

Summer Reading Assignment Grade 7

ROLL OF THUNDER and LINCOLN: A PHOTOBIOGRAPHY

(Historical fiction)

(Nonfiction)

BACKGROUND: From Lincoln to MLK and beyond

Upon first glance, a student may struggle to recognize the connection between these two books; after all, the setting of *Roll of Thunder* is Mississippi in 1933, while *Lincoln: A Photobiography* ends with his assassination in 1865. So what's the connection? Well, it's found in the inherent and continuing prejudice of whites against "blacks" (African Americans), and the long standing Civil Rights Movement.

Most would regard Lincoln's signing of the Emancipation Proclamation on Jan. 1, 1863, as his greatest achievement. The Proclamation stated: "All people held as slaves in the rebel states (the Confederacy) would be thence forward and forever free." In a sense then, Lincoln would qualify as the very first Civil Rights leader. It is generally believed that African Americans were henceforth given equal rights, but this was far from the truth, especially in the South. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) banded together and committed horrible acts of violence against African Americans, and in 1896, the Supreme Court of the United States allowed states to segregate the races with the premise of "separate but equal facilities," including schools. The states then passed segregation laws (the "Jim Crow" laws). The story of the Logan family in *Roll of Thunder* is set in 1933, when these laws were very much enforced. These laws remained in effect until the 1955 bus boycotts. It was at this time that Martin Luther King, Jr. assumed leadership of the Civil Rights Movement. And finally, 100 years after Lincoln signed the

Emancipation Proclamation, 250,000 Americans marched on Washington, D.C. to demand equal rights. It was there that MLK delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech.

The movement continues to this very day. Think of the current issues of police profiling, police brutality, and the recent protests, riots, and violence in our own city of Baltimore.

ASSIGNMENT CHOICES:

Task 1: (easier) Research the Civil Rights movement. Create a timeline of at least 10 important events beginning with the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863. It would be impossible to include every event so be sure to indicate the most important ones. Mark the year (date?) and provide a brief explanation of why the year/ date is significant.

TASK 2: (average) In his second Inaugural Address, Lincoln called slavery," a hateful and evil practice - a sin in the sight of God and both North and South alike share the guilt of slavery," After reading the Proclamation to his cabinet members, he signed his full name and then said to those witnessing the signing, "If my name ever goes into history, it will be for this act."

Locate a copy of the Emancipation Proclamation. Read and reflect. Then create a 12 slide Power Point summarizing the Proclamation giving textual evidence (quotations) to support your summary. After completing this part, proceed on to comment on the following 3 statements: Abraham Lincoln was a man of quiet courage. Abraham Lincoln was a man of great

vision. A. Lincoln can rightfully be considered the 1st leader of the Civil Rights Movement. Do you agree or disagree with these statements? Why? Why not?

TASK 3: (average +) The injustices of the Jim Crow Laws legally inflicted racial segregation and discrimination upon the “Black” families living in Mississippi during the 1930s. (ex. the Logan family) Based on your reading of Roll of Thunder, and using textual evidence, (quotations) , create a 12 slide Power Point summarizing the injustices experienced by the Logan family. (10 slides to this purpose.) Your last 2 slides are to express your comments on these injustices.

TASK 4: (challenging) Original Picture Book Create an original picture book entitled What Were the Jim Crow Laws? Remember that in a picture book, the largest % of the page is the picture, and there is a very limited amount of text per page. Additionally, the vocab. of the text is very simple. With these qualities in mind, create your own 12 page picture book. Pictures may be drawn, or computer graphics and copies of nonfiction resource pictures may be used. The text in your book must be typed and then adhered to the page in your book. Text per page limited to 3 simple sentences and appropriate for a class of 1st graders. Your book must be bound together. Loose pages are not acceptable.

TASK 5: VISIT THE SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE in Washington, D.C. and tour through the exhibits and galleries. Take a few notes for yourself as this will help

you later write your personal reflection. Think about what you learned at the museum and examine your own personal responses. After doing this, write a personal reflection paper in which you describe what you learned at the museum and express your personal responses (reactions, feelings). This paper should be approx. 2 pages typed. This reflection will be shared orally with the class. Bring proof of your visit to the museum such as a ticket stub...

*****TICKETS & TIMED PASSES ARE SECURED ON THE MUSEUM'S WEB SITE*****

PARENT NOTE: Verification form to be submitted with completed task.

Summer Reading Verification Form

Grade 7

Upon completion of each of the books, a parent/guardian is asked to sign this verification form. Summer reading projects are due Wednesday, September 6th, along with this signed verification form.

My child _____ has completed reading
ROLL OF THUNDER.

Parent signature _____ Date _____

My child _____ has completed reading
the 2nd book.

Parent signature _____ Date _____