

Lesson Title: The Civil War and *Across Five Aprils*

Lesson Type: Integrated Literature/PEP Strategy

NCSS Thematic Strands addressed by the lesson:

II. Time, Continuity, and Change

b. apply key concepts such as time, chronology, causality, change, conflict and complexity to explain, analyze and show connections among patterns of historical change and continuity

IV. Individual Development and Identity

f. analyze the role of perceptions, attitudes, values, and beliefs in the development of personal identity

V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

d. identify and analyze examples of tensions between expressions of individuality and efforts used to promote social conformity by groups and institutions

Illinois Learning Standards:

State Goal 16. Understand events, trends, individuals, and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States and other nations

16.D. Understand Illinois, United States, and world social history

16.D.4b. Describe unintended social consequences of political events in the United States

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Know and understand the answers to 11 questions related to the reading excerpt from the book *Across Five Aprils*
2. Understand two ways conflicting view points led to the Civil War in America
3. Identify an important character from the reading and analyze that character's role in the excerpt

Materials and Equipment:

- Copies of reading from *Across Five Aprils*
- Document camera
- LCD ceiling projector
- Computer

Procedures:

1. Pre-Class Prep

- a. prepare questions for class discussion
- b. copy pages from book
- c. ensure all equipment is in working order
- d. make copies of blank PEP sheet

2. Before Reading Activity/Anticipatory Set

Open class by asking the students to think back to a time when there was a conflict or heated discussion in their family that put them against someone else in the family. Ask them to imagine if the issue had been something with consequences that could have impacted the entire country. How might the discussion have come out? Ask students to share an instance when they were involved in a heated discussion in their family.

3. **Statement of Objectives:** By the end of the lesson, students will know and understand the answers to 11 questions about the excerpt from the book *Across Five Aprils*, understand two ways that conflicting view points led to the Civil War, and identify an important character and analyze his/her role in the excerpt.

4. **Outline of Lesson Contents**

- a. **Introduction:** Introduce the book *Across Five Aprils* by giving background information, the general plot of the book, and the important events leading up to the excerpt that we will be reading.
- i. Book follows one family in southern Illinois (Jasper County) during the Civil War
 - ii. Country is tense as a war between the North and the South seems imminent
 - iii. A cousin from Kentucky has come to visit and the family is eating dinner and discussing the state of the country
- b. **During Reading Activity-**Distribute the reading selection and PEP sheet to each student. Assign students to groups. Give each group a different character from the reading to focus on and complete the PEP sheet about. Students read and answer questions on PEP sheet individually then meet with other group members to discuss answers.
- c. **Post Reading Class discussion-**Teacher-led discussion of the reading. Begin by asking questions of each group and then lead into a whole class discussion.
- i. Ask a student from each group to give the groups' answers to the person questions on their PEP sheet.
 - ii. Call on students to answer the remaining questions on the PEP Sheet
 - iii. Additional discussion questions
 1. Can you recall any events that led up to the Civil War that may have led to the differences between Wilse Graham and the other family members? Missouri Compromise?
 2. Why would there be differences of opinion in Southern Illinois? (border state, family ties in both north and south)
 3. Would a discussion about slavery have been the same in a northern state? Southern state? Why?
 4. Do you think the opinions of women and men were different? How? Why?
 5. Predict how the characters opinions about slavery and the Civil War may change over the course of the war. Why?
- d. **Extension Activity:**
For homework, students will write a two to three paragraph paper about how they would have felt if they were in the discussion at the dinner table with the family we read about. Students will draw on their knowledge of the events that led up to the Civil War gained from previous classes as well as the lesson over *Across Five Aprils*. Students will receive participation points for completing this assignment.

- e. **Closure:** Today we read an excerpt from *Across Five Aprils* and discussed how the characters in the book felt about slavery and the impending civil war. As we saw from our discussion, there were conflicting opinions about these topics even within families. Tomorrow we will continue our discussion of the Civil War by discussing some of the major battles and plotting them on the map.

Evaluation: Students will turn in their completed PEP sheets for the assessment of their grasp of the material covered in class. The students' answers during the discussion will help me to judge the effectiveness of the lesson.

MIVCA: (NCSS Key features or powerful social studies teaching & learning)

- **Meaningful:** This lesson emphasizes content worth learning because it teaches ideas and knowledge that the students may apply to their lives. This reading selection will also be meaningful to the students because it takes place in southern Illinois. The Civil War is one of the United States' most historic events. The students will be able to form their opinion based on the reading.
- **Integrative:** This lesson is integrative because it incorporates history and literature. It connects local to the national and global and it provides opportunities and practice for student oral communication and writing skills.
- **Value Based:** This lesson is value based because it considers ethical topics and addresses a multiple sided issue where students are required to assess the merits of competing arguments and they become aware of the complexities of an issue (Civil War).
- **Challenging:** This lesson is challenging because it requires students to make judgments based on reasoned criteria. It also encourages the class to function as a learning community and exposes the students to different information sources regarding the topic.
- **Active:** This lesson is active because the students will work in groups to complete the reading and worksheet.

Across 5 Aprils PEP Sheet

Directions: Students will be divided into groups and assigned a character from the reading. They will read the selected chapter during class and fill in the appropriate answer for the fill in the blank questions on the PEP Sheet.

PERSON

1. What person are you assigned? _____
2. What position did he/she have on slavery? _____
3. What relationship did he/she have to the host family? _____

EVENT

1. What happened to make the dinner discussion become more heated? _____
2. Who calmed the table down? _____
3. What news arrived later to make things more heated again? _____
4. How did your character respond to the news? _____

PLACE

1. Where was the dinner held? _____
2. When did the dinner occur? _____
3. Where was your character from? _____
4. Why was the area, Southern Illinois, so contested?

Across 5 Aprils PEP Sheet-Answer Key

Directions: Students will be divided into groups and assigned a character from the reading. They will read the selected chapter during class and fill in the appropriate answer for the fill in the blank questions on the PEP Sheet.

PERSON

1. What person are you assigned? **Jethro, Matt, Wilse Graham, Bill, Ellen**
2. What position did he/she have on slavery? **Unsure, opposed, it's ok, did not want to be told how to live, opposed**
3. What relationship did he/she have to the host family? **young son of s. IL family, father in s. IL family, cousin from Kentucky, son, mother**

EVENT

1. What happened to make the dinner discussion become more heated? **Issue of slavery, Confederacy, division of union/country, war**
2. Who calmed the table down? **The mother, Ellen**
3. What news arrived later to make things more heated again? **Anderson had surrendered at Fort Sumter (Union surrendered to Confederacy/North to South)**
4. How did your character respond to the news? **Too much for him to handle, falls to the ground, concerned-may know that there will be a high price to pay, the Confederates were lured into firing the first shot, did not say, wants to know if many men were hurt**

PLACE

1. Where was the dinner held? **Ellen Creighton's house, S. IL**
2. When did the dinner occur? **Just before the start of the Civil War**
3. Where was your character from? **S. IL, S. IL, Kentucky, S. IL, S. IL**

4. Why was the area so contested? **_many people from different areas with different views on slavery and other issues lived there**