

Historical Topics: Preschool-2nd 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 Preschool to 2nd 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: What is the title of this book? Who is the author? Who is the illustrator? What is happening in the cover illustration? Based on the cover, what historical moment is this book about? If it is historical fiction, what is the setting?

Prior Knowledge: With students in this age group, you will need to take time to introduce the historical moment or setting in an age-appropriate way.

Vocabulary: Identify 3-5 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. For younger students, this can be difficult to grasp as it is an abstract concept. As you read, provide students with concrete, relatable examples to help them understand when and where the book takes place.

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?/Who or what is the main topic?
- Who is telling the story?/Whose point of view does the author focus on?
- 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: When and where does this story take place? If the book is nonfiction, what is the author's subject?

Extending Our Thinking: Invite students to play a game of "Same and Different" to relate their lives and experiences to what happens in the book. List elements of their daily lives that are the same as those of the characters or subjects in the book and elements that are different. Then discuss the lists you made and talk about how we would have to adjust if we lived in the past and how the characters or subjects in the book would have to adjust if they lived in the present.