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Individual Learning Packet

Teaching Unit

The Red Badge of Courage

by Stephen Crane

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The Red Badge of Courage

Terms and Definitions

Allusion - a reference to a person, place, poem, book, event, etc., which is not part of the story, that the author expects the reader will recognize. **Example**: In *The Glass Menagerie*, Tom speaks of "Chamberlain's umbrella," a reference to British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain.

Coming of Age - a novel or other work of literature in which the main character or characters grow, mature, or understand the world in adult terms. **Examples:** *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn; The Cay*

Dialect - a particular kind of speech used by members of one specific group because of its geographical location or class. **Example**: Jim, in *Huckleberry Finn* says, "Shet de do." ["Shut the door".]

Imagery - the use of words to evoke impressions and meanings that are more than just the basic, accepted definitions of the words themselves. **Example**: The quotation, "Get thee to a nunnery," from *Hamlet* implies that Ophelia must regain her purity and chastity and does not simply mean that she needs to go to a convent.

Irony - a perception of inconsistency, sometimes humorous, in which the significance and understanding of a statement or event is changed by its context. **Example**: The firehouse burned down.

- *Dramatic Irony* - the audience or reader knows more about a character's situation than the character does and knows that the character's understanding is incorrect. **Example**: In *Medea,* Creon asks, "What atrocities could she commit in one day?" The reader, however, knows Medea will destroy her family and Creon's by day's end.
- *Structural Irony* – the use of a naïve hero, whose incorrect perceptions differ from the reader's correct ones. **Example**: Huck Finn.
- *Verbal Irony* - a discrepancy between what is said and what is really meant; sarcasm. **Example**: A large man whose nickname is "Tiny."

Jargon – The speech or language used by a specific group of people based upon region or occupation.

Metaphor - a comparison of two things that are basically dissimilar in which one is described in terms of the other. **Example**: The moon, a haunting lantern, shone through the clouds.

Motif - a situation, incident, idea, or image that is repeated significantly in a literary work. **Examples**: In *Hamlet,* revenge is a frequently repeated idea. In *The Catcher in the Rye,* Holden continually comments on the phoniness of people he meets.

Narrator - the one who tells the story. The narrator must not be confused with "author," the one who writes the story. If the narrator is a character in the book, the proper term is "first-person narration." **Example**: *Moby Dick* is narrated by Ishmael, a crewmember. If the narrator is not a character in the book, the correct term *is* "third-person narration." **Example**: *Sense and Sensibility*.

Naturalism - a literary movement that began in the late nineteenth century, which emphasized that man was as much a prisoner of instinct, environment, and heredity as animals; man has no free will in the theory of naturalism. **Examples:** *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets; The Call of the Wild.*

Objective correlative - the external manifestation of a person's state of mind, which hints at or mimics the character's thoughts, allowing the reader to view the internal from more than one perspective. **Example**: Winston Smith, in *1984*, has an ulcer on his leg, which represents both his suffering because of the State and his internal infections, as viewed by the State.

Personification - a figure of speech in which an object, abstract idea, or animal is given human characteristics. **Examples**: The wall did its best to keep out the invaders.
"Because I could not stop for Death,
He kindly stopped for me."
–Emily Dickinson

Plot - the pattern of events in a literary work; what happens.

Realism - a literary movement that has at its core the depiction of life as it really is, with no attempt to hide or gloss over the problems, hardships, or ugliness of life. **Example:** *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.*

Rite of Passage - a physical, mental, spiritual, or emotional test which a young person must overcome in order to be accepted and perceived as an adult by the rest of his or her society. **Examples**: Huck's entire trip down the Mississippi River is a Rite of Passage, which marks his change from a child to a young adult. Obtaining a driver's license in modern society marks one as an adult in some respects.

Setting - when and where the short story, play, or novel takes place. **Examples**: *Macbeth* takes place in the eleventh century in Scotland. *The Old Man and the Sea* has its main setting on the ocean outside Havana, Cuba, in an unspecified time in the middle-to-late 20th-century.

Simile - a comparison between two different things using either *like* or *as*. **Example**s: I am as hungry as a horse. The huge trees broke like twigs during the hurricane.

Universality - a literary work whose appeal extends beyond a specific time or place to any readers in any century. **Examples:** *A Christmas Carol; The Wizard of Oz.*

Verisimilitude - the use of realistic elements to make literature appear truthful or accurate. **Example**: The creature in *Frankenstein* meets and converses with a blind man.

The Red Badge of Courage

Background Information

The Red Badge of Courage is set in the American Civil War (1861-1865), but the names of the actual conflict, its battles, locations, or the enemies involved are rarely mentioned. Henry's regiment is referred to as the 304th New York regiment once, and mention is made of a regiment from Maine, but there is no specific identification of the enemy forces. In fact, even the characters are rarely referred to by name.

The novel, which was published in 1895, came out at a time when Social Darwinism was popular. Many people strenuously put forth the notion that, like the animal kingdom, only the fittest of humans and organizations should survive. Others strongly opposed the notion as it applied to human beings and their culture.

Out of this controversy developed the naturalistic school of writers. Their main belief was that people are caught up in powerful forces — heredity, instinct, environment (physical and social)— that they cannot control. Crane is cited as a leading example of naturalism. Therefore, in this novel, we might expect to find elements that characterize naturalism.

Because naturalistic writers presented life as it is with all its defects and problems, the authors rejected the romantic tendency to idealize life or people. In the sense that they presented both goodness and ugliness as they saw it, they were realistic writers. Their characters often had to battle physical, economic, or societal forces that were trying to crush them.

A historical point worth remembering, however, is that when this novel was published, readers had been used to romantic scenes of war. Warriors died, but they died bravely, frequently in the arms of a friend, and they died nobly for a cause. This is not the way death is depicted in this novel. We do not know what cause, if any, these warriors are fighting and dying for, and their deaths are anything but serene or tidy. For today's reader, used to extremely violent death scenes, the grim realism of Crane's description might be lost; it was not lost on the readers of his time, however.

It is of interest to note that this novel was hailed as an anti-war novel during the late 1960s and early 1970s because of the grim descriptions of death. But this is a point you should question and decide for yourself. Is this truly an antiwar novel; does it glorify war; what exactly is Crane's point?

Note to Teacher: All references come from the Prestwick House Literary Touchstone edition of The Red Badge of Courage*, copyright 2004.*

The Red Badge of Courage

Objectives

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

1. correctly identify the literal incidents and their proper sequence in the plot.

2. correctly interpret the literal meaning of the novel's metaphors, and state in your own words what image the author is striving to create.

3. comment on the following repeated use of some specific images in the novel and point out how some of these images involve personification.
   - animals
   - machines
   - the sun

4. comment on the devices used by the author to present this not only as a specific young man's experience in war, but also as a universal experience applicable to any young person in any war.

5. identify the following as motifs in this novel:

   - What it is courage; who has it, and how does a person get it?
   - Coming of Age or Rite of Passage. The young innocent confronts an ordeal and comes out of it a wiser or a mature person.
   - The individual is alone, but he functions at his best when he works cooperatively with others.
   - Of all human endeavors, war allows man to find out who he is and as Henry says, "be measured."

6. explain how this is an example of a realistic novel.

7. comment on the use of nature in this novel as an "objective correlative."

8. discuss the scenes that Crane depicts in a realistic fashion.

9. recognize how dialect and jargon play an important part by adding to the verisimilitude of the book.

The Red Badge of Courage

Essay or Discussion Questions

1. Does Henry exercise free will and choice, or is he a captive of his own instincts?

2. In what sense is this novel a good example of a "rite of passage" or "coming of age" novel?

3. There are extensive descriptions of nature in this novel, and it might be said that nature has two functions in this novel:

   - To show how nature represents a force or universe that is completely indifferent to man's travails and suffering.
   - To show how nature mirrors Henry's situation in terms of body, mind, and emotions.

4. Demonstrate how this novel makes the point that skirmishes, battles, and wars are not won by individual Greek-like heroes but by average men fighting together as a unit.

5. How does Crane answer the questions the story raises:
   - What is courage?
   - Where does bravery come from?
   - How does one find courage?

6. To what extent is this an example of a naturalistic novel?

7. Trace the use of animal imagery in this novel and discuss what the images represent.

8. To Crane, like Hemingway, war allows man "to take the measure of himself." In light of this novel, what do you suppose the phrase "to take the measure of himself" means? Do you think that this idea of war or battle being the measure of a man is true? Do you think most people today would accept or reject this idea?

9. Comment on these three features of Crane's style which mark him as a realistic writer rather than a romantic writer:
   - terse dialogue
   - short sentences
   - simple, grim descriptions and metaphors

10. Write an essay on the novel's title, *The Red Badge of Courage.* Consider the following points:
    - Where is the term "the red badge of courage" used?
    - What does it stand for?
    - What is ironic about Henry's red badge?
    - Why do you suppose it is especially significant that he is never wounded in all those later skirmishes when he repeatedly and courageously exposes himself to danger?

11. What function do the following characters play in this novel?

    - Wilson, the loud soldier
    - Jim Conklin, the tall private
    - the tattered soldier

12. The American Civil War was fought over very significant issues. For what reasons do you suppose these issues are never referred to? Given Henry's character, why would he not mention them?

The Red Badge of Courage

TEST

I. Multiple Choice

1. Crane gives his novel a universality by
   A. giving all of his characters names.
   B. de-emphasizing the use of names for his characters.
   C. not specifically identifying places, battles, or issues.
   D. making us care about Henry as a person.
   E. both B and C

2. Henry's mother
   A. is proud that her son enlisted.
   B. tries to discourage him from enlisting.
   C. says that his father would have approved of it.
   D. cries and curses at him when she hears the news.
   E. both B and D

3. When the veterans tell "war stories,"
   A. it makes Henry eager to get into battle.
   B. it frightens him about battle.
   C. it impresses him with their courage.
   D. he does not take much stock of it since he does not believe most of it.
   E. he gets angry at their cruelty and stupidity.

4. After the first skirmish, Henry
   A. runs off before the second is to start.
   B. is pleased with himself and his comrades.
   C. is angry at the men who he feels let him down.
   D. is angry at the lieutenant.
   E. both C and D

5. Before the first battle, Wilson, the loud soldier,
   A. asks Henry if he is afraid.
   B. deserts his post.
   C. asks Henry to hold on to some personal belongings.
   D. tells Henry that he is his only friend.
   E. both A and D

6. Before the first battle, the thought that nags at Henry is:
   A. What will happen to his mother if he is killed?
   B. Will getting shot be painful?
   C. Will Wilson stand by him?
   D. Will he, Henry, stay and fight or run away?
   E. Will his dead father be proud of him for what he does that day?

7. Henry is "wounded" by
   A. one of his own officers.
   B. an infantryman running from a battle.
   C. running blindly into a tree.
   D. falling and hitting his head on a rock.
   E. having his head grazed by an enemy's bullet.

8. When Henry falls in with the column of wounded soldiers, he
   A. plans to go to the aid station and say he cannot remember anything.
   B. feels proud to be a member of this group.
   C. resents this group because, for them, the fighting and war is over.
   D. envies their red badges of courage.
   E. both B and D

9. In one of the last skirmishes Wilson grabs
   A. Henry by the shoulders and turns him around.
   B. the lieutenant, who has been hitting Henry with a sword.
   C. the regiment's colors from Henry's hand.
   D. the colors of the enemy regiment.
   E. the flag of the United States as it is about to fall to the ground.

10. Wilson, the loud soldier, is
   A. a static character who does not change in the course of the novel.
   B. at heart, a coward.
   C. wounded and dies.
   D. sure that he is not going to survive the first battle.
   E. both A and D

II. Matching (two letters are used twice)

____11.	Henry leaves him wandering alone in a field.	A.	Bill Smither
____12.	His side looks as if it has been chewed on by wolves.	B.	the lieutenant
____13.	He says that Henry fought like a wildcat.	C.	the tattered soldier
____14.	He leads the dazed Henry back to his regiment.	D.	Wilson
____15.	He keeps asking Henry where he is wounded.	E.	Jim Conklin
____16.	Someone steps on his hand and he spends the battle in the hospital.	F.	the "cheery-voice" soldier
____17.	After the first battle, he becomes a quieter, more mature person.		

III. Completion

18. A characteristic of naturalism that we see in this novel is that nature is presented as:

19. Some of the metaphors used to describe war in this novel are:

20. A serpent is used as a metaphor to describe the regiment when:

IV. Essay (answer any two)

1. State how the dialogue, sentence structure, and imagery in *The Red Badge of Courage* are characteristic of a realistic novel.

2. The "coming of age" novel is characterized by an innocent who undergoes an ordeal or ordeals and, as a result, comes through these experiences a changed person. Apply this to Henry:
   - How is he at the opening?
   - What experiences does he have that act to change him?
   - How he has changed by the end of the novel?

3. Using quotations from the novel, prove that an important theme for this novel is that it is only by working cooperatively that a man can succeed.

4. In what respects is this a naturalistic novel; in what respects is it not?

5. Explain how Crane's use of jargon and dialect contribute to the feeling of realism in the book.

6. Consider the author's handling of fear and courage in this novel. Draw a generalization on this point, and then prove your generalization by referring to incidents and comments in the novel.

7. In your opinion, how much is war the measure of a man? Support your beliefs by referring to the points made in this novel which refute or bolster your opinions.

8. In an essay, choose one of the following points of view and support it by referring to the novel:
   The Red Badge of Courage is
   A. an anti-war novel.
   B. a novel that glorifies war.
   C. neither of the above

The Red Badge of Courage

TEST (Answers)

I. Multiple Choice

1.	E	4.	B	7.	B	10.	D
2.	B	5.	C	8.	D		
3.	D	6.	D	9	D		

II. Matching

11.	C	13.	B	15.	BC	17.	D
12.	E	14.	F	16.	A		

III. Completion

18. an aspect of the universe is that it is completely indifferent to man and his suffering.

19. a machine, a red animal, a blood-red god.

20. it breaks camp at dawn and begins marching down the road.

The Red Badge of Courage

Study Guide
Teacher's Guide

Chapter I

Vocabulary
adieu – goodbye (French)
advocated – argued for; supported
affront – offense
altercation – quarrel; combat situation
ardor – eagerness
assailed – attacked
brindle – having dark stripes or flecks
demure – reserved
despondent – without hope
dexterously – skillfully
diffidently – timidly; modestly
doggedly – persistently
effaced – erased
epithets – disparaging words
formidable – impressive; weighty
futile – fruitless
haversack – knapsack worn over the shoulder
herald – messenger
Homeric – heroic; epic
impregnable – unbeatable
lucid – clear
lurid – ghastly
martial – warlike
monotonous – boring
obliged – compelled
oblique – indirect
pompously – arrogantly
primed – prepared
prowess – demonstrated courage
resolutely – decidedly
secular – non-religious
shirking – dodging
speculate – guess at
steadfastly – steadily; faithfully
stoutly – bravely
tumult – commotion
two score – forty (1 score = 20)
valor – bravery
vivacious – lively

1. Note the descriptive opening. What is the place and time of day?

   The setting is an army encampment at dawn. They are stationed near hills and a river.

2. What rumor seems to be the most discussed?

   The rumors are about troop movement and battle strategies.

3. Why does the youthful private go off by himself?

   He wants to think about what he has heard.

4. What does each of the following thoughts of the youthful private suggest about his view of war or battle?

   A. He cannot believe that he is about to "mingle in one of those great affairs of the earth." (Pg. 11)

      He cannot believe that, finally, he is going to engage in the extremely important and immense undertaking of war.

   B. "He had imagined peoples secure in the shadow of his eagle-eyed prowess." (Pg. 11)

      As a soldier, he imagines himself as a protector of civilians.

   C. Why does he think war, which he associates with "heavy crowns and high castles," has gone forever? Why does he expect there will be no more "Greek-like struggles"? (Pg. 11)

      War, in his innocent mind, is associated with kings and castles and pageantry. Modern man, he thinks, no longer battles bravely and heroically one-on-one as Homer related. Henry also believes that modern man is better or more timid since education and religion have wiped out man's warlike instincts.

   D. What is the connotation in the phrase "field of battle"? (Pg. 11)

      The phrase suggests more of an athletic event, in which victory and/or glory can be won or lost, rather than a battle site in which men can lose arms, legs, and even their lives in slow and agonizing deaths. Henry does not yet realize the ramifications and horrors of war.

5. Why has the youth "burned" to enlist?

   Although war seems to have less glory than in Homer's time, it still has a strong, romantic appeal to him.

6. What role do the newspaper accounts of battle have in his decision to enlist?

   The newspaper, town gossip, and his own imagination make him think of war as a great enterprise.

7. What is his mother's opinion of his enlistment? What do her comments on socks and the choosing of companions while in the army suggest?

   She thinks Henry should have stayed on the farm. When faced with the accomplished deed, however, she treats him like a young boy and lectures him on taking care of himself and avoiding evil companions.

8. Why does the youth go back to the seminary in his uniform? How would you characterize this action?

   He is proud and he wants to show off to his schoolmates. In doing this, he shows immaturity, but most boys in similar situations would probably be proud to join the army and want to be the center of attention.

9. Why does he not put much faith in what the veterans say?

   He knows veterans make up stories to impress or scare the new recruits.

10. Henry concludes: "He was forced to admit that as far as war was concerned he knew nothing of himself." (Pg. 14) What question nags at him?

    He does not know whether will he stay and fight or break and run like a coward when he comes under fire.

11. In the closing paragraph, why does he feel reassured by what the tall private, Jim Conklin, says?

    He thinks that all the other new men may not have doubts about how they would behave in battle. Jim admits that he might run, if everybody does, which makes Henry feel less alone.

12. Neither the war he is enlisting to fight in, nor the cause his side represents is frequently mentioned. Note that we are given the soldiers' names only occasionally. Why do you suppose the author de-emphasizes proper names and uses many nonspecific points of reference in a war which is so well documented?

    This is a story about an individual youth who goes off to war; by not tying it down to specifics, Crane, gives universality to Henry.

Chapter II

Vocabulary
acute – sharp; high
adherents – followers; believers
blithe – merry
commiseration – empathy
dauntless – brave
derided – scorned
endeavors – attempts
fathom – measure; understand
flouted – scoffed
obscurity – unknown-ness; dimness
ominous – sinister
serene – calm
subdued – low-key; restrained
tranquilly – calmly
unscrupulous – unprincipled
vigorous – energetic
vociferous – loud, noisy, and insistent
wags – jokers
wending – proceeding; traveling

1. Once again, the rumor of moving out to fight proves false. Why does Henry view this as an "irritating prolongation"? (Pg. 17)

   He needs to know the answer to whether he will stand and fight or run.

2. Why, since he spends so much time thinking about it, can he not calculate the answer?

   He knows that only in the actual circumstance of battle will he be able to find his answer.

3. What is it that Henry would like to discover? Why does he not just ask someone outright?

   He wants to find out if any other men have doubts similar to his own, but he is afraid to ask anyone because it would mean confessing his own doubts and, perhaps, being laughed at.

4. Between what two opinions does Henry waver?

   Sometimes he believes that the other men are heroic because they talk eagerly of the coming battle and how they will distinguish themselves. At other times, he suspects they are as afraid as he is, but are lying to cover up their fears.

5. Why does he become angry with his commanders?

   He wants to go into battle so he can get his question answered.

6. Tell what is described in the following five images:

   A. "From across the river the red eyes were still peering. In the eastern sky there was a yellow patch like a rug laid for the feet of the coming sun; and against it, black and patternlike, loomed the gigantic figure of the colonel on a gigantic horse." (Pg. 18)

      The coming of dawn, with the campfires of the enemy across the river and the presence of their own colonel on horseback, is the simple description. The image of red, staring eyes, however, adds to the malevolence of the impending battle. The colonel is presented as less than real, but also as larger than life.

   B. "Staring once at the red eyes across the river, he conceived them to be growing larger, as the orbs of a row of dragons advancing." (Pg. 19)

      To describe the campfires, Crane uses the metaphor of a series of dragons moving forward, with their eyes aglow.

   C. "It was now like one of those moving monsters wending with many feet." (Pg. 19)

   D. "There was an occasional flash and glimmer of steel from the backs of all these huge crawling reptiles." (Pg. 19)

   E. "When the sunrays at last struck full and mellowingly upon the earth, the youth saw that the landscape was streaked with two long, thick, black columns which disappeared on the brow of a hill in front and rearward vanished in a wood. They were like two serpents crawling from the cavern of the night." (Pg. 19)

      All of the images in C, D, and E describe the regiment as it moves at dawn out of camp and down the road. The extended metaphor of dragons, serpents, red eyes, and monsters emphasizes the horror of war yet to come.

7. In what way do all these metaphors involve personification?

   The regiment, the enemy, and fires are all inanimate objects that have been given life-like qualities.

8. How is the mood of Henry contrasted with what seems to be the mood of the rest of the men in the column?

   Henry, still dwelling on his internal debate, is sullen and despondent. The rest of the men are joking, almost singing, and seem to be in a good mood.

9. Explain the incident that involves the fat soldier. What does it contribute to the regiment's mood?

   A fat, slovenly soldier tries to steal a horse but is thwarted by a pretty farm girl. The rest of the regiment laugh and shout encouragement to the girl. The coming battle seems to be the last thing on their minds.

10. Why does the conversation with Wilson upset Henry further?

    Wilson, unlike Henry, seems to have no doubts about his own courage.

11. Why does Henry feel like a mental outcast?

    No one else seems to share his thoughts or feelings.

12. Do you think Henry is unique with his doubts?

    Answers may vary. Example: All of the untried men probably have the same doubts, but Henry may dwell on the uncertainties more than the others.

Chapter III

Vocabulary
accosted – attacked
aggregations – assemblies; gatherings
aligned – lined up
covertly – secretly
crescendo – to gradually become louder
declamation – rant
demeanor – manner
denoted – intended
erecting – building
extricated – freed; disentangled
girted – surrounded; encircled
harangue – lecture
impetus – motivating reason; catalyst
incompetence – ineptitude; incapability
insolent – overbearing
perambulating – walking
ponderous – heavy; burdensome
pontoon – floating
prophetic – apocalyptic; mystical
reconnoitering – scouting; probing
rent – tear
strenuously – laboriously
viands – food; provisions

1. While on the march, in what way does the regiment lose the look of new recruits?

   The men, weary and hot, start throwing away much of their gear.

2. In what way is it still a regiment of rookies?

   The men still have not been in battle; unlike veteran regiments, this regiment still has many men.

3. After the regiment is on the march again, how is Henry feeling?

   He is angry and resentful, and with each new move he becomes even more so.

4. At this point, what does he suspect about his generals?

   He believes they are fools and are leading the regiment into a trap.

5. What two metaphors does the narrator use to describe war?

   Crane compares the battle to an uncontrollable force, or a god that will destroy them. "They were going to look at war, the red animal–war, the blood-swollen god." (Pg. 28)

6. Why does the youth become angry with the young lieutenant?

   Henry, lost in thought, has fallen behind; and the lieutenant comes along and tells him to hurry up and not skulk.

7. What picture do you get from this image: "After a time the brigade was halted in the cathedral light of a forest"? (Pg. 29)

   Answers may vary. Example: Henry is in a forest that is heavily shaded by leaves, except in spots where beams of light shine down through the openings in the branches. In some ways the forest reminds the narrator of being in church, which provides sanctuary and peace, regardless of the situation elsewhere.

8. What does Henry consider an intolerable circumstance, and why does he conclude it might "be better to get killed directly and end his troubles"? (Pg. 30)

   He has been thinking of very little else but how he will or will not behave under fire. Each time he thinks he is going to get the answer, the regiment does not go into battle and moves its position again. He thinks of death as a release from his anxieties and torment.

9. Why is Henry so surprised at the behavior of the loud soldier?

   The loud soldier has asked Henry to send his personal belongings home because the soldier feels he probably will not survive this battle. Henry is surprised because this is the first time the loud soldier has showed any doubts at all.

Chapter IV

Vocabulary
agitated – flustered; shaken
appalling – dismaying
awry – crooked; askew
banshee – a female spirit whose wailing warns of a death to come
bushwhacker – ambusher
composite – a whole made up of varied parts
facetious – witty; jesting
singular – exceptional; unique
turbulent – rough; disorderly

1. As Henry's brigade is halted in the grove, what is the conversation about?

   They are exchanging rumors as to the conduct of the battle.

2. From this position in the grove, as troops held in reserve, what do Henry and his comrades observe?

   The command directly in front of them has broken and run in the face of enemy fire.

3. What does Henry observe on the faces of men as they stampede from the battle?

   They are showing fear and the wild desire to get away from that place. The commander "resembled a man who had come from bed to go to a fire. Hoofs of his horse often threatened the heads of the running men, but they scampered with singular fortune." (Pg. 35)

4. Henry's outfit, the reserves, did not retreat. What is the "composite monster" that Henry and his comrades have not seen yet, but the stampeding soldiers have seen? (Pg. 35)

   the enemy

Chapter V

Vocabulary
abrupt – sudden
debris – garbage; wreckage
despise – hate
divinity – godliness; spirituality
eddied – swirled
faltering – hesitating
feign – pretend
fraternity – brotherhood
impotency – powerlessness
imprecations – curses
incessant – constant; never stopping
oratorical – flowery or overblown (speech)
picturesque – art-like in appearance
pummeling – pounding; beating
potent – powerful
prodigal – lavish, exuberant
protruding – sticking out
querulous – irritable; huffy
ruefully – woefully
undaunted – not discouraged; unruffled
welded – grafted; stuck together

1. As he waits for the battle to begin, what does the waiting remind Henry of?

   He remembers waiting for the circus to come to town.

2. As the fighting begins, Henry forgets his fears. In what way does he experience a sense of brotherhood?

   He feels he is not "not a man but a member." He feels he is a part of a regiment, an army, a cause. "There was a consciousness always of the presence of his comrades about him. He felt the subtle battle brotherhood more potent even than the cause for which they were fighting. It was a mysterious fraternity born of the smoke and danger of death." (Pg. 38)

3. What effect does the continued noise, smoke, and fighting have on Henry?

   He begins to feel rage.

4. What happens to the one man who fled?

   The lieutenant forces him back to the line.

5. At the close of this chapter, what is Henry's realization about nature?

   In the midst of the battle, the sun continues to shine and nature quietly goes on as if nothing had happened. This observation astonishes Henry.

Chapter VI

Vocabulary
abject – downtrodden
affably – sociably
blanched – paled
countenances – faces
discerned – made out; perceived
doleful – miserable; woeful
fretted – fussed; worried
hillock – small hill
impending – coming; about to happen
livid – sensational
luster – shine; brilliance
proverbial – fabled
redoubtable – horrible; frightful
reeking – stinking
refined – cultured; delicate
resplendent – glorious
scrutinizing – carefully examining
stolid – blunt; dull
vanquished – defeated
zeal – enthusiasm
infernal – hellish

1. At the opening of this chapter, how does Henry feel?

   Like the other men, Henry is feeling ecstatic that they held the line against the enemy. He feels that the problems of war and cowardice "had been vanquished." (Pg. 43)

2. Immediately after this joy, however, what surprise do Henry and his comrades get?

   The enemy forces have mounted a second attack.

3. Henry sees the new attack as "an onslaught of redoubtable dragons." (Pg. 45) What does he do and why?

   Henry sees the man next to him run away. Very frightened, he throws down his gun and runs away, too.

4. In what ways are his fears magnified by turning his back on the fighting?

   Now that he cannot see anything, Henry worries even more about what may be coming at him.

5. Is Henry's act of running away the result of a conscious decision, or is he overcome by some instinctive drive?

   Answers may vary. Example: Crane may be describing Henry's act as instinctual since he uses two animal images to describe Henry: "ran like a rabbit" and "like a proverbial chicken" without its head. (Pg. 45) However, the act may be the result of a conscious decision since Henry has repeatedly contemplated his reactions to the war. Therefore, Henry's reaction may be a combination of free will and an instinctual reaction to fear.

6. In what metaphor is death compared to a dragon?

   "He felt vaguely that death must make a first choice of the men who were nearest; the initial morsels for the dragon would be those who were following him." (Pg. 46)

7. When Henry spots the division general, what important news does he overhear?

   The division has held off the enemy attack.

Chapter VII

Vocabulary
aversion – dislike
commendable – praiseworthy
conciliate – pacify
density – thick-headedness
derision – scorn
edifice – structure
foliages – leaves and brush
imbecile – idiot; jerk
impudent – cheeky
jovial – jolly
sagacious – wise
soughingly – in a sighing manner
trepidation – fear

1. Why does Henry feel wronged?

   Henry ran for safety because he thought the division would be destroyed. If the division had been decimated, he would have felt vindicated; now, however, he feels foolish. This sounds very much like a rationalization, an attempt to justify his flight from battle.

2. Why is he angry with his former comrades?

   He is angry because they did not run, and he did.

3. As Henry walks, his feelings of self-pity, guilt, and despondency deepen. How does he use the incident with the squirrel to justify what he did?

   When Henry throws the pinecone at the squirrel, the squirrel runs off. To Henry, this is an indication that running from danger is in accordance with nature, not against it. Henry is rationalizing and justifying his flight from the battle.

4. As Henry walks in this very peaceable part of the forest, what does he stumble upon that upsets him?

   He encounters a dead body sitting propped against a tree, seemingly looking at him. The description Crane uses here is another example of his naturalistic writing style.

Chapter VIII

Vocabulary
abashed – embarrassed
agape – gaping; open
doggerel – poetry or song that is partly nonsense
eloquent – smooth-spoken
fortitude – strength
homely – ugly
industriously – busily; in a hardworking way
obstinately – stubbornly
pealed – rang
peevish – annoyed
perfunctory – brief
sardonic – cynical; wry
specter – ghost
suffused – filled

1. Why does Henry find it ironic that he is running in the direction of the battle?

   Because he has spent so much time and energy running from the battle, it is ironic that he is running toward it.

2. What prompts him to run in that direction?

   He concludes that he must be prompted by curiosity to see what is happening, similar to people who would go to the rooftops to see worlds collide.

3. What further conclusion does he reach about the battle he and his comrades were just in?

   While it seemed the most important battle in the world to him at the time, the fight would be very insignificant in the larger picture of the entire war.

4. In what way does the narrator use a machine as a metaphor for war?

   "The battle was like the grinding of an immense and terrible machine to him. Its complexities… fascinated him. He must go close and see it produce corpses." (Pg. 54)

5. What is the column of men that Henry falls in with?

   Apparently, these are wounded men marching to aid stations in the rear.

6. What question does the other soldier ask Henry that confounds and upsets him? Why does the question have this effect on him?

   The other soldier asks Henry where he is wounded. At this point, Henry realizes who he is with and where he is headed. He has no answer because he has not been wounded at all.

7. The word "pickets" means a group of soldiers. The rest of the soldier's jargon is reproduced below. Translate it into standard English. Why do you suppose so much of Crane's dialogue is like this?

   > I was talkin" cross pickets with a boy from Gergie, onct, an' that boy, he ses, 'Your fellers 'll all run like hell when they onct hearn a gun,' he ses. 'Mebbe they will,' I ses, 'but I don't b'lieve none of it,'…He larfed. Well, they didn't run t'day, did they, hey? They fit, an' fit, an' fit. (Pgs. 56-57)

   Answers may vary. Example: The soldiers speak in a dialect that indicates that they come from rural areas, not the cities. They seem uneducated and lack sophistication. "I was talking across to a group of soldiers with a boy from Georgia once, and that boy says, 'Your fellows will all run like hell when they once heard a gun," he says. 'Maybe they will,'…I say, 'but I don't believe any of it' he laughed. 'Well, they didn't run today, did they, hey? No, sir! They fought, and fought, and fought.' "

Chapter IX

Vocabulary
ague – fever with chills
beseeched – begged
devotee – follower
lamented – mourned
philippic – tirade
plight – predicament
reiterated – repeated
semblance – likeness

1. Why do you suppose Henry wishes that he had been wounded also?

   A war injury would have made him feel less guilty for having run away. It would also have provided him with some measure of safety from the derision of the others. It would have been for him a real red badge of courage.

2. Who does the ghost-like soldier turn out to be?

   Jim Conklin

3. What does the ghost-like soldier ask Henry?

   Conklin wants Henry to move him out of the road so that if Conklin falls, he will not be run over by artillery wagons.

4. What is Jim looking for as he runs through the woods?

   Jim wants a place to die and also wants Henry to let him alone; Jim says, "No–no–don't tech me–leave me be–leave me be–" (Pg. 61)

5. What makes this scene in the forest very realistic?

   Death, in all its agony, sadness, and violence is presented here. There is no glory in this death; there is, instead, ugliness, sorrow, and complete separation. Note Henry's previous encounter with the corpse.

6. What does the last line in this chapter suggest?

   Nature, exemplified by the sun, "pasted in the sky like a wafer," again looks down on the war with complete indifference. (Pg. 63) The hot, red sun also mirrors Henry's situation. His body, mind, and emotions are fevered and parched; just as a cool rain might cleanse and cool the body, he needs something to bring tranquility to his mind.

Chapter X

Vocabulary
commencing – beginning
docile – obedient
plaintively – sorrowfully
vigilance – watch; surveillance

1. After Jim dies, the tattered soldier asks Henry again where he was hit. How and why does Henry respond in that fashion?

   Henry tells the tattered soldier to leave him alone. The question assumes that Henry is out of the battle because he has been wounded, but, of course, this is not the case. This inquiry threatens to expose Henry as a deserter, and also brings back to his mind his present situation and the guilty feelings he has over what he has done.

2. Referring to his wound, the tattered soldier says, "It might be inside mostly, an' them plays thunder." (Pg. 66) In what way is Henry's wound inside?

   It is Henry's heart and mind that are suffering, not his body. The unseen wound does, indeed, sound loudly within Henry, like thunder.

3. What makes Henry's desertion of the tattered soldier a particularly cruel act?

   The tattered soldier, who has tried to help everyone else, is now wandering around in a daze and is in urgent need of help himself, but Henry just walks away and leaves him to his fate.

4. Why is Henry unable to see or respond to the tattered soldier's need?

   He is too consumed with his own guilt, with his consequent anger, and with those companions who remind him of his guilt.

Chapter XI

Vocabulary
compunctions – regrets
contrivance – invention
craven – cowardly
exhortations – pleas
haggard – drawn and scraggly
indifferent – uncaring
laurels – praises; honors
malediction – curse
pathos – something that evokes pity
profuse – great in number
salve – healing balm
seething – raging
sinuous – winding
ungainly – clumsy
unprecedented – never having happened before
vicinity – surrounding area
vulnerable – unprotected

1. As Henry sees a mass of men and wagons coming down the road from the front line, he feels vindicated. Why?

   These men seem to be running from the battle line, just as he did.

2. What is it, however, that he sees next that he resents and envies?

   He sees a column of infantry pushing their way forward, toward the battle line.

3. Why does he envy these men?

   They seem brave and eager to fight. He feels sure they will be heroes, and that is what he would like to be.

4. Why does Henry hope that his division is defeated?

   If the division is overrun, no one will call him names for having run away. This kind of defeat for the division will also give him a moral vindication because it will prove that he just saw the end earlier than everyone else. All Henry's feelings seem to point to his belief that his fleeing was not cowardice, but came as a result of understanding and reason.

5. At this point, however, Henry accepts the fact that the division will not be defeated. In what direction does his thinking go?

   He thinks about how he will be scorned and ridiculed when he returns to his division. He thinks of and rejects many false explanations for his absence. Henry is strictly concerned with others' reactions, not his own fate.

Chapter XII

Vocabulary
adroitly – deftly; skillfully
audacious – bold; uninhibited
balking – thwarting
burly – husky
gamin – imp
gesticulating – gesturing
heedless – careless
illumine – light up
interminable – never ending
invincible – unconquerable
languid – limp; sluggish
pallor – paleness
remonstrance – protest
secluded – hidden

1. As the column of men going toward the front disappears, Henry sees a large body of men running through the woods. Crane writes, "He knew at once that the steel fibers had washed from their hearts." (Pg. 75) What is the meaning of this image?

   These men have lost their courage and are running from the battle in great fear. Their hearts, once invincible, have disintegrated.

2. Henry grabs a man and tries to ask a question. What does the man do, and why does he do it?

   The man hits Henry in the head with his rifle because Henry is slowing down his flight. The man only wants to put distance between himself and the enemy.

3. After this, what is Henry's condition?

   Henry is wandering around in a daze.

4. Who helps him, and what does he do for Henry?

   Some cheery soldier comes along; seeing that Henry is in a daze, he leads Henry back to his regiment.

5. What is ironic about the red badge of courage that Henry now has?

   Henry has been hit by one of his fellow soldiers, a man who was running from battle. His badge of courage is really a badge of desertion.

Chapter XIII

Vocabulary
badgered – bothered
crone – old woman
debauch – degenerate
ethereal – heavenly; airy
languor – stupor; exhaustion
passively – submissively
perilous – dangerous
prostrate – prone; flat
visages – faces

1. As Henry approaches his regiment's fire, he is tempted to go off and hide rather than face the ridicule he expects from his comrades. What force, though, propels him into camp?

   At whatever cost, he needs a place to rest and get food.

2. When Henry meets Wilson on sentry duty, what lie does Henry tell?

   Henry says he was shot in the head.

3. Why is this lie believed?

   He has a large wound on his head that could have come from being grazed by a bullet.

4. How is Henry treated?

   He is welcomed back to camp and cared for.

Chapter XIV

Vocabulary
amiable – friendly
charnel – funeral-related
comprehensively – all-inclusively
conceits – fanciful ideas
deprecating – disapproving
marshaling – mobilizing; rallying
petulantly – irritably
squalling – howling; wailing

1. As Henry awakens, what does he mistake his sleeping comrades for?

   Henry thinks that all the men are dead since the light turned "the skin of the men in[to] corpselike hues and made the tangled limbs appear pulseless and dead." (Pg. 87)

2. In what way has Wilson changed? What caused it?

   Wilson had been a loudmouth and a braggart. Now he seems much more mature and certainly more quiet. Having gone through battle and found himself, Wilson may be more confident of his own strength and, consequently, have much less need to talk about himself and what great deeds he will accomplish.

3. At the end of this chapter, what remark of Wilson's does Henry get upset with? Why?

   Wilson comments that he thought they lost half the regiment, but stragglers keep showing up in camp. Henry questions whether Wilson is making some kind of point. Is Wilson suggesting that these stragglers ran off, "jest like you [Henry] done"? (Pg. 64)

Chapter XV

Vocabulary
condescension – lowering oneself
consternation – fear
discretion – guardedness
impelled – moved
lugubrious – sorrowful
oration – speech
reverie – daydream

1. With a good night's sleep and some food under his belt, how has Henry changed?

   All of his self-confidence has returned.

2. Henry felt that the previous day he had been out among the dragons. What does he conclude?

   Henry realizes that the dragons are not as hideous as he imagined. He has run in battle; but now he is back and no one knows of his shame, so he feels secure and cocky. At this point, he feels he will be able to handle whatever comes his way.

3. Wilson is embarrassed. Why?

   Wilson, the day before, showed weakness by asking Henry to send some personal items home. Now, he has to ask Henry to give those letters back. Wilson's weakness is public, but Henry's has been unobserved.

4. What does Henry imagine when he gets home?

   He fantasizes about upsetting his mother and local girls with his war stories. While there is not much substance to his stories, his meager adventures will be listened to with great interest since he is one of the few who can recite war events.

5. What makes Henry seem less than admirable at this point?

   He seems to be bragging and false. He describes the men who ran as "weak mortals," and feels "a scorn for them." He claims, "He had fled with discretion and dignity." (Pgs. 92-93) He returns Wilson's kindness with pettiness and with some cruelty. He judges his fellow soldiers for the actions he committed previously.

Chapter XVI

Vocabulary
precede – to go before
temerity – assurance; daring

1. In what way has Henry become something of a bore?

   He is constantly taking about what the generals are doing wrong, and he complains a great deal.

2. Why does the other soldier's comment about Henry's winning the previous day's battle all by himself bother Henry?

   Henry thinks that the other soldier might know of his flight and is being sarcastic. As a result, Henry vows to be a little less obvious.

3. What of Henry's own words surprises him?

   As he is saying, "Well, don't we fight like the devil? Don't we do all that men can?" he realizes that he does not have a right to say that, since he ran away. When no one questions him, however, he goes on more strongly than ever. (Pg. 96)

4. What does the lieutenant tell Henry?

   Henry is admonished to talk less and get ready to fight more.

5. At this point, what is the condition of the men in this regiment?

   They are worn out and exhausted; they stand still, like "men tied to stakes." (Pg. 99)

6. What is suggested by the last image: "They stood as men tied to stakes"? (Pg. 99)

   These men fought and did not move back an inch. This image suggests that the men are being held there by some force that will not allow them to move. It also implies helplessness and vulnerability to whatever will happen next.

Chapter XVII

Vocabulary
curlike – dog-like
spasmodic – fitful

1. In the second paragraph of this chapter, what are Henry's feelings?

   The day before, he felt the gods of fate were against him and he hated them. Today, he hates the enemy, which he feels pressing in on him all the time.

2. What simile does he use to express his feelings of being weak in the face of larger forces?

   He is "not going to be badgered in his life, like a kitten chased by boys." Pushed as they are, men will "develop teeth and claws." (Pg. 101)

3. How does Henry fight in this battle?

   He fights like a madman, but he is in something of a daze and is not fully aware of what he does.

4. What is the lieutenant's opinion of Henry?

   He thinks Henry is a magnificent fighter and is proud of him.

5. In this chapter, Henry appears to be very courageous. In your mind, is he?

   Answers may vary. Example: In this chapter, Crane describes Henry courageously with animal imagery. He chased the retreating enemy like a dog, and he fought like a beast. The lieutenant describes him as fighting like a wild cat. In fact, he is unaware, he tells, of much of what he does. "He had slept and, awakening, found himself a knight." (Pg. 104) Psychologically, from exhaustion and despair, he probably has been driven to a mad state in which he loses rational power. On another level, however, he could be acting on animal instinct. Perhaps courage and fear are instinctual responses that we have little control over.

Chapter XVIII

Vocabulary
reposeful – restful
restive – contrary; edgy

1. After the battle, what do Henry and Wilson set out to look for? What do they find?

   They set out looking for water; although they do not find any, they overhear a conversation between the general and one of his aides.

2. How do Henry and Wilson feel about the remarks made about their regiment?

   They realize that in the larger scheme of the war, their regiment is insignificant and disposable. Of all the regiments, theirs can best be used for this mission, from which few will return. They are said to "fight like a lot 'a mule drivers," which they seem to take as neither a compliment nor an insult. (Pg. 107) The phrase seems to suggest that they fight with a great deal of energy but with little skill. In later chapters, we will see that this phrase rankles Henry.

3. Why do Henry and Wilson not share this information with the others?

   They probably feel that it will do more harm than good to tell the rest of the men what kind of mission they face and how their chances of surviving this mission are slim.

Chapter XIX

Vocabulary
accoutrements – equipment; accessories
belabored – beat
deities – gods
dullard – idiot
imperious – overbearing
infantile – babyish; childish
stoic – impassive; matter-of-fact
surmounted – topped

1. Initially, what attitude does Henry and his comrades have as they lead the charge?

   The men are somewhat oblivious to what they are doing. They move forward with a feeling of invulnerability. At the moment, "there was a delirium that encounters despair and death, and is heedless and blind to the odds. It is a temporary but sublime absence of selfishness." (Pg. 110)

2. What happens to make the men vulnerable again?

   They pause, and in the pause they notice that "much of their strength and their breath had vanished [and] they returned to caution." (Pg. 110)

3. What gets the regiment moving again?

   The lieutenant harangues Henry, who starts moving again like a madman; Wilson follows both of them. This movement of three people gets the whole regiment moving.

4. What figure of speech does Crane use to describe Henry's feelings for the flag?

   Crane uses a metaphor, comparing Henry's love for the flag to a goddess that "could be a saver of lives." At the same time, Crane has the men engaged in a "ludicrous and awful" fight with the deceased flag holder. (Pg. 113) The second image points out the idiocy of war.

Chapter XX

Vocabulary
allusions – references
elation – joy
melee – confused struggle; combat
tableau – striking or artistic grouping; scene

1. What is the regiment's situation at the opening of this chapter?

   They are in complete disarray; milling around with no clear purpose. Many would like to go back to the safety of their own lines, but the officers will not let them. They regroup and move into another open space where they run up against a wall of bullets. Their morale is broken; they look for cover.

2. Knowing he has little hope of victory, on whom does Henry want revenge?

   He would like to show up the officer who called them mule drivers; but with the battle just about lost, he does not believe that he will have the opportunity.

3. Just as the men are about ready to lose all hope, the smoke clears. What appears?

   New and inexperienced enemy soldiers walk right into the regiment without knowing where they are. The regiment, although feeling that all is lost, fight viciously, because it now has a desire to go down blazing.

4. What is the result of this battle?

   The enemy, apparently taking large losses, either withdraws or runs off. The regiment now has a renewed feeling of pride and confidence. "And they were men," not mules or sheep. (Pg. 119)

Chapter XXI

Vocabulary
disheveled – messy
exertions – efforts
perturbation – disorder
vexation – irritation

1. When they return to their own lines, why are they mocked by the soldiers in the other regiment?

   The regiment thinks that they have made a great charge, but to the soldiers watching, Henry and the troops do not appear to have gone very far or accomplished much.

2. Why is the officer who called them "mule drivers" upset with them?

   The regiment stopped short and accomplished nothing. They were meant to be a diversion; if they had pushed forward a little more, they would have been a successful diversion.

3. As Henry and Wilson are discussing the good job they think they have done, what news is brought to them?

   Two soldiers tell them that they overheard the lieutenant and the colonel talking and that these two officers think that Henry and Wilson did a fine job in the attack.

Chapter XXII

Vocabulary
adjacent – next to
celerity – rapidity; swiftness
emaciated – severely thin; scrawny
expletives – curse words
prattled – babbled; talked meaninglessly
robust – healthy; fit
succor – aid; relief
unscathed – unharmed
vehement – intense; fierce

1. As the new color bearer, what resolve does Henry make?

   No matter what happens, he will not give an inch.

2. In this new battle, what appears to be happening to the regiment?

   Many of its men are being shot; as a consequence, their firepower has been reduced.

Chapter XXIII

Vocabulary
galling – painful; bitter
jubilant – triumphant; exultant
morose – gloomy
obdurate – unfeeling
paroxysm – convulsion
pestilential – deadly
superficial – at the surface level; shallow

1. Why do the officers decide that it is necessary to charge?

   The regiment is in an exposed position, and if it just sits there, it will be wiped out.

2. How do the men react to the order to charge?

   To Henry's surprise, they seem almost eager to attack.

3. What is the narrator indicating in the following line? "He himself felt the daring spirit of a savage religion-mad. He was capable of profound sacrifices, a tremendous death." (Pg. 132)

   Henry has become a fanatic who is quite willing to die for his cause, whatever that might be.

4. How does the attack come out?

   The regiment kills or drives off the enemy and captures four prisoners.

5. How do Henry and Wilson feel?

   They both feel proud and happy with their accomplishment.

6. What has Wilson been able to get?

   Wilson captured the flag of the enemy regiment.

Chapter XIV

Vocabulary
assented – agreed
bedraggled – shabby
bombast – pretentious speech
despondent – despairing; hopeless
stentorian – roaring; blaring
sultry – stuffy; broiling

1. The regiment has been marching parallel to the enemy's line; then they turn off and march in the opposite direction toward the river. What does Henry conclude from this?

   Henry believes that this battle is finally over and they have won it.

2. What is stated in the following passage?

   For a time the youth was obliged to reflect in a puzzled and uncertain way. His mind was undergoing a subtle change. It took moments for it to cast off its battleful ways and resume its accustomed course of thought. Gradually his brain emerged from the clogged clouds, and at last he was enabled to more closely comprehend himself and circumstance. (Pg. 136)

   With the battle over, Henry becomes human again and thinks about all that has happened to him.

3. In the paragraph that follows, what image does Henry use to describe the battle and his feelings during battle?

   Crane uses the imagery of color: "He had been where there was red of blood and black of passion and he was escaped." (Pg. 136) Red would be a color representing actual death and suffering, while black would stand for the emotional darkness in battle.

4. In recalling all that has happened, what are Henry's first thoughts and feelings?

   He feels glad he survived, and he is proud of his deeds. "He felt gleeful and unregretting." (Pg. 136)

5. What soon begins to bother him?

   He is haunted by his retreat from the first engagement, and feels ashamed. Then, he –remembers his treatment of the tattered soldier, and Henry is pained by that cruelty. He fears somebody might know of this cowardly behavior.

6. As he looks at and listens to his comrades, what does he observe?

   That they are caught up in re-living their own part in the battle.

7. At this point, Henry gains the following insight. Put it into your own words.

   Yet gradually he mustered force to put the sin at a distance. And at last his eyes seemed to open to some new ways. He found that he could look back upon the brass and bombast of his earlier gospels and see them truly. He was gleeful when he discovered that he now despised them. (Pg. 137)

   Henry can live with his sins, and continue on with his life. He no longer needs to boast and strut; in fact, in looking back, he hates the fact that he has behaved like that.

8. What is Henry's conclusion about manhood and death?

   With his understanding, "he felt a quiet manhood, nonassertive but of sturdy and strong blood." He has looked at death, and it no longer frightens him; nor does he have a need to shout against it. Death is only death, and he concludes "he was a man." (Pg. 138)

9. How does the narrator use nature to emphasize the change in Henry?

   Under the hot, red sun in the course of battle, Henry had been "an animal blistered and sweating in the heat and pain of war." Now, despite the rain and mud that others are cursing, Henry feels cleansed and at peace. The nightmare of battle is behind him, and "over the river a golden ray of sun came through the hosts of leaden rain clouds." (Pg. 138) This is the symbol, apparently, of a new and bright future. The many rain clouds, however, do remain, leaving the reader to determine whether The Red Badge of Courage *is anti-war, pro-heroism, or somewhere in between.*

The Veteran

Vocabulary
tannery – a place where animal hides are tanned
boisterous – noisy; loud
conflagration – a fire
motley – varied
indolence – laziness
stanchions – bars used to secure cattle in specific areas

1. When does this section of the story take place?

   While there is no specific timeframe mentioned, the Veteran, Henry, is now a grandfather. Therefore, we can assume that several years have passed since the battles.

2. How does Mr. Fleming describe his battle experiences? Why does the group laugh at him?

   He describes his confusion and fear during his first battle, admitting that he thought the "world was coming to an end." The group laughs because they are surprised that Henry would admit his fear. However, they actually admire him and consider him to be a hero. (Pg. 139)

3. Why does old Fleming call the enemy soldiers "unreasonable"? (Pg. 140)

   He felt that if the enemy soldiers knew him as a human being, they would not have shot at him. Since there was a war in progress, it was unreasonable of Henry to expect them not to shoot.

4. Describe the old man's reaction to the Swede.

   The Swede panics when he realizes that there is a fire, and tries to warn Mr. Fleming about the barn. When he finally understands the Swede, his face "became a mask" that was stricken with horror. (Pg. 141) This is an example of a metaphor.

5. What does Fleming do about the fire?

   He runs in to save the animals. He has no concern for his own safety, even after he loses his hair, and his clothes are on fire. He continues to rescue the animals even though he may have a broken hip.

6. What simile is used to describe Mr. Fleming's spirit?

   When the old man perishes in the fire, smoke fills the sky as "if the old man's mighty spirit…has swelled like the genie of a fable." (Pg. 143)

The Red Badge of Courage

Study Guide
Student Copy

Chapter I

Vocabulary
adieu – goodbye (French)
advocated – argued for; supported
affront – offense
altercation – quarrel; combat situation
ardor – eagerness
assailed – attacked
brindle – having dark stripes or flecks
demure – reserved
despondent – without hope
dexterously – skillfully
diffidently – timidly; modestly
doggedly – persistently
effaced – erased
epithets – disparaging words
formidable – impressive; weighty
futile – fruitless
haversack – knapsack worn over the shoulder
herald – messenger
Homeric – heroic; epic
impregnable – unbeatable
lucid – clear
lurid – ghastly
martial – warlike
monotonous – boring
obliged – compelled
oblique – indirect
pompously – arrogantly
primed – prepared
prowess – demonstrated courage
resolutely – decidedly
secular – non-religious
shirking – dodging
speculate – guess at
steadfastly – steadily; faithfully
stoutly – bravely
tumult – commotion
two score – forty (1 score = 20)
valor – bravery
vivacious – lively

1. Note the descriptive opening. What is the place and time of day?

2. What rumor seems to be the most discussed?

3. Why does the youthful private go off by himself?

4. What does each of the following thoughts of the youthful private suggest about his view of war or battle?

   A. He cannot believe that he is about to "mingle in one of those great affairs of the earth." (Pg. 11)

   B. "He had imagined peoples secure in the shadow of his eagle-eyed prowess." (Pg. 11)

   C. Why does he think war, which he associates with "heavy crowns and high castles," has gone forever? Why does he expect there will be no more "Greek-like struggles"? (Pg. 11)

   D. What is the connotation in the phrase "field of battle"? (Pg. 11)

5. Why has the youth “burned” to enlist?

6. What role do the newspaper accounts of battle have in his decision to enlist?

7. What is his mother’s opinion of his enlistment? What do her comments on socks and the choosing of companions while in the army suggest?

8. Why does the youth go back to the seminary in his uniform? How would you characterize this action?

9. Why does he not put much faith in what the veterans say?

10. Henry concludes: “He was forced to admit that as far as war was concerned he knew nothing of himself.” (Pg. 14) What question nags at him?

11. In the closing paragraph, why does he feel reassured by what the tall private, Jim Conklin, says?

12. Neither the war he is enlisting to fight in, nor the cause his side represents is frequently mentioned. Note that we are given the soldiers’ names only occasionally. Why do you suppose the author de-emphasizes proper names and uses many nonspecific points of reference in a war which is so well documented?

Chapter II

Vocabulary
acute – sharp; high
adherents – followers; believers
blithe – merry
commiseration – empathy
dauntless – brave
derided – scorned
endeavors – attempts
fathom – measure; understand
flouted – scoffed
obscurity – unknown-ness; dimness
ominous – sinister
serene – calm
subdued – low-key; restrained
tranquilly – calmly
unscrupulous – unprincipled
vigorous – energetic
vociferous – loud, noisy, and insistent
wags – jokers
wending – proceeding; traveling

1. Once again, the rumor of moving out to fight proves false. Why does Henry view this as an "irritating prolongation"? (Pg. 17)

2. Why, since he spends so much time thinking about it, can he not calculate the answer?

3. What is it that Henry would like to discover? Why does he not just ask someone outright?

4. Between what two opinions does Henry waver?

5. Why does he become angry with his commanders?

6. Tell what is described in the following five images:

   A. "From across the river the red eyes were still peering. In the eastern sky there was a yellow patch like a rug laid for the feet of the coming sun; and against it, black and patternlike, loomed the gigantic figure of the colonel on a gigantic horse." (Pg. 18)

   B. "Staring once at the red eyes across the river, he conceived them to be growing larger, as the orbs of a row of dragons advancing." (Pg. 19)

   C. "It was now like one of those moving monsters wending with many feet." (Pg. 19)

   D. "There was an occasional flash and glimmer of steel from the backs of all these huge crawling reptiles." (Pg. 19)

   E. "When the sunrays at last struck full and mellowingly upon the earth, the youth saw that the landscape was streaked with two long, thick, black columns which disappeared on the brow of a hill in front and rearward vanished in a wood. They were like two serpents crawling from the cavern of the night." (Pg. 19)

7. In what way do all these metaphors involve personification?

8. How is the mood of Henry contrasted with what seems to be the mood of the rest of the men in the column?

9. Explain the incident that involves the fat soldier. What does it contribute to the regiment's mood?

10. Why does the conversation with Wilson upset Henry further?

11. Why does Henry feel like a mental outcast?

12. Do you think Henry is unique with his doubts?

Chapter III

Vocabulary
accosted – attacked
aggregations – assemblies; gatherings
aligned – lined up
covertly – secretly
crescendo – to gradually become louder
declamation – rant
demeanor – manner
denoted – intended
erecting – building
extricated – freed; disentangled
girted – surrounded; encircled
harangue – lecture
impetus – motivating reason; catalyst
incompetence – ineptitude; incapability
insolent – overbearing
perambulating – walking
ponderous – heavy; burdensome
pontoon – floating
prophetic – apocalyptic; mystical
reconnoitering – scouting; probing
rent – tear
strenuously – laboriously
viands – food; provisions

1. While on the march, in what way does the regiment lose the look of new recruits?

2. In what way is it still a regiment of rookies?

3. After the regiment is on the march again, how is Henry feeling?

4. At this point, what does he suspect about his generals?

5. What two metaphors does the narrator use to describe war?

6. Why does the youth become angry with the young lieutenant?

7. What picture do you get from this image: “After a time the brigade was halted in the cathedral light of a forest”? (Pg. 29)

8. What does Henry consider an intolerable circumstance, and why does he conclude it might “be better to get killed directly and end his troubles”? (Pg. 30)

9. Why is Henry so surprised at the behavior of the loud soldier?

Chapter IV

Vocabulary
agitated – flustered; shaken
appalling – dismaying
awry – crooked; askew
banshee – a female spirit whose wailing warns of a death to come
bushwhacker – ambusher
composite – a whole made up of varied parts
facetious – witty; jesting
singular – exceptional; unique
turbulent – rough; disorderly

1. As Henry's brigade is halted in the grove, what is the conversation about?

2. From this position in the grove, as troops held in reserve, what do Henry and his comrades observe?

3. What does Henry observe on the faces of men as they stampede from the battle?

4. Henry's outfit, the reserves, did not retreat. What is the "composite monster" that Henry and his comrades have not seen yet, but the stampeding soldiers have seen? (Pg. 35)

Chapter V

Vocabulary
abrupt – sudden
debris – garbage; wreckage
despise – hate
divinity – godliness; spirituality
eddied – swirled
faltering – hesitating
feign – pretend
fraternity – brotherhood
impotency – powerlessness
imprecations – curses
incessant – constant; never stopping
oratorical – flowery or overblown (speech)
picturesque – art-like in appearance
pummeling – pounding; beating
potent – powerful
prodigal – lavish, exuberant
protruding – sticking out
querulous – irritable; huffy
ruefully – woefully
undaunted – not discouraged; unruffled
welded – grafted; stuck together

1. As he waits for the battle to begin, what does the waiting remind Henry of?

2. As the fighting begins, Henry forgets his fears. In what way does he experience a sense of brotherhood?

3. What effect does the continued noise, smoke, and fighting have on Henry?

4. What happens to the one man who fled?

5. At the close of this chapter, what is Henry's realization about nature?

Chapter VI

Vocabulary
abject – downtrodden
affably – sociably
blanched – paled
countenances – faces
discerned – made out; perceived
doleful – miserable; woeful
fretted – fussed; worried
hillock – small hill
impending – coming; about to happen
livid – sensational
luster – shine; brilliance
proverbial – fabled
redoubtable – horrible; frightful
reeking – stinking
refined – cultured; delicate
resplendent – glorious
scrutinizing – carefully examining
stolid – blunt; dull
vanquished – defeated
zeal – enthusiasm
infernal – hellish

1. At the opening of this chapter, how does Henry feel?

2. Immediately after this joy, however, what surprise do Henry and his comrades get?

3. Henry sees the new attack as “an onslaught of redoubtable dragons.” (Pg. 45) What does he do and why?

4. In what ways are his fears magnified by turning his back on the fighting?

5. Is Henry’s act of running away the result of a conscious decision, or is he overcome by some instinctive drive?

6. In what metaphor is death compared to a dragon?

7. When Henry spots the division general, what important news does he overhear?

Chapter VII

Vocabulary
aversion – dislike
commendable – praiseworthy
conciliate – pacify
density – thick-headedness
derision – scorn
edifice – structure
foliages – leaves and brush
imbecile – idiot; jerk
impudent – cheeky
jovial – jolly
sagacious – wise
soughingly – in a sighing manner
trepidation – fear

1. Why does Henry feel wronged?

2. Why is he angry with his former comrades?

3. As Henry walks, his feelings of self-pity, guilt, and despondency deepen. How does he use the incident with the squirrel to justify what he did?

4. As Henry walks in this very peaceable part of the forest, what does he stumble upon that upsets him?

Chapter VIII

Vocabulary
abashed – embarrassed
agape – gaping; open
doggerel – poetry or song that is partly nonsense
eloquent – smooth-spoken
fortitude – strength
homely – ugly
industriously – busily; in a hardworking way
obstinately – stubbornly
pealed – rang
peevish – annoyed
perfunctory – brief
sardonic – cynical; wry
specter – ghost
suffused – filled

1. Why does Henry find it ironic that he is running in the direction of the battle?

2. What prompts him to run in that direction?

3. What further conclusion does he reach about the battle he and his comrades were just in?

4. In what way does the narrator use a machine as a metaphor for war?

5. What is the column of men that Henry falls in with?

6. What question does the other soldier ask Henry that confounds and upsets him? Why does the question have this effect on him?

7. The word "pickets" means a group of soldiers. The rest of the soldier's jargon is reproduced below. Translate it into standard English. Why do you suppose so much of Crane's dialogue is like this?

> I was talkin" cross pickets with a boy from Gergie, onct, an' that boy, he ses, 'Your fellers 'll all run like hell when they onct hearn a gun,' he ses. 'Mebbe they will,' I ses, 'but I don't b'lieve none of it,'…He larfed. Well, they didn't run t'day, did they, hey? They fit, an' fit, an' fit. (Pgs. 56-57)

Chapter IX

Vocabulary
ague – fever with chills
beseeched – begged
devotee – follower
lamented – mourned
philippic – tirade
plight – predicament
reiterated – repeated
semblance – likeness

1. Why do you suppose Henry wishes that he had been wounded also?

2. Who does the ghost-like soldier turn out to be?

3. What does the ghost-like soldier ask Henry?

4. What is Jim looking for as he runs through the woods?

5. What makes this scene in the forest very realistic?

6. What does the last line in this chapter suggest?

Chapter X

Vocabulary
commencing – beginning
docile – obedient
plaintively – sorrowfully
vigilance – watch; surveillance

1. After Jim dies, the tattered soldier asks Henry again where he was hit. How and why does Henry respond in that fashion?

2. Referring to his wound, the tattered soldier says, "It might be inside mostly, an' them plays thunder." (Pg. 66) In what way is Henry's wound inside?

3. What makes Henry's desertion of the tattered soldier a particularly cruel act?

4. Why is Henry unable to see or respond to the tattered soldier's need?

Chapter XI

Vocabulary
compunctions – regrets
contrivance – invention
craven – cowardly
exhortations – pleas
haggard – drawn and scraggly
indifferent – uncaring
laurels – praises; honors
malediction – curse
pathos – something that evokes pity
profuse – great in number
salve – healing balm
seething – raging
sinuous – winding
ungainly – clumsy
unprecedented – never having happened before
vicinity – surrounding area
vulnerable – unprotected

1. As Henry sees a mass of men and wagons coming down the road from the front line, he feels vindicated. Why?

2. What is it, however, that he sees next that he resents and envies?

3. Why does he envy these men?

4. Why does Henry hope that his division is defeated?

5. At this point, however, Henry accepts the fact that the division will not be defeated. In what direction does his thinking go?

Chapter XII

Vocabulary
adroitly – deftly; skillfully
audacious – bold; uninhibited
balking – thwarting
burly – husky
gamin – imp
gesticulating – gesturing
heedless – careless
illumine – light up
interminable – never ending
invincible – unconquerable
languid – limp; sluggish
pallor – paleness
remonstrance – protest
secluded – hidden

1. As the column of men going toward the front disappears, Henry sees a large body of men running through the woods. Crane writes, "He knew at once that the steel fibers had washed from their hearts." (Pg. 75) What is the meaning of this image?

2. Henry grabs a man and tries to ask a question. What does the man do, and why does he do it?

3. After this, what is Henry's condition?

4. Who helps him, and what does he do for Henry?

5. What is ironic about the red badge of courage that Henry now has?

Chapter XIII

Vocabulary
badgered – bothered
crone – old woman
debauch – degenerate
ethereal – heavenly; airy
languor – stupor; exhaustion
passively – submissively
perilous – dangerous
prostrate – prone; flat
visages – faces

1. As Henry approaches his regiment's fire, he is tempted to go off and hide rather than face the ridicule he expects from his comrades. What force, though, propels him into camp?

2. When Henry meets Wilson on sentry duty, what lie does Henry tell?

3. Why is this lie believed?

4. How is Henry treated?

Chapter XIV

Vocabulary
amiable – friendly
charnel – funeral-related
comprehensively – all-inclusively
conceits – fanciful ideas
deprecating – disapproving
marshaling – mobilizing; rallying
petulantly – irritably
squalling – howling; wailing

1. As Henry awakens, what does he mistake his sleeping comrades for?

2. In what way has Wilson changed? What caused it?

3. At the end of this chapter, what remark of Wilson's does Henry get upset with? Why?

Chapter XV

Vocabulary
condescension – lowering oneself
consternation – fear
discretion – guardedness
impelled – moved
lugubrious – sorrowful
oration – speech
reverie – daydream

1. With a good night's sleep and some food under his belt, how has Henry changed?

2. Henry felt that the previous day he had been out among the dragons. What does he conclude?

3. Wilson is embarrassed. Why?

4. What does Henry imagine when he gets home?

5. What makes Henry seem less than admirable at this point?

Chapter XVI

Vocabulary
precede – to go before
temerity – assurance; daring

1. In what way has Henry become something of a bore?

2. Why does the other soldier's comment about Henry's winning the previous day's battle all by himself bother Henry?

3. What of Henry's own words surprises him?

4. What does the lieutenant tell Henry?

5. At this point, what is the condition of the men in this regiment?

6. What is suggested by the last image: "They stood as men tied to stakes"? (Pg. 99)

Chapter XVII

Vocabulary
curlike – dog-like
spasmodic – fitful

1. In the second paragraph of this chapter, what are Henry's feelings?

2. What simile does he use to express his feelings of being weak in the face of larger forces?

3. How does Henry fight in this battle?

4. What is the lieutenant's opinion of Henry?

5. In this chapter, Henry appears to be very courageous. In your mind, is he?

Chapter XVIII

Vocabulary
reposeful – restful
restive – contrary; edgy

1. After the battle, what do Henry and Wilson set out to look for? What do they find?

2. How do Henry and Wilson feel about the remarks made about their regiment?

3. Why do Henry and Wilson not share this information with the others?

Chapter XIX

Vocabulary
accoutrements – equipment; accessories
belabored – beat
deities – gods
dullard – idiot
imperious – overbearing
infantile – babyish; childish
stoic – impassive; matter-of-fact
surmounted – topped

1. Initially, what attitude does Henry and his comrades have as they lead the charge?

2. What happens to make the men vulnerable again?

3. What gets the regiment moving again?

4. What figure of speech does Crane use to describe Henry's feelings for the flag?

Chapter XX

Vocabulary
allusions – references
elation – joy
melee – confused struggle; combat
tableau – striking or artistic grouping; scene

1. What is the regiment's situation at the opening of this chapter?

2. Knowing he has little hope of victory, on whom does Henry want revenge?

3. Just as the men are about ready to lose all hope, the smoke clears. What appears?

4. What is the result of this battle?

Chapter XXI

Vocabulary
disheveled – messy
exertions – efforts
perturbation – disorder
vexation – irritation

1. When they return to their own lines, why are they mocked by the soldiers in the other regiment?

2. Why is the officer who called them "mule drivers" upset with them?

3. As Henry and Wilson are discussing the good job they think they have done, what news is brought to them?

Chapter XXII

Vocabulary
adjacent – next to
celerity – rapidity; swiftness
emaciated – severely thin; scrawny
expletives – curse words
prattled – babbled; talked meaninglessly
robust – healthy; fit
succor – aid; relief
unscathed – unharmed
vehement – intense; fierce

1. As the new color bearer, what resolve does Henry make?

2. In this new battle, what appears to be happening to the regiment?

Chapter XXIII

Vocabulary
galling – painful; bitter
jubilant – triumphant; exultant
morose – gloomy
obdurate – unfeeling
paroxysm – convulsion
pestilential – deadly
superficial – at the surface level; shallow

1. Why do the officers decide that it is necessary to charge?

2. How do the men react to the order to charge?

3. What is the narrator indicating in the following line? "He himself felt the daring spirit of a savage religion-mad. He was capable of profound sacrifices, a tremendous death." (Pg. 132)

4. How does the attack come out?

5. How do Henry and Wilson feel?

6. What has Wilson been able to get?

Chapter XIV

Vocabulary
assented – agreed
bedraggled – shabby
bombast – pretentious speech
despondent – despairing; hopeless
stentorian – roaring; blaring
sultry – stuffy; broiling

1. The regiment has been marching parallel to the enemy's line; then they turn off and march in the opposite direction toward the river. What does Henry conclude from this?

2. What is stated in the following passage?

   For a time the youth was obliged to reflect in a puzzled and uncertain way. His mind was undergoing a subtle change. It took moments for it to cast off its battleful ways and resume its accustomed course of thought. Gradually his brain emerged from the clogged clouds, and at last he was enabled to more closely comprehend himself and circumstance. (Pg. 136)

3. In the paragraph that follows, what image does Henry use to describe the battle and his feelings during battle?

4. In recalling all that has happened, what are Henry's first thoughts and feelings?

5. What soon begins to bother him?

6. As he looks at and listens to his comrades, what does he observe?

7. At this point, Henry gains the following insight. Put it into your own words.

> Yet gradually he mustered force to put the sin at a distance. And at last his eyes seemed to open to some new ways. He found that he could look back upon the brass and bombast of his earlier gospels and see them truly. He was gleeful when he discovered that he now despised them. (Pg. 137)

8. What is Henry's conclusion about manhood and death?

9. How does the narrator use nature to emphasize the change in Henry?

The Veteran

Vocabulary
tannery – a place where animal hides are tanned
boisterous – noisy; loud
conflagration – a fire
motley – varied
indolence – laziness
stanchions – bars used to secure cattle in specific areas

1. When does this section of the story take place?

2. How does Mr. Fleming describe his battle experiences? Why does the group laugh at him?

3. Why does old Fleming call the enemy soldiers "unreasonable"? (Pg. 140)

4. Describe the old man's reaction to the Swede.

5. What does Fleming do about the fire?

6. What simile is used to describe Mr. Fleming's spirit?

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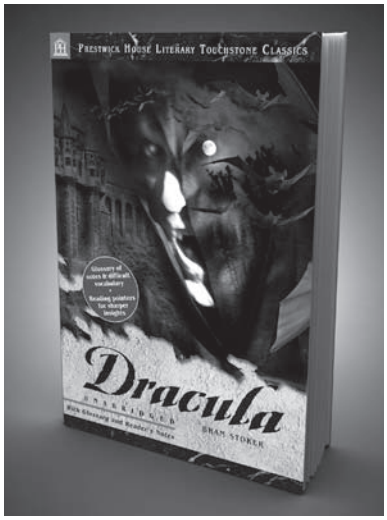

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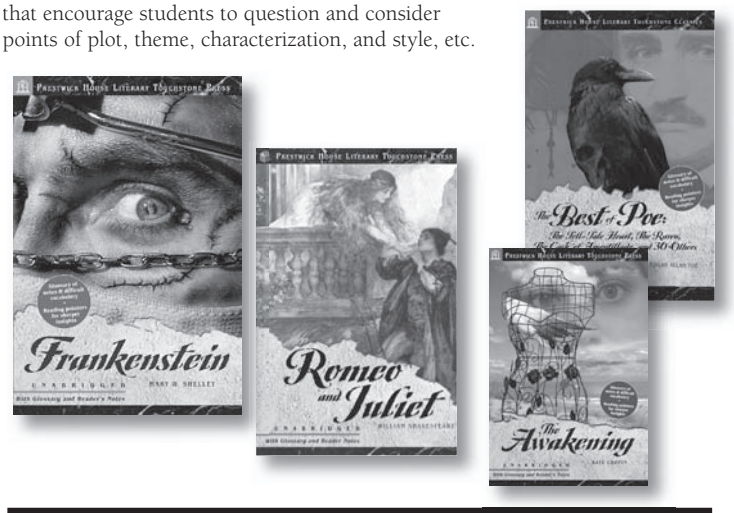

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