NonFiction Books

Political cartoons, drawings, portraits, maps and readable text combine to make this an extremely useful source for student research. Also included is a notes page, a glossary, a timeline, a bibliography, an index and a list of books for further reading.

The reading level is easy but the text covers enough of Jackson's involvement in the War of 1812 to make this a good source for struggling readers. The illustrations are beautiful and most are in color. This would also add interest to students.

As part of an excellent series, "America at War", this book not only covers the causes and consequences of the War of 1812, but also presents the African-American efforts in this event. The photos and maps throughout the book create interest for students. The glossary, index and web sites listed also serve to make this a highly recommended source for student research.

This account of his life lends a chapter to his involvement in the War of 1812. Students could use the information from that chapter alone or read the whole book for a more complete understanding of U.S. history during that time.

Pages 53-55 describe in detail the reasons for making war ships a certain way after the American Revolution. The "Constitution" was built during that time to protect the economy of the new republic. It was used during the War of 1812. Details of the battles at sea are given here.

This book describes all of the major battles as well as citing the reasons for the skirmish. It is set in its correct context of world problems at this time. The maps are helpful, but the drawings are not an asset. The level of reading is appropriate for middle school students.

This book has everything, from the origins of the conflict to a detailed description of the battle. There is commentary of the aftermath as well as photographs of the battlefield as it looks today. It is filled with color drawings of military uniforms, battle scenes and diagrams, maps and portraits of key people.

The editor relies on the journals of Captain David Porter as well as the journals of midshipman David Farragut, for whom Farragut State park in North Idaho was named. Though it doesn't lend itself to quick facts for research, it is an excellent book for those who desire a more thorough knowledge of what life was like aboard a warship during this time in U.S. history. It is written in narrative form, so a person with an interest would find this a very enjoyable learning experience.
The War of 1812 involved several of the early presidents: Adams, Buchanan, Harrison, Jackson, and Taylor. There are portraits, some in color, maps, political cartoons and drawings throughout this book. The text is concise and readable.

The words of our national anthem are illustrated with color drawings of battle scenes from the War of 1812 and surrounding countryside. A digital photograph of Francis Scott Key's original handwritten draft is included along with a map detailing the battle of Baltimore, September 12-14, 1814. His witness of this battle was the inspiration for the poem he wrote. There is also a photograph of the original receipt for payment to Mary Young Pickersgill for sewing a "Star Spangled Banner". All the words to all stanzas of the song along with the music is printed in the back of the book.

The addition of this lower level reading book would be welcome. There are many pictures, maps and political cartoons of that time period. These help create interest in the information presented in the text. Of particular interest are the historical maps such as the 1804 city plan of Baltimore.

An encyclopedia is always recommended as the first place to look for information when beginning a new topic. The subheadings break up the information into manageable chunks. Keywords that are useful for subsequent searches are also found in an encyclopedia. This article has interesting pictures (drawings) from the time.

Warrick, Karen Lemens. The War of 1812: "We Have Met the Enemy and They are Ours". Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow, 2002.
As part of the excellent series, "American War Series", this book details each battle of the War of 1812. There is a photo of an original poster, drawings of battle ships and key people and text written at the middle school level. This book would be very useful for the student researcher.

This biography is a lower level reading book with excellent presentation of information. There are portraits, maps, and a timeline of this life. Also included is a glossary, an index and related Internet sites. This is a must have for students reading below 7/8th grade level.

Buckey, Sarah Masters. The Smuggler’s Treasure. Middelton, Wis.: Elisabet's father is a prisoner in the War of 1812. She tries to free him and encounters a dangerous pirate.

For the student who would like to read a novel based on the first hand account of life on a battleship during the War of 1812, this would be a good source. Ned Myers told J. Fenimore Cooper his experiences on the Scourge that includes its sinking.

Tom joins the English navy during the War of 1812. This is a story of life on the high seas, full of danger from pirates and a hot battle with the Americans.

Caroline sets out to find her brother and discovers the "sinister" world of Baltimore's waterfront in 1814.
Inspired by an actual event, the daughters of the lighthouse keeper outwit British sailors who come ashore, take their father hostage, and make plans to burn the town.

It is 1811 in Salem, Massachusetts and 14 year old Edie is hearing rumors of war. A half Shawnee Indian cousin comes to live with her, so everyday life in town is described as well as Indian culture. Historical novels are a great way to gain an understanding of what life might have been like during times past.

When Mary O'Shea's father leaves to join the army in 1812, Mary and her brother and sister must tend the farm.

Articles

Another effort in making history relevant to middle school students, the book reviewed in this article will help the teacher compare President Bush's actions toward Iraq with President Madison in the War of 1812, President Polk in the Mexican War and President Lincoln's decisions in the civil war. This is a book review written by a senior fellow at the Council on foreign Relations and the author of "The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power." The book he reviews is Lincoln's War by Geoffrey Perret.

A short selection from one of John Quincy Adams' many diary pages serves to personalize another view of the War of1812. He was in Ghent to negotiate the peace treaty with Britain and complained about how much time the Brits were wasting with "bad wine" and "Cigars". The article also describes personality traits of this very intense, busy man.

The effects of the War of 1812 on Astoria, the Oregon coastal town at the mouth of the Columbia River, are given here. This makes a connection to regional history that will be interesting to students. There is a quote from former president Thomas Jefferson and background on the transfer of the area from British to American control.

This is an excellent article for teacher background, to prepare for a small lecture about the events and conditions surrounding the War of 1812. It provides information about the capitalist transformation of the fledgling United States and its impact on the environment. It outlines the consequences of the War of 1812 on the agriculture and fishing markets.

There is a quote from Thomas Jefferson about the American desire to take Quebec. The tensions in the Pacific Northwest are also mentioned. There is a photograph of modern day Kingston, Ontario with an early British fort erected to "withstand young America's intentions".
Underwater photographs of these two sunken ships are remarkable. The pictures alone will capture the students' imaginations. The methods for discovering these vessels are explained. There are quotes in the text from a man (Ned Myers) who was a survivor and later recalled the event.

This personal account of a naval officer in the war of 1812 brings this period of history alive. There are excerpts from letters he wrote to his wife just before he was killed in battle. There is a color portrait of he and his wife which make this article all the more interesting for students.

Middle school students need constant reminders that they are living in historic times. During the study of the War of 1812, the teacher could refer to this article comparing the war in Iraq to previous wars including the War of 1812 in terms of casualties and political impact.

This makes good storytelling material. It involves the future president Andrew Jackson in a quarrel with Thomas Hart Benton during the War of 1812. Their disagreement was fueled by gossip until it reached a ridiculous conclusion. There is reference to the Battle of New Orleans.

Videos

Our national anthem comes alive with Peter Spier's illustrations (Random, 1973) and Aretha Franklin's voice. In Part II, a narrator provides information about the War of 1812 along with drawings and black and white photos and maps. Although this is recommended for younger grades, middle school students would enjoy and learn interesting connections from this video as well.

From www.libraryvideo.com: 1812: The Forgotten War
Interviews with historians and reenactments serve to provide a visually interesting presentation of this war. Grade 8- adult, $29.95, 90 minutes, VHS #D1111

From www.libraryvideo.com: U.S. Invaded!
This video features synopsis of various world conflicts that were brought to U.S. soil. Included is the Pancho Villa raid on a New Mexico town and the British attack of 1812 as well as Japanese submarines stationed off the California coast during World War II. Grade 7- adult, $24.95, 50 minutes, VHS #1167

Maps

This beautiful color map shows all of the major battles by text boxes overlaid on a map of the eastern United States. There is a legend that further helps in understanding this conflict. A map of the entire U.S. is also given with the states involved in the war within a red box. This is a great visual help for students studying the war of 1812. It is better viewed on a computer since it prints out rather fuzzy.
Websites

"Historical Society of Delaware Museums." 2000. Historical Society of Delaware. 01 Jul 2004 <http://www.hsd.org/museums.htm>. This site can serve to demonstrate the value of museums and historical societies in the quest for quality information about our country's history. This page has photographs of buildings built in the late 1790's, just before the War of 1812. Students can compare the age of those buildings with the age of the oldest buildings in Spokane. They can also remember to look up museums and historical societies when traveling.

"Military Battles and Campaigns." American Memory. Library of Congress. 01 Jul 2004 <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?gmd:2:./temp/-ammem GlEk:>::>. Here is a detailed map of one camp during the War of 1812: Camp Patterson Park, Baltimore, Maryland. It is the 110th Regiment of New York Volunteers, Col. D.D. Littlejohn, commanding. It shows the location and number of tents, historic buildings, wagon roads and "earth entrenchments". Also included are photos of some of the officers.

"Relations with the United States and Events Preliminary to War." American Memory. Library of Congress. 01 Jul 2004 This series of letters was written in the late 1790's by British military personnel. They can be found by going to the American Memory site, choosing "Collection Finder" and then "History". Then do a search on "War of 1812" using the drop down menu selections "match this exact phrase" and "match words exactly". Choose frame #20 (Upper Midwest books Historical Collections Vol. 15). Click on the "full text" link and then "Copies of papers on file in the dominion archives at Ottawa, Canada pertaining to relations of the British government with the United States during the period of the War of 1812. This primary source document serves to create interest in students as they learn of the events surrounding the War of 1812. They can note the difference in grammar, punctuation and spelling from today. They can comment on the feelings of these people who lived during this time in history.

"Statistical Summary of America's Wars." 29 April 2001. U.S. Civil War Center. 01 Jul 2004 <http://www.cwc.lsu.edu/cwc/other/stats/warcost.htm>. This table provides a quick comparison on all U.S. wars in terms of casualties and financial cost. What is appreciated about this table is the numbers are presented as ratios of the general U.S. population at the time of the war.

"The Treaty of Ghent (1814)." 100 Milestone Documents. The People's Vote: 100 Documents That Shaped America. 01 Jul 2004 <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=20>. Here is a digital photo of the original handwritten document that ended the War of 1812. There is nothing like seeing the words in the person's own handwriting to create a "hands on" learning experience. There is an option to view it as a typewritten document so that it can be read more easily. To further aid in learning, a summary of the conflict is included in this very user friendly site. Students conducting research of this war will definitely make use of this site.

"The War of 1812: The Capitol in Flames." Treasures of Congress. National Archives and Records Administration. 01 Jul 2004 <http://www.archives.gov/exhibithall/treasures_of_congress/page_8.html> This page is a collection of drawings depicting the Whitehouse on fire. There is a quote from an eyewitness as well as documents from Henry Clay and others calling for war against Britain. Students can compare the drawings with present day photos of the capitol and note changes in landscape, etc.