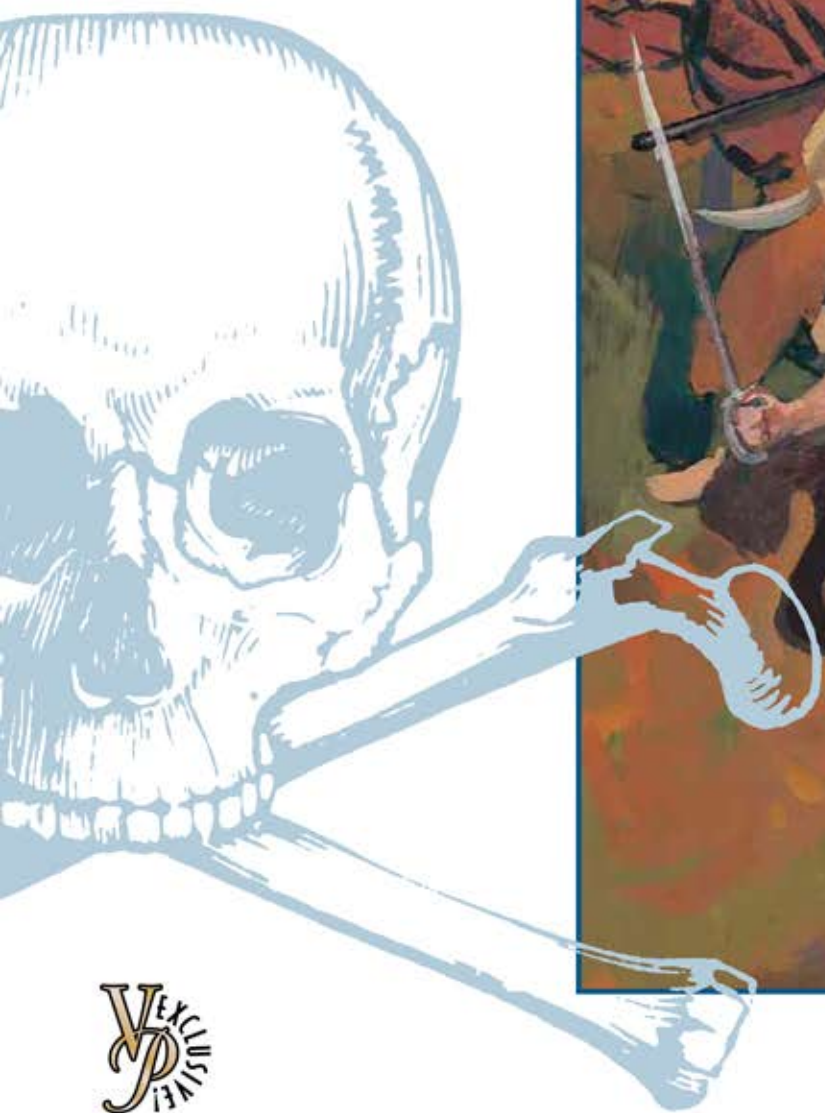


BLACKTHORN WINTER

COMPREHENSION GUIDE



BLACKTHORN WINTER

Comprehension Guide
by Marlin and Laurie Detweiler

Designed by Ned Bustard



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How to use this Guide

This guide is intended to help you study, understand, and enjoy *Blackthorn Winter*. You might ask if a guide is really necessary to read a book. Is the student not just working to improve reading skills while being taught to enjoy reading a book? Certainly, it is the case that the more a child reads, the more he should improve his skills, but quantity is not the only issue. Once a child has received adequate phonetic training he should learn how to read a book. Most educators using this guide will be teaching children in the grammar stage, generally understood to be during the elementary years in a classical education. (For a thorough understanding of classical Christian education we recommend reading *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning* or *The Case for Classical Christian Education*, both by Douglas Wilson.) The basic goals of reading in the grammar stage are as follows:

The student should be able to:

1. Fluently read a given selection orally.
2. Show an increased desire for reading.
3. Show comprehension on a literal and inferential level.
4. Demonstrate an increased vocabulary.
5. Identify basic Biblical values in the literature being read.
6. Identify various styles (myths, poems, fantasy, fiction, nonfiction, etc.)

Answers to the questions are found in the back of the guide. The students' answers should be in complete sentences, and they should restate the question in their answer.

Example:

Question: Why was Jim left without a father?

Answer: Jim was without a father because he was killed in the Korean War.

Such writing practice trains the student to answer thoroughly, completely, and with proper grammar. Another reason is to encourage integration. We want students to understand that how they write something is as important as what they write. After the grammar stage, students enter the dialectic stage, where they develop an interest in logic, analysis and critical thinking. *Blackthorn Winter* is a good book to start transitioning students into this stage. The last portion of the guide includes discussion questions to use with older children or to help fifth and sixth graders enter the dialectic stage. This is a wonderful book to help children think about things biblically.

You may wonder how to grade the student's work in this guide. Keep it simple. Unless otherwise indicated you should assume that each question is worth ten points.

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Setting the Scene

The following information will prove helpful as you study *Blackthorn Winter*. If you are using the Veritas Press Explorers to 1815 history curriculum, you will want to read this book with card number thirteen, “Thirteen Colonies Formed.”

Historical Setting

The Glorious Revolution had occurred in England just a short time before our story opens (1688). The result of that revolution was a rise in the power of Parliament, which helped set the stage for the American Revolution in 1776. Prior to the Glorious Revolution, the king was executive power over his kingdoms and colonies, and they all had their various legislatures. When the king lost power over against the Parliament of England, that parliament eventually began exercising authority over the “parliaments” in the colonies, which is what led to the revolution. The colonists at this time are faithful British subjects, but the forces that will alter this are already in motion.

The early years of the 1700s were considered the “golden age of piracy,” if things like piracy can have golden ages. Our story is on the early side of this period, before the times of Blackbeard and other notables. But at the same time, the east coast of North America down to the Caribbean was beginning to crawl with pirates. The Age of Exploration was over, but wealth was beginning to pour back to Europe from the areas that had been discovered and settled in the age of exploration. The pirates simply wanted a piece of the action. In some ways, the great powers had helped encourage piracy by commissioning privateers in time of war. But after the peace treaties were signed, some of the private warriors had trouble abandoning their ways.

One of the things that we must learn to do in considering the native tribes of North America is the task of remembering that they were separate nations. Just as the Europeans distinguished the Germans, Dutch, Scots, and French from one another, so we should distinguish the Iroquois from the Cherokee. In our story, there is a brief battle with the Rappahannock, which should not be understood as part of a large war between the Indians and the white men. Rather, the early history of our nation included many wars between various white tribes and various native tribes, in all sorts of combinations.

Douglas Wilson

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Chapter One—Fascination

1. Why was Jim left without a father?

2. What traits characterized Jim?

3. About what topic was Jim passionate?

4. When was the house Jim lived in built? How long had Jim's family lived on the property?

5. Why did Jim's mother need to sell off some of the family land?

6. Who was Jonas Beard?

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Chapter One, Page 2

7. What traits characterized Jonas Beard?

8. What discovery piqued Jim's interest?

9. What was the name of the book in which the above item was found?



10. Who is telling this story?

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Chapter One, Project—Pirate Report

From the list below choose one of the pirates on which to write a report. Fill in the information and then write it up in paragraph form.

JACK RACKHAM
ANNE BONNY AND MARY READE
BARTHOLOMEW ROBERTS
WILLIAM KIDD
EDWARD TEACH
HENRY MORGAN



Name of the pirate:

Ship they sailed on:

Where they sailed:

Two interesting facts about the pirate:

When they died:

How they died:

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Chapter Two—A Very Idle Boy

1. In what year is the story being told set?

2. What did Thomas Ingle dream of doing or always want to do?

3. What was used for money during the time of the story?

4. Describe Thomas.

5. Name and describe the boy who tumbled out of the candlemaker's shop.

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Chapter Two, Page 2

6. What characteristic caused Isaac's trouble with Mr. Whidbey?

7. How many times did Isaac fail as an apprentice? What were the consequences of the last failure?

8. What is the first thing Isaac wants to do when he returns from his first successful voyage?

9. What notable books were found on Sarah Ingle's bookshelf?

10. What does Sarah recommend that Thomas pray for regarding Isaac?



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Chapter Three—The Mulberry Tree

In this chapter you will learn that Mr. Jenkins had been a faithful covenanter. The following information will be helpful in understanding what that means.

The Covenanters were the Scots who courageously resisted the religious claims of the English crown for a period of roughly fifty years (1638–1688). This period was a time of political and religious upheaval throughout the British Isles, but the conclusion of this time had particular significance for the Scots.

First, an overview of the chronology. Charles I of England was beheaded (1649) and England was being ruled for a time by Oliver Cromwell and Parliament. After Cromwell's death came the Restoration, and the reign of Charles II. Following Charles II was James II of England, who wanted to restore Roman Catholicism. Fierce resistance in southern Scotland led to what came to be called the "Killing Times," when numerous faithful Scots gave their lives as martyrs.

Charles I had attempted to have the Book of Common Prayer established in Scottish liturgical worship in 1637. Creeping Roman Catholicism was suspected, and Jenny Geddes threw her famous milk stool at the Dean's head. This was a time of turbulent unrest in Scotland. In 1638, the "National Covenant" was signed at Greyfriars church in Edinburgh, a clear and anti-Roman Catholic document. When Charles I was executed, a "Solemn League and Covenant" was established between Scotland, England, and Ireland.

But Cromwell died in 1658, and Charles II came back to the throne. In 1661, he repudiated the National Covenant. Things went from bad to worse, and the period between 1680 and 1685 was the time known as the "Killing Times." James II, the brother of Charles, had come to the throne. He was a believer in the Divine Right of Kings, and was a supporter of the Roman Catholic faith. A time of vicious persecution broke out, and a serious attempt was made to eradicate the Covenanters completely. Evidence was not really required; common soldiers had the authority to take the life of any suspect at will. The brutality involved during this time was simply unbelievable. But in 1688, the Glorious Revolution occurred in England when James II was deposed and replaced by William of Orange.

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Chapter Three, Page 2

1. For what two reasons was Thomas not able to speak with Mr. Jenkins for two days after his mother gave him permission?

2. From what country did Mr. Jenkins move to the Chesapeake?

3. Name the ship and its captain to whom Mr. Jenkin's recommended to Thomas?

4. Where did Thomas hide to avoid being detected by the pirates he watched?

5. What did Thomas observe the three pirates doing on the ground beneath him?

6. What did O'Conner do to the other two pirates before they got back to the ship?

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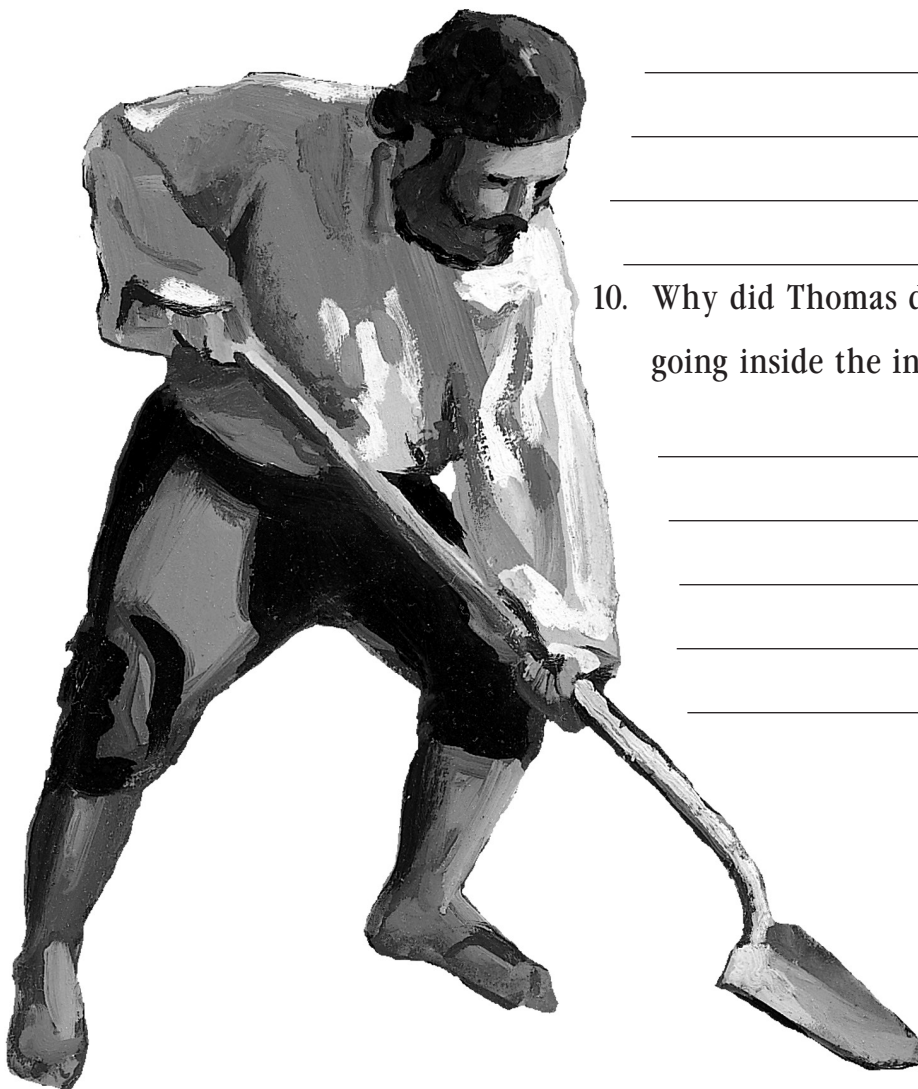
Chapter Three, Page 3

7. What did Thomas find in the package that the pirates had buried?

8. Where did Thomas hide the package he had found?

9. Whom did Thomas decide to tell about his discovery?

10. Why did Thomas decide to wash his hands before going inside the inn?



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Chapter Three, Project—Treasure Map

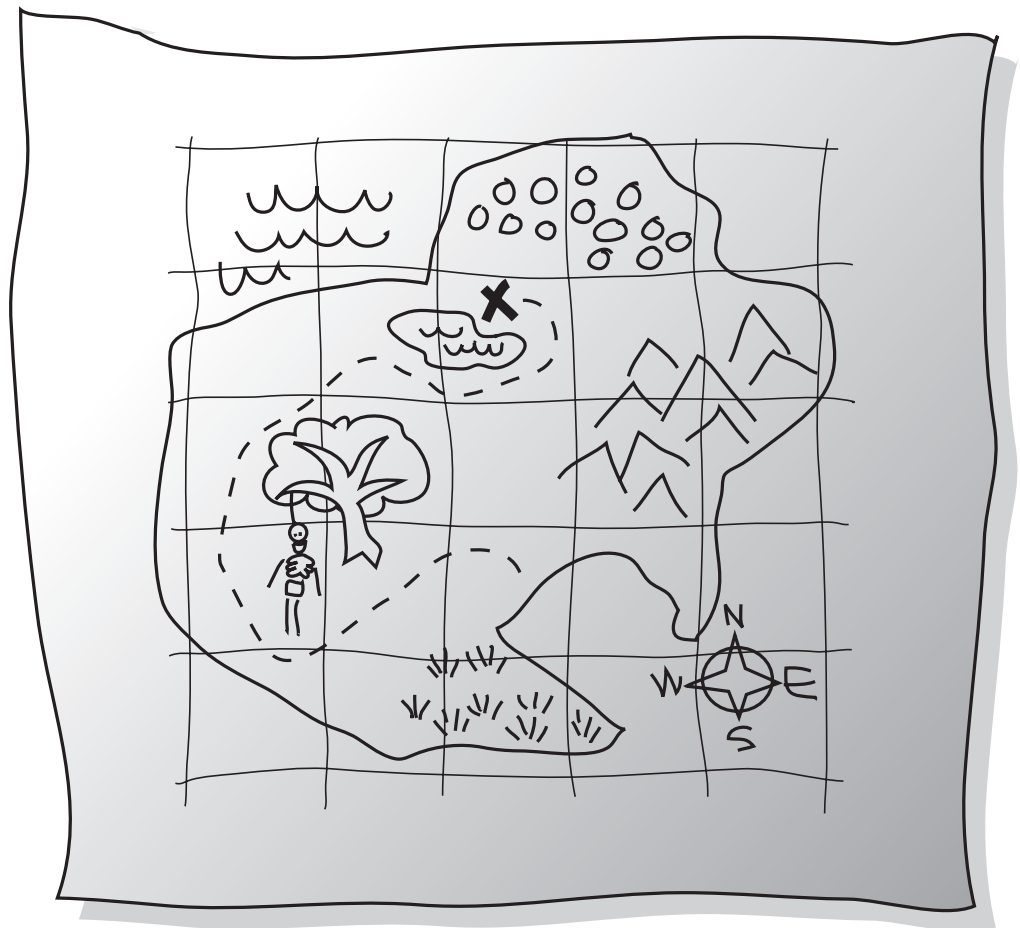
In this chapter Thomas finds the treasure map that O'Conner buried. He described it as a simple piece of paper covered with strange ciphers. One of the things we find with pirate maps is that they are not always what they appear to be. For instance, something that looks like a rock could really be a body of water. In this project you can develop your own system to represent landmarks. *Follow the directions below to create an aged, weathered piece of paper then read the description on the next page to make your own treasure map.*

Materials

- white paper
- 3 tea bags
- water
- markers
- bowl

Directions

1. Draw a 5 x 5 unit grid on the piece of white paper, then tear around the edges to create an irregular shape.
2. Crumple the paper into a ball.
3. Fill the bowl with hot water and add the tea bags.
4. Place the ball into the water and allow to stand for five minutes.
5. Remove from the water and open up the ball and allow the paper to dry overnight.
6. After the paper is dry draw the map.



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Chapter Three, Project—Treasure Map, Page 2

Your long-lost great uncle with the photographic memory has come to visit your family, and over a glass of lemonade describes to you a map he once saw as a boy in the bottom of a sea chest of a crusty old sailor. He asks you to transcribe the map, and then to talk your Dad into searching for the treasure when you visit the Outer Banks next summer.

The map indicated that it was a section of Emerald Isle, which is why I think your upcoming trip to North Carolina is so timely. The map was based on a grid that was five by five square. In the upper corner was a bit of a compass, indicating north, and a bit to the right of that was the word "Bay." The strip of land begins just under the top left unit of the grid, intersects the lower left corner of the next grid to the right, arches slightly then touches the bottom middle of the third unit of the grid, bouncing up to intersect the right side of the following unit in the middle and levels out a bit, ending in the middle of the final unit of the grid in the upper right hand corner. The ocean-side of the strip of land begins in the middle of the unit in the lower left corner. The coast continues almost horizontally, then slopes gently until it hits the right side of the next unit about three quarters of the way up. The beach continues and intersects the upper right corner of the next unit and slopes up to hit the middle of the right side of the unit above the unit directly to the right, ending just above the middle of the right side of the unit above the lower right unit. The lower right of the map has a jetty of large stones that arcs slightly from the lower right corner up to the upper left corner of the unit to the left of

the one in which the jetty began. A stretch of sea oats start near the end of the jetty and fill up the map to the right, almost filling the unit one down from the unit in the upper right corner. A stretch of trees mirror the oats on the other side with a small pool of water in the bottom right corner of the unit two down from the upper left hand corner unit. There is a shipwreck in the lower left corner that points to the upper left corner of the unit directly above it. Mirroring that in the upper right hand corner is a cannon that points diagonally towards the middle of the unit below it. There are three cannon balls to the left of it. The shipwreck is bound to be gone by now, but you may still be able to locate the cannon. The cannon and the shipwreck point to opposite ends of a heavy jagged bar which is probably a ridge of rock. This ridge cuts diagonally across the map, levelling out in the middle of the right side below the pool. There is a skull and crossbones at the intersection four units of the grid above the ridge. The upper left unit of these four is one to the right and one down from the upper left unit. I imagine the pirate left a body of a comrade in the ground above the treasure. A little digging should uncover it.



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