script of what they will present. This is an ongoing process of writing skills with initial drafts through to completed copy and presentation. I conference weekly with each student on their writing and computer research.

Evaluation: Holistic Rubrics for reading, writing, and dramatization presentations are used for assessment and evaluations. Students become very aware of the scoring process and expectations of their work. This is important for self evaluation, group evaluation, and teacher assessment for mastery of objectives. The evaluation is on a Scale of 0-6, 0 being no effort exemplified in contrast to a 6 being excellent. The rubric design aligns with the Connecticut Mastery Test Objectives and the districts objectives.

UNIT LESSONS: THE SHADES OF GRAY

Objectives: Students listen, read, and make journal entries of phrases and vocabulary. Students will answer oral and written questions of prediction, location, organization, memory, and write their personal reflections with collaborative sharing. Integration of reflective art, mathematical measurement, and geographic connections will be made.

Materials: The book, *Shades of Gray*, by Carolyn Reeder, Reader's/Writer's Journals, Chart Paper, and Markers for sample "Simple T" graphic organizer, Art materials for drawing illustrations

Strategies: The Unit Introduction Lessons lead nicely into other books that are read in class particularly the book *Shades of Gray*. This book is used as a whole class reading text. I read a chapter and model the first few journal entries of phrases with vocabulary words I have chosen, sharing the meaning from within the context of the literature. Then I describe why I choose the phrases and words. I do this using a graphic organizer I call, "The Simple T".

Process: Using the "Simple T". On the left side of the "T" I write the words and phrases I choose and on the right side I write a brief explanation as to why I choose them and my reflections. This is used throughout the reading of the text in class and home reading assignments. For home reading students will read from wherever I left off in class and read at least four pages. The next day Reading /Writing Journal discussions take place and meanings are clarified. I check the journals every week and make comments to encourage my students. I suggest that they leave me at least two lines between each chapter entry for my responses to their work. Discussions of the

settings, characters, and events take place. Each day a key question is asked by me such as, "How did Aunt Ella react when Will came to live with her?" This is discussed by all. I use forms of questions that focus on predicting, locating, organizing, remembering, and evaluating skills. At different points in the book students will use some form of art medium to present a picture of their own of what they think the setting looked like from the context of the story. This stretches their imagination as illustrators. I usually find some outstanding artist ready to bloom. The objective here is to bring in all the senses working collaboratively. Geographic location of places talked about in the story are recorded on a map of the United States. There are places in the book where non-standard and standard measurement is used and these are good places to reflect on prior knowledge of measurement concepts. In chapter two, Will measures his steps along the trap line in paces so he won't forget his way from one landmark to another and from one trap to another. In chapter four Will's Uncle Jed teaches him pride in work and how to measure using hand spans for fence-post holes (Page 39).

An example of the "Simple T " graphic organizer follows for chapter one of the book.

PHRASES AND VOCABULARY STUDENT RESPONSES

"Monotonous creaking" Pg.1 The word monotonous seems to mean, ongoing, maybe boring.

"Virginia Piedmont" I know Virginia is a state but I'm not sure of Piedmont.

Scrunched, florid, doffed, Methodically,

artillery guns, horses flank, they're kin, These are words that I don't know.

carpetbags, momentarily, coward, striding, I will try to learn them from the

luxuriant, Southern cause!, engulfed, context or look them up in the

Confederate, meager, saber, cavalry officer, dictionary.

and exhausted.

Teacher comments, "This is a good idea, to look up a word if you don't understand it from the context. Maybe you can get the meaning from our discussions. These words sound like good ones for your personal vocabulary to learn."

I like the discussion on page 12 and 13 between Will and Meg about the war's causes.

Will thinks the war was about states' rights. Meg thinks it was about slavery and still stands up to Will about it being about people's rights rather than states' rights.

Teacher comments, "What do you like about it? What do you think state versus federal rights means?"

As I read a student's entry and see that they still don't understand, I write a statement that might help them use critical thinking skills to get it.

Upon completion of discussions students respond with personal reflections on the chapter and make conclusions and summaries. Prediction questions are formulated about what might happen in the next chapter and recorded in the Readers/ Writers Journals. I then read pages 15- 20 aloud while the students follow along. I model on the Chart Paper the "Simple T" and writing words or phrases I choose and the reason why. Homework assignment is to continue reading pages 21-25 the same way.

This proceeds according to the teachers desired pace with the class. and should take about 45 minutes per day for 15 days. That is one chapter per day at the least.

For evaluations I make sure I confer weekly with each student on their Readers/Writers Journals and drafts of Character dramatizations. With individual teacher/student conferences I can have a positive force in developing a students reading and writing habits and abilities.

SMALL GROUP APPROACH:

In each group there is a leader whose job it is to direct the discussions, a recorder who will write down the responses and summarize the groups thoughts, a reporter who will present the groups work results, and a timekeeper to whom all must listen as he/she keeps the group on task and focused. Each group member is responsible for putting into effect the no-fault, collaboration, and consensus policies of James P. Comer, M.D., (Comer, 1996). The teacher is the manager/facilitator of the groups. The need for dependency upon one another shows the importance of collaboration. Also, the class learns to work with no-fault policies. This reduces the negativity and blame in the group for ideas that might lead to a conclusion that isn't based on consensus.

SMALL GROUP MODEL LESSONS: NORTH STAR TO FREEDOM, THE STORY OF THE UNDERGROUD RAILROAD , By Gena K. Gorrell

North Star to Freedom is historically rich with period posters, photographs and paintings, making it a wonderful starting point to focus on the human tragedies of slavery. The author, Gena K. Gorrell, gives a vivid ride on the underground railroad from the origins of slavery through the Civil War and beyond. From a crowded slave ship to the injustices of the galleries of human trade to freedom through the underground railroad, she shows the determination and strength of the passengers on escape routes and the conductors who risked their lives to help others. The people who were pivotal in roles they played are presented clearly. Those who became famous and those who remained obscure share equally in this book.

Objectives: *This book is a major force in students' understanding of the perils of slavery and the consequences of a country engaged in the use of slavery. Socially, religiously, economically, and politically the mind is stretched to understand the perspective and attitudes of the diversity of thought on the issue. Students are to read the introduction and each chapter introduction and view the pictures on the opposite pages. Then each student will give a verbal response to what they read and saw.*

Strategies and the Process: *The following is an example of how the Group Model works. I always model the expectations of behavior and learning : Step 1. I set up a group of four with myself in it. We choose among ourselves what position each wants leader, recorder, timekeeper, or reporter. Step 2. I then take the direction of talking the process through as the facilitator using the book. Step 3. The group's objectives are to read the introduction and chapter introduction and view the pictures and notations about the pictures. Then they will give an oral response to what they read and saw. Step 4. The group is given three minutes to read the introduction; time-keeper tells the group when to stop. Step 5. The leader asks each person to tell the words or phrases they would like to discuss. The timekeeper gives the group 5 minutes to respond. The recorder writes down the responses. Step 6. Students are told by the group leader to turn to the*

chapter headings and look at the pictures on the opposite page; the timekeeper gives the students a total of 3 minutes to view pictures and 1 minute to then read the introductions. Step 7. The leader calls for verbal response of each one and a discussion takes place. The recorder writes down a summary of the discussion. Step 8. The reporter reports the summary to the others in the class. Step 9. The whole group recorder writes down each group's key summary responses on large chart paper. Step 10. I would have the students focus on similarities and differences in each group's responses and discuss any questions. Each group's summary is written down in individual reading/writing journals.

I use these strategies and process for the first two chapters with this group and make sure that the others in the class understand the process by going back over the process steps, questioning various points in the process, to solicit responses from the other students observing. In the process, some responses will show surprise and bewilderment. Vocabulary that sometimes seems so simple brings on new importance such as the word, "free", used in the introduction to stress how it is taken for granted (xiv). There are thoughts that are expressed by a little slave boy in the introduction who questions, after he had slept in the only clothes he had all night because it was cold, "Why do I still hurt from where the young master punched me yesterday? Why did the master do that? It wasn't my fault his puppy nipped him. Still, better be extra careful today. Why does he get so much? Why is he the lucky one? Why do you have to be the slave? (pg.1)

Upon completion of the introduction exercise the rest of the class gets in groups of four and uses the same process. This takes about another 20 minutes and each group can work at their own pace as long as the timekeeper keeps them on task. At the end of 20 minutes I signal all the groups to stop and the reporter of each group will give a brief summary of the group's responses. A recorder of each group writes the key summary points on large chart paper. The whole class then contrasts the responses of each group noting the similarities and differences of each groups responses. Then I take time for any questions that individuals would like to ask. This is a good introduction to the book and pricks their desire to read and hear the rest of the story.

In conclusion to this book's use, I believe students need to see, feel, touch, taste, and smell, if only through their imaginations, the events that led up to and through the Civil War and the events that would follow. At various points, from the slave ship filling up with its cargo of humanity, hearts pumping on the slave block, through to the flight to freedom following the North Star, I will have the students participate actively by placing them in imaginative settings to feel the human anxiety these people felt.

Students need to know the struggle isn't over. As a good friend of mine once said to me, "The freedom train hasn't stopped yet! There are still those who need to be freed. The struggle isn't over yet!, until all of God's children are walking a just road free from hate, ridicule, prejudice, and scorn." (A friend now passed on who rides a better freedom train.) And so, I read the dedications in each book and talk about what meaning they have, such as "To all those whose names have been forgotten" so the children won't forget.

UNIT LESSONS USING POETRY AND MUSIC:

I bring in my musical ability and sing to my students the numerous Negro spirituals and blues. I recite the poems about the slaves' struggles and the songs that came out of them. This section can be broken up into five forty-five minute time frames or longer periods if you have blocked time for reading and language arts.

Objectives: *Students will learn to appreciate the rhythm and rhyme of the music which came out of the Negro Spirituals and how it influenced their lives. They will also hear a rendition of the song , Follow The Drinking Gourd, which is also a story with pictures by Jeanette Winter. Students will listen to a selected group of 20th century poetry about the times, and struggles from The Poetry of Black America, Anthology of the 20th Century, Edited by Arnold Adoff.*

Strategies: *I always introduce this lesson by playing the guitar and singing, "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" and then I ask students where did that song come from and why? I then give them a brief explanation of what a Negro Spiritual was. Upon completion I sing a song made popular among the slaves by a legendary sailor called Pig Leg Joe who helped free slaves through the underground railroad. This song is "Follow the Drinking Gourd" and it leads nicely into a discussion about the song and the book, Follow The Drinking Gourd, with story and illustrations by Jeanette Winter. I also bring in Blues songs such as, "The Poor Man's Blues", and the "Walking Man's Blues" which depicts the struggle of black men and women. I introduce these in the form of poetry first and then music. If you think you are not musically oriented you can find much of this music on tapes or discs performed by great musicians and poets such as B.B. King . I then read the ideas about the differences between the types of Poetry and Music and how they shaped the thinking of the black man from the book, The Dream Keeper and other poems, by Langston Hughes (1902-1967), Illustrated by Brian Pinkney, on page 26, A Note on Blues. I read the poems Bound No'th Blues, on page 28, Po' Boy Blues, on page 37, Wide River, page 41, Homesick Blues, page 43, and Night and Morn, page 44. We discuss the form of these poems and how they are Negro folk songs called the Blues. During the reading of some poems for the first lesson the Art Teacher comes in and draws his representation of the poem I read. The students see the words come alive in pictures and this motivates them toward their own work. We contrast how these poems differ from songs made up called Negro Spirituals. I always begin this by saying that the Negro Spirituals were made up as group songs and usually spoke to the freedom and hope on the other side of this life. The Blues are not group songs and are usually sung or made up by one man or woman and they have a strict poetic pattern.*

Activities that the students engage in to conclude these lessons are their own pictures and poems set to music. These works are bound in book form for others. I have an Author's Chair where upon completion of a piece of work a student can read or sing their piece of work to the entire class. We celebrate this achievement and it helps to motivate all.

Conclusion: *Students during these lessons learn the poetic nature of words and songs. They are able to write their own poems using the various forms they learned and then I am able to help them put the words to rhythm and music. Evaluation of the student's work is done on the 0-6 scale.*

SMALL GROUP AND INDEPENDENT LEARNING STATIONS:

Classroom organization is important to me so I establish the following learning stations for small groups and independent work: A Listening Station, A Vocabulary Station, A Writing/Art Station, A Computer Station, A Direct Reading Station, and A Classroom Library / Drama Station. Each station has specific objectives. Students also have journals for recording activities done at each station. The listening station is where

students listen to a recorded story from the bibliography, they follow along in the book while they listen with headphones to the cassette tape. In their journals they will record the date and the book they listened to and their response to the book. A list of predicting, locating, organizing, remembering, and evaluating questions will be there for them to answer. A Vocabulary Station is where students choose at least four words from any source they want to learn that evening, about slavery or the Civil War. These words are written in their personal dictionary. At the end of the week these words are written on a word wall in alphabetical order. A Writing/Art Station is for writing a story or response to an art piece on the Civil War or Slavery. The Computer station gives students an opportunity to research the Civil War and associated subject matter. They can also connect with others in the World Wide Web to have a book talk. Many Civil War Round Table Groups are on the Internet with chat groups. The Direct Reading Station is where students work on reading activities to improve reading skills within the theme framework. Shared reading activities and games take place here. The classroom Library/Drama Station is where they continue to search out books on the theme and each evening each student takes a book home with a reading card to be signed by a parent or responsible person. The number of books read each week is celebrated as well. The card comes back signed at the end of the week and a new card is given to the student. This along with other records are placed in their individual portfolio files for assessments. The Library/Drama area is also a place for characterization. Students can share with each other their favorite characters and practice dramatization. I encourage script writing here as well. They can work on scripts to portray characters that they have read about to eventually present to classmates. Every Friday is an author's chair celebration of works. Students will present their character dramatizations to the class. I use these strategies and process with most classes in which a two hour block of time is allotted for reading and language arts. This model gives each student twenty minutes per day for each learning station. This Model is patterned after, *Essentials of Literacy School Development Program* , by Edw. T. Murray, Ph.D., (Murray, 1993). I am very fortunate to be able to work with Dr. Murray at Davis Street Magnet School. He has been a consultant to our school for several years and has established *Essentials of Literacy Reading Rooms* at our school and in districts around the country.

The various literature that I use in this thematic approach and learning station strategies allows for a great deal of contrastive analysis of similar books. I always introduce all the books that will be available to the children and also make sure that they know these books are at various levels for us all to enjoy. I tell them that I still enjoy picture books that allow me to make up my own stories and poems. I also like non-pictorials, which allow me to use my own imagination. Here I introduce *Pink and Say* , by Patricia Polacco, a most effective picture book about the war and humanity. I stress the value of the pictures to help our minds understand the war and the events that took place. I then introduce *Walking the Road to Freedom, A Story about Sojourner Truth* , by Jeri Ferrris, illustrations by Peter E. Hanson. I always stress the importance of the author and the illustrator so children can see good collaborative work. I suggest that when they do their stories or poems two might want to work together as these authors and illustrators do. This is an excellent book that speaks of slavery in the North and South. It is about a woman who was named Isabelle or Isabella Hardenbergh only because her master's last name was Hardenbergh. Isabelle would change her name to Sojourner Truth, walking out of the City Streets of New York City upon gaining her freedom. She was born into slavery in Ulster County, New York; she was freed in 1827 and became a voice against slavery and an advocate of women's rights. This is her story about her life and how she helped in the underground railroad, met Frederick Douglass and President Lincoln. She traveled to Kansas to see a dream of hers fulfilled, people working on their own land; she was 83 years old. She died in 1883. She was a woman who did something about slavery before Harriet Tubman.

This leads nicely into books about Harriet Tubman, so I introduce books about her life by different authors: "*Wanted Dead or Alive*" *The True Story of Harriet Tubman* , by Ann McGovern; *The Story of Harriet Tubman*,

Conductor of the Underground Railroad , by Kate McMullan, illustrated by Steven James Petruccio; *The Story of Harriet Tubman, Freedom Train* , by Dorothy Sterling; and *Harriet Tubman, Conductor on the Underground Railroad* , by Ann Petry. Harriet Tubman was a very popular lady who risked her life by going back and forth freeing slaves and guiding them to the underground railroad. She was brave and skillful in her fight for freedom and the fight for others. I ask that when students read these books they should discuss the similarities and differences. Each person in a group can read one and then report their reading notes to each other to see how the story facts match up. Another great book is *The Underground Railroad* by Raymond Bial, in which Bial presents photographs that he took while retracing the steps of those who traveled the Underground Railroad. He took them as if he was traveling and being hunted late in the evening or during the night. He calls on us to imagine the emotions and feelings of those folks who took the freedom train on the Underground Railroad. This book can be complemented by the book *ÉIf You Traveled On The Underground Railroad* , by Ellen Levine, illustrated by Richard Williams. In this book the author helps me and the students to focus on quality questions about the Underground Railroad and then goes on to tell the story answering the various types of questions. This gives the students a chance to reflect and predict possible answers to the questions from their prior knowledge base. It also helps them in their critical thinking strategies.

Another great grouping of books is those about Abraham Lincoln. *Lincoln: A Photobiography* , by Russell Freedman is wonderful biography, walking you down the paths and roads Lincoln traveled down, from his boyhood home through the political days of great talks with the people, with pictures to go along with the exciting travels up to his assassination. You meet famous people and not so famous who found themselves in his company, but most of all you get to know the man who helped to abolish slavery and took the reins of a nation torn apart by war. Other books that help us know Abraham Lincoln are: *Just A Few Words Mr. Lincoln, The Story of the Gettysburg Address* , by Jean Fritz, Illustrated by Charles Robinson; *Gettysburg Address* , by Stuart A. Kallen, Illustrated by Terry Boles, This is a marvelous book of explanations of words used in the speeches made by Abraham Lincoln; its illustrations are fantastic to help students understand even better what this Gettysburg Address is all about. *The Gettysburg Address* , by Abraham Lincoln, Illustrated by Michael McCurdy. This is an excellent book for children to see how illustrations can make an old speech come alive with meaning. Each one of these books is below the targeted grade level of the Unit. However, it is my experience that I need to provide simple texts for good explanations of what might otherwise be difficult. Not all students read at their grade level and therefore I provide books at various levels and allow students to choose what they feel comfortable reading on their own in the Library Station.

Another great book that stands alone in the study of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, is *BOTH SIDES, The Emancipation Proclamation, Why Lincoln Really Freed the Slaves* , by Robert Young. It gives students a great Time Line and Glossary of words that can be added to their personal dictionaries. In fact when a student puts down that they read this book I look for the vocabulary in their dictionaries. The greatness of this book is it makes you look at the historical aspects of the issues that led up to the war and through the war and asks you to think about some questions. There are great illustrations of famous black men like Judge Samuel Sewall, an early opponent of slavery, and Richard Allen, one of the nation's first black activists; these are important historical figures that you don't hear too often about. Kids today need heroes of the past not just the present. I use page 31 of this book to get reactions of what it must have been like to have your back whipped so brutally and almost to death. This page shows a slave with the scars of the whip. I have the students talk about the feelings this gives them. We can never appreciate the freedom we have without looking at the past.

Here are three more groupings of books that can be used in many ways to contrast the settings, characters, and events of the Civil War period.

What it is like to be a slave girl is realized in reading *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt* , by Deborah Hopkinson, paintings by James Ransome, and *Dear America, A Picture of Freedom, The Diary of Clotee, a Slave Girl, Belmont Plantation, Virginia, 1859* . Another book to compare and contrast life in a big plantation house and slave quarters is by Patricia and Fredrick McKissack's outstanding *Christmas in the Big House, Christmas in the Quarters* . It tells of how Christmas was celebrated just before the Civil War with recipes, poems, and songs. This book is wonderfully illustrated by John Thompson.

Who is John Brown? This question can be interestingly answered after reading about him in *John Brown: One Man Against Slavery* , by Gwen Everett, paintings by Jacob Lawrence, and *The Story of John Brown's Raid On Harper's Ferry* , by Zachary Kent. One thing I know from these books is that Brown was influenced by Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin or Life Among the Lowly*, written in 1852. It described the hardships of slavery and convinced many Northerners slavery was immoral.

Another great grouping of novels for better readers includes: *Which Way Freedom ?* , by Joyce Hansen, which is about a slave boy who knew when the Civil War began that it was time to run for freedom even though he might be caught and killed. He ran to taste freedom and then turned around and fought for the freedom of others. It is a strong, thought-provoking novel. Julius Lester's *Long Journey Home* weaves six historical fiction stories to share the proud, joyful, and painfully emotional black experience. This book grew out of his first, *To Be a Slave* , which is a book about what it was like to live in slavery, in the words of the black Americans who lived it. *With Every Drop of Blood, A Novel of the Civil War* , by James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier, is a very challenging book about two people caught up in the war, one a Southern Boy named Johnny who is challenged to a bold mission of delivering supplies to the Rebel troops, the other a runaway slave who is now a Yankee soldier who captures Johnny.

Other books in the bibliography that follows are great books to include in your Library for the students' enjoyment.

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