THINKING AND WRITING CRITICALLY ABOUT HISTORICAL FICTION

PRESENTED BY
MARIE ROSSI
B. THERESA LEWIS
ROSEMARIE RIZZO

BALLSTON SPA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

Does the author of your novel of historical fiction accurately depict the historical time period in which it is set?
EVA WISEMAN

PUPPET
Sarah's Key

“A shocking, profoundly moving, and morally challenging story…nothing short of miraculous. It will haunt you, it will help to complete you….”

—Augusten Burroughs
WALTER DEAN MYERS
SUNRISE OVER FALLUJAH
The Berlin Boxing Club

Robert Sharenow
A Novel About
the Navajo Marines of World War Two

CODE TALKER

JOSEPH BRUCHAC
SNOW FLOWER and the SECRET FAN
A NOVEL

LISA SEE

"Powerfully alive, unfolding like a waking dream, haunting, magical, and absolutely impossible to forget." — The Boston Globe
Coauthor of the #1 New York Times Bestseller
THE DANGEROUS BOOK FOR BOYS

CONN
IGGULDEN

“Invigorating.”
—USA Today

“Brilliantly imagined and addictive.”
—Publishers Weekly

GENGHIS
BIRTH OF AN EMPIRE
A Novel of Genghis Khan
BALZAC and the LITTLE CHINESE SEAMSTRESS

DAI SIJIE

“A novel

“An unexpected miracle—‘a delicate, and often hilarious, tale.”’—LOS ANGELES TIMES BOOK REVIEW
Trapped behind enemy lines, where do his loyalties lie?

SOLDIER

DON WULFFSON
MY MOTHER
THE CHEERLEADER
A NOVEL BY ROBERT SHARENOW

Acts of courage come in all shapes and sizes.
CITY OF THIEVES
Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet

A NOVEL

"An impressive debut."
—Lisa See, bestselling author of Snow Flower and the Secret Fan

JAMIE FORD
VIETNAM
BOOK ONE
I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE
CHRIS LYNCH
MENTOR TEXT
TEACHER FLAGGING OF MENTOR TEXT

When they got to the market, Rani saw hundreds of Sephardic Jews surrounded. Grandmas and grandpas and mothers and fathers and children and babies. Everyone was dancing and singing, and some men tagged with tallit numbers. Some people were crying, but most just wept quietly. Rani's stomach was jumping up and down, and she wondered if everybody was scared as she was. She touched the small gold heart on her bracelet and tried to find brave.
STUDENT FLAGGING
Bud's Jazz Records
(1986)

I've been around," Henry said, flipping through a rack of old 78s, hoping to find something by Oscar Holden—the Holy Grail of Seattle's jazz recordings. The apocryphal story was that Oscar recorded a master-session 78 way back in the thirties, on vinyl, not wax. But of the rumored three hundred printed, none survived. None that anyone knew about anyway. But then again, almost no one knew who Oscar Holden was. Seattle greats like Ray Charles and Quincy Jones had moved on to the fame and fortune of Celebrityville. Still, Henry daydreamed that he might find a vinyl copy someday. And now that CDs were starting to outsell records, the used LP bins sold records every day.

If one still existed, someone we never knew about, it was Oscar's old stuff. Henry, after all, was a jazz fan. Was Bud still the music down at the store? I'd have seen you if you were playing, Overton Berry, Henry grunted.

Henry thought about his Arabic adult life, and part of his youth. *I heard* about the Panama I. He nodded, still humming "Tampa, Tampa, you make many men drunk" into the dust that always settled in the basement record store. "I was standing right there when they started bringing all that stuff up."

"You don't say?" Bud rubbed his bald black pate. "I know what you're always in here looking for. Oh, I gave up looking for Oscar myself. But it looks like you wonder, doesn't it? I mean they board up that whole building, what, around 1930? And then that new owner buys it, goes inspecting, and finds all that stuff sealed up all those years. Newspaper says there isn't much of value in there. No gold bars or nothing. But it makes you wonder..."

Henry had wondered nonstop since he'd watched them bring up that first steamer trunk. Since the owner had spun that Japanese paradox.
ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

Does the author of your novel of historical fiction accurately depict the historical time period in which it is set?
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GENERAL REFERENCE

**Biography In Context**
Contains biographies from over 80 sources. Searchable by Occupation, Nationality, Ethnicity, Birth/Death Year, Birth/Death Place, Gender and last name.

**Britannica Online Encyclopedia**
Britannica's Online School Edition offers encyclopedias and related materials for students of all levels. At the high school level, a wide variety of reference, journal, and newspaper articles are offered as well as multimedia.

**Student Research Center- MAS Ultra-School Edition**
This comprehensive, general periodical database provides access to information on a broad range of topics including general interest, business, consumer health, general science and multicultural titles.

**Gale Virtual Reference Library**
A database of encyclopedias, almanacs, and specialized reference sources for multidisciplinary research.

**General OneFile**
A one-stop source for news and periodical articles on a wide range of topics. "A NOVEL-funded program"

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Provides access to three online general subject encyclopedias: Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia, The New Book of Knowledge, and Encyclopedia Americana. Finding information is as simple as entering a term in the Search box and clicking "Go" to search all three at once, or clicking on the specific encyclopedia from the left of the page and searching just that encyclopedia. "A NOVEL-funded program."

**Popular Magazines**
This database is 100% full text and includes over 600 titles including Consumer Reports, Time, National Geographic, The New Yorker, Newsweek, Vanity Fair, US News and World Report, Vogue, Fortune, Business Week, National Review, Cosmopolitan, NPR and even Oprah. "A NOVEL-funded program"

**SIRS Researcher**
Features thousands of relevant full-text articles and analysis on today's hottest and most controversial social, scientific, health, historic, economic, political, and global issues.

**World Book Encyclopedia**
Includes encyclopedia, multimedia, e-book, and primary source databases, all combined in a single search. A great start for any research project!

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Sample database search for informational texts with grade appropriate Lexiles
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### Works Cited

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<th>Media Type</th>
<th>Citation</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Notescards</th>
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During the second phase of the internment, the Nikkei were transported to one of the 10 permanent internment camps that were built under the direction of the U.S. Army and were further inland. Like the assembly centers, the permanent internment camps were surrounded by barbed wire fences and had armed guards at the gates and in the watchtowers. The Nikkei were once again housed in barracks.
NOODLETOOLS NOTE CARDS
Works Cited


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Many Japanese internment were even temporarily released from their camps for... The last internment camp was not closed until 1945, Japanese taken by the... Historical context - After Pearl Harbor - Military necessity as...
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Children of the Camps | INTERNMENT HISTORY
Some Japanese Americans died in the camps due to inadequate medical care and the...
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Japanese Internment Camps and Their Effects
JAPANESE LIFE BEFORE LIFE DURING LIFE AFTER JAPANESE INTERNMENT.
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library.thinkquest.org/TQ03120808/ - Cached - Similar

Japanese Internment Camps
Life in Japanese Internment camps was not a pretty picture. When the United States of America decided to take all Japanese-Americans and put them in...
library.thinkquest.org/TQ03120808/bhjic.html - Cached - Similar

Japanese Internment in World War II — infoplease.com
The evacuation order commenced the round-up of 120000 Americans of Japanese heritage to one of 10 internment camps—officially called “relocation centers”—in...
www.infoplease.com/spot/internment1.html - Cached - Similar

Japanese-American Internment Camps
The Japanese-American (Nisei) and the Japanese aliens (Issei) on the West Coast were rounded up and moved to assembly centers and then to internment camps...
www.bookmice.net/darkchild/japan/camp.html - Cached - Similar

Exploring Japanese American Internment
Japanese-American Internment Camps

A historical fact that is not really "common knowledge" is the fact that, during World War II, over 100,000 Japanese-American individuals, the vast majority of which were actually American citizens, were rounded up and shipped eventually to internment camps. These consisted of poorly-constructed barracks surrounded by barbed wire, sentry posts and armed guards.

They were put in these camps, not because they had been tried and found guilty of something, but because either they or their parents or ancestors were from Japan and, as such, they were deemed a "threat" to national security. They were also easily identifiable due to their race. There was no similar large-scale roundups of German or Italian-Americans, even though we were also fighting them during World War II.
LITERARY ACTIVITY #1

The setting of the book is a story told from the perspective of a young boy named Zak. The book takes place in a town called "Peace" and follows Zak's adventures and experiences.

The main conflict of the story is that the protagonist, Zak, is a young boy who is太勇太勇 (too brave too brave) and always trying to prove himself. He is afraid of the unknown and struggles with his fear of the dark and the unknown.

At first, Zak thought that the worst thing that could happen to him was having his own pet dog. He was determined to be brave and stood up to his fear. However, as the story progresses, he realizes that the greatest challenge is not the physical obstacles but the psychological ones. He learns to overcome his fear and stands up to his challenges.

Key characters:
- Zak: The protagonist, too brave too brave
- Grandpa: A wise and experienced mentor
- Friends: Supportive and encouraging companions

Themes:
- Bravery: Confronting and overcoming fear
- Friendship: Support and encouragement
- Growth: Learning and personal development

Note: The text is handwritten and may contain errors or informal language.
LITERARY ACTIVITY #1

The main setting of the book is the women rules kingdom of Eleusis. Since he is just the king and not the Queen, Theseus' spends most of his time on the balcony of the palace or in the forest with his hunting. In the corner of the bedroom is a lovely white birch that grows in the morning. In the distance, past Aigistus, Aegina, his father's kingdom.

Theseus -
- clever
- cunning
- inexperienced
- courageous
- strong
- brave
- quick thinking
- fearless
- noble
- honest
- fast

Aigistus -
- quick
- brave
- cunning
- deceitful
- evil
- greedy
- quick

Pillarus -
- wise
- noble
- strong
- intelligent
- happy
- kind
- strong
- intelligent
- quick thinking

The main conflict in the story is Theseus being both the king of Eleusis and the heir of Athens. His people need him while the Queen is ill and young. He is his father, who has never met him, wants him to stop in Athens. His must adjust to the new culture of Eleusis. The Queen wants him to convince the Eleusinians that he should take

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LITERARY ACTIVITY #1

The setting in my ATE book takes place in 1930 in Seattle. The main character lives in an apartment building near the City of Seattle. The main character also goes to the Panama Hotel, which he feels is an escape from the chaos of his home. A sketch of a scene that happens in the hotel is shown below.

- Henry Lee
  - Old
  - Smart
  - Risk-taker
  - Loving
  - Sympathetic

- Moe Lee
  - Young
  - Intelligent
  - Nice
  - Smart
  - Clean
  - Serious

- Mr. Lee
  - Proud
  - Clever
  - Easy-going
  - Motherly

- Mrs. Lee
  - Proud
  - Clever
  - Easy-going
  - Motherly
LITERARY ACTIVITY #1

Character:

Ammon - Kind
   Simple
   Trustworthy
   Strong

Plot:

Ammon's journey began when he was a young boy. He lived in a small village surrounded by mountains. Ammon was known for his kindness and his ability to make everyone feel welcome. One day, as he was walking through the village, he noticed a young girl struggling to carry a heavy bag of water. Ammon immediately offered to help her and together they made their way home. From that day on, Ammon became known as the village's hero.

Setting:

The village was small, surrounded by lush green fields and towering mountains. The people were friendly and welcoming, always ready to help each other.

Conflict:

The main conflict in the story involved the struggle for water. The village was located in a desert region, and the water supply was limited. Ammon decided to take action and build a system of irrigation canals to bring water to the village. This was no easy task, but Ammon was determined to succeed.

Solution:

Ammon worked tirelessly, using his skills and knowledge to build the irrigation canals. The villagers were amazed by his dedication and support. The new system of canals brought water to the village and allowed the crops to thrive.

Conclusion:

Ammon's story is one of dedication and hard work. He showed that with determination and kindness, even the most difficult challenges can be overcome. The village of Ammon continues to flourish, thanks to his legacy.
LITERARY ACTIVITY # 2

**Setting**
- The main setting is a small, rural community.

**Characters**
- **Nell:**
  - Honest
  - Sorrowful
  - Simple
  - Strong

- **Mr. Hopkins:**
  - The local teacher

- **Mistress Bramble:**
  - Comfort in her home

**Conflict**
- In the novel "The Minister's Daughter," the main character Nell faces both internal and external conflicts. For example, she struggles to find strength in herself when her mother becomes ill and must earn money to care for herself and her younger sister. She does this by working in various jobs, including as a maid. Her determination and strength carry her through her experiences. She learns to find her place in the world, even in the face of adversity, and ultimately finds love in her grandmother's home.
**LITERARY ACTIVITY #2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Henry Lee</th>
<th>Ichioka</th>
<th>Harry Lee</th>
<th>Mr. Lee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aspects</strong></td>
<td><strong>Characteristics</strong></td>
<td><strong>Aspects</strong></td>
<td><strong>Characteristics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Small in size</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Old Man</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>Serious</td>
<td>National</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>Serious</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
<td>Cruel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
<td>Smart</td>
<td>Non-vocal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 years old</td>
<td>Girl</td>
<td>Speaker</td>
<td>Speaker</td>
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</tbody>
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Henry Lee is a Nisei in 1942. His life purpose was to live for his family. He tried to save Keiko from being deported to an internment camp.

**Conflict:**

In the book *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*, Henry Lee goes through hard times in 1940 and 1941. Henry goes through both internal and external conflicts. For example, an external conflict would include him trying to save Keiko from being deported to an internment camp.

An internal conflict would be tied to what he wants to find something that belonged to Keiko in the basement in the Panama Hotel. Henry Lee faced many conflicts throughout the story.
LITERARY ACTIVITY #3

**Sources**

* People of Leningrad built trenches and look control of the factory.
* Women in city played a great role in Russian success.
* Those who were extremely desperate moved to cannibalism.
* Propaganda was a morale booster.
* Bombings were a daily obstacle for Leningrad people.
* Many makeshift hospitals were made and were over-filled.
* People received very small amounts of food.
* Many citizens were bread eaten before a major bombing occurred.
* Supplies were used in the north to provide food and resources.
* Temperature fell to -46°F in the winter.

**Book**

* Ley built trenches to prevent tanks from attacking secretly.
* The factory was up and running.
* Women began working for Russia, and helping with the war front.
* Dolga and her children moved to the capital and lived with her relatives.
* Propaganda was played through the radio to boost the spirits of Russians.
* Bombs were dropped on Leningrad each day.
* Hospitals were backed tight with wounded casualties.
* People resorted to eating pets in order to stay alive.
* Ley and his sister were executed at the start of the novel.
* Most of the population was killed due to weather conditions and disease.
LITERARY ACTIVITY #3

Historical Era

Hotel on the Corner of Bitter

6 Japanese Americans, including
women and children, were
attacked racially and sent away
during the WW2 era.

6 Many Chinese Americans
were prejudiced towards
the Japanese for what
happened to them during the
Sino-Japanese War.

6 Along the western coast,
in cities, Japanese were
being sent to internment
 camps.

6 Many Americans hated
the Japanese.

6 Americans did not let
Japanese into their stores.

6 Many Japanese
stores were shut down
due to boycotting.

6 Keiko and her family
were being harassed
with signs and racial comments.

6 They were sent to an
internment camp without notice.

6 Mr. Lee, Henry’s father,
was a nationalistic
Chinese man who encouraged
the deportation of Japanese.

6 Once in camp, the guards
often beat Henry and many of his
neighbors when they looked away.

6 The scene in the book where
the American boys are painting
their own town on Windows.

6 In the book, sometimes
Henry was not allowed into
stores with Henry.

6 Stores and apartments
were closed down; Henry saw
boarded up windows.
Fever, 1793
Laurie Halse Anderson.

5 stars (Reviews: 1)

In 1793 Philadelphia, sixteen-year-old Matilda Cook, separated from her sick mother, learns about perseverance and self-reliance when she is forced to cope with the horrors of a yellow fever epidemic.

Total Number of Reviews: 1

5/5/2011

This historical fiction book is about a girl in the time period of the yellow fever, who goes through a series of hardships to overcome the problems of living in an almost deserted city, with the sick and dying people in it. I recommend this for anyone who enjoys reading in a diary style book. It's a good book for a historical research paper.
City of thieves: a novel
David Benioff.

Instead of being executed by the powerful Nazis, Lev and Kolya are given a shot at saving their own lives by complying with an outrageous directive: secure a dozen eggs for a powerful Soviet colonel to use in his daughter's wedding cake.

Call#: FIC BEN

Shelf Browse

TitlePeek™

Total Number of Reviews: 1

2/10/2010

This book was good for the historical reading project but I probably wouldn't've read it otherwise. Despite the fact that I only read it for the project, I still thought it was pretty good.
Sunrise over Fallujah
Walter Dean Myers.

Robin Perry, from Harlem, is sent to Iraq in 2003 as a member of the Civilian Affairs Battalion, and his time there profoundly changes him.

Total Number of Reviews: 2

5/5/2011
"Only half way done, but this book is already as good as Fallen Angels, another book by the same author. The characters are funny and yet easy to relate to, and the book takes place only a few years earlier than now. A great read for anyone who loves a great story about a soldier surviving day to day in a war."

This review was modified by Marie Rossi

5/5/2011
"I don't read that much and I thought this book was fantastic! This book gives you a really good idea of how life was during this war, from a soldier's point of view. I recommend this book to everyone!"
Balzac and the little Chinese seamstress
Dai Sijie ; translated from the French by Ina Rilke.

(Reviews: 1)

Two boys, moved to the country for "re-education" as part of Mao’s Cultural Revolution, find little to amuse them, but things change when they discover a stash of Western classics in Chinese translation and use the stories of Balzac to capture the...

You may also like:
- Kenilworth
- Waiting
- A cup of tea
- Doctor Zhivago

This review was modified by Marie Rossi
The man from the other side
Uri Orlev; translated from the Hebrew by Hillel Halkin.

Living on the outskirts of the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II, fourteen-year-old Marek and his grandparents shelter a Jewish man in the days before the Jewish uprising.

Total Number of Reviews: 1

5/5/2011
I only read the 1st chapter and I could not stand it...it was so boring and I just couldn’t get into the book.

This review was modified by Marie Rossi
Hotel on the corner of bitter and sweet: a novel
Jamie Ford.

(Reviews: 2)

Henry Lee, a Chinese-American in Seattle, loses his wife to cancer and recalls his youth, when he and his Japanese-American friend, Keiko, spent time together during WWII—before Keiko and her family were interred at a camp—and deals with...

5/5/2011
I really enjoyed this depiction of the Japanese American Internment era. The author used good word choice and developed characters well. He also used good detail to show historical circumstance. Overall, this was an amazing book.

5/5/2011
This book was a good read and it helped me learn about this time period. The way it is written really grabs your attention the entire time. I read it in one week! I highly recommend it for the historical fiction project that 10th graders do.
Flygirl
Sherri L. Smith.

During World War II, a light-skinned African American girl "passes" for white in order to join the Women Airforce Service Pilots.

Total Number of Reviews: 1

This was a reallyyy good book...it talks about girls in the WASP during World War II. I recommend it for the 10th grade historical research project.

This review was modified by Site Administrator
Search and destroy
Dean Hughes.

Recent high school graduate Rick Ward, undecided about his future and eager to escape his unhappy home life, joins the army and experiences the horrors of the war in Vietnam.

Call#: FIC Hug
Shelf Browse
TitlePeek™

Total Number of Reviews: 1

5/5/2011

Probably one of the best novels I have ever had the opportunity to read, Search and Destroy by author Dean Hughes is now one of my top all time favorites. It follows the life of high school graduate Rick Ward who feels he hasn't done anything with his life and enlists in the US Army to be shipped off to Vietnam. He feels the experiences of war will mold him into a man, but he is also running away from numerous conflicts back in the States. He soon realizes that war isn't like the movies and the experiences that he has will forever be engraved into his memory. Hughes does an amazing job in his work to accurately portray not only the war and time period, but also the people and how they change and react before, during, and after experiencing the horrors of war. This novel was a great help for my historical fiction project and was an enjoyable read. In my opinion, this book deserves its five stars.
STUDENT TESTIMONIAL

“I was never into books. I read *CITY OF THIEVES* for my 10th grade Historical Fiction project. It was one of the first books I actually wanted to finish! At first, I had a book that I didn’t like, as usual. I was told I could change books until I found one I liked. So Ms. Rossi gave me *CITY OF THIEVES* and I LOVED it. This book made me read more. Now, I do all of my outside reading. I didn’t really like the research part of the project, but I loved reading the book.”