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Teaching Guide for **Dadblamed Union Army Cow**

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This is a literary guide to help teachers, book club facilitators and parents in sharing *Alphabet of Dreams*. Peruse the guide and select the parts that seem most engaging, relevant and helpful to your purposes!

Summary

This is a fictionalized account of a true story about a cow that marched with the Union Army during the Civil War.

Ideas for Classroom Use

Discussion questions

Encourage children to find examples from the story to document their answers.

1. Why do you think that “dadblamed cow” followed its owner everywhere?
2. What are some words we might use today to describe the cow besides “dadblamed or persnickety?”
3. Why do you think the Union Army allowed the cow to march in the war with the soldiers?
4. Using the illustrations, how can you figure out what “horse dragoons” are?
5. What are several ways the “dadblamed cow” was useful to the soldiers?
6. How do you think the cow’s owner felt when the cow received a medal of honor from the Army?

Responding to the Text

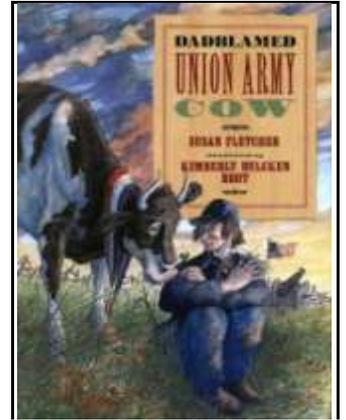
Social Studies – Exploring the Civil War

There are many websites about the Civil War for children. The website below lists many of them. Pick and choose the websites that meet your own particular teaching needs.

<http://www.kathimitchell.com/civil.htm>

Animal mascots of the Civil War

Evidently, it was quite common for regiments to have an animal mascot. At the websites below, you will find several stories of the dogs, chickens, horses, a bear, a camel and a bald eagle that also made Civil War history. Individuals or small groups of children might have fun researching an animal and then sharing the story with the rest of the class.



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<http://oha.alexandriava.gov/forward/special-sections/mascots/>

<http://www.floridareenactorsonline.com/mascots.htm>

Writing

Write your own newspaper article about the “dadblamed cow,” the cow’s owner, or told through the eyes of the Captain of the regiment, Captain Jesse M. Lee. Be sure to share with your children, the photo of the article on the webpage below that was written right after the war.

http://www.susanfletcher.com/books/bk_dadblamedz.html

Some basic ideas for teaching children how to begin a newspaper article can be found at the website below:

<http://bit.ly/TqO6L4>

Science

Why is milk important?

That “dadblamed cow’s” milk most likely saved the regiment of Indiana soldiers and many others during the Civil War. What is in milk that is so important to our bodies? Encourage a few children to research milk and to share the information with the rest of the class.

Milk products

Encourage children to gather in small groups to brainstorm a list of foods and drinks they consume that have milk products in them. Then, have each group take turns sharing a milk product with the class as you record them on a list on the board. When all possibilities have been shared, create a class list for children to take home and post on their refrigerator.

Milk alternatives

An increasing number of children are allergic to milk products or are lactose intolerant. What do they eat or drink instead of milk to get the nutrients they need? Add these alternatives to the classroom list. Perhaps you could invite some parents to set up a dairy and dairy alternative tasting some day?