

Historical Topics: 6th-8th Grade

A RIF Guide for Educators

Themes: History, Historical Fiction

Book Brief: This guide is designed for use with books about historical topics at the 6th to 8th Grade reading level. Adapt the questions and activities in this guide to the book you are reading.

Content Connections: ELA, Social Studies

Time To Read!

Before we read, let's look at...

The Cover: Based on the cover, what historical moment is this book about? If it is historical fiction, what is the setting?

Prior Knowledge: What do you know about this historical moment or setting? Have you read other books about the same or a similar topic? What have you learned about this historical moment or setting in school?

Vocabulary: Identify 10-15 words that are likely to be new to your students and introduce them before you read this book with your class.

Purpose for Reading: It's important to be able to identify the context of a book with a historical setting and to evaluate how that context affects events in the book. As we read, identify where and when the story takes place, and consider what effect that has on the plot or events in the book.

While We Read

Monitoring Comprehension

- Provide an objective summary of the text, avoiding personal opinions or judgments.
- What is the theme or central idea of the text?
- From whose point of view is the story or series of events told?
- Which elements of the text are supported by evidence? Which are not? In historical fiction, this may include a discussion of which elements are historically accurate and which ones are from the author's imagination. In a nonfiction book, this may include a discussion of which claims are adequately supported and which are not.

Let's Think About

Our Purpose: What is the context of the book? How does that context affect what happens in the book?

Extending Our Thinking: Have students choose a character or individual from the book and write a journal entry as this person. Tell them to consider what everyday life is like for this person and how this person becomes involved in historic events. Use this as an opportunity to discuss how history is a series of events that happen to real people just like them.