

Book Backdrop/ *The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg* by Rodman Philbrick

Big Ideas of the Lesson

Students will gain a greater understanding of life during the Civil War (1860-1865) and develop an appreciation of some of the issues surrounding the Civil War. A Book Backdrop using Library of Congress Primary Sources is a method of instruction which can be used to secure these understandings and appreciations.

Lesson Abstract: (summary of main points)

The use of historical fiction can often bring students a greater appreciation of life in a particular time frame. Book Backdrops can help engage students in the story, and provide background knowledge which enriches understandings. This lesson will provide lesson guidelines and activities for teachers and librarians and model the Book Backdrop protocol.

Content Expectations or Standards

See Attached (Content Standards file)

This lesson plan is designed to be modified by the teacher. All possible standards for History and ELA have been included. It is up to the teacher to decide the focus and the standards addressed.

Integrated GLCEs

See Attached (Content Standards file)

This lesson plan is designed to be modified by the teacher. All possible GLCEs for History and ELA have been included. It is up to the teacher to decide the focus and the GLCEs addressed.

NOTE: This lesson supports the Skills, Dispositions, Responsibilities and Self-Evaluations of AASL Standards for the 21st Century Learner:

http://aasl.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/guidelinesandstandards/learningstandards/AASL_Learning_Standards_2007.pdf

Key Concept(s)

- ✧ (Book Backdrops): Primary Sources can help provide background knowledge necessary for understanding and enjoyment when reading Historical Fiction.
- ✧ (*The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg*): War brings about changes in life and can require acts of personal sacrifice.

Instructional Resources

Equipment/Manipulative

- ✧ Color printer for printing Primary Sources as manipulatives.
- ✧ Projection equipment
- ✧ Smartboard or equivalent (Optional)

Student Resource

- ✧ Copies of or projected images of selected Primary Sources as determined by Teacher.
- ✧ Printed Analysis sheets for Primary Sources.
(http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Primary_Source_Analysis_Tool.pdf)

Teacher Resources

- ✧ Petri, Gail. Books Backdrops: Bringing Historical Fiction to Life with Primary Sources. Library of Congress, Summer Institute, 2007. (http://www.aea267.k12.ia.us/media/files/AEA_267_Primary_Doc.ppt)
 - *View to gain further insights into using Primary Sources with literature.*
- ✧ As assembled in Book Backdrop: *The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg* Primary Resources.
- ✧ *Creating Book Backdrops Using the Inquiry Method* (see Build & Deliver / Bookbackdrops:
 - <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/professionaldevelopment/tpsdirect/pdplanbuilder/>)
- ✧ Analysis sheets for photos, prints and maps
 - (<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/guides.html>)

Lesson Sequence.

- ✧ Sequence is dependent upon the teacher, generally 2-3 weeks. Alternatively, if used as a Read-aloud, the activities could be used for the life of the story.

Suggestion (Only):

Session 1:

Introduction of Bacon's military map of the United States, the northern union states, and the southern confederate states

- ✧ Refer to Book Glossary (aka Some Additional Civil War Facts, Opinions, Slang & Definitions, To Be Argued, Debated & Cogitated Upon p.219)
- ✧ Begin a Vocabulary list from the novel and the information found on Primary Sources and continue throughout the lesson.
- ✧ Begin reading book Chapters 1-3 to set up the story

Session 2:

- ✧ Introduce images which relate to Chapters 1 through 11
- ✧ Read chapters 3 through 11 to class
- ✧ Go to Bacon's military map and map Homer's journey so far
- ✧ Talk about Underground Railroad

Session 3 and further lessons:

- ✧ Dependent upon Teacher's timeline.
- ✧ Digital images should be introduced when needed for background, discussion or reflection.
- ✧ Continue to map Homer's journey.

Teaching Strategies:

The following strategies (from Creating Book Backdrops Using the Inquiry Method) may be used based on the Book Backdrop:

- ✧ Compare and contrast images of the same event by different artists.
- ✧ Analyze maps that depict settings described in the book.
- ✧ Use photographs as story starters or writing prompts.
- ✧ Investigate letters written by or for soldiers (see Additional Resources/VMI Archives). Write a letter Homer might have written to his brother, or to Jedediah Brewster.
- ✧ Write a news article which might have appeared in the *Pine Swamp Gazette*.
- ✧ Create a timeline with primary sources related to happenings in the book.
- ✧ Create a book gallery displaying the book (or cover) with primary source connections and student statements.

Assessment

Each of the activities used is a form of assessment providing the student and teacher with evidence of greater understanding and knowledge. Students should be able to explain what they produced.

Student Self-Evaluation activities found in **AASL Standards for the 21st Century Learner:**

http://aasl.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/guidelinesandstandards/learningstandards/AASL_Learning_Standards_2007.pdf

