



Teacher's Guide for *Hearts of Stone*

By Kathleen Ernst

(Dutton Children's Books, 2006)
ISBN 0-525-47686-5 (hardcover)

Synopsis

With her father gone to join the Yankee troops and her best friend, Ben, sympathizing with the Confederates, fifteen year-old Hannah finds her world torn apart by the Civil War. Then her mother suddenly dies. Now responsible for holding the young family together, Hannah makes the difficult decision to leave her beloved Cumberland Mountain with her brother and sisters and set out on the long and dangerous journey to Nashville, in search of their only living relative. Their quest to reclaim their family leads them into the very heart of the Civil War, and could cost them their lives.

Activity Suggestions

Note: Tennessee (TN) Curriculum Standards refer to 8th grade content standards and learning expectations; Wisconsin (WI) Model Academic Standards refer to 8th grade performance standards; International Reading Association/ National Council of Teachers of English (IRA/NCTE) Standards refer to the general standards for English Language Arts; National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) Curriculum Standards refer to middle grades.

1. Ask the school Media Specialist to help guide students through an exploration of several accounts from the Civil War, published or online. Include accounts written during the war and accounts written later by historians. If possible, study multiple accounts of the same event, or multiple accounts from Tennessee. Lead a discussion: How do these accounts differ? What can the students learn from the first-person accounts and the historians' summations? How can students evaluate past events? What cautions must be kept in mind when considering different accounts? What groups are most likely to be missing from the written record? (The poor, illiterate, non-English speakers, etc.)
 - TN Standards for English/Language Arts: 1.0, 3.0
 - TN Standard for Social Studies: 5.20
 - WI Standards for Social Studies: B.8.1, B.8.4
 - WI Standards for English Language Arts: A.8.1, A.8.2, A.8.3, A.8.4, E.8.1, F.8.1
 - IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts: 1, 2, 3, 7, 6, 11, 12
 - NCSS Standards for Social Studies: 1b, 2a, 2d, 2e

2. Ask students to reflect on the importance of place/setting in *Hearts of Stone*. Direct them to review and collect examples of sensory details used to describe Cumberland Mountain (such as pp. 1-9, pp. 142-143), and to find similar examples from Hannah's time in Nashville (pp. 103-105, pp. 160-161). Then ask them to write a poem or essay about their own favorite or least favorite place, incorporating specific sensory details.

- TN Standard for Social Studies: 3.03
- TN Standards for English/Language Arts: 1.05, 2.02, 2.06, 2.10, 2.11, 3.0
- WI Standards for English Language Arts: A.8.1, B.8.1
- WI Standard for Social Studies: A.8.8
- IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts: 1, 3, 5, 6, 12
- NCSS Standard for Social Studies: 4b

3. When the refugee asylum where Hannah and the children were staying became too crowded, the military officers in charge made a decision to send the refugees on to Ohio. Citizens there were waiting to help care for the refugees, but the forced evacuation meant many of the refugees were further separated from their loved ones—possibly forever. Guide a student debate: if they had been in charge of the asylum, would they have forced the refugees to evacuate to Ohio? What responsibility should the military take for caring for refugees? Who is morally obligated or best prepared to aid refugees—countries, private aid groups, individual citizens?

In all wars, some children become orphaned and homeless. Some, like Hannah and her siblings, find themselves in refugee camps. Ask students to find contemporary accounts of refugees from newspapers, magazines, or online sources. Guide a discussion: How are their experiences similar to, and different from, Hannah's?

- TN Standards for English/Language Arts: 3.01
- TN Standards for Social Studies: 3.05, 4.04, 5.18, 6.01, 6.02
- WI Standards for Language Arts: A.8.3, A.8.4, C.8.1, C.8.3, E.8.1, F.8.1
- WI Standards for Social Studies: A.8.7, B.8.10, E.8.4, E.8.5, E.8.15
- IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts: 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 12
- NCSS Standards for Social Studies: 2f, 5e, 5f, 5g, 6b, 6c, 6d, 10d

4. After Mary died, Hannah had to decide whether to leave Maude with the Strattons, where she would be well cared for, or to take Maude back to Cumberland Mountain, not knowing what they might find. Ask students to decide what choice they would have made if they were Hannah, and to write an essay or letter from Hannah's point of view explaining their decision. Or, let students discuss and debate their opinions. What do Hannah's choices say about her personal identity?

- TN Standards for English/Language Arts: 1.01, 1.08, 2.08, 2.10, 2.11, 3.0
- TN Standards for Social Studies: 5.18, 5.20, 6.01
- WI Standards for Language Arts: A.8.2, B.8.1, C.8.1, C.8.3
- WI Standard for Social Studies: E.8.2
- IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts: 4, 5, 6, 11, 12
- NCSS Standards for Social Studies: 2e, 4c, 4f

5. *Hearts of Stone* includes many examples of people helping others, and of people ignoring or hurting others. After reading the novel, ask students to recall examples of cooperation and conflict within the story. (Examples of cooperation might include Willie taking them on to Nashville, the slave woman sharing her gingerbread, Hannah helping Mrs. O'Donnell, Mr. Norton letting Hannah work in his store; examples of conflict might include the bushwhackers terrorizing neighbors if they didn't agree with their politics, Jack stealing the mule, Mr. Reubens' treatment of his young workers.) Students might identify a third category as well, actions which might have been well intended but nonetheless caused conflict for Hannah and her siblings, such as the neighbors offering to take the Cameron children into their homes and the Strattons offering to adopt the twins.

Hannah's father fought for the Union Army, but not everyone who presented conflict for the Camerons was a Confederate sympathizer. Conversely, some of the people who did help Hannah and her siblings were somehow connected to the Confederate cause. What do these examples show about human nature and politics?

- TN Standards for English/Language Arts: 1.02, 1.08, 3.0
- TN Standards for Social Studies: 1.01, 4.04, 5.18, 6.01, 6.02
- WI Standards for English Language Arts: A.8.2, A.8.3
- WI Standards for Social Studies: B.8.10, E.8.2, E.8.6, E.8.12, E.8.15
- IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts: 1, 3, 11
- NCSS Standards for Social Studies: 1a, 3i, 4d, 4f, 5a, 5d, 5e

6. Ask students to map the children's journey from Cumberland Mountain to Nashville, consider the changing terrain, and to calculate the miles they walked. How does that compare with journeys they have taken? What local or regional landmarks can provide a sense of scale for your students?
- TN Standards for Social Studies: 3.01, 3.02
 - WI Standards for Social Studies: A.8.3, A.8.7
 - NCSS Standards for Social Studies: 3b, 3d

7. The role independent partisans played during the Civil War was especially harsh in the Tennessee mountains. What contributing factors can students identify? (Responses might include divided loyalties among residents, sparse rural population, geographic terrain that made pursuit difficult and hiding relatively easy, distance from military bases of operation.)

For students in other states, how does the experience of Tennessee civilians during the war compare with the experience of civilians in their region?

- TN Standard for English/Language Arts: 1.08
- TN Standards for Social Studies: 3.03, 3.04, 4.03, 4.04, 5.20, 6.01
- WI Standards for Social Studies: B.8.3, B.8.10
- WI Standards for English Language Arts: A.8.1, A.8.2, A.8.3
- IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts: 1, 3
- NCSS Standards for Social Studies: 1d, 2c, 2d, 3i, 4d, 4e, 5a, 5b, 5d, 5e

8. Mr. Reubens' way of doing business changed during the Civil War. Tobacco and transportation costs were more expensive, so his cigars were as well. The influx of soldiers into Nashville created more demand, however, so Hannah's idea of supplying cheap, low-grade cigars was successful. Ask students to consider other economic impacts the Civil War had on families, local communities, individual states, the North and the South. Who prospered? Who suffered? How do these trends compare with current events?
 - TN Standards for Social Studies: 2.1, 2.4
 - WI Standards for Social Studies: D.8.1, D.8.2, D.8.7
 - NCSS Standards for Social Studies: 7a, 7b, 7e

9. Review scenes in which Hannah derived comfort and strength from music, or when music helped her relate to others. (Examples include p. 16, p. 48, p. 53, p. 62, pp. 169-170, p. 200. p. 208.) Ask students to research period lyrics from the Civil War, or old Scottish or Scots-Irish tunes. Discuss their meaning in class, or ask students to share lyrics they found particularly informative or insightful.
 - TN Standard for English/Language Arts: 1.0
 - WI Standards for Social Studies: B.8.1, E.8.10
 - WI Standards for English Language Arts: A.8.3, C.8.3, E.8.1, F.8.1
 - IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts: 1, 3, 7, 8, 12
 - NCSS Standards for Social Studies: 1d, 2d

10. At the end of the book, Hannah and Ben are leading their younger siblings back to Cumberland Mountain. What do the students think they will find? Will their neighbors accept them and leave them alone, or will partisans on both sides continue to harass them? Ask students to write a diary entry from the point of view of Ben or Hannah, describing the day they arrive back at Cumberland Mountain.
 - TN Standards for English/Language Arts: 2.08, 2.10, 2.11, 3.0
 - TN Standards for Social Studies: 5.20, 6.01
 - WI Standard for English Language Arts: B.8.1
 - IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts: 4, 5, 6, 12
 - NCSS Standards for Social Studies: 2b, 2c, 4a

For Further Exploration

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<http://www.east-tennessee-history.org/>

The website contains lesson plans developed by participants of Teachers History Institutes, including "The War Within a War: The Hidden Stories of the Civil War's Impact on Tennessee." Follow the "Teachers & Students" link to access these resources.

Author Presentations

Kathleen Ernst offers a variety of programs and presentations for student audiences. Information can be found on her website, www.kathleenernst.com.