

## Civics/American Government—Schedule for Topics and Skills<sup>1</sup>

Week	History/Social Studies	Geography
1	Introduction to American Government in the 19th Century; Introduction to American Government in the 20th Century; Introduction: the Political Crisis	<i>United States, Germany, Russia, Sweden, England, Ecuador</i>
2	Introduction: the Political Crisis; Significance of Written Constitution; Powers of Congress; the Constitution (Art. I); Powers of the President; Authority of the Courts; A Mixed Government	<i>England, United States, Ecuador</i>
3	The Constitution (Arts. II-VII); A Republic; A Federal System of Government; A Limited Government; the Bill of Rights; Constitutional Amendments 1-3	<i>United States, Ecuador</i>
4	The Bill of Rights; Constitutional Amendments 4-10; Judeo-Christian Background; Greek Rationalism; Socrates; Plato; Aristotle	<i>Greece, Ecuador</i>
5	Cicero; the Philosopher Kings; the Middle Ages	<i>Rome, Ecuador</i>
6	The Middle Ages; the Renaissance; the Reformation	<i>Europe</i>
7	The Age of Reason; the Magna Carta; the English Heritage; the Political and Religious Backdrop of the Founding of the United States; the Reformation's Role in Advancing Political and Religious Liberty	<i>Paris, England</i>
8	Martin Luther's Protest; Calvin and the Presbyterians; Calvin's Resistance Theory; Tudor Family and the English Reformation; Stuart Family and the Divine Right of Kings; Two Revolutions in England Set the Stage for America's Birth; Civil War (Puritan Revolution) in England and Rutherford's Lex Rex; Westminster Assembly and Confession; Defeat of Charles I and the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell; Restoration and John Locke	<i>Germany, Geneva, England</i>
9	Excursion: the Enlightenment; the Whigs and Algernon Sidney; the Glorious Revolution; John Locke's Political Philosophy; Political Changes of the 17th Century; British Political Thought; Richard Hooker; Thomas Hobbes; John Milton; John Locke; Trenchard and Gordon	<i>England, Scotland, Virginia, West Virginia, Malden, Hampton, Washington D.C.</i>
10	Sir William Blackstone; Adam Smith; the Flight of the Reformation to America; Basing Government Upon the Consent of the Governed; A Government of Laws, and Not of Men; Calvin's Dilemma; Puritan Predicament in America; Roger Williams; Anne Hutchinson; Puritan Desperation; Salem Witch Trials; First Great Awakening; Impact of the Awakening; the Socio-Cultural Backdrop for the Founding of the United States; the English Common Law: Our National Birthright; Common Law and Christian Morality	<i>West Virginia, Charleston, Hampton, Tuskegee, Alabama, New England, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Salem</i>
11	American Colonial Experience; Practical Political Experience; Development of Ideas on Liberty; the Common Law and the Founding; Edward Coke; William Blackstone; Thomas Jefferson	<i>United States, Tuskegee, Madison, Boston, Atlanta</i>
12	The American Revolution; Between Plymouth Rock and Independence Hall; the Religious Controversy that Ignited the Revolution; Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty; the "Presbyterian Rebellion"; Two Founding Documents; the Law of Nature and Nature's God; A Season of Constitution Making; Declaration of Independence	<i>United States, Boston, Tuskegee, New York, Antwerp, Holland, Belgium, Paris, London</i>
13	Declaration of Independence; Self-Evident Truths, Inalienable Rights, and Slavery; Consent of the Governed; Relying on Divine Providence; State Constitutions; Government in the States; Government at the State Level; the Executive	<i>Massachusetts</i>
14	The Legislature; State Courts; County Governments; Municipal Governments; Other Local Governments; Your State Constitution	
15	State Constitutions; Virginia Bill of Rights; Articles of Confederation; Constitution of 1787	<i>Virginia, Philadelphia</i>

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1. This Schedule for Topics and Skills does not include Memory Work, Bible Reading, or Biography.

## Civics/American Government—Schedule for Topics and Skills<sup>1</sup>

Week	History/Social Studies	Geography
16	Constitution of 1787; Constitution: Preamble, Art. I, Secs. 1-4; Constitution: Amend. 17; the Federal Constitution; the Nature of Federalism; the Federalist Papers; the Constitution and Religious Language	
17	Constitution: Art. I, Secs. 5-10; Constitution: Art. II, Secs. 1-4; Amendment XII	
18	Constitution: Art. III, Secs.1-3; Art. IV, Secs. 1-2; Arts. V-VII	
19	Constitution: Amendments 1-10; Separation of Church and State; Religious Climate in Colonial Virginia; Madison and Jefferson; Virginia Bill of Rights; Taxes and the Use of Force; Jefferson's Statute for Religious Freedom; the Baptist Influence on Jefferson; What Jefferson Said; Religious Taxes; James Madison's Reply; Madison's Impact; Contemporary Views	<i>Virginia</i>
20	Separation of Church and State	
21	Separation of Church and State	
22	Separation of Church and State	
23	Separation of Church and State; Establishing a General Government; Putting the Government in Operation; Setting an Economic Course; Foreign Affairs; Washington's Farewell Address	<i>England, France, Spain, West Florida</i>
24	Washington's Farewell Address; the Rise of Political Parties	
25	Limited Constitutional Government; the Jeffersonians; Economy in Government; Checks and Balances in Practice; the Jacksonians	
26	the Constitution as Higher Law: the Establishment of the Supreme Court; Major Decisions of the Marshall Court; the Taney Court	
27	Civil War and Reconstruction: Constitutional Disruption and Restoration; Republicans in Power; Conduct of the War and Presidential Reconstruction; American Civil War	
28	American Civil War; Segregation and Racism in the Deep South	<i>New Orleans</i>
29	American Civil War; Segregation and Racism in the Deep South	<i>New Orleans, Mississippi</i>
30	Conduct of the War and Presidential Reconstruction; Congressional Reconstruction; Constitutional Reconstruction; American Civil War; Segregation and Racism in the Deep South	<i>Mississippi, Mobile, Montgomery, Georgia</i>
31	Constitutional Restoration; American Civil War; Segregation and Racism in the Deep South	<i>Atlanta, New Orleans, Mansfield</i>
32	Preparation for Leviathan; Cutting Away the Foundations; the Rise of Socialism; Major Reforms of Progressives; Presidential Leadership; 16th Amendment; 17th Amendment; the Federal Reserve System; American Civil War	
33	Progressivism; Federal Reserve System; Breaking the Constitutional Dam; Emergency Used to Justify Action; Overwhelming Congress; Bringing the Courts to Heel; American Civil War	
34	Buying the People; Overwhelming the State Governments; Buying and Controlling the States; States Reduced to Minions by the Warren Court; the Segregation Decisions; Reappointment Decisions; Federal Courts Intervene in Criminal Prosecutions; Driving Religion and Morality Out of Public Life; American Civil War	
35	Pornography, Vulgarity, and Obscenity; Abortion; Government Out of Control; Fiscal Policy and Spending; the Welfare State; Foreign Aid; the Credit Expansion System	
36	Bureaucracy; the Ubiquitous Bureaucracy; Bureaucratic Barriers; Oppressions Large and Small; Crime, Punishment, and Litigation; Potpourri	

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# Week 1—Schedule

Date:	Day 1 <sup>1</sup>	Day 2 <sup>2</sup>	Day 3 <sup>3</sup>	Day 4 <sup>4</sup>	Day 5 <sup>5</sup>
<b>Bible<sup>1</sup></b>					
<b>Institutes of Biblical Law</b>	Introductory Comments in Bible Study Guide pp. i–iv		pp. 651–655 "The Use of the Law"	pp. 302–308 "Christ and the Law"	pp. 698–702 "Christ and the Law"
<b>Tools of Dominion</b>		pp. 27–30 (end of para. that spans pp. 29–30); 36–41 (end)			
<b>Memorization</b>	You may, of course, memorize anything you want. However, for the first two weeks, we recommend Deuteronomy 4: 5–8.				
<b>History/Civics and Historical Fiction<sup>1</sup></b>					
<b>Basic American Government<sup>2</sup></b>	Introductory Comments in History/Civics and Historical Fiction Study Guide, pp. i–ii	p. xi–para. that spans pp. xi–xii; pp. 215–218	pp. 347–350 (very end)	pp. 351–355	pp. 4 (last para.)–10 (para. that spans pp. 9–10)
<b>Shadow of the Almighty</b>	Preface, Introduction, Prologue	chaps. 1–2	chap. 3	chap. 4	chap. 5
<b>Current Events</b> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 0 2px;">N</span> <sup>3</sup>	Check boxes when you have completed each assignment: <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>American Literature<sup>1</sup></b>					
<b>The Scarlet Letter</b>	chaps. 1–3	chaps. 4–6	chaps. 7–8	chaps. 9–11	chaps. 12–13
<b>100 Best-Loved Poems</b>	"Lord Randal" p. 1		"Sir Patrick Spens" pp. 2–4		"The Lover ..." pp. 4–5
<b>Language Arts<sup>1</sup></b>					
<b>Creative Expression</b>	This week is so full of other things, I'm going to let you off of an additional assignment here in Creative Expression. We'll be making up for "lost time" soon enough! Enjoy your freedom while you have it ☺.				
<b>Math</b>					
<b>Physical Education</b>					
<b>Other Notes</b>					
<b>Foreign Language</b>					

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1. Study Guides: Additional information for each book is located in the corresponding subject's Study Guide: Bible, History/Civics and Historical Fiction, American Literature, and Language Arts. The sections are ordered alphabetically by book title.
2. **Note to Mom or Dad:** Read the Introductory Comments for *Basic American Government* on p. 1 in the History/Civics and Historical Fiction Study Guide.
3. The N symbol means there is a note for this assignment in the notes section immediately following the schedule page.

## Week 1—Notes

### Current Events

**Note to Mom or Dad:** We believe students need to learn that world affairs—matters of social, political, economic, and cultural concern—are appropriate for their interest: they should be informed about these matters, and they ought to be forming biblically-appropriate opinions about them. As citizens of God’s Kingdom, they are called upon to be gracious (and, therefore, informed) ambassadors to the peoples and kingdoms of this world.

The “textbook” for your children’s study of current events should be articles found in current newspapers and magazines. This year, we think a daily newspaper would be more appropriate for at least two out of three of each week’s reports.

Students must prove that they are informed by telling you<sup>1</sup> about articles they have read in a newspaper or magazine and then going on to add a statement of their own position on what it is they have reported. They must also explain why they believe and feel as they do.

**To Student:** Someone has said that the last 100 years have marked the era of politics. One of the best means I have found for learning about what is going on in the world of politics—government—is to read the “Commentary” or “Op-Ed” (Opinion-Editorial) pages in our newspaper. In most papers, you will find an assortment of opinions, liberal and conservative, informed and ignorant, well-stated and some that are just plain awful.

This year I would like you to read and comment on at least one professional column (i.e., not just a letter to the editor) each week. Much as it may tend to make you want to gag, if you report on the comments of a columnist with whom you agree one week, I want you to find the next week a columnist with whose views you tend sharply to *disagree* ... and comment on that columnist’s viewpoint.

Our purpose, here, is to give you practice at accurately and fairly *summarizing* a person’s viewpoint (a difficult task!), then *analyzing* the relative strengths and weaknesses of that person’s position, and, finally, stating how and why you would *improve* on his or her viewpoint (if you think you can).

Let me attempt to illustrate—through general examples—how and why I think this exercise is so valuable.

I am, personally, of a libertarian bent. Put in other words, I believe in “free minds (i.e., the free and open exchange of ideas and information) and free markets (i.e., buying and selling with as little government interference as possible).”

When I read articles or commentaries that advocate for and extol the virtues of minimal government interference in the lives of normal, everyday human beings, my heart exults. And I would be a *happy* hardcore libertarian if I would only read libertarian journals.

The problem is, I read conservative papers and liberal works as well. And I am left with questions about the all-encompassing wisdom and truth of libertarian policies. I wonder: would the United States today—or even in a hundred years—be anywhere near so wealthy if President Theodore Roosevelt had pursued conservative rather than “Progressive” (really *socialist*) policies back in the period 1901 to 1909? *Would* “the market,” alone, have permitted poor children in the early 1900s to acquire the education they needed to better themselves and escape the grinding poverty that their parents suffered? What is the proper role of government?—Without the alternative commentaries, I would have no doubts. I would be a self-assured man. And, I’m afraid, I would be wrong about too many things.

By reading the alternative viewpoints, I see the weak spots within my own philosophy, among “my own” people. I learn what issues concern other people and how they express their concerns. If I listen *very* carefully, I may even be able to learn how to express my own viewpoints more forcefully and effectively than I would be able to if I had never listened to “the other side.” ...

Please. Take the time. Endure the frustration. Discipline yourself and learn!

### Timeline

You should either use the timeline sold by Sonlight Curriculum, or make a timeline for the wall of your room using 8½” x 11” paper (taped sideways, end to end), one inch for every five years.

Timelines are helpful because not every book we read will be in chronological order. When we read them and mark dates on our timeline, we are better able to understand how events fit together: which things occurred at the same time, which things came first, and which things came later.

1. And I do mean *telling* you, orally, *not* in writing!

## Week 18—Schedule

Date:	Day 1 <small>86</small>	Day 2 <small>87</small>	Day 3 <small>88</small>	Day 4 <small>89</small>	Day 5 <small>90</small>
<b>Bible</b>					
<i>Institutes of Biblical Law</i>	pp. 504–510	pp. 510–514	pp. 514–522	pp. 522–525	pp. 525–530
<b>History/Civics and Historical Fiction</b>					
<i>Basic American Government</i>	Constitution: Art. III, Sec. 1 (p. 542)	Constitution: Art. III, Sec. 2 (p. 542)	Constitution: Art. III, Sec. 3; Art. IV, Sec. 1–2, para. 1 (pp. 542–543)	Constitution: Art. IV, Sec. 2, para. 2–Sec. 4 (p. 543)	Constitution: Arts. V–VII (pp. 543–544)
<i>The Jungle</i>	pp. 111–120	pp. 121–128	pp. 128–136	pp. 136–147	pp. 147–158
<b>Current Events</b>	Check boxes when you have completed each assignment: <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>American Literature</b>					
<i>Moby-Dick</i>	chaps. 52–54	chaps. 55–61 (skim chaps. 55–57)	chaps. 62–69	chaps. 70–74	chaps. 75–81
<i>100 Best-Loved Poems</i>	"Ode to a Nightingale" pp. 43–45		"Bright star ..." (In the American Literature Study Guide)		"Ode on Grecian ..." pp. 45–46
<b>Memorization</b>	"If" (see <i>100 Best-Loved Poems</i> in the American Literature Study Guide).				
<b>Language Arts</b>					
<b>Creative Expression</b>	Character Development, Part 1				Poetic Response
<b>Math</b>					
<b>Physical Education</b>					
<b>Other Notes</b>					
<b>Foreign Language</b>					

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## Week 36—Schedule

Date:	Day 1 <span style="float: right;">176</span>	Day 2 <span style="float: right;">177</span>	Day 3 <span style="float: right;">178</span>	Day 4 <span style="float: right;">179</span>	Day 5 <span style="float: right;">180</span>
<b>Bible</b>					
<b>Tools of Dominion</b>	pp. 861–867	pp. 867–873	pp. 928–935	pp. 936–942	pp. 942–949
<b>History/Civics and Historical Fiction</b>					
<b>Basic American Government</b>	pp. 453–458	pp. 459–464	pp. 465–469 (just above midpoint, ending: "... three million illegal aliens.")	pp. 469–474	pp. 475–480
<b>Current Events</b>	Check boxes when you have completed each assignment: <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>American Literature</b>					
<b>The Giver</b>	chaps. 1–4	chaps. 5–9	chaps. 10–13	chaps. 14–18	chaps. 19–23
<b>100 Best-Loved Poems</b>	"The Charge of ..." p. 62		"Do Not Go Gentle ..." p. 93		
<b>Memorization</b>	"To a Louse" by Burns, last verse only (see <i>100 Best-Loved Poems</i> in the American Literature Study Guide).				
<b>Language Arts</b>					
<b>Creative Expression</b>	Analyzing Plot, Part II				Write Me a Letter
<b>Math</b>					
<b>Physical Education</b>					
<b>Other Notes</b>					
<b>Dating with Integrity</b>		pp. 221–224	pp. 225–229	pp. 231–234	
	Make sure you take the time to <i>answer questions</i> at the end of each chapter!				
<b>Foreign Language</b>					
<b>You're all done!</b>					

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# Appendix 1: Map Keys and Sample Maps

## Civics/American Government - Map 1



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## Tools of Dominion: The Case Laws of Exodus

### pp. 27–30, 36–41

#### Comments and Questions for Study and Discussion

According to North, what is casuistry? →

Why does North urge us to look at biblical law? → At this point in time, do you agree with him? To what extent do you or do you not agree? Why?

According to North, what are three reasons Christians don't study the case laws of the Old Testament? →

Why does North think the concept of "natural law" is insufficient and/or unbiblical? →

According to North, how or why does the concept and reality of God's Kingdom require Christians to live under and preach the validity of God's law? → What do you think of these ideas?

Does North believe that politics has to do with "bringing in the Kingdom of God"? If so, how? If not, why not? →

According to North, which comes first (which ought to come first): political change or personal repentance and salvation? →

So why does North stress politics? →

#### Discuss

Do you think there is a legitimate place for "biblical law and politics"? Why or why not?

### pp. 42–48

#### Comments and Questions for Study and Discussion

North claims that most Christians agree with humanists about what? →

Why is North concerned about the issue of slavery, sons (grown sons) who are "out of control," and Old Testament laws having to do with stoning people?

North seems rather strongly in favor of not just "the death penalty," but stoning. Why? →

Why does North object to private execution? →

Why does North think public stoning is particularly good from a social perspective? →

Why does North object to imprisonment as a form of punishment? →

North says that for Christians to avoid trying to deal with "every jot and tittle" of the Old Testament law means what? → What do you think? Is he correct? Is this a problem?

### Condensed Version

**Page 51:** stop at break, then pick up again six lines below the subhead: "Christian people are required to take dominion ..."

### pp. 48–54

#### Comments and Questions for Study and Discussion

What did Thomas Paine teach about the Bible? →

What did Marcion (ca. 85–160) teach? →

North takes a shot at dispensationalism; why? →

Many people feel that God's laws are harsh. North says they are merciful compared to unpunished sin. What do you think?

On what grounds does North claim that New Testament law is actually more stringent than Old Testament law?

According to North, what are the four covenants under God? (Put another way: who is permitted to take an oath and make a covenant before God?) →

North claims that the church, the state, and the family are all God-ordained institutions. As such, each and every one of these institutions is supposed to be run according to God's law. Do you agree? Disagree? Why?

How would you respond to North's argument that, in the same way God (appropriately) rules the family, and in the same way God (appropriately) rules the church, so it is appropriate for God to rule in civil governmental affairs?

#### Comment

North quotes Ronald Wells' criticism of "Calvinists" (which might just as well be aimed at Christian Reconstructionists): "one sees Calvinists in power as triumphal and dictatorial ... Calvinists in power have wielded that power oppressively." He then (cleverly) avoids the criticism and levels one of his own against Wells and his fellow "neo-evangelical academic critics." He suggests that Wells (a professor at a private Christian college) is afraid for his job because the Reconstructionists would dismantle the centralized government ...

Let me say here that I am not impressed with North's response. He should have answered the criticism.

The fact is, Calvinists *have* been dictatorial and, depending on your opinion about things, they have been oppressive.

We have just finished *The Scarlet Letter*, and no matter how false Hawthorne's description of the Puritans, the truth is that if you disobeyed their laws, you could expect to suffer the consequences. Among their laws were these:

## Tools of Dominion: The Case Laws of Exodus

### pp. 27–30, 36–41

#### Comments and Questions for Study and Discussion

According to North, what is casuistry? (*the application of conscience to moral decisions*)

Why does North urge us to look at biblical law? (*because the conscience needs a reliable guide concerning righteousness and he believes the Old Testament law[s] provide this*)

According to North, what are three reasons Christians don't study the case laws of the Old Testament? (*1. because they believe the Old Testament law has been annulled and is, therefore, inapplicable today; 2. because they believe the laws are so old-fashioned they have no useful wisdom for us today; 3. because they believe the laws are really not from God, but have been borrowed from other ancient Near Eastern cultures*)

Why does North think the concept of "natural law" is insufficient and/or unbiblical? (*1. because there is no such thing as a universal system of rational natural law; 2. because if [without Christ] we are still condemned by the law, then that means the law is still valid and authoritative*)

According to North, how or why does the concept and reality of God's Kingdom require Christians to live under and preach the validity of God's law? (*because he believes that there are only two possible kingdoms under which we can live: God's or Satan's; as he puts it, "Kingdom" is an inescapable concept. It is never a question of kingdom vs. no kingdom; it is always a question of whose kingdom." God's kingdom—i.e., God's authority and jurisdiction—encompasses all of civilization, not just individual human lives and the Church, but every aspect of society: education [i.e., schools], business affairs [economics], politics [the state], law ... everything*)

If not, why not? (*I believe he would say politics is related to God's Kingdom in that the advance of God's Kingdom will affect politics, but he vociferously denies that politics will, itself, advance God's Kingdom; God's Kingdom must be advanced, as he says, through "salvation which is supernaturally imparted"*)

According to North, which comes first (which ought to come first): political change or personal repentance and salvation? (*the personal transformation, absolutely*)

So why does North stress politics? (*because that happens to be of interest to him; other Christians focus, say, on biblical counseling, or biblical family life, or biblical ways of conducting the affairs of the church; North believes it is appropriate for some people—him—to focus on biblical law and politics*)

### pp. 42–48

#### Comments and Questions for Study and Discussion

North claims that most Christians agree with humanists about what? (*that the Bible offers no specific legal standards by which to reform or reconstruct society*)

Why? (*because it points to God's ultimate judgment; because it images God's promised judgment against Satan*)

Why does North object to private execution? (*because it is unjust to the convicted criminal [removes his ability to make a public statement—whether of protest or apology] and it is unjust to the surviving victims [who do not get to see justice served in public]*)

Why does North think public stoning is particularly good from a social perspective? (*because it forces all members of the community to participate and to accept responsibility for the execution of justice*)

Why does North object to imprisonment as a form of punishment? (*1. because it restores nothing to the victim; 2. because the prisoner does virtually nothing of value to society [let alone to the victim] or to him- or herself*)

North says that for Christians to avoid trying to deal with "every jot and tittle" of the Old Testament law means what? (*to turn over the running of the world to pagan humanists*)

### pp. 48–54

#### Comments and Questions for Study and Discussion

What did Thomas Paine teach about the Bible? (*that it was the word of a demon*)

What did Marcion (ca. 85–160) teach? (*that the Bible really reveals two gods: one in the Old Testament who was really quite evil; and one in the New Testament who was exceedingly kind and loving*)

North takes a shot at dispensationalism; why? (*because it offers no help for the practical issues that face world leaders*)

According to North, what are the four covenants under God? (Put another way: who is permitted to take an oath and make a covenant before God?) (*a person, a family, a church, and a society*<sup>1</sup>)

1. I want to note here: North and Rushdoony seem to be sloppy in their interpretation of the Greek word *ethne* (translated as *nations* in English): "Make disciples of all the *ethne*," says Jesus in Matthew 28:19. But what are these "nations"? Are they equivalent to modern nation-states? No! Look at the Greek root: *ethne*; *ethnic* is our modern English equivalent. Jesus was talking about all the *ethnic groups* in the world, all the *peoples*, not about nation-states. Still, I, personally, think the question remains: how shall or should the governments of all the nations—whether mini-ethnic groups or large nation-states—be run? Does the Bible offer help?

# Lies My Teacher Told Me

## Introduction

### Comments and Questions for Study and Discussion

**Note:** The point of this book is stated in the very first quote by Felix Okoye: “It would be better not to know so many things than to know so many things that are not so.” Obviously, no account of history is perfect, but some accounts of history are purposely biased, so it is important for you to consider additional historical information such as you will read in this book. Studying this book may not be a comfortable exercise for you, mainly because the author attempts to expose what he calls the “heroification” of many of our national “heroes” and “heroines,” and because he “de-mythologizes” historical events portrayed in favor of western culture. Despite your potential discomfort, please give him a fair hearing, ask some hard questions, challenge the standard historical view (and this author’s biases!), and come to some understanding of history that is balanced, fair, and helpful to you.

According to Loewen, why are history textbooks so bad? →

Loewen says, “History is furious debate informed by evidence and reason. Textbooks encourage students to believe that history is facts to be learned.” What do you think he means? Do you think he’s right? Can the “furious debate” occur without knowledge of the “facts to be learned?” If not, how would you solve the apparent conflict in Loewen’s statement?

### Vocabulary Development

“Why are you devoting time to **pedagogy** rather than original research?”

## Chapter 1 pp. 11–15

### Questions for Study and Discussion

What is your take on the quotes by Du Bois and Willie? Does history lose its value as an incentive and example if it does not tell the truth? Does a failure to expose historical truth blind us to the possibility of repeating the same failures and mistakes? In your opinion, why would the authors of history textbooks want to make heroes of historical figures? **Note:** Their motives will be exposed and explored as you proceed through this book, but what do you think now, before you read the book? Write your opinion down—when you finish the book, take a look at what you wrote and see if your opinion has changed.

What is the value of using Woodrow Wilson and Helen Keller as case studies of heroification? →

Assuming Loewen is correct that textbooks engage in massive heroification, do you think he is right, then, to

suggest that students are worse off because of it? Why or why not?

Is there anything wrong, in your opinion, with presenting the story of Helen Keller so as to inspire the handicapped and the rest of society to help the handicapped? What is Loewen’s objection to this approach to the story of Keller’s life? →

What was Helen Keller’s political persuasion? → Does that negatively impact your image of Helen Keller? Explain. According to Loewen, what prompted her bent toward socialism? → What do you think? Is opportunity for treatment and development limited by social class in America? Explain. Suppose social class does limit one’s opportunities; does that make socialism “right” and/or capitalism “wrong”? Why or why not?

What are some of the causes with which Helen Keller identified? → Does it bother you to know these things about Helen Keller, or change your view of her? Why or why not?

### Vocabulary Development

This chapter is about **heroification**, a degenerative process (much like calcification) that makes people over into heroes.

... a **Wobbly**, a member of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), the syndicalist union persecuted by Woodrow Wilson.

## pp. 16–19

### Questions for Study and Discussion

What are the two “antidemocratic” policies that Woodrow Wilson carried out during his presidency? → **Note:** I [Gus White] need to admit here that Loewen’s treatment of Woodrow Wilson is especially difficult for me because Wilson is in my family tree, and our family has always taken pride in our “famous” forefather. But to tell the truth, I would rather think of Wilson as a real and believable person who had theological and philosophical blind spots like everyone else, and who made some mistakes in his life and presidency, than to think of him as a “larger-than-life” hero with which no one in our family could really identify or approach. I guess I’ll make Loewen’s point here—tell me the truth about my famous relative! Let me understand him and the other “shakers and movers” of history as they really were. In that way I can identify with them and be truly inspired by the good they did in spite of the bad they did.

Under Woodrow Wilson’s presidency, in what Latin American countries did the U.S. intervene? →

Describe Woodrow Wilson’s “unknown war” with Russia in 1917–1920. Why do you think Russian history textbooks

# Lies My Teacher Told Me

## Introduction

### Comments and Questions for Study and Discussion

According to Loewen, why are history textbooks so bad? (they tend to exclude conflict; they seem to leave out anything that might reflect badly on the national character; they do not use the present to illuminate the past, nor do they use the past to illuminate the present; they are too full of information [what he calls “factoids”]; they suppress causation; they contain errors of omission and distortion)

### Vocabulary Development

**pedagogy** (the art of teaching)

## Chapter 1 pp. 11–15

### Questions for Study and Discussion

What is the value of using Woodrow Wilson and Helen Keller as case studies of heroification? (they are two large American heroes whose real stories are different from the stories presented by most American history textbooks)

What is Loewen’s objection to this approach to the story of Keller’s life? (it doesn’t tell the truth about her life and neglects lessons Keller herself would want us to learn from her)

What was Helen Keller’s political persuasion? (she was a radical socialist) According to Loewen, what prompted her bent toward socialism? (she came to believe that the social class system controls people’s opportunities in life, even as it is related to handicaps)

What are some of the causes with which Helen Keller identified? (American Civil Liberties Union; NAACP; a socialist presidential candidate; the American Communist party)

### Vocabulary Development

**heroification** (a degenerative process [much like calcification] that makes people over into heroes)

**Wobbly** (a member of the Industrial Workers of the World [IWW], the syndicalist union persecuted by Woodrow Wilson)

## pp. 16–19

### Questions for Study and Discussion

What are the two “antidemocratic” policies that Woodrow Wilson carried out during his presidency? (racial segregation of the federal government; military interventions in foreign countries)

Under Woodrow Wilson’s presidency, in what Latin American countries did the U.S. intervene? (Mexico; Haiti; the Dominican Republic; Cuba; Panama; Nicaragua)

“He intervened to impose hegemony, not democracy”? (that Wilson wanted U.S. control over these countries, rather than to enable them to establish and maintain their own independence as democratic societies)

According to Loewen, what were Woodrow Wilson’s three bedrock “ism’s”? (colonialism; racism; anticommunism)

## pp. 19–22

### Questions for Study and Discussion

To what does Loewen refer when he says that Woodrow Wilson’s domestic racial policies “disgraced the office he held”? (Wilson was an outspoken White supremacist; his administration tried to curtail the civil rights of African Americans; he segregated the federal government)

What movie does Loewen characterize as “probably the most racist major movie of all time?” (*Birth of a Nation*!)

To whom did Wilson’s term “hyphenated Americans” refer? (immigrants to the U.S. from other countries, i.e. German-Americans, Japanese-Americans, Polish-Americans, etc.) What was Wilson’s view of these people? (he questioned their loyalty to the U.S.)

### Vocabulary Development

**nativist** (a policy favoring established inhabitants over immigrants)

## pp. 22–25

### Questions for Study and Discussion

What was Helen Keller’s characterization of Woodrow Wilson? (she called him the greatest individual disappointment the world has ever known)

## pp. 25–30

### Questions for Study and Discussion

According to Loewen, why do textbooks promote “wartless stereotypes?” (to make historical figures sympathetic to as many people as possible so that they may be honored and respected)

What are the three great taboos in textbook publishing, according to Loewen’s conversation with a textbook author? (sex, religion, and social class)

1. D.W. Griffith’s most famous, and controversial, work was the epic *The Birth of a Nation* (1915). The film portrayed the American Civil War (1861-1865) and the following Reconstruction period through the eyes of two families, one Northern and one Southern. The film was praised as the first great American work of cinema art, but also criticized as racist for its portrayal of blacks and its sympathetic treatment of the Ku Klux Klan. (*World Book 2001*, electronic edition)

# My *Ántonia*

## Introductory Comments

*This is great literature!*

I'm not sure how far we want to go into the book in an analytic manner. Perhaps more than anything else as you read, I would like you to soak up Cather's haunting and rich descriptions. I don't know if I have ever read any book that has so much sustained high-quality descriptive text as this! Savor the words and phrases. Let them become part of you and see how the manner in which Ms. Cather writes can become part of *your* manner of writing as well.

This is not biography. It is not really a story of character development (though *Ántonia* and the narrator both certainly change over time). It has no gripping action or adventure, hardly any plot . . . I think I would like to call it a *portrait*, an exquisite portrait whose beauty you can enjoy for itself . . . like the beauty of a thunderstorm or an intense rainbow can be enjoyed for itself.

I hope you will enjoy the intimate and mature emotions you will feel as you contemplate . . . *My Ántonia*, the fictional portrait of a late-1800s Bohemian woman in America's midwest.

## Introduction—Part 1, chaps. 1–6

### Identification

**freemasonry**—freemasonry is a secret brotherhood; the bond that those who have grown up in a little prairie town feel is . . . a kind of secret bond and brotherhood.

**Bismarck, North Dakota**—the capital of North Dakota.

**sod house, dugout house**—*sod house*: a house with walls built of sod or turf laid in horizontal layers; *dugout*: a shelter or primitive dwelling excavated in a hillside or dug in the ground and roofed with sod.

**sorghum**—a grass widely cultivated as grain and forage or as a source of syrup.

**bull-snake**—nonvenomous North American snake that feeds chiefly on rodents.

**badger**—a burrowing animal with short, thick legs, and long claws on the fore feet.

**opossum**—a furry mammal of the Western Hemisphere, the female opossum carries its young in a pouch on its abdomen.

**gopher**—a burrowing rodent about the size of a large rat and with small eyes, short ears, strong claws on the forelimbs, and large cheek pouches opening beside the mouth.

**Bohemian**—from a region in the western part of the Czech Republic.

**windlass**—a horizontal cylinder turned by a crank on which a cable or rope winds.

**lariat**—a long light rope for lassoing or picketing grazing livestock.

**torpor**—dullness, sluggishness.

### Questions for Study and Discussion

"[Jim] went into the next room, sat down at my desk and wrote across the face of the portfolio '*Ántonia*.' He frowned at this [a] moment, then prefixed another word, making it '*My Ántonia*.' That seemed to satisfy him." You cannot possibly answer this question now, but by the end of the book, it will be good for you to know: does that word "*my*" indicate possession of the woman named *Ántonia*, or does it indicate possession of a certain *memory* of her? When we get to the end of the book, I will want you to answer that question.

"My grandmother always spoke in a very loud tone to foreigners, as if they were deaf." Have you ever observed similar behavior? This really is common behavior, but it takes a master wordsmith to pay attention enough to comment upon it and write it down.

"They kept him in their hole and fed him for the same reason that the prairie-dogs and the brown owls house the rattlesnakes—because they did not know how to get rid of him." What forms the basis of this elegant double-metaphor (i.e., what is being compared to what)?

### Vocabulary Development

. . . he was more inscribed than an Egyptian **obelisk**.

A **bantering** voice called out . . .

. . . nothing but land—slightly **undulating** . . .

. . . a **spare**, tall woman . . .

Her laugh, too, was high, and perhaps a little **strident** . . .

. . . as he uttered it, it became **oracular**, the most sacred of words.

. . . inside the ploughed **fire-breaks** . . .

. . . a thick-set strip of **box-elder trees** . . .

. . . the **tawny** hawks . . .

. . . the road followed the windings of the **draw** . . .

. . . growing along the **furrows** . . .

Their backs were polished **vermilion**, with black spots.

## chaps. 7–10

### Identification

**croup**—a disease of infants and young children that often involves harsh coughing, hoarseness, fever, and difficult breathing.

# My *Ántonia*

## Introduction—Part 1, Chaps. 1–6

### Vocabulary Development

**obelisk** (a four-sided stone pillar that tapers towards a pyramidal top commonly covered with hieroglyphic writing from top to bottom)

**bantering** (playfully teasing)

**undulating** (rising and falling)

**spare** (somewhat thin, lean)

**strident** (harsh, shrill, annoying)

**oracular** (solemnly prophetic or wise)

**fire-breaks** (strips of cleared or plowed land used to stop the spread of a fire)

**box-elder trees** (common shade trees of eastern and central United States)

**tawny** (light brown)

**draw** (a dry stream bed)

**furrows** (plowed ground)

**vermilion** (bright red)

## Chaps. 7–10

### Questions for Study and Discussion

Anything strike you about what this episode means to the two families? (clearly, they are coming from two sides of a great cultural gap; grandmother does not value what the Shimerdas obviously value [the mushrooms]; the mushrooms, to the Shimerdas, are so valuable as a fragrant and flavorful addition to a meal that they went to great trouble, first, to find them, then, to transport them to America, and, finally, to preserve them)

### Vocabulary Development

**despoiled** (stripped, denuded)

**draw** (dry stream bed)

**quirt** (a riding whip with a short handle and a lash of braided rawhide)

**laconically** (briefly, concisely)

**supercilious** (scornful, haughty)

**mortgages** (conditional conveyances of property as security for the repayment of loans)

**hartshorn** (ammonia)

**quinsy** (a painful inflammation of the tonsils and surrounding tissues)

**mutton** (meat from a mature domestic sheep)

**tallow** (animal fat)

## Chaps. 11–15

### Vocabulary Development

**case-hardened** (emotionally hardened)

**taciturn** (untalkative, reserved)

## Chap. 16—Part 2, Chap. 2

### Vocabulary Development

**sharpers** (swindlers, cheats)

**bobbed** (cut short)

## Chaps. 3–7

### Questions for Study and Discussion

Why would you expect the complaining? (I expect they would say it is racist)

### Vocabulary Development

**archly** (in a playfully sly manner, roguishly)

**blandly** (mildly)

**lief** (leave: permission to do something)

**irresolutely** (uncertainly)

**pinafors** (a sleeveless garment similar to an apron, worn especially by small girls as a dress or an overdress)

**hectoringly** (harassingly)

**freshet** (a stream of fresh water)

**trap** (a light two-wheeled carriage with springs)

**docile** (ready and willing to be taught or supervised)

**subservience** (submissive, willing to serve another)

## Part 2, Chaps. 8–12

### Vocabulary Development

**affable** (pleasant)

**Euchre** (a card game)

**piquant** (interesting, exciting)

**ingenuousness** (simplicity, innocence)

**daft** (crazy, insane)

**affable** (pleasant)

## Week 2—Creative Writing (Day 1)

### *It's All About "You! You! You!," Part I*

One of the most difficult lessons any author has to learn is to focus on their audience. Not only does this discipline generate the kinds of behavior recognized generally as “common courtesy”, it makes for effective communication. And for an author, communication is what everything is about.

I would like you to consider some authors who failed to consider their audiences.

One group I love to pick on is the majority of ad writers. Of all the people in the world who should be thinking about their audiences, it should be ad writers. They're trying to sell something, for goodness sakes. And if they don't think of their audience, they will not only fail to communicate, they will fail to make the sale. And they are *paid* to make sales!

So, just for fun, and to get our year off on the right foot, I would like you to consider the following very real advertisement I found in none other than *RT (Retail Technology)* magazine (January 1998). This is what it looked like and what it said:

**Photograph** (the photo, taking up half the page, grabs our eye first): A gray, elongated box-like thing with nondescript buttons down the right, a light-greenish rectangle that looks something like a PalmPilot® screen in the middle, and the letter/ words “TELXON PTC-1124” down the left. Below the rectangle that looks like a screen, there are four buttons: “Call,” “Help,” and an up-arrow and a down-arrow.

\* \* \*

**My commentary/analysis:** by looking at the picture, I honestly don't know what the box is. All I can figure out is that it's something kind of technological. By the way: notice that if I had some idea of what the thing was, I could simply tell you: “a personal digital assistant (like a PalmPilot®),” or, “a cell phone,” or, “a computer,” or ... whatever it is. But I don't know what it is. It doesn't look like anything I've ever seen before ... Oh. And I should also note that when a picture is as nondescript as this one is, neither I nor you nor anyone else is going to spend a lot of time looking at it the way I have been forced to in order to attempt an accurate description ... So let's go on to the headline that should explain what it is ... supposing you actually care!

\* \* \*

**Headline** (right above the photo): “We Trimmed The Fat, Added A Whole Lot Of Muscle, And Sent It To Merchandising School.”


\* \* \*

**My commentary/analysis:** Uh-huh. Right. Has the headline added any more interest, excitement, or understanding? Do you have any idea who this thing is for? Why are they using a meat metaphor for a technological gizmo? Are you motivated to keep reading? I'm not, either, but since this is today's assignment, I'm sorry, you're going to have to keep reading anyway!

\* \* \*

**Body copy:** “Telxon's new PTC-1124 is only 7.6 inches long and weighs in at just 24.5 ounces. However, it's no lightweight when it comes to power, performance and durability. This new pen-based prodigy packs 486 power, advanced touch screen technology and robust wireless networking capabilities into a rugged information management tool designed for a myriad of retail applications. Its custom magnesium case and sturdy frame are also engineered for reliability in even the most demanding stockrooms and distribution center environments. Telxon's SelecTouch™ display speeds the user through data input, functions and application routines with fingertip control. Built-in data communication support includes a serial infrared port and a PC Card slot. You get it all—power, durability and smarts. Telxon's new PTC-1124 the future of what's in store.

“TELXON. Driving Change For The Future.”

**Closing Copy** (very tiny print): “©1997 Telxon Corporation. Telxon is a registered trademark and SelecTouch is a trademark of Telxon Corporation in the United States and other countries. Internet E-mail Address: sales@telxon.com.\*Visit our IG Links web page for a link that will allow you to read the entire story. 

\* \* \*

**My commentary/analysis:** Boy! Does that get your juices flowing, or what? Aren't you excited about the Telxon “PTC-1124”? No? I didn't think so.

What's the problem?

First: do you have any idea of what this ad is about? (*Some* kind of computerized *something*!) But can you think of someone you would like to rush out and tell about the “PTC-1124”?

No? That's what I thought. There is nothing—*N-O-T-H-I-N-G*—that gives us any clue about who this ad is addressed to. The photo doesn't do it. The headline doesn't to it. Nothing does it. And so I certainly don't see myself being interested in this ... *thing*. And I can't think of anyone else who would want one, either.

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Eighty to ninety percent of all advertisements are about as ineffective as the one I just described. They don't tell the reader *who* it is that the advertiser is trying to talk to.