ST. JOSEPH'S ACADEMY

AMERICAN HISTORY

Teachers: Mrs. Allison Koob, Ms. Bella Neuman

ASSIGNMENT:

The Drummer Boy of Shiloh

Complete the following on a Google Doc and submit on the first day of class.

We use Google Docs tools to look at the 'history' of a paper. This helps us make sure students are doing their own writing and helps us see exactly where they might need more help.

Define in your own words:

1. solemn
2. askew
3. strew
4. legitimately
5. resolute
6. muted
7. benediction
8. lag
9. bindled
10. riveted

QUESTIONS

Please answer in full sentences, citing text evidence where appropriate.
Using MLA format: cite your research sources here:

HISTORICAL RESEARCH

Fact vs. Fiction:
In the book you are reading, identify one character who actually existed in history and one character created by the author. How does the author blend them together in the story?

The Setting as a Character:
How does the specific time period (the year, the social rules, and the technology) influence the protagonist's choices? Could this story happen today, or is it tied strictly to its era?

Dialogue and Dialect:
Authors of historical fiction often use specific slang or "old-fashioned" ways of speaking. Find a quote from the text that feels unique to that time period and explain what it tells you about the character's background.

HISTORICAL RESEARCH (continued)

The Battle of Shiloh: Research the Battle of Shiloh (April 1862).

- What was the primary outcome of this battle?
- If your story takes place during this event, how does the author's description of the "Sunken Road" or the "Hornet's Nest" compare to the historical accounts of the fighting?

General Ulysses S. Grant: Known as "Unconditional Surrender" Grant, he played a pivotal role at Shiloh.

- Research Grant's leadership style during the Civil War.
- Based on your research, does the author portray Grant as a hero, a flawed human, or a cold strategist? Provide an example from the text to support your answer.

The Technology of War: Look up the types of weapons or medical tools used during the 1860s. Find a scene in the book where a historical object is used. Does the author describe its use accurately according to your research?

The "What If" Factor: Historical fiction often explores the "gaps" in history—things we don't know for sure. What is one event in your book that isn't in the history books? Why do you think the author chose to include it?

Anachronism Hunt: An anachronism is something that is out of place in time (like a Roman soldier wearing a digital watch). Did you find anything in the book—a word, an object, or an idea—that felt too modern for the setting? Explain why.

The Irony of "Shiloh": Research the origin of the name "Shiloh." What does it mean in Hebrew? How does the meaning of the name contrast with the events that took place at the Shiloh United Methodist Church on April 6, 1862?

The "Hornets' Nest": This was a thicket of brush where Union soldiers held their ground against repeated Confederate charges.

- Research: Why was it called the "Hornets' Nest"? (Hint: Think about the sound of the bullets).
- Application: If your character was stationed here, describe the sensory experience—the smell of the peach blossoms, the sound of the "minié balls," and the density of the smoke.

The Sunken Road and Bloody Pond: Find out why these two specific landmarks became famous during the battle. What happened at the pond that gave it its grim name?

Grant's "Defining Moment": On the night of April 6, after a day of retreat and heavy losses, General Sherman found Grant standing under a tree in a pouring rainstorm.

- The Quote: Sherman said, "Well, Grant, we've had the devil's own business today, haven't we?" Grant replied, "Yes. Lick 'em tomorrow, though."
- Analysis: What does this exchange tell you about Grant's personality? How does a historical fiction author use a real quote like this to show a character's "grit"?

The Death of Albert Sidney Johnston: The Confederate commander, General Johnston, was killed on the first day of the battle.

- Research: How did he die, and why was his death considered a "turning point" for the Confederacy?
- Fiction Connection: If your story is told from the perspective of a Confederate soldier, how would the news of his death affect the morale of the troops?

The "Militia" Reality: Most soldiers at Shiloh had never been in a real battle before.

- Fact Check: Research the term "Seeing the Elephant." What did this phrase mean to Civil War soldiers?
- Observation: Find a passage in your book where a character experiences combat for the first time. Does the author portray them as a fearless hero, or does the author show their confusion and fear?

STORY SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

1. What is historical fiction? Please define in your own words.

2. Describe the setting of the story.

3. Where are the two armies located?

4. How old is Joby? How old are the other soldiers with him? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

5. How does Joby feel about the upcoming battle? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

6. According to Joby, how do the other men feel about the upcoming battle? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

7. What is the mood or atmosphere of the story? What text evidence supports this?

8. What question does the General ask Joby? How does he respond? What does this response mean?

9. How does the General feel about the upcoming battle? How does he describe his emotions as a result of this? Use evidence from the text to support.

10. According to the General, what is the responsibility of the drummer in an army? How does he describe this?

11. How does the General describe the soldiers? What does he mean by this?

12. Describe the General's attitude toward Joby.

13. What is the effect of the General's talk on Joby?

14. Find examples of foreshadowing in the story.