

Historical Topics: 3rd-5th 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 3rd to 5th 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?

Vocabulary: Identify 8-10 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 that deals with a historical topic. As we read, think about when and where this story or nonfiction book takes place. This is also called the setting.

While We Read

Monitoring Comprehension

(In items with two questions, the first refers to historical fiction texts and the second to nonfiction texts.)

- Who is the main character?/What is the main idea?
- What is the author's purpose for writing? What details from the text let you know?
- Retell the story, including key details./Summarize the book, including key details.
- Discuss how the illustrations help you understand what is happening in the book, including how the illustrations help you learn about historical concepts that are different from life today.
- How do text features, such as a glossary, headings, or author's note, help you understand the text better?

Let's Think About

Our Purpose: What is the setting of this book?

Extending Our Thinking: Use butcher paper to make a large timeline of events in the story or nonfiction book. Include both events that are specific to the book and other significant national or world events that occurred during the timeline of the book. Discuss how all these types of events work together to create the book's context, and connect this concept to students' lives by brainstorming some events you might include on a timeline of your school year.