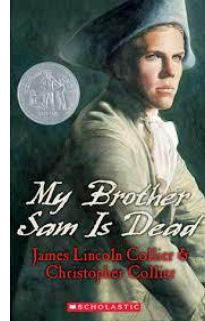


My Brother Sam is Dead



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Author Collier, James Lincoln and Collier, Christopher

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Genre Historical Fiction

Synopsis All his life, Tim Meeker has looked up to his brother Sam. Sam's smart and brave -- and is now a part of the American Revolution. Not everyone in town wants to be a part of the rebellion. Most are supporters of the British -- including Tim and Sam's father. With the war soon raging, Tim knows he'll have to make a choice -- between the Revolutionaries and the Redcoats and between his brother and his father.

Themes Family Relations, Perseverance

Protagonist Male, Revolutionary

Note Over the years, these books have been published in multiple editions. The page numbers in your book may be different than the ones on the lesson plan.

More Information www.scu.edu/character



Character Based Literacy Program

Independent Study Lesson Plan

My Brother Sam Is Dead, Week 1



PREPARE

Background Gather background knowledge about a place, time, event, person, or thing.



Justice Requires Restraint. Justice demands I not say or do some things to myself, any other person, or the planet because justice demands it. The actions I take and the decisions I make, must respect the rights of all.

Research the following terms:

- The Revolutionary War
- Minutemen
- Lexington and Concord

Research the role of religion in the Revolutionary War.

Which side of the American Revolution is justified by God? (What would Mr. Meeker say?)

How does the Brown Bess play a part in justice?

How do you feel about spies? How should enemy spies be punished?

Research the following spies:

- Benjamin Franklin
- Nathan Hale
- Benedict Arnold
- Miss Jenny
- Ann Bates
- Lydia Darragh
-

Give examples of how soldiers used restraint and justice during the Revolutionary War.

What was the Battle of Stony Point? Why was it significant?

Word Wall Here are vocabulary words to add to the Word Wall.

massacred (2)	rebellion (5)	agitators (7)	triumph (10)	subversion (21)
meddle (27)	cordial (31)	parish (31)	scornful (34)	principles (34)
livestock (41)	idle (42)	arithmetic (44)	reputation (51)	deserter (58)

militia (62)	petition (63)	consumption (72)	commissary (80)	reliable (84)
scarce (86)	enlistment (86)	pondering (88)	almanacs (90)	plundering (91)

READ

Review Review the timeline from the beginning every day.

Start at the beginning and review the story so far

- mention the setting and main character
- point to each timeline item as you quickly review it

Read Read the selection.

p. 1-22, 23-37, 38-60, 61-84, 85-112

RESPOND

Timeline List the 15-20 most important on the timeline.

Think about what you read today and begin your timeline

- First, *fix the facts*: who, what, when, where, why
- Then, decide on the most important events and begin your timeline with these.

Over the course of the next week, you will be required to read a number of pages. It would be best if you spread the reading out over the week and not try to do everything at the last minute before your next appointment.

Map Add to ongoing activities like a KWL chart or map: where did the characters go?

War Map: Using a map of the United States during the American Revolution, refer to Sam's account of the battles he describes on page 2, and plot those events on the map.

Draw a map of Redding according to Tim's descriptions starting on page 24

Plot the places mentioned in these chapters on your map. Some of the places are: Bunker Hill, Fort Ticonderoga, Waterbury.

Plot the places mentioned in these chapters on your map. Some of the places are: Fairfield, Horseneck on Long Island Sound,

Plot the places mentioned in these chapters on your map. Some of the places are: New York City, New Jersey, Verplancks Point, Hudson River, Peekskill, Albany, Westchester county, Danbury, Ridgebury, Golden's Bridge

EXPLORE

Activity Explore the reading more deeply with a visual or oral language activity.

Open Mind: Draw an Open Mind activity for Tim Meeker by putting pictures and words in his head. (see diagram at the end of Day 1)

Propaganda Poster: Inspired by the propaganda posters of WWII, chose a side—Loyalists or Patriots—and make a poster for the Revolutionary War. Be sure to include words and pictures.

Have you noticed that there are many terms and nicknames for the people on either side of the war? Look at the following list of terms. Identify whether each term means a person on the British side or on the American side.

Write a 'B' for British, and an 'A' for American:

____ Patriot
____ Tory
____ Continental
____ Loyalist
____ Lobsterback
____ Rebel
____ Redcoat
____ Whig
____ Regular
____ Minuteman

Character Profile Chart: Fill out the Character Profile Chart for Tim in the graphic organizer on page 17 of this lesson plan. Identify character traits that describe Tim and give examples of things he has said or done that illustrate those traits.

My Brother Sam is Dead is a bildungsroman, or a coming-of-age novel. In other words, during the course of the novel, the main character grows from an innocent child to a young adult from his or her experiences. You have already witnessed many ways in which Tim has changed during the course of the novel so far. The trip to Verplancks Point is a major milestone for Tim.

Make a list of the ways in which he is changing from an innocent child to an experienced young adult.

Discussion

Key Questions (pp. 1-22)

1. Why was Sam away from home?
2. Why did Sam and his father get into a heated argument?
3. Who are the Lobsterbacks?
4. What are "talking points"?
5. What did Sam come home for?

Key Questions (pp. 23-37)

1. Where did Sam go hide?
2. What kind of bind did Sam put his brother in by taking the gun?

3. Who are the Tories? Who are the Patriots?
4. What was it that Tim was trying to forget about?
5. Which side of the war were most of the people in Redding on?

Key Questions (pp. 38-60)

1. Why did Father kick a man out of the tavern?
2. How does Tim spend his days before Sam comes home?
3. How is he feeling about Sam's arrival?
4. What happens to Father and what danger is he in?
5. How does Tim try to help?

Key Questions (pp. 61-84)

1. Until this point, how had the Meekers received information about the war?(61)
2. Who was stealing cows? Why?(63)
3. Why doesn't Father want Tim to carry the letters?(69-70)
4. Does Tim want to carry the letters? Why or why not? (70)
5. What happens when Tim runs into Betsy on the road?(79-84)

Key Questions (pp. 85-112)

1. What did Father try to argue to get out of the conflict with the cattle thieves?
2. What was the procedure once they reached the river?
3. What was Tim's impression of the Hudson?
4. What happened on their way back?

EXTEND

Write Write a short product based on today's prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Key Paragraph

Page 7-8:

"God meant man to obey. He meant children to obey their fathers, he meant men to obey their kings. As a subject of the Lord Our God I don't question His ways. As a subject of His Majesty, George the Third, should you question his ways? Answer me this, Sam---do you really think you know better than the King and those learned men in Parliament?"

Writing Prompt

In the above quote, Sam's father captures the theme of rebellion in this novel. Think about how rebellion relates to justice. Sometimes rebellion is driven by the pursuit of justice. Other times, rebellion is misguided and contradicts justice. Pretend you are Sam. How would you argue his father's opinions of obedience?

Key Paragraph

Page 25-26:

Some people said that the King was the King and that was that, and we ought to do what he said. Other people said that men were supposed to be free to govern themselves and we should rebel and drive the Lobsterbacks out altogether. Some others said, well, they were born Englishmen and they wanted to die Englishmen, but that the Colonies ought to have more say in their own government, and that maybe we'd

have to give the Lobsterbacks a taste of blood just to show the King that we meant business...

Writing Prompt

In the above quote, we see that Tim is learning that not everything is so “black and white.” There are many arguments about the government of the colonies. While everyone wants to seek a society where values such as freedom and justice prevail, there are many differing philosophies on how to achieve that.

Which of the mentioned arguments do you agree with? Write a 2 paragraph essay explaining your opinion.

Key Paragraph

Page 38:

It’s a funny thing. You’d think if there was a war going on in your own country, it would change everything, it would make your life different. You’d think that there’d be men marching and drilling and people hurrying back and forth and lots of talk about the fighting. But it wasn’t that way at all; it wasn’t any different from usual, it was just normal.

Writing Prompt

Justice requires the protection of every person’s inborn and unalienable rights. Sometimes it is necessary for a person or a people to fight for those rights. Shortly after Tim made the statement in the above quote, a group of Continental soldiers came into Redding and straight into the Meekers’ tavern. They wanted to take Father’s gun and threatened him for it. At that point the war became very close and real for Tim and his family.

Could this happen to you in present times? Write an argumentative essay explaining how something similar could happen, or why you do not have to worry about it happening to you.

Key Paragraph

Page 84:

“It didn’t make any sense. Mr. Heron was supposed to be a Tory; he wasn’t supposed to know where American commissary officers were.”

Writing Prompt

Going behind Father’s back, Tim plans to deliver letters for Mr. Heron. In these pages, Tim starts to learn things that make him suspicious of Mr. Heron as a spy. During the American Revolution the punishment for treason (being a traitor) was death. Write an argument explaining whether this type of punishment was just or unjust.

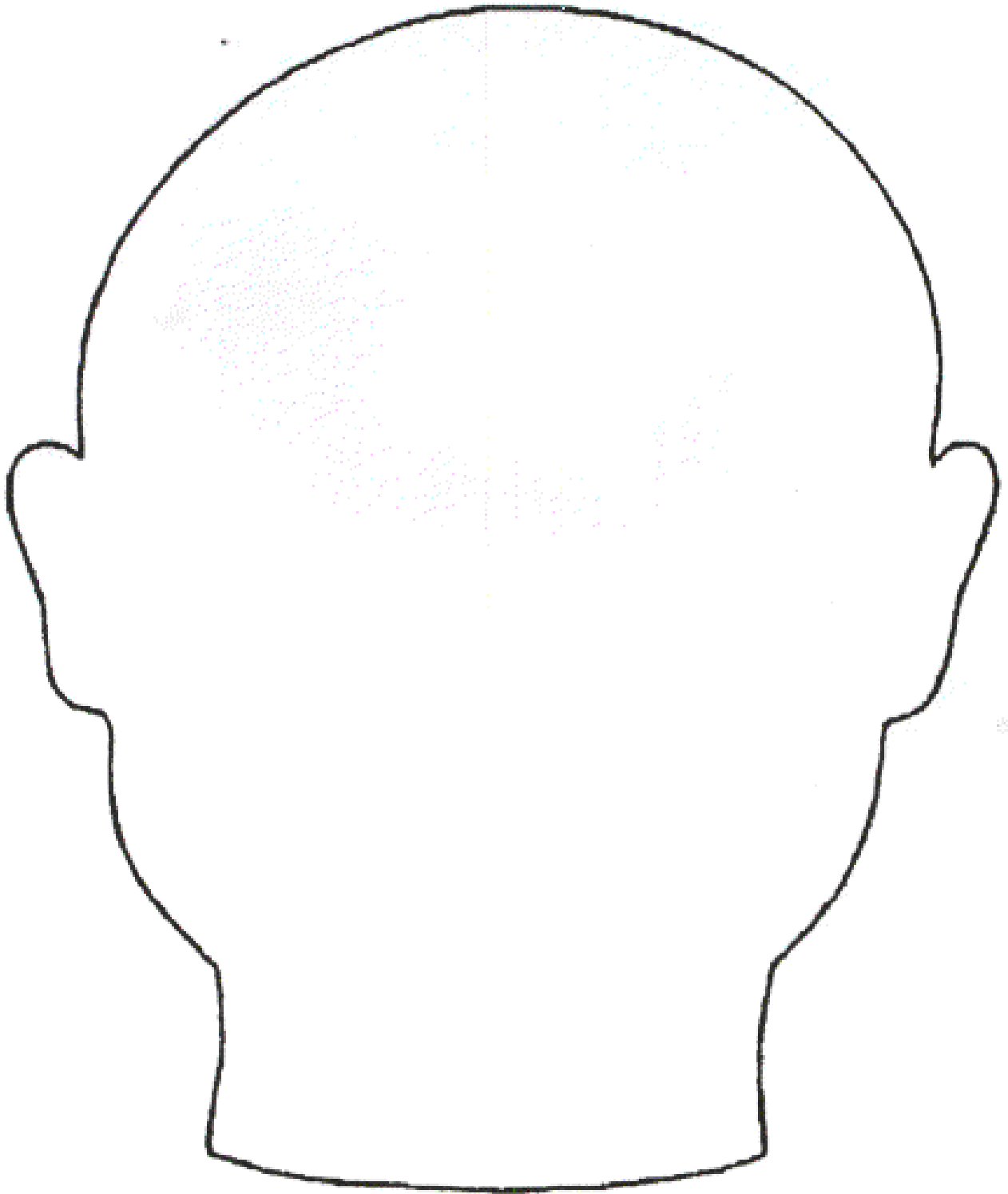
Key Paragraph

Page 101:

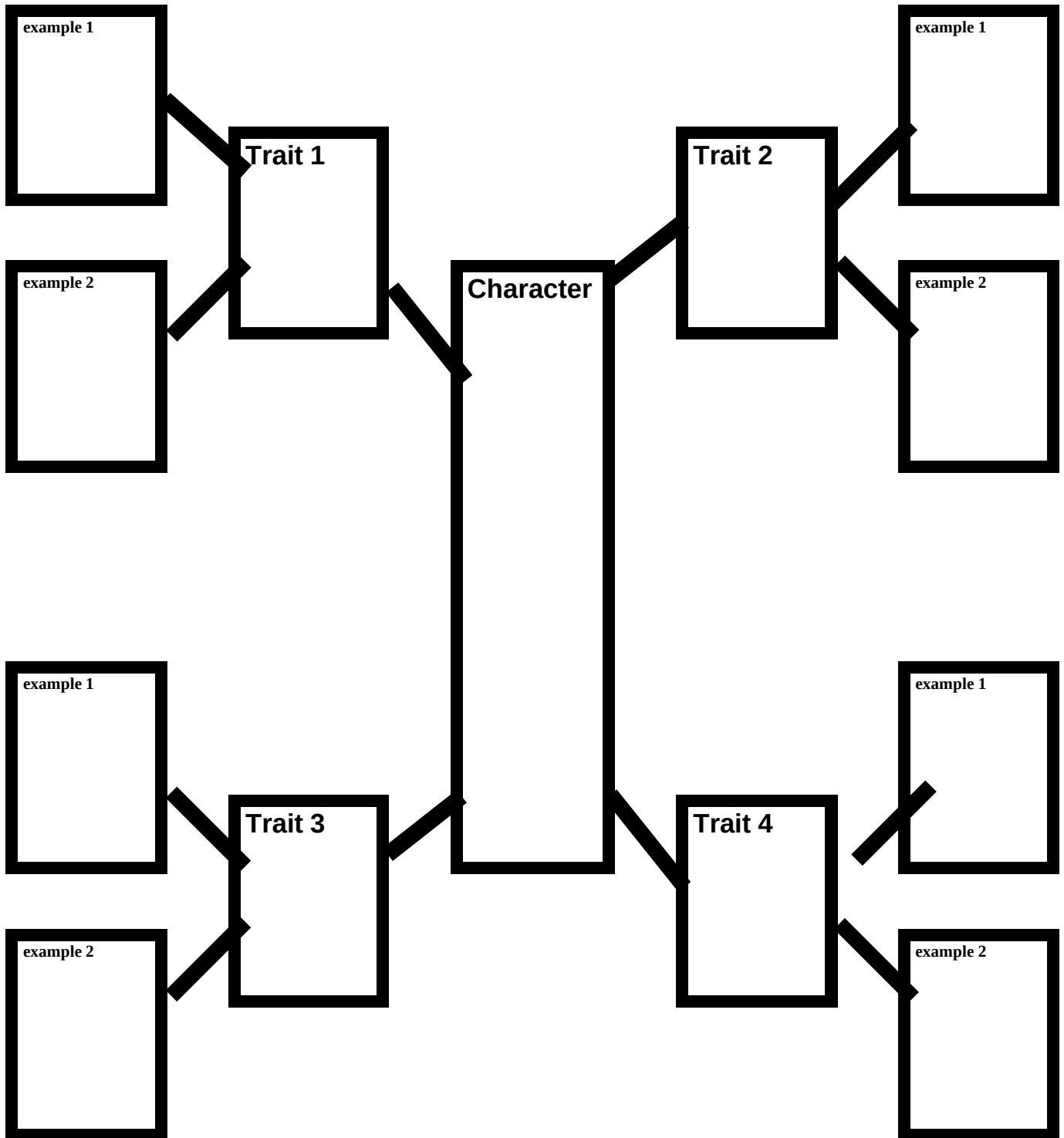
“Lawlessness has run wild, common decency between people has disappeared, every man is armed against his neighbor...”

Writing Prompt

Consider the following question: Were the cowboys really Patriots or were they just taking advantage of the situation? Apply the justice requires restraint theme to their actions. Write an argumentative essay to answer.



Activity: Character Profile Chart



Character Based Literacy Program

Independent Study Lesson Plan

My Brother Sam Is Dead, Week 2



PREPARE

Background Gather background knowledge about a place, time, event, person, or thing.



Justice Requires Restraint. Justice demands I not say or do some things to myself, any other person, or the planet because justice demands it. The actions I take and the decisions I make, must respect the rights of all.

When does justice permit rebellion?

When is breaking rules justified?
Research “rules of engagement”

Who can claim justice? Consider the responsibility that people who detain prisoners have to treat them fairly.

How do the scales of justice find balance?

What causes a miscarriage of justice?

Word Wall Here are vocabulary words to add to the Word Wall.

scouting (116)	daring (120)	livelihood (122)	ambush (124)	depreciation (129)
striding (134)	scowled (135)	commotion (141)	patriotism (149)	squalls (151)
badgered (161)	liable (165)	siege (171)	unscrupulous (174)	mutiny (180)
floundering (183)	foreboding (184)	bluntly (193)	agony (194)	plumes (195)
pastures (202)	stockade (203)	scaffold (208)	profits (210)	prospered (210)

READ

Review Review the timeline from the beginning every day.

Start at the beginning and review the story so far

- mention the setting and main character
- point to each timeline item as you quickly review it.

Read Read the selection.

pp. 113-133, 134-155, 156-181, 182-198, 199-216

RESPOND

Timeline List the 15-20 most important on the timeline.

Think about what you read today and begin your timeline

- First, *fix the facts*: who, what, when, where, why
- Then, decide on the most important events and begin your timeline with these.

Over the course of the next week, you will be required to read a number of pages. It would be best if you spread the reading out over the week and not try to do everything at the last minute before your next appointment.

Map Add to ongoing activities like a KWL chart or map: where did the characters go?

Draw a map of Europe and mark the countries on p. 116

Mini Storyboard: Using the template on page 27, choose two major events in the novel so far and draw a picture of it and a caption explaining it.

Mark the following on the map: Long Island, Long Island Sound (p. 165, buried Father), Valley Forge, Westchester County (p. 169), White Plains (170), Middletown(172),

Draw a map of the encampment.

Draw a map of the path from Tim's house to the gallows.

EXPLORE

Activity Explore the reading more deeply with a visual or oral language activity.

Suitcase Activity: Imagine you are Tim. Make a list of items you would bring with you on the trip to Verplancks Point and back. You cannot include modern items, only things they had during the American Revolution. Also, keep in mind that you need to limit personal items due to space and weight.

Freeze Frame Activity: Choose two important scenes from the novel thus far and draw a picture of each on the template on page 25 of this lesson plan and add a caption explaining what is happening in the scenes.

Real Historical People

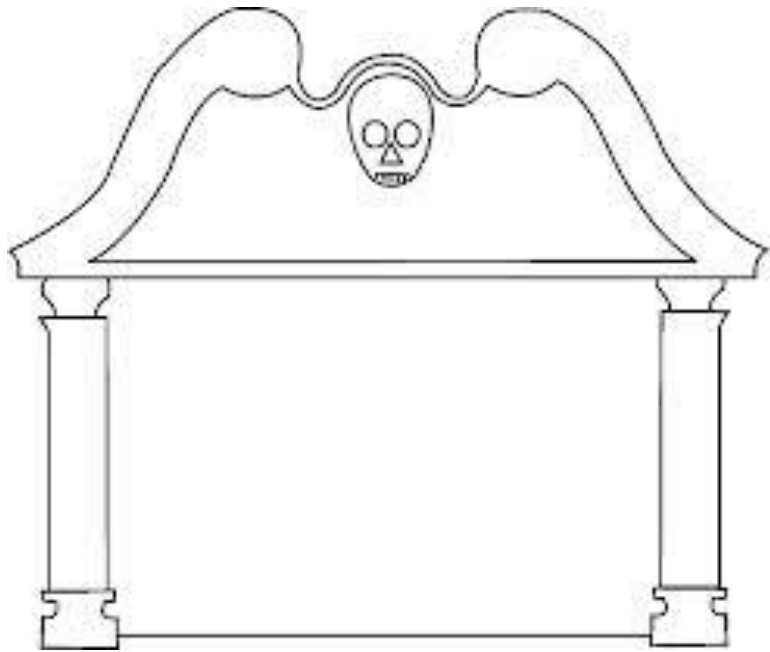
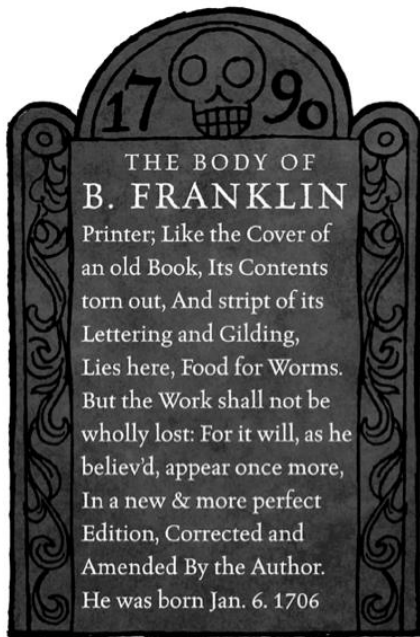
1. Samuel Adams	a. Member of the House of Commons in Britain who supported the American revolutionaries
2. Benedict Arnold	b. Head of the Connecticut militia. Died as a result of the Danbury Raid by the British.
3. Edmund Burke	c. Ruler of England from 1760-1820. The Patriots believed he was a tyrant.
4. John Hancock	d. Captain of American troops until 1780 when he betrayed the Colonies and switched sides to Britain.
5. King George III	e. Commanding General of the Continental Army and first president of the United States of America.
6. George Washington	f. Prominent Patriot best known for his large and fancy signature on the Declaration of Independence
7. Gen. David Wooster	g. Prominent Patriot, cousin of President John Adams .

Characters Fill-In: Identify the following characters using the character list.

Benedict Arnold	Mr. Beach
Betsy	Mr. Heron
Colonel Parsons	Ned
Eliphalet	Sam

- _____ Main character, little brother of Sam.
- _____ A wealthy and somewhat shady local character, he claims to be a Tory but probably works for both sides. He asks Tim to relay a letter for him.
- _____ An Indian living on Colonel Read's land who allows Sam to hide out in his teepee.
- _____ The leader of the Rebels staying in Redding. He sentences Sam to death as an example to the rest of the troops.
- _____ Sam's girlfriend and granddaughter of Colonel Read, a local Patriot.
- _____ Full first name of Tim and Sam's father.
- _____ A young local boy and friend of Tim's. He is captured by the British and dies on a prison ship.
- _____ Captain of Sam's company in the novel, but a real historical person known for being a traitor.
- _____ A local black man who is beheaded by the British.
- _____ Sixteen year old Yale student who enlists in war. Tim's older brother.
- _____ An elderly, loyalist preacher.

Epitaph of Sam Meeker: An epitaph is a brief text honoring a deceased person that is inscribed on the person's tombstone. An epitaph may be a poem, or include quotes, or highlight important things of the person's life in some way. In centuries past, including the 1700s, epitaphs were longer than they are today. Benjamin Franklin's epitaph was written by himself before he died, as many others were, too. His epitaph is given in the example below. In the blank tombstone to the right, compose an epitaph for Sam. Use a minimum of 40 words.



Discussion

Key Questions (pp. 113-133)

1. What evidence did Tim find that indicated something might have happened to Father?
2. What story did Tim think of to scare away the cowboys?
3. What theories did Mother have about what happened to Father?

Key Questions (pp. 134-155)

1. How did Tim handle his new responsibilities?
2. What happened when Tim went to find the doctor?
3. Who enters the tavern?
4. How did Sam and Tim react when they saw each other?

Key Questions (pp. 156-181)

1. What does Mother want Sam to do?
2. Why won't Sam stop fighting?
3. What was your reaction to Father and Jerry's deaths?
4. What do you think about Sam being framed?

Key Questions (pp. 182-198)

1. Why doesn't anyone believe Sam or Mother's story about what really happened?
2. What are the consequences of stealing or deserting your post?
3. What story did the guilty men make up about Sam?
4. What predictions do you have about the story?

Key Questions (pp 199-216)

1. Do you find the book realistic?
2. What do you think about Tim's attempt to help his brother?
3. What were your thoughts about the epilogue?

EXTEND

Write Write a short product based on today's prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Key Paragraph

Page 121:

...Then it came to me that even though rescuing Father was the daring thing to do, it wasn't the smartest thing. So I asked myself another question: what would Father do?

Writing Prompt

Justice requires restraint. Justice also requires wisdom—the wisdom to know right from wrong, proper punishments for crimes, what is fair and how to settle disputes, etc. In the above quote and from the way Tim handled the confrontation with the cowboys, we see that he was wise in that situation. Write an argument explaining what wisdom is and how a person gets it.

Key Paragraph

Page 140:

"They wouldn't shoot Jerry would they?"

"War turns men into beasts. It's cheaper to shoot a boy than feed him."

Writing Prompt

To every reasonable person, war is a very undesirable situation. Some believe war is never justified; others believe war is sometimes a necessary last resort to preserving justice. According to Susannah Meeker in the key paragraph above, "War turns men into beasts." It is true that there are many atrocities and horrors in war. Of course, she is making a generalization about all men involved in war. Others may argue that men (and women) who fight in wars are defenders of the weak or mistreated.

Do you agree with Mrs. Meeker that war desensitizes people and destroys their moral conscience, or is she being unfair to the humanity of men in arms? Write an argumentative essay defending your position.

Key Paragraph

Page 161:

We were quiet for a moment. Then he said, "We've made a promise, a group of us, not to quit until the Redcoats are beaten. We've made a pledge to each other."

"Oh Sam, that's a foolish promise." [said Mother]

Writing Prompt

Consider why Sam feels so strongly about the war and his role in it, why he would make such a pledge. Also consider Mother and Tim's feelings and what they have been through. Who do you agree with? Do you think Sam should honor the pledge he made, no matter what? Consider the role justice plays in making and breaking pledges. Write an argumentative essay in answer to these questions.

Key Paragraph

Page 198:

"What else can we do, Sam?"

"Pray, I guess. You'd better have Mother do that; the Lord is more likely to believe her than you, Tim." He grinned. I grinned back; but I felt all sick inside."

Writing Prompt

As a reader, we know that Sam is innocent of the crime, as do all of the other people who know him well. After reading chapters 13 and 14, think about what you would have done if you were Tim or Mother. Could they have done more to try to help Sam? Explain in an argumentative essay.

Key Paragraph

Page 215:

And so that leaves one last question: Could the United States have made its way without all that agony and killing? That is probably one question you will have to answer for yourself.

Writing Prompt

Justice points its finger at the guilty. Now it is your turn to play a part in justice. Write a five-paragraph essay answering the following question: Who is responsible for Sam's death? Develop a thorough argument explaining your opinion of who deserves the blame for killing Sam. You may choose more than one person if you decide.

Page _____

