

Fall Reading Program



DOGHOUSE DIVIDED DIVIDED

WRITTEN BY LEIGH ANNE FLORENCE

ILLUSTRATED BY DONNIE MATHER

Chapter 6

“Hello,” Mom said sweetly when she answered the telephone.

“I’m sorry I didn’t ask permission before I bought the drums. Please don’t make me return them.”

“Excuse me?” Mom asked, puzzled.

“Mrs. Grant said I needed to call home. Aren’t you going to say I can’t keep the drums?”

“Son, haven’t we talked about not jumping to conclusions before getting the facts?” I listened as Mom reminded me of the lesson she’d tried to teach

me many times before. She paused and spoke again. “I asked you to call because we need a gallon of milk for supper. Would you please bring it home?”

“Yes, ma’am,” I answered, thankful Chloe hadn’t spent all her money on my overdue fees. “I’m sorry, Mom.”

“Thanks. I accept your apology.”

As Chloe and I walked to the market, I thought about the drums. I couldn’t wait

to eat dinner and then beat on them. I was certain Chloe felt the same. She surprised me when she said, “I never knew a war that happened 150 years ago could be interesting. While you were talking with Mom I found some answers to our questions. Only 34 states were in the Civil War because those were all the states established by 1861. Also, Abraham Lincoln was the president during the Civil War.”

“Really?” I asked. Since Lincoln was from Kentucky, I’d read about him. Everyone called him Honest Abe. “Why were the states fighting?”

“Like Mrs. Grant said, there were several reasons. In fact, President Lincoln was one reason they were fighting, though I don’t know why. Another reason was slavery.”

“Slavery? What’s that?” I asked Chloe.

“Not sure. Maybe Dad will know.”

We returned home, handed

Mom the milk, washed our paws and set the supper table. Fried chicken and mashed potatoes - my favorite! I couldn’t wait to eat drumsticks so I could use my drumsticks later.

“Tell us about work, pups,” Dad said after complimenting us on getting a job so quickly.

We explained that Kentucky was preparing for the 150th anniversary of the Civil War and we talked about researching it.

“Dad, what’s slavery?” I asked, after receiving permission for a second helping of potatoes. Dad wiped his mouth, looked thoughtful, and spoke.

“Hundreds of years ago, people owned other people called slaves. The owners treated the slaves like property. They purchased slaves, traded slaves and made them work hard without pay. The slaves had to obey their master and had few rights. To answer your question, slavery is the practice of treating people like property.”

“Couldn’t the slaves tell the police they were being mistreated?” I asked.

“Before the Civil War, slavery was legal in the South.” Dad explained.

“How could treating people like property be legal?” Chloe asked.

“Many people in the southern states depended on agriculture to make a living. They grew crops - especially cotton - and needed lots of inexpensive workers, so they owned slaves,” Dad explained. “Therefore, slavery was legal in the South - and Southerners wanted to keep it that way.”

“What about the North?” I asked.

“Northerners relied more on industrialism and factory jobs to earn a living. They didn’t require help like Southerners did,” Dad answered. “Therefore, slavery was illegal.”

“That explains what we learned,” I said, excited to make the connection. “Some states thought the president and federal government should make laws that applied to all states. Other states thought they should have the right to make their own laws. Slavery was probably one of those laws.”

“Exactly, son!” Dad replied. “Also, many Northerners didn’t think it was enough that slavery was illegal in the North, they wanted slavery to be outlawed in the South, too. These were called abolitionists - people who wanted slavery to be illegal everywhere.”

“Why did it matter to the abolitionists? Slavery didn’t affect them,” I said, hoping we could finish dinner soon so I could drum before bedtime.

“Woody,” Mom chimed in, “just because things don’t directly affect us doesn’t mean we sit back and allow it to happen. The abolitionists didn’t like seeing the slaves being treated poorly. Remember, we treat others the way we want to be treated.”

I thought about what Mom said about treating others the way we want to be treated. I thought about the slaves, the slave owners and the abolitionists. My mind was so busy thinking that I almost didn’t hear the knock at the door. The next thing I know, I heard Dad say, “Woody, Bark is here to see you!”



Thank you to our sponsors! For online activities and podcasts visit www.paducahsun.com