

# YOUNG READERS' TEACHER' GUIDE



HERITAGE CLASSICAL CURRICULUM





# TABLE OF CONTENTS



<b>Overview.....</b>	<b>3</b>
Teacher's Guide Contents .....	3
<b>Recommended Reading .....</b>	<b>5</b>
The Young Readers' Library .....	6
American Selections.....	9
European Selections.....	10
Ancient Selections.....	11
Christian Selections .....	12
Legends and Folklore .....	13
<b>Historical Divisions .....</b>	<b>15</b>
American History .....	17
European History .....	21
Ancient History .....	25
Bible and Saint Stories .....	29
<b>How Children Learn History .....</b>	<b>31</b>
Story Based History .....	31
Historical Categories.....	33
Just Enough Information .....	34
Historical Genres .....	35
Historical Criticism .....	36
Remembering and Forgetting .....	37
<b>How Children Differ.....</b>	<b>39</b>
Girls and Boys .....	39
Aptitude and Retention .....	41
Sociability and Introspection .....	42
<b>What Parents Can Do .....</b>	<b>45</b>
Making Selections.....	45
Providing Accountability .....	46
Learning as a Family .....	47
Recovering a Lost Generation .....	48
<b>Accountability Forms.....</b>	<b>51</b>

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## OVERVIEW

The Young Readers Library includes over eighty high-quality juvenile histories that should appeal to students with a broad range of interests. While all of the books in the Young Readers collection are appropriate for read-aloud to younger students, they are intended for self-directed reading and can be read independently by any student who is reading at a chapter book or fourth-grade level.

All of the books in the Young Readers library are categorized by subject, genre, and series. In addition, a short description of the contents of each book is provided on the Book Summaries page. The books in the library can be read directly from the CD, printed and bound to be read like a regular book, or downloaded to any e-reader.

Very few of the books in the Young Readers library are what could be considered comprehensive histories. Most are collections of loosely-related stories from history, biographies, abridged classics, or historical fiction. The advantage of this style of history for young readers is that each book can be read in any order, and students can each choose the books which most interest them. None of the books in the Young Readers library assume any previous knowledge of a civilization, or requires any “context” to understand. The curriculum is intended to expose grammar school students to some of the most famous stories from history without the overhead of a systematic program of study.

## TEACHER’S GUIDE CONTENTS

This Teacher’s Guide is directed toward parents and instructors of grammar school aged children—especially those families and teachers that are unfamiliar with the Heritage program. It is organized differently than the Study Guides that accompany the civilization-specific curriculums. The Study Guides provide for an in depth, comprehensive study of a single civilization and are intended to be used by students to complement their reading. The Teacher’s Guide, on the other hand, includes only very broad civilization-specific content and focuses primarily on providing general advice for those charged with guiding the reading selections of younger students.

The Young Readers Teacher’s Guide is intended to be read in conjunction with the Curriculum User’s Guide, which provides an overview of the entire Heritage Classical Curriculum course of study. There is some similar content between the two guides, but the Teacher’s Guide explains the educational philosophy behind the Heritage program to a more considerable extent, while the Curriculum Guide is more concerned with practical details of book selection, scheduling, and day-to-day management of a reading-based curriculum. We recommend that instructors who are new to the Heritage Classical Curriculum read both.



The Young Readers Teacher's Guide includes the following sections:

**Recommended Reading**—This section lists the author, title, length, genre of every book in the Young Readers Library. The core reading requirements are divided by subject rather than reading level and students need only read one book from each category. Short descriptions of each suggested book are given, and more information about *all* of the books in the collection is included on the Book Summaries page of the Compact Library.

**Historical Divisions**—In the Study Guides that accompany most of the other Compact Libraries, the Historical Division section is the largest and most detailed portion of the document. In contrast, Historical Division section of the Young Readers Teacher's Guide is relatively short. This is because the Young Readers library includes such a wide range of books that the historical divisions are too broad to develop in much detail. Only a cursory overview of major events and characters in each category is provided.

**How Children Learn History**—This section discusses the manner in which children learn history and explains how the Heritage Curriculum was designed to take advantage of their natural curiosity. The advantages of story-based history and the importance of providing a historical framework are a few of the topics discussed.

**How Children Differ**—This section discusses differences in aptitude, interest, and learning style among children and explains how parents can use this information to make sure their students' elective reading is appropriate for their interests and abilities.

**What Parents can Do**—This section summarizes the things that parents can do to help their children learn history, from helping guide their reading selections, to providing accountability, to learning along with their children.

**Accountability Forms**—Reproducible forms that can be used to keep track of books read, and the number of hours read on a weekly basis are provided in this section.

The following appendixes can be included if their contents are of interest.

**Curriculum User Guide**—This Guide introduces the learning philosophy of the Heritage Curriculum and gives practical guidelines for its use. The Heritage program advocates an independent study method of learning history, but recognizes that some sort of accountability is required. Methods of assuring students are learning the basics, while giving them flexibility to pursue their own interests are the key strategies discussed.

**Electronic Text User Guide**—The Young Readers Library includes e-reader and printable versions of every book. Instructions for downloading Heritage History electronic books to various e-readers is given in this Guide. Users of the Heritage Classical Curriculum who haven't yet purchased an e-reader can learn more about their options, and advice is also provided for those who desire to print and bind their own books instead of reading them electronically.

## RECOMMENDED READING

The books that make up the Young Readers Classical Curriculum are extraordinarily good. All were written by first-rate children's authors who loved their subjects and understood how to introduce students to the delights of classical history. Edward Eggleston, Andrew Lang, H. E. Marshall, and Amy Steedman are just a few of the exceptional writers who contributed to the Young Readers collection, and one would be hard pressed to find classical scholars of equal talent in today's education system.

Students who are following a civilization-specific Classical Curriculum are encouraged to read several *core* selections to make sure they are covering the basics. Once they have read a few required books they are permitted a great deal of latitude in the rest of their selections. The *core* reading selections for the Young Readers Curriculum are organized somewhat differently than those of more advanced curriculums. There is no specific group of books in the collection that we recommend that all students read. Instead we suggest that instructors make sure that, over a given period of time, students read at least a few books from each of five categories. These categories are:

- American History
- European History
- Ancient History
- Bible Stories
- Legends and Folklore

The books recommended in each of these sections represent the most substantial general histories on the given topic. In most cases comprehensive histories are not appropriate for younger students, but stories from history that relate to a particular country or time period are very helpful in understanding the culture and folk heroes of a particular civilization. The object is not for the students to study any of these topics in a systematic way, but rather to familiarize themselves with the time period and a few important heroes of the age.

Students only need to read one book from each of the following lists, but all are worthwhile, so strong readers might elect to read several. All students should be aware of what book belongs to what historical category. They should also come to understand the difference between a *legend* and a *true story from history* and that some of the characters in historical fiction are *made up* and others are *real*.

The books in the core series can be read at any time in the student's course of study. It is sometimes better to introduce a novice reader to a particular historical subject by way of historical fiction than to introduce them directly to more serious histories, but good readers shouldn't have trouble with any books in the Young Readers collection.

## THE YOUNG READERS' LIBRARY

*All of the titles included in the Young Readers Library are listed below. The number to the right indicates how many (single sided) sheets of paper the complete book takes to print on letter size (8 1/2 x 11) paper. This corresponds to about half the number of pages in the original books.*

American History	Size	genre
<b>American Life and Adventure</b> by E. Eggleston	84	History Stories
<b>Great Americans for Little Americans</b> by E. Eggleston	60	Short Bios
<b>America First</b> by Lawton Evans	151	History Stories
<b>The Story of Abraham Lincoln</b> by M. A. Hamilton	37	Biography
<b>The Men Who Found America</b> by F. W. Hutchinson	48	Short Bios
<b>The Story of Columbus</b> by Gladys Imlach	34	Biography
<b>American History Stories—Volume I</b> by Mara L. Pratt	59	History
<b>American History Stories—Volume II</b> by Mara L. Pratt	59	History
<b>American History Stories—Volume III</b> by Mara L. Pratt	59	History
<b>American History Stories—Volume IV</b> by Mara L. Pratt	74	History
<b>Buccaneers and Pirates of Our Coasts</b> by Frank Stockton	101	Short Bios
<b>Stories of the Pilgrims</b> by Margaret Pumphrey	82	History Stories
<b>Stories from Uncle Tom's Cabin</b> by H.E. Marshall	48	Literature
<b>The Puritan Twins</b> by Lucy Fitch Perkins	45	Fiction
<b>Ruth of Boston</b> by James Otis	64	Fiction
<b>Richard of Jamestown</b> by James Otis	66	Fiction
<b>Stephen of Philadelphia</b> by James Otis	67	Fiction
<b>Peter of New Amsterdam</b> by James Otis	62	Fiction
<b>Seth of Colorado</b> by James Otis	60	Fiction
<b>Hannah of Kentucky</b> by James Otis	62	Fiction

Ancient History	Size	Genre
<b>Stories from Greek History</b> by Ethelwyn Lemon	36	History Stories
<b>Stories from Roman History</b> by Lena Dalkeith	37	History Stories
<b>Stories from the Iliad</b> by Jeanie Lang	36	Literature
<b>Stories from the Odyssey</b> by Jeanie Lang	37	Literature
<b>The Aesop for Children</b> by Milo Winter	82	Literature
<b>Our Little Spartan Cousin</b> by Julia Cowles	43	Fiction
<b>Our Little Athenian Cousin</b> by Julia Cowles	36	Fiction
<b>Our Little Roman Cousin</b> by Julia Cowles	37	Fiction
<b>Our Little Carthaginian Cousin</b> by Clara Winlow	36	Fiction
<b>The Spartan Twins</b> by Lucy Fitch Perkins	43	Fiction



European History	Size	Genre
<b>Old Time Tales</b> <i>by Lawton Evans</i>	112	History Stories
<b>Viking Tales</b> <i>by Jennie Hall</i>	57	History Stories
<b>Stories from English History</b> <i>by Hilda Skae</i>	39	History Stories
<b>Stories from French History</b> <i>by Lena Dalkeith</i>	35	History Stories
<b>Stories of the Vikings</b> <i>by Mary Macgregor</i>	43	History Stories
<b>The Story of Robert Bruce</b> <i>by Jeanie Lang</i>	44	Biography
<b>The Story of Joan of Arc</b> <i>by Andrew Lang</i>	35	Biography
<b>The Story of Sir Francis Drake</b> <i>by Mrs. Oliver Elton</i>	37	Biography
<b>The Story of Sir Walter Raleigh</b> <i>by Margaret Kelly</i>	36	Biography
<b>The Story of Lord Clive</b> <i>by John Lang</i>	32	Biography
<b>The Story of Captain Cook</b> <i>by John Lang</i>	34	Biography
<b>The Story of Napoleon</b> <i>by H. E. Marshall</i>	34	Biography
<b>The Story of Nelson</b> <i>by Edmund Sellar</i>	40	Biography
<b>Stories of William Tell</b> <i>by H. E. Marshall</i>	31	Biography
<b>Stories from Pilgrim's Progress</b> <i>by Mary Macgregor</i>	37	Literature
<b>Stories of Gulliver's Travels</b> <i>by John Lang</i>	33	Literature
<b>Robinson Crusoe Written for Children</b> <i>by James Baldwin</i>	69	Literature
<b>Stories of Don Quixote</b> <i>by James Baldwin</i>	95	Literature
<b>Our Little Saxon Cousin</b> <i>by Julia D. Cowles</i>	34	Fiction
<b>Our Little Norman Cousin</b> <i>by Evaleen Stein</i>	41	Fiction
<b>Our Little Crusader Cousin</b> <i>by Evaleen Stein</i>	48	Fiction
<b>Our Little Celtic Cousin</b> <i>by Evaleen Stein</i>	37	Fiction
<b>Our Little Viking Cousin</b> <i>by Charles Johnston</i>	49	Fiction
<b>The Scotch Twins</b> <i>by Lucy Fitch Perkins</i>	57	Fiction
<b>The Belgian Twins</b> <i>by Lucy Fitch Perkins</i>	48	Fiction
<b>The Dutch Twins</b> <i>by Lucy Fitch Perkins</i>	50	Fiction
<b>The French Twins</b> <i>by Lucy Fitch Perkins</i>	50	Fiction
<b>The Swiss Twins</b> <i>by Lucy Fitch Perkins</i>	32	Fiction

Bible and Saint Stories	Size	Genre
<b>The Nursery Book of Bible Stories</b> <i>by Amy Steedman</i>	82	Bible Stories
<b>Heroes of Israel</b> <i>by Lawton Evans</i>	130	Bible Stories
<b>Stories from the Old Testament</b> <i>by Louey Chisholm</i>	36	Bible Stories
<b>Stories from the Life of Christ</b> <i>by Janet Harvey Kelman</i>	44	Bible Stories
<b>God's Troubadour: St. Francis of Assisi</b> <i>by Sophie Jewett</i>	34	Saint Stories
<b>In God's Garden</b> <i>by Amy Steedman</i>	55	Saint Stories
<b>Book of Saints and Friendly Beasts</b> <i>by A. Farwell Brown</i>	67	Saint Stories
Legends and Folklore	Size	Genre
<b>Stories of King Arthur's Knights</b> <i>by Mary Macgregor</i>	36	Legend
<b>Stories of Guy of Warwick</b> <i>by H. E. Marshall</i>	31	Legend
<b>Stories of Robin Hood</b> <i>by H. E. Marshall</i>	38	Legend
<b>The Book of Legends</b> <i>by Horace Scudder</i>	31	Legend
<b>Page, Esquire, and Knight</b> <i>by Florence Lansing</i>	58	Legend
<b>Stories of Roland</b> <i>by H. E. Marshall</i>	33	Legend
<b>Stories of Beowulf</b> <i>by H. E. Marshall</i>	29	Literature
<b>Stories of Siegfried</b> <i>by Mary Macgregor</i>	37	Legend
<b>Jataka Tales</b> <i>by E.C. Babbitt</i>	33	Literature
<b>More Jataka Tales</b> <i>by E.C. Babbitt</i>	32	Literature
<b>Stories from the Arabian Nights</b> <i>by Amy Steedman</i>	42	Literature
Historical Anecdotes	Size	Genre
<b>Fifty Famous People</b> <i>by James Baldwin</i>	71	History Stories
<b>Fifty Famous Stories Retold</b> <i>by James Baldwin</i>	66	History Stories
<b>Thirty More Famous Stories Retold</b> <i>by James Baldwin</i>	79	History Stories
Other Topics	Size	Genre
<b>The Eskimo Twins</b> <i>by Lucy Fitch Perkins</i>	49	Fiction
<b>The Japanese Twins</b> <i>by Lucy Fitch Perkins</i>	46	Fiction
<b>The Mexican Twins</b> <i>by Lucy Fitch Perkins</i>	52	Fiction

## AMERICAN SELECTIONS

*The American histories listed below cover much of the same material, but each takes a different approach to presenting the major events and characters. We recommend that all students, before graduating from the Young Readers collection, familiarize themselves with at least one of the following books. The Great American History Stories is a short, simplified introduction to famous Americans, the American History Stories series is the closest we have to a comprehensive American history text, and America First is an excellent choice for family read-aloud.*

### Great Americans for Little Americans by Edward Eggleston

Simply told stories of warriors, statesmen, explorers, scientists, inventors, men and women of letters, and others. Featured are Marquette in Iowa, Penn and the Indians, Thomas Smith and the beginning of rice culture in South Carolina, Franklin and the ants, Putnam and the wolf, and dozens of other stories.

### America First by Lawton Evans

This delightful collection of stories from America's past recounts one hundred interesting and romantic incidents from America's history, and provides character sketches of dozens of early American heroes and heroines. It makes no attempt to relate or explain complicated government issues, and does not provide a chronological or comprehensive account, but instead focuses on stories of great human interest and reads like a book of fairy tales.

### American History Stories: Vol I-IV by Mara L. Pratt:

This four volume series is a very simple history of the United States from its colonial age to the end of the civil war. It was written for grammar school children and relates American history through short stories, character sketches, poems and songs. The first volume covers the landing of Columbus through the French and Indian Wars. The second relates the Revolutionary War period in detail. The third covers the time from the end of the Revolutionary War to the middle of the 19th century, and the fourth focuses on the years before, during, and after the civil war.

*Another American series that is worthy of note is the Colonial Children series from James Otis. This historical fiction series is extremely well written. Each follows an early American colonist over a period of a few years and gives great insight into the customs, motivation, and daily life of America's earliest settlers. The Young Readers collection includes six volumes. The complete series of twelve volumes can be found in Heritage's Early American Classical library.*

## EUROPEAN SELECTIONS

*Within the Heritage History online library, the field of European history is broken up into several divisions—Britain, Spain, Western Europe, and Eastern Europe—since each of these regions have distinctive cultures. As far as Young Readers are concerned, however, these cultures can all be considered as one European Civilization. European History is too complicated to summarize in a meaningful way for young readers, but the following books provide anecdotes from history that introduce some of the leading characters of Europe.*

### **Old Time Tales** by **Lawton Evans**

This collection of over forty stories and legends from history are related by a master-story teller. They are perfect for reading individually, or aloud to younger children. Most of the stories are from European History and include both legends and folklore, and history stories. Well known stories, such as William Tell, Joan of Arc, and the death of Roland are told as well as lesser known classics such as “The Mouse Tower”, “Dmitri the Pretender”, and “Berth of the Big Foot”.

### **Stories from English History** by **Hilda Skae**

This book recounts six stories from English history, beginning with that of the Celtic hero Caradoc and ending with Sir Francis Drake. Other tales include the story of Augustine of Kent and the conversion of the Saxons to Christianity, William the Conqueror and the Battle of Hastings, King John and the murder of his rival Prince Arthur, and the story of the Black Prince at Crecy and Poitiers.

### **Stories from French History** by **Lena Dalkeith**

This beautifully illustrated book tells seven of the most picturesque stories from the History of France. They include the story of Clovis and his Queen Clotilda, Charlemagne, Saint Louis the Crusader, Joan of Arc, the Huguenots and the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, the French Revolution and Marie Antoinette, and Napoleon Bonaparte.

*Another approach to European history that sometimes appeals to young people is to read folklore and adapted literature. Most of the books in the Legends and Adapted Literature categories are European in origin. The Little Cousin from Long Ago and Twins of the World Series also feature historical fiction that introduces young students to various European cultures.*

## ANCIENT SELECTIONS

*Once Young Readers are ready to learn “real” comprehensive history, the Heritage program recommends that they begin by studying Ancient Greece and Roman History. There are a variety of reasons that Ancient history is especially attractive to younger students. It is not surprising therefore, that several of the following books are also recommended as “beginner” core books in the Ancient Greece Classical Curriculum.*

### **Stories from Greek History by Ethelwyn Lemon**

In this short but well written book, six of the many inspiring stories from Greek History are told. They include the story of Solon, the law-giver of Athens, Themistocles and the battle of Salamis, Pelopidas and Epaminondas and the Boeotian Wars, Timoleon and the liberation of Sicily, Demosthenes, the orator of Athens, and Alexander the Great.

### **Stories from Roman History by Lena Dalkeith**

This short book tells stories of several of the most famous characters of Roman History. Included are heroes of the early republic: Horatius and Coriolanus; heroes of the Punic and Macedonian Wars: Hannibal, Fabius Maximus, Paulus Amelius, and Scipio Africanus; and leading men of the late republic: the Gracchi, Pompey, Julius Caesar. Each story is told in simple but engaging terms.

### **Stories from the Iliad by Jeanie Lang**

This short version of Homer’s Iliad is part of the *Told to the Children* series. It is very short, very well written, and recounted in a suitable manner for younger children. The action begins with the story of Helen and Paris and ends with the death of Hector. The story of the Trojan horse and the fall of Troy are not included.

### **Aesop's Fables by Milo Winter:**

This beautifully illustrated version of Aesop’s fables is one of the best renditions of Aesop’s Fables ever published. It is just as delightful for adults and older children as it is for beginning readers, and like much of the other literature that descends to us from Ancient Greece, reminds us of the sophisticated wisdom of the classical sages.

*An alternative to introducing younger students to Ancient History is to focus on Greek Mythology and historical fiction. The Ancient Greece Compact Library includes a good selection of mythology that is appropriate for young readers. The folklore of Ancient Greece is of outstanding interest to youngsters and is often better appreciated by younger children than by preoccupied older students.*

## CHRISTIAN SELECTIONS

*The stories of the Bible, simplified for children, are perfectly suited to young readers. Many Biblical characters are icons of western civilization who symbolize universal virtues, vices and moral difficulties. The essential morals of the stories are well understood even by grammar school students. The early years are a perfect time to focus on Biblical history so students will have a clear idea of Christian values before they embark on a serious, comprehensive study of world history.*

### **Nursery Book of Bible Stories by Amy Steedman**

This beautifully illustrated book retells many of the most famous stories from the bible, especially those most appealing to youngsters. It includes twenty-four stories from the Old Testament and twelve stories from the New Testament, each told in the manner of a children's tale.

### **Heroes of Israel by Lawton Evans**

Ninety stories from the Old Testament, nicely illustrated and told by a master storyteller. Evans introduces dozens of fascinating characters from the Bible from Adam and Eve to Esther and Nehemiah in a series of short, easily read stories.

### **God's Troubadour, St. Francis of Assisi by Sophie Jewett**

This children's biography of St. Francis of Assisi relates how the gay, courtly young soldier became a knight of Jesus Christ, vowed devotion to Lady Poverty and proved himself the 'little brother' to all men and even to the birds and beasts. It is a charming tale and a Christian classic.

*Like the stories of the Bible, the stories of saints show how God works in the lives of his people. Some saints, like Joan of Arc and St. Patrick, are important as national heroes as well as Christian heroes, while others are known primarily for their Christian virtues. The stories of a few saints, such as St. George and St. Christopher, are more legend than fact. In all cases, however, the life stories of Christian heroes are testaments to the role of faith and the spiritual reality of human existence.*



## LEGENDS AND FOLKLORE

*Most youngsters need little encouragement to read legends. A legend is simply a popular children's story that has been told so many times over the ages that it takes on a life of its own. Many famous children's legends have some shadowy connection to real historical characters and others are rooted in primitive religious stories. In either case, legendary characters are a staple of regional folklore and helpful in understanding the character and ideals of civilizations.*

### **Robin Hood Told to the Children by H. E. Marshall**

This short retelling of some of the most famous stories associated with the legend of Robin hood chronicles events that are set during the reign of Richard I in 11<sup>th</sup> century England. The story tells of how and why he came to live in Sherwood forest and of the adventures he had there with Little John, Maid Marian, and the Sheriff of Nottingham.

### **Siegfried Told to the Children by Mary Macgregor**

Siegfried is the central character of a legend that is based on the Nibelung, an old German poem. The epic is filled with of strange adventures of tiny dwarves and stalwart mortals. In this retelling, Siegfried wins the accursed Rhineland treasure, takes Kriemhild as bride, and comes to an untimely end, passing the curse of the Rhinegold on to his enemies.

### **Roland Told to the Children by H. E. Marshall**

Roland was the nephew of Charlemagne and the most famous of his knights. The stories from this book tell of incidents near the end of the hero's life, as told by the Epic poem, the Song of Roland. The story recounts the incidents at the Battle of Roncesvalles in which Oliver and Roland were killed. It also tells of the treachery of Ganelon, Charlemagne's ultimate revenge, and the death of the traitor.

*The Young Readers library includes several volumes of "Adapted Literature" as well as legends. In each case the author has rendered a literary classic in simple enough terms to be enjoyed by a young reader. There isn't necessarily a clear distinction between legends, folklore, and adapted literature since ancient folklore has often made its way into classical literature and visa versa.*

*Legends are an important part of history, but students even at an early age should be able to identify which characters are legendary and which are historical. Although most of the legends in this section are European in origin, we have considered them in a separate category to avoid confusion on this point.*



## HISTORICAL DIVISIONS

The Young Readers Collection was created in order to provide a broad overview of the great characters, events, and literature of Western Civilization to young students. It includes some of the shortest and easiest to read selections from across all of Heritage History's civilization-specific libraries.

The Historical Division sections for civilization-specific libraries are dedicated to defining historically significant eras within the context of a single subject, such as Ancient Rome or British Middle Ages. In such cases, the divisions are narrow, focused and thorough. Since the Young Readers Collection is intended as a survey rather than an in depth study, the Historical divisions that we have defined for it are extremely broad. Furthermore, they are presented in reverse chronological order, with the most recent civilization of concern—American—presented first, and the oldest civilizations last. The following table presents the Historical Divisions for the Young Readers collection.

<b>Era</b>	<b>Dates</b>
<b>American History</b>	1492 to 1920
<b>European History</b>	500 to 1920
<b>Ancient History</b>	BC 500 to AD 500
<b>Bible and Saint Stories</b>	All eras
<b>Legends and Folklore</b>	All eras

The purpose of these divisions is to provide a framework for understanding how the books included in the Young Readers library fit into the broad panorama of Western Civilization. The categories are very simple but in order to appeal to young readers with an unsophisticated view of history, we thought it best to emphasize a basic overview.

Following each major division is a short summary of a few well known characters and events likely to have children's stories associated with them. By the time a student has read a few books from each category he should have been introduced to many of the famous characters and incidents from these lists.

In addition to a brief timeline and character list, a short discussion of the way in which each division could be broken up into meaningful subcategories is provided. These categories may be useful to students who are ready to begin the process of organizing the events of history into regional and chronological periods. It is not necessary for novice readers to do this, but eventually such an approach helps students classify their historical knowledge into meaningful units.



# AMERICAN HISTORY

The American History division of the Young Readers collection focuses mainly on the early history of the United States, but also includes stories of discovery of the New World that were undertaken by Spanish and French explorers.

There are many stories of American history that are of terrific interest to students, but the ones most appealing to young readers are those of explorers, inventors, pioneers, and military heroes rather than statesmen. In most cases, the lives of the Founding Fathers are introduced to young students through personal anecdotes that emphasize character rather than a discussion of their role in government.

It is important to introduce the idea of a constitution and bill of rights to younger students, but they are unlikely to understand their significance until they have studied much more history. We recommend emphasizing American liberties and the right of electing leaders, but leaving a discussion of the American form of government to older students.



American history will likely be of great interest to young students because it is their own country. It should be pointed out, however, that the entire course of American history takes place in only a few hundred years—whereas the recorded history of some Ancient and European civilizations lasted over a thousand years. America also has a relatively peaceful and prosperous history, with few wars, famines, plagues, or military coups. This gives United States history more of an optimistic character than histories of other periods, which also makes it attractive to younger students.

The Heritage Classical Curriculum, because it draws on history books written prior to 1923, only deals with American History until the close of World War I. This is, however, a suitable break point, since the progressive, secular, liberalism that transformed the American system into our modern government did not gain a substantial foothold until the early twentieth century.

Virtually all of the American histories included in the Heritage collection were written from a traditional, patriotic viewpoint that celebrated American freedoms and individualism. This “simplistic” viewpoint, whatever its flaws, is at least comprehensible and attractive to young students and holds their interest in American history, whereas more “critical” modern accounts tend to bore and repel novice readers.

## MAJOR EVENTS OF EARLY AMERICAN HISTORY

Year	Event
1492	Columbus Discovers America
1500's	Spanish and French Explorations in Florida, Mexico, Canada
1520	Pilgrims arrive in Massachusetts
1607	Jamestown Colony
1664	British conquer Dutch colony, New Amsterdam becomes New York
1677	William Penn founds Pennsylvania colony
1776	Declaration of Independence—begin <i>Revolutionary War</i>
1783	States ratify the Constitution—George Washington president
1793	Eli Whitney invents the Cotton Gin
1804	Lewis and Clark explore the Louisiana Purchase
1812	<i>War of 1812</i>
1829	Andrew Jackson becomes first “commoner” president.
1837	Samuel Morse invents the Telegraph
1846	<i>Mexican American War</i> —Southwest annexed to the U.S.
1849	Gold Found in California, beginning of westward expansion
1861	Opening shot of the <i>American Civil War</i>
1869	First Intercontinental Railroad completed
1877	Retreat of Chief Joseph marks the last major Indian battle
1879	Thomas Edison introduces first commercial light bulb
1898	<i>Spanish American War</i> —Spain driven from Cuba, Philippines
1917	United States becomes involved in <i>World War I</i>
1920's	Roaring Twenties, age of prosperity and growth
1931	Great Depression, high unemployment and
1941	Pearl Harbor is bombed—U. S. becomes involved in <b>World War I</b>

## AMERICAN HISTORY SUBCATEGORIES

*Other than **Exploration**, which encompasses both early and later discoveries, the subdivisions of American history are mainly chronological. **Colonial**, **Revolutionary**, **Early Republic**, and **Civil War** eras, are divisions with obvious themes, easily understood by young readers. The later 19<sup>th</sup> century has diverse themes including reconstruction, invention, industrial development, and westward expansion. In histories for older students these periods might be broken up differently, but for younger students, the decades following the civil war can simply be called the age of **Progress**.*



## CHARACTERS FROM EARLY AMERICAN HISTORY

Character	Era	Short Biography
<b>Christopher Columbus</b>	Exploration	Sailed across Atlantic Ocean and discovered the Americas.
<b>Miles Standish</b>	Colonial	Military advisor to Plymouth colony. Arrived on the Mayflower.
<b>William Penn</b>	Colonial	Quaker and founder of the colony of Pennsylvania.
<b>Benjamin Franklin</b>	Revolution	Statesman, publisher, inventor, non-conformist, Founding Father and benefactor of Philadelphia.
<b>George Washington</b>	Revolution	Leader of Continental Army and first president.
<b>Daniel Boone</b>	Exploration	Explored Kentucky and Tennessee. Opened a road for settlers.
<b>Thomas Jefferson</b>	Revolution	Third president. Author of the Declaration of Independence.
<b>John Paul Johns</b>	Revolution	Revolutionary naval war hero.
<b>Eli Whitney</b>	Republic	Inventor of the cotton gin and interchangeable parts for rifles.
<b>Andrew Jackson</b>	Republic	War hero, president of U.S., and founder of Democratic Party.
<b>Merriwether Lewis</b>	Exploration	With <b>William Clark</b> , explored the Louisiana Purchase from the Missouri river to the Pacific ocean.
<b>Abraham Lincoln</b>	Civil War	President of the United States during the American Civil War.
<b>Clara Barton</b>	Civil War	War nurse and founder of the American Red Cross.
<b>Robert E. Lee</b>	Civil War	General of the Confederates during the American Civil War.
<b>Ulysses S. Grant</b>	Civil War	Commander of Union forces in the Civil War, and President.
<b>Thomas Edison</b>	Progress	Invented light bulb, movies, phonograph, and many others.
<b>Booker T. Washington</b>	Progress	Former slave who became leader of newly freed negroes.
<b>Theodore Roosevelt</b>	Progress	Progressive Republican Reformer, and 26th President.



# EUROPEAN HISTORY

The European History division of the Young Readers Curriculum includes dozens of stories from European history ranging in time from the fall of the Roman Empire to the First World War. Since European history is such a large topic and since the fates of various nations of Europe diverge significantly, the Heritage Classical Curriculum breaks the History of Europe into five different divisions: British Middle Ages, British Empire, Spanish Empire, Christian Europe, and Modern Europe. All of these divisions are grouped together in the Young Readers collection for the sake of simplicity.

European history is the most complex of the three major divisions covered in the Young Readers collection and most topics related to recent history are best left until high school. The European middle ages, with its monasteries, knights and chivalry, crusades, guilds, exploration, art, and architecture are easy enough to romanticize in such a way that they are of interest to very young students. It is more difficult to simplify modern themes, such as the reformation, the enlightenment, colonialism, and rise of secular democracies in such a way that they are perceptible to younger students. The most effective way to introduce them is simply to expose students to stories about the major characters of the age, and if appropriate, encourage them to identify the era. Just being able to recognize events, characters, and eras is plenty for younger students, who are not old enough to comprehend the political and philosophical dimensions of recent events.



European history is an enormously rich field for studying the impact of Christianity on Western Civilization and the evolution of modern society. Many important topics such as modern capitalism and world trade, republican political systems, secularism, and technological innovation have their roots in European culture. Such topics, however, are best left until students are old enough to comprehend them. The object of young readers should be to become familiar with a broad range of European characters, folklore, literature, nationalities, eras, and events. These topics need only to be introduced at a young age—they can be better organized and understood at a later date.

## MAJOR EVENTS OF EUROPEAN HISTORY

Year	Event
410	Visigoths invade Rome
451	Attila the Hun is defeated at the battle of <i>Chalons</i>
600	Frankish king Clovis converts to Christianity, France becomes Catholic
711	Moslems invade Spain
732	Moors driven back to Spain at the battle of <i>Tours</i>
800	Charlemagne crowned first Holy Roman Emperor
900	Death of Alfred the Great, who saved Britain from Vikings
1066	Norman Conquest of Britain at battle of <i>Hastings</i>
1096	First Crusade
1350	Black Plague
1431	Death of Joan of Arc, end of <i>Hundred Years War</i>
1492	Columbus discovers America
1517	Beginning of Protestant Reformation
1534	Henry VIII marries Anne Boleyn, breaks with Rome
1650	Peace of Westphalia—end of <i>Thirty Years War</i>
1757	Britain wins control of Indian colonies at battle of <i>Plassey</i>
1783	Britain loses colonies in <i>Revolutionary War</i>
1789	Beginning of French Revolution
1815	Napoleon defeated at battle of <i>Waterloo</i>
1914	Beginning of <i>First World War</i>

## EUROPEAN HISTORY SUBCATEGORIES

*European history can be divided either by region or by Era. The Heritage Curriculum uses both divisions. It is easy for young students to divide European history by region because by fourth grade most students have some idea of the nations of Europe. What they have a hard time understanding is that modern national borders are a recent development. For historical purposes, it is therefore best to divide Europe into four different geographic/historical divisions rather than along modern boundaries. These divisions are **Britain**, **Spain** (including Portugal), **Western Europe** (Germany, France, Italy, Netherlands), and **Eastern Europe** (Poland, Russia, Balkans, Scandinavia).*

*The division of Europe into historical eras can be complex, but it is not appropriate for young readers to attempt more than two or three eras. The three divisions we recommend are **Middle Ages** (5<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> centuries), **Reformation** (16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> centuries), and **Early Modern** (18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> centuries).*

## CHARACTERS FROM EUROPEAN HISTORY

Character	Era	Short Biography
<b>William the Conqueror</b>	Middle Ages	Claimed the crown of England and won it at the <i>Battle of Hastings</i> .
<b>The Black Prince</b>	Middle Ages	English general who ruled alongside his father, Edward III.
<b>Charlemagne</b>	Middle Ages	First Holy Roman Emperor. Unified Western Europe.
<b>Joan of Arc</b>	Middle Ages	Martyr who led French to victory in Hundred Years War.
<b>Saint Benedict</b>	Middle Ages	Monk whose followers founded monasteries.
<b>Frederick Barbarossa</b>	Middle Ages	Holy Roman Emperor. Died on Third Crusade.
<b>Charlemagne</b>	Middle Ages	Conquered Italy and Saxony, first Holy Roman Emperor.
<b>John Gutenberg</b>	Middle Ages	Invented printing press. Improved types, inks, methods.
<b>Henry VIII</b>	Reformation	King of England famed for marrying six wives.
<b>Elizabeth I</b>	Reformation	Led England during age of reformation and discovery.
<b>Sir Francis Drake</b>	Reformation	Sea adventurer. Sailed around the world. Fought in Armada.
<b>Martin Luther</b>	Reformation	Leader of the Protestant Reformation.
<b>Galileo Galilei</b>	Reformation	Promoted heliocentric theory. Invented the telescope.
<b>Oliver Cromwell</b>	Reformation	Parliament general during English Civil War. Led government after death of Charles I.
<b>John Calvin</b>	Reformation	Protestant Theologian. Influenced French Huguenots, Presbyterian Scots, and English Puritans.
<b>Maria Antoinette</b>	Early Modern	Queen of France. Beheaded during French Revolution.
<b>Napoleon Bonaparte</b>	Early Modern	Extraordinary general who rose to power after the French Revolution and nearly conquered all of Europe.
<b>Robert Clive</b>	Early Modern	British soldier, who delivered Bengal to Britain at <i>Plassey</i> .
<b>Captain James Cook</b>	Early Modern	Discovered Australia and New Zealand. Founded colonies.





## ANCIENT HISTORY

The Ancient History division of the Young Readers collection focuses primarily on Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome. It also encompasses other non-Biblical ancient civilizations such as Persia, Phoenicia, Babylon and Egypt, but in the Young Readers collection, Greece and Rome are the dominant civilizations.

Ancient history is especially attractive to young students, partly because it is so rich in mythology, and partly because it has an exceptionally interesting military history that is quite appealing, especially to boys. Both Greece and Rome rose on the strength of their exceptionally well organizing fighting forces, and both declined precipitously when their militaries became weak and corrupt. Their histories therefore, are full of the most fascinating kind of military adventures, which can easily be appreciated by younger students.

In terms of mythology, the attractions of ancient history are even greater. Few modern superheroes can compare with Hercules, Theseus, or Odysseus, and few modern villains are as interesting as ancient monsters such as Medusa, Cyclopes, the Minotaur and the Hydra. The creativity and variety of the ancient Greek storytellers is impressive by any measure, and many of the their tales are of eternal interest, seeing as they deal fundamental dilemmas of human existence. Even the stock stories and petty squabbles associated with the Greek gods—once they have been “cleaned up” for children—are both amusing and full of insight into human foibles.

Once students are ready to start learning comprehensive history, we recommend they begin with Greek history. Not only is Greek history attractive to younger students, but along with the biblical stories of Israel, it is truly the foundation of Western Civilization. It is important for older students to revisit Ancient History once they are able to fully appreciate the genius of the great authors—Herodotus, Aristophanes, Plato, Plutarch, Virgil, and others—but even younger students should understand overall timeline of history and the rich contribution of the ancients to the western way of life.



## MAJOR EVENTS OF ANCIENT GREECE

Year	Event
1000 BC	Trojan War
700 BC	Laws of Sparta established
490 BC	Persian War—Battle of Marathon
480 BC	Persian War—Battle of Thermopylae, Salamis
450 BC	Golden Age of Athens
404 BC	End of Peloponnesian War—downfall of Athenian Empire
401 BC	Retreat of the Ten Thousand Greeks from Persian territory
399 BC	Execution of the philosopher Socrates
334 BC	Alexander the Great conquers Persia

## MAJOR EVENTS OF ANCIENT ROME

Year	Event
750 BC	Kingdom of Rome established
510 BC	Roman Republic is founded. King is exiled.
280 BC	Rome conquers all of Italy
202 BC	End of Second Punic War
168 BC	Macedonia falls to Rome.
146 BC	Carthage and Corinth destroyed
52 BC	Julius Caesar conquers Gaul
44 BC	Julius Caesar assassinated
31 BC	Caesar Augustus gains undisputed control of Roman Empire
68	Death of Nero, last of the Caesars
313	Edict of Milan—Christianity is recognized by Roman Empire
410	Rome sacked by Visigoth army

## ANCIENT HISTORY SUBCATEGORIES

*The Subdivisions of Ancient history are primarily civilization based. The two primary ancient civilizations are **Greece** and **Rome**. Other civilizations such as **Egypt** and **Persia** could also be mentioned, but the Young Readers collection has few books from these categories. Many of the most famous characters from Greek and Roman history are legendary rather than historical. Those characters associated with the great Homeric **Epics** (the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*) are identified separately from the gods and demigods associated with the **Heroic** age of Greece.*

## CHARACTERS FROM GREEK AND ROMAN HISTORY

Character	Era	Short Biography
<b>Achilles</b>	Epic	Great Greek Warrior in the Trojan War. Invincible except for his heel.
<b>Odysseus</b>	Epic	Greek hero <i>Iliad</i> and <i>Odyssey</i> , famous for his wiles and craft.
<b>Hector</b>	Epic	Hero of Troy. Son of King Priam.
<b>Penelope</b>	Epic	Faithful wife of Odysseus. Kept suitors at bay for twenty years.
<b>Hercules</b>	Heroic	Greatest of Greek demigod heroes. Succeeded in twelve labors.
<b>Jason</b>	Heroic	Led a voyage of “Argonauts” on a quest to recover the Golden Fleece.
<b>Perseus</b>	Heroic	Hero who killed Medusa, a monster so ugly it turned people to stone.
<b>Theseus</b>	Heroic	Hero who killed the Minotaur. Ancient King of Athens.
<b>Helen</b>	Epic	Wife of Menelaus, who ran off with Paris. Caused the Trojan War.
<b>Solon</b>	Greek	Rewrote the laws of Athens to better protect poor citizens from rich.
<b>Xerxes</b>	Persian	Raised huge army for Persian invasion of Greece. Defeated at <i>Salamis</i> .
<b>Leonidas</b>	Greek	Spartan King whose army died defending the pass of Thermopylae.
<b>Alexander</b>	Greek	Greatest general of ancient times. Conquered Persian Empire.
<b>Socrates</b>	Greek	Philosopher who discussed the meaning of life and nature of truth.
<b>Romulus</b>	Roman	Legendary founder of the city of Rome, with brother Remus.
<b>Horatius</b>	Roman	Hero who held the Sublican Bridge against Porsena's entire army.
<b>Cincinnatus</b>	Roman	Soldier summoned while plowing his fields to be dictator of Rome.
<b>Hannibal</b>	Roman	Carthaginian general, invaded and laid waste to Italy for sixteen years.
<b>Julius Caesar</b>	Roman	Conquered Gaul, prevailed in civil war. Mastermind of Roman empire.
<b>Augustus</b>	Roman	First emperor. Reigned over fifty years. Established Imperial system.
<b>Constantine</b>	Roman	Emperor who unified the Roman Empire and supported Christianity.



## BIBLE AND SAINT STORIES

Biblical history is unique in that it purports to provide more than a simple record of events in the history of the nation of Israel. As history, the Bible is as accurate as any contemporaneous text by any measure of historical integrity. Its unusual position rests on its claim to interpret God's will and to show how God's providence works through individuals. For Christians, the Bible is "moral" history as well as a chronological history of the nation of Israel.

To those who believe that the God of Israel is the Creator of the Universe, the Bible is a sacred text. But even those who are skeptical of such claims should recognize the unique place of the Bible and the Christian Church in the history of Western Civilization. To teach western history without reference to them is a gross distortion and to dismiss them as irrelevant to modern life is willful ignorance.

The Judeo-Christian view of man is that he is both a spiritual and a physical creature and that material comforts can satisfy his physical needs, but only obedience to the will of his creator can satisfy man's spiritual needs. This is a philosophical proposition that is easily understood by young readers, and the stories of the Bible can be effectively simplified for younger children.

The stories of saints and Christian heroes are included in this category because they tend to emphasize spiritual rather than political history. Like the stories of the Bible, the stories of saints emphasize the manner in which God continues to work in the lives of his people.

Bible stories rewritten for children are always a favorite of elementary school students, and many are so well done that a solid understanding of both the Old Testament and New Testament is accessible even to very young children. Younger students are surprisingly adept at picking up ironic, moral, or humorous anecdotes. One only needs to read Aesop's fables to a kindergartener to realize how sensitive youngsters are to moral lessons. This is why Bible Stories are so well suited to Young Readers.





## BIBLICAL HISTORY SUBCATEGORIES

*The Subdivisions of Biblical history are based on the divisions of the Bible in a straight forward manner. The historical content of the Old Testament is divided into the **Pentateuch** or Books of Moses, and the **Prophets**, or history of the Nation of Israel. The **Gospels** of the New Testament needs no division. Lives of the Saints who lived after the Apostles are **post-Biblical**.*

## BIBLICAL CHARACTERS AND HISTORICAL SAINTS

Character	Era	Short Biography
<b>Isaac</b>	Pentateuch	Biblical patriarch. Son of Abraham and father of Jacob and Esau.
<b>Jacob</b>	Pentateuch	Patriarch whose sons formed the twelve tribes of Israel.
<b>Moses</b>	Pentateuch	Prophet who led the Hebrews out of Egypt, authored Pentateuch.
<b>David</b>	Prophets	Second king of Israel. Great warrior, musician, godly monarch.
<b>Esther</b>	Prophets	Persian queen who protected the Jews in her kingdom.
<b>Isaiah</b>	Prophets	Prophet of the 8th century B.C. Author of the book of Isaiah.
<b>Jonah</b>	Prophets	Prophet who was swallowed by a whale on his way to Ninevah.
<b>Ruth</b>	Prophets	Faithful heroine who became the grandmother of David.
<b>Solomon</b>	Prophets	Son of David, known for wealth and wisdom. Built the first temple.
<b>Daniel</b>	Prophets	Jewish hostage at Babylon. Minister of Babylon, interpreter, prophet.
<b>St John</b>	Gospels	Long-lived apostle who preached in Asia Minor. Authored gospel.
<b>St James</b>	Gospels	Apostle who preached in Spain before being beheaded by Herod.
<b>St Peter</b>	Gospels	Leader of the Apostles and first Pope of the Catholic Church.
<b>St Paul</b>	Gospels	Apostle who evangelized throughout the Empire. Wrote Epistles.
<b>St Patrick</b>	Post Biblical	Escaped from slavery in Ireland, returned to spread Christianity.
<b>St Benedict</b>	Post Biblical	Established the Benedictine order. Founded monasteries in Europe.
<b>St Christopher</b>	Post Biblical	Early Christian saint who bore the burdens of the Christ child.
<b>Francis of Assisi</b>	Post Biblical	Founded the Franciscan order of indigent Friars.
<b>St Augustine</b>	Post Biblical	Great theologian of the Middle ages. Wrote <i>Confessions</i> , <i>City of God</i> .



## HOW CHILDREN LEARN HISTORY

This section discusses the process by which children actually absorb historical information and explains how the selection and organization of books in the Young Readers Library is designed to make learning history easy and enjoyable. It is true that attentive students can learn history from textbooks rather than living books—most do in fact. Bright students are likely to pick up information from many sources and are often willing to learn whatever lessons are required in order to earn a good grade.

But when history is presented as a collection of facts and abstract issues there is a tendency for students to see history itself as a checklist of dull information and clichés—important to learn for the purpose of passing a test, but afterward disregarded. Many capable students see no purpose in continuing to study history after passing their AP History courses, because they never developed any real interest in the subject.

The goal of the Heritage Curriculum is not to spoon feed historical facts into a student as efficiently as possible; it is to foster interest in history and to encourage discovery based on curiosity rather than to-do lists. This is important to keep in mind when reading the following guidelines. They are intended to help parents understand how the living books approach is best suited to generating history lovers, rather than students who merely absorb a superficial knowledge of the past for the purpose of passing tests.

### STORY BASED HISTORY

When children get tested for their retention of historical knowledge they typically get tested on their retention of facts. Horatio Nelson was killed at the Battle of Trafalgar; Hernando Cortez conquered Mexico, Miles Standish arrived in the Mayflower, etc. But behind each one of these associations is a terrific and highly memorable story—sometimes a whole collection of stories.

The problem with highly condensed history—that is, the style of history that textbooks are typically written in—is that they tend to diminish stories to make room for facts and analysis. But the idea that students need to absorb facts rather than stories is a distortion of the truth. Memorizing facts may help a student become a winning contestant on jeopardy, but it is unlikely to provide him with useful insights into human nature and the behavior of complex civilizations. It is stories from history that portray personalities and events in their full complexity that provide the most valuable insight and instruction into the real problems of human society.

The point here is not to diminish facts in favor of mere propaganda. The modern trend of abandoning facts in favor of political posturing has done great mischief, but encouraging students to learn the whole stories of history rather than basic facts is not the same as distorting historical events for the purpose of social engineering. Conservatives tend to emphasize facts over concepts, and progressives tend to prefer concepts over facts, but at Heritage History, we believe the whole controversy is misguided. Almost all textbooks, whether they emphasize facts or *social studies*, condense the stories of history into mere sketches. Story-based history simply cannot be confined to a textbook—a whole library is required.

When textbooks omit the stories of history, either to present facts in the most succinct possible fashion or to provide interpretations and analysis, they neglect the vehicle for the greatest gift that history can give. It doesn't really matter, in the grand scheme of things, that the Spanish conquistador who conquered Mexico was named Cortez rather than Velazquez. But it matters a great deal who Cortez was, what he was like, and how he overpowered an advanced, powerful, and militant civilization of millions with a rag-tag army of undaunted Spaniards. The devil is in the details one might say—but certainly all the interest is in the details. The full story of the conquest of Mexico is fascinating on many levels—some of which are too advanced for youngsters. But simplified children's versions that preserve much of the drama of the original are available and are far more worthwhile to read than a highly condensed summary.

That is why virtually all of the books in the Heritage Library—from those written for the youngest children to those directed toward college prep high-schoolers—are story based, rather than textbook style. We think it is more important for students to learn at least some of the stories behind the major events of history than it is for them to memorize data that has no substance behind it. That is, we believe there is more value in learning the full story behind Hernando Cortez, Horatio Nelson, or Miles Standish than there is in memorizing the basic achievements of a dozen other conquistadors, naval heroes, or pioneers.

Obviously, stories written for the youngest of children must be simplified so that they omit a great deal of the most interesting aspects of history. The point is not that grammar school students need to read Plutarch's *Lives*, or Diaz's *Conquest of New Spain*. Historical accounts written for children often focus only on a few incidents or personal anecdotes rather than trying to tell the whole story. But from the very beginning, children should see history as drama rather than data. History is a panorama, not a point.

## HISTORICAL CATEGORIES

When children are exposed to new information, they usually only retain it if there is some category already in their mind for the new information to fit into. In other words, they need to know what kind of information it is in order to “store” it effectively. Once a child is aware of a country called France, for example, with its capital at Paris, and its Eiffel Tower, he will be able to digest more information about France if it is presented as a historical anecdote and his view of France will be gradually enhanced. If he is unaware of the significance of the Holy Roman, Austrian, and Prussia empires, he may have a much harder time piecing together incidents of German history into a coherent narrative. Since Germany lacks the unity and longevity of European states such as England, France and Spain, its history is more difficult for youngsters to comprehend.

The formation of categories in which to organize data occurs spontaneously, but it is a process that can be helped along with particular study aids. At Heritage History we help the process along by the use of maps and timelines, but also by the use of explicit historical divisions. All of the Heritage History Study Guides, including Young Readers, divide the subject into pre-defined historical eras. Historical summaries, timelines and character lists are identified for each division. These divisions help reinforce the idea of thematic categories for history so that students are conscious of how what they are learning fits into the “big picture.”

The Historical divisions for Young Readers are extremely broad—and this is appropriate for students who are just becoming familiar with world history. The four major categories we emphasize in the Young Reader collection are American, European, and Ancient History, and Bible/Saint Stories. In each section we provide a brief outline for ways in which these broad categories can be subdivided, but it is not necessary to provide a complicated framework for novice students. As students read more books in each section, the division of broad historical categories into more specialized topics will evolve naturally.

In the civilization-specific Curriculums which follow the Young Readers collection, much more attention is given to the idea of historical divisions. The major portion of the Study Guides for Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome, British Middle Ages, and British Empire curriculums are all organized by historical era. The divisions in these curriculums are intended to be used by middle school and high school students for reference and review. Younger students, can of course, refer to them also but they should not be expected to comprehend or be familiar with all the information therein.

A broad overview of the Heritage Classical Curriculum is given in the Curriculum Users Guide, and the uses of historical divisions for review are discussed in more detail.

## JUST ENOUGH INFORMATION

Even when a student has his historical categories squared away, the amount of new material he will be able to absorb may be limited and he will learn best if the rate at which he is exposed to new information is slow and steady rather than overwhelming. One of the biggest problems with history textbooks is they are designed to pack facts into a small space and are therefore very dense. The amount of information a particular student can absorb at a given age is not increased by throwing more at him than he can handle. This is why settling on a pace that is comfortable and enjoyable to an individual child is so important. Students do not enjoy reading books that are tedious or “over their head.” When too much information is presented in a short space, students who are unable to absorb and categorize material are unlikely to enjoy the subject.

Most learning aids are organized around the belief that helping students organize the facts presented to them will help them learn more efficiently, but even learning aids such as maps and timelines can only do so much. Each child’s brain develops at a different pace and no learning aids or curriculum will force a student to absorb and retain more information than he is ready to process. Just as some students learn to read well in first grade and others learn in fourth grade, the age at which student can synthesize historical information varies. When students are taught history on a strict grade-level basis, some will absorb nearly everything and some will retain almost nothing. Only when their curriculum is customized to take into account individual abilities, can children learn at maximum efficiency. In some subjects it is very difficult to accommodate individual learning styles, but in a reading-based subject like history, it is relatively easy.

The good news is that most students are naturally drawn to books that are “just right” for their level of sophistication. The necessity of giving students a broad selection of worthwhile material underlies the whole Heritage History approach. It is essential for students to read books that genuinely interest and engage them. Presenting material that is too challenging or unappealing to a particular student is not only useless, it can be counter-productive. There are so many excellent books written for students of all abilities that every child should have a wide selection of appropriate material.

## HISTORICAL GENRES

Many of the books in the Young Readers library are anthologies rather than comprehensive histories. That is, they are collections of stories with no explicit relationship to each other. For example, in the book *Stories from French History*, historical tales are presented in chronological order but the author does not make any attempt to “connect the dots”. However, the stories do introduce many of the most important characters and events of France so that when students revisit European history at a later time they will have some guiding lights. Several of the books in the Young Readers collection include anecdotes from history that illustrate human virtues and vices and so are useful for moral as well as historical instruction.

Other common genres include biographies, legends, adapted literature, Bible stories and historical fiction. In each case we have selected versions that were written specifically for grammar school students and have been skillfully simplified for a young audience. Virtually all of the books in the Young Readers collection cover topics that should be revisited at a more detailed level with when students are older, but in the meantime provide a good introduction to famous characters and events.

The legends and adapted literature included in the Young Readers collection are based on classical literature of great historical significance. Certain famous works of literature, such as the *Iliad*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, and *Don Quixote* were so widely read by previous generations that they are staples of the Western Canon. Such works are historically significant and an important part of *cultural literacy*, an idea promoted by the well-known “What Your Nth grader needs to Know” series. Heritage History takes a more individualized approach to learning, but shares many of the general goals as the author of this series.

The Young Readers library also includes several exceptionally good historical fiction series that are intended to help younger students ease the transition from chapter books to historical topics. Each work of fiction in the collection features a character growing up in a historically significant period. All are told from a child's viewpoint and discuss customs and occurrences that would be of particular interest to youngsters, rather than emphasizing the most historically significant events. This is because the purpose of most of these books is to familiarize younger students with a historical setting rather than to impart historical facts. By helping students to develop pictures in their mind of various time periods, they lay the groundwork for more detailed histories to come.

The individual biographies in the Young Readers collection were selected because their subject was a man or woman “of action” whose life story would be of considerable interest to younger students. They are fast-moving rather than contemplative, and emphasize adventure and daring-do in order to appeal to younger students. The biographies are among the more challenging of the books in the Young Readers collection, and are likely to be of great interest to older students as well.

## HISTORICAL CRITICISM

The modern method of history instruction involves pointing out associations, themes and lessons of history to students even in grammar school. There is a strong desire among many educators that students learn, not only “what” happened, but “why” it happened. For this reason modern textbooks frequently devote as much time to explanations of events as to the events themselves. This is a trend with which we disagree, and the authors of books in the Young Readers collection spend little time explaining “root causes” or “social factors” that influenced historical events. Reasons why we believe that teaching analytical history to younger students is not appropriate are given as follows:

First, interpretations of historical events are invariably world view dependent, whereas simple stories from history are much less so. We strongly believe that students do best when they are taught an explicit world view rather than learning to infer one from second-hand interpretations. History is a fascinating subject to analyze *in light* of a given world view. It is a very clumsy tool to use to impart one.

Secondly, most grammar school children are concrete thinkers and are bound to misunderstand complicated political, social, and human factors that are thrust on them at too early of an age. Political philosophy is no more appropriate to teach to elementary school students than calculus. The “grammar” stage is perfect for learning facts and stories, and time spent on “rhetorical” arguments is largely wasted. Stages of learning cannot and should not be rushed.

Third, young students are inherently naïve about politics and naturally gullible. A mature view of history will require them to be skeptical of one-sided explanations and wary of political posturing, but this wisdom can only develop gradually over time as students mature and learn to balance trust and distrust in their community and institutions. Forcing the issue too early will produce apparatchiks and cynics, but not thoughtful or reflective young people.

Modern educators are likely to object to any contention that older histories are “less biased” than modern histories and to some certain extent they are correct. Whether Cortez, Napoleon, or the pope is a hero or a villain certainly depends on world view, and older authors had very definite ideas on these subjects. But writing children’s history stories from a flagrantly Protestant, pro-imperial, or Whiggish point-of-view is not the same as the verbose scoldings of modern historians that are intended to “balance” innate patriotic sentiments. It takes very few words to convince fifth graders that they should be proud of their nation’s traditional heroes, but many bewildering words to convince them otherwise. We are strong advocates of self-reflection and internal criticism—at an appropriate age and with a broad knowledge of history already absorbed. When imposed on young and ignorant students it is worse than ineffective—it is boring.

## REMEMBERING AND FORGETTING

Much to the frustration of instructors, it is sometimes difficult to tell just how much history a student comprehends and remembers. Classroom history teachers often prefer textbooks just because they are organized to present “testable” facts efficiently. Even if students do learn more effectively from story based history, until a way is found to objectively evaluate story-based learning, classroom teachers are likely to stick with textbook methods.

Homeschoolers have ways of evaluating their student’s progress that are not available to teachers with a large number of students. The Charlotte Mason method, for example, recommends oral review to evaluate learning. However, even this technique has some limitations:

I once asked our fourth grader (a day-dreamer *extraordinaire*) to relate to me a story he had just read from one of his Greek history books. He gave an interesting account about “some guys” who defended Athens from the Persians: “Some guys” went to see “a guy” who told them they would be saved by wooden walls. “The guy” said they should build some ships. When the Persians arrived “the guy” wanted to attack but “the other guys” didn’t want to, so “the guy” got his “slave guy” to tell the “Persian guy” they were going to run away . . . eventually the “Greek guys” won and the “Persian guy” went back to Persia. I was able to follow the story well enough, but when I tried to get him to identify all these “guys”, or even the name of the battle he had just described he was at a complete loss.

Maybe our young man would have been able to remember familiar names—such as “Stark” and “Bunker Hill” better than strange Greek names such as “Themistocles” and “Salamis”, but a great many names from history are either unusual or confusingly repetitive (Louis, Henry, etc.). This experience shows the difficulty of evaluating how much history children really absorb when they learn from stories rather than textbooks. When students read interesting stories they are far more likely to remember the essence of the story rather than superficial details—especially over time. And even when they do retain much, students with poor communication skills may be unable to reiterate all that they learned.

At Heritage History we believe that it is better to read story-based history than to study from textbooks, whether or not it is easy to discern the full extent of a student’s learning. First of all, as this example illustrates, the student did get a great deal of value from the story, even if he forgot the labels. He knows the Greeks beat the Persians in a great naval battle. He knows the Greeks depended on prophecies to make decisions about strategy. He knows there was trickery and intrigue involved in their affairs. These are the essential ideas behind history, not names and dates.



Second, the Heritage program involves reading history for several hours a week over many years. Our day-dreamer will inevitably tackle Greek history again sometime in the future and will re-read these stories with more maturity and sophistication. The Heritage program involves a mix of new learning, in depth learning, and review of all historical eras. The Young Readers program is mostly “new learning,” but virtually all of the material will be covered again in later years.

Finally, as long as a student is reading age and interest appropriate material, he will absorb as much information as he is capable of. Some students will retain more than others. Some can communicate what they have learned better than others, but there is no magic method of forcing a student to absorb and process more than he is capable of at any given time. Parents, instructors, books, and learning aids can only do so much. At some point it is the students himself, working with his God-given faculties that must do the learning. Teachers who have provided the best possible opportunities for learning have done all they can do.

## HOW CHILDREN DIFFER

In the previous section we discussed methods of learning that pertain to all children and how the Heritage Classical Curriculum, and the Young Readers collection in particular, is suited to grammar school age learning. In this section we will discuss differences between students, and how the Heritage program can be adapted for individual interests, preferences, and learning styles.

One of the wonderful things about history is that it is a very easy subject to adapt to individual interests and abilities. The process of designing a history curriculum for large groups of students—in either a public or a private school setting—is that teachers are required to normalize the material, limit it to the essentials, and spoon feed selected facts and ideas so that students may be tested on their common knowledge. In other words, the first thing a classroom instructor needs to do when teaching history is to put aside the differences between students and focus on their common abilities.

Obviously, talented classroom teachers can do much to spur individual interest, but by necessity, it is a secondary concern. It is simply impossible to teach any subject as multi-faceted as history to a large group of students without simplifying and bringing history within a narrow scope, appropriate for the average child. The point of this section is to do the opposite—to explore the full range of student abilities and interests, and to help instructors customize learning programs that are of special interest to individual students rather than groups of students.

### GIRLS AND BOYS

Not all students' interests fall neatly within their own gender's traditional categories, but there is, in general, a wide divergence between the native interests of boys and girls. There is a great deal of overlap of course—many historical tales appeal to just about everyone, and learning the basic outline of western history is essential to all students. The issue of boy-girl preferences becomes most relevant when choosing supplemental material and encouraging independent reading. The basics are the same for boys and girls, but the *electives* can vary considerably.

While girls tend to enjoy the personal drama of history, most boys prefer action. The two are of course related. Many stories from history have plenty of both, and so are appealing to both boys and girls. High-action stories, however, are often intentionally written to appeal to boys and contain rather extraordinary feats of valor and dire misdeeds. Boys seldom need much encouragement to delve into stories that feature pirates, cannibals, sword fights, despicable villains, harrowing sea-battles, horrific trench warfare and general dangers. Fortunately, many such stories are terrific sources of information as well as entertainment, and are a great way to get boys hooked on history. These same stories, however, frequently have limited appeal to girls, who often find combat and blood-letting distasteful.

The features that most reliably attract girls to history are dramatic stories and interesting character development. Girls are often just as interested in mythology, legends, and hero stories as boys are because the stories are dramatic and involve plenty of romantic heroes and appalling villains. But true stories from history are most interesting to girls if the character at the center of the story is of unusual interest. A chivalrous knight is a more attractive hero to most girls than a brilliant general.

The most dramatic difference between girls and boys in regards to historical preferences has to do with war. Almost all boys are *interested* in war, even if they are not particularly aggressive and personally disapprove of most wars. Many girls on the other hand, are repelled by the idea of wars, disinterested in war stories, and generally disapprove of boys' fascination with the subject. This is somewhat unfortunate since *war is an exceedingly important aspect of history and boys gain a real advantage in understanding historical conflicts by studying them.*

At Heritage History we believe that the great difference in attitude towards war should be respected and accommodated as much as possible, without denying the enormous importance of war within history. No matter how much one loves peace, it must be acknowledged that war is an essential facet of history, and girls who would prefer not to study it—that is most girls—are cutting themselves off from understanding an enormously significant aspect of human civilization. That said, we do not believe it is wise to force the issue one way or another. Uninterested girls should not have to deal with war stories except at an introductory level, and fascinated boys should have free rein to bury themselves in war stories.

It is an over-statement to say that history, because it is more-or-less based on true facts, is a “boy” subject, whereas literature, because it deals more profoundly with human drama is a “girl” subject, but there is certainly an element of truth to the assertion. When left to their own devices, boys are generally more interested in true stories and non-fiction than girls are, and they are certainly more interested in the many “unpleasant” aspects of history that girls sometimes find disturbing.

Instead of denying these tendencies, we recommend allowing both boys and girls to follow their own interests, once the essential stories of history have been taught to all. If girls prefer historical fiction, mythology, legends, and biographies, then these interests should be encouraged. If boys prefer pirates, knights, hoplite battles, stories of adventure, and horrific trench warfare, then so be it. All should read a few core texts to familiarize themselves with the basics, but their optional reading should reflect each student's genuine preferences.

## APTITUDE AND RETENTION

As many frustrated parents already know, the ability to read and the ability to retain the essential information that one has read are two different abilities. Some students read a book and seem to remember every detail. Others may read the same books and will have a hard time recalling and reiterating its most basic facts. What can be done to help poor learners remember more of what they read?

First, simplifying a student's reading material is an option. There is a tendency, especially among ambitious parents, to want to "challenge" their children so they won't be bored, but this can backfire. A student will learn more from a book that they can easily grasp than they can from one that is over their head. Sometimes this means that slower students should spend more time reading children's biographies and episodic histories—which focus on a few incidents in detail, and fewer comprehensive histories, that present many different stories and facts.

The Heritage History Young Readers collection is full of fascinating books, and many can appeal to older students and even adults. The biographies included in the Young Readers collection are the perfect size for someone of any age who wants to read the story of a fascinating character in forty pages instead of two hundred. If children's books are dumbed down or patronizing they will not interest older students, but all the books in the Young Reader collection are appealing to readers of any age. It is perfectly appropriate to encourage students to read worthwhile books "below" their reading level, especially if they are getting bogged down or struggling for any reason.

Second, repetition is key to helping some students grasp the material. Many students simply will not remember something they are exposed to only once. The method that Heritage History uses to help students retain information is to make sure they read similar material at least twice. Instead of reading the same book, we suggest that older students read two or more books that cover similar material. When dealing with younger students, however, reading the same book more than once may be very effective. Books that are enjoyable the first time are often even more enjoyable the second. As long as students are encouraged to read books that they enjoy they will likely be willing to read a particularly important book more than once.

Third, if your student enjoys a particular book in a series there is a good chance that he will enjoy others by the same author or from the same series. The majority of the books in the Young Readers collection are part of a series and more information about these book sets can be found on the Series Descriptions page of the Young Readers Compact Library.

Fourth, patience is important. Some students are late bloomers, and others, even after they are more mature, will never possess outstanding memory or reasoning ability. In either case, there is no terrific rush to "get through" historical material in a pre-defined period of time. As long as a student is making progress, proceeding at a pace that is comfortable for his individual abilities is critical to holding his interest. One of the great benefits of the Heritage Program is just

this—students really can proceed at their own pace. At Heritage History we have kept the grade and age-level designations for our introductory, intermediate, and advanced books intentionally vague, and each of the civilization-based Compact Libraries includes dozens of books at all reading-levels.

It is a disservice to children of all ages and capabilities to hold their progress in history up to a golden standard so they can be identified as “ahead” or “behind” their age group. History is so poorly taught in most schools that it is meaningless to discern how a sixth grader who has been learning *social studies* for six years compares to a homeschooled 11-year-old who has read dozens of books from the Young Readers collection and worked their way through a year of Ancient Greece. Likewise, an exceptionally bright high-schooler who aces his AP History tests but then abandons the subject altogether cannot be compared with an average student who becomes a lifelong military history buff, but never masters the modern art of “historical criticism”.

It is certainly desirable for all students to become familiar with the outline of western history, but there are any number of paths a student might take to get there, and having a superficial framework of events, while useful, is not the same as having an in depth understanding of them. Mastery of history is an excellent goal to work toward, but it is ultimately unattainable. It is just when a student becomes self-satisfied with his understanding of history that his knowledge becomes an obstacle rather than a pathway to greater learning.

### SOCIABILITY AND INTROSPECTION

A final way that students differ in their approach to learning history is their sociability. Some students are very motivated by peer interest and others are almost entirely self-reliant. History, more than most other fields of study is a “social” subject—that is, a knowledge of history can be a common bond between friends. Probably the most obvious example of this might be boys playing at war—a situation where detailed knowledge of actual battles, generals, and outcomes can affect strategy and endow status. When you have a group of ten-year-old boys who all know details of some famous Greek battles it can lead to some very interesting and instructive role-play.

On the other extreme, some children are independent, reflective, and internally motivated to pursue their own interests, rather than those of a larger group. Introverts sometimes enjoy being the only one who knows obscure facts and knowledge of unfamiliar cultures—all of history is a feast of information for solitary day-dreamers. The study of history can be of great interest to both extroverts and introverts, but it is helpful to know which type of student you are dealing with when helping him select appropriate material.

Extroverted, socially-oriented students may benefit from group learning, which is not necessarily the same as classroom learning. Many homeschool co-operatives use a common curriculum and the Heritage program is perfectly suited to such a co-operative—even one

whose purpose is primarily social rather than academic. If older students are involved it may be appropriate to choose a civilization-based curriculum, each of which includes reading lists for all age groups. If a co-operative consists mainly of grammar school students then the Young Readers collection is a good choice. Families can agree on which books should be read in common so that students will have a shared learning experience. In terms of group activities, projects, or lectures, co-op leaders can be as ambitious or lackadaisical as they desire—the benefit of common learning can be experienced formally or informally.

Introverted students, on the other hand, are often good readers, and it is not difficult to inspire children to do more of what they are good at. If introspective students are given a wide selection of reading materials and motivated appropriately they have great potential to become lifelong history enthusiasts.

All history students, whether introverts or extroverts, should be required to do a minimum amount of history reading every week—instructors should not rely on native interest and incentives alone. But providing appropriate external motivators can help turn a good history student into an exceptional one. Each family is different so it is hard to generalize on the subject of providing incentives—one student might be motivated by privileges, treats, or money—others might be motivated by access to video games. The difference between introverts and extroverts in terms of incentives can be quite stark. Extroverts, for example, may be motivated by play dates or games that they can enjoy in the short term, while introverts are usually more willing to work towards long term goals.

History, by its nature, is a social subject. It is the essence of “common culture” and the recorded expression of all known human experience. Learning history can create bonds not only between friends but also between generations—and perhaps most importantly—between the living and those that lived before us. The idea that our forefathers have much to teach the living is an alien concept to the narcissistic generation that currently controls most government sponsored educational institutes, but it is the essence of traditional wisdom.

History, unlike fashion, popular culture, social networking, and contemporary politics is a permanent reserve of knowledge and insight of enduring interest. Friends, fashion, technology and political exigencies come and go, but history remains—as rich in wisdom and warning for our generation as it was for our forefathers. It is social at its very heart, in a way that transcends time and personal circumstance. In this sense, an introvert reading history alone in his room is being every bit as “social” as a group of ten-year olds re-enacting a hoplite battle—in the grand scheme of things, probably more so.





## WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

The Heritage Classical Curriculum has been designed to make learning history as easy as possible. There is much flexibility built into the program and virtually no busy-work. Every student, regardless of background or aptitude, who reads a selection of these excellent books will benefit from them. But in order to gain the most value from a self-directed history education, a serious time commitment is necessary. The goal of the Heritage History is to encourage a life-long interest in history, but until students are mature enough to work independently, it is the job of parents to provide an impetus to learning.

Given the information provided about how children learn history in the previous sections, the obvious things that parents can do to help their students make progress in history are: 1) help them make appropriate reading selections; 2) hold them accountable for a certain amount of weekly reading; and 3) read history along with them.

But there is one more thing that parents can do that is less obvious. In order to be the best possible mentor to their children, parents can take the opportunity to learn history for themselves. Instead of just reading along with their students, adults can use the Heritage Classical Curriculum to pursue their own interests and increase their own breadth of knowledge. Nothing will help parents guide their students through a program of history better than firsthand knowledge and a personal interest in the subject.

## MAKING SELECTIONS

The Heritage Curriculum encourages students to choose the books which most interest them from a selection of high quality texts. For older students this is a simple process, but younger students will almost certainly need help. Most grammar school age children are more comfortable with conventional books than electronic libraries, and may have difficulty selecting the most appropriate books from the available descriptions. Parents, on the other hand, can easily survey the options, and knowing their children's preferences, help select and prepare reading assignments.

Most middle-school students can use e-reader devices and many even prefer them to conventional books. Some younger children can also use e-readers, but others—especially those who are easily distracted—do much better with printed copies. Older students are often able to download or print and bind the e-books that they have selected, but a younger student will almost surely need a parent's help. Even if a parent takes an active role in selecting and reproducing books for their students we recommend allowing students some choice in their reading material. Giving children a choice of books to read—even a carefully screened choice—helps them see history as a field of variety and interest rather than a narrow assignment.

## PROVIDING ACCOUNTABILITY

The most important thing that parents need to do to help their students make steady progress in history is to provide accountability. Reading history can be very enjoyable but most school age children have many distractions and will not persevere without consistent guidance. Even students who read willingly and enjoy history need help staying focused. The Heritage History library provides a selection of readable and enjoyable histories that can entertain as well as inform. But even engaging history books are no match for video games, social networking, fantasy novels or personal hobbies.

It is certainly true that some history books are appealing enough to read for pure entertainment. Boys, in particular, have been known to read books about pirates, wars, naval adventures, mythical heroes and other sensational endeavors strictly for enjoyment. These high octane history stories are certainly worthwhile, but there is also a great deal of value in more reflective histories, such as biographies and comprehensive histories. A balanced history education needs to include staples as well as indulgences.

In order for a student to thrive in history and make steady progress in his learning goals, parents must make history reading a regular part of each student's weekly schedule and hold students accountable. For older students we suggest three hours a week minimum, with incentives provided for additional reading time. This may be too ambitious for some younger students—parents should decide a level of commitment that both they and their children are comfortable with and stick with it. History is learned best through a long term commitment to consistent study rather than in jumps and starts.

The topic of incentives is a difficult one to generalize upon because it depends on both individual and family preferences. One student might willingly read hours of history a day if history-reading time is tied to computer or video privileges, while another might remain indifferent. Some students are difficult to motivate with external rewards while others are anxious to earn credits. For this reason, one should never depend *only* on incentives. A minimum reading requirement is essential no matter what approach is taken to encourage additional efforts.

Heritage History has provided several accountability forms which were designed to help students and their instructors track progress. The reproducible Book Selection register can be used to create a permanent record of all of the books related to history that a student reads during the year. The Weekly Reading register can be used to record how many hours of history reading per week a given student actually does. More information about using these forms is provided in the Preparation and Scheduling section of the Curriculum Users Guide along with a few other tips for tracking student progress. Copies of these forms can be found on the Compact Library and in the appendix of this Teacher's Guide.

## LEARNING AS A FAMILY

There are many different approaches to learning history and the Heritage History curriculum can be used with a variety of different styles. It is not strictly necessary that parents become involved with their children's history lessons beyond helping with selections and providing accountability, but there are many benefits to doing so. History is, as noted previously, a "social" subject. One of the benefits of learning history as a family is that it fosters this social aspect and provides a subject of common interest.

The idea of learning as a family can take many forms. Parents with very young children—even those who don't read well—may read history aloud with them. Almost all of the history stories in the Young Readers collection are appropriate for this purpose. Families with older children can also read more advanced histories together.

As students mature and become more independent, parallel learning can be just as interesting as group learning. Having individual family members each read and retell their own history selections is one alternative to having everyone study the same history at the same time. History selections that all members of the family read together can be entertaining and informative, but family history discussions that cover many disparate topics may be even more so.

A final benefit of learning as a family and conversing regularly with your children on the subject of history is that such communication provides the best possible way of reflecting your own values and world view through history. The idea that a history book can "teach" a specific world view is flawed—history is best interpreted through the lens of a pre-existing world view rather than used as a tool to impart one. But that said, history provides an almost infinite field of reflection on human achievements and foibles. Obviously, older students will be able to understand issues related to world view and politics better than younger students but very young students are quite capable of understanding irony, morals, and wit. The fact that Aesop's fables and Bible Stories for children are so popular with young children is proof that they are quite adept at seeing purpose and moral values in human activity.

Families, as well as individuals vary greatly in their approach to learning. Some are activity oriented and enjoy field trips and special projects, while others are homebodies. Some prefer to integrate history into a unit study, while others consider it an individual subject. Some families are talkative while others are more inclined toward individual reflection. Some families are likely to delve deeply into the Heritage History library and read dozens of the available books, while others will probably only avail themselves of a much smaller selection. We hope that whatever approach your family takes to learning history, the Heritage History library can incite interest and expand horizons.

## RECOVERING A LOST GENERATION

*What we need is to have a culture before we hand it down. In other words, it is a truth, however sad and strange, that we cannot give what we have not got, and cannot teach to other people what we do not know ourselves.* —G. K. Chesterton.

We have already covered the essentials—providing accountability and making sure children spend the necessary time to learn history is the most important thing that parents can do. But there is one more thing of enormous significance that parents can do for their own benefit as well as that of their families, and that is to study history themselves. The Heritage Classical Curriculum provides a marvelous opportunity for parents to teach themselves the history stories they never had the opportunity to learn—while at the same time helping their own children.

Each civilization-specific library in the Heritage collection was intentionally designed to include reading material that appeals to older students and adults as well as children. The Heritage curriculum is intended to encourage a life time interest in history, and this means engaging mature readers as well as novices.

Besides the inherent value of learning history for one's own edification, children benefit from having a parent actively engaged in history. Children learn to value what their parents value and leading by example is worth any number of exhortations. If parents find history enlightening and worthwhile, their actions as well as words will communicate this interest to their children.

A small minority of contemporary parents already have an outstanding education in history—but such persons are unlikely to need much encouragement to continue studying the subject. The main thing an excellent background in history provides is a clear vision of how much more of interest still remains. Unfortunately, parents with a poor education in history are much more common and they frequently don't have any idea what they are missing. Simplistic “lesson-plan-in-a-can” history curriculums are most appealing to parents with a very limited view of history; but parents who want more for their children should want more for themselves as well.

The fact is, most parents who were educated in public schools after the 1960's came of age during a time when learning authentic history rather than *social studies* was out of vogue. One only needs to read a few of the history books included in the Heritage History library to realize how seriously deficient one's knowledge of history really is. Most of the books in the Heritage collection were widely available in children's libraries at the turn of the century, but very few history books of comparable value were still in school libraries in the 70's and 80's. And fewer still, on subjects other than American history, exist today. Our generation simply had no opportunity to learn classical history in the manner of our grandparents and great-grandparents.

This was certainly the case with the founders of Heritage History, so for parents who are concerned about their own lack of historical knowledge, we hope to serve as an encouraging example. We ourselves did not begin seriously studying history until our mid 30's when we began homeschooling. And one of the things that we have come to realize since that time is that the collective ignorance of our entire generation regarding history is astonishing—even many of the “brightest” students who have attended the “best” Universities have a very poor background in history.

We, at least, have the excuse of being technical graduates, but even many history majors of our age—who were encouraged to focus on esoteric or contemporary topics rather than general subjects—lack breadth and historical perspective. Most modern Universities so are committed to promoting “specialization” and “innovation” at the expense of general knowledge and traditional wisdom that they are no longer capable of teaching or even understanding classical history. The whole notion of history and the modern University's idea of what constitutes valuable knowledge has been transformed into something that would be unrecognizable, and undoubtedly deplored, by our forefathers.

Given that we live in an age where Universities see their role as providing credentials rather than promoting classical knowledge, anyone who desires to learn traditional history as an adult is probably better off learning independently. For a motivated student, the Heritage Classical Curriculum can provide a better opportunity for learning the stories from history that inspire, enlighten, and entertain, than a college classroom. Traditional history has been suppressed and derided by the modern educational establishment, yet for all its genuine faults, it remains a more interesting and edifying field than most of the social sciences and academic specialties that displaced it.

In terms of breadth and readability, the selection of books in the Heritage History library compares favorably with the history section in almost any modern library or bookstore. And parents who are who are interested in studying history themselves should know this as well—many of the books in the Heritage library that are designated for beginning and intermediate students can also be of great interest to adults who are not already familiar with the subject. One doesn't need to confine oneself to “advanced” history, just because one is advanced in age.

Reading full-fledged adult histories can be time consuming since most devote much space to details, quotes, and opinions. In contrast, story-based juvenile histories are easy to read, get right to the point, and are devoid of tedious analysis. The fact is, most adults with a mature view of human nature will be able to understand juvenile history better than their children can. This is because they have more insight into politics, institutional duplicity and human foibles than younger persons do so they can read between the lines, particularly when studying political conflicts and infighting that are somewhat above the heads of ingenuous children.

Furthermore, mature adults with a coherent world view are likely to enjoy history just as much, and get more out of reading history stories, than young people. This is not to say that the study of history should be put off until middle age—only that life experience does bring its own insights. Many subjects, such as math, music, and foreign languages are best learned when one is young, when the mind is sharpest and large blocks of time can be given to concentrated study. But history is different. What is required to get the fullest appreciation of history is discernment, not mental acuity. It is a valuable subject to teach the young, but a subject whose insights grow keener, not duller, with age.

The mission of Heritage History is to help re-popularize traditional juvenile history with adults as well as children. It is easier to correct systematic problems in an educational system early on, rather than in midlife, so we emphasize traditional history's appeal to a "new generation". But in truth, we haven't given up on the "old generation". Our goal is to help produce history lovers of all ages. It is never too late to learn history.

## ACCOUNTABILITY FORMS

*The following pages may be reproduced to help keep track of students' weekly and quarterly history reading objectives.*

### **Book Selection Register:**

When a student selects a book to read he enters it in his Book Selection Register. When he completes the books he writes comments if desired. Each form registers up to five books.

<b>Title:</b> <i>Plutarch's Lives</i>	<b>Category:</b> <i>suggested</i>	<b>Length:</b> <i>90 pgs</i>
<b>Author:</b> <i>W. H. Weston</i>	<b>Start:</b> <i>11-10</i>	<b>Finish:</b> <i>11-19</i>
<b>Comments:</b> <i>Only read the chapters on Greeks: Aristides, Themistocles, Alexander, Timoleon, and Philopœmen.</i>		

### **Weekly Reading Register:**

Each day that a student reads history, he should write down the number of minutes he spent reading, and the name of the book and author. The "length" of the book can be tracked either by recording printed pages, or in the case of e-books (which don't have fixed page numbers), by recording chapters. Students can make up to five entries per week using this form.

Date	Mon	Tues	Thu	Sat		Weekly Total
Time	<i>1:20</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>1:45</i>		<i>4:35</i>
Author/ Title	<i>Church Iliad</i>	<i>Church Iliad</i>	<i>Colum Golden Fleece</i>	<i>Colum Golden Fleece</i>		<i>Finished Iliad</i>
Length	<i>Ch 10- 19</i>	<i>Ch 20- 26</i>	<i>Ch 1-5</i>	<i>Ch 6-16</i>		<i>Iliad-16 Fleece-16</i>

### **Weekly Reading Long Form:**

The Weekly Reading long form contains much of the same information as the Weekly Reading Register, but organized differently, with more room to write information about reading topics.

Instructors can also create their own forms to personalize tracking methods.





## BOOK SELECTION REGISTER

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Category:</b>	<b>Length:</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Start:</b>	<b>Finish:</b>
<b>Comments:</b>		

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Category:</b>	<b>Pages:</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Start:</b>	<b>Finish:</b>
<b>Comments:</b>		

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Category:</b>	<b>Pages:</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Start:</b>	<b>Finish:</b>
<b>Comments:</b>		

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Category:</b>	<b>Pages:</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Start:</b>	<b>Finish:</b>
<b>Comments:</b>		

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Category:</b>	<b>Pages:</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Start:</b>	<b>Finish:</b>
<b>Comments:</b>		



WEEKLY READING REGISTER

<b>Date</b>						<b>Weekly Total</b>
<b>Time</b>						
<b>Author/ Title</b>						
<b>Length</b>						

<b>Date</b>						<b>Weekly Total</b>
<b>Time</b>						
<b>Author/ Title</b>						
<b>Length</b>						

<b>Date</b>						<b>Weekly Total</b>
<b>Time</b>						
<b>Author/ Title</b>						
<b>Length</b>						



WEEKLY READING

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Day	Minutes	What I Read
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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