



## Sample — *TruthQuest History: American History for Young Students III (1865-2000+)*

Enjoy this sample! How does it work? *Easily! Naturally!* Just as you discuss life with your kids as an innate part of parenting, simply gather on the couch and together read aloud the commentary which begins each lesson. It won't ask kids to “passively” accept a worldview “download;” rather, the commentary's subtle hints at biblical principles will have them “actively” hunting for truth—little by little, lesson by lesson. By the end of each guide, the lightbulb will be full-on! The kids *will* absorb innumerable brain-facts; but more importantly, they'll develop spiritual eyes to seek God's powerful truths at work in history. This will show convincing proof that He is, and always has been, real *and* right! They will no longer think (as we were taught) of “history” as merely human names and dates (utterly devoid of culture-healing power), but will instead relish the engaging, eternal, worthwhile, inspiring, life-changing, unforgettable heart-story of God and mankind!

After the commentary has been read and discussed, each child is ready to dig into the historical event/personage being studied by enjoying a great book for their age level (from our lists here, or whatever resources are at your library). Thanks to your “priming” time in the commentary, they can probe almost any book and find surpassing lessons. Alternatively, you may wish to read aloud a single book for all to enjoy. Too, Dad can launch a great historical-fiction read-aloud at evening time—the older book gems are especially thrilling adventures—for everyone's enjoyment and his participation in the kids' learning/thinking/believing. (\*Starred books were in-print at time of writing, but the older the book, the better, usually.)

Some lessons include a (strategically-placed) *ThinkWrite* exercise, deepening their spiritual insights through writing. Most lessons have them simply talk, read, and think...for these require time, peace, and relationship. Because “out of the heart the mouth speaks,” you'll hear their learning bubble up in conversation, play, etc. Hands-on activity resources are cited at many junctures. Feel free to use them, or not, as desired. You may also enjoy the companion notebooks/lapbooks/timelines created for *TruthQuest History* by AJTL, but all are optional. Walking and talking together, reading God's word: this is how Jesus taught the disciples the most important truths of all times, and enabled them to turn the world upside down. That is good enough for us! He created families as the place for teaching the young, and He authored the ultimate Book. So, family discussions and riveting reading are the heart of the matter!

## 8. Middle America...and New Ideas

Let's check America's heartland and countryside, where there had been time for pioneer homesteads to blossom into comfortable farms, healthy businesses, and bustling communities...many of which were helped by the mighty Mississippi River and her steamboats.

Remember, though, that when times get easier, when folks have money, when life doesn't seem so risky...that's when people forget about God! They think *they* made everything nice, and forget it's the Lord's blessing. They forget that good things happen *only* when people obey God, because He loves us so much that His rules *help* us! So watch as you're learning about this time in history! Will 'Frank the Farmer' or 'Bob the Businessman' honor God and use his money to help others? Or will he think he's Superman and spend only on himself?!

Or worse yet, will he start believing the new-fangled idea creeping about the land, the one we talked about earlier, the one that tried to knock God right off the throne of the universe! It said that it was a silly ol' idea to think God had created people; instead it claimed that people 'evolved' out of animals. *In other words, people sort of made themselves by always becoming better.* With this new belief, they didn't have to admit there was a God who had made them and was therefore bigger than them. They thought they were free of God! They thought they could be their own boss. They could do whatever felt good, whatever seemed right just for them!

Parents and older students! You will be blessed by something Abraham Lincoln said about this very issue! He made this powerful proclamation to all Americans asking them to pray and fast and humble themselves before God:

*We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown; but we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious land, which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God who made us.*

Parents, for quick insight into these key issues, you will enjoy:

*\*History Through the Eyes of Faith*  
by Ronald Wells, Ch. 13

*\*Seven Men Who Rule the World from the Grave*, by Dave Breese, Ch. 1-3

*\*Basic History of the United States—Vol. 4*, Ch. 3  
by Clarence Carson

Oh, my! I can't begin to tell you how much changed when people started believing this new idea called *evolution!* Life without God *seemed* thrilling (just like I was feeling when I stormed out of my house the day I ran away). We understand that, don't we?! We know it's exciting to stomp our foot and say that no one is going to boss us around. But that thrill only lasts a little while! Soon problems come. That's why I turned around that day and headed back home. But it can take longer for a whole country to turn around and 'head back home.'

I'm hoping that one day soon, America will do just that. It is our great privilege to help people see how smart and right that decision would be! But in the meantime, you have to realize that evolution made a new way of thinking—new *Big 2 Beliefs*. And because evolution gives people the thrill of stomping their foot at God, these beliefs are very popular in our country right now. They are in almost every movie, TV show, public school, government decision, and more.

Oh, I know what you're thinking! You're saying to yourself that movies and shows and government decisions aren't about whether or not people came from monkeys. But guess what! That's not the main part of evolution! The main part is this—it's all about saying there is nothing higher than people. And if there is no God, there is no one to say what is right or wrong...and everyone can do what they feel like doing! Ack!

And think about this! God says that He is the same, yesterday, and forever! He *does not* change! That's why whatever God says is true is always true, and it's true for everybody; God and truth *do not* change. But evolution says there is one main force in the universe—*change!* Evolution says that nature has this power to change and it is making people better and better and better, until one day people will become perfect and they will finish making the world perfect! You can see, then, why people who believe in evolution think it's silly to learn history. They don't want to know what happened back when people were "less evolved." They only want to come up with new ideas (new "truths") they think will make a perfect tomorrow! Wow! People have made themselves into gods!

I hope you will take a minute or two to talk about these ideas with your parents. Though these ideas may seem too hard for you, if you ask God to give you wisdom, He promises that He will! You can ask God to help you understand the real truth about all this! Then you will understand the way many people in our world are thinking. And you will see why these people are making problems...for themselves and others. We know that God is the answer to these problems, and we need to help people understand that! What a big, important job we have! Wow!

Just think! As the American Revolution made such a big change in our country, so did this new belief of evolution! In fact, it made a revolution too, as you'll see, though the changes were so gradual that many people didn't realize what was happening! The sad thing is that many churches were teaching people to believe evolution! But where people loved God with all their heart, they refused to ignore the Bible and they refused to make themselves like gods! Yeah!

Anyway, can you please keep this 'big idea' in your mind while we learn about this time in America's history? (Do *ThinkWrite 1* now.)

***ThinkWrite 1: "What's the big deal?"***

Though it may be hard, try to explain why it is so important that we know God created us and the whole world.

**8a America's heartland and countryside**

\**Mailing May*, by Michael Tunnell

Gr. 1-4

What happens when an Idaho girl wants to visit her grandmother? A true story!

\**The Way We Lived*, by Martin Sandler

Gr. 5-12

I don't know the tone of the text, but this book contains many actual photographs.

\**Christy*, by Catherine Marshall

Gr. 5-12

It's hard to imagine a middle-upper-years girl not enjoying this fabulous, true story of life in Appalachia and one young lady's attempt to help! Also in abridged version.

\**Little Britches*, by Ralph Moody (first in series) All ages!  
 A gem loved by many, especially fathers wanting to connect with their sons throughout life. You may want to gather the whole family, and read this one aloud since it's too challenging for most young students to read independently. (Also in audio, but harder to omit some "cowboy words".)

\**A Time to Keep*, by Tasha Tudor, shows celebrations held by families during this era.

**Fiction/Historical Fiction:**

- \**Daniel's Duck*, by Clyde Robert Bulla (I Can Read) Gr. K-2  
 Dear story of Appalachian boy.
- Fish Fry*, by Susan Saunders Gr. 1-3  
 Texas townfolk enjoy a festive summer day in 1912.
- \**Lucy's Summer*, by Donald Hall Gr. 1-4  
 Delightful picture book shows one summer in the life of a New Hampshire girl.
- \**Copper-Toed Boots*, by Marguerite de Angeli Gr. 2-6  
 A Michigan boy longs for boots. A beloved classic, full of good character!
- Time of the Wolves*, **and**, *Runaway Cattle*, both by Verne Davis Gr. 2-6  
 Boys have rip-snorting adventure in post-Civil War Michigan.
- \**Hannah*, by Gloria Whelan Gr. 2-8  
 Well-known story of blind Michigan girl.
- \**Mandie and the Secret Tunnel*, by Lois Gladys Leppard Gr. 2-8  
 First in Christian series about girl growing up in North Carolina.
- \**Betsy-Tacy*, by Maud Lovelace Gr. 3-7  
 First in series.
- Uncle Fonzio's Ford*, by Miska Miles Gr. 3-8  
 Missouri family has adventures, especially with early auto.
- \**In Grandma's Attic*, by Arleta Richardson Gr. 3-9  
 First of many in a series. An abridged collection of these homespun stories by a Christian author from Michigan can be found in: *Stories from Grandma's Attic*.
- \**Pollyanna*, by Eleanor Porter Gr. 3-12  
 Classic tale of the great influence of one girl's cheerful attitude.
- \**Understood Betsy*, by Dorothy Canfield Fisher Gr. 4-10  
 Beloved story of Vermont girl.
- \**Rascal*, by Sterling North Gr. 4-12  
 Warm tale of boy and his raccoon.

\**Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*, by Kate Douglas Wiggin Gr. 4-12  
There are abridged versions for young readers, too. If you'd like, you can learn more about the author: *Kate Douglas Wiggin: Little Schoolteacher*, by M. Mason (Childhood).

\**Elsie Dinsmore*, by Martha Finley (first in a series of many about Elsie) Gr. 4-12

*Red Horse Hill*, **and**, *The Buckboard Stranger*, by Stephen Meader Gr. 5-12  
Stories set in small New Hampshire towns. Meader's books are much loved!

### Films:

\**Pollyanna* All ages

\**Rascal* All ages

\**Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*, starring Shirley Temple All ages

\**Christy* Parental decision

### 8b Lumbering

**Lumbering helped many states grow, as when Michigan forests rebuilt Chicago after her great fire. Let's meet these tough, ol' lumberjacks!**

*Lumberjacks of the North Woods*, by Lillie Patterson (How They Lived) Gr. 3-8

*Timber*, by Walter Buehr Gr. 3-10

*Timber!* by Aileen Fisher (Aladdin's American Heritage) Gr. 4-10

*Early Loggers and the Sawmill*, by Adams Gr. 4-12

*Lumberjack*, by William Kurelek Gr. 4-12  
Canadian lumbering.

### Fiction/Historical Fiction:

\**Marven of the Great North Woods*, by Kathryn Lasky Gr. 1-5  
True story of the author's father, who had to work in lumber camp as a boy.

\**Lumber Camp Library*, by Natalie Kinsey-Warnock Gr. 2-6

*Song of the Pines*, by Walter & Marion Havighurst (Land of the Free) Gr. 4-12  
Award-winning story of Norwegian settlers lumbering in Wisconsin.

*Lumberjack*, by Stephen Meader Gr. 5-12

Meader's books are usually high adventure!

### Tall tales of Paul Bunyan!

- \**Paul Bunyan*, by Steven Kellogg Gr. K-4  
Kids love Kellogg's funny books.
- Ol' Paul, the Mighty Logger*, by Glen Rounds Gr. 1-8  
Don't miss this laugh-till-you-cry book!

### 8c Mississippi River, steamboats, and river culture

- \**Steamboat!* by Judith Gilliland Gr. 1-5  
The true story of the first female steamboat captain, Blanche Leathers.

*John Fitch: Steamboat Boy*, by Augusta Stevenson (Childhood) Gr. 1-6

- \**Steamboats to the West*, by Edith McCall (Frontiers of America) Gr. 2-6  
Also titled, *Stories of American Steamboats*

*Grant Marsh, Steamboat Captain* Gr. 2-6  
by A.M. Anderson  
(American Adventures)

- \**Story of Mississippi Steamboats* Gr. 2-7  
by R. Conrad Stein  
(Cornerstone)

\**First Steamboat Down the Mississippi*, by George Richter Gr. 3-7  
I've not seen this, so am not  
sure of age recommendation.

How'd'ya like to meet a great songwriter of the Mississippi? He drew native sounds into his work, reflecting the increasing sense of *America!*

*Stephen Foster: Boy Minstrel* (Childhood) Gr. 1-6  
by Helen Higgins

*Stephen Foster and His Little Dog Tray* Gr. 2-6  
by Opal Wheeler

*The Story of Stephen Foster* (Signature) Gr. 3-8  
by Esther Douty

*Stephen Foster*, by Catherine Peare Gr. 4-9

*He Heard America Sing*, by C. Purdy Gr. 4-12  
(Messner)

*Amazing Voyage of the New Orleans*, by Judith St. George Gr. 3-8

*Mississippi Steamboat Days*, by James McCague (How They Lived) Gr. 3-8

*First Steamboat on the Mississippi*, by Sterling North (North Star) Gr. 5-12

### Fiction/Historical Fiction:

*Down the Mississippi*, by Clyde Robert Bulla Gr. 1-6  
His stories are favorites with many young boys.

*Mr. Yowder and the Steamboat*, by Glen Rounds Gr. 1-6

*Willie Jasper's Golden Eagle*, by F.N. Monjo Gr. 2-10  
Story of a steamboat race!

*Making the Mississippi Shout*, by Mary Calhoun Gr. 4-10

\**Swift Rivers*, by Cornelia Meigs Gr. 4-10

Many a tall tale's been told of Mike Fink, the legendary keelboatman!

\**Mike Fink*, by Steven Kellogg Gr. 1-4  
Fun illustrations!

\**Pioneers on Early Waterways*, by Edith McCall, Ch. 2 (Frontiers of America) Gr. 2-6  
Great series.

*Mike Fink: Best of the Keelboatmen*, by Harold Felton Gr. 5-12

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