

Afterward Background Information

Redcap - was a person who carried baggage at hotels, train stations, etc.

Pullman porter - was a person who provided for the needs of passengers on train cars. They are referred to as Pullman porters in this novel due to A. Philip Randolph Pullman, the president of a union that happened to be the largest employer of black labor in the U.S. at this time. In the novel, “Lefty” Lewis was a member of this union.

A picture of Mr. Pullman and some valuable information about him and the union can be found at: <http://www.kentlaw.edu/ilhs/pullpormus.htm>

A photograph of a Pullman porter can be found at:
http://www.ksu.edu/english/nelp/childlit/1930s/delano_pullman_portrait.html

This is the website for the A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum
<http://www.aphiliprandolphmuseum.com/>

Negro Baseball Leagues/Satchel Paige - the following website gives some great information and a picture of Satchel Paige. Mr. Curtis mentioned in the afterward that one of “Lefty” Lewis’ fondest moments in his baseball career was pitching against this legend.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satchel_Paige

During the Great Depression, many households had radios that provided relatively cheap entertainment for the family. Mr. Curtis mentions this as a source of entertainment on p. 239. Some students may not understand that during this era, the radio served as a host of entertainment options, not just music. A wide variety of programs were available over the radio including, talent shows, sport broadcasts, soap operas, gossip columns, etc.

A picture of a family sitting around the radio can be found at:
<http://www.lib.ndsu.nodak.edu/ndirs/collections/photography/20365224.htm>

Chapter 1 Background Information

A foster home is a house where children are raised by someone besides their natural parents.

The Great Depression lasted from 1929-1939.

Jazz music is a style of music native to America, originating in 1900 in New Orleans. It has heavy rhythms and often has improvisations.

A fiddle is a musical instrument of the viol family. (a string instrument). You can see a picture of one here: http://www.communitymusicschool.org/teen_camp_2004/100/13.jpg

Flint, Michigan is a real place. It is 66 miles northwest of Detroit. Around 125,000 people live there.

When Bud talks about getting “slugged,” this means a heavy hit.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

During the Great Depression, a 10-year-old homeless boy sets out in search of a man he believes to be his father.

Bud Caldwell's mother died when he was six years old, leaving him with nothing but a cardboard suitcase filled with memories and a possible hint of who his father may be. Now, ten years old and on the run, Bud lives among the homeless in Flint, Michigan, until he decides to walk to Grand Rapids in search of his father. Helped by a few kind people along the way, Bud eventually locates Herman E. Calloway, a famous musician who denies Bud's claim that he is his father. Finally, the contents of Bud's suitcase provide the clues necessary to prove that Calloway is indeed related to Bud, but not in the way that Bud expects.

ABOUT THIS AUTHOR

Born in Flint, Michigan, Christopher Paul Curtis spent his first 13 years after high school on the assembly line of Flint's historic Fisher Body Plant #1. His job entailed hanging doors, and it left him with an aversion to getting into and out of large automobiles- particularly big Buicks.

Curtis's writing-and his dedication to it-has been greatly influenced by his family members, particularly his wife, Kaysandra. With grandfathers like Earl "Lefty" Lewis, a Negro Baseball League pitcher, and 1930s band leader Herman E. Curtis, Sr., of "Herman Curtis and the Dusky Devastators of the Depression," it is easy to see why Christopher Paul Curtis was destined to become an entertainer.

Chapter 2 Background Information

The important thing to know is that all students will know what violence, fighting, and bullying is, as most have experienced this personally, or at least watched it on the television. This chapter leads to very sensitive discussions because these topics are sensitive. Some students may have had more experiences than others and it is important to remember how YOUR students will be able to handle these topics.

Information you need to know as students might ask: “What is that?”

.22 Long Rifle

(From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)



 .22 Long Rifle – Subsonic Hollowpoint (left), Standard Velocity (Centre), Hyper-Velocity “Stinger” Hollowpoint (Right).

The **.22 Long Rifle rimfire cartridge** is a long established variety of [ammunition](#), and in terms of units sold is still by far the most common in the world today. The cartridge is often referred to simply as a **.22 LR** and various [rifles](#), [pistols](#), [revolvers](#), and even some [smoothbore shotguns](#) have been manufactured in this [caliber](#). For many decades, it has been a very popular cartridge around the world. It is one of the few cartridges that are accepted by a large variety of rifles, as well as pistols. Virtually every manufacturer of cartridge firearms makes at least one model chambering it, and this has been true for more than a century. The .22 Long Rifle and related cartridges use a [heeled bullet](#), which means that the bullet is the same diameter of the case, and has a narrower “heel” portion that fits in the case.

Black razor strap

Use of **the Strap** has been one of the most common forms of domestic discipline of children ... the woodshed ... the taws (or tawes) ... “daddy’s big belt.” And all that. On the other hand, it has been one of the most feared punishments in prison discipline. Less well known is the fact that captives of the “Peculiar Institution” (slavery) in the American South, were “driven” with whips, but formal punishment, especially in the commercial

“whipping sheds,” was more often accomplished with a strap. It was believed to be more painful but less likely to disable or do lasting damage.

Double-barreled shotgun

(From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

A double-barreled shotgun is a [shotgun](#) with two nearly parallel barrels, allowing two shots to be fired in quick succession.

Double-barrelled shotguns, often known as *doubles*, are almost universally [break open](#) actions, with the barrels tilting up at the rear to expose the breech ends of the barrels for unloading and reloading. Since there is no reciprocating action needed to eject and reload the [shells](#), doubles are more compact than repeating designs such as [pump action](#) or [semiautomatic](#) shotguns. In most cases, shooters will choose a longer barrel length than they would for a repeating shotgun, to have a gun with a similar overall length.

Steam Locomotive:

If you follow the link: <http://travel.howstuffworks.com/steam.htm/printable> you will be able to see how steam engines work with great pictures and diagrams as well as great explanations.

Chapter 3 Background Information

Go here to get one person's perspective on the depression

<http://www.rinfret.com/jobs.html>

Chapter 4 Background Information

The book is set in 1936 so running water in homes signified wealth (especially during the Great Depression in the country which lasted about a decade in the 1930's).

Drinking out of a jelly jar, which is a glass jar that might have originally been used for jam or preserves. It was common practice during that time period to use them for drinking glasses.

J. Edgar Hoover was the founder of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and was the director from 1924 to 1972.

Chapter 5 Background Information

Charles Arthur "Pretty Boy" Floyd - (February 3, 1904 – October 22, 1934) was an American bank robber and alleged killer, romanticized by the press and by folk singer Woody Guthrie in *The Ballad of Pretty Boy Floyd*.

The Real McCoy - There are at least half a dozen theories that argue that one of the myriad McCoy's of America at the end of the nineteenth century is the genuinely *real McCoy* that led to this common expression, meaning the real thing. Its origin is unclear, which has opened the gates to admit an astonishing range of individuals bearing ideas, most of them owing much to ingenuity but little to hard fact.

Chapter 6 Background Information

Wristwatch is a word that refers to a watch that is worn on the wrist. A picture of an example can be found at: <http://www.pcbypaul.com/wpclipart/time/wristwatch.png>

Crapper is often referred to as the bathroom and could also be associated with a toilet.

Information on the Great Depression can be found at:

<http://education.yahoo.com/reference/encyclopedia/entry/GreatDep>

Chapter 7 Background Information

Atlas of the United States of America - A collection of maps, traditionally bound into book form, but also found in multimedia formats. As well as geographic features and political boundaries, many often feature geopolitical, social, religious, and economic statistics. The Atlas is used primarily for transportation purposes and can be purchased fairly cheap just about anywhere books and/or maps are sold. The instructions for how to use these are found in the front cover of each one.

Standard Highway Mileage Guide - This is a chart that is used to calculate the mileage between two cities and or states. This guide can be as a book in itself, in an Atlas, or in an abbreviated form at the bottom of state transportation maps. The maps can be obtained from visitor centers and/or welcome centers in just about any state. All maps are different so to know how to use each one you will need to locate the key that is usually found at the bottom of each map.

Chapter 8 Background Information

Hooverilles – A crudely built camp put up usually on the edge of a town to house the dispossessed and destitute during the depression of the 1930's. During the Great Depression, many families lost their homes because they could not pay their mortgages. These people had no choice but to seek alternative forms of shelter. President Hoover, who was blamed for the problems that led to the depression, sprung up throughout the United States.

Explained at www.hexafind.com/encyclopedia/Hooverilles

Pictures of Hooverville www.metrokc.gov/recelec/archives/kcarch/slhoover1.htm

Muskrat - An aquatic rodent of North America, having dark, glossy brown fur, a flattened tail, webbed hind feet, and a musky odor.

Everything Muskrat website <http://mynet-link.net/~vaneselk/muskrat/>

Pictures www.holoweb.com/cannon/muskrat.htm

Chapter 9 Background Information

Genre is a class of literary or artistic work that has a particular style and/or theme. Different types of genre include fiction, nonfiction, picture books, plays and poems.

Understand **relative** and **absolute location**:

Relative location: the location of a place in connection with landforms and other landmarks.

Absolute location: locating a place using a coordinate system or an exact street address.

Know the five themes of geography (location, place, human environmental interactions, movement, regions). A great website for better understanding the five themes of geography is <http://www2.una.edu/geography/statedepted/themes.html>. This website has definitions for each of the themes and explains them in great detail.

Chapter 10 Background Information

A **bottle key** is also sometimes called a church key or a bottle opener, and it is used to remove metal bottle caps from bottles. A picture of an example (there are several varieties) can be found at <http://www.pans.com/images/bottle.bmp>.

Bud seems to be describing a **chauffeur's hat**. For a picture, visit http://www.chapellerie-traclet.com/hat/images/casquette_chauffeur.jpg.

Pop is just another word for SODA, and it is used more frequently in certain geographic areas. See <http://www.popvsoda.com/> for an illustration of what parts of the country use the word pop instead of soda. (Michigan is one of them!)

Baby Face Nelson was a bank robber and murderer wanted by the FBI. His real name was Lester Gillis. For pictures and a more detailed biography, visit http://chicago.about.com/cs/history/a/fbi_nelson.htm.

Chapter 11 Background Information

Red Cross - The American Red Cross is a humanitarian organization, led by volunteers, that provides relief to victims of disaster and helps people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. It does this through services that are consistent with the congressional charter and the fundamental principles of the International Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement. Our humanitarian mission connects us to people and communities across the nation and around the world. We are committed to ensuring that our people, programs and services reflect the diversity of the people and communities we serve. More information can be found at www.redcross.org or on a more local level <http://northcarolina.redcross.org/>

Red Cross and Great Depression -Following the First World War, the American Red Cross faced new challenges. Public support and the number of volunteers for the organization decreased, but the great demand for services continued. Reorganization was necessary if the Red Cross was to survive. Starting in 1921, under its new chairman Judge John Barton Payne, the Red Cross showed that it could survive and be strong without war, and without reliance on emergency work to justify its existence. Payne believed that if the Red Cross was to endure and prosper, it must satisfy social demands not met by other agencies. Staff and volunteers worked together to achieve Payne's vision, and the Red Cross regained its former popularity. Between 1923 and 1939, the Red Cross responded to calls for help from victims of floods, drought, and the Great Depression as it commenced preparation to provide assistance to the victims of another world war. For more information on the Red Cross during the Great Depression this can be found at <http://www.redcross.org/museum/history/20-39.asp>

Hospitals/ Nursing Homes - Dropping off flowers or mail, helping you find your way around the hospital, or sharing a smile, American Red Cross hospital and nursing home volunteers provide a helpful hand whenever needed. A handmade afghan made by caring volunteers may provide that extra touch to make a nursing home resident's room feels like home. During the holidays, stockings filled with gifts and cards help ease the pain of being away from home. Contact your local chapter to find out if they offer any of these services in your area. For more information on how the Red Cross works with the hospital click on <http://www.redcross.org/more/commserv/hosp.html>

The Great Depression - The Great Depression was a worldwide **economic downturn** which started in 1929 (although its effects were not fully felt until late 1930) and lasted through most of the 1930s. It centered in **North America** and **Europe**, but had devastating effects around the world. The most industrialized countries were affected much more than others, including the **United States, Germany, Britain, France, Canada, and Australia**. **Cities all around the world** were hit hard, especially those based on heavy industry. Unemployment and homelessness soared. Construction virtually halted in many countries. Farmers and rural areas suffered as prices for crops fell by 40–60%. Mining and **logging** areas had perhaps the most striking blow because the demand fell sharply

and there were hardly any other alternatives. The Great Depression ended at different times in different countries. For more information go to:

http://www.reference.com/browse/wiki/Great_Depression

Local Red Cross information

American Red Cross

Catawba Valley Chapter

1607 Highland Ave NE

Hickory, NC 28658

828-322-4151

<http://www.catawbavalleyarc.org>

Chapter 12 Background Information

Unions – information on this can be found at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trade_union

In this chapter there is also a reference to Ku Kluxer and John Brown, some of the students may not understand this reference and may need clarification. This would be a good time to discuss how African Americans were discriminated against and how this has changed over time. (I have included several picture books on my annotated resources that are stories about people who lived and dealt with racism, bias, and stereotyping.)

Chapter 13 Background Information

The Great Depression - the economic crisis and period of low business activity in the U.S. and other countries, roughly beginning with the stock-market crash in October, 1929, and continuing through most of the 1930s. The Great Depression was an economic slump in North America, Europe, and other industrialized areas of the world that began in 1929 and lasted until 1939. It was the longest and most severe depression ever experienced by industrialized western world.

<http://www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/depression/about.htm> This website gives more information about the great depression.

Chapter 14 Background Information

The food pyramid is a guide for healthy eating. It emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products. It includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts. It is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars. For additional information, visit www.mypyramid.gov.

Calories are used to compare chemical energy of food. Carbohydrates and protein each give four calories per gram of energy. Fat gives 9 calories per gram of energy.

The digestive system is a group of organs that work like wrecking equipment to break down the chemical components of food, through the use of digestive juices, into tiny nutrients which can be absorbed to generate energy for the body. This system also builds and replaces cells and tissues, which are constantly dying. For a detailed explanation of the order of the digestive system, please visit <http://www.innerbody.com/text/digeov-new.html>.

Blind Lemon Jefferson was born in September 1893 and died in December 1929. He was an influential Blues singer and guitarist from Texas. He was blind.

Chapter 15 Background Information

Grand Central Station- Grand Central Station is one of New York's most famous landmarks. The station opened in 1913 after 10 years of construction. In 1960 the station was designated as a historical landmark. Grand Central Station is more than just a train station. While at the station guest can enjoy restaurants, take tours, and experience public events. More information can be found at:

<http://grandcentralterminal.com/pages/default.aspx>

Chapter 16 Background Information

Great Depression – The Great Depression was a worldwide economic downturn which started in 1929 (although its effects were not fully felt until late 1930) and lasted through most of the 1930s. There is no consensus on the actual cause of the depression, but economists believe it was due to several factors including the stock market crash of 1929, individual debt, trade decline, labor issues, etc. Cities all around the world were hit hard, especially those based on heavy industry. Unemployment and homelessness soared. Construction virtually halted in many countries. Farmers and rural areas suffered as prices for crops fell by 40–60%. Mining and logging areas had perhaps the most striking blow because the demand fell sharply and there were hardly any other alternatives. President Roosevelt chose to combat the depression by proposing the New Deal. New Deal programs sought to stimulate demand and provide work and relief for the impoverished.

Jazz music era – Jazz is an original American musical art form that originated around the start of the 20th century in New Orleans, rooted in African American musical styles blended with Western music technique and theory. Jazz uses blue notes, syncopation, swing, call and response, polyrhythms, and improvisation. Key musicians included Louis Armstrong, Buddy Bolden, Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, and Duke Ellington.

Orphans – An orphan is a person (or animal), who has lost one or both parents often through death. In past times and in much of the third world, orphans often lived homeless as "street urchins", or were cared for in almshouses, orphanages, or occasionally monasteries; most modern people feel that this was a mistake, or, at the least, provided suboptimal care.

Orphanages – an institution dedicated to caring for orphans (children who have lost their parents) and abused, abandoned, and neglected children. Largely seen as an inferior alternative to foster care and adoption, orphanages may be privately or publicly funded, and many are run by religious organizations. Many orphanages practiced some form of "binding-out" in which children, as soon as they were old enough, were given as apprentices to households. This would ensure their support and their learning an occupation.

Alto saxophone – The alto saxophone is a variety of the saxophone, a family of woodwind instruments invented by Adolphe Sax. The alto is the third smallest of the saxophone family, which consists of over eight sizes of saxophone (see saxophone). The alto is the most common size of saxophone, and is also the size most commonly composed for by classical composers. A picture can be found at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alto_Saxophone.

Recorder – The recorder is a woodwind musical instrument of the family known as *fipple flutes* or *internal duct flutes*—whistle-like instruments which include the tin whistle and ocarina. The recorder is end-blown and the mouth of the instrument is constricted by a wooden plug, known as a *block* or *fipple*. It is distinguished from other members of the family by having holes for seven fingers (the lower one or two often

doubled to facilitate the production of semitones) and one for the thumb of the uppermost hand. A picture can be found at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Recorder>.

Outhouses –An outhouse is an old type of toilet in a small structure separate from the main building which does not have a flush or sewer attached.

Bass fiddle – The double bass is the largest and lowest-pitched bowed string instrument used in the modern symphony orchestra. It is used extensively in Western classical music as a standard member of the string section of symphony orchestras^[1] and smaller string ensembles^[2]. In addition, it is used in other genres such as jazz, blues, rock and roll, psychobilly, rockabilly, and bluegrass. As with most other string instruments, the double bass is played with a bow (arco) or by plucking the strings (pizzicato). A picture can be found at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bass_fiddle.

All information was collected from www.wikipedia.org.

Chapter 17 Background Information

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea - *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* begins with a mystery. For over a year, ocean-going vessels have reported running into a floating island or a submerged naval wreck, or being rammed by a giant whale. Pierre Aronnax, assistant professor at the Museum of Natural History in Paris, develops a theory to explain these confusing sightings; he believes that a huge narwhal is bedeviling these ships. After the *Scotia*, a Cunard Lines passenger ship, again encounters this "creature," the United States equips a speedy frigate, the *Abraham Lincoln*, to hunt and kill the dangerous... Retrieved from: <http://www.enotes.com/twenty-thousand-qn/>

Drums - a musical percussion instrument consisting of a hollow cylinder with a thin layer of material (as animal skin or plastic) stretched over one or both ends that is beaten with a stick or with the hands. Retrieved from: <http://www.dwdrums.com/>

Piano - a musical instrument consisting of a large frame holding steel wire strings that sound when struck by felt-covered hammers which are operated from a keyboard. A useful website to use to learn more about pianos is: <http://www.pianoworld.com/>
Niagara Falls: (p.200) to learn more information on Niagara Falls, go to <http://www.city.niagarafalls.on.ca/>

Saxophone - a musical instrument of the woodwind class consisting of a usually curved metal tube with finger keys and a reed mouthpiece. To find more about saxophones, go to <http://www.saxophone.org/>

Trombone - a brass wind instrument with a section that can slide in and out to make different tones. To find more about trombones, go to <http://www.trombone-usa.com/>

Curtsey bow - a bow made especially by women that consists of a slight lowering of the body and bending of the knees.

Chapter 18 Background Information

Depression- A period of drastic decline in a national or international economy, characterized by decreasing business activity, falling prices, and unemployment.

The Great Depression- In U.S. history, the severe economic crisis supposedly precipitated by the U.S. stock-market crash of 1929. Although it shared the basic characteristics of other such crises, the Great Depression was unprecedented in its length and in the wholesale poverty and tragedy it inflicted on society. Economists have disagreed over its causes, but certain causative factors are generally accepted. The prosperity of the 1920s was unevenly distributed among the various parts of the American economy—farmers and unskilled workers were notably excluded—with the result that the nation's productive capacity was greater than its capacity to consume. In addition, the tariff and war-debt policies of the Republican administrations of the 1920s had cut down the foreign market for American goods. Finally, easy-money policies led to an inordinate expansion of credit and installment buying and fantastic speculation in the stock market. The American depression produced severe effects abroad, especially in Europe, where many countries had not fully recovered from the aftermath of World War I; in Germany, the economic disaster and resulting social dislocation contributed to the rise of Adolf Hitler. In the United States, at the depth (1932—33) of the depression, there were 16 million unemployed—about one third of the available labor force. The gross national product declined from the 1929 figure of \$103,828,000,000 to \$55,760,000,000 in 1933. The economic, agricultural, and relief policies of the [New Deal](#) administration under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt did a great deal to mitigate the effects of the depression and, most importantly, to restore a sense of confidence to the American people. Yet it is generally agreed that complete business recovery was not achieved and unemployment ended until the government began to spend heavily for defense in the early 1940s. (Found at Yahoo Encyclopedia)

Polka- A ballroom dance for couples performed in 2/4 time. Originated by Bohemian peasants about 1830 from steps of the schottische and other dances, the polka by 1835 reached the drawing rooms of Prague, from which it spread to the capitals of Europe. The modern polka is a mere remnant of a much livelier, more complicated dance based on five to ten intricate figures in which the partners tossed their feet in the air while executing turns in close embrace, toe-heel steps, and other movements. Related dances include the galop and the mazurka. (Found at Yahoo Encyclopedia)

Waltz- A romantic dance performed in moderate triple time. It evolved from the German *Ländler* and became popular in the 18th cent. The dance is smooth, graceful, and vital in performance. The waltz in Vicente Martin's opera *Una cosa rara*, produced in Vienna (1776), is regarded as the first Viennese waltz. This type was later made famous by the two Johann Strausses, father and son. The younger Strauss composed the *Blue Danube Waltz*, the most popular of the Viennese style. The waltz was introduced in the United States via England in the early 19th cent. Mozart, Chopin, Berlioz, Brahms, Richard Strauss, and Ravel have also composed waltzes. (Found at Yahoo Encyclopedia)

Recorder- A musical wind instrument of the flute family made of wood, varying in length, and having an inverted conical bore (largest end near the mouthpiece). Its tone is produced by an air stream against an edge, like that of the flute, but the air is conducted by a mouthpiece through a channel to the edge; intonation is somewhat less flexible on the vertical recorder than on the transverse flute. The recorder has a soft, sweet timbre which makes it an ideal chamber instrument.

Sax Case- A case used to hold or store a saxophone. Picture found at <http://www.music123.com/Gator-GC-Alto-Sax-Case-i113358.music>

Packard – Packard was a type of luxury vehicle. They were manufactured in Detroit, Michigan. They were first produced in 1899 and production ended in 1958. You can find pictures of Packards at www.packardclub.org.

Chapter 19 Background Information

Great Depression was a worldwide economic downturn which started in 1929 (although its effects were not fully felt until late in 1930) and lasting through most of the 1930s. It centered in North America and Europe, but had damaging effects around the world. The most industrialized countries were affected the worst, including the United States, Germany, Britain, France, Canada, and Australia. Cities around the world were hit hard, especially those based on heavy industry. Unemployment and homelessness soared. Construction virtually halted in many countries. Farmers and rural areas suffered as prices for crops fell by 40-60% ^[1] Mining and logging areas were perhaps the hardest hit because demand fell sharply and there was little alternative economic activity. The Great Depression ended at different times in different countries.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Depression#Causes_of_Depression

Alto Saxophone is a smaller saxophone that gives out a different tone than a regular saxophone. More information about an Alto Saxophone is located at

www.saxophone.com