

A Guide for Using

The Red Badge of Courage

in the Classroom

Based on the book written by Stephen Crane

This guide written by Michelle Breyer



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Introduction

A good book is like a good friend. It becomes a part of our lives and inspires us to persevere through times of struggles and great difficulties. Within its pages we find characters and life lessons that encourage us to achieve our highest goals and dreams.

In *Literature Units*, great care has been taken to select quality books that are sure to become good friends!

This unit features the following ideas which can be adapted to meet the needs of teachers and students:

- Sample Lesson Plans
- Pre-reading Activities
- Biographical Sketch and Picture of the Author
- Book Summary
- Vocabulary Lists and Suggested Vocabulary Activities
- Chapters grouped for study with each section including:
 - quizzes
 - hands-on projects
 - cooperative learning activities
 - cross-curricular connections
 - extensions into the reader’s own life
- Post-reading Activities
- Book Report Ideas
- Research Activities
- Culminating Activities
- Three Different Options for Unit Tests
- Bibliography
- Answer Key

We are confident this unit will be a valuable addition to your planning; and we hope that, as you use our ideas, your students will experience the joy of reading good books.

Sample Lesson Plans

Each lesson suggested below may take from one to several days to complete.

Lesson 1

- Introduce and complete some or all of the pre-reading activities found on page 5.
- Read “About the Author” (page 6) and the book summary (page 7) with your students.
- Introduce the vocabulary list for Section 1 (page 8).

Lesson 2

- Read chapters 1 through 3. As you read, place the vocabulary words in the context of the story and discuss their meanings.
- Choose a vocabulary activity (page 9).
- Begin “Reader’s Response Journals” (page 13).
- Play Character Hot Seat (page 11).
- Write a letter home and receive a response (page 12).
- Use figurative language, like that in the story, to describe your room (page 14).
- Administer the Section 1 Quiz (page 10).
- Introduce the vocabulary list for Section 2 (page 8).

Lesson 3

- Read chapters 4 through 8. Place the vocabulary words in context and discuss their meanings.
- Choose a vocabulary activity (page 9).
- Respond in journals to characters and events from this section (page 13).
- Debate the power of violence in our society (page 16).
- Compare the romantic images of war with reality (page 17).
- Discuss the major battles of the Civil War (page 18).
- Reflect on a time in your life when you had your character tested (page 19).
- Administer the Section 2 Quiz (page 15).
- Introduce the vocabulary list for Section 3 (page 8).

Lesson 4

- Read chapters 9 through 13. Place the vocabulary words in context and discuss their meanings.
- Choose a vocabulary activity (page 9).
- Respond in journals to characters and events from this section (page 13).
- Research and discuss The Glory of Death (page 21).

- Interpret dialect from the passage (page 22).
- Write a personification of war (page 23).
- Describe your concept of a hero (page 24).
- Administer the Section 3 Quiz (page 20).
- Introduce the vocabulary list for Section 4 (page 8).

Lesson 5

- Read chapters 14 through 19. Place the vocabulary in context and discuss their meanings.
- Choose a vocabulary activity (page 9).
- Respond in journals to characters and events from this section (page 13).
- Play Mancala to practice strategy (page 26).
- Create a Regiment Flag (page 27).
- Calculate some Civil War statistics (page 28).
- Describe a life event that changed your attitude (page 29).
- Administer the Section 4 Quiz (page 25).
- Introduce the vocabulary list for Section 5 (page 8).

Lesson 6

- Read chapters 20 through 24. Place the vocabulary words in context and discuss their meanings.
- Choose a vocabulary activity (page 9).
- Respond in journals to characters and events from this section (page 13).
- Debate the perceptions of the Civil War (page 31).
- Write a dialogue (page 32).
- Discuss the Gettysburg Address and how it applies to this tale (page 33).
- Discuss the great threats of today (page 34).
- Administer the Section 5 Quiz (page 30).

Lesson 7

- Discuss any questions your students may have about the story (page 35).
- Assign book report projects (page 36).
- Begin work on culminating activities (page 37–41).

Lesson 8

- Administer unit tests 1, 2, and/or 3 (pages 42–44).
- Discuss the students’ opinions and enjoyment of the book.
- Provide a list of related reading for the students (page 45).

The Red Badge of Courage

by Stephen Crane

Puffin (1895), 1994

A young farm boy, Henry, enlists in the Union Army during the Civil War, with romanticized visions of battle. During his enlistment, he questions his character and fears he will run at the first sound of gunfire. It is with mixed emotions of boredom, paranoia, anger, and death that he encounters his first battle to test his personal moral fiber.

Henry is caught up in the battle and fights heroically. He is proud and feels he has passed the test, when suddenly the enemy returns. Stupefied by their endurance, many men in Henry's regiment flee, and Henry follows suit. Alone and away from danger, Henry tries to justify his selfish actions. He then unexpectedly encounters a solemn dead soldier in the woods, which shames him into action. Henry eventually finds his way to a retreating troop of wounded soldiers, which only increases his feelings of cowardice and self-pity.

Henry envies the wounded and dead for their romanticized heroism. During the march he comes in contact with an old friend, Jim, who has been critically wounded in battle. Henry witnesses his agonizing death, further mocking his lack of character. New fighting ensues, and Henry hopes for defeat to pacify his shame. True to his desire, the troops retreat, and Henry grabs a passing soldier for questioning. He is quickly rebuffed with the end of the rifle to his head, thus gaining him a "red badge of courage," like the other wounded soldiers. A cheerful soldier befriends the dazed and injured Henry, finally returning him to his own regiment for medical attention and sleep.

Back with his regiment, Henry partners up with another youth, Wilson, who is known as the "loud soldier." Wilson tends to Henry's needs while Henry continues to wrestle with his inner demons. They are sent to battle again, and this time Henry fights with glory. After overhearing a general's criticism of their regiment, the youths rejoin their troop for a suicidal charge at the enemy.

The battles rage on and on, with Henry valiantly bearing the flag at each charge. Finally, the bloody and weary regiment overpowers the enemy and takes their flag in victory. With the fighting over, Henry marches away to the river reflecting on the achievements, failings, and a new sense of war and the struggles of humankind.



Vocabulary Lists

On this page are vocabulary lists which correspond to each sectional grouping of chapters. Vocabulary activities can be found on page 9 of this book.

Section 1 (Chapters 1–3)

assemblage	epithets	vindication	aggregations	reconnoitering
lucid	adherents	commiseration	perambulating	viands
oblique	prolongation	felicitating	monotonous	impetus
dexterously	ominous	vociferous	harangue	intrenchments
altercation	ardor			

Section 2 (Chapters 4–8)

facetious	querulous	leering	resplendent	perfunctory
tumult	pummeling	contortions	sagacious	ilks
annihilated	vindictive	oratorical	protestations	regardant
discomfited	edded	countenances	trepidation	obstinately
respite				

Section 3 (Chapters 9–13)

beseached	sinuous	derision	audacious	languor
ague	malediction	interminable	visages	unprecedented
philippic	sublime	besplashed	pallid	gesticulating
exhortations	calamity	gauntleted	debauch	reproof
imprecations				

Section 4 (Chapters 14–19)

heraldic	reverberations	spasmodic	accouterments	lurid
petemptory	fracas	abominable	grotesque	bludgeon
lugubrious	denunciation	interminable	delirium	cavalcade
patronizing	insolence	lamentation	belabored	interposed
retribution	uninitiated			

Section 5 (Chapters 20–24)

projectile	mortification	disheveled	emaciated	catapultian
din	panic-stricken	ragamuffin	poignant	morose
melee	sward	prodigious	galling	paroxysm
stolid	perturbation	airily		