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Activity Guide for  
*Young Heroes of the Confederacy*

by Debra West Smith

**Chapter 1 – James Edward Hanger**

1. Describe Jim's life before the war.
2. Why did Jim volunteer? What would you have done if you were Jim, and why?
3. What was the first land battle of the Civil War called?
4. What did Jim invent, and why?
5. Since he studied engineering, do you imagine Jim was a boy who liked to work with his hands? What skill or interest do you have that could lead to a future career?

**Research** - Learn how the Hanger Prosthetic Company has helped people with disabilities around the world. Explore their website for photos of Jim's inventions, and other inspiring stories.

<http://www.hanger.com/history/Pages/The-J.E.-Hanger-Story.aspx>

**Writing** - Write a short biography about a modern amputee.

**Math** - By what ratio were Colonel Porterfield's volunteers outnumbered at the Battle of Philippi? (p.16)

**Chapter 2 – John Randolph Bryan**

1. Who was Thaddeus Lowe? Name two ways he contributed to aviation.
2. How could balloon surveillance help the military?
3. Describe Ran's feelings about his mission. How would you have felt?
4. Compare the Union army's balloon with the Confederate balloon.
5. What happened on Ran's last flight?

**Research** - Draw a map of the Peninsula Campaign and John Randolph Bryan's balloon. Trace his flight.

**Writing** - Write a paragraph describing in detail – clothing, hair, gestures, mood – someone you saw on the way to school this morning. Do the same thing tomorrow. Will your observation skills improve?

**Chapter 3 – John Baptist Smith**

1. List five ways people communicated in the 1860s.
2. How did the Signal Corps send messages? Why was John's invention helpful?
3. How did the battle between the *USS Monitor* and the *CSS Virginia (Merrimac)* change the navy forever?
4. What was meant by *running the blockade*? Why was it dangerous?
5. What choice did the crew of the *Advance* have to make? What would you have done?

**Writing** - Read John's description of the storm at sea. Which words or phrases help you feel its power?  
- Write about the scariest moment in your life, using descriptive language.

**Research** - Draw a picture of John's ship, the *Advance*, riding out the storm.

<http://www.civilwarsignals.org>

<http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/hampton-roads/maps/hamptonroadsmaps.html>

### **Chapter 4 – Simon Baruch**

1. What was Simon's life like before the war?
2. Why do you think immigrants became involved in America's civil war?
3. Describe Simon's first surgery experience.
4. How did the people of Thomasville prepare for the wounded men who were brought there?
5. What medical contributions did Simon make later in life?

**Research** - Compare a doctor's training in the 1860s with today.

**Writing** - Write a diary entry for a Thomasville girl/boy after the train load of wounded men arrived.  
- Write a diary entry for a crow crossing South Carolina after General Sherman's march.

**Math** - How long had Simon lived in South Carolina when the war broke out? (p.37-38)

- What percentage of Confederate soldiers died from disease? (p.39)

### **Chapter 5 – Harriet Bailey Bullock**

1. What were the Border States? Why was life so difficult there?
2. Describe Bailey's life before the war. What was her relationship with the slaves?
3. Name four places people hid their food and valuables when soldiers came.
4. How did Mr. Bullock prepare everyone for the changes emancipation would bring?
5. What sacrifice did Bailey make to help her father?

**Research** - Foragers were a huge problem for the folks back home. Draw a "hidden picture" farm scene where the family has tried to protect their food, livestock, and valuables.

<http://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=20318>; <http://www.arkansascivilwar150.com/>

<http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=6392>

**Writing** - Imagine that you are the younger brother or sister of a soldier and write him a letter.

### **Chapter 6 – Jesse Austin Holman**

1. Why were Southern boys well-suited to military life? What branch of service did Texans choose?
2. Explain why the cavalry was important. Who do they compare to in the modern military?
3. What was the attitude of some soldiers toward the men who were supposed to be their enemies?
4. Describe Jesse's experience at the Battle of Stones River.
5. Did Jesse make the right choice about taking the Oath of Allegiance to the United States? What would you have done?

**Writing** - Write a paragraph from the viewpoint of a cavalry horse.

- Write the script for a conversation between two pickets (guards) who meet each other in the forest.
- Imagine that you are a soldier at the Battle of Stones River, and write a letter home.

<http://www.nps.gov/stri/index.htm>

**Math** - How many Mexican Americans fought in the war? What percentage was Confederate? (p.55)

- By what margin did the Union army outnumber the Confederates at Stones River? (p.59)

**Research** – Find a copy of the Oath of Allegiance.

- Early photography required heavy equipment, so newspapers paid “special artists” to sketch battle scenes. They traveled with the soldiers, and faced the same dangers. Some of their work has survived. Write a short biography about one of the following artists, and view his drawings on the Library of Congress website.

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/civwar/>.

**Alfred Waud** (1828–1891)

**Frank Vizetelly** (1830–1883)

**Winslow Homer** (1836–1910)

**Conrad Wise Chapman** (1842–1910)

### ***Chapter 7 – Samuel Davis***

1. What was the difference between a *scout* and a *spy*?
2. Describe Sam’s experiences as a scout.
3. How would you define *loyalty*?
4. What would you have done if you were Coleman?
5. Do you think Sam made the right choice? What would you have done?

**Research** – Make a list of the items a soldier on the move might have carried in his haversack. Plan a scavenger hunt using the modern equivalent of those items. *Ex: Cup, water bottle.*

<https://www.samdavishome.org/sam-davis-boy-hero/>

**Writing** – Write a paragraph about loyalty. Include who, or what, you would risk your life for.

### ***Chapter 8 – Emma Sansom***

1. Describe Emma’s family.
2. What happened when the Union army invaded Emma’s home?
3. Why was General Forrest chasing the *Lightning Mule Brigade*?
4. How did Emma help General Forrest? What would you have done?
5. Explain the consequences of Emma’s actions on the people of Rome, GA.

**Research** - Ask family members how your ancestors were involved in the Civil War, and draw your family tree. The Internet may have more information.

<http://www.nps.gov/civilwar/soldiers-and-sailors-database.htm>

**Writing** - Correct the grammar and spelling errors on General Forrest’s note to Emma Sansom.

### ***Chapter 9 – Charles Read***

1. How did Charlie’s challenges as a boy help prepare him for leadership?
2. Compare Charlie’s performance as a student with his success as a naval officer. What made the difference?
3. Do you think President Lincoln was right in ordering the *blockade*?
4. Do you think the Confederate navy was right to respond with *commerce raiders*?
5. Describe Charlie’s daring raid up the East Coast.

**Research** - Discover how newspapers like *Harper's Weekly* shaped public opinion. Design a "wanted poster" about Charles Read and his crew that a northern paper might have published.

<http://www.loc.gov/search/?q=harper%27s+weekly&dates=1860-1869>

<http://archive.org/details/confederateliter00bost>

**Writing** – Write two short news articles, from northern and southern perspectives, about Charlie's raids.

### ***Chapter 10 – William Yopp***

1. Describe Bill's life before the war. What was his relationship with Thomas Yopp?
2. What were Bill's duties as a soldier? How did he get his nickname?
3. Describe the contributions of musicians to army life. Name a song they might have played.
4. Name three places Bill worked after the war.
5. How did Bill show kindness to the men at the Veterans Home? Does it surprise you?

**Research** - Musicians played an important role, both in camp life and during battle. Some of their sheet music still exists. Find songs that bands would have played. <http://www.civilwarpoetry.org>

**Writing** – Based on what you have learned about camp life, compose four lines of a soldier's song.

### ***Chapter 11 – Daniel Jackson Collins***

1. How did the Spanish explorers contribute to Florida's future economy?
2. What was the preferred military age when the Civil War started? Was it enforced?
3. What special contributions did Florida make to the war effort?
4. Describe the journey of the *Cow Cavalry*. How did farm life prepare Daniel for his special duty?
5. Compare the experiences of three Collins brothers. How many came home from the war?

**Research** - Driving a herd of cows from central Florida to South Carolina was no easy task. Design a game board tracing their journey from Tampa to Charleston. Include the many dangers and obstacles that Daniel Collins and the "cracker cowboys" faced.

<http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/299682-1>

**Math** - Use fractions to show how many of Florida's soldiers died in the war. (p. 98)

**Writing** – Write a week of diary entries for young Daniel as he drove the cows northward.

### ***Chapter 12 – Sarah Morgan***

1. What did Sarah pack in her *running bag*? What precious items would you take in an emergency?
2. How did the Union general's kindness to her family put them in an awkward position?
3. Since she was not allowed to help wounded men at the hospital, what did Sarah do instead?
4. Sarah said that writing in her diary helped her cope with stress. What helps you?
5. Describe Sarah's accident and what happened afterward.

**Research** - Fashion has always been important to young ladies. Use the library, Internet, or visit a costume store, to learn more about a southern girl's clothing in the 1860s. Design an outfit you would like to wear.

<http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/dawson/dawson.html>; <http://www.ushistory.org/us/34d.asp>

**Writing** - Compare Sarah Morgan's diary entries with notes from a friend. How is the language different?  
- Write a paragraph about the worst day of your life. What helped you to cope with it?

### *Summary*

1. Of the young people featured in this book, who do you think is the most heroic? Give three reasons.
2. Name four advances in medicine and technology that came out of the Civil War.
3. Make a Venn diagram comparing life before and after the Civil War.
4. If you could be in a movie about the Civil War, what character would you choose to be?
5. How can learning about people who lived so long ago make a difference in your life?

### *Connections to Common Core*

#### **English Language Arts**

- RI.4.3 – Explain events or ideas in a historical context, including what happened and why.
- RL.4.6 – Compare and contrast point of view from which different stories are narrated.
- W.4.7 – Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation.
- L.4.2 – Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization and punctuation.
- RI.5.3 – Explain relationships between two or more individuals in a historical context.
- RL.5.6 – Describe how a narrator’s point of view influences how events are described.
- W.5.3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events.
- L.5.3b – Compare and contrast the varieties of English used in stories.
- RH.6-8.7 – Integrate visual information with other information in print and digital texts.
- RH.6-8.9 – Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source.
- WHST.6-8.2 – Write information/explanatory text narrating historical events.
- RI.6.3 – Analyze how an individual is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text.
- RI.7.9 – Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations.
- W.7.3d – Use precise words and phrases, descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action.
- RL.8.5 – Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts.
- RI.8.1 – Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says.
- W.8.2 – Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas.

#### **Math**

- 4.NBT.B.4 - Add and subtract multi-digit whole numbers.
- 6.RP.A.1 - Describe a ratio relationship between two quantities.
- 6.RP.A.3c - Find a percent of a quantity as a rate per 100.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR Debra West Smith enjoys writing about history, editing, and interacting with young people. She offers school presentations and Skype interviews. Now living in Tennessee, she has published several other books with Pelican.

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