



## ***Bountiful Red Acres* Classroom Implementation Guide**

### **Overview**

Young readers can experience a window into farm life in the North Carolina Piedmont through [Bountiful Red Acres](#). The book chronicles a year in the lives of two neighboring families—one Black and one White—moving from season to season through the year 1900. Despite the racial inequalities in the American South, the Sawyers and Hauser families share an abiding friendship as they rear children, tend crops, and build community.

Author [Eileen Heyes](#) and artist [Dare Coulter](#) bring these real Surry County, NC families to life for readers, offering a vibrant look at neighbors caring for each other as they forge a living out of the red clay soil. Today, the Hauser family farm is a State Historic Site known as [Horne Creek Farm](#), operated by the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, where visitors can explore the original farm house, a tobacco curing barn, a heritage apple orchard, and more.

This guide provides discussion questions, lesson plans and activities that can be used to engage students in the book and its diverse themes. The materials are designed so that teachers can implement as few or as many as their pacing guide allows.

[Bountiful Red Acres](#) is a publication of [North Carolina Office of Archives and History](#) and the [N.C. African American Heritage Commission](#), both part of the [North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources](#).

The book is available for purchase [here](#).

### **About the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources**

The NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources includes 27 historic sites, seven history museums, two art museums, three science museums, three aquariums and Jennette's Pier, 41 state parks and recreation areas, the N.C. Zoo, the N.C. Symphony Orchestra, the State Library, the State Archives, the N.C. Arts Council, the African American Heritage Commission, State Preservation Office and the Office of State Archaeology, and the Division of Land and Water Stewardship. For more information, please visit [www.ncdcr.gov](http://www.ncdcr.gov).

The Department's [Learning Happens Here](#) initiative aims to inspire a lifelong love of learning, promote unity through shared history, foster science literacy, encourage environmental responsibility, and instill a lifelong passion for reading. Visit our site for information about our numerous programs for educators, classroom resources, and more.

### **Grades**

The book and activities are designed for 4th - 5th grades. However, with modifications, the is well suited for middle school students as well, particularly for 8<sup>th</sup> grade social studies.

### **Duration**

The time for completion of each activity will vary based on student level. Teachers can pick and choose which activities to implement, since they are written in way that they can be utilized independent of each other.

## Standards

### [Social Studies 4th Grade Standards](#)

- 4.B.1 Understand ways in which values and beliefs have influenced the development of North Carolina's identity as a state.
- 4.E.1 Understand how economic decisions and resources affect the economy of North Carolina.
- 4.G.1 Understand the role geography has played in the development of North Carolina.
- 4.H.1 Understand the role of various people, events, and ideas in shaping North Carolina.

### [Social Studies 5th Grade Standards](#)

- For each standard below, various objectives connect directly to content in [Bountiful Red Acres](#).
- 5.B.1 Understand ways in which values and beliefs have influenced the development of the United States.
- 5.E.1 Understand how economic decisions have impacted the United States in terms of consequence, growth, and trade.
- 5.G.1 Understand the ways in which geographic factors and features have influenced development of the United States.
- 5.H.1 Understand the role of various people, events, and ideas in shaping the United States.

The activities include also correlate to:

- [Visual Art 4th & 5th Grade Standards](#)
- [Science 4th Grade Standards](#)
- [Science 5th Grade Standards](#)
- [English Language Arts 4th Grade Standards](#); [5th Grade Standards](#)
- [Mathematics 4th & 5th Grade Standards](#)

## Place-Based Learning

For classrooms within the vicinity of [Horne Creek Farm](#), or who can manage the trip to its location (308 Horne Creek Rd, Pinnacle, NC 27043), a fieldtrip to the site where the Sawyers and the Houser families made a life will make for an impactful learning experience while engaging with the book.

## Reading Format

Determine whether students will engage in independent reading, [partner reading](#), [literacy circles or book clubs](#), a read aloud (this includes either having [students take turns to read aloud](#) or the [teacher reading to the class](#)), or a combination of several reading strategies.

For younger students, if reading the book out loud, consider using enlarged text and images projected on a screen. Pause throughout to help students become familiar with the novel's structure, and to clarify some of the old-fashioned language and references of the time. Answer students' questions and check for comprehension as necessary.

For older students reading the book independently (whether individually, in partners, or in reading circles), point out bold print and subtitles as markers for new seasons or alternating perspectives in the book. During partner or

group reading, encourage students to ask questions, discuss responses, and support each other’s understanding of the text.

For students reading in small groups, it is important that the process is structured. Create a schedule for reading and provide tasks to keep students focused and engaged. Some pre-teaching to ensure students are prepared for [Collaborative Learning](#) should occur prior to implementing books clubs/literacy circles. Here is a [sample schedule and discussion questions](#) for the “literature circle/book club” approach.

### Pre-Activity: Analyzing the Cover

Often, the book cover is what hooks the student and motivates them to dive in! Teaching students to engage with the cover is important. This [Analyzing the Cover activity](#) includes a pre-reading section and a post-reading section. For best results, allow students to complete the activity in groups of 2 - 3. They need to talk about it! Make sure that students are clear on expectations for completing the worksheet - identify which questions should be completed collaboratively and which ones should be completed independently. This activity can also be a whole-class discussion/exploration activity.

## LANGUAGE ARTS ACTIVITIES

### Guided Reading Questions

Below are sample guided reading questions for students. Questions can be edited based on each class’s time constraints, student reading levels, and specific learning goals. Each section of the book is subtitled a season; these guided reading questions align with each section of the novel:

[Prologue & Winter](#)      [Spring](#)      [Summer](#)      [Autumn](#)      [Winter \(Again\)/ Epilogue](#)

### Vocabulary

*Bountiful Red Acres* is primarily told in a realistic narrative style. However, it also contains vocabulary central to the agricultural lifestyle during Reconstruction in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. Mastering these words is vital to understanding the plot and the book’s characters. Encourage students to use context clues and to check definitions as they read. Ask them to add unfamiliar words they encounter to the list of story words below.

<i>Breezeway</i>	<i>Cash Crop</i>	<i>Devotions</i>	<i>Disc and Harrow</i>	<i>Dogwood</i>
<i>Emancipation Proclamation</i>	<i>Free People of Color</i>	<i>Ford</i>	<i>Midwife</i>	<i>Potash</i>
<i>Quilting Bees</i>	<i>Shucking</i>	<i>Sonker</i>	<i>Sweetgum</i>	<i>The Piedmont</i>
<i>Threshing Machine</i>	<i>Trough</i>	<i>Vigor</i>	<i>Wood Chopping Frolics</i>	<i>Yadkin River</i>

Encourage students to utilize the glossary at the back of the text to look up definitions of unfamiliar words and to maintain a personal word bank.

### Word Sort

Word sorts are great for introducing, broadening, and reviewing content. By organizing words/ideas into groups, understanding is deepened.

Students are provided a list of key terms from the text - ideally connected to main ideas or concepts. Working in groups of 4 - 5, students are asked to sort the words in a way that is meaningful to them. The teacher can direct the headings by including them in the word list, or students can determine their own headings as they discuss and organize the terms. Conversation/discussion is a key goal for this activity. Teachers should intentionally create groups to promote a high level of engagement, thought, and conversation. There are no “wrong answers” for this activity, but students should be prepared to explain their rationale.

Students can do the word sort as a **preview activity** or as a **post reading/review activity**. Teachers might also consider having students do the sort twice—once before reading, then after studying the text. Students could also work in small groups to create their own list of words to exchange with other groups for sorting.

[Template for word sort](#)

[Terms for word sort \(sample\)](#)

### Then and Now

As students read, have them keep a running comparison of life in 1900 to life today. They can consider aspects ranging from food, agricultural practices, recreation, general life of a child, etc. [Comparison tools can include a matrix, Venn Diagram, or a Double Bubble.](#)

### Letter Writing

Have students imagine they are one of the characters from *Bountiful Red Acres* and write a letter to another character expressing their thoughts, emotions, experiences, etc. This could be a culminating activity used to assess students' understanding of the text and the important facts you want them to acquire, or it can be used while reading the book to help students connect to characters and imagine what happens “behind the scenes” with the characters. Use this [pre-writing tool](#) to kick-start the activity.

## SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITIES

### Design a Field Trip to Horne Creek Farm

**Objective:** Students will learn about the historical significance of Horne Creek Living Historical Farm. They will develop and practice map-reading skills by planning the route from their school to the farm and will collaborate to design a detailed and educational field trip itinerary.

#### Materials

- Computers or tablets with internet access
- Printed maps of the local area (including their school and Horne Creek Farm)
- [Horne Creek Farm Historic Site](#)
- Large poster boards or bulletin board paper for group presentations
- Markers, colored pencils, and other art materials

#### Procedure

##### 1. Introduction to Horne Creek Living Historical Farm (10 minutes)

- All students should have read *Bountiful Red Acres* and be familiar with the Piedmont region. Begin by discussing the historical importance of [Horne Creek Farm](#). Explain how it preserves the way of life of Piedmont farming families in the early 1900s.
- Review important points about the Hauser and Sawyers families' contributions to the Horne Creek Farm's history.

##### 2. Map Activity: Planning the Route (30 minutes)

- Students will use maps to plan the best route from their school to Horne Creek Living Historical Farm.
- Provide students with printed maps and access to online mapping tools (e.g., Google Maps).

- In groups, students will identify key landmarks, highways, and rural roads they will take to reach the farm. Encourage them to explore different route options.
- Have students mark the route on the printed map and calculate the approximate travel time based on the distance.

### 3. Designing the Field Trip Itinerary (30 minutes)

- In partners or small groups, students will learn about today's [Horne Creek Farm site](#), a state historic site operated by the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. Provide each pair or group with an internet connected device and instruct them to review the website for Horne Creek Farm.
- Students will use what they discover on the website and imagine what they think would be most interesting, meaningful, and educational when visiting the site. They will create a detailed itinerary for the field trip, with a focus on planning educational activities that would further what they've learned in class while reading *Bountiful Red Acres*.
- Students will brainstorm and list activities they would want to include during a field trip. Students will display their itinerary on the post board/paper provided, designing a "pitch" that they will deliver to their classmates to garner excitement. Ideas could include:
  - A tour of the Hauser house and farm
  - A hands-on demonstration of early 1900s farming techniques
  - Storytelling sessions featuring descendants of the Hauser and Sawyers families
  - A picnic lunch featuring foods that would have been common in the early 1900s

### 4. Presentation and Class Discussion (30 minutes)

- Each group will present their proposed route and field trip itinerary to the class using the large poster board or bulletin board paper.
- After each presentation, facilitate a class discussion on the different routes and activities, highlighting their choices' historical and educational value.

### 5. Reflection and Wrap-Up (15 minutes)

- Students will write a short reflection on what they learned about Horne Creek Farm and how planning the field trip helped them understand the historical context of the early 1900s.
- Collect reflections and discuss as a class how historical sites like Horne Creek can help us connect with the past.

## Researching Early Schools for Freed People, a Testament of Resilience

**Objective:** Students will research and learn about the first schools established for Black children in the Piedmont region. They will understand these early educational institutions' historical context and significance.

### Materials

- Access to the Internet
- Research materials
- Poster board or digital presentation tools
- Notebooks and pencils for notetaking
- [Map of the Piedmont region](#)
- [A Brief History of Jim Crow-era Rosenwald Schools for Black Children](#), YouTube Video
- [Early Schools for Freed People](#), *NCPedia*

### Procedure

#### 1. Introduction to Education in North Carolina (30 minutes)

- Begin with a class discussion about education in North Carolina during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Discuss the differences in schooling opportunities for Black and White children during this period. Use the graphs and charts available in *Bountiful Red Acres* as starters.
- Introduce Rosenwald Schools as one of the first opportunities for Black children to receive education in the Piedmont region following the Civil War. Highlight the historical significance of the schools and how they served the local community by showing the short video (2:30 min.), [A Brief History of Jim Crow-era Rosenwald Schools for Black Children](#).
- Let students know that over 800 Rosenwald Schools would eventually exist in 93 of North Carolina's counties, more than any other state! Allow students to hypothesize why they think this is.
- OPTIONAL: Additional information can be found about Rosenwald Schools in [this guide](#).

## 2. Research Activity (time will vary)

- **Group Assignment:** Divide the students into small groups. Assign each group a specific research topic related to early Black schools in the Piedmont region. Topics may include:
  - Rosenwald Schools throughout North Carolina
  - The daily life of students in Rosenwald Schools
  - Key figures who contributed to the establishment and running of the school
  - Comparison between Black, White, and Indigenous schools in the region
  - The impact of segregation on education in the Piedmont region
- **Research Time:** Students can gather information from a library, computer lab, or tablet. Provide them with guided questions to help direct their research, such as:
  - Who were the teachers at these schools? Who were the leaders that helped open them?
  - What successes resulted from the schools?
  - What challenges did the schools/students face?
  - How did the community support the school?
- **Note-Taking:** Instruct students to take detailed notes during their research, focusing on key facts, dates, and figures. Encourage them to look for primary sources like photos, letters, or diaries.

## 3. Mapping Activity (30 minutes)

- **Using Maps:** Provide students with a map of the Piedmont region. Have them locate some of North Carolina's Rosenwald schools and chart them on a map, as well as any other significant sites related to their research.
- **Route Planning:** Ask the students to plan a hypothetical field trip from their school to the sites of these early schools. They should identify the route, the distance, and any historical landmarks they might pass along the way.
- **Discussion:** Discuss the geographical challenges and distances students and teachers might have faced attending these schools in the early 1900s.

## 4. Presentations (1 or more class periods)

- **Creating Presentations:** Have each group prepare a presentation based on their research. They can create posters, slideshows, or other visual aids to share their findings with the class.
- **Rehearsal:** Allow time for groups to rehearse their presentations. Provide feedback and help them refine their work.

- **Group Presentations:** Each group presents to the class. Encourage students to ask questions and discuss the different aspects of Rosenwald Schools.
- **Reflection:** After all presentations, lead a class reflection on what they learned about the early education system for Black children in the Piedmont region. Discuss the importance of preserving and learning about this history.

## Interview a Historical Figure from *Bountiful Red Acres*

### Objective

- Encourage creative thinking and empathy by having students imagine themselves as historical figures from the Hauser or Sawyers family.
- Develop skills in research, writing, and oral communication.

### Materials

- Copies of relevant passages from *Bountiful Red Acres*
- Research materials (books, articles, online resources)
- Writing materials (paper, pencils, or computers)
- Audio or video recording devices (if available)
- Props or costumes (optional)

### Procedure

#### 1. Day 1: Introduction & Research

- **Introduction to the Project:** Explain that students will be writing and performing an interview with a historical figure from the Hauser or Sawyers family. Discuss how this activity will help them understand life on a farm in the early 1900s.
- **Choosing a Historical Figure:** Provide students with a list of possible historical figures from the Hauser or Sawyers family. Have students choose or assign each a figure to research.
- **Research:** Allow time for students to research their chosen figure using *Bountiful Red Acres* and other resources. Encourage them to focus on their daily life, significant events, and challenges their figure might have faced.
- **Guiding Questions for Research:**
  - What was your daily routine like on the farm?
  - How did you and your family contribute to the farm work?
  - What were the significant events or challenges in your life?

#### 2. Day 2: Writing & Rehearsal

- **Writing the Interview:**
  - Students will write a script for their interview, including the interviewer's questions and the historical figure's responses.
  - Encourage students to think creatively and use their research to make the answers authentic to the period.
- **Rehearsal:**
  - Allow students time to practice their interviews with a partner or in small groups. Provide feedback on their performance, focusing on clarity, expression, and historical accuracy.

### 3. Day 3: Performance & Recording

- **Performing the Interview:**
    - Have students perform their interviews in front of the class. Students can do this live or recorded.
    - Encourage students to use props or costumes to enhance their presentation if available.
  - **Recording as a Podcast/Video (Extension):**
    - For the extension activity, students can record their interviews as podcasts or videos. If time and resources permit, this can be done in class or as a homework assignment.
    - After recording, the class can listen to or watch each other's interviews.
4. **Reflection:** Have a class discussion or written reflection on what students learned about people's lives in the early 1900s and how this activity helped them connect with history.

### Connections to Foodways: The Sonker

**Objective:** To explore oral history through discussion of family or intergenerational recipes.

1. **Introduction:** Lead students in a discussion about meals and traditions. Ask students to study the Sonker recipe on pg. 50 and to share their first impressions. Ask if they have ever had this dessert or something similar. (Explain that the dish goes by many different names: cobbler, buckle, pandowdy, kuchen, etc.)
2. **Assign this [oral history activity](#)**, in which students interview an older family member or adult about recipe memories. (Teachers should be mindful of students who may not have easy access to someone to interview. In this case, pre-identify an adult in the building who can help or contact a senior center or senior group at a local church. Teachers may want to record a sample interview with someone and use it to inspire and guide your students.
3. **Even Better:** Engage in experiential learning by making a Sonker at school!

Helpful information:

- <https://www.southernliving.com/food/what-is-a-sonker>
- <https://sonkertrail.org/what-is-sonker>
- <https://www.ourstate.com/sonker/>

## SCIENCE & MATH ACTIVITIES

### Exploring the Science of Food

#### [Honey and Beeswax Exploration](#)

**Objective:** Understand the process of honey extraction and the properties of beeswax.

- **Activity:** Students can simulate honey extraction by creating a simple filter set-up with cheesecloth and a jar, mimicking how honey is separated from combs. They can observe how gravity helps extract the honey over time.
- **Extension:** Have students study the different uses of beeswax, such as candle-making. They can even create their own small beeswax candles.

#### [Apple Preservation](#)

**Objective:** Explore different methods of food preservation used on farms.



- **Activity:** Students can experiment with drying apple slices using a food dehydrator or air drying. Compare the dried apples to fresh ones regarding taste, texture, and appearance.
- **Extension:** Students can also try making simple apple cider vinegar in class and study the chemical process of fermentation.

### Understanding Soil and Plant Growth

**Objective:** Investigate the importance of soil quality in farming.

- **Activity:** Create small planting experiments in which students grow seeds in different soil types (e.g., sandy, clay, loamy). Students can observe and record the plants' growth over time, relating it to the kinds of crops grown on the Hauser and Sawyers farms.
- **Extension:** Discuss how soil quality impacts farming and how farmers in the Piedmont region might have managed their land.

### Phases of the Moon and Farming

**Objective:** Understand the phases of the moon and their significance in traditional farming practices.

- **Activity:** Students can create a moon phase model using a light source (like a lamp) and a small ball representing the moon. By moving the ball around the lamp, they can observe how the light changes on the surface of the "moon," representing different phases.
- **Extension:** Discuss how farmers, including those on the Hauser and Sawyers farms, might have used the moon's phases to guide planting and harvesting schedules.

### Exploring the Agriculture Cycle

*Bountiful Red Acres* is about two family farms and offers a great explanation of the agriculture cycle. Students will work in small groups to identify and creatively present the stages of agriculture as presented in the text. Using the worksheet below, they can explore the cycle and then create a visual to support the information presented in the story. (The visual can be as narrow or broad as they choose. For example, students could show the life cycle of a single crop or create a diagram that broadly shows the "process of agriculture" from season to season.) Upon completion, visuals can be used to create a "mural" or "quilt" on a wall in the school, or in another public space.

Farming terms from the text: agriculture, soil, potash, pruning, disc, harrow, plow, crop, orchard, cash crop, plot, threshing, winnow, chaff, harvest, curing barn, husk

Consider asking a local farmer to come talk to students about their work, or reach out to an Agricultural Extension office/4-H agent to serve as a guest speaker.

[Agriculture Cycle Note-Sheet](#)

[Sample Answers/Note-Sheet](#)

For an additional resource, see [How to Talk Farming](#).

### By the Numbers

The data included at various points in *Bountiful Red Acres* can be used to provide important context for students. Teachers can use the infographics on the pages below with this [Infographics in Bountiful Red Acres](#) handout for whole class discussion, small group collaboration, and/or independent lessons:

- Page 17: Work wage for a Black person and a White person
- Page 30: Population information for North Carolina and Shoals Township
- Page 31: Families in Shoals Township Owning or Renting Farmland
- Page 34: Shoals Township school children during 1900

## Arts

### Visualizing Bountiful Red Acres

*Bountiful Red Acres* is filled with amazing illustrations by artist [Dare Coulter](#). This [illustration analysis tool](#) can be used to connect illustrations to important concepts and content in the text.

This activity, [A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words](#), can be used as a post-reading (art-focused) exercise. Some specific pre-teaching may be helpful: artist's style, purpose of an illustration, purpose of a caption, how to write a caption, etc.

### Act It Out

Students should select a key scene from *Bountiful Red Acres* and create a short dramatic performance, incorporating dialogue and character interactions. This ["Act it Out" planning guide](#) can be used by students to prepare for their performance. It is important to create student groups that are set up for success. Set clear expectations and assure students that the activity is all about effort and having fun! The teacher will need to do some upfront planning—timeline, expectations for the performance, learning objectives, etc.