

Classroom Spice

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How Much Can a Paper Clip Hold?

If you said, "Several sheets of paper, or if you had a really big paper clip maybe a lot of paper," you would be underestimating the paper clip. It can hold together memories, hopes, dreams, people, and goodness.

Paper clips, patented first in 1899 by Johan Vaaler, a Norwegian, looked significantly different than our double oval shaped paper clip of today. But regardless of what they looked like, paper clips have played a role, little known in history, until a Tennessee Middle School decided to study the Holocaust.

Whitwell, Tennessee is a small, rural, impoverished town, centered in an area of the nation better known for the Scopes Trial and the Ku Klux Klan. In the fall of 1998, deputy principal/football coach David Smith approached his principal, and middle school English/social studies teacher about using the Holocaust as a tool for teaching tolerance. Anyone looking around Whitwell would see a very homogenous White Christian fundamentalist community. Of the 425 middle school students in 1998, six were black students, one Hispanic, no Asians, no Catholics, and no Jews. Not a likely bed for teaching tolerance, many would think. But David Smith, Principal Hooper, and Sandra Roberts took on the challenge. It started small. *The Diary of Anne Frank* and *Elie Wiesel's Night* were

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From Former Slave to Oklahoma Marshal

Bass Reeves, sometimes referred to as "The Manhunter," may not be a name most people are familiar with today, but in the late 1800s he was well-known in Indian Territory as the most feared lawman in the territory. He was the first black commissioned United States deputy marshal west of the Mississippi, and one of Judge Parker's first appointments to Indian Territory.

Reeves was born in Texas or Arkansas, most probably Texas, and was the son of slave parents. When? Well that is a good question. Reports range from 1824 to 1840; Reeves himself claimed 1838. He was owned by Colonel George Reeves and, as was common among slaves, Bass's last name became that of his owner. Bass started work as a mere child hauling water to workers in the fields, then later he worked as a field hand. He liked to sing as he worked in the field, making up songs which usually included references to firearms, knives, and robberies. His mother thought he would grow up to be a criminal instead of the lawman he later became.

There are different versions as to how Bass left the service of Colonel Reeves, but it appears to have happened during the Civil War, and likely in Arkansas. Bass then went to Indian Territory where he would not be considered a runaway slave. There he learned to speak Creek fluently and could converse in the language of the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole. He spent much of his time mastering firearms, both pistols and rifles, and was renowned as a sharpshooter. After being freed by the Emancipation Proclamation, Bass went to Van



Buren, Arkansas where he settled down, became a stockman and farmer, and married. He had ten children by his first wife. After she died, he married a woman from Muskogee, Oklahoma and started a second family.

In 1875 Judge Isaac Parker, the "Hanging Judge," appointed Bass as one of the first two hundred

Deputy U.S. Marshals authorized to bring in all the robbers, murderers, and thieves they could find using "John Doe" warrants. While Bass was a crack shot, familiar with virtually all of the 75,000 square mile territory he had jurisdiction over, able to speak many Native languages, a great horseman, ambidextrous, and a master of disguise, he did have one serious shortcoming. He could not read or write. Initially, using John Doe warrants, this was not a problem. But later, when specific warrants were written, Reeves would have someone read subpoenas or warrants to him until he memorized which warrant went with which name. When he arrested someone, if they could not read the warrant, he would be forced to find someone who could, to be sure he had the right person for the right charge. Regardless of the fact he could not read, he reportedly never made a mistake.

By 1901 Bass had arrested more than three thousand men and women, some Indian, some Black, some White. Over his thirty-two year career as a deputy marshal he killed fourteen

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Test Your Women's History I.Q

For answers go to <http://www.nwhp.org/resourcecenter/historyquiz.php>

Fifteen women to identify by their achievements.

1. Which mother led a 125-mile march of child workers all the way from the mills of Pennsylvania to President Theodore Roosevelt's vacation home on Long Island?
2. One of the most important Union spies and scouts during the Civil War was a Black woman who had escaped from slavery. Can you name her?
3. Before the 1960s, farm workers in the U.S. were not paid even the minimum wage, and had no influential representatives to fight for their rights. What part did Dolores Huerta play in changing this situation?
4. The line of beauty products she created for African-American people made her the first Black woman millionaire in the United States. Who was she, and when did she do this?
5. She came to the U.S. when she was a teenager to study science and stayed to become "the world's foremost female experimental physicist." Her most famous experiment disproved what had been thought to be a fundamental scientific law. Who is this outstanding Asian-American scientist?
6. She took her job as "First Lady" seriously, traveling the country and the world to gather information about the problems and concerns of workers, children, minorities, and the poor. She wrote a daily newspaper column and made frequent radio broadcasts. Who was this active wife of a president?
7. When the Mexican Revolution of 1910 reached the Texas border, she and her friends organized La Cruz Blanca, The White Cross, to take care of the wounded. They nursed people from both sides of the fighting. She was also known as a journalist and community activist. Who was she and where did she live?
8. Who was the last reigning monarch of the Hawaiian Islands, deposed when American business and military interests wanted to annex Hawaii to the U.S.?
9. She opened "Hull House" in a run-down Chicago neighborhood, a community center to improve conditions for poor immigrants. The program of English-language classes, childcare, health education, and recreational opportunities soon inspired hundreds of other settlement houses throughout the country. Her name?
10. Daughter and granddaughter of Paiute Indian chiefs from Nevada, she lobbied Congress, wrote extensively, and traveled across country during the late 1800s lecturing on the hardships brought upon Native Americans by the U.S. Government. Her name?
11. Her 1939 Easter Sunday concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial drew a crowd of 75,000. Who was she, and why was she singing there?
12. Who printed the first copy of the Declaration of Independence that included the signers' names?
13. Clara Barton (1821-1912) is best known for founding the American Red Cross, but she also played a vital role during the Civil War. What did she do?
14. She is regarded as the greatest ballerina born in America. Her father was the Chief of the Osage Indians. Can you name her?
15. Why is Rachel Carson (1907-1964) considered the mother of the environmental movement?

(Authorization for use granted by National Women's History Project, www.nwhp.org.)

(Paper Clip—cont'd from page 1)

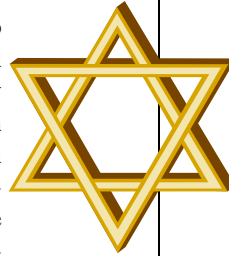
read aloud as there was no money for individual copies. Research began and the number six million took center stage. Six million Jews, adults and children, were killed. How could anyone understand the magnitude of six million? One day the teacher commented that during the German occupation courageous Norwegians wore paper clips as a sign of their solidarity as a nation and as support for those who were being targeted. A student suggested they collect six million paper clips and make them into a sculpture to remember the victims. The word spread and paper clips started arriving from other states. In 1999 two German journalists working as White House correspondents somehow heard of the project and took an interest. With their help, a Washington Post article in 2001, and coverage on the NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw, paper clips started arriving from around the world. But not only paper clips arrived, but also survivor stories, stories from those whose family members were victims, and stories of hope and pride in what these students were doing.

As of this time they have more than twenty eight million paper clips, carefully logged and stored. Eleven million of them are in display in an authentic German railroad car from the 1940s that transported victims to camps. The car has been turned into a museum to remember the atrocities and the importance of tolerance. Did you pause to wonder why “eleven” million are on display? While six million Jews were killed by the Nazis, five million more were killed who were not Jews, but rather Polish Christians, Catholics, Jehovah’s Witnesses, homosexuals, gypsies, or disabled. Whitwell strives to remember them all.

Today, students no longer collect paper clips. Instead they give tours of their museum and try to help pass the torch of tolerance. So how much can a paper clip hold? Whitwell students and Holocaust survivors would say a world of emotions! (For more information see the documentary DVD *Paper Clips* available in an educational version with lesson plans, study guide, and handouts.)

The Literature Connection

Often it is easiest to bring up the sensitive topic of the Holocaust in middle school with a children’s book. You can read through it in a short period of time, leaving time for discussion, insights, and questions to research. For example, *The Butterfly* by Patricia Polacco, gives a very simplified child’s version of a true incident dealing with the German occupation of France and the efforts of the French underground. (ISBN 0-439-28713-8) Polacco also addresses the Holocaust in *Christmas Tapestry*, a story set in current day Detroit, with the meeting of a Christian family and a Holocaust survivor, and the magic of the Christmas season. (ISBN 0-439-59100-7)



Susan Goldman Rubin’s *Fireflies in the Dark: The Story of Friedl Dicker-Brandeis and the Children of Terezin*, is the true story of Freidl Dicker-Brandeis, an artist. It was in 1942 that Freidl, a Jew, was ordered to Terezin, a ghetto/concentration camp in the Czech Republic. While this was not a “death camp” per se, in the end 97,297 who went there died. From 1942 to 1944, Freidel conducted a secret art school for the children in the camp. School was an escape

for the children, although some recorded the atrocities that surrounded them. The book tells of the daily routine of the camp as well as the secret art work that was done. The media varied, sometimes pencil, sometimes pen and ink, watercolor or chalk. It depended on what supplies they could steal, although they called it “organize,” from the German offices. Of the 15,000 children who went through Terezin, only 132 survived.

But their artwork and their stories live on. Six thousand drawings were hidden and later retrieved. They are on display in Prague, Israel and at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. and tell the children’s stories. Note—Freidel was sent to Auschwitz and died in 1944. (ISBN 0-439-29694-3)

A historical fiction, *Shadows on the Sea*, by Joan Hiatt Harlow, also deals with World War II, but from a different perspective. Jill, a fourteen-year-old, must stay with her grandmother during the summer while her pop star father is on tour and her mother travels to Newfoundland in waters patrolled by German U-boats. Jill discovers that it is not only her mother who is in danger. A great middle/high school read full of mystery and history—ISBN 0-689-84927-3. (See the February 2001 Classroom Spice issue for more Holocaust titles.)

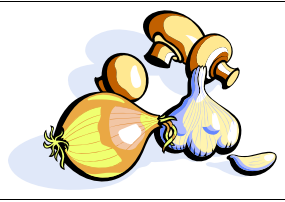
Muslim Children in Indonesia

At a time when Muslims around the world are suffering from the anger and hatred because of the actions of minority Muslim radicals, perhaps it is time to see another side of Muslims. In 2004 a wonderful exhibition, “Islam Berwarna-warni: The Many Colors of Islam,” included a project introducing American children to the lives of Muslim children in Indonesia through art.

Indonesia, a country in Southeast Asia, is made up of over 17,000 islands with only about 6,000 inhabited. Indonesia, with about 90% of the population Muslim, has the fourth largest population in the world. Unfortunately, many people when they hear “Indonesia” think of terrorism or tsunami devastation. But there is much more to this country and the children in it.

Muslims believe in one God, Allah, and that Islam was founded by the prophet Muhammad. They believe in the Five Pillars of Islam: 1) Declaration of Faith; 2) Daily Prayer Ritual (prayer five times between dawn and dusk); 3) Fasting during the holy month of Ramadan (14 hours of fasting per day for a full month); 4) giving to charity; and 5) an annual pilgrimage to Mecca. The children will tell you that Muslim is more than a religion, but a way of life. Being a Muslim means that you dress, behave, and act in accordance with Islamic tradition. Muslims eat foods that are Halal, food sold and marked with Arabic showing they are acceptable, for example they do not contain pork or alcohol.

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In This Issue...

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**What medal
winner wore his
Olympic sweat-
shirt while
sweeping
streets?**

Matthew "Mack" Robinson, Jackie Robinson's brother, won a Silver Medal in the Men's 200 Meter race in the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, just behind Jesse Owens. Upon returning home to Pasadena, the only job he could find was as a street sweeper.

(Muslim—Cont'd from page 3)

Prayer is an integral part of school life as well, including the study of the Koran, the Muslim Holy Book. Children in Indonesia wear uniforms to school, and part of their curriculum includes learning to speak at least two languages and calligraphy.

It is easy to get a feel for Muslim children from a statement made by eight-year-old Safiera, "I follow the good examples like Islam philosophy in life which teaches us to live peacefully, never stop [learning] and be nice to people." Perhaps if our children and adults saw this side of Muslims there would be a little less prejudice in the world. For access to the online version of the project, including wonderful drawings, photographs, and personal reflections by children, go to <http://72.46.5.44/pages/sitepage.cfm?id=172>.

(Reeves—Cont'd from page 1)

men in gun battles, all shown to have been justified. And though he was in countless gun battles, he was never wounded, although at different times his belt was shot in two; his hat brim, a button off his coat, and even his bridle reins were shot. Reeves arrested many famous outlaws, including murderer and robber Bob Dozier; the Tom Story Gang, whose members were cattle rustlers, horse thieves, and murderers; and cowboy and horse thief Jim Webb. Belle Starr, who was a friend of Reeves before she had a warrant put out for her arrest, turned herself in when she found out that Reeves had been given her arrest warrant.

Reeves had other personal legal issues. Once he was charged with the murder of his cook, but, after spending most of his accumulated wealth on law-

yers, he was found innocent. Perhaps the hardest on Bass was when he had to arrest his own son for the murder of his son's wife. His son was convicted and sentenced to life in Leavenworth. Many years later he was given a full pardon and released, unfortunately not while his father was alive.

On November 16, 1907, when Oklahoma became a state, U.S. Marshals were no longer needed, so nearing the age of seventy, Reeves joined the Muskogee Police Force. Until he took ill in 1909, there was not even a minor crime committed on his beat. He died in 1910 of Bright's disease, a chronic inflammation of the kidneys. He is buried in the old Union Agency Cemetery. He was posthumously honored in 2006 as the first African-American in the Great Westerner Hall of the National Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City.