

# ***Rifles for Watie* by Harold Keith (Published by Crowell)**

Approved for use in Communication Arts, Grade 7

## **Summary**

With fighting erupting around his Kansas farm, 16-year-old Jefferson Davis Bussey can hardly wait to join the Union forces. When he infiltrates Colonel Watie's Confederate camp as a spy, he discovers the enemy is much like himself--only fighting for a different cause. --From Ebsco Novelist

## **Connection to the Curriculum**

Elements of a novel: Students may examine all the elements of a novel including statement of problem, conflicts both internal and external, numerous complications, climax, and resolution.

Cause and effect: Each event, beginning with Jeff's mother being killed leads to a complication and into a string of cause-effect events that catapult Jeff into crisis and alter his life. A change in even one of these events would alter the direction of his life.

Internal and external conflict: Not only does the reader learn the internal conflicts that Jeff suffers, but he/she also experiences many external conflicts with Jeff as he fights in the Civil War and struggles with enemies on both sides.

Character development and motivation: This novel portrays strong, three-dimensional characters with a variety of motivations and behaviors. Readers are permitted to view the war from many points of view, rather than the one-sided view often portrayed in novels.

## **Standards**

### ***Course Objectives (Benchmarks)***

**Reading:** 1.4- The students comprehend a variety of texts.

**Literature:** 2.1- The students use literary concepts to interpret and respond to text.

### ***Possible Skills Taught (Indicators)***

#### **Reading:**

1.4.15- The student uses information from the text to make inferences and draw conclusions.

1.4.17- The student compares and contrasts varying aspects (characters' traits and motives, themes, problem-solution, cause-effect relationships, ideas and concepts, procedures, viewpoints) in one or more appropriate-level texts.

#### **Literature:**

2.1.1- The student describes different aspects of characters (e.g., their physical traits, personality traits, feelings, actions, motives) and analyzes how major characters are developed (through their thoughts, words, speech patterns, actions) and how they change over time.

2.1.2- The student identifies and describes the setting (environment, time of day or year, historical period, situation, place) and analyzes connections between the setting and other story elements (e.g., character, plot).

2.1.3- The student identifies major and minor elements of the plot (e.g., conflict, crisis/turning moment, climax, resolution, rising action, falling action, subplots, parallel episodes) and explains how these elements relate to another.

2.1.4- The student understands aspects of theme (e.g. moral, lesson, meaning, message, author's ideas about the subject) and supports with implicit/explicit information from the text.

## **A Note on the Text**

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

*As the subject of this novel is war, readers will experience descriptions/images of war and death.*

## **Additional Unit Design Connections**

Coming soon:

To be completed during future curriculum development activities