

# Teaching Historical Fiction

When you read an amazing story, get to meet the author, forge a professional & personal friendship that spans over 17 years, AND be able to bring that to hundreds of students a year, that's what inspires my love of historical fiction.

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## How Do I Start?

- \* Get students interested in the characters, themes, ideas that they will explore WITHOUT tying it to time period yet.
- \* Anticipation Guides or Wall Blogs—thought-provoking statements that allow students to agree/disagree, offer opinions on paper, chart paper, etc.
- \* Probable Passage, Tea Party, Possible Sentences (see work of Kyleene Beers and Bob Probst)

## The Students Are Interested, Now What?

- \* Activities that build background/instruction of time period
- \* Articles
- \* Picture books
- \* Primary source documents/media
- \* Thinking Maps—Provide students with a list of words from time period. Students independently define what they know. Groups meet to select a small set of words, glue to chart paper, create/draw connections among words, present

## Do Students Really Even Like Historical Fiction?

- \* They will tell you no, but if done right, it becomes yes!!
- \* Investment in characters in a different way than other genres
- \* Other books to explore in that time period, look for other books by that same authors or willing to try other historical fiction author, willing to try narrative nonfiction to broaden their knowledge...ON. THEIR. OWN!
- \* My media coordinator's rough estimate is that circulation of historical fiction increases 50-60% after my WWII unit. The biggest group leading the way...BOYS, the group we desperately want reading more and the toughest to sell.