

Sample: American History for Young Students III (1865-2000)

Unlike other curricula which depend on certain books, *TruthQuest History's* commentary brings depth to any reading. Our topic-specific booklists simply show the rich possibilities! Relax; choose from whatever is available.

(*Starred books were in-print at the time of this writing.)

8É Middle America...and New Ideas

Before moving on, 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 a little money, when life doesn't seem so risky...that's when people start forgetting about God! They start thinking they're the ones who made everything so nice! They forget that it's the blessings of the Lord they're enjoying. They forget that good things happen *only* when people obey God, because He loves us so much that His rules actually 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?!

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.

Or worse yet, will he start believing that 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 said 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, for a quick insight into these key issues, you will enjoy:

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

Oh, my! I can't begin to tell you how much changed when people started believing this new idea called *evolution!* Life without God did *seem* pretty 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!

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.

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.)

8aÉ 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
No girl should miss reading this fabulous, true story of life in Appalachia and one girl's attempt to help! I just learned that someone recently published an abridged version!
- * *Little Britches*, by Ralph Moody Read-aloud
I can't overstate the fondness this book (the first in a series) holds for many Americans. You might want to gather the whole family, and read this one aloud since it's too challenging for most young students to read independently.

* *A Time to Keep*, by Tasha Tudor, shows the lovely celebrations held by American 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.
- 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
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 Fonzo's Ford, by M. Miles Gr. 3-8
Missouri family has adventures, especially with early auto.

* *In Grandma's Attic* Gr. 3-9
by Arleta Richardson
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* Gr. 4-10
by Dorothy Canfield Fisher
Beloved story of Vermont girl.

* *Rascal*, by Sterling North Gr. 4-12
Warm tale of boy and his raccoon.

* *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* Gr. 4-12
by Kate Douglas Wiggin
There are abridged versions for young readers. If you'd like, you can learn more about the author: *Kate Douglas Wiggin: Little Schoolteacher*, by M. Mason (Childhood; Gr. 1-6).

* *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.

Films:

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

* *Rascal* All ages

* *Pollyanna* All ages

* *Christy* Parental decision

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 Gr. 3-8
by L. Patterson (How They Lived)
Timber, by Walter Buehr Gr. 3-10
Timber! by A. Fisher (Al. Am Her.) Gr. 4-10
Early Loggers and the Sawmill, by Adams Gr. 4-12
Lumberjack, by W. Kurelek Gr. 4-12
Canadian lumbering.

Fiction/Historical Fiction:

* *Marven of the Great North Woods* Gr. 1-5
by Kathryn Lasky
True story of the author's father, who had to work in lumber camp as a boy.
* *Lumber Camp Library* Gr. 2-6
by Natalie Kinsey-Warnock
Song of the Pines (Land of the Free) Gr. 4-12
by Walter & Marion Havighurst
Award-winning story of Norwegian settlers lumbering in Wisconsin.
Lumberjack, by Stephen Meader Gr. 5-12

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 Rounds Gr. 1-8
Don't miss this laugh-till-you-cry book!

8bÉ 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
(Amer. Adventures)

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

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

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

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

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 Gr. 3-8
by Judith St. George

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 such favorites with young boys.

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

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

* *Mike Fink*, by Steven Kellogg Gr. 1-4

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

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

Willie Jasper's Golden Eagle Gr. 2-10

by F.N. Monjo
Monjo writes wonderful books; this one tells of an exciting steamboat race!

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

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