

Group Overview Guide for Unit Study Curriculum Guides (Heroes of History Series)

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Introduction

This overview guide is designed to help you make the most effective use of the Unit Study Curriculum Guides for the Heroes of History series. Each Unit Study Curriculum Guide is based on a corresponding Heroes of History biography that brings to life a particular time and place where an individual has powerfully impacted American history. Whether you are interested in taking a field trip, having a weekly group discussion, or completing an arts and crafts project, the Unit Study Curriculum Guides are a resource that you will not want to be without!

Full of wonderful ideas and activities, each Unit Study Curriculum Guide

- presents valuable character qualities.
- integrates important Social Studies concepts.
- provides activities for studying the times and places in which the hero lived.
- includes chapter questions, vocabulary exercises, and a variety of Language Arts projects.

The following chart lists all current Heroes of History biographies with the time period and topics presented in the story.

Biography Title	Time Period	Topics Supported by the Story
<i>The Beginnings of a Nation</i>		
<i>Christopher Columbus: Across the Ocean Sea</i>	1451–1506	Exploration of the world, European-Native American relations, monarchies in Spain, Portugal, and Italy, early mapmaking, early trade routes, sea adventures, 15th century religious conflicts, shipbuilding, perseverance
<i>John Smith: A Foothold in the New World</i>	1580–1631	Exploration of the world, the Jamestown colony, European-Native American relations, mercenaries, sea adventures, initiative
<i>William Penn: Liberty and Justice for All</i>	1644–1718	The fight for religious freedom, Pennsylvania, colonial times, England, 17th century religious conflicts, the Black Plague, Christianity, Quakers, following convictions
<i>The Establishment of a Nation</i>		
<i>Benjamin Franklin: Live Wire</i>	1706–1790	Diplomacy, American Revolution, colonial times, Declaration of Independence, Boston, electricity, inventions, printing business, creativity
<i>George Washington: True Patriot</i>	1732–1799	American Revolution, Declaration of Independence, Constitutional Convention, Virginia, the thirteen colonies, the Presidency, the French-Indian War, plantations, surveying, military strategy, leadership
<i>John Adams: Independence Forever</i>	1735–1826	American Revolution, Declaration of Independence, forms of government, Massachusetts, law, diplomacy
<i>The Exploration of a Nation</i>		
<i>Meriwether Lewis: Off the Edge of the Map</i>	1774–1809	European-Native American relations, the Louisiana Purchase, the early military, the Corps of Discovery, life on the frontier, navigation, courage, botany, animal identification, exploration
<i>Daniel Boone: Frontiersman</i>	1734–1820	European-Native American relations, the settlement of Kentucky, life on the frontier, surveying, exploration
<i>The Fracturing of a Nation</i>		
<i>Abraham Lincoln: A New Birth of Freedom</i>	1809–1869	Civil War, slavery, Illinois, the presidency, eloquence
<i>Harriet Tubman: Freedombound</i>	1820?–1913	Civil War, slavery, Reconstruction, Maryland, commitment
<i>Clara Barton: Courage Under Fire</i>	1821–1912	Red Cross, Geneva Conventions, Civil War, slavery, Maryland, Virginia, Washington, D.C., nursing, compassion

<i>The Growth of a Nation</i>		
<i>Theodore Roosevelt: An American Original</i>	1858–1919	Spanish-American War, American foreign relations
<i>Laura Ingalls Wilder: A Storybook Life</i>	1867–1957	Homestead Act, resilience
<i>Douglas MacArthur: What Greater Honor</i>	1880–1964	World War I & II, military life, loyalty, confidence
<i>The Inspiration of a Nation</i>		
<i>Thomas Edison: Inspiration and Hard Work</i>	1847–1931	New Jersey, New York, Invention of practical light bulb & motion pictures, patents, creativity
<i>George Washington Carver: From Slave to Scientist</i>	1864?–1943	Slavery, Reconstruction, Alabama, plant science, innovation
<i>Orville Wright: The Flyer</i>	1871–1948	North Carolina, aviation, perseverance
<i>The Future of a Nation</i>		
<i>Alan Shepard: Higher and Faster</i>	1923–1998	World War II, Korean War, aeronautics, space travel, military life, discipline

Adaptations for the Leader's Role

The Unit Study Curriculum Guides allow group leaders a great amount of flexibility in working with Heroes of History books. If you want to make the book study a focus of your group's time together, you may choose to use all of the sections of the Unit Study and use your group time to read the book and work on the various activities. If your time together is shorter, you may have members do much of the work at home and use your group time for them to share their work.

In addition, the Unit Studies allow you to adjust the level of work and amount of support you provide students in your group. If you are working with younger students, you will be able to choose simpler assignments and can closely monitor each part of their reading and study during your group time. If your students are older or able to work independently, you will be able to give more complex assignments and can simply be available as a resource while allowing them to work independently. Examples of both styles follow.

Leader-Directed Study

If you are having your group read the book during your meeting time, it is important that you be sensitive to the various reading ability and comfort levels of group members. For example, if you choose to have the group take turns reading aloud, you should ask for volunteers rather than expecting each child to read. If you have very slow readers, you may choose to read the book aloud to the group most of the time. Here are some more options for reading the book during group time:

- Read the chapters aloud while students follow along in their books.
- Have group members take turns reading a paragraph of the book aloud to the group.
- Read the chapters aloud while the group listens.
- Partner the group members and have the partners alternate reading paragraphs.
- Have students read the chapters silently.

After reading each chapter, here are some ways you could use each section of the Unit Study.

- **Key Quotes.** Display selected quotes and lead a group discussion about their meaning and relevance to the character of study.
- **Display Corner.** Collect Display Corner items and present them to the group to help create context for the times and places in which the character lived. You may also wish to create a display of the items in a corner of the meeting space. Group members can bring in any additional related items they may have.
- **Chapter Questions.** Have group members answer the questions listed for each chapter. You can use the answer key in the back to help correct the first four questions. You will need to grade the last two on your own since answers will vary. After having students answer the chapter questions, lead a group discussion about the chapter, using the questions as discussion starters.
- **Student Explorations.** Based on learning styles and ability levels, assign or give students project options from this chapter. Use the group meeting time for members to complete their projects, provide the necessary materials, and offer assistance along the way.
- **Community Links.** Using ideas from this sections, schedule a guest speaker or set up a field trip.
- **Social Studies.** Using the maps and timeline from this section, have group members map the locations listed in the book and record the list of events on the timeline. You may choose to do this together as a group or copy off a map and timeline for each child to do individually. Use the list of terms to play one of the suggested games as a group.
- **Related Themes.** This section may be helpful to reference as you plan future units of study.
- **Culminating Event.** Use the suggestions in this section (or come up with your own) to organize an event that wraps up your study of the Heroes of History character and allows your group members to share their completed projects.
- **Books and Resources.** Use this resource list to collect books, articles, and movies for your group's study of the Heroes of History character. These can be available for children to use as resources for their projects or independent reading.

The following sample schedule assumes that a group would be meeting once a week for 90 minutes and completing all of the activities in the Unit Study. You can make adjustments to the schedule depending on how much meeting time you have and which activities you want to complete.

- **Week 1**
 - Introduce the book
 - Share display items that you have collected with the group
 - Read Chapters 1–2 and discuss questions

- **Week 2**
 - Read Chapters 3–4 and discuss questions
 - Present selected quotes to the group and discuss their meaning and relevance to the character of study

- **Week 3**
 - Read Chapters 5–6 and discuss questions
 - Present additional selected quotes to the group and discuss their meaning and relevance to the character of study

- **Week 4**
 - Read Chapters 7–8 and discuss questions
 - Listen to guest speaker that you have pre-arranged

- **Week 5**
 - Read Chapters 9–11 and discuss questions

- **Week 6** (extended meeting time)
 - Take field trip to pre-arranged location

- **Week 7**
 - Read Chapters 12–13 and discuss questions
 - Assign Student Explorations project and begin work

- **Week 8**
 - Read Chapter 14 and discuss questions
 - Continue work on Student Explorations project
 - Begin planning Culminating Event and make invitations

- **Week 9**
 - Read Chapter 15 and discuss questions

- Complete Social Studies map section
- Continue work on Student Explorations project
- Continue planning Culminating Event

- **Week 10**
 - Read Chapter 16 and discuss questions
 - Complete Social Studies timeline and/or do other activities from Social Studies section
 - Continue work on Student Explorations project
 - Continue planning Culminating Event

- **Week 11**
 - Watch movie from Books and Resources section
 - Put finishing touches on Student Explorations project
 - Make final arrangements for Culminating Event

- **Week 12**
 - Celebrate your group's work with parents and friends during the Culminating Event!

Student-Directed Study

If your group has a minimal amount of time to meet and/or your group members are able to work independently, it may work best for them to read their books and complete related work at home. In this way, the group time can be utilized to share what each member has completed during the week. Here are some ideas.

- **Key Quotes.** Have children memorize and illustrate the meaning of one of the quotes at home. During group time, they can recite the quote and share their illustrations.

- **Display Corner.** Have group members locate Display Corner items at home or the library. During group time they can each present their assigned item and explain its significance to the character being studied.

- **Chapter Questions.** Have students answer questions listed for each chapter at home. Use their answers as a starting point for a discussion during your group time.

- **Student Explorations.** Based on learning styles and ability levels, assign or allow students to choose a project from this chapter. Ask them to complete their projects at home, but use group time to check in on their progress. When all of the projects are completed, one of your meetings can be devoted to sharing the projects. You may wish to combine this with the Culminating Event.

- **Community Links.** Using ideas from this section, arrange for a guest speaker to visit or set up a field trip.
- **Social Studies.** Copy off the maps and timelines found in this section. Have group members take them home and use an atlas and the Heroes of History title to mark the listed locations on the map and record the events on the timeline. The next week, use group time to check their work, either by having members partner up or by going over the maps and timelines as a group.
- **Related Themes.** This section may be helpful to reference as you plan future units of study.
- **Culminating Event.** Use your group time to plan the event several weeks in advance but have the children make their preparations at home (have the group make invitations for parents and friends to join you for this time). Alternatively, for a simpler culminating event, you may choose to ignore the suggestions for food, clothing, and music, and just make this a time for your group members to share their completed projects.
- **Books and Resources.** Group members can use this list to check out resources relevant to their study or project. You can also procure each of the listed materials yourself and allow the group members to check them out from you. For a group activity, choose one of the movies and watch it during your meeting time.

The following sample schedule assumes that a group would be meeting once a week for 60–90 minutes and completing all of the activities in the Unit Study. You can make adjustments to the schedule depending on how much meeting time you have and which activities you wish to complete.

- **Week 1**
 - Introduce the book
 - Assign a display item for each group member to find
 - Assign Chapter 1–2 reading and questions
- **Week 2**
 - Have group members share and explain their display item
 - Create a display corner
 - Discuss Chapter 1–2 reading and questions
 - Assign a quote to each group member
 - Assign Chapter 3–4 reading and questions
- **Week 3**
 - Have group members recite their quote and share their illustration
 - Discuss Chapter 3–4 reading and questions
 - Assign Chapter 5–6 reading and questions

- **Week 4**
 - Discuss Chapter 5– 6 reading and questions
 - Listen to guest speaker that you have pre-arranged
 - Assign Chapters 7–10 reading and questions
- **Week 5**
 - Discuss Chapters 7–10 reading and questions
- **Week 6**
 - Take field trip to prearranged location
 - Assign Chapters 11–12 reading and questions
- **Week 7**
 - Discuss Chapters 11–12 reading and questions
 - Assign Student Explorations project
 - Assign Chapters 13–14 reading and questions
- **Week 8**
 - Discuss Chapters 13–14 reading and questions
 - Check in on progress on Student Explorations project
 - Begin planning Culminating Event and make invitations
 - Assign maps from Social Studies section
 - Assign Chapters 15–16 reading and questions
- **Week 9**
 - Discuss Chapters 15–16 reading and questions
 - Check work on Social Studies map section
 - Check in on progress on Student Explorations project
 - Continue planning Culminating Event
 - Assign Social Studies timeline
- **Week 10**
 - Check work on Social Studies timeline
 - Do other activities from Social Studies section
 - Check in on progress on Student Explorations project
 - Continue planning Culminating Event

- **Week 11**
 - Watch movie from Books and Resources section
 - Make final arrangements for Culminating Event
- **Week 12**
 - Celebrate your group's work with parents and friends during the Culminating Event!

Working with Children of Varying Ability Levels and Learning Styles

Children's abilities and learning styles within a single group vary. Some children respond easily to adult instruction and are able to work independently. Others have a difficult time with instructions or need adult guidance to complete assigned tasks. The Heroes of History Unit Study Curriculum Guides can help you in supporting all types of students.

You can ensure that the needs of *all* children in your group are met by adjusting the level of support or by adjusting the tasks given to a child, depending on their needs. For example, when working with a child that is at a lower ability level than others in the group, you may choose to provide more support by having him or her come to the group early or stay late to receive extra help. You can also talk with the child's parents about providing extra support at home.

Alternatively, you may choose to *adjust the assignments* you give to a student, depending on his or her level. For example, when working with the Key Quote section, you could make sure that higher level students are assigned the longest and most complex verses to ensure that they are challenged at an appropriate level as they work at home during the week.

In addition to the varying ability levels, some students may have nontypical learning styles. For example, consider the assignment of chapter questions. The basic purpose of having students complete the questions is to check their understanding of the chapter they have just read. However, it is not necessary that all students complete this task in writing. Some of your students may have more success by completing a detailed drawing that captures characters and events. Others may benefit from working through their thoughts about the chapter in a group discussion, while still others may find it easiest to recreate the events in a short skit.

Here are some ways you can adapt Unit Study activities for students of varying ability levels or learning styles:

- **Key Quotes**
 - Assign less complex quotes to lower level students and discuss their meaning and relationship to the Heroes character. Higher level students may memorize several of the quotes or provide an in-depth explanation of their larger meaning.
 - Allow students show their understanding of the quote in the way that best suits them. Some students may demonstrate a quote's meaning through an illustration or skit; others may choose to explain orally or by writing a paragraph.
- **Chapter Questions**
 - Questions for each chapter are arranged from simpler to more complex. Assign lower level students to work on the first

three questions independently. Check answers together and complete the last three questions as a group. Higher level students may be able to complete all of the questions independently.

- For some chapters, consider letting students demonstrate their understanding in a different way, perhaps by re-enacting the chapter dramatically, giving an oral summary, or mapping a timeline of events.

- **Student Explorations**

- Projects in each section are arranged from simpler to more complex. Assign projects based on your knowledge of student learning styles and ability levels or create lists of projects suited for various levels (one list of simpler writing, hands-on, media, and arts and crafts projects, one list of more complex projects) and allow students to choose their own project. You can also have a higher and lower level student work together to complete a project, making sure that each of them has a meaningful part in the final product.

- **Culminating Event**

- Assign the roles that students will take in this event based on their strengths. For example, some students will be better suited for selecting and coordinating the music, while others will take great enjoyment in drawing up flyers advertising the event.

- **Books and Resources**

- Each resource in this section describes the appropriate age level and gives an idea of whom it would be appropriate for. Use this information to select specific books for students or to offer an alternative biography of the character for low level students to read.

Choosing Heroes of History Books for Your Group

Here are some ways to use the Heroes of History series based on the format of your group and your budget.

Group Study of a Single Book

The easiest scenario for group study would be to have each member read the same book. In this case, each child will be reading about the same character and completing the same chapter questions and Social Studies activities.

Group Study of a Theme

Rather than having the group read the same book, you may choose to focus on a certain theme and allow members a choice between two or three titles. For example, if you wanted the group to learn more about electricity, some students could read *Thomas Edison: Inspiration and Hard Work* while others read *Benjamin Franklin: Live Wire*.

Alternatively, if you wanted your group to study the idea of perseverance and determination, one third of your group might read *Abraham Lincoln: A New Birth of Freedom*, others could read *Harriet Tubman: Freedombound*, and the last third read *Clara Barton: Courage Under Fire*. As the children read about this period in history and see examples of perseverance and determination through the lives of a former slave, a Civil War nurse, and a president and share their findings, the entire group will gain a richer perspective on the Civil War time period. (Another approach would be to open or close your group time by reading aloud one of the books while your students all studied the other book. This would allow them to hear multiple perspectives without the complication of completing activities and assignments from two different books.)

If you choose to have your group members read different books, you will need to adapt some of the activities. For example, it might be necessary for you to provide a short background on each of the characters to the group at the beginning of your study. In this way, when key quotes or display items are shared, it will be easier for everyone in the group to understand the relevance of quotes or items not related to the character he or she is reading about. During the group discussion, rather than discussing the chapter questions, you will need to create questions more focused on the common theme, with children giving examples from the book they are reading. When taking a field trip, you would need to choose a location relevant to the theme rather than specific characters.

Reading Individual Books Based on Interest

Some leaders may let each child choose which book they would like to read. For example, if a child had an interest in aviation, he or she might be interested in reading *Orville Wright: The Flyer*. Another child in the group might prefer to learn about the experience of a pioneer girl and choose *Laura Ingalls Wilder: A Storybook Life*. In this case, each child would work independently and the leader would be available as a resource. The group discussions might be a time for each child to share one thing they learned from the previous chapters and find connections between the books. The leader might suggest a relevant field trip for each group member to take with their family and the group time might be spent sharing pictures and impressions from these field trips.

Using the Heroes of History Books for Academic Study

The Unit Study Curriculum Guides make it easy to give your group members additional practice with the academic skills they are learning in school. If you are interested in having your group do a more academic study of the Heroes of History books, you can review the *Classroom Overview Guide for Unit Study Curriculum Guides*.

To access the guide, go to <http://www.ywampublishing.com/t-UnitStudyHowTo.aspx>.

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