Lesson Plans and Resources for *Cold Mountain*

**Table of Contents**

1. Overview and Essential Questions
2. In-Class Introduction
3. Common Core Standards Alignment
4. Reader Response Questions
5. Vocabulary + Sample Sentences
6. Literary Log Prompts + Worksheets
   - *Inman’s Encounters*
   - *Ada’s Experiences*
7. Suggested Analytical Assessments
8. Suggested Creative Assessments
9. Online Resources
10. Print Resources
    - Civil War Desertion in North Carolina
    - Charles Frazier on Writing “Cold Mountain”

These resources are all available, both separately and together, at www.freelibrary.org/onebook

Please send any comments or feedback about these resources to Larissa.Pahomov@gmail.com.
OVERVIEW AND ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

The materials in this unit plan are meant to be flexible and easy to adapt to your own classroom. Each chapter has discussion questions provided in a later section.

Through reading the book and completing any of the suggested activities, students can achieve any number of the following understandings:

- Our understanding of home changes indelibly once we leave it.
- Ultimately, there is no logic to war and violence.
- A person has truly “come home” when they can not only survive, but thrive in their environment.

Students should be introduced to the following key questions as they begin reading. They can be discussed both in universal terms and in relation to specific characters in the book:

Universal

- What matters more in life: the journey or the destination?
- Is violence a necessary part of human existence?
- What does a human need to survive and be independent?

Book-Specific

- Does Inman benefit from his long and arduous journey back to Cold Mountain?
- Do the violent moments in the book need to occur? Could Inman have made his way back home peacefully?
- Is Ada living an independent, sustainable life by the end of the book? Are any of the characters succeeding at this?

Many of the reader response questions and suggested projects relate to these essential questions, and they can be looped back to frequently.
IN-CLASS INTRODUCTION

This lesson is designed to provide students with a one-class introduction to the book. The lesson can be used to start off a class reading of the text, or to encourage them to read it independently.

As a recipient of One Book resources, the Free Library requires that you devote one class period to introducing Cold Mountain to students, either using this lesson or your own plan.

Introduction

1. Have students brainstorm, verbally or on paper:

   Where is home for you? And how do you recognize it?

   Have students create lists of concrete reasons why they identify a place as their home. When students are finished, have them share out their lists in small groups or to the whole class. They don’t need to name the place, just share the reasons they give.

2. Hand out books and have students turn to the page with two epigrams. Read both out loud. What do students know of Charles Darwin? (Han Shan is a 9th century Chinese Poet whose name literally means “Cold Mountain.”) Why do they think these two quotes are included? What themes are being previewed?

3. Now, have students partner up and read the openings of the first two chapters, introducing them to the two main characters. One student reads about Inman (pages 1-7) and one student reads about Ada (pgs 27-34). When they are finished, discuss: what did you learn about your individual? What kind of journey do you think they are on? Where is “home” for them?

4. Hand out a reading log and/or vocabulary list as needed, and then give students time to continue reading on their own.

5. If students have internet access: have them visit the “virtual tenement tour” on the New York Tenement Museum website: http://www.tenement.org/Virtual_Tour/index_virtual.html
Correlation to Common Core Standards for Grades 11-12

INTRODUCTION LESSON + DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
Reading Standards for Literature
1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
2. Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
10. By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently

Speaking and Listening Standards
1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

VOCABULARY
Reading Standards for Literature
4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

Language Standards
4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
6. Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

ANALYTICAL + CREATIVE ASSESSMENTS
Writing Standards
1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 11–12 on page 54.)

9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

**READER RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

**Section 1 – Pages 3-26**

Who is Swimmer? Why is he important to Inman? What messages or lessons Inman learn from him?

Why does Inman walk out of the hospital? Why is this choice dangerous?

**Section 2 – Pages 27-68**

Why does Ada Monroe choose to stay at Black Cove instead of going back to Charleston? Where does she consider her home to be?

Who is Ruby, and what does she offer Ada? Do they seem like equals?

**Section 3 – Pages 69-91**

How did Inman and Ada first meet? How would you characterize their first interaction? Was it successful, by Inman’s standards?

What do you think Ada’s first impression of Inman is? What does she think of him?

**Section 4 – verbs, all of them tiring — Pages 92-110**

What item does Ada choose to sell? Why do you think she chose this item?

Who is Stobrod, and how has he influenced Ruby’s character? Could she be the person she became without him?

**Section 5 – like any other thing, a gift — Pages 111 - 132**

Who does Inman encounter in the chapter, and how does he deal with the situation? Why does he choose not to kill the preacher at the end?

What does Inman dream of at the end of the chapter? Do you think this provides him with a realistic or unrealistic hope?

**Section 7 – ashes of roses — Pages 133-146**

How would you describe Inman and Ada’s interaction at the party? What might each be expecting to happen the next time they see each other?
At the end of the chapter, Ada catches herself in the mirror without realizing it and approves of what she sees (142). Do you agree with her approval? At this point in her life, is she the woman she imagines herself to be? Why or why not?

Section 7 – exile and brute wandering — Pages 147-174

Why does the preacher from the previous chapter try to join up with Inman? Why does Inman let him?

Who challenges whom at the tavern? Why does Inman stick up for Veasley? Do you think he made the right choice?

What is Odell searching for? Do you find his mission honorable or misguided?

Section 8 – source and root — Pages 175-202

What story does the prisoner tell out of the window of the jail, and how do Ruby and Ada react to it differently? Whose reaction do you side with?

How did Ada’s parents come to be a couple? Why do you think her father kept this story from her for so long, and how does it change her image of herself?

Section 9 – to live like a gamecock — Pages 203-235

What stops Veasley and Inman on their journey? Why do the men disagree about how to solve the problem in the river?

Junior says he would like to “live like a gamecock.” What does he mean by that statement? By the end of the chapter, do you think he has achieved it?

Do you think Inman and Veasley were naive to trust Junior? Do you approve of what Inman did after he escaped and returned to Junior’s house?

Section 10 — in place of truth — Pages 236-259

Why is Inman concerned about the picture that Ada has of him? Why is her feeling about the picture not so positive?

What was Inman and Ada’s first farewell like? Why do you think they often miss the mark during their conversations? Does it reflect their personalities, or the time in which they lived?

Section 11 - the doing of it — Pages 260-283

What is the lifestyle of the woman that Inman meets in this chapter? What is his opinion of her life? Do you think
you could live like her? Why or why not?

Why do you think the woman helps Inman?

**Section 12 - freewill savages - Pages 284-297**

How does Stobrod reappear? How does Ruby react? How does Ada react?

What kind of meaning has Stobrod found in his life, and how did he come to that discovery? Do you agree with Ada’s assessment that his life has been redeemed to some degree?

**Section 13 — bride bed full of blood — pages 298-322**

Why does the widow need to tell the story of her husband? Why do you think she trusts Inman to tell it to?

Do you think Inman ever considers staying on to help the widow through the winter? Why or why not?

Why does Inman choose to go after the soldiers who steal the hog? Do you think this is a wise choice on his part?

**Section 14 - a satisfied mind - Pages 323-344**

Why does Stobrod reappear? Do you think he purposefully waits until Ruby is away?

Ada says that “There is the view that he is your father and that at some point it becomes your duty to take care of him.” Why does Ruby disagree with this position? What’s her story of her father?

Why does Ada write such a simple note to Inman? How does this letter compare to her previous ones?

**Section 15 - a vow to bear - Pages 345-356**

What comfort does Inman find in his scroll of Bartram’s travels? Why does he refer to it when losing hope?

Why does Inman wish to never again kill a bear? How does he respond when it has to happen? Do you think his response makes sense?

**Section 16 - naught and grief - Pages 357-369**

Why does Teague choose to attack Pangle and Stobrod?

**Section 17 - black bark in winter - Pages 370-390**

What does Ruby propose they do when they get the news about Pangle and Stobrod? What does Ada object to, and why does she eventually come around?

Where do Ruby and Ada end up taking Stobrod after they find him alive? What might the significance or symbolism
of this place be?

Section 18 - footsteps in the snow - Pages 391-406

What does Ada think of Inman when she first sees him? How does she act once she does recognize him? Why do you think that the exchange is minimal and does not involve any display of emotion on their part?

Section 19 - the far side of trouble - Pages 407-434

Why is Ruby worried about Inman’s appearance? What conclusion does Ada come to about Ruby and the farm? Do you think she is making the right choice?

Why does the arrowhead in the tree have such meaning for Inman and Ada?

Section 20 - spirit of crows, dancing - Pages 435-449

Why does Inman choose to charge Teague and his men in the forest?

Once Inman is wounded, what does he dream of? Why do you think these images come to him?

In the last paragraph of the chapter, why do you think the author chooses to zoom out instead of letting us see and hear Ada and Inman up close?

Epilogue

What choices have Ruby and Ada made about their living arrangements in the years since the war?
Reading Group Guide Questions (provided by the publisher)

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION -
http://www.groveatlantic.com/?title=Cold+Mountain#page=isbn9780802142849-readers

1. How would you describe the style, or the voice, in which Charles Frazier tells his story? Do you find it realistic or stylized? What does it add to the overall effect of the story?

2. Charles Frazier seems to imply that, because of the moral barrenness of the Civil War and the crimes committed on the battlefield in the name of honor, there is no moral onus attached to the act of desertion? Do you agree with him? Why has Frazier chosen to portray the deserters as good, the Home Guard as evil?

3. How have Inman's views on secession, slavery, and war changed by the time he finds himself in the military hospital? What has he come to believe of both sides, the Federals and the Confederates, their leaders, and their motivations for fighting? Is he being overly cynical? How does the fighting and the level of blind violence in the Civil War compare with other, more recent wars?

4. Inman remembers a conversation he had with a boy he met after the battle of Fredericksburg, when he pointed out Orion's principal star. The boy replied, "That's just a name we give it. . . . It ain't God's name." We can never know God's name for things, the boy continues; "It's a lesson that sometimes we're meant to settle for ignorance" [p. 117]. How does this statement correspond with the lessons learned by Ada and Ruby? What point does Cold Mountain make about the nature and limitations of human knowledge?

5. Inman has little use for conventional religion, but he liked one sermon of Monroe's: "That which shows God in me, fortifies me. That which shows God out of me, makes me a wart and a wen. There is no longer a necessary reason for my being. Already the long shadows of untimely oblivion creep over me, and I shall decrease forever" [p. 77]. What notion of "God" does this quotation endorse? What about the voice that spoke to Ruby when, as a child, she was in despair: Was this God's voice, and if so, in what does God consist? What do you conclude Frazier's ideas to be, and how do they differ from conventional Christianity?

6. How, finally, does Frazier portray the natural world: as benign, treacherous, cruel, or indifferent? Famous contemporaries of Inman and Ada--thinkers like Darwin, Wordsworth, and Emerson--were expressing new ideas, in poetry and prose, about nature. How do these ideas influence Monroe's thinking? "Monroe had commented that, like all elements of nature, the features of this magnificent topography were simply tokens of some other world, some deeper life with a whole other existence toward which we ought aim all our yearning" [p. 144]. What very different conclusions does Ada come to? How do Inman and Ruby view the natural world?

7. Remembering his friend Swimmer, Inman reflects that Swimmer's spells "portrayed the spirit as a frail thing, constantly under attack and in need of strength, always threatening to die inside you. Inman found this notion dismal indeed, since he had been taught by sermon and hymn to hold as truth that the soul of man never dies" [p. 20]. Which version of the soul seems to be borne out during the course of the book? Does Inman come to change his ideas during his journey?
8. Throughout Cold Mountain, the author works with the idea of the search for the soul. Inman, Ada, Ruby, Stobrod, Veasey, and the slaveholder's runaway son Odell are all in some way engaged upon this search. Which of them is, in the end, successful, and why?

9. Both Ada and Inman reflect, at different times, that they are living in a "new world" [p. 33]. . . . What changes is nineteenth-century America undergoing, and how do Ada and Inman's experiences, and the people they meet, reflect those changes? How, and why, is the ideal of womanhood changing?

10. Both Ada and Ruby were motherless children from the time they were born. How has that state affected their characters and formed their ideas? How has it molded their relationships with their fathers? Do both women reconcile themselves to their fathers in the end, and if so, why?

11. Was Monroe, overall, a good father to Ada? In what ways did he fail her, and in what ways did he contribute to her strength of character? In what ways did he deceive himself?

12. Several of Cold Mountain's characters meet their death during the course of the novel. How do these characters' deaths reflect, or redeem, their lives? What points are made by the particular deaths of Veasey, Ada's suitor Blount, Pangle, Monroe, and others?

13. Stobrod claims not to be Ruby's true father; his wife, he says, was impregnated by a heron. What other mythical or animistic images does the book offer, and what is their purpose? How does Frazier view, and treat, the supernatural?

14. What is the significance of the Cherokee woman's story about the Shining Rocks? What does it mean to Inman, and why is Ada skeptical? What does her reaction tell us about her character?

15. Charles Frazier has based his novel loosely on Homer's Odyssey. If you are familiar with The Odyssey, which incidents from it do you find reproduced in Cold Mountain, and how has Frazier reimagined them? Why do you think he might have chosen this structure for a Civil War novel? What similarities do the two works have in the way they deal with war? With love and marriage? With fidelity? With home? With spiritual growth? How is Inman like Odysseus?
VOCABULARY

Section 1 – the shadow of a crow - Pages 3-26

Potent (3) - Inman’s eyes and the long wound at his neck drew them, and the sound of their wings and the touch of their feet were soon more potent than a yardful of roosters rousing a man to wake.

Puckered (8) - His eyelids, though, were dead as shoe leather and were sunken into puckered cups where his eyeballs had bin.

Obscure (12) - What troubled Inman most, though, was that Lee made it clear he looked on war as an instrument for clarifying God’s obscure will.

Retribution (17) - What would be the cost of not having an enemy? Who could you strike for retribution other than yourself?

Section 2 – the ground beneath her hands - Pages 27-68

Tenor (27) - Even more than the penmanship, she disliked the tenor of the letter.

Quiver (39) - The morning was bright, and a temperate wind swept down off Cold Mountain, and all the world quivered in it.

Unfettered (54) - “The sick sight and giddy prospect of the raving stream, the unfettered clouds and light—were all like workings of one mind, the features of the same face, blossoms upon one tree, characters of the great Apocalypse…”

Etiquette (59) - He had doubts that he could ever make a place for himself there, until Ada finally said, I think since we’ve been given a lesson in etiquette, we ought to act in accordance.

Section 3 – the color of despair - Pages 69-91

Jaunty (69) - At another time the scene might have had about it a note of the jaunty.

Ominous (90) - The foul country passing along the river along either side was vague and ominous in the moonlight.

Section 4 – verbs, all of them tiring — Pages 92-110

Untethered (94) - Barter was very much on Ada’s mind, since she did not understand it and yet found herself suddenly so untethered to the money economy.
Qualmish (100) - Not feeling qualmish, are you? Inman said, somewhat confused by her behavior.

Rivets (110) - Again using the hammer, she pounded its rivets made of scrap copper to hold a handle of applewood that she had sawed from a thick limb.

Section 5 – like any other thing, a gift — Pages 111 - 132

Predatory (126) - Inman had dealt with gypsies before and thought them possessed of a fine honesty in their predatory relationship to the rest of mankind, their bald admission of constantly seeking an opening.

Section 7 – ashes of roses — Pages 133-146

Covetous (134) - But Ada, increasingly covetous of Ruby’s learning in the ways living things inhabited this particular place, chose to view the signs as metaphoric.

Lore (137) - Ada had soon noted that Ruby’s lore included many impracticalities beyond the raising of crops.

Acquit (142) - He was unsure if he would be able to acquit himself in a way that would bring credit.

Section 7 – exile and brute wandering — Pages 147-174

Cohort (152) - Veasley drifted along at Inman’s elbow, talking seamlessly. He worked under the notion that he had acquired a cohort.

Section 8 – source and root — Pages 175-202

Mackled (178) - Her arms were mackled red like a measles sufferer from being pricked and scraped with the cut grass ends…

Maudlin (181) - She told a long and maudlin story she had read about a recent battle, its obvious fictitiousness apparently lost on her.

Scant (193) - She had seen a scant number in her life, and those so lonesome as to make the heart sting on their behalf.

Staid (202) - She could not at that moment easily frame herself anew, not as some staid erratum but as the product of passion extended against great odds.
Section 9 – to live like a gamecock — Pages 203-235

Adversary (210) - Inside, bright birds glared out the slots with cold shiny eyes that saw the whole world as little other than opportunity for an adversary.

Section 10 — in place of truth — Pages 236-259

Proximity (242) - Ada imagined her as a lonely and abandoned child wandering the countryside to braid the tails of old solitary plow houses out of need for proximity to something live and warm.

Vie (242) - In such spirit, Ada had proposed they vie to see who could compose the most intricate or beautiful or outlandish plait of the other’s hair.

Section 11 - the doing of it — Pages 260-283

Impediment (261) - He just wanted to get on into the thinly settled regions of the mountains, where he hoped people would offer less impediment.

Elusive (273) - Abundance did seem, in his experience, to be an elusive thing. Unless you counted plenty of hardship.

Section 12 - freewill savages - Pages 284-297

Pert (288) - The house looked pert, unsmudged white.

Relish (291) - He drew out his pocketknife and cute a forked stick about four feet long and went back to the snake, which had not moved and seemed to relish the prospect of a contest.

Section 13 — bride bed full of blood — pages 298-322

Sanctuary (311) - The beasts of it chased after him in a dark wood, and there was not one place for sanctuary no matter where he turned.

Section 14 - a satisfied mind - Pages 323-344

Akin (327) - You would not know it on me for I suspect it is somehow akin to contentment.
Section 15 - a vow to bear - Pages 345-356

Bivouac (351) - The sun was falling, and Inman reckoned he would again make a bivouac without benefit of fire or water.

Duff (351) - In the space near the edge of the scarp, he scraped together what little duff there was to soften a sleeping place.

Section 16 - naught and grief - Pages 357-369

Enshrouded (357) - He had enshrouded himself in a moth-riddled butternut blanket that trailed on the ground, dragging a wake in the leaves.

Section 17 - black bark in winter - Pages 370-390

Congruent (377) - Every bright image in the visible world only a shadow of a divine thing, so that earth and heaven, low and high, strangely agreed in form and meaning because they were in fact congruent.

Section 18 - footsteps in the snow - Pages 391-406

Braggart (397) - But Inman’s dark voice figured such bragart claims to be lies.

Section 19 - the far side of trouble - Pages 407-434

Lapsed (407) - He put his head down and lapsed into sleep again.

Cadre (415) - Ada told herself that Charleston, with its cadres of ancient aunts informing elaborate rituals of chaperonage, was perhaps some made-up place…

Section 20 - spirit of crows, dancing - Pages 435-449

Premonition (419) - In their story of the family, Ada and Inman gave them premonitions of the end of their world.

Despot (432) - He wished to live a life where little interest could be found in one gang of despots launching attacks upon another.
Inman’s Encounters

During his long trek home to Cold Mountain, Inman encounters a wide range of characters — some friend, some foe. What do you think he learns from each interaction? Describe the encounter and then analyze.

Character, description, and page #

Analysis: what did Inman learn? How did he change?
Ada’s Experiences

Name: __________________________

Although she is not traveling a long distance like Inman, each new day on the farm brings a wealth of new experiences for Ada. How does each event influence her character or change how she sees the world?

Description of experience, page #  Analysis – how does Ada grow or change in response?
SUGGESTED ANALYTICAL ASSESSMENTS

These prompts could be used for traditional essay assignments, or for responses across a variety of mediums (live presentation, digital stories via Powerpoint or video, etc.)

1. Read the interview Charles Frazier gave in 2011 (in print resources). What was he trying to achieve by writing this novel? Select one or two of his stated goals, and then analyze whether he was successful or not. Use specific examples from the text.

2. Inman chooses to desert the Confederate army — a decision that, by today’s standards in Philadelphia, makes him look like a hero. However, he also commits several severe acts of violence on his way home, including killing several characters. Revisit Inman’s choices and analyze: in what way(s) are his actions justified, or not? Use the essay “Civil War Desertion in North Carolina” (in Print Resources) for additional historical context.
3. This book was selected by Philadelphia as a novel that would interest readers across the city, of different ages and backgrounds. Do you agree with this assessment? Write a letter to libraries in other cities presenting an argument either for or against adopting the novel for their own programs. Cite specific examples from the text with direct quotes to show why this book does or does not have a universal appeal to readers.

4. If students have an opportunity to see the Cold Mountain opera - how does the live version of the story compare to the book? In what ways does one version of the story achieve what the other cannot? Refer to the NPR coverage of the opera (link in Online Resources) for more information.
SUGGESTED CREATIVE ASSESSMENTS

These prompts could be used for traditional essay assignments, or for responses across a variety of mediums (live presentation, digital stories via powerpoint or video, etc.)

1. The book ends with a scene several years into the future, with several children already born and living on the farm. Fast forward the story another ten, twenty, or thirty years into the future — who have these children grown up into, and what kinds of lives are they leading? And what of the surviving original characters that have now grown old? Make sure to also weave in their perspective on the events that took place in Cold Mountain.

2. During the war, Ada wrote several letters to Inman that went undelivered. At the end of the book, their daughter is also without a father. Write a letter (or series of letters) from the girl to her deceased father. What would she want to tell him? What would she want to ask him, even though she knows she won’t get a response?

3. The book switches between the stories of Inman and Ada, with other characters orbiting around them. Pick one of the characters we are missing information about – Ruby, Stobrod, Ada’s father Monroe, or one of the many individuals Inman meets on his journey – and write a chapter for the book following them through their own story. This story can reprise the events in the novel, but it must present it from the new perspective and add additional information when needed.

4. As he travels home, Inman encounters many men (and a few women) who are violent and vengeful. What are the motivations for these characters as they commit these horrendous acts? Write a first-person story giving voice to one of these “villains” — Teague, Junior, the Preacher Veasley, Union soldiers — and try to show the “why” behind their actions.
ONLINE RESOURCES

AUTHOR INTERVIEWS

PBS NEWSHOUR INTERVIEW
A detailed interview with Charles Frazier, including him reading a selection from the book.
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/entertainment-july-dec97-frazier_11-20/

GUARDIAN INTERVIEW
An essay written by Frazier about the writing process — also provided below in Print Resources.
http://www.theguardian.com/books/2011/sep/30/cold-mountain-charles-frazier-bookclub

HISTORY & REGION

COLD MOUNTAIN
An essay about the regional setting of the novel.
http://digitalheritage.org/2010/08/cold-mountain/

CIVIL WAR IN4
A series of informational videos explaining different aspects of the war — each just 4 minutes long. “Battlefield Deaths” and “Medicine” are two topics that are directly relevant to the events in the book.
http://www.civilwar.org/education/in4/

TEXT CONNECTIONS

MOVIE CLIPS
Twelve clips from the movie version of “Cold Mountain” available on YouTube.
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZbXA4IyCtqpl_zo8L-aYSe-hPjsKowH

‘COLD MOUNTAIN’ TAKES CIVIL WAR ODYSSEY TO THE OPERA STAGE
A report from the world premiere of the opera in Santa Fe, including commentary from the composer, performers, and author Charles Frazier.
http://www.npr.org/sections/deceptivecadence/2015/08/05/429370329/cold-mountain-takes-civil-war-odyssey-to-the-opera-stage

A SUMMARY OF THE “ODYSSEY”
A brief summary of each book of The Odyssey, with images to accompany each section. An easy way for students to familiarize themselves with the story if they don’t know it already.
http://www.mythweb.com/odyssey/background_s.html

A COMIC VERSION OF THE “ODYSSEY”
A comic strip version of most of the books.
https://greekmythcomix.wordpress.com/odyssey-comix/
Civil War Desertion in North Carolina - [http://ncpedia.org/desertion-civil-war](http://ncpedia.org/desertion-civil-war)

by Michael Thomas Smith, 2006

Civil War desertion by North Carolina troops remains a controversial topic. Owing to the fragmentary nature of surviving records, researchers have arrived at different conclusions as to how many North Carolina soldiers actually deserted the Confederate army. Soon after the conflict, the U.S. Army's provost marshal general officially estimated that 23,000 North Carolina troops deserted between 1861 and 1865, nearly one-quarter of the total for the entire Confederacy and significantly more than for any other state. Historians have challenged this estimate, one suggesting that a more accurate figure, based on his quantitative analysis of compiled service records, would be about 14,000 desertions.

Although debate continues over exact numbers, undoubtedly the absence of North Carolina troops without leave represented a serious problem for the Confederate army. Gen. Robert E. Lee complained about North Carolina's desertion rate. Many North Carolinians bitterly resented these charges, seeing them as yet another example of the Confederate government's alleged discrimination against their state. Virginia newspapers routinely impugned the effectiveness of North Carolina troops.

Nevertheless, the state did have an unusually high rate of desertion. Several factors contributed to this exodus. Many men left the army after they became aware of the hardships and danger encountered by their families back home. As the ravages of war worsened, wives increasingly wrote letters encouraging their soldier-husbands to desert. Desertion generally increased in a unit when the region from which it had been recruited fell into enemy hands, as did several coastal counties. Desertions also occurred in areas where civilians experienced extreme suffering and law and order broke down, as in several western counties.

The state's 1864 peace movement, led by Raleigh Standard editor William W. Holden, may also have contributed to poor morale and desertion among North Carolina soldiers, although Holden publicly condemned this practice. The rulings of North Carolina Supreme Court chief justice Richmond Pearson against the legality of conscription also led many deserters to believe that if they reached their home state, its legal authorities would shield them from punishment. Although some deserters were conscripts who saw little or no active service and some were members of the Unionist secret society called the Heroes of America, many more were relatively devoted Confederates. More than half the state's deserters had served in the army for more than 18 months and almost 70 percent for more than a year. These men apparently felt a greater loyalty to their families, who desperately needed their assistance, or perhaps they recognized the futility of the Confederate cause, particularly in the last, hopeless days of the war.
I've never been very attached to genre labels and never set out intentionally to write historic fiction. Besides, what you consider historic depends on how far back your memory extends.

From my childhood, I remember a tiny old woman named Mary, made pale and almost translucent by time. Mary's childhood memories extended back to the confusing and violent finale of the civil war, and she told stories of brutal murders in those days and refused to name some of the killers, as if dead men might still be prosecuted in the late 1950s. So, just one direct transmission of memory from hers to mine makes for a pretty shallow past. And yet, the civil war is as mythic in the American mind as the siege of Troy.

The year I began Cold Mountain, 1989, I had been working on a novel set in the current moment. About all I recall clearly of those months of writing is a beautiful couple of September weeks in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and a story set in the southern Appalachians and in northern Mexico, Tarahumara country, where I'd spent some time. I recall a hapless narrator on the road trying to find his runaway wife. But by late fall that year I had abandoned the story because I had fallen into a much better one, and it just happened to be historic.

As I wrote my way into it, I found myself less and less interested in the civil war itself, all that fetishising of the generals and their tragic grandeur. I was more interested in the devastation visited on ordinary lives. And also the shadows it cast forward to the present, since it has always seemed to me that historic novels tell as much about the times in which they are written as the times in which they are set.

I was interested, too, in why my ancestors volunteered to fight. They didn't own slaves; like most people, they did their own work. Of four brothers, two were dead by the time General Robert E Lee handed over his sword and went home to brood and fade into such a legend that even his horse has its own large grave marker. My great-great grandfather was one of the surviving brothers. He came back and built a small country chapel – still standing – and became a Universalist minister.

I wished I had been able to ask him how he looked at the war when he volunteered and how he looked at it when he came home. So, the story I found myself writing became an Odyssey, not an Iliad. Returning, not going. A long journey home through a devastated world. Late in the third century BC, the Greek geographer Eratosthenes wrote: "You will find the scene of the wanderings of Odysseus when you find the cobbler who sewed up the bag of the four winds." His point, of course, had to do with readers who get twisted up trying to untangle fact and fiction, especially the ones needing too much of the former.

While writing Cold Mountain, I held maps of two geographies, two worlds, in my mind as I wrote. One was an early map of North Carolina. Overlaying it, though, was an imagined map of the landscape Jack travels in the southern Appalachian folktales. He's much the same Jack who climbs the beanstalk, vulnerable and clever and opportunistic. Also sometimes violent. The mountains he wanders seem to go on forever. I wanted Cold Mountain to incorporate the sort of practical magic and weirdness of those stories and of murder ballads and lonesome fiddle tunes, but I also wanted the book to insist on the reality of its fictional world.
Henry James wrote that "The historical novel is, for me condemned … to a fatal cheapness." And yet he also wrote that "The sense of the past is our sense." I kept both of those lines pinned to the wall over my writing desk. Every day, trying to avoid the one and reach for the other. It is not either/or, though. It's a continuum. The Scarlet Pimpernel near one end, The Scarlet Letter near the other.

I had never taken creative writing classes. Hadn't even considered it. So the first couple of years were a learning process. Just simple things, like understanding the narrative voice as a distinct character in the book. Certainly not me and also not the characters' inner voices, but the voice of the tale teller with his/her distinct language and knowledge and attitude toward the world. Maybe I would have learned that in the first week of a creative writing programme, but to me fiction seems too important to professionalise. Leave it to amateurs. You're always in the process of learning the trade anyway, even though it's a primitive one, shaped from fragile materials, mostly just words and memory.