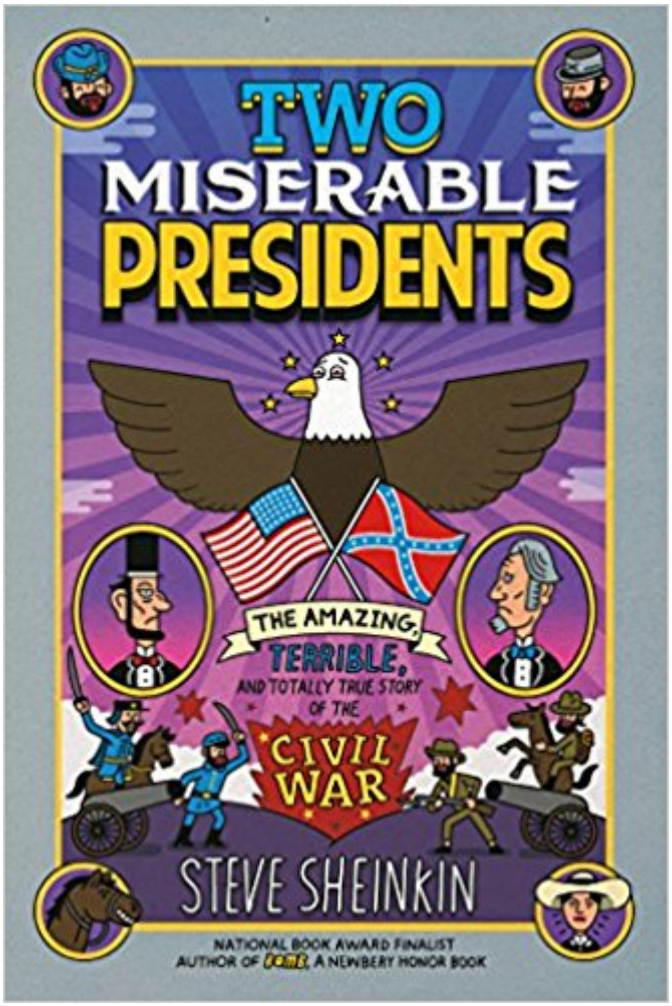
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Two Miserable Presidents: Everything Your Schoolbooks Didn't Tell You About The Civil War



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Synopsis

Get the feeling something big is about to happen? Welcome to the Civil WarÃ¢â ¬â ¢one of the scariest, saddest, and occasionally wackiest stories in American History.1856: Northern and Southern settlers attack each other in Kansas.1858: Congressmen start sneaking guns and knives into the Senate chamber.1860: President James Buchanan is heard wailing, Ã¢â ¬Å“I am the last president of the United States!Ã¢â ¬Â•That Congressman, Preston Brooks, was ready to attack Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts over remarks Sumner made slamming senators who supported slavery in Kansas. Brooks lifted his cane to beat Sumner, and here the action in the book stops, so that Steve Sheinkin can explain just where this confrontation started. In the process, he unravels the complicated string of events Ã¢â ¬â œthe small things, the personal ones, the big issuesÃ¢â ¬â œthat led to The Civil War. It is a time and a war that threatened America's very existence, revealed in the surprising true stories of the soldiers and statesmen who battled it out. Two Miserable Presidents: The Amazing, Terrible, and Totally True Story of the Civil War by Steve Sheinkin, National Book Award Finalist Author of Bomb, a Newbery Honor Book, is a fascinating way for young readers to learn about a chapter of American history.A Bank Street Best ChildrenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Book of the YearA Beacon of Freedom Award WinnerÃ¢â ¬Å“Chatty and accessible, this book does double duty: it introduces Civil War history for readers who don't know much about it and supplies browsable commentary for those familiar with the big picture. . . . Beginning with a look at the role cotton played in the history, his fast-paced narrative is broken into short, tersely titled vignettes. . . . The horrors of slavery and battlefield slaughter are clear, as are achievements of Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, John Brown, and many more.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Booklist

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Grade 5Ã¢â ¬â œ8Ã¢â ¬â •Sheinkin tells readers that this book is the one that he always wanted to write, one that is packed with "all the true stories and real quotes that textbooks never tell you." While he provides plenty of material about military objectives, battles, and political and military leaders, such as the title's often-miserable Lincoln and Jefferson Davis, he also includes the stories of spies, drummer boys, women who masqueraded as men to join the army, and African Americans. He ends with Grant's surrender at Appomattox and the Lincoln assassination, followed by a "Whatever Happened ToÃ¢â ¬Â|?" chapter that tells readers about the postwar lives of many of those he discusses in the text. The author's very readable effort combines the clear prose, objectivity, and good organization of a textbook with a chatty style and stories and quotes that will make historical figures real to readers. Chapters have intriguing titles, and the text is broken into easily digested segments. The book is supplemented with a variety of cartoons, illustrations, maps, and diagrams. It will hold the attention of students who are interested in the Civil War, and is broader in scope than Doreen Rappaport and Joan Verniero's United No More!: Stories of the Civil War (HarperCollins, 2006), which focuses on individual stories. While the coverage is somewhat superficial, Sheinkin's book is a good choice to introduce students to the Civil War.Ã¢â ¬â •Mary Mueller, Rolla Junior High School, MO Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Chatty and accessible, this book does double duty: it introduces Civil War history forÃ Â readers who donÃ¢â ¬â„¢t know much about it andÃ Â supplies browsable commentary for those familiar with the big picture. Although Sheinkin apologizes for the dull textbooks he used to write in an authorÃ¢â ¬â„¢s note,Ã Â his experiencesÃ Â give him the authority to tell the history from the inside,Ã Â and he supports his material with an extensive array of source notes. His backgroundÃ Â alsoÃ Â givesÃ Â him a store ofÃ Â lively, interestingÃ Â anecdotes, which appear here. Beginning withÃ Â a look at the role cotton played in the history,Ã Â his fast-pacedÃ Â narrative isÃ Â broken into short, tersely titledÃ Â vignettes (Ã¢â ¬Å“Brother against brother?Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬Å“The bloody road to RichmondÃ¢â ¬Â•). ThereÃ¢â ¬â„¢s noÃ Â in-depth analysis, but thatÃ Â doesnÃ¢â ¬â„¢tÃ Â equate withÃ Â simplistic.Ã Â The

horrors of slavery andÃ Â battlefield slaughter areÃ Â clear, as are achievements of Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, John Brown, and many more. Although the illustrations were not available at the time of this review, the informational content easily pushes this into the recommended category. Grades 4-8. --Hazel Rochman --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Loved it! It and bought decal more of Steve Sheinkin's books. This one was good for all ages and adds a touch of humor that at 12 year old enjoyed, all while learning factual information through the book. He has documented several source notes at the end of the books to verify where he obtained his information for the books. I also enjoyed the section of the book that gives an update for some of the important figures through that book.

Steve Sheinkin has proven to be a very good writer for ALL ages. I am just completing Two Miserable Presidents after reading King George, What was His Problem. He explains the causes of the wars and the unfolding events very well and makes you glad there is history to study. Now if we could only get his publishers to have him tackle less known events to children like the Mexican War or the Spanish American War-that would be great!!! Keep up the great work, Steve!!!!!

My grandsons (10 1/2) have read it and re-read it and love it!

Every night, our family spends about 10 or 15 minutes reading some history. To be honest, most of the time, my children (ages 8 and 10) would prefer that we skip this activity, but their public school -- which is generally excellent -- provides very little history education, so I supplement. This book (and its companion about the American Revolution) has really helped my children develop and interest in history. While I cannot say that they now clamor for history time, they do enjoy the books and (more importantly) they seem to retain more of the information. I highly recommend it!

I am currently reading this to my 5th grade students and they love it. They beg for me to read it everyday. They enjoy the story like format, while I enjoy the information they are gaining about the Civil War. It is an easy read aloud, because of the short chapters, which also helps keeps students engaged. There are also just enough pictures for upper elementary to keep them entertained, while wanting more of the story.

non-fiction can be as good as fiction with the right writer. this book hits the target head on. Quote from my son: "why can’t schoolbooks lay out history in a fun way? this book is so fun to read and my social studies book in school is so boring!"

This author tells the story of the Civil War in such a way kids will be engaged and even hanging on his every word. He includes true stories you will NOT find in history textbooks (ICK!) He helps the reader imagine this time in history from various perspectives and encourages the reader to think like historians. FABULOUS for teachers to use to supplement, even replace, that old textbook!

A wonderful read to better understand the civil war, and all the people involved on both sides. You understand the people better, with all their positive aspects and their warts, and they all come out human... You are being taught history and you don’t even realize it.

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