



# American Historical Fiction & American History

Genre Card

Reader: \_\_\_\_\_ Room: \_\_\_\_\_

## American Historical Fiction

One grew up in an orphanage during the Great Depression. Another braved the dangers of the wagon train seeking a better life out West. Yet another found himself in an internment camp during World War II. But they can all call themselves American. American Historical Fiction takes us through the many stories of our nation, the stories of triumph and liberty, and stories of misfortune and injustice. What is it that binds together these many people and experiences? What makes them all “American”?

### Setting

What makes this time in history so special? Why do you think the author wanted to use this time and place to tell a story?

Compare the America of the story with today’s America. In what ways is America the same, and in what ways is it different? Do we still face some of the same challenges today?

### History & Fiction

Can you separate fact from fiction? Which parts of the story really happened, and which do you think the author “made up”? Think about characters, setting, events, and problems.

Why did the author make some things up? What did it do for the story?

### Characters

Who is the main character in the book? How does s/he relate to the other characters in the story? Is s/he based on an actual historical person? If so, try and find out more information about that person. What kind of job do you think the author did in representing that person?

Choose a character and think about how the author created that character. What kind of person is s/he? What does he/she like? How would you describe his/her way of thinking or behavior? How do you know?

Who is the villain of the story and what is the major challenge they present? How do the other characters overcome this challenge?

### Theme & Plot

What problems do the characters face? How do they overcome their problems? Are any of these problems like problems people could face in our world today? In what way?

Why do you think the author wrote this book? What is his/her message, moral, or lesson for the reader?

### Identity & Inclusion

American has been a place of many peoples for centuries. Think about who is included in this book and who is missing:

- Men/Women
- African-Americans, Latinos, Asian-Americans
- Native Americans
- Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Atheists
- Rich, poor, in-between

### Point of View

From whose perspective is this story told? What other points of view might there be? How might they see the same events differently? Why?



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## Vocabulary

### Government

Bill of Rights  
capitol  
Confederate  
Congress  
Constitution  
inauguration  
international  
taxation  
treaty  
Union

### War

ammunition  
battle/war  
civil war  
land mines  
Marines  
militia  
platoon  
revolution  
soldiers  
stockade  
troops

### Protest

bigotry  
civil rights  
discrimination  
exile  
indentured servant  
injustice  
labor union  
movement  
persecution  
prejudice

### Protest (continued)

protest  
racial  
racism  
relocation  
segregation  
sit-in  
slave trade  
strike  
Underground Railroad

### Society

ancestors  
ancestral  
chaos  
desperate  
emigrant  
ethnic group  
generations  
hardship  
homeland  
identity  
immigrant  
migration  
society  
starvation  
survival  
tragedy  
witness

### Economy

barter  
blacksmith  
currency  
Gold Rush  
Great Depression  
harvest  
homeless  
maize  
opportunity  
plantation  
resources  
sharecropper

### Living

citizens  
colony  
community  
frontier  
inhabitants  
pioneer  
rural  
settlement  
settler  
suburban  
tenement  
urban

