

# Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth

by James Cross Giblin

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## About the Guide

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This guide is designed to enhance students' mastery of key content and skills in United States history, geography, and language arts (including drama) by studying the life and times of eminent actor Edwin Booth and his infamous brother, John Wilkes Booth. It is intended to be used in conjunction with *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth*, by award-winning author James Cross Giblin, as well as with your textbook or other supplemental materials. The lessons will complement curriculum in the social studies, particularly antebellum, Gold Rush, and Civil War history and geography. The guide also includes creative and expository writing exercises and provides insight into the history of the nineteenth-century American theater. Each lesson is designed with multiple objectives in mind to make the most efficient use of teachers' time. The lessons in this guide may be used with students from upper elementary through high school, based on educators' judgments about what is most suitable to the experience level and abilities of the students in their classroom and the curriculum of their district and state.

The guide consists of six lesson plans drawn from topics investigated in *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth*:

- The Historian's Craft
- Brothers —A Poem in Two Voices
- Good Brother
- Bad Brother
- Brother versus Brother: The Human Face of the Civil War
- Liberty in Time of War

Within each lesson plan you will find all or most of the following information:

- Synopsis of lesson
- National curriculum standards met by this lesson (based on Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning standards and benchmarks, [www.mcrel.org](http://www.mcrel.org))
- Time required
- Materials needed
- The lesson, with lesson-starter and lesson procedures
- Assessment rubric
- Interdisciplinary activities

Although the study guide is designed so that the six lesson plans provide an integrated unit of studies, it is not expected that students will complete all the listed activities. Teachers may assign selected activities to their classes, allow students to choose an activity for themselves, or set up independent learning centers with the material needed for suggested activities. Also, teachers may wish to give students the opportunity to earn extra credit by completing some activities as independent work. Recognizing the time and accountability constraints facing classroom teachers, we encourage you to select and adapt the activities that best meet your students' needs and abilities, curriculum requirements, and your teaching style.

This study guide was written by Jean M. West, an education consultant in Port Orange, Florida.

## Lesson Synopses

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These lessons are most appropriate for high school students, grades 9–12, but may be suitable for middle school students, grades 6–8.

### Lesson One: The Historian's Craft

In this introductory lesson to *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth*, students will examine the challenges facing historians and biographers. Students will look at a fairy tale villain (such as the wolf from the *Three Little Pigs* or the Wicked Witch of the West from *The Wizard of Oz*). The class will discuss why it is important to write about history's villains while avoiding the traps of over-demonizing or over-glorifying them.

### Lesson Two: Brothers — A Poem in Two Voices

Students will begin to examine the lives of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth in this lesson. Using a handout of quotations from Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth and an organizational chart, small groups will select from the quotations and organize the words of the two brothers. They will culminate the activity by using the brothers' words to create a found poem with two voices.

### Lesson Three: Good Brother

In this lesson, students will begin to examine how historians and biographers work to create a full, balanced account of people of the past, in this case focusing on the problem of the "good brother" or any "hero." Students will begin by talking about "what's in a name," and brainstorming the characteristics of the stereotypical "good brother." The class will follow up with research in *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth*, along with other sources, to determine how Edwin Booth compares with the stereotype of "good brother." The students will express their findings in a choice of culminating written activities.

### Lesson Four: Bad Brother

In this lesson, students deal with the historian's dilemma of how to write about people in the past who have committed wicked deeds. Students will analyze a well-known cartoon, "Satan Tempting Booth to the Murder of the President," on p. 115 of Giblin's book. Then they will read *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth* to try to determine when and how John Wilkes Booth, a man "who seemed so loveable and in whom all his family found a source of joy in his boyish and confiding nature," turned into "a villain" (Edwin Booth, quoted on p. 5).

### Lesson Five: Brother versus Brother: The Human Face of the Civil War

The rift between Edwin and his younger brother John was repeated between hundreds of brothers, neighbors, and friends during the Civil War. Because pupils today are nearly one hundred-fifty years removed from the participants, they will research a human aspect of the war and prepare a written report, skit, project board, or computer slide-show about their findings.

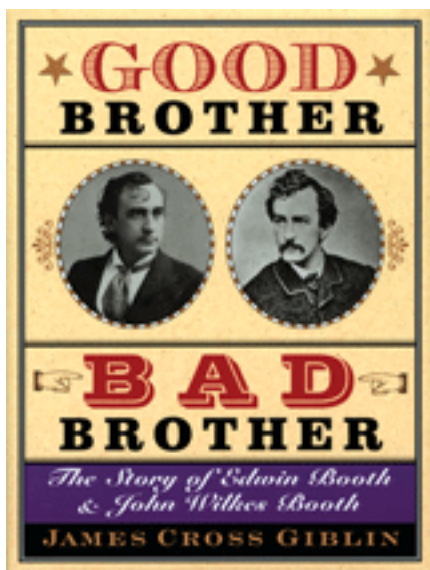
### Lesson Six: Liberty in Time of War

John Wilkes Booth chafed at the limits on his ability to express his political opinion due to the authorities and public opinion; the Lincoln conspirators were tried by a military tribunal. Students will research what happens to personal liberties when the nation is threatened by investigating how treasonous behavior was handled by the U.S. government during the Civil War, the Red Scare, World War II, and the McCarthy Era and then present their findings in a panel report.

### Additional Resources

A list of additional resources relevant to the topics presented in this guide

## A Teacher's Guide



# Good Brother, Bad Brother

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## Lesson One: The Historian's Craft

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## Synopsis

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In this introductory lesson to *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth*, students will examine the challenges facing historians and biographers. Students will look at a fairy tale villain (such as the wolf from the *Three Little Pigs* or the Wicked Witch of the West from *The Wizard of Oz*). Next, they will complete a worksheet considering the challenges presented by historical resources, both primary and secondary. The class will discuss why it is important to write about history's villains while avoiding the traps of over-demonizing or over-glorifying them. Finally, pupils will draft a list of guidelines for researching and writing about historical persons. The lesson is most appropriate for middle school students, grades 6–8, but may be suitable for high school students, grades 9–12.

## National Curriculum Standards

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Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning has created standards and benchmarks for language arts, math, science, geography, economics, and history.

This lesson meets standards and benchmarks for:

**Historical Understanding (4th Ed.)** Standard 2: Understands the historical perspective, including benchmark:

Level III (Grades 7–8)

1. Understands that specific individuals and the values those individuals held had an impact on history

5. Understands that historical accounts are subject to change based on newly uncovered records and interpretations

6. Knows different types of primary and secondary sources and the motives, interests, and biases expressed within them (e.g., eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, artifacts, photos; magazine articles, newspaper accounts, hearsay)

Level IV (Grades 9–12)

1. Analyzes the values held by specific people who influenced history and the role their values played in influencing history

## Time Required

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This lesson will probably take a half to a full class period, depending on whether the worksheet and written activity is completed outside of class.

## Materials Needed

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- *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth* (p. 221)
- Historical Sources Worksheet

## The Lesson

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### Lesson-Starter

1. Read the passage written by Giblin, on p. 221 of *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth*. "But for every person who knows that there was once a great actor named Edwin Booth, there are thousands who know that his brother, John Wilkes Booth, assassinated Abraham Lincoln. This is yet another example of the long-held truism that villains in fiction and in life are more interesting and colorful than heroes."

2. Share with your students a fairy tale such as Jon Scieszka's *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs!* by A. Wolf. Or you may choose a song from the soundtrack of a Broadway show about the Wicked Witch of the West, such as "Nobody Mourns the Wicked" from *Wicked* or "No One is Alone" from *Into the Woods*, sung by Rapunzel's Witch.

3. Briefly discuss whether hearing both sides of a story makes it any easier to write about history or people from the past.

### Procedures

1. Provide students with the Historical Sources Worksheet (included at the end of this lesson) and ask them to complete it. Discuss the worksheet with the students. (Further information about Asia Booth Clarke's *John Wilkes Booth: A Sister's Memoir* may be found on pp. 211 and 225 of *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth*.)

2. Establish the historical context of the documents and materials quoted in secondary sources. Point out that historical documents are not made with modern readers' sensibilities in mind and may contain words that are considered racially offensive or profane. Ask students about how such documents should be handled.

3. Both Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth played the role of Shakespeare's Hamlet (see the Library of Congress photo of Edwin Booth as Hamlet on p. 170). Hamlet is also mirrored by Simba in the popular children's film *The Lion King*. At the end of the final act of the play, Hamlet's friend Horatio wants to commit suicide and die along with Hamlet, but Hamlet prevents him from doing so. Hamlet realizes that if Horatio dies, all remaining witnesses will think "mad Hamlet" has gone on a murder spree. He wants Horatio to live and bear witness to the truth, commanding him, "Absent thee from felicity a while and in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain to tell my story" (*Hamlet*, V.ii. 347-348).

Ask students how *Hamlet* would have been different if Claudius told the story as opposed to Horatio, or how *The Lion King* would have been different if Scar were writing the tale. (Playwright Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead* examines Hamlet from the point of view of a pair of minor characters in the Shakespeare play; available on VHS (1990) and DVD.) Ask students to brainstorm a list of problems historians and biographers face as they try to write accounts of the past, especially when dealing with conflicting points of view or complex individuals capable of both good and wickedness.

4. Inform students that they will be writing a list of guidelines for writers of history, so that readers will get an accurate and fair presentation about past people and events. This may be done in pairs or individually. Lists should be written in complete sentences with standard spelling, punctuation, and grammar and

- Include at least ten guidelines
- Clearly address the problems of accuracy
- Clearly address the problems of fairness

## Assessment

The students' guidelines may be graded on a twenty-five point scale (which may be multiplied by four to convert to one hundred-point scale or for conversion to letter grades) using the following rubric:

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>
Historical Issues(15 points)	<p><b>(15–14 points)</b></p> <p>Included ten or more guidelines</p> <p>Addressed both accuracy and fairness thoroughly</p> <p>Showed great insight into the process of writing history</p>	<p><b>(13–12 points)</b></p> <p>Included ten guidelines</p> <p>Addressed both accuracy and fairness in a balanced manner</p> <p>Showed insight into the process of writing history</p>	<p><b>(11–6 points)</b></p> <p>Included ten guidelines, but some were the same but reworded, or unclear</p> <p>Addressed both accuracy and fairness but unevenly, concentrated on one</p> <p>Showed some insight into the process of writing history</p>	<p><b>(5–1 points)</b></p> <p>Included less than ten guidelines</p> <p>Addressed only fairness or only accuracy OR prepared guidelines with some merit but without a clear relationship to the issues of fairness or accuracy</p> <p>Understood problems in writing history to a very limited degree</p>	<p><b>(0)</b></p> <p>Did not prepare a list of guidelines</p>
Written Components (10 points)	<p><b>(10–9 points)</b></p> <p>Wrote in complete sentences</p> <p>Followed all spelling, punctuation, and grammar conventions; error-free</p>	<p><b>(8 points)</b></p> <p>Wrote in complete sentences</p> <p>Followed all spelling, punctuation, and grammar conventions; one or two errors</p>	<p><b>(7–6 points)</b></p> <p>Wrote in complete sentences</p> <p>Followed most spelling, punctuation, and grammar conventions, several errors</p>	<p><b>(5–1 points)</b></p> <p>Generally wrote in complete sentences</p> <p>Numerous problems with spelling, punctuation, and/or grammar conventions</p>	<p><b>(0)</b></p> <p>Did not prepare the assignment</p>

## Internet Resources

Image of the 1850 Census of the 5th Ward of Baltimore listing the household headed by Junius Brutus Booth, whose occupation is "Tragedian." Edwin is enumerated on line 17; John on line 20. [http://www.rootdig.com/1850census/1850\\_john\\_wilkes\\_booth.html](http://www.rootdig.com/1850census/1850_john_wilkes_booth.html)

The Library of Congress American Treasures Imagination Web site includes an 1873 chromolithograph poster of Edwin Booth playing the role of Hamlet at <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/images/at0166A.2s.jpg>.

## Interdisciplinary Activities

### *Dramatic Arts*

A twenty-one-year-old clerk named Charles Clarke provided a 60,000 word description of Edwin Booth's portrayal of Hamlet. This original obsessive fan took detailed notes, for example these observations from the first act, as reported by John A. Mills (*Hamlet on Stage: The Great Tradition*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985):

Booth entered with a slow, unvaried "monotread," which seemed to say that his presence was "in sullen obedience to the courtesy of the occasion." The little bow he gave the King after the first solemnly scornful aside had something of the same quality . . . In his reply to Gertrude (I.ii.76–86) he employed a number of illustrative gestures which were typical of his general manner; he raised the hem of his cloak on "suits of solemn black" and again on "trappings," struck his breast "gravely" on "that within" and pointed to his eye when he mentioned that organ's "fruitful river". . . the many gestures "were delivered with so much ease and in so natural a manner that one would scarcely notice them especially. There was no vivacity in them; they were full of languor, but so conversant with Hamlet's meditative, mournful demeanor that they appeared highly natural."

PBS broadcast a program available in VHS and DVD, *Discovering Hamlet* (1999), showing how Sir Derek Jacobi instructed Kenneth Branagh when he played Hamlet. Ask students to watch the first act of Hamlet from at least two different productions (either live or recorded) and take note of the gestures and movements used to convey Hamlet's character. After reviewing their notes, ask them what kind of Hamlet the actor was trying to portray and to judge how successful the actor was. Versions of *Hamlet* available on VHS or DVD include:

Adrian Lester, 2005 (*Hamlet* by Brook)  
Kevin Kline, 2002  
Campbell Scott, 2000  
Kenneth Branagh, 1996  
Mel Gibson, 1991  
Ethan Hawke, 1990  
Derek Jacobi, 1980 (Part of the BBC Shakespeare Tragedies set)

Nicol Williamson, 1969  
Richard Burton, 1964  
Innokentij Smoktunovskij, 1964  
Laurence Olivier, 1948  
A&E Biography, *Hamlet* (February 1995) features some archival footage of Sir John Gielgud as Hamlet.

## Historical Sources Worksheet

1. List three things you would like to know about the people who lived in the United States during the Civil War.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Where might you look to find information about the three topics you selected above?

Topic	Source
a. _____	a. _____

b. _____	b. _____
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c. _____	c. _____
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3. Historians classify sources of information as primary or secondary. Primary sources are those created by people who actually saw or participated in an event and recorded that event or their reactions to it. Secondary sources are those created by someone who was not present when that event occurred. Classify the sources of information you listed above as primary or secondary.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Some sources of historical information are viewed as more reliable than others, although all of them may be useful. Factors such as bias, self-interest, and faulty memory affect the reliability of a source. Below are five sources of information about John Wilkes Booth. Rate the reliability of each source on a numerical scale where 1 is very reliable and 5 is very unreliable. Be prepared to explain your ratings.

a. your textbook account of Lincoln's assassination	1 2 3 4 5
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b. an encyclopedia entry on John Wilkes Booth	1 2 3 4 5
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c. John Wilkes Booth's diary	1 2 3 4 5
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d. 1850 census of Baltimore's 5 <sup>th</sup> ward with the Booth family	1 2 3 4 5
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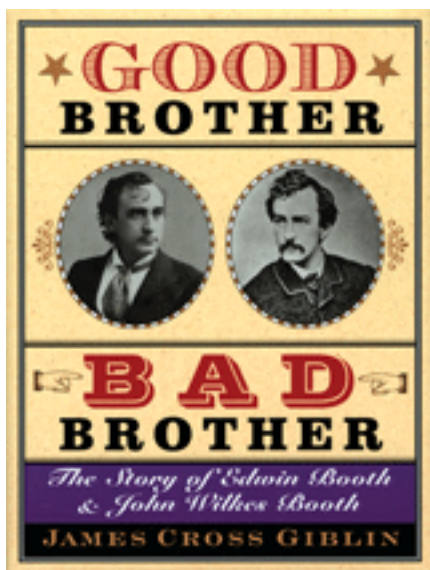
e. The memoir of John Wilkes Booth by his sister Asia, mainly written in 1874, revised until her death in 1888 and published by the daughter of an English friend in 1938	1 2 3 4 5
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5. Reconsider what sources you would use to find information about the Civil War and add three more.

a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_ c. \_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from a worksheet developed by the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408

## A Teacher's Guide



# Good Brother, Bad Brother

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## Lesson Two: Brothers — A Poem in Two Voices

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- [National Curriculum Standards](#)
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### Synopsis

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Students will begin to examine the lives of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth in this lesson. Using a handout of quotations from Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth and an organizational chart, small groups will select from the quotations and organize the words of the two brothers. They will end the activity by using the brothers' words (about each other, the acting profession, the Union, the war, their ambitions, and so on) to create a found poem with two voices. Two group members will read the poem to the class. The lesson is most appropriate for middle school students, grades 6–8, but may be suitable for high school students, grades 9–12.

### National Curriculum Standards

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Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning has created standards and benchmarks for language arts, math, science, geography, economics, and history.

This lesson meets standards and benchmarks for:

**United States History Standard (4th Ed.)** for Era 5 — Civil War and Reconstruction (1850–1877) including benchmark 14: Understand the course and character of the Civil War and its effects on the American people:

Level III (Grades 7–8)

2. Understands how different groups of people shaped the Civil War (e.g., the motives and experiences of Confederate and white and African-American Union soldiers, different perspectives on conscription, the effects of divided loyalties)

## Level IV (Grades 9–12)

4. Understands how the Civil War influenced Northern and Southern society on the home front (e.g., the New York City draft riots of July 1863, the Union's reasons for curbing civil liberties in wartime, Lincoln's suspension of the writ of habeas corpus during the war)

### Time Required

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This activity will take one to two class periods, depending on whether the reading of the handouts and preparation of the organizational chart are completed outside of class.

### Materials Needed

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- Handout, quotations from Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth
- Organizational chart for Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth
- Worksheet for writing down a poem in two voices

**Note to Teachers: Some quotations contain expressions that may be deemed profane or racially offensive. Adapt the duplicating masters to conform with your district and community standards.**

### The Lesson

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#### Lesson-Starter

1. As a class, brainstorm a list of "opponents" who may be from politics, sports, popular culture, or history. Ideas to get students started might be Republicans and Democrats, New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox, Roadrunner and Wiley Coyote, or Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant.
2. Ask students to name opponents who share some things in common or work together, for example, former president George H. W. Bush and former president Bill Clinton worked on tsunami and hurricane aid.
3. Provide the following sample of a poem in two voices to two student volunteers. Give them about five minutes to rehearse it briefly before reading it to the class. (Hamilton is in *italics*, Jefferson is in regular font, and lines said together are in **bold**.) Explain to the class that Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton were founding fathers, are on our currency, and were highly intelligent and patriotic men, but they disagreed on virtually everything imaginable. Political parties past and present have gathered around their different visions for America. Hamilton was killed in a duel when he was only forty-nine; following his death, Thomas Jefferson placed a bust of Hamilton in the entrance hall of his home, Monticello.

# Two Busts in Monticello's Hall

A Poem in Two Voices

Alexander Hamilton

Both

Thomas Jefferson

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## I believe I know the only way for America to prosper

While we have land to labor then, let us never wish to see our citizens occupied at a work-bench, or twirling a distaff.

We must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt.

*Those who do not industrialize become hewers of wood and haulers of water.*

*A national debt, if it is not excessive, will be to us a national blessing.*

## When I look at people, I think man is

A rational animal, endowed by nature with rights and with an innate sense of justice.

The people are in truth the only legitimate proprietors of the soil and government.

*A reasoning rather than a reasonable animal.*

*The people are turbulent and changing, they seldom judge or determine right.*

## No Government Is Perfect

We think experience has proved it safer for the mass of individuals composing the society to reserve to themselves personally the exercise of all rightful powers to which they are competent and to delegate those to which they are not competent to deputies named and removable for unfaithful conduct by themselves immediately.

Were we directed from Washington when to sow, and when to reap, we should soon want bread.

*It will be of little avail to the people that the laws are made by men of their own choice if the laws be so voluminous that they cannot be read, or so incoherent that they cannot be understood.*

*You must first enable the government to control the governed, and in the next place, oblige it to control itself.*

## We Are Opposed in Death As in Life

## Procedures

1. Explain to students that they will be creating a different poem in two voices about two very different brothers. Divide students into groups of 3–4 persons.
2. Announce that each group will be writing a found poem based on the Booth quotations they have read and organized. The poem will be for two voices, that of Edwin Booth and his brother John Wilkes Booth. The lines of the poem will come from entire or partial quotations from the handout.
3. Advise the groups to discuss their charts with each other and come to a consensus about the issues and viewpoints expressed in the Booth brothers' words.
4. Provide the following instructions to each group on how to structure their poem along with the worksheet for the poem for two voices on which to record it.
  - a. Write a title for your poem.
  - b. Begin by writing one phrase both sides can say together that reflects agreement, for example, "He is my brother," or "I am an actor," or "I love my country." Put this in the middle column.
  - c. Look through the sheet of quotations and select 5–8 pairs of quotations that show how the two brothers disagreed. You may use the entire quotation or part of a quotation (as long as it doesn't change the meaning). Put quotations from Edwin in the left column, from John in the right column; break up the quotations with at least one, or perhaps two, phrases both brothers can say together.
  - d. Conclude with one phrase both sides can say in one voice.

## Assessment

The groups' poems and presentations may be graded on a twenty point scale (which may be multiplied by five to convert to one hundred-point scale or for conversion to letter grades) using the following rubric:

	<b>Good - 2 points</b>	<b>Average - 1 point</b>	<b>No - 0 points</b>
The poem is titled			
The opening "Both" phrase reflected agreement			
There are at least 5 and no more than 8 pairs of quotations that reflected disagreement			
The middle "Both" phrase(s) reflected agreement			
The closing "Both" phrase reflected agreement			
The conclusion emphasized or summarized the conflict			
Presenters introduced the poem effectively			
Presenters spoke clearly and audibly			
Presenters read the poem dramatically			
Presenters transitioned without problem between each other			

## Internet Resources

Historical Society of Harford County (Maryland), Tour of Booth Family Historical Sites

<http://www.harfordhistory.net/Booths.htm>

<http://www.harfordhistory.net/boothtour.htm>

<http://www.harfordhistory.net/boothtour2.htm>

Maryland state tourism office at <http://www.maryland.com/>

City of Baltimore's interactive map at <http://maps.baltimorecity.gov/imap/>

Harford County tourism site at <http://www.harfordmd.com/>

HomeTownLocator's links to Bel Air, Maryland, at <http://www.hometownlocator.com/City/Bel-Air-Maryland.cfm>

## Interdisciplinary Activities

### *Geography*

Students may use the travels of the Booth family to improve their geography skills.

- Challenge students to find free maps of Maryland, Baltimore, Harford County, and Bel Air, Maryland. The maps may be conventional paper maps or maps that they found online and can use or print out.
- Instruct students to plot the locations of Booth family sites on a Harford or Baltimore map using site information from the Historical Society of Harford County.
- Coordinate with the computer lab so students can learn how to make a computer-slide show presentation featuring places associated with the Booths of Maryland.

## Worksheets

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Worksheets are also available in PDF format:

[Quotations from Edwin Booth](#)

[Quotations from John Wilkes Booth](#)

[Edwin Booth versus John Wilkes Booth: Good Brother, Bad Brother Organizational Chart](#)

[A Poem for Two Voices Template](#)

## Quotations from Edwin Booth

Whatever calamity may befall me or mine, my country, one and indivisible, has my warmest devotion.

I often wondered at the popularity of my Hamlet with the native chiefs.

I think I am a little quieter.

I don't think John will startle the world, but he is improving fast and looks beautiful onstage.

'Tis a great pity he had not more sense but time will teach him.

I asked him once why he did not join the Confederate Army.

God bless you, my boy! And stick to the flag, Dick, as I intend to do, though far away.

To talk about such old-time nonsense as my own affairs is now too trivial. May the God of Battles guard you.

A daughter, and thank God, all is well with her and her mother.

I saw every time I looked from the window Mary dead, with a white cloth tied around her neck and chin. I saw her distinctly, a dozen times at least.

My conduct hastened her death, and when she heard that I—her all—was lost to all sense of decency and respect for her—her feeble spirit sank.

Although my love was deep-rooted in my soul yet I could never *show* it.

Starring around the country is sad work.

I wish to God I was not an actor. I despise and dread the d—d occupation; all its charms are gone and the stupid reality stands naked before me. I am a performing monkey, nothing more.

He played Pescara, a bloody villain of the deepest red, and he presented him—not underdone but rare enough for the most fastidious beef-eater...I am happy to state that he is full of the true grit...and when time and study round his rough edges he'll bid them all 'stand apart!'

I'll struggle—I'll fight—I'll conquer too, with God's help.

The news is indeed glorious. I am happy in it, and glory in it, although Southern-born. God grant the end, or rather the beginning, is now at hand.

While mourning, in common with all other loyal hearts, the death of the President, I am oppressed by a private woe not to be expressed in words.

You know...how I have labored to establish a name that all my friends would be proud of; how I have always toiled for the comfort and welfare of my family—and how loyal I have been from the first of this damned rebellion.

You must feel deeply the agony I bear in thus being blasted in all my hopes by a villain who seemed so loveable and in whom all his family found a source of joy in his boyish and confiding nature.

At last the terrible end is known—fearful as it is, it is not withstanding a blessed relief.

My Fellow Citizens, It has pleased God to lay at the door of my afflicted family the lifeblood of our great, good, and martyred President. Prostrated to the very earth by this dreadful event, I am yet but too sensible that other mourners fill the land. To them, to you, one and all, go forth our deep, unutterable sympathy; our abhorrence and detestation for this most foul and atrocious of crimes. For my mother and sisters, for my remaining brothers and my own poor self, there is nothing to be said except that we are thus placed without any power of our own. For our present position we are not responsible. For the future—alas, I shall struggle on in my retirement bearing a heavy heart, an oppressed memory, and a wounded name.

I have huge debts to pay, a family to care for, and a love for the grand and beautiful in art to gratify. Hence my sudden resolve to abandon the dreary, aching gloom of my little red room where I have sat so long chewing my heart in solitude, for the excitement of the only trade for which God has fitted me.

At the earnest solicitation of my mother, I write to ask you if you think the time is yet arrived for her to have the remains of her unhappy son. If I am premature in this I hope you will understand the motive which activates me, arising purely from a sense of duty to assuage, if possible, the anguish of an aged mother. If at your convenience you will acquaint me when and how I should proceed in this matter, you will relieve her sorrow-stricken heart and bind me ever.

Put it on the fire with the others....That's all, we'll go now.

It's a terrible blow indeed but not the worst that I have felt. The loss of money (so long as God grants me the health to work) does not disturb me much; but the fear of being misjudged by my creditors and the disappointment in not being able to establish the true Drama in New York—those are very painful reflections.

*If your lips you'd keep from slips,  
Of these five things beware:  
Of whom you speak,  
To whom you speak,  
And how, and when and where.*

How often, Oh! How often have I imagined the delights of a collegiate education... What a world of never-ending interest lies open to the master of languages!... I have suffered much from the lack of that which my father could easily have given in my youth, that I am all the more anxious you shall escape my punishment in that respect; that you may not, like me, dream of those advantages others enjoy through any lack of opportunity or neglect of mine. Therefore, learn to love your Latin, your French, and your English grammar; standing firmly and securely on them, you'll have a solid foothold in the field of literature.

I can give you very little information regarding my brother John. I seldom saw him since his early boyhood in Baltimore.... We regarded him as a good-hearted, harmless, though wild-brained boy, and used to laugh at his patriotic faith whenever secession was discussed. That he was insane on that one point, no one who knew him well can doubt. When I told him that I had voted

for Lincoln's re-election, he expressed deep regret, and declared his belief that Lincoln would be made King of America; and this, I believe, drove him beyond the limits of reason. . . .

Knowing my sentiments, he avoided me, rarely visiting my house, except to see his mother, when political topics were not touched upon, at least in my presence. He was of a gentle, loving disposition, very boyish and full of fun—his mother's darling—and his deed and death crushed her spirit. He possessed rare dramatic talent and would have made a brilliant mark in the theatrical world. This is positively all that I know about him, having left him a mere schoolboy when I went with my father to California in 1852. On my return in '56 we were separated by professional engagements, which kept him mostly in the South, while I was employed in the Eastern and Northern states.

I do not believe any of the wild, romantic stories published in the papers concerning him; but of course he may have been engaged in political matters of which I knew nothing. All his theatrical friends speak of him as a poor, crazy boy, and such his family thought of him.

I am sorry I can afford you no further light on the subject.

Very truly yours, Edwin Booth.

Memories are hard on one in the lonely hours.

Let us drink from this loving cup, this souvenir of long ago, my father's flagon. Let us now, beneath his portrait, drink to the Players' perpetual prosperity.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for your great kindness. I hope this is not the last time I shall have the honor of appearing before you. . . . I hope that my health and strength may be improved so that I can serve you better, and I shall always try to deserve the favor you have shown me.

What I want now is to stay in one place with things I like around me. . . . Here is my bed, and here is the fire, and here are my books, and here you come to see me. I suppose I shall wear out here.

How are you yourself, old fellow?

Quotation from the book, *Good Brother, Bad Brother*

To show his support for his war-torn homeland, Edwin obtained an American flag and hung it like a canopy over Mary's bed, thus making sure in his own way that their child would be born under the Stars and Stripes.

## Quotations from John Wilkes Booth

I must have fame, fame, fame!

Madame I am Pondofio Pet—Pedofio Pat—Pantuchio Ped—Dammit! Who am I?

I don't know, and I don't care!

He was a brave old man; his heart must have broken when he felt himself deserted.

You all feel the fire now raging in the nation's heart. It is a fire lighted and fanned by Northern fanaticism. A fire which naught but blood & justice can extinguish. I tell you the Abolitionist doctrine is the fire which, if allowed to rage, will consume the house and crush us all beneath its ruins...Fierce Civil War will follow. And then, what then? *Why God alone can tell the rest.*

I promised Mother I would keep out of the quarrel, if possible, and am sorry that I said so.

Is this not a democratic city?

My goose does indeed hang high (long may she wave), I have picked up on an average this season over \$650 per week. My first week here paid me near \$900. And this week has opened even better.

I wish the President and the whole damned government would go to hell.

Never, if you value your life, never speak in that way again of a man and a cause I hold sacred!

If it were not for mother I would not enter Edwin's house. But she will leave there if I cannot be welcomed, and I do not want her to be unhappy because of me.

I would never darken Clarke's door, but for you.

It is the unwise move this country has yet made. The suave pressing of hordes of ignorant foreigners, buying up citizens before they land, to swell their armies. The time will come...when the braggart North will groan at not being able to swear they fought the South man to man. If the North conquers us it will be by numbers only, not by native grit, not pluck, and not by devotion!

So help me Holy God! My soul, life, and possessions are for the South.

I have only an army to give; my brains are worth twenty men, my money worth a hundred. I have free pass everywhere. My profession, my name is my passport. My beloved precious money—oh, never beloved till now!—is the means, one of the means, by which I serve the South.

What are actors, anyway? Mummies of the quality of skimmed milk. They know little, think less, and understand next to nothing.

In 1865, when Lincoln shall be king...No, by God's mercy, never that! This man's appearance, his pedigree, his coarse low jokes and anecdotes, his vulgar similes, and his policy are a disgrace to the seat he holds. Other brains rule the country. He is made the tool of the North to crush out, or try to crush out, slavery by robbery, rape, slaughter, and bought armies. He is Bonaparte in

one great move, that is, by overturning this blind Republic and making himself a king. This man's reelection, I tell you will be a reign!...You'll see, you'll see, that reelection means succession. His kin and friends are in every place of office already.

This country was formed for the *white* and not the black man. I have lived among it most of my life and have seen *less* harsh treatment from Master to Slave than I have beheld in the north from father to son.

My love (as things stand today) is for the South alone. Nor do I deem it a dishonor in attempting to make for her a prisoner of this man, to whom she owes so much of misery.

A Confederate doing duty *upon his own responsibility*. J. Wilkes Booth

Dearest beloved Mother...I have always endeavored to be a good and dutiful son. And even now would wish to die sooner than give you pain. But dearest Mother, though I owe you all, *there* is another duty. A noble duty for the sake of liberty and humanity due my Country. For four years I have lived a *slave* in the north (a favored slave it's true, but no less hateful to me on that account). Not daring to express my thoughts or sentiments, even in my own home. Constantly hearing every principle, dear to my heart, denounced as treasonable....Should the last bolt strike your son, dear Mother, bear it patiently. And think at the best life is but short, and *not at all times happy*. My Brothers and Sisters (Heaven protect them) will add my love and duty to their own, and watch you with care and kindness, till we meet again. And if *that happiness* does not come to us on earth, then may, O May it be with God. Come weal or woe, with never ending love and devotion, you will find me your affectionate son. John.

Lock this in your safe for me...let me *see* you lock it up.

What an excellent chance I had to kill the President, if I had wished, on inauguration day!

That means nigger citizenship. Now, by God, I'll put him through. That is the last speech he will ever make.

Our cause being almost lost, something decisive & great must be done!

*Sic semper tyrannis!* [Translation: Thus always to tyrants!]

Dearest Mother, I only drop you these few lines to let you know I am well...Excuse brevity; am in haste. With best love to you all, I am your affectionate son ever.

After being hunted like a dog through swamps, woods, and last night being chased by gun boats till I was forced to return wet, cold and starving, with every man's hand against me, I am here in despair. And why? For doing what Brutus was honored for, what made Tell a Hero. And yet I for striking down a greater tyrant that they ever knew am looked upon as a common cutthroat....I hoped for no gain. I knew no private wrong. I struck for my country and that alone....Yet now behold the cold hand they extend me.... So ends all. For my country I have given up all that makes life sweet and Holy, brought misery on my family, and I am sure there is no pardon in Heaven for me since man condemns me so. Tonight I will once more try the river with intent to cross....I do not repent the blow I struck. I may before God but not to man....Who, who can read his fate? God's will be done. I have too great a soul to die like a criminal. Oh may He, may He spare me that and let me die bravely.

Dear sir, Forgive me, but I have some little pride. I hate to blame you for your want of hospitality: you know your own affairs. I was sick and tired, with a broken leg, in need of medical advice. I would not have turned a dog from my door in such a condition. However, you were kind enough to give me something to eat, for which I not only thank you, but on account of the reluctant manner in which it was bestowed, I feel bound to pay for it...Be kind enough to accept the enclosed two dollars and a half (though hard to spare) for what we have received.  
Yours respectfully, The Stranger.

Captain, give me a chance. Draw off your men and I'll fight them singly. Give a lame man a show.

Tell...Mother...I died...for my country.

Let me die here.

Useless, useless.

**Edwin Booth vs. John Wilkes Booth: *Good Brother, Bad Brother*  
Organizational Chart**

<b>How did each:</b>	<b>Edwin Booth</b>	<b>John Wilkes Booth</b>
<b>view the other?</b>		
<b>feel about their mother and family?</b>		
<b>feel about the South?</b>		
<b>feel about the North?</b>		
<b>feel about Lincoln?</b>		
<b>feel about acting?</b>		
<b>feel about duty?</b>		
<b>feel about death?</b>		
<b>Other:</b>		

Names of Group Members:

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**A Poem for Two Voices**

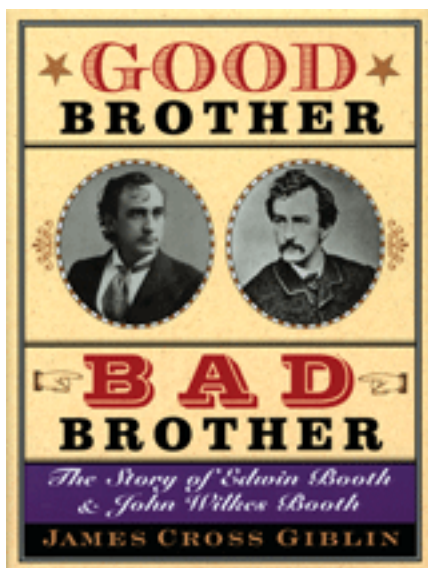
Edwin Booth

Both

John Wilkes Booth

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## A Teacher's Guide



# Good Brother, Bad Brother

by James Cross Giblin

## Lesson Three: Good Brother

- [Synopsis](#)
- [National Curriculum Standards](#)
- [Time Required](#)
- [Materials Needed](#)
- [The Lesson](#)

## Synopsis

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In this lesson, students will begin to examine how historians and biographers work to create a full, balanced account of people of the past, in this case focusing on the problem of the "good brother" or any hero. Students will begin by talking about "what's in a name," and brainstorming the characteristics of the stereotypical "good brother." The class will follow up with research in *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth*, along with other sources, to determine how Edwin Booth compares with the stereotype of a "good brother" and express their findings in a choice of culminating written activities. The lesson is most appropriate for middle school students, grades 6–8, but may be suitable for high school students, grades 9–12.

## National Curriculum Standards

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Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning has created standards and benchmarks for language arts, math, science, geography, economics, and history. This lesson meets standards and benchmarks for:

**United States History Standard (4th Ed.)** for Era 5 — Civil War and Reconstruction (1850–1877) including benchmark 14: Understand the course and character of the Civil War and its effects on the American people:

Level III (Grades 7–8)

2. Understands how different groups of people shaped the Civil War (e.g., the motives and experiences of Confederate and white and African American Union soldiers, different perspectives on conscription, the effects of divided loyalties)

Level IV (Grades 9–12)

4. Understands how the Civil War influenced Northern and Southern society on the home front (e.g., the New York City draft riots of July 1863, the Union's reasons for curbing civil liberties in wartime, Lincoln's suspension of the writ of habeas corpus during the war)

**Historical Understanding (4th Ed.)** Standard 2: Understands the historical perspective including benchmark:

Level III (Grades 7–8)

1. Understands that specific individuals and the values those individuals held had an impact on history

Level IV (Grades 9–12)

11. Knows how to perceive past events with historical empathy

12. Knows how to evaluate the credibility and authenticity of historical sources

13. Evaluates the validity and credibility of different historical interpretations

14. Uses historical maps to understand the relationship between historical events and geography

**Theatre Standard (4th Ed.)**, Standard 6: Understands the context in which theatre, film, television and electronic media are performed today as well as in the past

Level III (Grades 7–8)

4. Knows ways in which theatre reflects a culture

Level IV (Grades 9–12)

3. Understands similarities and differences among the lives, works, and influence of representative theatre artists in various cultures and historical periods

## Time Required

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This lesson will probably take a half to a full class period, more if reading and written assignments are not completed outside of class.

## Materials Needed

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- *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth*

# The Lesson

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## Lesson-Starter

1. Some of the greatest moments in drama occur when an innocent person fears that after death, he or she will be considered a villain. Hamlet worries, "O' God, Horatio, what a wounded name, things standing thus unknown, shall I leave behind me!" (*Hamlet*, V. ii.344-345.) John Proctor refuses to hand over his confession to witchcraft to save himself from the gallows at the end of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, Act IV. Proctor declares, "God sees my name; God knows how black my sins are! It is enough . . . it is my name! . . . I cannot have another in my life! . . . How may I live without my name? I have given you my soul; leave me my name!" To return to Shakespeare, in this case, *Romeo and Juliet*, II.ii.30–57, pose Juliet's question to your students: "What's in a name?"
2. After your students have had a chance to discuss what is important about a name, share with them the following passage written by Edwin Booth: "You know . . . how I have labored to establish a name that all my friends would be proud of . . ." (Edwin Booth to Adam Badeau, April 1865, p. 4). After Lincoln's assassination by John Wilkes Booth, Edwin Booth worked hard to mend his name, a name that he lent to his New York City theater as well as the home he called Boothden. It was not always easy, as when he visited Boothbay Harbor, Maine, and was told it had *not* been named after "that damned scoundrel who killed Lincoln" (p. 210).
3. Point out the book's title, *Good Brother, Bad Brother*. Brainstorm a list of characteristics of the stereotypical "good brother," and record them on a poster or flip-chart so that students can refer to the list.

## Procedures

1. On p. 221 of *Good Brother, Bad Brother*, Giblin points out, "Real life is more complicated than fiction, however. Edwin Booth, especially in his hard-drinking younger years, did not always fit the stereotype of the 'good brother.'"
2. Direct students to read the book and take notes about what Edwin says about himself and what eyewitnesses say about him. Ask them to note events in his life that support or contradict the stereotype of a "good brother." Students may also conduct outside research, including examining additional information on the Internet (such as listening to Edwin reciting from *Othello*, viewing the Shakespeare statue in Central Park, and visiting the Players Club website) mentioned in the Internet Resources section (following the Assessment rubric.)
3. As a final activity, students will select one of the following written assignments and complete it:
  - a. Write an opinion essay evaluating whether, on balance, Edwin fits the stereotypical "good brother" model and provide examples of events or quotations, from text or witnesses, to support the evaluation.

b. Write a biopoem (a pattern poem) in the following style:

Style One — Ten Lines

First name

Four adjectives or descriptive characteristics

Family relationship (sibling/child of/ spouse/parent of . . . )

Lover of (something or someone the person cares deeply about)

Who fears (something or someone the person fears)

Who needs

Who gives

Who would like to see/experience (give two or three examples of things this person would like to see or do)

Resident of

Last name

c. Create a series of diary entries Edwin would have written in April 1865, had he kept a diary, touching on issues including what a "good brother" is; what the name Booth means to him; his duties in his family as son, father, and brother; and what went through his mind and heart when his valet burst into his bedroom saying, "Mr. Booth, President Lincoln has been shot! And — oh, Mr. Booth — they say your brother John has done it!"

d. "Transcribe" an "interview" you've conducted with Edwin Booth focusing on his personal character and whether he was a "good brother". Use some questions patterned after those developed by Bernard Pivot and used by James Lipton of *Inside the Actors Studio* in the "interview." An adapted list of Lipton's questions includes:

- What is your favorite word?
- What is your least favorite word?
- What turns you on creatively, spiritually or emotionally?
- What turns you off?
- What is your favorite exclamation?
- What sound or noise do you love?
- What sound or noise do you hate?
- What profession other than your own would you like to attempt?
- What profession would you not like to do?
- If Heaven exists, what would you like to hear God say when you arrive at the Pearly Gates?

## Assessment

The student's written assignment may be graded on a twenty-five point scale (which may be multiplied by four to convert to one hundred-point scale or for conversion to letter grades) using the following rubric:

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Not Satisfactory</b>	<b>No Work</b>
<b>Historical Research and Accuracy (5)</b>	<b>(5)</b> Written assignment demonstrated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• extensive research</li> <li>• many details</li> <li>• no factual errors or anachronisms</li> </ul>	<b>(4)</b> Written assignment demonstrated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complete research</li> <li>• some details</li> <li>• no factual errors or anachronisms</li> </ul>	<b>(3-2)</b> Written assignment showed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• minimal research</li> <li>• generalized information</li> <li>• some errors</li> </ul>	<b>(1)</b> Written assignment showed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• little or no research</li> <li>• no new information</li> <li>• many factual errors</li> </ul>	<b>0</b>
<b>Technical Writing Skills (10)</b>	<b>(10)</b> Written assignment showed excellent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compositional structure</li> <li>• sentence structure and variety</li> <li>• vocabulary use</li> <li>• grammar, spelling, punctuation</li> </ul>	<b>(9-8)</b> Written assignment showed good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compositional structure</li> <li>• sentence structure and variety</li> <li>• vocabulary use</li> <li>• grammar, spelling, punctuation</li> </ul>	<b>(7-5)</b> Written assignment showed adequate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compositional structure</li> <li>• sentence structure and variety</li> <li>• vocabulary use</li> <li>• grammar, spelling, punctuation</li> </ul>	<b>(4-1)</b> Written assignment showed inadequate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compositional structure</li> <li>• sentence structure and variety</li> <li>• vocabulary use</li> <li>• grammar, spelling, punctuation</li> </ul>	<b>0</b>
<b>Felicity of style and presentation (10)</b>	<b>(10)</b> Composition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engaged reader</li> <li>• showed high originality</li> <li>• showed empathy with historical figures</li> </ul>	<b>(9-8)</b> Composition was above average in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engaging reader</li> <li>• originality</li> <li>• showing empathy with historical figures</li> </ul>	<b>(7-5)</b> Composition was adequate in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• holding reader interest</li> <li>• originality</li> <li>• showing empathy with historical figures</li> </ul>	<b>(4-1)</b> Composition demonstrated attempt to fulfill assignment with little or no success	<b>0</b>

## Internet Resources

<http://www.theplayersnyc.org/> The Players Club Web site

[http://search.eb.com/shakespeare/ind\\_av.html](http://search.eb.com/shakespeare/ind_av.html)

Edwin Booth reading a passage from *Othello* I.iii.162–168 (28 seconds)

<http://www.centralparknyc.org/virtualpark/southend/williamshakespeare>

In 1864, actor Edwin Booth (himself memorialized in bronze in Gramercy Park) laid the foundation for a statue of The Bard of Avon in honor of his 300th birthday. The Civil War delayed construction of the statue, but it finally was installed in 1870. Booth's fellow actor James McKay posed as Shakespeare for sculptor John Quincy Adams Ward. The statue is located at the southern end of the Literary Walk in the Mall, west of West Sixty-sixth Street.

1880 Census of New York City, with Edwin, second wife Mary, and daughter Edwina.

[http://www.rootdig.com/1880census/1880\\_edwin\\_booth.html](http://www.rootdig.com/1880census/1880_edwin_booth.html)

*New York Times*, May 21, 1906, Account of Players Club fundraising for the Edwin Booth Memorial in Gramercy Park.

<http://www.twainquotes.com/19060521.html>

Times Square Alliance, Times Square: Then and Now: Theatre

[http://www.timessquarenyc.org/then\\_now/then\\_now\\_theatre\\_notable.html](http://www.timessquarenyc.org/then_now/then_now_theatre_notable.html)

Find A Grave Cemetery Records

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=110&pt=Edwin%20Booth>

## Interdisciplinary Activities

### *Geography*

1. The Booths were globetrotters. Students could plot all the places mentioned in the *Good Brother, Bad Brother* on a world and U.S. map; a related art activity would be to make a passport for Edwin and create "stamps" for places he visited overseas.
2. The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society offers tours of Edwin Booth's New York City from time to time. Create a tour pamphlet for an "Edwin Booth tour of New York City" by locating past and present locations mentioned in the book, listing sites and illustrating what they look like now, and mapping their locations. (See Internet Resources for ideas.)
3. Transportation and communication had long been at the mercy of geography, but much changed over Edwin Booth's lifetime. How did people overcome the obstacles of poor roads (see the picture of Tenth Street in Washington, D.C., in front of Ford's Theatre on p. 116), heavy snow (pp. 88–89), rivers, streams, and mountains? Consider the impact of bridges, ferries, and sailing boats large and small on travel. How did the lack of the Panama Canal make sailing from the east coast of the United States to the west coast more difficult? What impact do you see on the Booth's lives with the increase in railroad lines, especially the transcontinental railroad? How does the ability to send cables and

telegrams change their lives?

## Drama

Teachers of drama classes may ask their students to discuss or research and write their findings about some aspects of acting highlighted in *Good Brother, Bad Brother*.

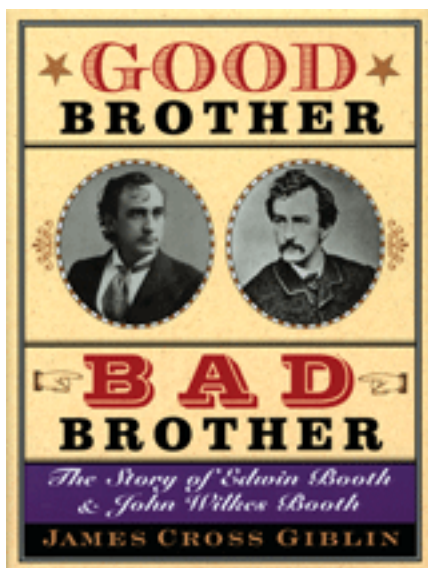
1. Griblin recounts on p. 226 in his Bibliography and Source Notes that a youthful guide at Ford's Theatre described John Wilkes Booth as "the Brad Pitt of his day." After reading about Edwin Booth and his acting style, decide which contemporary performer you would compare Edwin to, and explain why. In his lifetime, Edwin both learned from his father (in the "Where are your spurs?" episode on p. 21) and reacted against it (p. 48). Select another parent-child pair of performers and examine the degree that the child has incorporated or disassociated himself or herself stylistically from the parent. Edwin Booth was also the brother of actors — Junius, Jr. and, the more famous actor, John. Examine the comments on p. 73 and decide if the brothers' acting styles were predetermined by their differing personalities. Did Edwin's experiences of performing for people who didn't speak English (in Hawaii and Germany) contribute to his development of using his physical presence to build the character, as much as the way he delivered lines? Was one brother a better actor than the other, or just different? What style of acting appeals to you most as a viewer? What style of acting do you think would be your style if you were an actor?

2. The reputation of theaters was poor at the time Junius, Jr., and Edwin were touring the country. Edwin's first performance is at the Boston Museum, "so named because some city residents, influenced by Puritan ideas, were reluctant to enter a building called a theater" (p. 19) When Lincoln was assassinated in a theater, many in the public reverted to their low opinion of the stage (see p. 134). Read *Good Brother, Bad Brother* and focus on life in the early nineteenth-century theater as described in Chapters 3–6, and the late nineteenth century as described in Chapters 17–21. Compare and contrast the business of running a theater and being an actor between the nineteenth century and the present.

3. Edwin Booth was a celebrity in his time and received public acclaim and silver wreaths, but he also experienced disdain and a nearly-fatal episode with a stalker (Chapter 19). What similarities do you see in the life of Edwin Booth, a famous actor in his time, with that of celebrities today? What differences?

4. How did Edwin Booth, through his acting and his efforts at the Booth Theater and the Players Club, help to transform acting from "playing" into a profession?

## A Teacher's Guide



# Good Brother, Bad Brother

by James Cross Giblin

## Lesson Four: Bad Brother

- [Synopsis](#)
- [National Curriculum Standards](#)
- [Time Required](#)
- [Materials Needed](#)
- [The Lesson](#)
- [Worksheets](#)

## Synopsis

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In this lesson, students will deal with the historian's dilemma of how to write about people in the past who committed wicked deeds. Giblin acknowledges that "John wasn't just any villain. He was the first in a long line of men and women who, for various reasons, killed or tried to kill a president of the United States. And his target was Abraham Lincoln, who would become arguably America's most beloved president. No wonder John Wilkes Booth is still talked about, and still detested, today." In this lesson, students will analyze a well-known cartoon, "Satan Tempting Booth to the Murder of the President," on p. 115 of *Good Brother, Bad Brother*. Then they will read *Good Brother, Bad Brother* to try to determine when and how John Wilkes Booth, a man "who seemed so loveable and in whom all his family found a source of joy in his boyish and confiding nature," turned into "a villain" (Edwin Booth, quoted on p. 5). This lesson is most appropriate for middle school students, grades 6–8, but may be suitable for high school students, grades 9–12.

## National Curriculum Standards

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Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning has created standards and benchmarks for language arts, math, science, geography, economics, and history. This lesson meets standards and benchmarks for:

**United States History Standard (4th Ed.)** for Era 5 — Civil War and Reconstruction (1850–1877) including benchmark 14, Understand the course and character of the Civil War and its effects on the American people:

Level III (Grades 7–8)

2. Understands how different groups of people shaped the Civil War (e.g., the motives and experiences of Confederate and white and African American Union soldiers, different perspectives on conscription, the effects of divided loyalties)

Level IV (Grades 9–12)

4. Understands how the Civil War influenced Northern and Southern society on the home front (e.g., the New York City draft riots of July 1863, the Union's reasons for curbing civil liberties in wartime, Lincoln's suspension of the writ of habeas corpus during the war)

**Historical Understanding (4th Ed.)** Standard 2: Understands the historical perspective including benchmark:

Level III (Grades 7–8)

1. Understands that specific individuals and the values those individuals held had an impact on history

Level IV (Grades 9–12)

8. Understands how past events are affected by the irrational (e.g., the assassination of John F. Kennedy or Archduke Ferdinand) and the accidental (e.g., the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus)

11. Knows how to perceive past events with historical empathy

12. Knows how to evaluate the credibility and authenticity of historical sources

13. Evaluates the validity and credibility of different historical interpretations

14. Uses historical maps to understand the relationship between historical events and geography

**Theatre Standard (4th Ed.)**, Standard 6: Understands the context in which theatre, film, television and electronic media are performed today as well as in the past

Level III (Grades 7–8)

4. Knows ways in which theatre reflects a culture

Level IV (Grades 9–12)

3. Understands similarities and differences among the lives, works, and influences of representative theatre artists in various cultures and historical periods

## Time Required

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This lesson will probably take a half to a full class period, more if reading and writing assignments are not completed outside of class.

## Materials Needed

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- *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth*
- Copy of cartoon, found on p. 115 of *Good Brother, Bad Brother*, in this guide, or online at the Library of Congress, "Satan Tempting Booth to the Murder of the President," lithograph by John L. Magee, Philadelphia, 1865. Item # LC-USZ62-8933 [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?pp/PPALL:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(cph+3a53167\)\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?pp/PPALL:@field(NUMBER+@band(cph+3a53167)))
- Cartoon Analysis Worksheet
- Reader's Guide to *Good Brother, Bad Brother*

# The Lesson

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## Lesson-Starter

1. Ask students to look at the cartoon of John Wilkes Booth at Ford's Theatre for two minutes. They may wish to use the first minute or so to focus on one quarter of the image at a time, covering the rest from their view with their hands or paper; the remainder of the time they may want to look at the caption and take in the entirety of the image. When the time is up, ask students to put away or turn over the cartoon and then jot down their first impressions of the image in Step 1, Visuals on the Cartoon Analysis Worksheet. Ask students to share their findings of people, objects, and actions. Students may ask what Satan is holding. It is a peacock feather, a symbol of excessive pride, associated with sorcery but also immortality.
2. Next, allow students to complete the remainder of the worksheet with the cartoon in front of them. Discuss their answers and any questions they may have about the cartoon.

## Procedures

1. On p. 221 of *Good Brother, Bad Brother*, Giblin writes, "Real life is more complicated than fiction, however . . . Nor did John as a young actor and bon vivant deserve the label bad brother. Reckless and rambunctious, yes, but not necessarily evil. All that was forgotten, though, in light of John's final murderous act — the act that ensured he would be remembered only as the killer of Lincoln." Or, in the words uttered by John Wilkes Booth in the role of Marc Anthony, "The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones." (*Julius Caesar*, III.ii.75–76.)
2. Direct students to read *Good Brother, Bad Brother* and take notes on the Reader's Guide worksheet (following Evaluation).
3. As a culminating activity, assign students to conduct additional research and compose one of the following written assignments:
  - Write an essay explaining whether knowing that the most notorious assassin in U.S. history was at times a good son, brother, and uncle makes him more or less frightening, approachable, interesting, or understandable — and explain why

- Compose a biopoem (a pattern poem) in the following style:  
 Style Two — Seventeen Lines; Title is the person's name  
 I am (two adjectives or descriptive characteristics)  
 I wonder (a matter this person is curious about)  
 I hear (something real or imaginary)  
 I see (something real or imaginary)  
 I want  
 I am (repeat first line)  
 I pretend  
 I feel (something real or imaginary)  
 I touch (something real or imaginary)  
 I worry  
 I am (repeat first line)  
 I understand  
 I say  
 I dream (some real or imaginary goal)  
 I try  
 I hope  
 I am (repeat first line)

- Invent and "document" the dialogue between Abraham Lincoln and John Wilkes Booth if they had met backstage after Booth's November 9, 1863, performance of *The Marble Heart*.

- Prepare a letter written by John Wilkes Booth to his older brother, Edwin, to be opened in the event of his death, as if he'd actually written it.

- "Transcribe" an "interview" you've conducted with Edwin Booth focusing on his personal character and whether he was a "good brother"; use with some questions patterned after those developed by Bernard Pivot and used by James Lipton of *Inside the Actors Studio* (see Lesson 3 for questions).

## Assessment

The student's written assignment may be graded on a twenty-five point scale (which may be multiplied by four to convert to one hundred-point scale or for conversion to letter grades) using the following rubric:

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>
<b>Historical Issues (15 points)</b>	<p><b>(15–14 points)</b></p> <p>Included ten or more guidelines</p> <p>Addressed both accuracy and fairness thoroughly</p> <p>Showed great insight into the process of writing history</p>	<p><b>(13–12 points)</b></p> <p>Included ten guidelines</p> <p>Addressed both accuracy and fairness in a balanced manner</p> <p>Showed insight into the process of writing history</p>	<p><b>(11–6 points)</b></p> <p>Included ten guidelines but some are the same only reworded, or unclear</p> <p>Addressed both accuracy and fairness but unevenly, concentrating on one</p> <p>Showed some insight into the process of writing history</p>	<p><b>(5–1 points)</b></p> <p>Included less than ten guidelines</p> <p>Addressed only fairness or only accuracy OR prepared guidelines with some merit but without a clear relationship to the issues of fairness or accuracy</p> <p>Understood problems in writing history to a very limited degree</p>	<p><b>(0)</b></p> <p>Did not prepare a list of guidelines</p>
<b>Written Components (10 points)</b>	<p><b>(10–9 points)</b></p> <p>Wrote in complete sentences</p> <p>Followed all spelling, punctuation, and grammar conventions; error-free</p>	<p><b>(8 points)</b></p> <p>Wrote in complete sentences</p> <p>Followed all spelling, punctuation, and grammar conventions; one or two errors</p>	<p><b>(7–6 points)</b></p> <p>Wrote in complete sentences</p> <p>Followed most spelling, punctuation, and grammar conventions; several errors</p>	<p><b>(5–1 points)</b></p> <p>Generally wrote in complete sentences</p> <p>Had numerous problems with spelling, punctuation, and/or grammar conventions</p>	<p><b>(0)</b></p> <p>Did not prepare the assignment</p>

## Internet Resources

Smithsonian Associates, CivilWarStudies.org, John Wilkes Booth Escape Route  
<http://civilwarstudies.org/OnlinePrograms/Thumbnails/Boothtour/start.htm>

District of Columbia Cultural Tourism, Civil War to Civil Rights Trail with map  
[http://www.culturaltourismdc.org/information2546/information\\_show.htm?doc\\_id=71433](http://www.culturaltourismdc.org/information2546/information_show.htm?doc_id=71433)

## Interdisciplinary Activities

### Geography

1. Explain that Wilkes-Barré, Pennsylvania is named, in part, for John Wilkes, an English member of Parliament who was considered to be a powerful voice for democracy in government (along with Major Isaac Barré, an English hero of the French and Indian War and later a member of Parliament). Ask students to locate the town on a map. In 1838, English actor Junius Brutus Booth, Sr., named his son, John Wilkes Booth, after John Wilkes, who died in 1797 and was a distant relative. Ask students how significant Wilkes must have been if children and towns were named for him.
2. Students can sharpen geography skills by assuming the role of investigators trying to capture John Wilkes Booth and his co-conspirators. Using information in the book and from additional research, students should pinpoint locations and trace the path of John Wilkes Booth and the co-conspirators in Washington, D.C., using separate colors for Booth, Davey Herold, George Atzerodt, and Lewis Powell. They should continue to follow Booth and Herold's flight to Garrett's barn on regional maps, marking times and dates. A world map will be necessary to track John Surratt.

### Drama

1. Examine the comments on p. 73 of *Good Brother, Bad Brother* and decide if the Booth brothers' acting styles were predetermined by their differing personalities. Was one a better actor than the other, or just different? What style of acting appeals to you most as a viewer? What style of acting do you think would be your style if you were an actor? Aside from Brad Pitt, what other modern actor do you think matches the style of John Wilkes Booth most closely, based on the descriptions of his acting. Why?
2. In *Good Brother, Bad Brother*, a number of critical reviews of John Wilkes Booth's acting are included, for example on p. 70. It was noted that he "ignored the fundamental principal of all vocal study and exercise: that the chest, and not the throat or the mouth, should supply the sound necessary for singing or speaking." The outcome of this abuse is recounted in Chapter 10. What conditions, in travel and in theater, created this problem? Is it still a problem for modern actors?
3. Despite the increasingly bitter political differences between John and his brothers Edwin and Junius, Jr., he embraced the idea of a benefit performance to erect a statue of William Shakespeare in Central Park. Read about this joint effort on pp. 97-101. Consider other causes that have brought artists of differing political persuasion together, such as the concerts for 9-11, Hurricane Katrina families, and encouraging young voters to exercise their right to vote.

4. Examples in the book show how John Wilkes Booth handled flubbing his lines (p. 51), wardrobe failure (p. 70), fame, and breathless women at the stage door. Do these details make him more accessible as a human being? Kate Reynolds blamed his lack of discipline on being the spoiled child of the family and "gaining position by flashes of genius, but the necessity of ordinary study had not been borne in on him." How do you think others in the theater profession felt about the kind of person to whom all things came with little work, even if he was gifted?

## Worksheets

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["Satan Tempting Booth to the Murder of the President" cartoon](#)

[Cartoon Analysis Worksheet](#)

[Reader's Guide for \*Good Brother, Bad Brother\*](#)



The Library of Congress

## Cartoon Analysis Worksheet

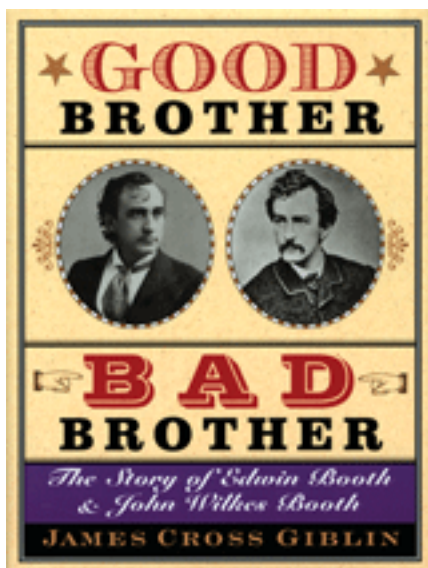
	<b>Visuals</b>	<b>Words (not all cartoons include words)</b>
Step One	1. List the objects or people you see in the cartoon.	1. Identify the cartoon caption and/or title.  2. Locate three words or phrases used by the cartoonist to identify objects or people within the cartoon.  3. Record any important dates or numbers that appear in the cartoon.
Step Two	2. Which of the objects on your list are symbols?  3. What do you think each symbol means?	4. Which words or phrases in the cartoon appear to be the most significant? Why do you think so?  5. List adjectives that describe the emotions portrayed in the cartoon.
Step Three	A. Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.  B. Explain how the words in the cartoon clarify the symbols.  C. Explain the message of the cartoon.  D. What special interest groups would agree/disagree with the cartoon's message? Why?	

Developed by the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., 20408

## Reader's Guide for *Good Brother, Bad Brother*

1. Write examples, including page numbers, of when John Wilkes Booth was a "good brother" to his brothers, sisters, or sister-in-law, Mary Devlin Booth.
2. Write examples, including page numbers, of when John Wilkes Booth was a "bad brother" either to his brothers, sisters, or brother-in-law, John Clarke.
3. Write examples, including page numbers, of when John Wilkes Booth was a "good son" to his mother, Mary Ann Booth.
4. Write examples, including page numbers, of when John Wilkes Booth was a "bad son" to his mother, Mary Ann Booth.
5. How do you explain John Wilkes Booth's behavior in helping to get a statue of William Shakespeare erected in New York City (in the North, which he hated, pp. 97–99) and assisting with the rescue of Adam Badeau (Edwin's wounded Union Army friend) during the Draft Riots (p. 84)?
6. Focusing in particular on pp. 53–58, 60–63, 82–86, 96–97, 101–9, 110–124, and 136–149, what did John Wilkes Booth believe about:
  - John Brown and abolitionists?
  - the North's superior numbers and use of immigrant Irishmen in the Union Army?
  - not fighting for the South?
  - treason laws in the North?
  - acting as a spy and blockade runner?
  - Lincoln and his legitimacy as president?
  - the North's superior numbers and collapse of prisoner-of-war exchanges?
  - African-American slavery?
  - extending citizenship and the vote to African Americans?
  - the ethics of kidnapping Lincoln?
  - the ethics of killing top officials of the United States government, including Lincoln?
  - the press not viewing him as a Southern patriot following the assassination?
7. Do you think there was a particular point in his life when John Wilkes Booth's assassination of Lincoln was inevitable, or was it a random, irrational act that could have been prevented by any number of things? Explain.
8. Do you think, as Edwin Booth did, that on the matter of patriotism to the South, John Wilkes Booth was "insane on that one point"? Or were his actions sane, if wicked? Explain.
9. Do humanizing details about John Wilkes Booth make him more likable or more troubling to you? Explain.
10. "For every person who knows that there was once a great actor named Edwin Booth, there are thousands who know that his brother, John Wilkes Booth, assassinated Abraham Lincoln" (p. 221). Explain whether you believe any book, play, or film can change that reality. Does *Good Brother, Bad Brother* succeed in transforming John Wilkes Booth from the one-dimensional, demonically possessed man of Magee's cartoon into a more complete person? Is it better for history and students of history that we have a well-rounded study of even those who perpetrate great evil? Explain.

## A Teacher's Guide



# Good Brother, Bad Brother

by James Cross Giblin

## Lesson Five: Brother versus Brother: The Human Face of the Civil War

- [Synopsis](#)
- [National Curriculum Standards](#)
- [Time Required](#)
- [Materials Needed](#)
- [The Lesson](#)

### Synopsis

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The rift between Edwin Booth and his younger brother John Wilkes Booth was repeated between hundreds of brothers, neighbors, and friends during the Civil War. For Edwin Booth, the war was very real: he had friends in the army, including Adam Badeau (wounded in fighting near New Orleans) and Richard Cary (who died at Antietam.) Because pupils today are nearly one hundred-fifty years removed from the participants, they should research a human aspect of the war and prepare a written report, skit, project board, or computer slide-show about their findings. This lesson is most appropriate for high school students, grades 9–12, but may be suitable for middle school students, grades 6–8.

### National Curriculum Standards

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Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning has created standards and benchmarks for language arts, math, science, geography, economics, and history. This lesson meets standards and benchmarks for:

**United States History Standard (4th Ed.)** for Era 5 — Civil War and Reconstruction (1850–1877) including benchmark 14: Understand the course and character of the Civil War and its effects on the American people:

Level III (Grades 7–8)

2. Understands how different groups of people shaped the Civil War (e.g., the motives and experiences of Confederate and white and African-American Union soldiers, different perspectives on conscription, the effects of divided loyalties)

Level IV (Grades 9–12)

4. Understands how the Civil War influenced Northern and Southern society on the home front (e.g., the New York City draft riots of July 1863, the Union's reasons for curbing civil liberties in wartime, Lincoln's suspension of the writ of habeas corpus during the war)

**Historical Understanding (4th Ed.)** Standard 2: Understands the historical perspective including benchmark:

Level III (Grades 7–8)

1. Understands that specific individuals and the values those individuals held had an impact on history

Level IV (Grades 9–12)

11. Knows how to perceive past events with historical empathy

13. Evaluates the validity and credibility of different historical interpretations

14. Uses historical maps to understand the relationship between historical events and geography

## Time Required

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This lesson will probably take three to four class periods, more if research and project preparation is not completed outside of class.

## Materials Needed

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- *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth*
- Timer or watch with a second hand, to time five minutes
- Calculator

## The Lesson

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### Lesson-Starter

1. Ask students to take out a piece of blank paper and a pen or pencil. Explain that when you start the timer, you want them to list as many names as they can of people that they know (friends, family, teachers, neighbors, coaches, and team members, people they know from stores and the community) in five minutes. Spelling doesn't matter, nor do full proper names (if they may know somebody only as "our mailman"). Students may not use any celebrity, political, or public figure whom they have not met. Set the timer and announce, "Go."

2. Announce when time is up and tell students to put down their pens or pencils. Ask if their hands are tired and if they were having trouble at the end coming up with names. Next, direct students to count the number of names on their lists and begin recording each student's total. (You may do this on the board or a transparency or have a student recorder take down the numbers.)

3. Add up the numbers to produce a total for the entire class; post the lists around the class. Finally, divide the number into the rounded number 623,000. (This is the estimated combined total of Union and Confederate casualties, both combat and non-combat, from the Civil War, according to the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.) The resulting number equals the number of days every student in the class would have to spend writing the name of everyone who is believed to have died in the Civil War. If you divide that number by 180 (the number of days in a typical school year) students can calculate how many years the job would take.

4. Point out that if the list the students made were the roll of the Civil War dead, everyone included on the list would have died either from combat or something else. Ask students how many of them would have become orphans? Would have lost their best friend? Point out the number of days they would have to write new lists, the same length, but with entirely new, different names. Every day, everyone on the list would die. Remind students that 623,000 isn't just a number, it is 623,000 individuals, many of whom were best friends, brothers, fathers, sons, cousins, as well as mothers, sisters, daughters, and wives. This is the human face of America's bloodiest war.

## Procedures

1. The Civil War is sometimes called a "brothers war." Ask students to read *Good Brother, Bad Brother* to learn about how the Booth family was torn apart by the Civil War. As students read, they should look at how the war impacted the relationships within the family (Edwin, John Wilkes, Junius, Jr., Asia Booth Clarke, John S. Clarke, Mary Ann Booth, and Mary Devlin Booth) and also jot down the name of each person whose life was impacted by the Civil War. The war's general outlines are covered in this book, but how is it different from a military history (either written or similar to the documentaries they may see on television, including the well-known Ken Burns's series, *The Civil War*)?

2. A number of elements of the book may serve as a springboard for a research project on the theme "The Human Face of the Civil War." The final project may be in any one of the formats established by National History Day (see <http://www.nationalhistoryday.org/> for exact criteria) including a paper (individual only), exhibit, documentary, or performance. Students may work individually, in pairs, or, in the case of performances, small teams. They will have ten minutes to present their final project in class, either as a performance or an explanation of what they learned in their research and how it relates to the theme. Provide three minutes follow-up time for question and answer.

Possible topics for research include (but are not limited to),

- The battle of Antietam, in which Richard Cary died. September 17, 1862, remains the bloodiest day in American history, the day on which 3,650 Americans died. It is deadlier than September 11, 2001, or even D-Day (June 6, 1944). The National Park Service Web site has further information at <http://www.nps.gov/anti/casualty.htm>. Yet, out of the bloodiest day came the Emancipation Proclamation and the beginning of the American Red Cross, in the person of Clara Barton.

- Evaluate if John Wilkes Booth was correct when he said, "If the North conquers us it will be by numbers only . . ." Examine the balance sheet, North and South, with a focus on populations and the impact that immigrants and African-American soldiers had on the North's ability to conduct the war. For a detailed account of the size and condition of the Confederate forces by April 1865, see Jay Winik's book *April 1865: The Month That Saved America* (included in the resource list at the end of this guide).
- Compare and contrast the lives, and deaths, of John Brown and John Wilkes Booth. Or compare John Brown's trial with that of the Lincoln conspirators. For information on both the Brown and the Lincoln conspirators' trials look at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Law School's Famous Trials Web site, which has trial testimonies and reports, John Brown's speech to the court, his letters from prison, and the provisional constitution he would have implemented had his rebellion succeeded. <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/johnbrown/brownhome.html> and <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/lincolnconspiracy/lincolnconspiracy.html>
- How did the Anaconda Plan and Grant's war of attrition give Lincoln the reputation of "Abe the Widomaker" yet help the Union to win the war?
- The Confederate Signal Corps and other secret services not only recruited John Wilkes Booth for the Lincoln kidnapping but attempted arson in New York City, conducted espionage, developed new weaponry, and smuggled quinine and other necessities. To what degree was this in reaction to the Anaconda Plan and the war of attrition?
- Examine one northerner and one southerner alive during the Civil War at the University of Virginia's Web site Valley of the Shadow, which has an online archive of letters, newspapers, county records, and other documents about the people of Augusta County, Virginia, and Franklin County, Pennsylvania (<http://valley.vcdh.virginia.edu/>). Select one person from each community and compare and contrast lives, views, and experiences over the years of war, 1861–1865.
- Maryland was a border state — even Edwin refers to himself as southern-born. Examine pro-Confederate activities in the state such as the Baltimore Riot against Union troops passing through the city in April 1861; the arrest of Francis Scott Key's grandson (Frank Key Howard) and his confinement in Fort McHenry; and the network of Confederate sympathizers who passed quinine, gold, and information through the state. (Look at *The Civil War in Maryland*, the Pulitzer Prize–winning *Reveille in Washington 1860–1865*, and the two books by William Tidwell, all mentioned in the resource list at the end of this guide.)

## Assessment

The student's assignment may be graded on a twenty point scale (which may be multiplied by five to convert to a one hundred-point scale or for conversion to letter grades) using the following rubric:

	<b>Excellent (10)</b>	<b>Good (9-8)</b>	<b>Fair (7-6)</b>	<b>Not Satisfactory (5-1)</b>	<b>No Work (0)</b>
<b>Research</b>	<p>Located and used specific information from a wide range of sources both obvious and unusual</p> <p>Exceptionally strong presentation of the theme, The Human Face of the Civil War</p> <p>No factual errors</p>	<p>Located and used general information and examples from obvious sources</p> <p>Good presentation of the theme, The Human Face of the Civil War</p> <p>No factual errors</p>	<p>Located and used general information from a limited number of sources</p> <p>The project generally related to the theme, The Human Face of the Civil War</p> <p>No factual errors</p>	<p>Research was weak, topic coverage was incomplete or unbalanced</p> <p>The research had little or no relationship with the theme, The Human Face of the Civil War</p> <p>May have contained factual errors</p>	No research
<b>Project presentation (Audio or Visual display or performance or demonstration)</b>	<p>Well-balanced, thorough presentation of topic information</p> <p>Appealing project or performance, showed originality</p> <p>Media enhanced understanding of topic</p> <p>Captions or introductory explanations were excellent, either audible and clear or well-written and</p>	<p>Generally balanced, complete presentation of topic information</p> <p>Appealing project or performance</p> <p>Media generally supported topic</p> <p>Captions were useful and generally conformed to language rules; or, introductory explanations were useful and audible</p>	<p>Presentation of information was not complete for the topic</p> <p>Appealing project or performance</p> <p>Media may have not always been appropriate to topic</p> <p>Captions were missing in some cases or not clear and may have contained errors in language</p>	<p>Presentation of data was incomplete or missing in some aspects of topic or very vague</p> <p>Project was sloppy or disorganized</p> <p>Media did not tie in with topic</p> <p>Little or no captioning or introductory explanations that may have been unclear or irrelevant, and exhibit had many errors in</p>	No project

	informative		usage; or, introductory explanations were not helpful or are so soft, rapid, or mumbled that they could not be heard	language usage	
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## Internet Resources

The companion Web site for Ken Burns's *The Civil War* documentary series is <http://www.pbs.org/civilwar/>

A recruitment poster and other documents about black soldiers during the Civil War is at the National Archives Digital Classroom Web site. <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/blacks-civil-war/>

## Interdisciplinary Activities

### *Geography*

The Civil War was fought all across the country and the ships of the North and the South engaged in combat around the world (the *CSS Alabama* was sunk off of Cherbourg, France, in the English Channel and the *CSS Shenandoah* ranged as far as Australia and the Bering Sea).

1. Go to the Civil War Battle Summaries by State (part of the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program Web site) at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/abpp/battles/bystate.htm> for a list of locations, either in your home state or a state of your choice, and then locate and mark them on a modern state map.
2. Find out about the Civil War in your state, or in a state of your choice. Remember that states that experienced no combat may have sent troops, and territories (such as Colorado and New Mexico) participated in the Civil War prior to statehood. A list of state archival sites may be visited at [http://www.pbs.org/civilwar/classroom/archival\\_resources.html](http://www.pbs.org/civilwar/classroom/archival_resources.html).
3. Plot the voyages on a world map of one of the Confederate raiders, the *CSS Alabama*, the *CSS Shenandoah*, or the *CSS Florida*.

4. Determine if there is a cemetery with Civil War burials in your community. If so, you may wish to organize a wreath-laying ceremony for Veterans Day or Memorial Day (which originated in the decorating of graves of Civil War soldiers with flowers on Decoration Day), either at an individual's grave or at the cemetery's flagstaff. If the school has a trumpeter, part of the ceremony might include the playing of "Taps," the bugle song that originated in the Civil War, and which is still played at military funerals. This activity may be researched and coordinated along with a local, contemporary veterans organization, such as the American Legion or Veterans of Foreign Wars.

### *Drama*

1. There is no theater more famous in America or one more closely associated with the Civil War than Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. Conduct research about Ford's Theatre before and after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. Start research at the National Park Service Web site, <http://www.nps.gov/foth/index.htm>. To find out what's going on at Ford's Theatre today, visit <http://www.fordstheatre.org/Pages/home/home.htm> and check for dates of the annual gala broadcast on television.

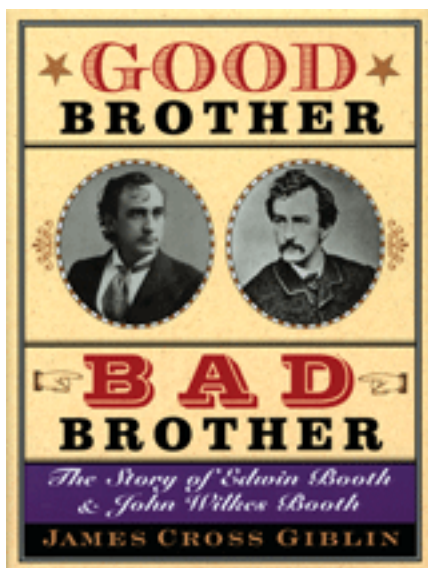
2. In *Good Brother, Bad Brother*, Giblin writes, "People were hungry for entertainment of all sorts — anything that would distract them from the war . . ." And he quotes Mrs. John Sherwood's diary, in which she recalled, "In that first year of the war, when we were profoundly miserable and frightened, what a relief it was to go and see Edwin Booth in *Hamlet*."

a. Read *Good Brother, Bad Brother* to find the names of other Washington theaters (such as the National and Grover's) and those in New York (such as the Winter Garden) and other locations (such as the St. Charles Theatre in New Orleans) that operated during the Civil War. Conduct research to find more information about one of these theaters and what has happened to it since the Civil War.

b. Research another actor or actress of the Civil War and the roles he or she performed through the period 1861–1865.

c. John Wilkes Booth was not the only actor to engage in espionage; the Union employed New Orleans–born actress Pauline Cushman as a spy. Research the dual lives, as actress and spy, of Pauline Cushman.

## A Teacher's Guide



# Good Brother, Bad Brother

by James Cross Giblin

## Lesson Six: Liberty in Time of War

- [Synopsis](#)
- [National Curriculum Standards](#)
- [Time Required](#)
- [Materials Needed](#)
- [The Lesson](#)

### Synopsis

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Fanaticism, whether it was northerner John Brown's assault on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry or the South's plot to burn New York City, led to authorities taking extraordinary measures, most notably, Lincoln's suspension of the writ of habeas corpus. John Wilkes Booth chafed at the limits on his ability to express his political opinion due to the authorities and public opinion; the Lincoln conspirators were tried by a military tribunal. Students will learn what happens to personal liberties when the nation is threatened by investigating how treasonous behavior was handled by the U.S. government during the Civil War, the Red Scare, World War II, and the McCarthy Era and present their findings in a panel report. This lesson is most appropriate for high school students, grades 9–12, but may be suitable for middle school students, grades 6–8.

### National Curriculum Standards

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This lesson supports the following themes in Advanced Placement U.S. History that might appear in any one edition of the A.P. United States History Examination:

- Politics and Citizenship — Colonial and revolutionary legacies, American political traditions, growth of democracy, and the development of the modern state. Defining citizenship; struggles for civil rights.
- War and Diplomacy — Armed conflict from the precolonial period to the twenty-first century; impact of war on American foreign policy and on politics, economy, and society.

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning has created standards and benchmarks for language arts, math, science, geography, economics, and history. This lesson also meets standards and benchmarks for:

**United States History Standard (4th Ed.)** for Era 5 — Civil War and Reconstruction (1850–1877) including benchmark 14: Understand the course and character of the Civil War and its effects on the American people:

Level III (Grades 7–8)

2. Understands how different groups of people shaped the Civil War (e.g., the motives and experiences of Confederate and white and African-American Union soldiers, different perspectives on conscription, the effects of divided loyalties)

Level IV (Grades 9–12)

4. Understands how the Civil War influenced Northern and Southern society on the home front (e.g., the New York City draft riots of July 1863, the Union's reasons for curbing civil liberties in wartime, Lincoln's suspension of the writ of habeas corpus during the war)

**Historical Understanding (4th Ed.)** Standard 2: Understands the historical perspective including benchmark:

Level III (Grades 7–8)

1. Understands that specific individuals and the values those individuals held had an impact on history

Level IV (Grades 9–12)

11. Knows how to perceive past events with historical empathy

13. Evaluates the validity and credibility of different historical interpretations

## Time Required

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This lesson will probably take two class periods, more if research and team planning is not completed outside of class.

## Materials Needed

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- *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth*
- Slips of paper (one per student)
- U.S. Constitution

## The Lesson

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### Lesson-Starter

1. Read aloud the following extracted passage from p. 60 of *Good Brother, Bad Brother* without identifying the speaker. "You all feel the fire now raging in the nation's heart. It is a fire lighted and fanned by . . . fanaticism. A fire which naught but blood & justice can extinguish . . . I tell you . . . [it] is the fire which, if allowed to rage, will consume the house and crush us all beneath its ruins." Give students the four following dates: December 1861, January 1920, December 1941, and September 2001. Hand out one slip of paper to each student and ask them to write the date they think the comment was written, and then turn it in. Tally the numbers, and then announce that the date was

December 1861.

2. Ask students if they have any idea who the writer of this passage might have been. Ask if it sounds most like Jefferson Davis, Abraham Lincoln, John Brown, or John Wilkes Booth. Inform them the writer was John Wilkes Booth.
3. Explain that fanaticism is not just a modern problem with jihadists and the War on Terror. Ask students to read the passages in *Good Brother, Bad Brother* on pp. 53–57 about John Brown's raid, trial, and execution, and then discuss how we would view anyone who raided a federal arsenal today.
4. Ask students to read about the limits of free speech that John Wilkes Booth encountered during the Civil War in Albany, New York (pp. 61, 63–4) and St. Louis, Missouri (p. 81). Read his feelings about it on p. 103: "For four years I have lived a slave in the north (a favored slave, it's true, but no less hateful to me on that account). Not daring to express my thoughts or sentiments, even in my own home. Constantly hearing every principle, dear to my heart, denounced as treasonable." Discuss whether modern performers who express political dissent face the same perils as Booth did.
5. Of course, John Wilkes Booth was not merely a dissenter. He was, in fact, involved in smuggling and espionage, in the plot to kidnap Lincoln, and he assassinated him. Look at the U.S. Constitution, Article III, Section 3.

Clause 1: Treason against the United States shall consist only in levying War against them, or in adhering to their Enemies, giving them Aid and Comfort. No Person shall be convicted of Treason unless on the Testimony of two Witness to the same overt Act, or on Confession in open Court.

Clause 2: The Congress shall have Power to declare the Punishment of Treason, but no Attainder of Treason shall work Corruption of Blood, or Forfeiture except during the Life of the Person attainted.

According to the definition of treason in the U.S. Constitution, was John Wilkes Booth guilty?

## Procedures

1. Explain to students that they will be working on four teams to look at four periods in U. S. history when there was great fear of treason: the Civil War (1861–1865), the Red Scare (1919–1920), World War II (1941–1945) and the McCarthy Era (1947–1954).
2. Each team needs to determine:
  - a) Which historical event or events triggered the fear
  - b) How the government reacted (specific rights revoked, laws passed, groups targeted by law enforcement or investigation, and so on)
  - c) When the event ended
  - d) Whether the government modified its reaction prior to the end of the event or after

e) If there are standing legal precedents from this event

Students should present their findings in a panel report.

3. At the conclusion of the panel presentations, ask students if they see any patterns that seem to repeat themselves, or if each episode is unique. Students may wish to draw comparisons between past events (such as the military tribunal for the Lincoln conspirators) and the War on Terror (the proposed tribunals for prisoners held at Guantanamo Bay) as well as note differences.

### **Assessment**

The student's assignment may be graded on a twenty point scale (which may be multiplied by five to convert to a one hundred-point scale or for conversion to letter grades) using the following rubric:

	<b>Excellent (5)</b>	<b>Good (4)</b>	<b>Fair (3-2)</b>	<b>Not Satisfactory (1)</b>	<b>No Work (0)</b>
<b>Oral Skills</b>	Effective speaker — tonal variety, speed, volume, clarity	Minor Problems — monotone, soft, mumbling, too rapid	Numerous speaking problems or minimal participation	Communication was lacking Wandered off topic	Did not participate
<b>Historical Research</b>	Located detailed, compelling answers to all five categories  No factual errors	Located and used general information and a few examples for all five categories  No factual errors	Failed to address one of the categories and/or showed some general research but few specifics  Some factual errors	Little research and most categories were unaddressed  Limited understanding of the era investigated  Many factual errors	No research
<b>Team presentation</b>	Knowledge of information was deep; little need to refer to notes  Enthusiastic and persuasive relationship with audience	Above average enthusiasm and audience impact  Good knowledge but reliance on notes	Read quite a bit, making little contact with audience  Average knowledge	Read and made no contact with audience  Limited knowledge and information base	Did not participate
<b>Group Skills</b>	Contributed insight to the presentation but did not monopolize it  Displayed courtesy	Participated effectively  Displayed courtesy	Monopolized panel presentation	Minimal contribution to team effort	Inappropriate comments or did not contribute

## Internet Resources

National Archives Digital Classroom, Japanese Relocation During World War II, <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/japanese-relocation/> and telegram from Senator Joseph McCarthy to President Truman <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/mccarthy-telegram/>

The University of Missouri-Kansas City Law School Famous Trials Web site features:

The Trial of the Lincoln conspirators, including maps, courtroom diagrams, sketches of Ford's Theatre, and much more at <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/lincolnconspiracy/lincolnconspiracy.html>

The Sacco and Vanzetti Trial includes a section on the Red Scare, maps, trial transcript excerpts, prison letters, and images at <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/SaccoV/SaccoV.htm>

The Nuremberg War Crimes Trials following World War II at <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/nuremberg/nuremberg.htm>

The McCarthy era trials of Alger Hiss at <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/hiss/hiss.html> and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg's Trial at <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/rosenb/ROSENB.HTM>

Edward R. Murrow: Broadcasting History (includes audio file of commentary on Senator Joseph McCarthy, *See It Now* (CBS-TV, March 9, 1954) <http://www.npr.org/features/feature.php?wfId=1872668>

Edward R. Murrow: *See It Now* (CBS-TV, March 9, 1954), program transcript <http://honors.umd.edu/HONR269J/archive/Murrow540309.html>

History Matters — "Have You No Sense of Decency": The Army-McCarthy Hearings, transcript of the committee proceedings on June 9, 1954 <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6444/>

McCarthy-Welch Exchange: "Have You No Sense of Decency," MP3 audio file <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/welch-mccarthy.html>

The Army-McCarthy Hearings <http://www.museum.tv/archives/etv/A/htmlA/army-mccarthy/army-mccarthy.htm>

## Interdisciplinary Activities

### *Drama*

Arthur Miller's play *The Crucible*, set historically during the Salem Witchcraft Trials, was a thinly veiled commentary on the activities of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and senator Joseph McCarthy. Elia Kazan's film *On the Waterfront* is also, in part,

a response to his experiences before the HUAC. *The Crucible* is often in production, but if it is not and you wish to see it, a 1996 version, which Miller assisted in, is available on VHS and DVD, as is *On the Waterfront*. For further research, check out:

### *Books*

Miller, Arthur. *Timebends*. (New York: Grove Press, 1989).

### *Video*

In 1993, CBS News produced in VHS format *Edward R. Murrow, The Best of See it Now, 1951–1958*, with Mike Wallace. This show includes portions from the March 9, 1954, program on Joseph McCarthy and gives students the opportunity to look at the film editing techniques used by Murrow to shape the audience's perception of McCarthy.

In 2003, PBS broadcast a two-hour documentary called *Arthur Miller, Elia Kazan, and the Blacklist: None Without Sin* as part of its American Masters series. This show allows students to trace the relationship between the two men before, during, and after the communist witch-hunt and explains how their experiences with the HUAC were expressed in Miller's *The Crucible* and Kazan's *On the Waterfront*.

### *Internet Resources*

Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*: Fact & Fiction (Or Picky, Picky, Picky . . . ) by Margo Burns

<http://www.17thc.us/docs/fact-fiction.shtml>

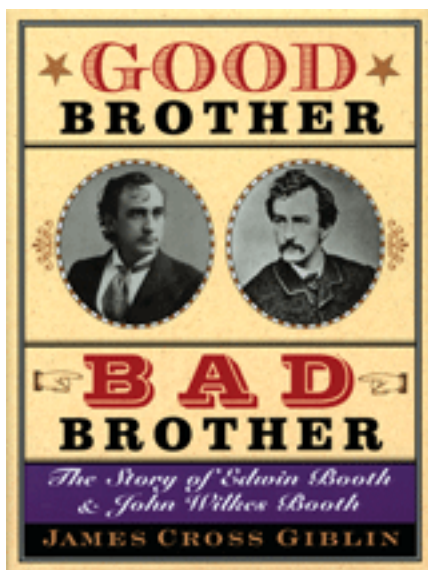
Salem Witch Trials Documentary Archive and Transcription Project

<http://etext.virginia.edu/salem/witchcraft/>

"Why I Wrote The Crucible: An Artist's Answer to Politics," by Arthur Miller

[http://warren.dusd.net/~dstone/Resources/11P/M\\_NY.htm](http://warren.dusd.net/~dstone/Resources/11P/M_NY.htm)

## A Teacher's Guide



# Good Brother, Bad Brother

by James Cross Giblin

## Additional Resources

### Additional Resources

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Catton, Bruce. *Never Call Retreat*. (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1965; first paperback edition, New York: Washington Square Press, Pocket Books Inc., 1967).

Clarke, Asia Booth. *The Elder and the Younger Booth*. (Boston: James R. Osgood & Company, 1882). (Asia Booth's biography of her father, Junius and brother Edwin, available online through the fee service, Questia.com as are the Mills and Ruggles books.)

Clarke, Asia Booth. *John Wilkes Booth: A Sister's Memoir*. (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1996; paperback edition 1999).

Freedman, Russell. *Lincoln: A Photobiography*. (New York: Clarion Books, 1987).

Grossman, Edwina Booth. *Edwin Booth: Recollections by His Daughter Edwina Booth Grossman and Letters to Her and to His Friends*. (New York: The Century Company, 1894).

Hanchett, William. *The Lincoln Murder Conspiracies*. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1983).

Katz, Mark. *Witness to an Era — The Life and Photographs of Alexander Gardner: The Civil War, Lincoln, and the West*. (New York: Viking Books, 1991).

Kimmel, Stanley. *The Mad Booths of Maryland*. Second revised edition. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1969).

Leech, Margaret. *Reveille in Washington, 1860–1865*. Second reprint edition. (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 1991).

- Mills, John A. *Hamlet on Stage: The Great Tradition*. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985).
- Murphy, Jim. *The Boys' War*. (New York: Clarion Books, 1990).
- Phillips, Charles and Axelrod, Alan. *My Brother's Face: Portraits of the Civil War in Photographs, Diaries, and Letters*. (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1993).
- Reck, W. Emerson. *A. Lincoln: His Last 24 Hours*. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company Inc., Publishers, 1987; first paperback edition, Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina Press, 1994).
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- Ruggles, Eleanor. *Prince of Players: Edwin Booth*. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1953).
- Samples, Gordon. *Lust for Fame: The Stage Career of John Wilkes Booth*. (Jefferson, NC and London: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 1982; first paperback edition 1998).
- Shattuck, Charles. *The Hamlet of Edwin Booth*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969).
- Smith, Gene. *American Gothic: The Story of America's Legendary Theatrical Family — Junius, Edwin, and John Wilkes Booth*. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992).
- Steers, Edward. *The Escape and Capture of John Wilkes Booth*. (Gettysburg, PA: Thomas Publications, 1983, 1992).
- Swanson, James L., and Weinberg, Daniel R. *Lincoln's Assassins: Their Trial and Execution: An Illustrated History*. (Santa Fe, NM: Arena Editions, 2001).
- Taylor, Tom. *Our American Cousin: The Play That Changed History*. (Washington, D.C.: Beacham Publishing, Inc., 1990).
- Tidwell, William A., James O. Hall and David W. Gaddy. *Come Retribution: The Confederate Secret Service and the Assassination of Lincoln*. (Jackson, MS, and London: University Press of Mississippi, 1988). Tidwell has a follow-up book to this one: *April '65: Confederate Covert Action in the American Civil War*, (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1995), which is available at the fee site [Questia.com](http://Questia.com)
- Toomey, Daniel Carroll. *The Civil War in Maryland*. (Baltimore: Toomey Press, 1991).
- Winik, Jay. *April 1865: The Month That Saved America*. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001).