

Prestwick PowerPacks™

Practical Activities for Comprehension and Key Skills



Fever 1793

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Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity I: Historical Research

Pre-Reading

HISTORICAL RESEARCH

You are about to embark on a journey through time! *Fever 1793* takes place over 200 years ago, in the city of Philadelphia. Before you begin your journey, some research must be done. You must be educated on the time period, the city, and even the customs before you travel. Your research will begin...now!

First, you must decide if you would like to conduct your research alone or with a group (groups may have no more than four people). Next, choose from one of the following topics, or you may choose a related topic of your own. If you choose your own topic, you must get it approved by your teacher before you begin. Finally, after your research is complete, you must present your findings to the class. Every student is required to present something to the class. (Considering the entire class is taking the journey to 1793, all of you must be informed!)

SUGGESTED TOPICS:

- **Yellow Fever:** Discuss the symptoms and history, the attempts to find cures and medication, the Philadelphia outbreak, or other related cases.
- **The Free African Society:** Research the founders, (*Absalom Jones and Richard Allen*), the Preamble, and why the society was formed.
- **The Fugitive Slave Act:** Discuss what the act entails, additional laws brought on by the act, a specific case (*Prigg vs. Pennsylvania*), and how the act affected the United States as a whole.
- **Eli Whitney's Cotton Gin:** Who is Eli Whitney? What is a cotton gin? What type of aid does it provide? Who does the cotton gin benefit the most?
- **William Penn:** Who is William Penn? What is his significance? For what is he most known?
- **Quakers:** Discuss the Quaker background, where it originated, how it developed, and how prominent it is in Philadelphia during 1793.
- **Dress, Occupations, and Responsibilities:** Discuss the type of clothes (of men, women, and children) worn during the late 1700s, the types of jobs available in the Philadelphia area, what those jobs entail, and the responsibilities of children.

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These are only a few topics that can be researched. Use your imagination, and find one of your very own. But remember, if you choose a topic of your own, you must let your teacher know first!

Now—off to the library! Remember, you want to know as much about this time period as you can before you travel back in time. There is a plethora of research materials available to you: books, encyclopedias, magazines, newspapers, and/or the Internet. You must use a minimum of three sources. On the day of your presentation, you will turn in a neatly written (or typed) paper that contains all the information on your topic. In addition, you will include a **Bibliography** that lists all the sources you used to write your paper.

As you are presenting your topic, your teacher will be grading your performance. Speak clearly and make eye contact. You have the opportunity to earn 35 points, but you can earn an additional 5 points for using visual aids (posters, pictures, handouts, etc.) to enhance your presentation. Be creative, have fun, and learn something!

Name: _____

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Activity I: Who's Who? Chapters 1-4

You have successfully read the first four chapters of *Fever 1793*. The characters have been introduced, and you are learning more about them as the story progresses. In this activity, you will show just how well you know the characters. In the **CHARACTER TRAIT TABLE** provided, insert at least four character traits for each character: Matilda, Mother (Lucille), Grandfather, and Eliza. A character trait is something specific to that character that defines part of his or her personality. Is the character stubborn, mean, or a genius? Once you have written the trait, you must then find a quote from the first four chapters of the story to demonstrate that the character does indeed exhibit that particular trait. The first one is done for you.

Student's Page

Name: _____

Date: _____

CHARACTER TRAIT TABLE

Character	Trait	Quote
Matilda	a whiner	"[Mother] never complained. Oh, no, never. Good children were seen and not heard. How utterly unlike me!" (Pg. 2)
Matilda		
Matilda		
Matilda		
Matilda		
Mother		
Mother		
Mother		
Mother		
Grandfather		
Grandfather		
Grandfather		
Grandfather		
Eliza		
Eliza		
Eliza		
Eliza		

Name: _____

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Activity II: Then & Now **Chapters 1-4**

Part One

So much has changed in the United States since 1793. One notable change can be seen in the language. It almost seems that language changes with the advancement in technology. Other words/phrases just become obsolete over time. Read through the first four chapters again, and find at least 12 words or phrases that are no longer everyday words. On the **CHANGING LANGUAGE CHART**, write each word. Next to the word from the text, write a modern description for that word. Once the lists are completed, go around the room, and read one word with its modern description until all words have been given. The first one is done for you.

CHANGING LANGUAGE CHART

1793 Word	Modern Description
bedchamber (Pg. 1)	a bedroom

Name: _____

Date: _____

Part Two

Language is not the only element of life in 1793 that is different from today. Life was lived differently; however, similarities remain that keep us connected with the past.

In the following **CHANGING LIFESTYLES CHART**, first, make a list of at least four **differences**: find quotes from the first four chapters, and briefly explain why or how this is different from your life.

Next, make a list of at least four **similarities**: find quotes from the first four chapters, and give a brief explanation of why or how this is similar to your life.

Finally, choose two differences and two similarities to share with your class.

CHANGING LIFESTYLES CHART

Differences (Quotes)	Explanation
“I leapt from my bed, and— <i>thunk!</i> —cracked my head on the sloped ceiling.” (Pg. 2)	I have never slept in a room that was close to the ceiling.

Similarities (Quotes)	Explanation
“ ‘You’re sleeping the day away.’ She shook my shoulder.” (Pg. 1)	Last weekend, my mother woke me this way because I slept until noon.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity III: Personal Responses

Chapters 1-4

Wow! The early chapters reveal so much! Matilda does not have a father because he passed away, Polly dies unexpectedly, rumors of fever are spreading throughout the city, and so much more! Below is a list of writing prompts. Write a five-paragraph essay discussing one of the prompts. The essays are confidential; you will not be required to read them in front of the class. You must include an introduction, body, and conclusion in your essay.

Writing Prompts:

- **Your Ropes** – At the end of the first chapter, Matilda is thinking about Blanchard's legendary balloon flight: "From the prison's courtyard it rose, a yellow silk bubble escaping the earth. I vowed to do that one day, slip free of the ropes that held me." (Pg. 4-5) What "ropes" is Matilda referring to? What are your "ropes"?
- **Important Meeting** – Matilda's father died when she was very young. She was not given the opportunity to get to know him. Discuss a person in your life whom you never had the chance to meet, but wished you had. Explain that person's significance, why you were never able to meet him or her, and why you wished you had met that person.
- **Nicknames** – Eliza calls Matilda, "Little Mattie." This nickname offends Matilda: "Little Mattie, indeed." (Pg. 12) Have you ever been given a nickname that you did not like? How did you acquire such a name? Why did you not like it? What nickname, if any, would you have preferred?
- **In Between Child and Adult** – Matilda is given many responsibilities, especially after Polly's death. Lucille (Matilda's mother) expects her daughter to act like an adult, and even believes that Matilda is old enough to find a suitable husband. Even though Matilda is being treated as an adult, she is still being treated as a child:

“ ‘What about the funeral?’ [Matilda] asked, blinking back the tears. ‘You must let me attend that.’

‘No. Absolutely no. I forbid it. You'll have nightmares.’ ”(Pg. 16)

Describe a similar experience you have had.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity I: Finding the Clues **Chapters 5-7**

The beginning of a book is a good opportunity for the author to foreshadow some main events that will eventually take place. Considering you have not read the entire book, you are unaware of what is going to happen. Now is your chance to do some detective work. Go through the chapters for this activity (5-7) and find at least four examples of what you think is foreshadowing. Then, explain what you think the quote is foreshadowing. Use the knowledge you have about the novel thus far to create your conclusions. Your inferences must be logical. A sample has been provided for you.

Foreshadow	Conclusion
“ ‘I was thinking of sending her to the country, to the Ludingtons at Gwynedd.’ ” (Pg. 25)	Matilda is going to be sent out of town to save her from the fever.

Student's Page

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Date: _____

Activity II: Descriptive Style **Chapters 5-7**

Matilda and her mother have been invited to the Ogilvie mansion for tea. Despite Matilda's pleas, she and her mother arrive wearing the nicest clothes they can find. When the maid answers the door, she "...showed [Matilda and her mother] into a drawing room as large as the entire first floor of the coffee shop. The long windows were covered with shimmering damask curtains. A crystal chandelier hung over a gleaming mahogany table, around which were clustered a half-dozen Chippendale chairs. Very expensive." (Pg. 47) Close your eyes—can you see the mansion in your mind?

There must be a lot of details that are not mentioned. It is up to you to fill the reader in on the missing details. Write a descriptive paragraph of the Ogilvie mansion. Use some of the details mentioned in the chapter, but you will have to use your imagination for the rest.
