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THEN & NOW

Biographies & Unit Study Curriculum Guides

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In this document you will find:

1. Sample chapters from the Christian Heroes: Then & Now biography *Gladys Aylward: The Adventure of a Lifetime*
2. Sample selections from various Christian Heroes *Unit Study Curriculum Guides*
3. Complete listing of Christian Heroes: Then & Now product line

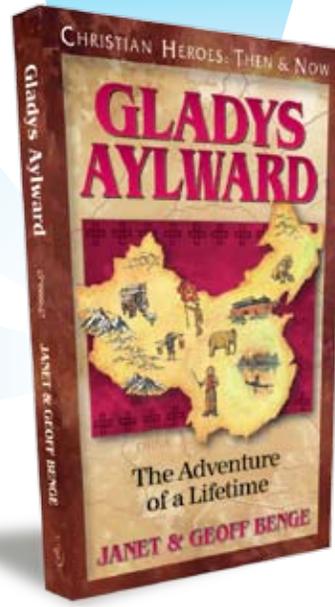
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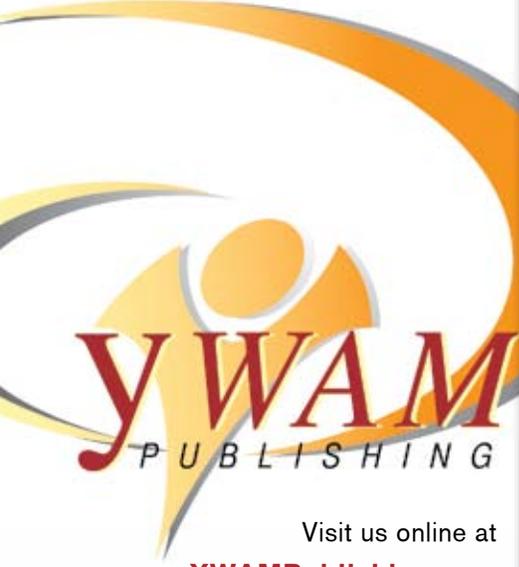
Sample chapters from
*Gladys Aylward:
The Adventure of a Lifetime*
by Janet & Geoff Bengé
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YWAM Publishing
ISBN 978-1-57658-019-6



Chapter 2

Not Good Enough to Be a Missionary

Her worst nightmare had come true. Gladys sat in a straight-backed chair while the director of the China Inland Missionary Society's training school in London droned on. By now she was hardly listening to what he had to say. All that needed to be said had already been said. Gladys was no longer welcome to continue her studies. She was being thrown out of the training school for failing Bible class. Her grades were not good enough for her to be a missionary. Not to mention the fact that she was twenty-seven years of age, old by the training school's standards. The director had tried to explain that the experience of the China Inland Mission had shown that it was difficult enough for "quick-minded" older people to learn the complex languages of China. He also tried to explain that it would be unfair to allow Gladys to continue failing classes when others could take her place and do much better. Other younger and more-qualified people were waiting in line to take her place in the school.



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"I must say as a pastor that Gladys Aylward is one of the very best biographies that I've ever read! I am recommending this book to everyone, after the Bible of course, because it helps to broaden your own perspective regarding what it means to trust in the Lord and depend on him for everything, especially ministry! God bless and enjoy the Lord and this book."

—Dwight B.

The director was a kindly man with deep blue eyes and a soft voice. He wasn't trying to hurt Gladys's feelings. He was just giving her the facts as they were. Gladys could see his point. She hadn't done well during the first three months of the school. But then she'd never done well at school. She had left school at age fourteen to take a job as a housemaid. And by missionary standards, she was an older woman, though she didn't feel it. If she stayed in the training school to the end, she would be thirty years old by the time she got to China. At that age it would probably be difficult for her to learn Chinese. It was also true she had no useful qualifications. She wasn't a nurse or a teacher. She was just Gladys Aylward, daughter of Thomas and Rosina Aylward, a postman and a housewife from Edmonton, a small suburb of London.

Even though she understood all this, tears of disappointment welled in Gladys's eyes as the young woman stood to leave the director's office. Gladys didn't trust herself to speak without bursting into loud sobs. Instead, she thrust out her hand to shake the director's hand. He was about to shake her hand when he hesitated. "One more thing, Miss Aylward," he said. "There is one way you could serve God with regard to China."

Gladys's heart skipped a beat. Was she going to get to China some other way, after all?

The director continued. "I see you've been in service before as a housemaid."

"Yes," replied Gladys, wondering what was coming next.

"As it happens," the director went on, "I received news this morning of an elderly missionary couple, Dr. and Mrs. Fisher, who have just returned from China. They have retired to Bristol and need a housemaid. I would be more than happy to recommend you for the job."

Gladys clutched the back of the chair. Her head was spinning. After all her effort to make her dream of going to China as a missionary come to pass, the director thought she was fit only to be a housemaid. Her shoulders slumped as she sat down again to copy the Fishers' address.

Dr. and Mrs. Fisher turned out to be not at all like Gladys had imagined them. They didn't need much help around the house, and they were still very interested in missionary work. They listened to Gladys's story of how she had grown up in a Christian home, though Christianity hadn't come alive to her until one night two years before when she had visited an unfamiliar church. She had heard a young preacher tell about the many wonderful missionary opportunities that existed, especially in China. Something inside Gladys was stirred that night, and she knew she wanted to serve God as a missionary in China.



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“Sometimes I wonder if I will someday be like the people I read about in your stories”

—Mary C., age 10

Gladys asked the Fishers all sorts of questions about China and wrote their answers in her journal.

Because the Fishers were so kind, Gladys didn't mind being their housemaid. Dr. and Mrs. Fisher became concerned for Gladys, however. They could see that Gladys had too much enthusiasm and energy to limit herself to being a housemaid. They didn't see how she would ever get to China, but they did think she should find some full-time Christian work where her talents could be put to better use. They knew the director of a rescue mission in Swansea, a seaport in south Wales. They contacted him, and he invited Gladys to work for the mission as a “rescue sister.” The job involved patrolling the streets of Swansea in the middle of the night looking for young girls who had no place to stay. Many of the girls had come to the city to escape the boredom of their villages but quickly ran out of money after they arrived. With no money for food or rent, they began living on the streets. Often, out of desperation, they became involved in prostitution as a way to make ends meet. A rescue sister's job was to find these girls before the sailors did. The mission would pay for the girls to stay one night in a hostel and in the morning would put them on a train back home to their villages.

Gladys's parents had never tried to shelter their daughter from the way other people lived. Even so, Gladys was shocked at the way these girls lived on the street each night. Yet Gladys loved the job. She especially liked it when she got to share the gospel message with the girls. As much as she loved the job, though, something was missing. Yes, she was doing very useful work, but she wasn't doing it in China, where she knew God wanted her to be.

Gladys knew, of course, that after her mission training school experience no missionary organization would send her to China. If she was going to go there, she would have to get there on her own. But she had no money, and her parents were not rich. Nor did she have any rich friends who would sponsor her. She had only one option: She would have to save up the money to pay her own way to China. Much as she loved being a rescue sister, she needed a job that paid more money. The little she did get paid by the rescue mission usually ended up buying food for the girls who were going home. The job she knew best, and the job where she knew she could earn enough money to save some, was being a housemaid again. With a heavy heart at leaving the job in Swansea she enjoyed so much, she returned to London to find work as a housemaid.

In London, the employment agency sent her to work at the home of Sir Francis Younghusband. Gladys pulled the silver bell at the door of the huge house in Belgravia, near Buckingham Palace. A butler answered the door and showed Gladys to her new room. The room had a bed, a chair, and a water stand, like most maid's

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—Anna B.,
Overtheway Books

rooms. Gladys lifted her cardboard suitcase onto the bed. Inside it was everything she owned. She pulled out her black leather-bound Bible and placed it carefully on the chair beside her bed. Next she reached into her purse and took out all the money she had left after getting to Belgravia. She didn't need to count it; she knew exactly how much she had. After paying the train fare from Edmonton, where she had visited her parents, Gladys had two and a half pennies left. She laid them in a row on top of her Bible. A sense of hopelessness came over her. What was the use of trying to save enough money to get to China when traveling across London had taken nearly all the money she had?

Then Gladys thought about why she wanted to go to China. She was certain it was where God wanted her to live and work, and if that was where He wanted her, surely He would help her get the money she needed to get there. She placed her hands over the money and in a loud voice prayed, “Here is my Bible. Here is all the money I have. Here is me. Find some way to use me, God!”

As she prayed, the door creaked open, and another maid peered into her room. Gladys knew that the maid must have heard her prayer, but she didn't care; she had meant every word she prayed.

“Excuse me,” began the maid, “but the mistress wants to see you in the drawing room.”

Gladys glanced in the mirror and quickly adjusted her black bun. She stepped into the hallway and followed the maid down the servants' stairs to the drawing room, where Lady Annabel Younghusband was waiting for her. Gladys curtsied and introduced herself.

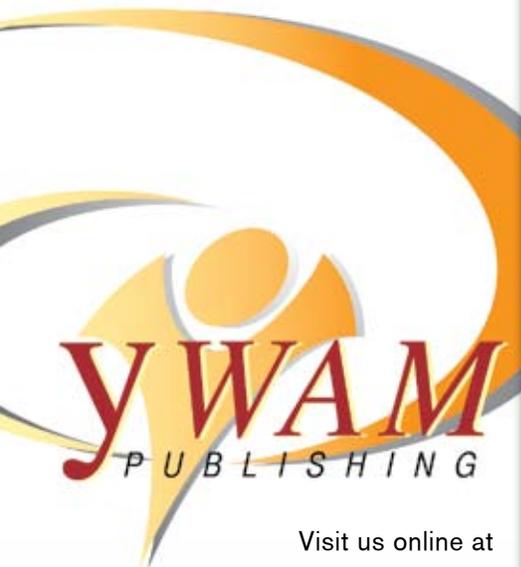
Lady Annabel smiled at her. “How much did the train fare to get here cost you?” she asked Gladys kindly.

“Two shillings and nine pence, ma'am,” Gladys replied, wondering why the woman was asking such a question.

“Here you are,” Lady Annabel said, reaching into her purse. “Take three shillings. I always pay the fare of my maids when I hire them.”

Gladys could hardly believe it. No one had ever before offered to pay her train fare to get to a new job. She thanked Lady Annabel and bounded back up the stairs to her room. She put the three shillings next to the two and a half pennies. A big smile lit up her face. In the ten minutes since praying her prayer, her money had increased fifteen times! In her mind, Gladys was already practically in China!

Of course, Gladys had no idea how much a trip to China would cost. It wasn't the kind of thing her parents or any of the other maids knew, either. But she needed to find out. So as she polished the silverware and dusted books over the next several



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“This series has challenged me personally to pray for those who dedicate their lives to serving God”

—Sarah M.

days, Gladys worked out a plan. She would save every penny she could, and when she had saved three pounds, she would go to Haymarket and find a shipping agent. There she would put a deposit on a ticket to China.

It didn't take Gladys as long as she thought to save three pounds. She managed to find some extra work serving at banquets in the evenings and on her days off. Several weeks later, with high hopes, she caught a trolley car to Haymarket. The trolley stopped right outside the door to Muller's Shipping Agency.

Gathering all her courage, Gladys pushed open the door to Muller's and entered the impressive building. It was just about empty inside, so she did not have to wait long before being served. She cleared her throat and looked directly at the elderly clerk who had asked if he could help her. "How much is a one-way ticket to China?" she politely asked.

"And to what part of China would that be?" the clerk snapped back.

Gladys hadn't thought about that. "I don't know," she stammered, feeling her cheeks turning red with embarrassment at the question. "Any part will do. Whatever is the cheapest to get to."

The clerk looked at her patched coat and threadbare gloves and rolled his eyes as if to say he didn't have time for a maid pretending to be rich. Gladys obviously looked like a person who would never be able to afford a trip to China. "Please step aside, Miss. I have work to do," he finally said in a firm voice.

"No, you don't understand," Gladys pleaded. "I have money, and I need to get to China." She fumbled in her pocket and pulled out the three one-pound notes. "Here," she continued, laying the notes on the counter between them.

The clerk sighed. "Ma'am, the cheapest sea passage to any part of China," he explained, emphasizing the word *any*, "is ninety pounds. That's thirty times more than the money you have."

Gladys felt sick. Ninety pounds would take forever to save. She knew the clerk expected her to pick up the money and walk out, but she did not. "There must be a cheaper way," she asked, trying to sound calm.

The clerk sighed heavily again. "There is, ma'am," he said, unable to keep the sarcasm from his voice, "if you don't mind arriving dead, that is."

Gladys stared at him and waited for him to continue.

"There is a rail route through Europe, Russia, and Siberia to Tientsin in northern China. It would cost forty-seven pounds ten shillings. But a war is in progress between Russia and China over a land claim in the area. It's unlikely you would arrive alive at your destination, wherever that might be."

"It's hard to find a biography that is both inspiring and engagingly written, which makes the Christian Heroes series a standout in this area. Not only does the series bring to life the struggles and triumphs of great men and women of God for readers of all ages, but they also have the amazing ability to draw the reader to the point where they are actually hard to put down!"

—Jess L.,
Rainbow Resource
Center, Inc.

Gladys leveled her dark brown eyes at the clerk and spoke calmly. "It's my life that would be at risk, so it's my choice. Do you or do you not sell train tickets to China?"

The clerk nodded. "Yes, we do," he said.

"Very well," said Gladys. "I would like to open an account to pay for a train ticket to China. Take the three pounds, and I'll be back every Friday afternoon with more money until I have paid the ticket off." Then, feeling she might have been a little overly bold, Gladys added with a smile, "Don't worry about me and a silly little war. By the time I save enough money to get to China, it will be long over."

Seeing that Gladys was not going to leave until he took her money, the clerk counted her three one-pound notes into the money drawer and wrote her a receipt. Then, reluctantly, he opened the company ledger and asked Gladys for her name and address.

Gladys left Muller's Shipping Agency a very happy person. She had just paid three pounds deposit on a ticket to China. She only had forty-four pounds ten shillings to go.

As she rode the trolley back to Belgravia, she turned her attention to what she would do once she got to China. She needed more training, but where would she get it? She didn't want to spend any money on Bible school. Besides, she'd already failed at that! If she was going to get an education in missionary work, Gladys decided she was going to have to give it to herself.

On a piece of paper she noted some of the things she'd need to learn. The first thing on her list was preaching. Every missionary needed to know how to preach, she told herself. Hyde Park in London became the place where she learned to do this. Hyde Park was where people with strong opinions climbed onto wooden soapboxes and made speeches. Most of the speeches were about politics. If a passerby liked what the person was saying, he or she might stop and listen for a while, perhaps even throw a penny or two at the speaker's feet. Those who disagreed might jeer and throw a leftover sandwich from lunch at the speaker. In the midst of the loud, bustling crowd, Gladys, wearing a simple black dress, would climb onto her soapbox and begin preaching at the top of her voice. She preached about how much God loved the people hurrying by and about their need to serve God.

Nobody stopped to listen to her. A few people passing by jeered and heckled her, but Gladys did not mind. Each time she got up to preach, she was a little less concerned about what people thought of her and a little more confident that one day she would preach in China.

Besides learning to preach, Gladys set out to learn more about China. This task was made easier for her by a happy coinci-

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Gladys Aylward: The Adventure of a Lifetime

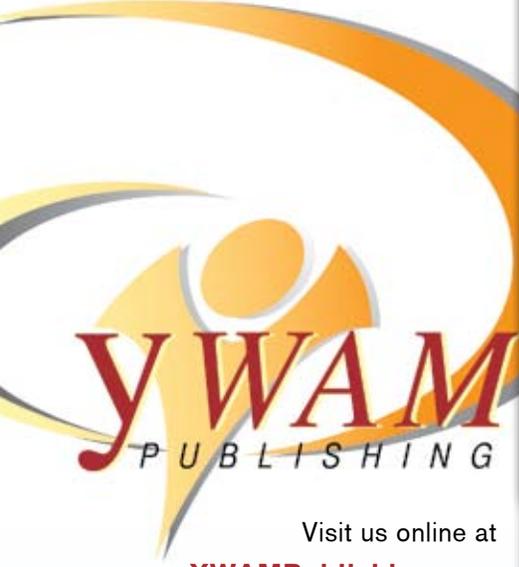
dence. Sir Francis Younghusband was a famous explorer who had spent a lot of time in the interior of China and had written several books on his experiences there. Gladys politely asked him if she could borrow some of the books from his private library. He was puzzled. Housemaids were usually not interested much in reading, especially not the type of books he had in his library. Though the request seemed odd, Sir Francis Younghusband kindly told Gladys she could borrow one book at a time from his library and keep it for a week.

As with her preaching in Hyde Park, Gladys threw herself into reading as many books about China from her employer's library as she possibly could. As she read each book, she made notes about what she'd learned in the journal she'd started while working for the Fishers.

Things for her trip to China were slowly coming together. But Gladys still had a few unanswered questions. Where would she go, and what would she do once she got there?

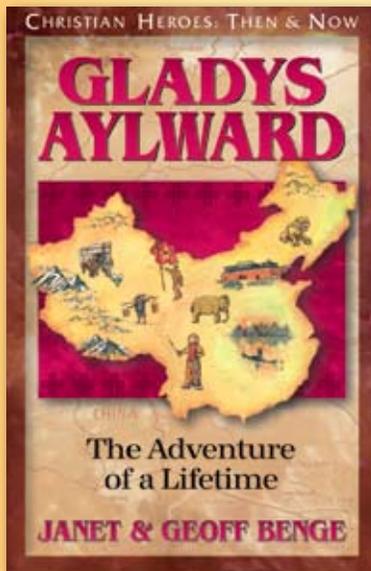
"After our youngest son Michael's stroke, he was unable to speak correctly or comprehend well. He suffered with double vision, so watching television was futile. We discovered that if I read to him very, very slowly, he could understand the stories. Every day we would sit down together with a book from the Heroes series. The inspiring lives of people such as Brother Andrew, Corrie ten Boom (Christian Heroes), Daniel Boone, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln (Heroes of History), and others who had overcome challenges with God's help, inspired Michael to stay focused. The wonderful day came when he could read slowly to me. It has been four years since the stroke, but we continue reading together every day from the Bible and other books. The Heroes books are still among our favorites. Thank you, YWAM Publishing, for making these wonderful books by Janet and Geoff Bengé available."

—Fred & Jini V.



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Sample chapters from
*Gladys Aylward:
The Adventure of a Lifetime*
by Janet & Geoff Bengé
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ISBN 978-1-57658-019-6

All Aboard

Gladys hadn't really been paying much attention to the elderly woman talking to her after church. She was tired from the late party she had been serving at the night before. But as exhausted as she felt, the extra work was worth it to her. In only seven months she had deposited nearly all the money for her ticket to China at Muller's Shipping Agency. Every week the clerk, who now looked forward to her visits to pay more money on the ticket, would ask her whether she knew yet where she was going in China. And each week Gladys told him she didn't. But as she stood, tired, not really paying too much attention to the old woman, her ears suddenly pricked up.

"As I was saying," the old lady said, "Mrs. Lawson couldn't settle back into England after her husband died. Last year she packed up everything and went back to China. She said she would rather die there doing God's work than stay in England doing needlepoint. At seventy-three years old, I expect she will die there."

"Did you say she's gone back to China?" asked Gladys.

"Yes," said the woman. "Her only regret was that she had to go back alone. She couldn't interest anyone in going back with her. It's a pity, really; she wanted to train someone to carry on after she was gone."

Gladys could feel the hairs on the back of her neck stand on end. "That's me," she blurted, before she even knew what she was saying.

The old woman looked at Gladys in amazement. But over the next several minutes, Gladys managed to convince her she was serious about going to China. So the woman searched around in her huge handbag until she found Mrs. Lawson's address. She handed it to Gladys, kissed her on the cheek, and wished her well.

Gladys went back to her room at the Younghusbands' house in Belgravia full of enthusiasm. She had so many things to do. She had to write to Mrs. Lawson and let her know help was on the way, and she had to tell the clerk at Muller's Shipping Agency she now had a destination in China. She also had to collect as many useful items as she could for her trip to China.



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“The stories are captivating and opened opportunities for discussions from my sons that we couldn’t have had otherwise”

—Aleisha V.

It wasn’t too long before Gladys received a letter from Mrs. Lawson telling her that if she came to China she had work for her, and she would meet Gladys in Tientsin. So, on Saturday, October 15, 1930, three months after hearing about Mrs. Lawson, Gladys stood at the Liverpool Street railway station, ready to begin her journey. She was by far the strangest-looking passenger waiting to board the train, wearing a bright orange dress and a huge fur overcoat with the sleeves cut out. The coat was far too heavy for the English autumn she was leaving behind. Under her clothes she was wearing one of her mother’s old corsets. Sewn inside the corset was a maze of secret pockets holding her train tickets, passport, a fountain pen (which she hoped wouldn’t leak), all her money (nine pennies in loose change and two one-pound traveler’s checks), and her Bible. Of course, these items stuffed inside her corset made her look rather lumpy, but fortunately, the fur overcoat managed to hide most of the lumps.

Gladys also had with her two old, battered suitcases. In the larger of the two suitcases she had packed some extra clothes: darned woolen stockings, a hand-knitted sweater from her sister Violet, and a woolly vest from a woman at church. A bedroll and a small spirit stove were also packed inside. The smaller suitcase was filled with food: canned fish and meat, baked beans, crackers, boiled eggs, instant coffee, and lots of tea. On its outside was tied a large pot and a kettle. Altogether, Gladys looked more like a hobo than a departing missionary.

“All aboard for Hull,” yelled the conductor. Steam hissed from the huge locomotive at the front of the train. Gladys hugged her parents and Violet good-bye. Her brother Lawrence, a drummer in the British Army, wasn’t able to be there, but Gladys had a photo of him in his full-dress uniform tucked into her suitcase.

“Don’t forget us, Glad,” said Violet, as she gave her big sister one last hug.

“Our Glad will never forget us, will you, love?” said her mother. “And we’ll be praying for you every day,” she added, giving Gladys a motherly pat on the hand.

Gladys surveyed the crowd of about fifty people who’d come to wish her well. Even the clerk from Muller’s Shipping Agency was there. Gladys tried to take in every detail so she would always remember the people who had loved and supported her as she worked to make her dream of going to China come true.

Another loud hiss of steam escaped from the locomotive, and Gladys climbed into the carriage. She pulled down the window and waved furiously to everyone. The conductor blew his whistle, and the train began to pull away from the platform. Slowly, Gladys’s friends, relatives, and supporters grew smaller and smaller in the distance, until Gladys sat alone on the train. She was bound

“Each of my students chose a missionary book to read. A few days later I heard things like ‘This is the best book I’ve ever read’ and ‘I love this book.’ I’m a fifth grade teacher and LOVE using YWAM’s books.”

—Lisa L.

for Tientsin, China, with two pounds nine shillings tucked in a pocket in her corset.

It didn’t take Gladys long to make friends on the train. A middle-aged couple took a special interest in her. They had seen all the people farewelling her in London and asked where she was going. Gladys told them that she was on her way to be a missionary in China. The train she was on would take her to Hull, where she would catch a boat to The Hague in Holland. There she would board another train and travel overland through Germany, Poland, and Russia to China.

The couple turned out to be Christians and were on their way back to Holland after attending some Keswick meetings in England. As the English countryside rolled by, Gladys and the couple became firm friends. The three of them boarded the boat for The Hague together, and as the Dutch coastline came into view, the couple made Gladys a promise. They would pray for her every night at 9 p.m. for the rest of their lives. As the couple said good-bye to Gladys on the train in The Hague, the husband shook Gladys’s hand heartily, and his wife kissed Gladys good-bye, as if she were her own sister.

It was not until Gladys had settled into her seat and the train had pulled away from the station that she noticed that the husband had pressed something into her hand. She turned her hand over, and when she opened it, in her palm was a crumpled one-pound note. Gladys was very grateful for the money, though she didn’t know what use English money would be where she was going. But it was kind of him. As soon as she could, she folded the one-pound note, tucked it into one of the pockets in her corset, and quickly forgot about it.

Cities and villages, barns and bridges flashed by as the train wound its way across Europe. Slowly the plains turned into rolling hills, and then the hills turned into mountains. All the while, Gladys sat with her nose up against the carriage window, fascinated by all she was seeing. The farther away the train got from The Hague, the fewer the fellow passengers who spoke English. In Berlin, Germany, Gladys had a difficult time making herself understood to the immigration officer, but thankfully he recognized her British passport and waved her through. The train continued on through Warsaw, Moscow, Irkutsk, and on past Lake Baikal.

Gladys ate meals she made from the food in her suitcase. The eggs her mother had boiled for her she ate in Warsaw, the canned herring in Moscow, and the crackers and cheese while watching Lake Baikal glide by. The only exercise Gladys got on the trip was walking up and down the carriage aisle or walking briskly around the train when it stopped to take on more coal and water for the engine.

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"We are truly grateful for your material and will use them throughout our children's lives and education."

—Mrs. Edmunds

Seven days after leaving the Liverpool Street station, Gladys crossed the Ural Mountains that divide Europe from Asia. The first difference she noticed as the train moved across eastern Russia was the extreme cold. Each carriage had small steam radiators for heat, but even sitting sideways with her back against a radiator provided Gladys little heat against the freezing wind that whipped into the train around the edges of the windows. So Gladys kept her fur coat pulled tightly around her.

The next difference that Gladys noted in this part of Russia was the type of passengers on the train. At each stop, more grandmothers and businessmen got off the train, and more soldiers climbed on. By the time the train crossed into Siberia, Gladys was the only civilian on board. This made her very nervous at first. The Russian soldiers were loud and unshaven. Under their arms they carried long loaves of bread, from which they broke off and ate chunks when they were hungry. Any English girl would have found their manners revolting. They ate with their mouths wide open and blew their noses into their fingers. It was hard for Gladys to keep smiling at them. She tried to think of her brother Lawrence. She took his photo from her bag and studied it carefully. He looked handsome in his full-dress uniform. Gladys reminded herself that the soldier sitting next to her, laughing and slapping his friend on the shoulder, was probably someone's brother. Gladys was grateful that these loud and a bit unruly soldiers were at least polite to her.

After passing Lake Baikal, the train headed southwest in the direction of Harbin, China, where Gladys would transfer to a Manchurian railway train to continue her journey to Tientsin. As darkness fell, the train rumbled on. Gladys dropped off to sleep with her shoulder leaning against the icy window of the carriage.

Gladys awoke sometime later to the conductor yelling at her. She couldn't understand a word he was saying, of course, but she got the general idea from his actions. He pointed to the small station where the train had stopped, and then he pointed at Gladys and her baggage. He wanted Gladys to take her luggage and get off the train. Gladys shook her head and pulled her two suitcases down from the overhead rack. She stacked them on the floor and sat on them. She decided her little demonstration would get the message across to the conductor that she wouldn't be getting off the train. The conductor continued yelling at her for several minutes, but Gladys just pulled out her ticket and pointed to the destination of Tientsin, China, written on it. He threw up his hands in disbelief. One last time the conductor tried to convince her to get off. He pretended to shoot a gun and then clutched his chest as if wounded. Still Gladys wouldn't budge. She had a ticket to China, and every turn of the train wheels down the tracks was a wheel

“Don’t read these books unless you are willing to shed many a tear and have your life challenged.”

—Marie H.,
My Father’s World

turn closer to her destination. Eventually, the conductor gave up in disgust, and a short while later the train lurched away from the Chita railway station.

The train moved through the black Siberian night. Trees lined the railroad tracks and towered menacingly above the train. Gladys was glad to be tucked in her warm coat inside the train with its lights and heaters. She was even glad for her noisy fellow travelers. The train was now completely filled with soldiers, but their presence gave Gladys courage as they passed through the lonely, desolate countryside. It was very late in the evening when the train whistle sounded and the engine hissed to a stop. A Russian officer stood and yelled something at the men. The soldiers grabbed their knapsacks and formed a line outside the carriage. Gladys watched them march on down the tracks, their breath forming white puffs in the icy darkness. In the distance, wolves howled.

Gladys turned away from the window just as the train was plunged into blackness. She waited for her eyes to adjust to the dark. She listened carefully; the train was no longer hissing. A thought occurred to her that caused her to panic. What if the train had stopped here for good? She grabbed her suitcases and made her way down the aisle to the end of the carriage. Suddenly an unfamiliar noise burst into the carriage. Pop. Pop. Pop. Gladys began to tremble. Even though she’d never heard the sound before, she had no doubt it was gunfire, and it was very close. She peered from the train in the direction the soldiers had marched and saw flares of light in the sky.

Gladys no longer felt safe on the train. She had to get off and find shelter. She dropped her suitcases to the ground and climbed off the train. She had to find someone to talk to, but how would anyone understand her? Her heart was thumping hard inside her chest. She looked around and saw a rickety wooden building at the end of a station platform.

Gladys pushed on the door of the small wooden building. The door creaked open. There were no lights inside, but Gladys could make out four men huddled around a small woodstove. Each man held a large mug, and Gladys could smell strong coffee. She recognized three of the men: the engineer from the train, the fireman, and the conductor who had tried so hard to get her off the train in Chita. As soon as Gladys entered the room, the conductor jumped up from his perch on an upturned box and started yelling at her again. She was sure he was saying, “I told you so.” Indeed, he had told her so. After several minutes of ranting at Gladys in Russian, he abruptly sat back down and offered her a cup of coffee. She nodded and pulled up one of her suitcases to sit on. She took the mug from the conductor, and for several minutes they all sat in silence, sipping their steaming drinks.

“Those books became part of our nightly routine, after family devotions”

—Jonna S.

When Gladys had drained her mug of coffee, the conductor launched into a charade like the one he'd acted out back in Chita. This time he had help from the engineer. First, they pointed to the west and made popping noises. Gladys nodded; now she understood—a war was going on down the tracks. Next they pretended to pick up her bags and walk out the door, pointing back up the railroad tracks towards Chita. Gladys understood this, too, but their meaning was like a bad dream to her. Surely they didn't expect her to walk back to Chita. She frowned at them.

The two men then launched into a longer act. They pretended to shoot at each other. Then they dragged each other towards the train. They held up all their fingers several times, and reluctantly Gladys nodded her head. They were telling her the train would stay right where it was until it was filled with wounded soldiers, and only then would it return to Chita.

Gladys tried to think of a way to ask them how long it would be before the train made the return journey. She looked desperately around the room until her eyes fixed on an old yellowed calendar. She began a charade of her own. She rushed over to the calendar and started pointing to the days one at a time. Then she looked at the men and shrugged her shoulders. The engineer nodded, he seemed to understand what she was asking. He held up both hands and flashed all ten fingers. Then he shrugged his shoulders and flashed twenty fingers, and then he shrugged again and flashed thirty fingers. Gladys had her answer. The train could be at the station for ten or twenty or perhaps even thirty days. Gladys didn't have enough supplies with her to last that long, and besides, the men hadn't invited her to stay or offered to share their supplies with her. And why should they? The conductor had done everything in his power, short of picking her up and throwing her off the train in Chita, to prevent her from being here. It was obvious from the way the men acted that they expected her to walk back up the tracks to Chita.

When she could finally see no other course of action, Gladys picked up her two suitcases, stepped off the makeshift station platform, and headed out into the frozen wasteland. The tiny station building soon faded into the night as she followed the snow-covered railroad tracks. Huge pine trees lined both sides of the tracks. Every now and then the sky behind her would light up with the flash of cannon fire. With each flash, Gladys would catch a glimpse of the silhouetted train in the distance. Soon, though, she turned a bend in the tracks and was completely alone. Two weeks earlier she had been standing on the busy platform of Liverpool Street station saying good-bye to all her family and friends. Now she was walking alone in the middle of the night along snow-covered railroad tracks in Siberia. “I want to go to China to serve you, God. Don't let me die here,” she prayed over and over with every step she took.

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Christian Heroes
Unit Study
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Unit Study

Curriculum Guides

Introduction

Each unit study guide is designed to accompany one book in the Christian Heroes: Then & Now series by Janet and Geoff Benge. The guides provide the Christian schoolteacher and home-schooling parent with ways to use the book as a vehicle for teaching or reinforcing various curriculum areas, including the following:

- ◆ History
- ◆ Geography
- ◆ Essay writing
- ◆ Creative writing
- ◆ Reading comprehension
- ◆ Public speaking
- ◆ Drama
- ◆ Art

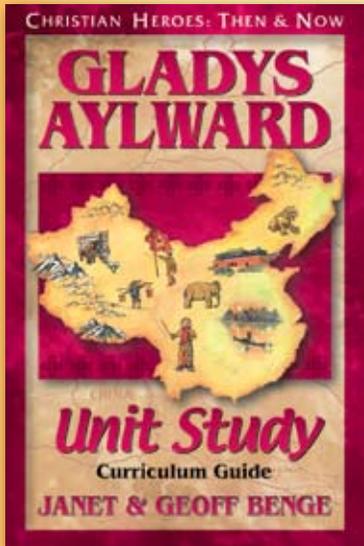
As there are more ideas than could possibly be used in one unit, it is the parent/teacher's job to sift through the ideas and select those that best fit the needs of the students.

The activities recommended in each unit study guide are reflective of a wide range of learning styles, designed for both group and individual study, and suitable for a range of grade levels and abilities.

Below you will find excerpts from the Gladys Aylward and other unit studies. Taken together, these excerpts give a brief example of the parts that make up one unit study guide.

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Gladys Aylward: A Unit Study Curriculum Guide
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1

Key Bible Verses

The authors have selected four Bible verses (*one is listed here*) that can be used alongside or as part of this unit study. For your convenience, these verses have been quoted in two versions: the King James Version and the New International Version.

“And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” (2 Corinthians 12:9 KJV)

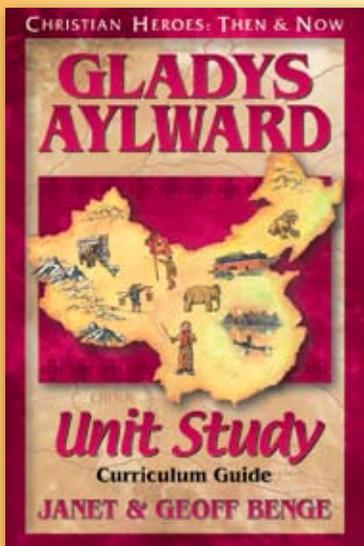
“But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.” (2 Corinthians 12:9 NIV)

2

Display Corner

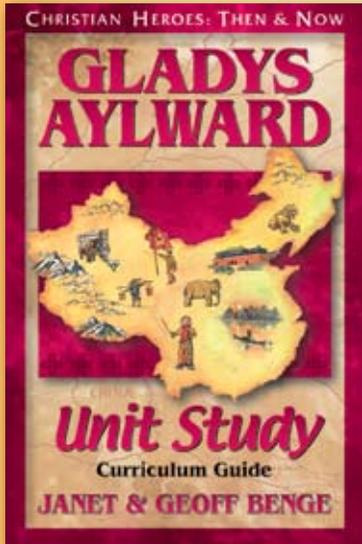
Many students will enjoy collecting and displaying objects from the country or culture they are studying. It is motivational to designate a corner of the room, including a table or desk and wall space, that can be used for this purpose. Following is a list of things students (or you) might like to display.

- ◆ A large map of China
- ◆ Items of Chinese clothing, including slippers, umbrellas, and hats
- ◆ Chinese food and food-related objects, such as rice, millet, Chinese tea, sweets, bowls, chopsticks, and cookbooks



Sample taken from
Gladys Aylward: A Unit Study Curriculum Guide
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Chapter Questions



Sample taken from
*Gladys Aylward: A Unit
Study Curriculum Guide*

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There are six questions related to each chapter of *Gladys Aylward: The Adventure of a Lifetime*:

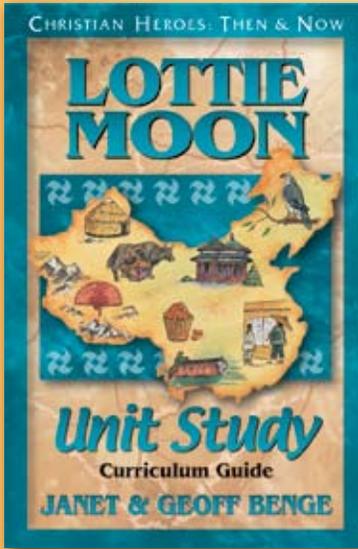
- ◆ A vocabulary question drawn from the text and referenced to a page in the book
- ◆ A factual question arising from the text
- ◆ Two questions to gauge the level of a student's comprehension
- ◆ Two open-ended question seeking an opinion or interpretation

The first three questions are geared toward younger students, while the last three questions are more difficult.

Chapter Two

1. What does *jeer* mean (page 29)? Use the word in a sentence.
2. How much money did the train ticket to China cost Gladys?
3. Why was Gladys thrown out of the missionary training school?
4. Why did Gladys leave her job as a rescue sister even though she loved that work?
5. What do you think made Gladys stick to her plan to go to China even after she was rejected by the mission school? Why do you think that?
6. In Gladys's day, nurses and teachers were wanted on the mission field, as they still are. What other qualifications would be useful in missions today?

Student Explorations



Sample taken from
*Lottie Moon: A Unit Study
 Curriculum Guide*
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Student explorations are a variety of activities that are appropriate to a wide range of learning styles. These activities consist of the following: Essay Questions, Creative Writing, Hands-On Projects, Audio/Visual Projects, Arts and Crafts, Language Examples.

Essay Questions

- ◆ Despite the fact that Lottie had a very privileged childhood, she was able to adapt to living in meager conditions in China. Using examples from the book, discuss how and why she was able to be content living in China.

Creative Writing

- ◆ Write a series of three letters in Lottie's voice that describes events in her life. For example, you might write about her father dying or about her going way to school, becoming a Christian, being a Civil War nurse, or choosing to become a missionary.

Hands-On Projects

- ◆ Research how your church or denomination supports missionaries. Draw a graph to show how much money is given to various missionary causes and mark on a map the places where these supported missionaries serve.

Audio/Visual Projects

- ◆ Research the life of Elizabeth Blackwell (America's first female doctor). Write and perform a monologue in which she explains her life, her achievements, and the obstacles she had to overcome to pursue a career in medicine. Tape-record the monologue.

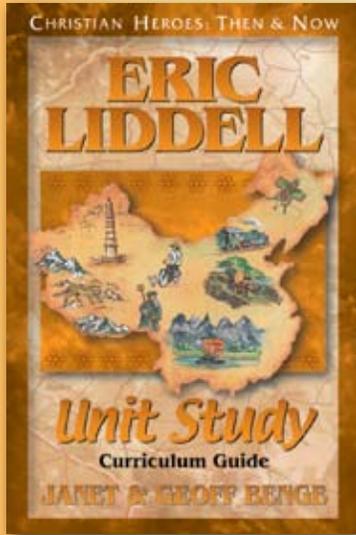
Arts and Crafts

- ◆ Research the land and homes of the pre-Civil War plantations. Paint or draw a picture of what the Viewmont plantation might have looked like.

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Community Links



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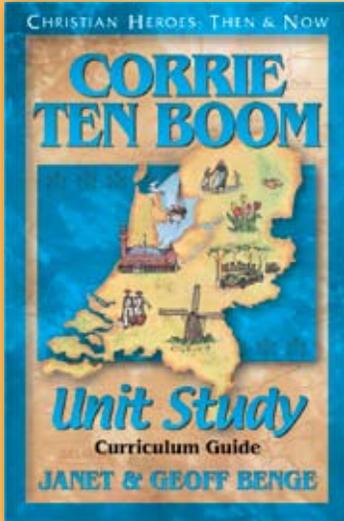
Many communities have a rich supply of people and places to which students can be exposed to help them learn about and appreciate other cultures. It is well worth the effort to find out what your community has to offer with regard to the unit you are studying.

While it would be wonderful if you could take a field trip to visit some of these people and places, if you can't, it is often possible to have visitors come to the classroom.

Suggested Community Links

- ◆ **Chinese Church.** Locate a Chinese church in your area. Call the pastor and ask permission to take your class for a visit. (Attending a Sunday service would be ideal here if you could arrange it with the students' families.) Be sure to check to see whether the church has a dress code or any special customs the students (and you) should be aware of. If attending a Sunday service is not possible, ask if you can visit the pastor at church or if the pastor can come to school to speak to your class.
- ◆ **Retired Missionaries.** Ask around to see if you can find a retired missionary who has worked in China or Taiwan. If so, invite him or her to speak to your class. Ask the person to bring any artifacts he or she has and dress in national costume if possible. This will make the visit more memorable for the students.

Social Studies



Sample taken from
*Corrie ten Boom: A Unit
 Study Curriculum Guide*
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 978-1-57658-201-5

The social studies section is divided into three categories, each with suggestions on how to use the material given.

- ◆ **Places.** This section covers significant places related to the story and named in the text of the book *Corrie ten Boom: Keeper of the Angels' Den*.
- ◆ **Geographical Characteristics.** This section contains suggestions for mapping some of the physical characteristics of the Netherlands.
- ◆ **Conceptual Questions.** This section provides the teacher with conceptual social studies questions related to the book.

Places

- ◆ Calculate the relative locations of various places mentioned in the book. For example, how far is it from Haarlem to Ravensbrück or from the Netherlands across the North Sea to England?

Geographical Characteristics

Have students use an atlas to locate the following and then mark them on the blank map of the Netherlands:

- ◆ The Netherlands' two major rivers and their sources and tributaries: the Maas River and the Rhine River with its tributaries the Waal, the IJssel, and the Lek.

Conceptual Questions

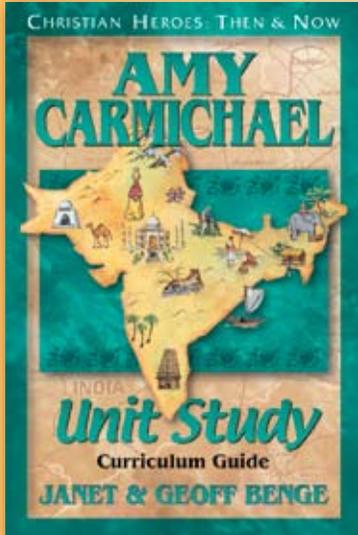
- ◆ How large is the Netherlands compared to the United States? What state is roughly the same size as the Netherlands?
- ◆ Research the reasons the Netherlands was so strategic to Germany during World War II. What are these reasons?

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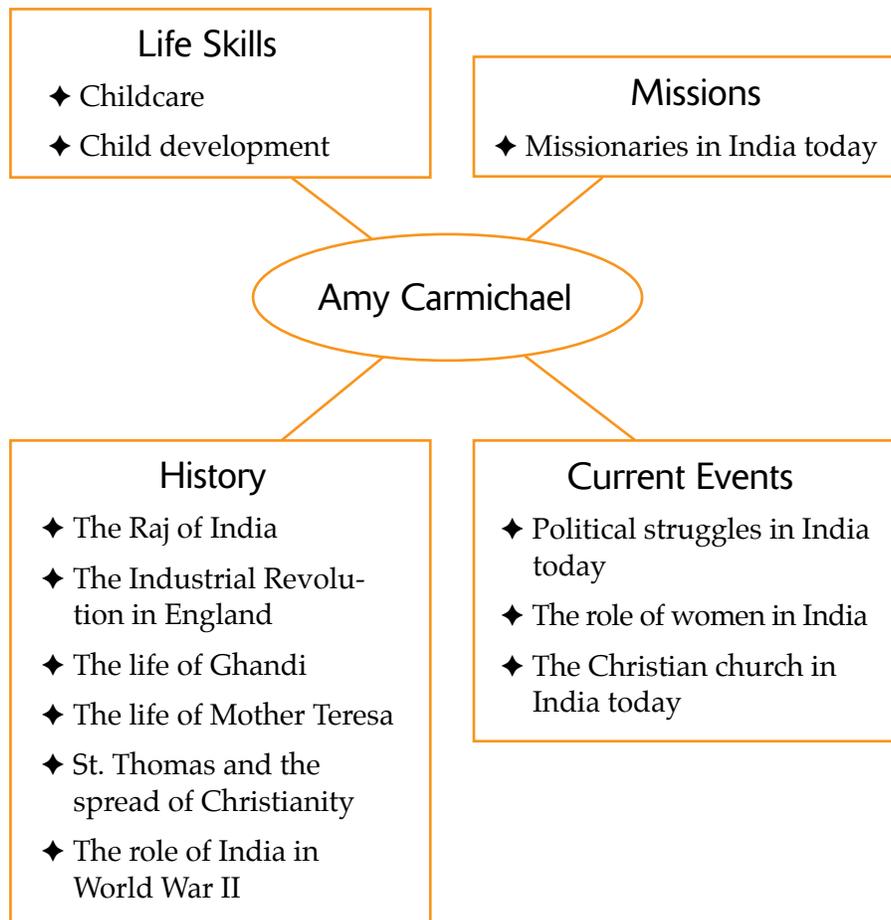
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Related Themes to Explore

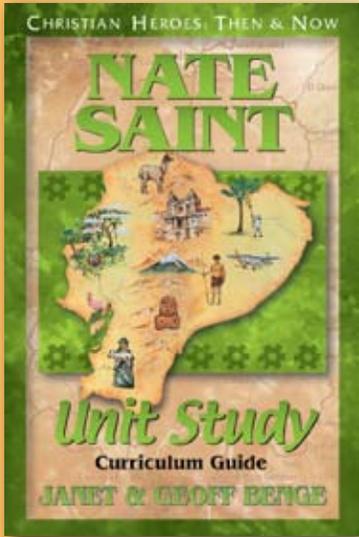
Any unit study has natural links to many other topics that can also be explored. The spoke diagram on the next page shows some related topics that students might find interesting to study alongside Amy Carmichael.



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Amy Carmichael: A Unit Study Curriculum Guide
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Culminating Event



Sample taken from
*Nate Saint: A Unit Study
Curriculum Guide*

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As the name implies, the culminating event marks the end of the unit study and gives a sense of closure to the topic. It also serves to put what students have learned into a larger context that can be shared with others.

Idea Sparks

- ◆ **Food.** Prepare and serve regional food. The people of Ecuador love getting together for a meal, and nearly all of their religious holidays involve feasting. A wide variety of fruits and vegetables are eaten in Ecuador.
- ◆ **Music.** Play traditional Ecuadoran music in the background to set the mood. The Ecuadorans are well known for their flute players.
- ◆ **Oral Presentations.** Present poems, essays, speeches, reports, reviews, and devotions that students have written during the course of the unity study.
- ◆ **Display.** Display other work, including artwork, map work, models, newspapers, and video interviews.
- ◆ **Clothing.** Younger students might enjoy dressing up, girls in long skirts and embroidered blouses and boys in ponchos. Both men and women wear felt hats.
- ◆ **Cultural Activities.** Play traditional South American children's games.

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—Pat Wester,
Pastor of Family
Ministries,
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