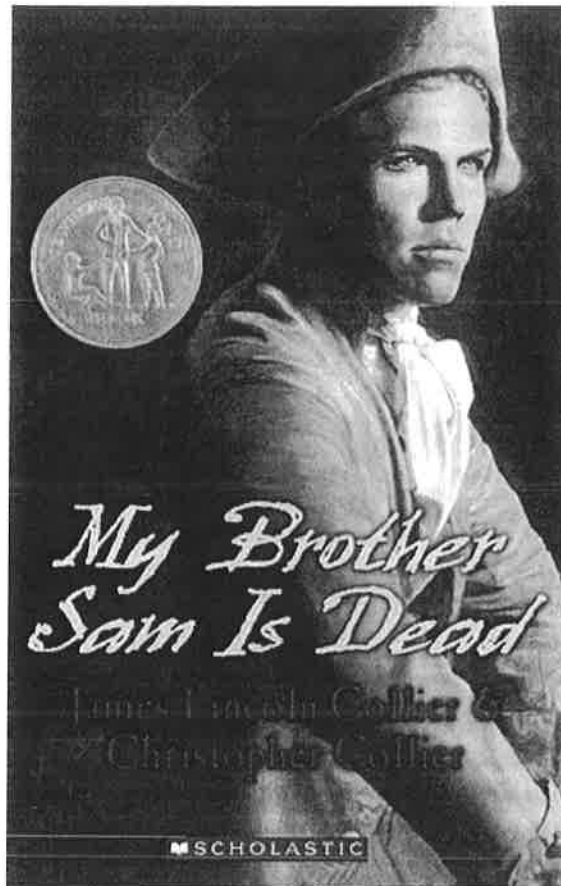


Welcome Incoming 7th Graders!

Over the summer, you will be reading *My Brother Sam Is Dead* by James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier.



Summary: The Newbery Honor Book My Brother Sam Is Dead joins the Scholastic Gold line, which features award-winning and beloved novels. All his life, Tim Meeker has looked up to his brother Sam. Sam's smart and brave -- and is now a part of the American Revolution. Not everyone in town wants to be a part of the rebellion. Most are supporters of the British -- including Tim and Sam's father. War is raging and Tim knows he'll have to make a choice -- between the Revolutionaries and the Redcoats . . . and between his brother and his father.

When you have completed the novel, complete the following assessment. This summer assignment will be graded as a test for the first quarter. All assignments are due on the first day of school. Have a great summer!

Mr. Pezzella

My Brother Sam is Dead Final Test

Multiple Choice (3 points each)

1. In the plot, the event that started the story and changed the character's lives occurred when
 - A. Tim realized that Sam had stolen their father's gun
 - B. Sam arrived home and announced that he was joining the army
 - C. Mr. Beach explained that only madmen support the war
 - D. Sam and Life argued about politics

2. In the sentence, "Sam always got *scornful* when other people disagreed with him," scornful means
 - A. Embarrassed and shy
 - B. Irritated and furious
 - C. Full of contempt
 - D. Worried and fretful

3. After reading about Sam and his father, the reader could conclude that
 - A. Sam had absolutely no respect for his father
 - B. Sam wanted to be independent from his father
 - C. Tim liked to watch his father and brother become angry with each other
 - D. Sam had a difficult life living with a dominating father

4. When Sam said, "Captain Arnold will lead us through the Lobsterbacks *like a hot knife slicing through butter*," he was using figurative language to show
 - A. How Captain Arnold's leadership would help to defeat the British Redcoats
 - B. What an excellent chef Captain Arnold was
 - C. How hungry the colonial army was after years of war with the British
 - D. How weak the Lobsterbacks, the British army, were during this time in history

5. When Tim described his chores, the authors were using the setting to show
 - A. The anger of Tim's unwillingness to help his family
 - B. The circumstances of the Revolutionary War in colonial Massachusetts
 - C. The difficulties of being an only child in wartime
 - D. A different way of life - the activities necessary during the colonial times

6. When Tim said, "I didn't feel much like being a Tory anymore," the reader could conclude that
 - A. Seeing the British wound the Rebel messenger made Tim too angry to fight
 - B. Watching the British capture Jerry Sanford was the last straw
 - C. Seeing the violent British attack at Captain Starr's home, made Tim change his mind
 - D. Realizing the British were not going to spend their money in the tavern hurt his feelings

7. When Susannah said, "War turns men into beasts," the author uses dialogue to
- Establish the situation and indicate the action the Rebels were taking
 - Help develop Susannah's character as a woman who enjoyed war
 - Help create a mood of desperation caused by the lack of food
 - Establish the theme that war changes people
8. The climax of the plot, that moment of highest suspense that changes lives, occurred when
- Colonel Read told Susannah that Sam was to be executed
 - Tim threw the bayonet into the stockade and realized he could not save Sam
 - Tim told Colonel Parsons that Sam did not steal the cattle
 - Tim saw Sam restrained between two soldiers, accused of being a cattle thief
9. The main idea of the epilogue would be the following:
- Tim, writing a few years after his brother's death, had found evidence of Sam's innocence.
 - Tim, writing as a 64 year old man, thinks America might have won freedom without a war
 - Tim, writing as an adult with grown children, understands Sam's arguments with his father
 - Tim, writing for his mother, expresses her vow not to serve soldiers
10. One of the major themes the authors want to teach in *My Brother Sam is Dead* is
- War tends to make people's ideas about politics and freedom come into agreement
 - People will argue about the wrongs in their lives whether there is a war or not
 - Wanting to serve in a war, and suffer starvation and death, should be the goal of every young man
 - Tim learns glory in battle can lead to early death, and avoiding the glory of war can lead to a long, happy life
11. As Life began his trip to Verplancks, he had checked almanacs and Tim described the snowy ground. The most important reason for the authors to include these details of the setting would be to show
- The changes in character, how immature Tim was to think he knew about driving cattle in the snow
 - The realistic aspects of the actions of the characters as they argued about the best trail to take
 - A different way of life, the boredom of living through snowstorms in colonial New England
 - A mood, the dangerous nature of the road to Verplancks, filled with cow-boys and bad weather
12. In the following sentence, page 95, "Others (cattle) were edging out into the pastures alongside the road, looking for *forage*," the word *forage* means
- A protected place to huddle during the storm
 - The cowherd to lead the herd to Verplancks where cattle sleep
 - Food and grass to eat
 - A low piece of ground

13. In the following sentence, “Tim could see the trail of his footsteps, drawn like a line across the fields and fences that divided them up,” the authors are using figurative language called a
- A. Hyperbole
 - B. Simile
 - C. Metaphor
 - D. Personification
14. Which sentence best summarizes the trip to Verplancks
- A. Tim learned that his father’s job of providing for his family was even easier than he thought.
 - B. Colonial New England was a peaceful area in spite of the war going on in the southern colonies.
 - C. Thieves, such as “cow-boys,” have harassed honest people during the history of mankind.
 - D. Travel during war, food shortage, and a torn country was filled with exciting and dangerous events.
15. In the spring of 1777 the British troops came to Redding. The authors described the soldiers, their cannons and ammunition wagons, as well as, their powder horns and bayonets. They were using setting details to:
- A. To make the actions of the war seem more real to the reader as the Revolution came to Redding
 - B. To establish the circumstances of the Revolutionary War as it was fought in the South
 - C. To show the change in the mood of the town as the powerful Continentals attacked the Redcoats
 - D. To show the lesson of discouragement as Tim and the children cowered in fear of the British
16. In the following sentence, “There was a commotion in The British ranks and a quick fusillade of shots,” fusillade means:
- A. An ambush by soldiers in the trees
 - B. A single person discharging his weapon
 - C. A random firing of muskets
 - D. A rapid and continuous discharge of many guns
17. One reason the authors had the British attack Redding happen in the spring might be because
- A. Spring is a time of hope and regrowth, and they are contrasting that with the despair and pain of war
 - B. It is more logical that the British troops would attack a Troy town in the springtime
 - C. Tim would never have been able to run across the fields to witness the killings during the wintertime
 - D. It was easier for the British to set up camp in the training ground of Redding when it was warm
18. General Putnam, a soldier who did not shirk duty nor take defection lightly, had to decide

- A. whether or not to listen to Betsy Read who came to beg for Sam's release
 - B. whether to listen to the advice of Colonel Parsons about how best to slaughter the cattle
 - C. how to maintain order in his troops who were discouraged by the lack of food and supplies
 - D. whether or not to punish the Meekers for slaughtering the last eight cows in the valley
19. When Sam said, "Butcher them, the cattle, and hide the meat... Sell what you can. I promise you the stock will be stolen," the most important way the authors were using dialogue was to
- A. Show Sam's point of view about his fellow soldiers stealing cattle because they were starving
 - B. To show the reader the theme of how war affects people, making people less honest and respectable
 - C. Create a metaphor, a piece of figurative language, that compared the soldiers to cattle thieves
 - D. Foreshadow Sam's capture for stealing the Meekers' cows and his execution as a cattle thief
20. When the authors described Sam's execution, their probable reason for having Tim express such detail is to
- A. Scare the reader into never stealing anything for fear of execution
 - B. Show Tim's continuing dedication to his brother, his pride in him and his love
 - C. Allow the reader to see first-hand the bloodiness of the firing squad
 - D. Show Tim that the General was correct in ordering Sam to be executed

True/False (2 point each)

- 21. _____ Mr. Meeker, father, is a rebel.
- 22. _____ Mr. Heron helps both sides of the war.
- 23. _____ Since business is so good, hunger is not an issue for Tim and Mother.
- 24. _____ The British soldiers burned down Colonel Read's house.
- 25. _____ Tim agrees with Sam about staying in the war.

Extended Response – include specific text evidence and page numbers for every answer. (5 points each)

26. Describe Life’s plan for traveling through the danger as they begin the journey home from Verplancks.

27. When Tim realized what happened to Life, on their way home from Verplancks, he must think of a plan in case he runs into the “cow-boys.” When he finally runs into them what does he tell them that helps him get away? Explain what he said.

28. The climax of the story is when Tim makes his last effort to save Sam from the encampment by throwing the bayonet over the fence. Discuss why this is the climax.

29. As the war continues, business is good at the store, but bad in the tavern. Explain why this is.

30. Tim decides to save Sam, even though Mother has given up hope. Explain Tim's plan and the outcome of the plan.

31. Write a paragraph about one theme of the book -- the lessons you learned from reading this novel.
