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## ABSTRACT

This unit of study is geared toward a heterogeneous eighth grade language arts class. The unit's goal is to show students that the American story chronicled in "My Brother Sam Is Dead" is not simply a story about a series of events that occurred in the past but about taking pride in your heritage and not being afraid to fight back when your liberties are being taken away. The hope is that in reading this novel, students will delve into their own heritage. According to the unit, "My Brother Sam Is Dead" has many themes that adolescents can relate to--for example, the theme of rebellion is prominent, as is identity. While Sam Meeker has embroiled himself in the fight for independence, his younger brother Tim struggles with the conflicting views about the revolution within his own family. Adolescence is a time when many students are beginning to form their own identities, and they can follow along with the Meeker brothers struggling with similar issues. Although it is sometimes difficult for students to relate to a story set in the 18th century, many different lesson ideas and varied approaches have been incorporated into the unit to provide a balanced study of the historical novel. The unit is divided into these parts: I. Lesson Plans 1-5 with handouts; II. Lesson Plans 6-10 with handouts; III. Overall Purpose and Modifications for Inclusion; IV. Assessment and Evaluation of Unit; V. Quizzes and Test; VI. Study Guide and Discussion Questions; VII. Integration with Other Content; and VIII. Bibliography. (NKA)

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## Relating Personal Heritage to America's Fight for Independence

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**Dan Kirby**  
**Methods/Spring 2002**  
**Dr. McFarland**

## Overall Purpose of Unit

This unit is geared towards a heterogeneous eighth grade language arts class. My goal in this unit is to show my students that the American story chronicled in *My Brother Sam Is Dead*, is not simply a story about a series of events that occurred in the past. The story is about taking pride in your heritage and not being afraid to fight back when your liberties are being taken away. It is my hope that in reading this novel, my students will delve into their own heritage. I would like for them to see that almost all cultures go through some type of revolution, and that these uprisings are not just wars, but events that have a real and lasting impact on their lives today.

*My Brother Sam Is Dead* has many themes that adolescents can relate to. The theme of rebellion is prominent, as is identity. While Sam Meeker has embroiled himself in the fight for independence, his younger brother Tim struggles with the conflicting views about the revolution within his own family. Adolescence is a time when many students are beginning to form their own identities and they can follow along with the Meeker brothers as they struggle with similar issues.

I would like for my students to see that studying historical novels does not have to be boring. I have incorporated many different lesson ideas, and these various approaches will provide a balanced study of the novel. It is often difficult for some students to relate to a story set in the eighteenth century. I hope that by showing students how their heritage is similar to that of America's, I can draw personal parallels that will increase their interest in the novel and in reading.

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- I. Lesson Plans 1-5 with handouts
- II. Lesson Plans 6-10 with handouts
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- IV. Assessment and evaluation of unit
- V. Quizzes and Test
- VI. Study Guide and Discussion Questions
- VII. Integration with other content
- VIII. Bibliography

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## Day # 1

### Objectives:

- Distribute copies of My Brother Sam Is Dead to the class
- TSWBAT: Become familiar with assignments due for the unit
- TSWBAT: Understand the concept of personal heritage
- TSWBAT: Predict what will happen in the novel

Motivations: On the blackboard I will write the following question to get students thinking about their individual heritage: "What do you know about your nationality, family history, or family tree? If you know very little, think of someone who you know more about. Write as much as you can in five minutes and be ready to share."

### Teaching Procedures:

- Discuss motivation question and how it relates to what we'll be doing for the next two weeks
- Pass out copies of My Brother Sam Is Dead
- Pass out study guide packets
- Explain that study guides will be randomly checked for completion
- Begin pre-reading activity for novel
  - divide students into groups of four by counting off
  - pass out prediction chart to each group
  - Explain that when the nerf ball gets tossed to them they'll need to respond with a prediction about the novel

### Student Activities:

- Read book jacket of novel and fill out chart as completely as possible.
- With your group members come up with predictions about the book and fill out the chart as completely as possible.
- The youngest student will automatically be the recorder in the group, next youngest will be the speaker, next youngest will be the director.
- Be ready to respond when the ball is tossed to your group
- Pass in your prediction chart to be revisited at the end of the novel

Extended Activities: KWL chart on the Revolutionary War (transparency)

Closure: Ask a group to respond the question "Why is it important to learn about our country's heritage?"

Evaluation: Group participation will be noted with a five point participation grade.

Handouts: Prediction chart

Homework: Read chapter 1

Prediction Chart for My Brother Sam Is Dead

You are to complete the following chart with your group. Since you already know from the title that Sam is going to die, predict what will happen to him.

How Will Sam Die?	Why Will Sam Die?	Who Will Kill Him?	What Will Happen to Tim?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Revolutionary War

<b>K</b> <i>What I Know</i>	<b>W</b> <i>What I Want To Learn</i>	<b>L</b> <i>What I Have Learned</i>

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## Day # 2

### Objectives:

- TSWBAT: discuss background for the novel
- TSWBAT: discuss genre of historical fiction/memoir
- TSWBAT: discuss some major ideas in the book: freedom, rebellion, courage, loyalty, choices, bravery, and growing up

### Motivation:

- Present Ben Jonson's poem "On My First Son" on the overhead projector. Ask students to read the poem and write for two minutes responding to the following questions.
1. What is this poem about?
  2. How does Jonson (the author) feel in this poem? List some adjectives.
  3. How can you relate this to Mr. Meeker's feelings about Sam?

### Teaching Procedure:

- Check study guides from chapter one for completion
- Overhead projector with background information on the Revolutionary War
  - Who is fighting?
  - Why are they fighting?
  - What role do the characters have in the fighting?
- Explaining historical fiction/memoir
- Students will receive copy of transparency and will copy down the notes presented.
- Reading aloud of chapter two will begin after the notes have been copied.

### Student Activities:

- Students will write down notes on the sheet provided.
- Students will follow along in their book while being read to.

### Extended Activities:

- Students may work on their journal projects or they may do the crossword puzzle.

Evaluation: Class participation will be noted and study guides will be checked at the beginning of class.

Handouts: Transparency handout to write notes

Homework: Read chapters 2 & 3

## *On My First Son*

by Ben Jonson

Farewell, thou child of my right hand, and joy ;  
My sin was too much hope of thee, lov'd boy.  
Seven years thou wert lent to me, and I thee pay,  
Exacted by thy fate, on the just day.  
Oh, could I lose all father now ! For why  
Will man lament the state he should envy?  
To have so soon 'scaped world's and flesh's rage,  
And if no other misery, yet age !  
Rest in soft peace, and, asked, say, Here doth lie  
Ben Jonson his best piece of poetry.  
For whose sake henceforth all his vows be such  
As what he loves may never like too much.



Statue of father and son.  
Vatican Museums. ©1999 A. Jokinen.

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Source:

Poetry of the English Renaissance 1509-1660.

J. William Hebel and Hoyt H. Hudson, eds.

New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1941. 498.

★ **TIMELINE of the REVOLUTION** ★

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**1760** | King George III ascends to the throne of England.

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**1763** | Treaty signed between England and France ending the French and Indian War. Canada and the continent east of the Mississippi River added to Great Britain's growing empire.

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**1765** | Parliament passes The Stamp Act as a means to pay for British troops on the American frontier. Colonists violently protest the measure.

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**1766** | **March 18.** Stamp Act repealed, but on the same day parliament passes the Declaratory Act asserting its right to make laws binding on the colonies.

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**1768** | **October.** British troops arrive in Boston to enforce customs laws.

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**1770** | **March.** Four workers shot by British troops stationed in Boston. Patriots label the killings "The Boston Massacre."

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**1773** | **December.** Massachusetts patriots dressed as Mohawk Indians protest the British Tea Act by dumping crates of tea into Boston Harbor.

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**1774** | **January.** The Privy Council reprimands Benjamin Franklin in London for leaking letters damaging to the Royal Governor of Massachusetts. **September.** First Continental Congress convenes in Philadelphia.

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**1775** | April. Shots fired at Lexington and Concord. "Minute Men" force British troops back to Boston.  
George Washington takes command of the Continental Army.

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**1776** | **January.** Thomas Paine's Common Sense published. Becomes an instant best seller and pushes the colonies closer to independence.

**July 4.** Thomas Jefferson's Declaration of Independence ratified by the Congress.  


**July.** A huge British force arrives in New York harbor bent on crushing the rebellion.

---

**August.** Continental Army routed at Long Island, New York.

**December 26.** Washington crosses the Delaware River and captures a Hessian force at Trenton, New Jersey.

**December.** In desperate need of financing and arms, Congress sends Benjamin Franklin to France to urge the French to ally with America.

---

**1777** | **July.** A British force led by John Burgoyne takes Fort Ticonderoga in a devastating loss to the Americans. The Marquis de Lafayette arrives in America.

Washington defeated at Brandywine (September 11) and Germantown (October 4). Philadelphia is lost to the British.

**October 17.** Americans capture Burgoyne and his army at Saratoga.

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**1778** | **February.** France signs a treaty of alliance with the United States and the American Revolution becomes a world war.

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**1780** | British attack Charleston, South Carolina. City falls in May.

**1780-'81** - Americans "lose" series of engagements in the south, but exact a heavy toll on the British army.

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**1781** | African-American Elizabeth Freeman sues for her freedom in Massachusetts. Her victory prohibits slavery in that state.

**October 19.** A miraculous convergence of American and French forces traps Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia. He surrenders his British army.

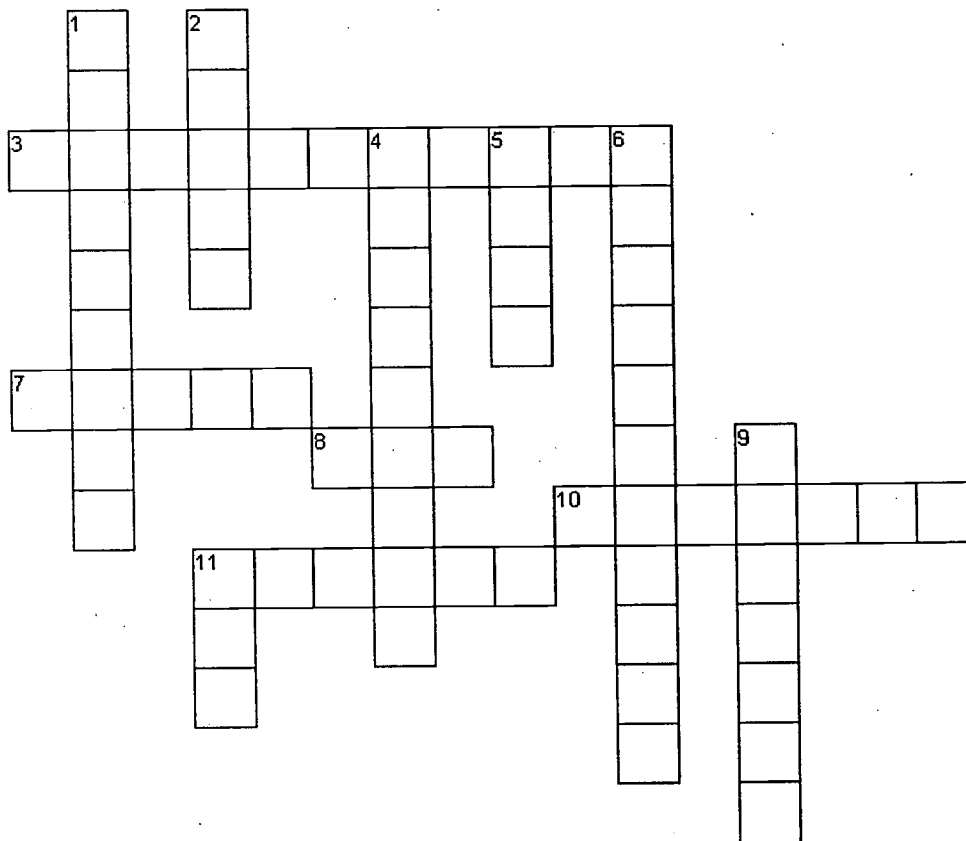
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# Timeline of the Revolution

1760	.
1765	.
1766	.
1768	.
1770	.
1773	.
1775	.
1776	.

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# My Brother Sam Is Dead Criss Cross Puzzle



Across

- 3. name of rebel army
- 7. Tim's best friend
- 8. older brother
- 10. Sam's reason for fighting
- 11. meeker family business

Down

- 1. name of mr. meeker's gun
- 2. Sam's girlfriend
- 4. father's first name
- 5. one who supports the British
- 6. slang name for British
- 9. town in Connecticut
- 11. younger brother

12 of 12 words were placed into the puzzle.

### Day # 3

#### Objectives:

- TSWBAT: understand the setting of this novel.
- TSWBAT: understand why setting is so important and how it affects the characters.
- TSWBAT: relate the setting of the novel to the setting of their own heritage

#### Motivation:

- Write down one place that you've been to that had a beautiful/memorable setting. It can be indoors or outdoors. This will be written on the blackboard and students will write it down on a piece of notebook paper. **OR** Have art pictures displayed around the room and have students write a sentence about the picture as a setting.

#### Teaching Procedures:

- Briefly discuss the motivation about places students have been.
- I'll then instruct students to use any number of information sources to compare the setting of the novel to the setting of their ancestors.
- I will distribute question sheets to be answered and collected.
- Gather class together to talk for ten minutes about what they've found out about their heritage and how it relates to setting.

#### Student Activities:

- Work independently or in groups of no more than three.
- Fill out sheet comparing setting of the novel to the setting of another country.
- Share information with the class for five minutes

Extended Activities: As an extension, I'll share the results of what I have found out about my own heritage. There will also be review questions to be completed on chapter one, if time remains.

Closure: Preview what is coming up in chapters two and three and give students some idea of what to look for.

- new characters
- differences between Patriots and Tories
- Sam's girlfriend and Tim's friend

Handouts: There will be a handout comparing the different settings.

Evaluation: Handouts will be collected and checked for completion.

Homework: Read chapters two and three

# Setting

What makes up a setting?

Why is it important to understand the setting?

Is time a part of setting?

Do you think setting dominates *My Brother Sam Is Dead*? Why or why not?

List some of the setting characteristics of *My Brother Sam Is Dead*



## Setting

What makes up a setting?

- Setting is more than just where the story takes place. Elements of setting can also include topography, scenery, physical arrangements such as the location of windows or furniture

Why is it important to understand the setting?

- Understanding the setting will greatly enhance your understanding and enjoyment of the novel. The occupations and daily living manner of the characters are also a part of setting

Is time a part of setting?

- Yes, the time period of the novel is critical to understanding setting. Often, when setting dominates, the work is written largely to present the manners and customs of a locality.

Do you think setting dominates *My Brother Sam Is Dead*? Why or why not?

List some of the setting characteristics of My Brother Sam Is Dead

## Comparing Two Different Settings

1. What country are you researching?
2. How do people's occupations differ in this country from the novel?
3. What are some geographical similarities between the two settings? What are some similarities between the people in the two settings?
4. Think about the scenery of the country you're researching? How does it compare to the way you picture the scenery in the novel.
5. Did the country you are researching ever have a major revolution? A minor one? Briefly explain what caused this revolution.
6. Name three major differences between the setting in My Brother Sam is Dead and the country that you are researching.
7. My Brother Sam is Dead is set in the winter. Examine what winter is like in your particular country. Write two or three sentences briefly describing the winter months.

## Day # 4

### Objectives:

- Check study guide questions.
- TSWBAT: understand why Sam is so passionate about his freedom.
- TSWBAT: work cooperatively and make decisions based on a hypothetical scenario.
- TSWBAT: gain a better understanding of colonialism.

### Motivation:

- Students will read a brief article on Tibet and respond to article using the GRASP procedure.

### Teaching Procedures:

- Students will have their study guides checked for completion at the beginning of class.
- Briefly discuss the motivational activity.
- Divide students into groups and pass out hypothetical scenario.
- Explain exactly what is to be done and that each member of the group must positively contribute to filling out the organizer.

### Student Activities:

- Students will complete the motivational activity and present study guides to be checked.
- Students will work cooperatively to fill out the graphic organizer. The organizer will show them that there are numerous ways that countries have dealt with colonial powers over the years.

### Extended Activities:

- Answer questions concerning what America would be like today if we were still a colony of Britain.

### Closure:

- Exit slips with one sentence explaining why Sam Meeker is fighting in the war.

### Evaluations:

- Study Guides will be checked for completion.

### Handouts:

- Hypothetical situation and graphic organizer with choices.

### Homework:

- Read chapter five

## Chambersburg Has Colonized Greencastle!

With your group members, fill out the attached sheet concerning the following scenario

The town of Chambersburg has decided that it wants to take over the town of Greencastle. Chambersburg wants to expand its territory and, as a result, anyone living in Greencastle will need to follow certain strict guidelines. Because Chambersburg is much more powerful than Greencastle, military violence will accomplish nothing. Below are some of the restrictions that Chambersburg wishes to impose on the residents of Greencastle.

- 2000\$ a year fee for owning a house.
- Boys over sixteen must work in a factory sewing socks.
- Girls must wear khaki pants and red bonnets while out in public. This applies to all seasons.
- All residents must change their religion and become Taoists. Church attendance is mandatory every Sunday at 7:00 am sharp. Failure to attend will result in deportation.
- All newspapers must not contain any negative comments about the ruling government of Chambersburg.
- Stealing will NOT be tolerated. Anyone caught stealing will be immediately hung, no questions asked.
- At any time, the government may barge into your house and search your belongings for stolen property.
- No criminal may be represented by an attorney. If one commits a crime, they must represent themselves in court.

Read the Bill of Rights to decide which of your liberties is being violated.

Here are some possible course of action that you could take:

- Appeal to a more powerful country to stop the violation of rights
- Protest non-violently in the streets.
- Refuse to abide by the laws.

## **Colonialism and Economic Conditions in Tibet Today**

The establishment of colonial political and economic structures followed the military invasion and occupation of Tibet. Tibetans are considered "backward" and of "low quality" and have been ruled as if they were children. Racism towards Tibetans is rampant, contributing to the de facto segregation of the races.

Many of the central subsidies and investments in Tibet go to either to the extractive industries (and the infrastructure and population connected to them) or to the Chinese administrators and settlers (and the infrastructure supporting them). For the most part, Chinese settlers have a much higher standard of living than do Tibetans. An official study bluntly stated that Chinese settlers "cannot be expected to live on the local fare..The need good housing, hospitals, cinemas and schools for their children." An official in one of Kanze's largest work units said that they only hire and take care of Chinese settlers.

The T.A.R. is the poorest part of China, with annual per capita income amounting to less than the equivalent of 100 dollars per year. Economic conditions in rural areas are extremely poor and have often changed little since the first half of the century. In many areas there is still no electricity or running water, and often no school or clinic. Clinics, schools, electricity and other social services are available in Chinese population centers in Tibet but are often far enough away from Tibetan communities to make them marginally relevant to the lives of most Tibetans. Tibetans who live near Chinese settlements are casual beneficiaries of government programs that would not exist in their present state but for the Chinese population.

According to official Chinese statistics, 54% of school age Tibetan children attend school, 44% of the population is literate or semi-literate and the average life span is 65 years. Chinese statistics range from being notoriously unreliable to somewhat reliable. These figures are unconfirmed, and the life span average is particularly suspect.

**GRASP**  
**(Guided Reading and Summarizing Procedure)**

Read passage.

Close book and write down everything that was important.

Delete trivial and repetitious information.

Go back to passage to make sure that all important information is included.

Organize information using a graphic outline format.

Collapse individual bits of information into categories.

Integrate main points into a summary.

Polish summary.

## THE FIRST 10 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AS RATIFIED BY THE STATES

Note: The following text is a transcription of the first 10 amendments to the Constitution in their original form. These amendments were ratified December 15, 1791, and form what is known as the "Bill of Rights."

### Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

### Amendment II

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

### Amendment III

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

### Amendment IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

### Amendment V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.



#### Amendment VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

#### Amendment VII

In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise reexamined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

#### Amendment VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

#### Amendment IX

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

#### Amendment X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

## Day # 5

### Objectives:

- TSWBAT: become dramatically involved with the text.
- TSWBAT: understand the novel by going back and re-reading it.
- TSWBAT: work cooperatively.

### Motivation:

- Quote about acting

The thing about performance, even if it's only an illusion, is that it is a celebration of the fact that we do contain within ourselves infinite possibilities.

~ Daniel Day Lewis ~

### Teaching Procedures:

- Explain to students that they'll need to work quickly and efficiently but that the day will be fun
- Split students into groups of four by counting off
  - Ones are directors
  - Twos are actors
  - Threes are actors
  - Fours are narrators
- Give the groups a section of the book to be acted out
- Pass out sheet describing each job
- Encourage the use of props, scenery, and dramatic acting
- Give groups twenty minutes of rehearsal time

### Student Activities:

- Think of props to use and how you want the scene to be set up
- Try hard to memorize your lines. If you have to read, that's okay.
- Dramatize to the best of your ability, put yourself in the character's shoes. Are they angry, happy, contemplative?
- Perform your selected scene

### Extended Activities:

- If we finish with time left, we'll pass the nerf ball around the room and try to remember events in the plot. The events should be said in order of their occurrence.

### Evaluation:

- Participation points will be noted and the first place performance gets an award consisting of a homework pass. All groups will receive some sort of prize for their performance

Handout: Scenes for the performances will be handed out and descriptions of jobs.

Homework: Read chapters six and seven

Script #1

Sam: Sir it's worth dying to be free

Father: Free? Free to do what, Sam? Free to mock your King? To shoot your neighbor? To make a mess of thousands of lives? Where have you been getting these ideas?

Sam: You don't understand Father, you just don't understand...If they won't let us be free, we have to fight...They're 3000 miles away, how can they make laws for us?

Narrator: It made me nervous to listen to Sam argue with Father. I could see that Mr. Beach wanted to quiet him down, too, before he and Father got into a real fight the way they sometimes did.

Father: God meant man to obey. He meant children to obey their fathers, he meant them to obey their kings. As a subject of the Lord our God I don't question His Ways...Answer me this Sam, do you really think you know better than the learned men of Parliament?

Sam: Some of those men in Parliament agree with me, sir

Script # 2

Father: Tim, did Sam say anything to you about going to war?

Narrator: I didn't want to lie to Father, but I didn't want to give Sam away either

Tim: Well, he said he was, but I thought he was probably just boasting

Father: He wasn't boasting, Tim. He's going over to Weathersfield. The fools are planning to march up to Massachusetts to meddle in something that isn't their affair

Tim: Is he really going to fight father?

Father: I hope not...what do you think of all this Tim?

Tim: I don't know Father, I can't figure out exactly what it's about

Father: I suppose Sam's been teaching rebellion to you

Narrator: I tried to think of something that wouldn't get Sam in trouble

Tim: He said we ought to be free

Father: That's just college boy wind...Who isn't free, aren't we free?

Script # 3

Father: I don't have it anymore...My loyal son Samuel stole it to play soldier boy

Officer: Come now, I'm not going to believe that story. You're all Tories here. We want your gun!

Father: Believe it or not as you like...What do you intend to do, run me through with that sword and leave my wife and child to fend for themselves?

Officer: I will if you don't give up your weapon...We know you have one. We know where all the Tory weapons in Redding are. Not everybody is willing to play the dog to the King.

Father: There are traitors everywhere

Officer: Watch your tongue or I'll slice it out.

Narrator: Oh, it scared me to hear Father yell at the Rebel officer. I wanted him just to be quiet and not make a fuss; to beg even. It made me realize where Sam his rebelliousness from.

## **Lights, Camera, Action!**

**Now is the time for you to show off your acting ability!**

**In your groups, get busy on rehearsing your lines for your performance. You only have twenty minutes to practice, so get busy. The best group performance will win a real Academy Award!**

### **Group Member Duties**

- **Director – Responsible for helping the actors with their lines and deciding what props are necessary for the scene.**
- **Actors – You should try to memorize your lines but if you have to write them on a piece of paper, that's okay. Be as dramatic as possible and try to get a sense of what the character is feeling.**
- **Narrator – You're responsible for reading the non quoted lines. You should practice voice inflection and be very careful not be monotone. Be sure that you're loud enough to be heard. You should take your job just as seriously as the actors.**

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## Day # 6

### Objectives:

- TSWBAT: understand characterization.
- TSWBAT: identify major differences between characters.
- TSWBAT: compare different attitudes of heritage in other pieces of literature.
- TSWBAT: re-state the importance of heritage.

### Motivations:

- Poem/quote on the board from someone about their heritage.

### Teaching Procedures:

- Quiz on chapters six and seven.
- Briefly discuss the motivational activity by randomly calling on students.
- Divide students into groups of four.
- Assign each group a character. They will complete the chart for each character
  - Characters will be: Sam, Tim, Mr. Meeker (father), Mr. Heron and mother
- Inform students that the tallest person will be the writer for the group.
- The youngest person will be the presenter and will teach the class about their particular character.

### Student Activities:

- Take quiz.
- Participate in discussion on motivational activity.
- Work cooperatively in group of four students.
- Select tallest person as tallest as the writer for the group.
- Select the youngest person as the presenter to the class.

Extended Activities: The students could complete a bio poem on their character

Closure: Ask students if they would go to war if they had to? Preview the upcoming chapters. Look for the following

- Where are the Meekers going?
- Why?

Evaluation: Quiz will be given

Handout: Chart on characters

Homework: Read chapters eight and nine

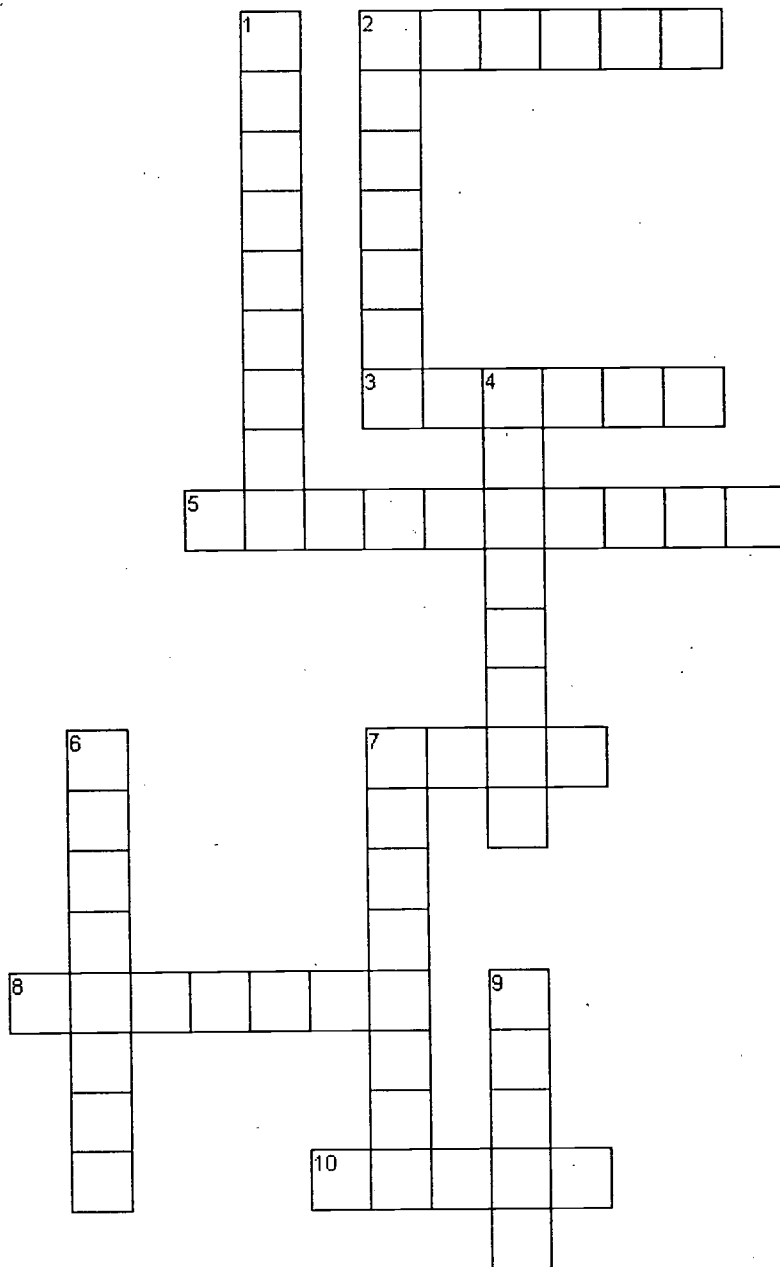
Name of Character	What three words best describe your character's personality?	What motivates this character to do the things he/she does?	What are actions by this character which show what is important to him/her?	What do other characters say about your character that truly reflect the kind of person he/she is?	What does your character say that truly reflects the kind of person he/she is?
	Word-				
	Text citation-	Text citation-	Text citation-	Text citation-	Text citation-
	Word-				
	Text citation-	Text citation-	Text citation-	Text citation-	Text citation-
	Word-				
	Text citation-	Text citation-	Text citation-	Text citation-	Text citation-



## Write a Bio Poem

LINE 1: FIRST NAME  
LINE 2: FOUR DESCRIPTIVE TRAITS  
LINE 3: SIBLING OF...  
LINE 4: LOVER OF  
LINE 5: WHO FEARS...  
LINE 6: WHO NEEDS...  
LINE 7: WHO GIVES...  
LINE 8: WHO WOULD LIKE TO SEE...  
LINE 9: RESIDENT OF...  
LINE 10: LAST NAME

# Vocabulary Criss Cross Chapters 5-7



Across

- 2. surprise attack on approaching enemy
- 3. do arithmetic or use figures
- 5. time enrolled in armed forces
- 7. tiny lead balls fired from a shotgun
- 8. twist and turn
- 10. quick and active, lively

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Down

1. distrust, doubt, lack of trust
2. annual book of tables, weather predictions etc.
4. formal request to a superior
6. contestant unlikely to win
7. person who surveys
9. become red in the face

12 of 12 words were placed into the puzzle.

*Visit [Puzzlemaker at DiscoverySchool.com](http://Puzzlemaker.DiscoverySchool.com)*



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## Day # 7

### Objectives:

- TSWBAT: discuss some major themes of the novel.
- TSWBAT: discuss themes in a roundtable environment.
- TSWBAT: debate the issues in the novel.

### Motivation:

- With the person next to you, discuss Tim's assumption that his father has been taken away. What do you think really happened? Be ready to share in three minutes.

### Teaching Procedure:

- Briefly discuss motivational activity.
- Have a mini lesson on theme and answer any questions.
- Divide class into six different roundtables. Each roundtable will be assigned a theme to discuss. After they have a sufficient explanation and a textual reference, they will present the theme to the class. Other students may comment after the group has finished presenting.
- The groups will present their themes and if there's time, we'll switch to talking about predicting what will happen in the rest of the novel.

### Student Activities

- Complete and discuss motivational activity.
- Take notes on mini-lesson.
- Work cooperatively with your group members and help them present a solid explanation of your theme.
- Present your theme clearly and concisely to the class.

### Extended Activities:

- Debate whether this book should be banned from school or do crossword puzzle.

### Closure:

- Ask students to pay particular attention to plot in the upcoming reading.

### Evaluation:

- Students will be judged based on how well they explain their themes. Participation will be noted.

### Hardout:

- Sheet explaining what their theme is and what they are supposed to do.

### Homework:

- Read chapter ten.

### Roundtable # 1

Themes for roundtable one will be Courage and Rebellion

Explain why these two ideas are themes and be ready to back up your discussion with textual references. Be prepared to give page numbers and to teach the class about your theme.

### Roundtable # 2

The themes for this roundtable will be Loyalty and Family relationships

### Roundtable # 3

The themes for this roundtable will be Choices and Growing Up

## Day # 8

### Objectives:

- TSWBAT: understand the plot of the story and understand how plot works.
- TSWBAT: become familiar with terms like climax, resolution, rising action.
- TSWBAT: gain a better understanding of the novel's plot by using a graphic organizer.

### Motivation:

- What have you learned in your interviews about the plot of your family or interviewee's heritage? List four events that you can remember about the person's life. When were they born?, What is or has been their career?, What is their nationality?

### Teaching Procedure:

- Discuss motivation activity for five or ten minutes
- Begin a mini-lesson on plot on the overhead projector
  - Discuss rising action
  - Climax
  - Denouement
- I will use examples from comic strips to illustrate the basics of the plot. I'll ask the students to identify the elements of plot in the comic. Each student will get a copy.
- Hand out graphic organizers and explain that students should look back in the text and do their best to find the plot events.
- Divide students into small groups of three or four. Everyone must fill out a graphic organizer.

### Student Activities:

- Answer the motivation question.
- Participate in discussion about plot and take notes from overhead projector.
- Work in small groups to fill out the graphic organizer.
- Share results of group work with class.

### Extended Activities

- Talk about plots in favorite movies. Have students write down three favorite movies and tell the class the basic plot of the movie.

### Closure:

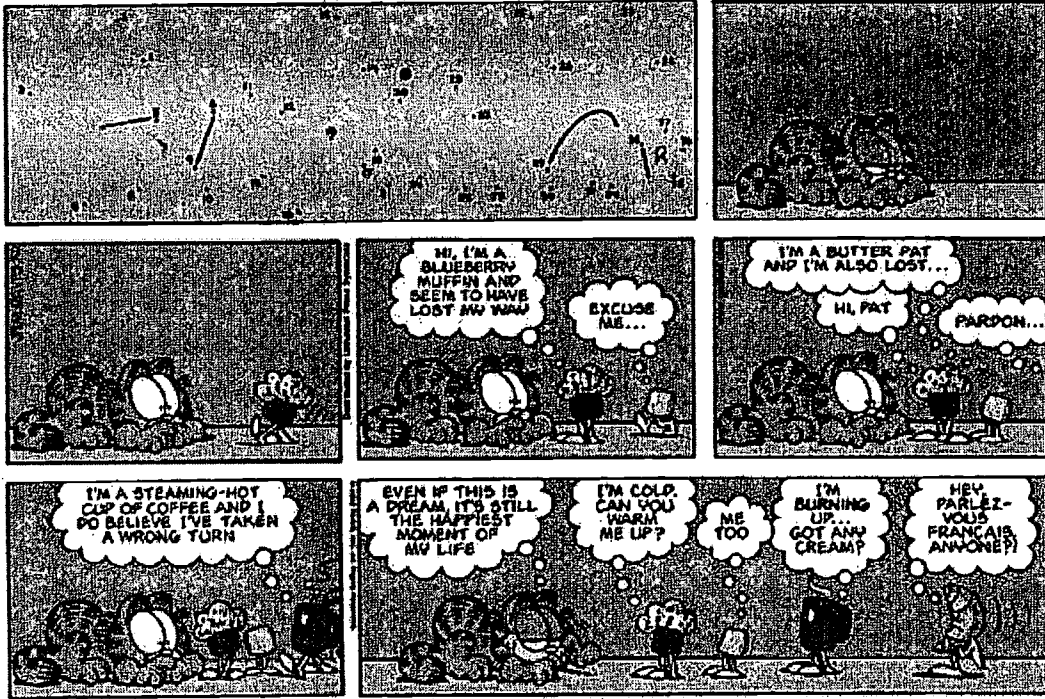
- Before leaving each student must tell me one thing they learned about plot.

### Evaluation:

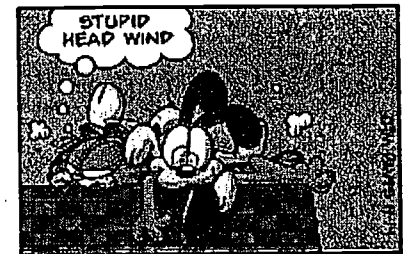
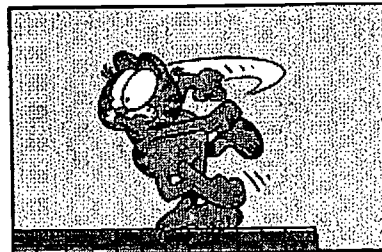
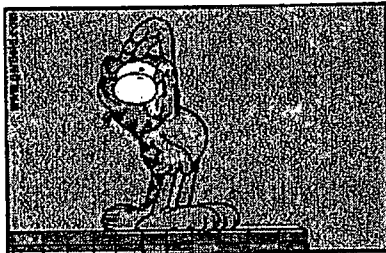
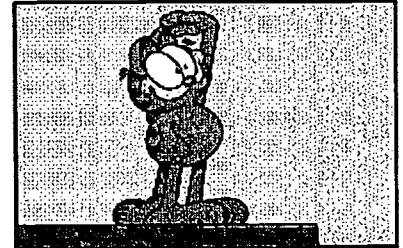
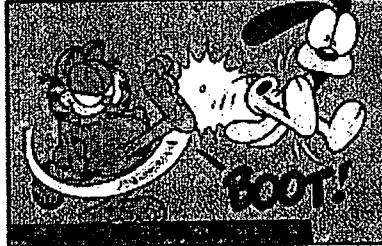
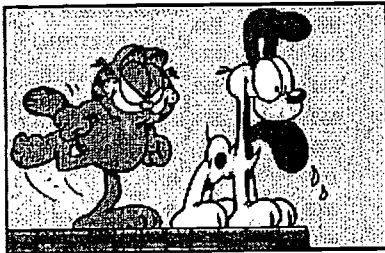
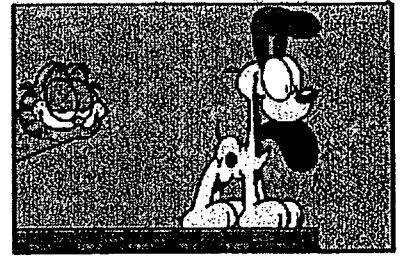
- Each student will hand in a completed graphic organizer to be checked for completion.

### Homework:

- Read chapters twelve and thirteen



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## Day # 9

### **Objectives:**

- Quiz students on the previous night's reading
- TSWBAT: examine techniques used by great storytellers.
- TSWBAT: apply storytelling techniques to the novel *My Brother Sam Is Dead*.
- TSWBAT: decide what characteristics good storytellers possess.

### **Motivation:**

- Write down one great story that you can recall. It can be something from your interviews, something that you've read, or something that you've heard. Write down three things that you think make this a great story. Is it dramatic, funny, or full of interesting characters?

### **Teaching procedure:**

- Call on random students to discuss a great story that they recall.
- Pass out sheet on qualities of a great story teller.
- Read aloud excerpt, p. 108 or 101-103 of Rick Bragg's *All Over but the Shoutin.*
- Ask students to identify the qualities that make the excerpt an interesting story.
- List particular scenes from the novel on the board by page number.
- Have students work in pairs and go through some of the more dramatic scenes in the novel, identifying effective story telling techniques.

### **Student activities:**

- Respond to the motivation on a sheet of paper
- Listen to the reading aloud and be ready to discuss when appropriate.
- Identify qualities that make the story effective.
- With a partner work to fill out the sheet on storytelling for at least two scenes in the novel.
- Be prepared to share your results with the class.

### **Extended Activities:**

- Write a brief story about a funny incident that happened to you. Be sure to employ the storytelling techniques listed.

### **Closure:**

- Quickly review elements of a good story and preview upcoming reading.

### **Evaluation:**

- A quiz will be given on the previous night's reading

### **Handouts:**

- Sheet on techniques of a great storyteller
- Question sheet for excerpts from *My Brother Sam Is Dead*

### **Homework:**

- Read to the end of the novel

### **Characteristics of a good story:**

- A single theme, clearly defined
- A well developed plot
- Style: vivid word pictures, pleasing sounds and rhythm
- Characterization
- Faithful to source
- Dramatic appeal
- Appropriateness to listeners

Baker and Greene, Storytelling: Art and Technique, pp. 28

## Day # 10

### Objectives:

- TSWBAT: discuss the end of the novel.
- TSWBAT: review the novel and prepare for the test.
- TSWBAT: play Jeopardy style review game.

### Motivation:

- If you could change one thing about this novel, what would it be? Respond on a sheet of paper and be ready to share your response

### Teaching Procedures:

- Discuss the motivation question.
- Divide students into two separate teams.
- Put Jeopardy chart on the board with categories and dollar values.
- Give each side a bell that must be passed boy-girl-boy girl for every question.
- Quiz students on the events, characters, setting of the novel.
- Encourage students to take notes.

### Student Activities:

- Write down a response to the motivation question and be ready to share.
- Take notes on the questions being asked.
- Be prepared to answer questions about the novel when it is your turn.

### Extended Activities:

- Discussion questions could become extended activities.

### Closure:

- Remind students that the test is on Monday and that they should review their study packets and their notes.

### Evaluation:

- The winning team will get one bonus point added to their test score.

### Handouts:

- For this lesson there will be no handouts.

### Homework:

- Study for test and continue preparing your heritage project.

## Jeopardy Review Game

Categories:

- Names
- Places
- Literary Terms
- Historical Events
- Plot Events

<u>Names</u>	<u>Places</u>	<u>Lit. Terms</u>	<u>Historical Events</u>	<u>Plot Events</u>
Tim and Sam's last name  100\$ Meeker	State that the story is set  Connecticut	Where and when a story takes place  Setting	War this story is set  Rev. War	Where does Tim go after he steals Brown Bess  Tom Warrups'
This is Sam's girlfriend  200\$ Betsy Read	Town that the story takes place  Redding	Perspective story is told from  Point of view	Ascended the throne in 1760  George II	What prevents Tim from reaching Fairfield?  Betsy Read
Mr. Heron's Indian friend 300\$ Tom Warrups	Where Sam gets falsely accused of stealing  Family's Barn	The high point during a series of events DUB JEP Climax	Famous General who later became a traitor  Benedict Arnold	People Tim meets after father gets taken away  cowboys
General who sentenced Sam to death 400\$ Gen. Putnam	Where Mr. Heron wants Tim to carry letters  Fairfield	Events that lead up to climax  Rising action	Protesting of East India Co.'s monopolization on tea trade  Boston Tea Party	First place the British go when they reach Redding  Mr. Heron's
The slave killed during the fight at captain Starr's house 500\$ - Dub. Jep Ned	Where Tim and Father go to trade  Verplancks point	French word for resolution  Denouement	When four Rebel troops were killed by British soldiers  Boston Massacre	Tim does this before running into the woods when trying to see Tim  Throws bayonet

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## Assessment/Evaluation of Unit

Quizzes (2) 10% = 100 pts

Study guide packets 10% = 100 pts.

Participation will be noted every day and given a score out of fifteen 15% = 150 pts.

Book Test 25% = 250 pts.

Unit Project 40 % = 400 pts.

## Unit Project on Heritage

To culminate our unit on American heritage and the Revolutionary War, you will be completing a project about your own personal heritage. (If you would prefer to learn about someone else's heritage such as a neighbor, friend or community member, please let me know.) Here are the requirements for your heritage project.

1. Interview someone who knows a great deal about your own heritage. Using the interview question, write a one-page paper outlining the following:
  - Your country(s) of origin/nationality – are you Italian, Irish, German, Japanese, a mix of two different nationalities?
  - How you demonstrate the pride you have in your nationality?
  - What struggles your family went through to get to America?

2. Present a family tree going back at least three generations or more. At each branch of the family tree, you should include a colored flag to represent the person's nationality. You only need to include one flag per person.

Example: Three generations from you would be your great grandparents. Find out what nationality they are and put that next to their branch on the family tree. If your great grandfather was German/Dutch, you need to only include one of the two flags.

3. Your revolutionary war journal will be turned in as a part of your unit project. Include in your journal the following:
  - Six entries detailing what you might do as a typical Revolutionary war era boy or girl. The entries only need to be eight lines long and should include details about your chores, hobbies, sports, or anything else that you can think of. The best entries will include very realistic depictions of life during the Revolutionary War.

Your project will be due: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Rubric for Unit Project

<b><u>Material to be graded</u></b>	Poor (5 pts)	Fair (10 pts)	Good (15 pts)	Excellent (20 pts)
Requirements included: Are all of the assignments totally completed and assembled together?				
Quality of written essay: Spelling errors, sentence structure, content. Also, include your interview questions as well.				
Family Tree: Do you have a nice presentation with the flags included? Is your family tree legible and neat?				
Journal Entries: Do you have realistic details about life in Rev. War times? Did you make an effort to do some research?				

Total points \_\_\_\_\_ x5= \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why are Tim and his father going to Verplancks Point?
3. How are their troubles on this journey foreshadowed?
4. What do you think the message in the letter Tim was delivering for Mr. Heron means?
5. How does Tim feel about going with his father to Verplancks Point?
6. What are some of Tim's feelings during the trip?

### **Chapters 9 - 11**

1. What happens to Mr. Meeker on the way home from Verplancks Point?
2. How does Tim outsmart the cowboys?
3. Who are the Continentals?
4. How has Tim changed since the trip to Verplancks point?
5. Why doesn't Mrs. Meeker support the Rebels?
6. What does Tim learn about Sam's reasons for staying in the army?

### **Chapter 12 – End**

1. How did Mr. Meeker die?
2. How did Sam die and why?
3. How old was Tim when he wrote this story and why did he write it?



## Study Guide Packet

### Chapters 1-2

1. Where is the story set?
2. Why does Sam want the Brown Bess
3. Who are the Lobsterbacks?
4. How would you characterize the religious beliefs of Tim and his family?
5. How does Tim feel about Sam fighting in the war?

### Chapters 3-5

1. In what year does the book begin?
2. Is Sam a rebel or a Tory?
3. Who are Jerry Sanford and Betsy Read?
4. How are Sam and his father alike?
5. Why does Tim decide to work for Mr. Heron?
6. Tim is in the woodlot when he sees a party of twenty men on horseback. Who are they and what do they do?

### Chapters 6-8

1. Who does Tim meet on the way to Fairfield? What happens?

4. Do you think that Sam's father forgave Sam?
  
5. What do you think Mrs. Meeker meant when she said, "In war, the dead pay the debts of the living?"
  
6. What might Sam have been thinking just before he was shot?

✓ Adapted from Scott, Foresman guides to literature

atmosphere in the house; How would it change? As a younger member of the family, whose side would you take if an argument ensued?

This novel invites you to see the confused, cruel, and occasionally senseless side of war that sometimes accompanies the arrival of democracy. It is a book about the people and war changes their lives- whether they want change or not.

We meet Sam Meeker, a sixteen-year-old college student, who has abandoned Yale to fight the British with Benedict Arnold's regiment.

### After Chapter 1 and 2

How does Tim feel towards his father? About the war? Is he confused about his own loyalty?

A. As the colonies moved toward independence, the issue of obedience- to faith, family, and country- was frequently raised. Write a brief essay on how this notion affects Tim Meeker and adds to his confusion about the events in his life. Find support in the text or from your own experience.

### After Chapter 3-4

What methods does the author use to embed historical events in the story? Why do you think Tim is so confused about the tension between his brother and his father?

The rifle, or musket, owned by the average citizen during this period and for the century afterward had several purposes. What were those purposes? How and why has weapon ownership changed? What roles does Betsy Read play in the novel so far?

A. Write an editorial to the Connecticut Journal as though you were Mr. Meeker. Express your opposition to the war, and identify several reasons for it. Then, pretending you are Sam Meeker, respond to your father's editorial, and attempt to score some "telling points." Be as specific as you can.

### After Chapter 5 - 6

Even though Mr. Heron is a Tory, what reasons does Mr. Meeker give him for not wanting Tim to carry mail for him? Do you find anything suspicious about Mr. Heron's behavior with the Meekers? Does Mr. Heron offer a subtle bribe for Tim's cooperation?

Why should Mr. Heron want Tim to carry his letters when surely someone else would wish to earn a shilling? Do you think Tim is still somewhat immature? Find evidence to support this notion.

Betsy is suspicious of Tim's journey. She later revealed she saw Tim get the letter from Mr. Heron. What does she think is going on? Do you think she is right?

A. Write an advice column reply to Tim Meeker, who has written explaining his confusion about what is going on- with the country and his family. Begin your reply: "Dear Riddled in Redding."

### After Chapters 7 -9

Discuss strategies that could help people remain safe during times of political unrest or natural disaster. Generate ideas of similar situations at school when something could go wrong and suggest strategies for solving the problem.

Discuss the following questions:

1. What is the main problem or conflict?
2. What complications are introduced to deepen our involvement?
3. What events lead to the problem's resolution?
4. What is the high point of action, when the reader is most involved?
5. How does the story wind down to a satisfying end?

On p. 61, Tim says, "Up to that time the war hadn't been very real." Why does he make this statement? Can you relate an event in your life that "doesn't seem real"?

Why does the shortage of food become one of the earliest symptoms of war to Tim?

On p. 64, in the second paragraph, Tim examines his feeling about his brother Sam. He compares himself to Sam and makes discoveries about "younger brother/older brother" relationships. What do you think the authors wanted to accomplish with this passage?

What do you think about Mr. Heron and his request to Mr. Meeker? Speculate his motivations. What really motivates Sam to disobey his father and become Mr. Heron's messenger?

A. Study the maps in the front of the novel. Using the same scale, make two maps of your neighborhood: (1) your community, with five or six landmarks, and (2) an overview map of the region, including important geographical and historical landmarks.

### After chapter 10 -11

Tears comes easily to Tim at times of emotion and frustration. Have young people changed in the last 200 years in their ability to cry freely? Would Tim be showing "maturity" if he fought back his tears?

Do you feel Tim was becoming resentful about Sam's lack of interest in returning to the family business? Was he justified?

What would have been the result had all those involved in the fight for freedom given up when the going got tough?

Tim presses Sam to do something about finding their father. What do you feel is motivating him?

A. Imagine a movie is being made of *My Brother Sam Is Dead*. Design the poster that would advertise this movie. Remember that the movie posters can have a commentary. And identify the individuals from the class that you would cast in the major roles and include them on the poster.

### After Chapters 12 -14 Epilogue

What methods do the authors use to let readers know about the events happening outside of Redding?

Sam remains calm throughout his capture, imprisonment, and court martial. Given what he was facing, this seems unusual. Why do you think Sam remained so calm?

Why do you think General Putnam refused Sam's plea for clemency? Do you agree or disagree with his reasoning? Explain.

What is the purpose of the epilogue?

A. Research famous women of the Revolution. What did they do to support their cause? (For example, research Mary Ludwig Hays, also known as Molly Pitcher, who fought at Fort Clinton in the Battle of Monmouth in Freehold, New Jersey, in 1778.) What were the roles of most of the women during the battles of the Revolution.



## Final Test for My Brother Sam Is Dead

**Matching:** Match the literary term on the left with the definition on the right.

- |                             |                                                  |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Plot _____               | A. Time and place in which a story takes place   |
| 2. Setting _____            | B. A certain character's traits/personality      |
| 3. Characterization _____   | C. The perspective the story is told from        |
| 4. Historical Fiction _____ | D. A type of fiction that uses a historical base |
| 5. Theme _____              | E. An overriding idea or message in a text       |
| 6. Point of View _____      | F. A series of events that occur in a story      |

### **Fill in the blank**

- 1). The \_\_\_\_\_ family lives in Redding Connecticut and is the focus of this novel.
- 2). The country of \_\_\_\_\_ is fighting to colonize the country of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3). \_\_\_\_\_ is the name of the family gun.
- 4). Tim and his father were going to \_\_\_\_\_ to trade supplies when they were jumped by a group of cowboys.
- 5). \_\_\_\_\_ is a slang term used to describe the British.

### **Short Answer**

- 1). Explain the role of Mr. Heron in the novel. What side (if any) is he on? List one specific example from the text to support this answer. Please write in complete sentences.

Final Test for My Brother Sam Is Dead

**Short Answer Continued:**

2). Early in the book, Tim states that the war does not seem real. What events make the war seem more real to him?

3). Give a brief account of why Sam was arrested? Why was his arrest unfair?

4). What is the importance of the epilogue in this novel? What do we learn when we read the epilogue? Mention at least three items in your answer.

## Quiz on Chapters 6 & 7

1. Who wants Tim to deliver the letter?
2. What excuse is Tim going to tell his father so he does not become suspicious about Tim delivering the letter?
3. Who wrestles the letter away from Tim on his way to Fairfield?
4. Where are Tim and his father planning to go to trade supplies?

### Quiz on Chapters 12 & 13

1. The Meekers find out that \_\_\_\_\_ dies in chapter twelve
2. \_\_\_\_\_ returns home in chapter twelve.
3. Sam is arrested and charged with stealing \_\_\_\_\_.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ is going to be executed

## Modifications For Inclusion

I have tried to incorporate as many different learning styles as I could into my lessons. We will be reading the novel at a quick pace, and I think that could be a problem for slower readers or those reading below grade level. For these students I can make exceptions on the quizzes and allow them to take the test at a later date. I can also recommend that these students listen to the audio cassettes as an aid to help them read. I can have a sign out sheet for the audio cassettes. While there is not much in-class writing, there is a lot of discussion and group work. For inclusion students, I will work closely with the special education teacher and devise an altered reading plan. Quizzes will be given at different times for inclusion students and they might benefit from using group time to work on the novel individually. I do not provide much time for in-class reading but I think that it could be very helpful with some students. Some students might be physically incapable of getting in front of the class and performing during the lesson on day five. For these students I will allow them to remain seated. Hyperactive students may have a hard time working in the small groups and maintaining their focus. I might pair these students with more mature students who will encourage them to stay on task and contribute to the work of the group.

## Integration With Other Content

The most obvious subject to combine this novel with is history. The novel is very historically accurate, and an interdisciplinary unit with a history teacher would provide invaluable insight into the novel. By studying the Revolutionary War in more detail, students would be able to understand certain textual references and would have an easier time learning about the customs and traditions of Revolutionary War America. Another possibility for integration is combining the novel with a geography class. The students could study the original boundaries of the thirteen colonies and could trace the Meeker's various journeys. They could examine the topography of the land and how it made travel very difficult. Geography would also be helpful in understanding the country of Britain. They could compare the two countries and gain an understanding of why Britain so badly wanted to colonize America. In physical education class, students could research and participate in common games played by Revolutionary era children.

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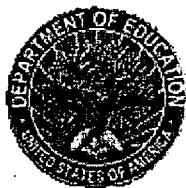
### Web sites:

Eduscapes.com Apr 21 2002 [www.eduscapes.com](http://www.eduscapes.com)

Luminarium.org Apr 21 2002 [www.luminarium.org](http://www.luminarium.org)

Puzzlemaker.com Apr 23 2002 <[www.puzzlemaker.com](http://www.puzzlemaker.com)>

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