

# Girl from the Gulches

## The Story of Mary Ronan Study Guide

Revised 10/16/2024

Book One of *Girl from the Gulches: The Story of Mary Ronan*, as told to Margaret Ronan, edited by Ellen Baumler (Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 2003), is available to download as a [PDF](#) from the educator resources page of the Montana Historical Society's website, [www.montanahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.montanahistoricalsociety.org).

Learning activities and discussion and comprehension questions for Language Arts and Social Studies, grades 6-10, by Cheryl Hughes, with Mapping and Chronicling America lessons by Ruth Ferris

## Contents

### [Fast Facts](#)

### [About the Author](#)

### [About the Editor](#)

### [Text Summary](#)

### [Teacher Notes and Cautions](#)

### [Common Core Standards](#)

### [Engagement Ideas](#)

### [Supplemental Resources](#)

Resources to Enrich the Study of Book One

Resources to Enrich the Study of Book Two

Resources to Enrich the Study of Book Three

### [Lesson Suggestions](#)

#### [Introduction](#)

[Lesson 1:](#) Writing Response Activities  
(grades 6-9)

[Lesson 2:](#) Reader's Theater (grades 8-10)

[Lesson 3:](#) Literary Devices to Set Tone and  
Mood (grades 9-10)

[Lesson 4:](#) Mapping Mary's Life (grades 6-8)

### [Chronicling America: Using Historic Digitized Newspapers to Understand Mary Ronan's World](#)

Introduction

[Lesson 5:](#) What Can You Buy? What Could  
Mary Buy? (grades 6-10)

### [Lesson 6:](#) Same Event, Different Accounts

(grades 6-10)

### [Lesson 7:](#) Found Poetry (grades 6-9)

### [Chapter Summaries and Questions](#)

[Chapter Summaries](#) and Comprehension  
Questions, Book One

Critical Thinking Questions for Book One

[Chapter Summaries](#), Comprehension  
Questions, and Critical Thinking  
Questions, Book Two

[Chapter Summaries](#), Comprehension  
Questions, and Critical Thinking  
Questions, Book Three

### [Vocabulary by Chapter](#)

### [Appendix A: Student Handouts](#)

[Lesson 2:](#) Rubric for Reader's Theater

[Lesson 4](#) Handouts 1-5

[Lesson 5:](#) What Can You Buy? What Could  
Mary Buy?

[Lesson 5:](#) Venn Diagram, Comparing Then  
and Now

[Lesson 6:](#) Venn Diagram, Same Event,  
Different Accounts (Lesson 6)

### [Appendix B: Printing Newspaper Pages from Chronicling America](#)

## Fast Facts

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**Genre:** Memoir

**Place:** Virginia City, MT; Helena, MT; San Juan Capistrano, CA; Flathead Agency, Arlee, MT

**Time:** 1852-1893

## About the Author

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Mary Sheehan Ronan was born in Kentucky in 1852. Sheehan lived a rich life of adventure and challenge as a young girl, traveling from gold camps in Colorado to gold camps in Montana with her freighter father, James Sheehan. As a teen she moved to the mission area of San Juan Capistrano, California, where her father continued to seek his fortune. She returned to Montana after marrying her lifelong sweetheart, Peter Ronan. Together they established a home on the Flathead Indian Reservation, just outside of Arlee, Montana, where Peter served as the reservation agent for sixteen years.

After Peter's death, Mary moved to Missoula, Montana, where she eventually wrote this memoir with her daughter. She died in 1940 at the age of eighty-eight. (Additional information is available in the book's introduction.)

## About the Editor

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Ellen Baumler is an Interpretive Historian at the Montana Historical Society and the author of a number of books including *Spirit Tailings: Ghost Tales from Virginia City, Butte and Helena*; *More Spirit Tailings; Montana Chillers* (for readers 9-12); *Montana Moments: History on the Go*; and *More Montana Moments*

## Text Summary

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This memoir details Mary Sheehan Ronan's journey across the Great Plains, her childhood on the Colorado and Montana mining fron-

tiers, her ascent to young womanhood on a farm in Southern California, her experiences as a student in a Los Angeles convent school, her return to Montana as a young bride, and her life on the Flathead Indian Reservation as the wife of an Indian agent. The 222-page memoir is divided into three "books." Book One focuses on Mary's childhood in the Montana gold-fields and offers a "child's-eye view" of the gold rush; Book Two tells the story of her life in California; and Book Three focuses on her experiences on the Flathead Indian Reservation.

## Teacher Notes and Cautions

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Book One may be the most valuable part of the memoir for most classroom instruction, especially for middle school students, grades 6-8, because it is a coming-of-age story. In addition, Book One will work well with any study of the Montana gold rush, a topic often covered in middle school.

As it moves into Books Two and Three, the story takes on a tone that reflects the times of the writing, particularly in regards to white-Indian relations. Interpreting Mary's perspective may require a level of analysis that is beyond the capacity of middle school students. Teachers must be careful to point out that the book is told from Mary's point of view, and reflects her perspective as a Euro-American Catholic woman and the wife of an Indian agent. Book Three, particularly, is filled with phrases and description that some would consider condescending and judgmental, and the Indians do not have the opportunity to tell their version of the story. The details Mary gives offer her Eurocentric understanding of the reservation era in western Montana.

## Alignment to Common Core English Language Arts Standards

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RI: Reading Informational Text; RH: Reading History; RL: Reading Literature

## Grade 5

**RI.5.6.** Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.

**RI.5.9.** Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

## Grades 6-8

**RH.6-8.2.** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

**RH.6-8.4.** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

**RH.6-8.6.** Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

## Grades 9-10

**RH.9-10.2.** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

**RH.9-10.4.** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

**RL.9-10.4.** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

**RH.9-10.6.** Compare the point of view of two

or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

## Engagement Ideas

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Building background knowledge is key to engaging students in this piece of literature. It is important that students understand a bit about the settlement of the West, and the nature of people moving from place to place to follow their dreams of fortune and happiness. Teachers may wish to assign *Girl from the Gulches* as part of a larger Montana history study or unit on westward expansion. Particularly, Book One will complement any unit on the gold rush. Book Two will complement a unit on California settlement and Mexican-American relations. Book Three will complement a larger study of the Flathead Indian Reservation. For schools in proximity, field trips to historic places (e.g., Virginia City, historic Helena, Flathead Agency site) will bring the book alive.

Pairing texts offers opportunity to investigate a subject in depth and from multiple viewpoints. Many works of literature explore the theme of outside settlers coming to a new place, examining how they adapt to and transform that place and how they affect the people who were there before. Educators may want to consider pairing *Girl from the Gulches* with another text that deals with this theme. One suggestion for middle school is *Hattie Big Sky*, Kirby Larson (2006); a suggestion for high school is *My Antonia*, Willa Cather (1918).

It can also be useful to pair books from two different time periods about the same place to show how things changed and the effects of decisions. A useful pairing for high school students in this regard is *The Surrounded*, Darcy McNickle (1936).

## Supplemental Resources

### Resources to Enrich the Study of Book One (Virginia City and Helena in the 1860s, during the Montana gold rush)

“Montana’s Gold and Silver Boom, 1862-1893,” *Montana: Stories of the Land*, by Krys Holmes (Helena, MT, 2008): 100-116.

[This chapter](#) of the Montana history textbook provides an overview of the gold rush.

“Virginia City Where History Lives,” [20-minute video](#)

This video provides an overview of Virginia City history, with historical and contemporary photographs, and discusses its modern history, including what the National Historic Landmark looks like today and attempts at historic preservation. The first five minutes are particularly relevant.

“Thinking Like a Historian: Using Digital Newspapers in the Classroom,” [Lesson Plan](#)

This lesson teaches students about gold-rush era Virginia City using historic newspapers.

“More on Vigilantes/Vigilantism”

[This website](#) will give teachers background information on the Vigilante movement Mary describes in her book.

“More than the Glory: Preserving the Gold Rush and Its Outcome at Virginia City,” by Ellen Baumler, *Montana The Magazine of Western History* (Autumn 1999)

[This scholarly article](#) discusses the history of Virginia City and its preservation.

*Spirit Tailings: Ghost Tales from Virginia City, Butte and Helena*, by Ellen Baumler (Helena, MT, 2002)

[Historical ghost stories](#) provide another way to hook students on Virginia City’s rich history,

and several of the Virginia City stories, written by the editor of *Girl from the Gulches*, have been digitized.

### Resources to Enrich the Study of Book Two (San Juan Capistrano in the 1870s)

Plaque honoring James Sheehan

[This link](#) shows a photograph of a historical marker at Mission San Juan Capistrano commemorating the land that James Sheehan, Mary’s father, sold to the church for their historic cemetery in the late 1800s.

*Images of America: San Juan Capistrano*, by Pamela Hallan-Gibson, Don Tryon, Mary Ellen Tryon, San Juan Capistrano Historical Society (2005), 31-44

Available through “Google Books,” [this Arcadia Press history](#) contains photographs and brief text on the townsite of San Juan Capistrano that are relevant to Mary’s story.

“The Irish Alcalde,” by Ellen K. Lee

[This website](#) from the Orange County Historical Society details the life and contributions of Judge Egan and even reveals his secret love for Mary Sheehan.

### Resources to Enrich the Study of Book Three (Flathead Reservation in the 1880s and 1890s)

*Challenge to Survive: History of the Salish Tribes of the Flathead Indian Reservation* (Pablo, MT, 2008)

Created by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes for a junior high school course on Flathead Reservation history, this multivolume set includes contemporary documents and twentieth-century interviews with tribal elders, presenting an Indian perspective that will provide a useful counterpoint to Mary Ronan’s Eurocentric take on reservation history.

## Hellgate Treaty

[This website](#) details the original Hellgate Treaty, 1855.

## “Historic St. Mary’s Mission and Museum”

[This website](#) details the history of the Bitterroot Salish Tribe.

“Report of Flathead Agency, August 26, 1892” from the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior. 1892, [pp. 291-295](#)

The University of Washington digitized Peter Ronan’s August 1892 report to the U.S. government on the condition of the Flathead Indian Reservation.

# Lesson Suggestions

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The first two lesson suggestions offer ideas for improving comprehension, engaging students in writing, and exercising historical imagination. **Lesson 1** provides four ideas for having students create different types of writing responses. **Lesson 2** suggests a reader’s theater activity, which will require students to conduct additional research to place *Girl from the Gulches* into context. Designed for older students, **Lesson 3** focuses specifically on identifying “tone” and “mood” words and analyzing how Mary’s word choice reflects her attitudes toward her Indian neighbors on the Flathead Reservation. **Lesson 4**, “Mapping Mary’s Life,” teaches geography skills while asking students to think about Mary Ronan’s life both geographically and chronologically.

The next three lessons (**Lessons 5-7**) all tap into an amazingly rich resource, Chronicling America, a digital newspaper archive that includes the full run of the *Montana Post*, Montana’s first newspaper. Published in Virginia City between 1864 and 1869, the *Post* chronicles the gold rush frontier during Mary and her family’s time in Virginia City and Helena (1863-1869). Through articles and advertisements published in the *Montana Post*, students can gain a deeper understanding of the places and events that shaped Mary’s childhood.

In addition to these lesson plans, instructors are encouraged to look at the comprehension and analysis questions (see page 25-32). These questions offer additional options for assessment and discussion.

## Lesson 1: Writing Response Activities

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Adaptable for Grades 6-9 (Grades 6-8 should read and respond to Book 1; Grade 9 can read and respond to Books 1, 2, and/or 3).

### Overview

Student creation of various writings. These activities can be targeted to specific parts of the book, or teachers can allow students to choose their own target.

### Instructional Outcomes

1. Students make universal connections from text to text, text to world, text to self.
2. Students apply textual evidence to make connections from text to text, text to world, and text to self.
3. Students synthesize information to support and form a thesis.

### Suggested Formats

Instructor can either assign a specific format or allow students to choose one of the following:

#### 1. Letters to or from Mary and any other character

**Procedure:** Have students choose two characters that they see as model pen pals. Have the students create a stream of three or four letter exchanges between those two characters, detailing their situations, dreams, hopes, frustrations, and passions. This activity offers an opportunity to teach letter-writing formats and how to address envelopes—a skill many middle school students still need to master.

#### 2. Diary entries by some major character

**Procedure:** Ideally, give students small journals or have them construct their own, so

that the format follows that of an authentic diary. Suggest that they pick a chapter in the book that includes interesting details, such as Mary's experiences in Virginia City or her life in Helena as a teen. Then ask students to write daily entries for about eight to ten days. Each entry can be as brief as three or four sentences or longer if the students become engaged in the process. Students may illustrate their diaries with pictures that help record Mary's or one of the other main character's experiences.

### 3. Epilogue to the book

**Procedure:** This can be a lesson in brainstorming, where students work together to create ideas for an epilogue to Book One that answers the questions, "What happened to Mary after she leaves Helena? What is the rest of her life like?" Listing multiple hypotheses about what may have happened to Mary on the whiteboard will give students inspiration, providing a direction that will make the process of their individual writing easier. Teachers should provide examples of an epilogue so students understand the intent and format of an epilogue. Suggested length: 500 words.

### 4. Personal narrative essay

**Procedure:** Ask students to write a personal essay that parallels some aspect of a character's experience with the student's own life (e.g., "like Mary, I am . . ."). Again, use a brainstorming format by suggesting that students come up with a list of twenty to thirty adjectives that describe Mary (or another major character) and her life as portrayed in the book. This brainstorming activity will give them an anchor on which to base their writing. From that list, suggest that they pick approximately five adjectives that match their life as well. In that way they can construct an essay that will address ways that their life has paralleled their character's. Suggested length: 500 words.

## Lesson 2: Creation of Reader's Theater

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### Grades 8-9

(Projects can address Books One, Two, or Three)

### Overview

Students create a mock news interview and perform their creation before the class. They can work in pairs and create interviews with some of the major characters of the book. The Reader's Theater format allows them to write their script and then perform with the comfort of being able to "read their lines."

### Instructional Outcomes

1. Students will conduct research, gathering relevant information.
2. Students will analyze points of view.
3. Students will produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
4. Students will present findings, emphasizing salient points, using appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

### Procedure

Pair students and suggest that they pick their roles as reporter or person to be interviewed. Suggest that they consider assigning one of the team as a reporter from a local newspaper and one as a major character from the book. An example might be a *Missoulian* reporter interviewing Chief Charlo (spelled Charlot in the reminiscence) about his recent move to the Flathead Agency; or interviewing Peter Ronan, seeking his thoughts on the success of the reservation system, on his relationship with the Salish and the Dawes Act, etc. Students will find other situations that they want to portray. Suggest that they might want to use additional sources of information to create their scripts.

Provide each student group a copy of the rubric by which you will grade their performance (see [Appendix A](#)). Students should write an actual script, which they will perform before the class (no improvising). Before performing, have students prepare enough copies so each team member has a script as well as the teacher (to evaluate the writing and performance).

### More about Reader's Theater

The text below is excerpted from “Readers Theatre in Elementary Classroom” and “Strategies for Reading: Readers Theatre in the Middle School” by Lois Walker.

#### What is Reader's Theater?

*Reader's theater is often defined by what it is not—no memorizing, no props, no costumes, no sets. All this makes reader's theater wonderfully convenient. Still, convenience is not its chief asset.*

*Like storytelling, reader's theater can create images by suggestion that could never be realistically portrayed on stage. Space and time can be shrunk or stretched, fantastic worlds can be created, marvelous journeys can be enacted. Reader's theater frees the performers and the audience from the physical limitations of conventional theater, letting the imagination soar.*

*Almost any story can be scripted for reader's theater, but some are easier and work better than others. In general, look for stories that are simple and lively, with lots of dialog or action, and with not too many scenes or characters.*

*Reader's theater involves children in oral reading through reading parts in scripts. Unlike traditional theatre, the emphasis is mainly on oral expression of the part. Reader's theater is “theatre of the imagination.” It involves children in understanding their world, creating their own scripts, reading aloud, performing with a purpose, and bringing enjoyment to both themselves and their audiences. Reader's theater gives children a purpose for writing, for reading, and for sharing their learning by*

*bringing others into the joyful “imagination space” they create. Reader's theater “succeeds in giving the same suggestive push to the imaginations in the audience that the act of silent reading gives to the imagination of the perceptive silent reader.” It is a simple, effective, and risk-free way to get children to enjoy reading. As children write, read, perform, and interpret their roles, they acquire a better understanding of the literature.*

*“Everyone needs to talk—to hear and to play with language, to exercise the mind and emotions and tongue together. Out of this spirited speech can come meaningful, flavorful language, worth the time and effort of writing and rewriting, phrasing, rehearsing, and reading aloud.”*

## Lesson 3: Literary Devices to Set Tone and Mood

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### Grades 9-10

This lesson is designed to use with Book Three, especially “One Small Domain,” chapters 16, pp. 171-81, and “Indians, Customs, and Religion,” chapter 17, pp. 182-93.

### Overview

So much of Mary's narrative is replete with tone and mood words. This exercise asks students to pick out specific words and phrases that convey “tone” and “mood.” It is also intended to draw attention to the way Mary's use of language reflects her attitudes toward the Indians among whom she lived on the Flathead Reservation.

### Instructional Outcomes

1. Students will recognize and evaluate how language, literary devices, and other elements contribute to the meaning and impact of literary works.
2. Students will reflect on how the words Mary uses shape the reader's impression of Indians on the Flathead Reservation.

3. Students will reflect on how Mary's particular time, place, race, and class shape her descriptions.

### Procedure

Discuss with students the difference between "tone" and "mood," sharing the examples and definitions below.

Then ask students to create a chart in their notebook with the following headings: "Word or Phrase," "Page," "Tone or Mood?"

Have students look closely at *Girl from the Gulches*, Chapters 16 and 17. Ask them to select words from those chapters that reflect the tone and mood of the chapters. Tell them to be prepared to justify why they have placed them in each category.

Before having students work independently or in groups, provide scaffolding by creating the same chart on the whiteboard, choosing particular words and phrases and deciding as a group whether they are "tone words" or "mood words" and why. Here's an example:

Word or Phrase	Page	Tone or Mood?
pompous monarch	182	Tone
magnificence	182	Mood
miserable	183	Tone
devoted	182	Mood

Expect there to be a lot of discussion. Provide time for a wrap-up discussion focused on Mary's attitude toward individual Indians, as well as tribal cultures, religion, and traditions. Possible questions for discussion may include the following:

- How do the tone and mood words she chooses convey her attitude?
- How does her attitude reflect her time, place, and culture?

- How might the tribal members Mary describes (e.g., Arlee, Michel Rivais) feel about the way they are described?
- How might their own descriptions of themselves and their families resemble Mary's?
- How might they differ?

### Definitions

**Mood** is the effect the writer's words have on the reader. It is the general atmosphere created by the author's words and the feeling the reader gets from reading those words. The mood may be the same throughout an entire work, or it may change from situation to situation. Examples of mood include fanciful, idealistic, romantic, realistic, optimistic, pessimistic, gloomy, melancholic, mournful, joyful.

**Tone** is the attitude that an author takes toward the audience, the subject, or the character. It is a style or manner of expression that is conveyed through the author's words and details. **Tone** tells us how the author thinks about his or her subject.

For example, an author's tone may be formal, informal, serious, humorous, amused, angry, playful, neutral, satirical, playful, conciliatory, gloomy, sad, resigned, supercilious (showing contemptuous indifference), cheerful, ironic, clear, detailed, imploring, monotonous, suspicious, pompous, witty (full of humor), or matter-of-fact.

## Lesson 4: Mapping Mary's Life

### Overview

Students map Mary's travels while gaining an overview of her life.

### Instructional Outcomes

1. Students will gain map-reading skills including locating places on a state highway map, locating sites using latitude and longitude, reading keys, and measuring mileage.

2. Students will gain an understanding of western travel routes.
3. Students will learn how infrastructure (roads, railroads) affects the movement of goods and people.
4. Students will recognize that people during the nineteenth century were highly mobile.
5. Students will gain an overview of Mary Ronan's life—and, by extension, a greater understanding of what life was like during the late nineteenth century for white westering women.

### Materials

Maps of the following states: Kentucky, Iowa, Indiana, Missouri, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, Montana, California, Kansas, Nevada (Montana State Highway maps can be ordered through <https://www.mdt.mt.gov/publications/maps.shtml>)

Handouts 1-5 (below)

String

Scotch tape or pins

### Procedure

Cut map borders so that the maps fit together like a large puzzle. Hang the maps on a wall so they form a large regional map.

Print two copies of Handouts 1-5. These handouts list events from Mary's life chronologically and the places where they occurred. Each event provides the location, available dates, the pages of *Girl from the Gulches* on which the event is discussed, and latitude and longitude coordinates. Some of the communities that Mary lived in are no longer listed on maps. Wherever possible, events are tied to current locations.

Handout 1: Birth to Colorado

Handout 2: The Trip to Montana

Handout 3: Mary Grows Up

Handout 4: The Wedding Journey

Handout 5: Mary's Married Life

**Note:** Printing each handout on a different color of paper will visually distinguish each era of Mary's life and will help students recognize the chronology of her journey as well as the geography.

Cut each handout into strips, with one event on each strip, and divide the strips among your students. (Each student should have two strips of the same event—one to pin to the map and one to keep.)

Have students attach one of their strips to the map. You can have multiple students pinning at once as long as they are working in different geographical regions. (**Note:** Mary lived in Helena several times. Attach a long string to Helena and have students tape their strips to the string instead of directly on the map.)

After all students have attached their information, call them up in turn, starting with Handout 1, number 1. Each student should show the class where she or he pinned the strip and share the information they have about that part of Mary's life.

**Notes:** Mary's childhood memory of the route her family took from Denver to Montana differs from the route Nelson Story (an adult at the time) describes of the same trip (they were part of the same wagon train). Handout 2 charts the route he described; it is likely more accurate than the route Mary recorded in her reminiscence.

As a girl, Mary Sheehan Ronan was known as Mollie, but she used Mary once she grew up. Handouts 1 and 2 call her Mollie; Handouts 3-5 call her Mary.

## **Extension activities**

Have students calculate the mileage for Mary's first trip to Montana (from Denver to Bannack, Handout 2). It took Mary over a month (she left Denver sometime in April and arrived in Bannack June 1). How long would it take today by car at sixty miles per hour? Then ask students to calculate the mileage for Mary's wedding journey by stage from Corinne, Utah, to Helena, Montana (Handout 4). The trip took the Ronans nine days. How long would it take to drive by car at sixty miles per hour? Discuss how the distances and travel times compare. Ask: Why is it faster today? Why was traveling by stagecoach so much faster than traveling by wagon?

Have students find images to illustrate their moment in time. Have them add the images to the map. Suggestions for websites with images are included on the handouts, but there are many other sources on the web.

Have small groups research and report on transportation of the time: railroads, steamers, stagecoaches, Pony Express riders, barouche, freighters, covered wagons, cable cars.

A contemporary man has been traveling in a custom wagon pulled by draft horses. The horses average three miles per hour. Looking at his journey compared with Mary's may give students another perspective on the distances that she traveled. <https://wagonteamster.com>

## Handout 1: Birth to Colorado

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**Note:** The latitude and longitude has been rounded to the nearest 100<sup>th</sup>. Students will need to use estimation and their best guess to locate the towns.

1. July 1852. Mary Catherine Fitzgibbon Sheehan was born in Louisville, Kentucky. Friends and family called her Mollie. p. 10 <https://www.flickr.com/photos/buildinghistories/4266106755/in/photostream/>  
Latitude 38.25 N, Longitude 85.76 W **Louisville, KY**
2. Mary's father's work took them to Illinois. Mary's mother died. pp. 10-11  
(We don't know where in Illinois, so place anywhere in the state.)
3. James Sheehan took Mollie and her cousins Patrick, Mary, and Ellen and moved to Ottumwa, Iowa. They lived with a family named Lauders. p. 11 [https://www.meetottumwa.org/explore/historic\\_districts\\_driving\\_tour/](https://www.meetottumwa.org/explore/historic_districts_driving_tour/) Latitude 41.02 N, Longitude 92.41 W **Ottumwa, IA**
4. James Sheehan took Mollie and her cousins Mary and Ellen to St. Joseph, Missouri, to stay with his cousin John. James Sheehan married Anne Cleary and moved his new wife to Colorado. p. 13 <http://www.legendsofamerica.com/mo-stjoseph.html>  
Latitude 39.76 N, Longitude 94.84 W **St Joseph, MO**
5. Autumn 1861. James returned to St. Joseph for Mollie, and the two of them traveled to Colorado. She was nine years old. Her father went to Central City, Colorado, leaving Mollie with a German couple in Denver. pp. 15-16  
Latitude 39.74 N, Longitude 104.98 W **Denver, CO**
6. 1861. From Denver Mollie moved to Nevada City, on Clear Creek in Gilpin County, Colorado. She lived there with her father, stepmother, and new baby sister. She attended school in nearby Central City, Colorado. pp. 17-18 <https://www.gilpinhistory.org/>  
Latitude 39.80 N, Longitude 105.51 W **Central City, CO**
7. Fall 1862. Mollie and her family moved to Denver. Her cousin Ellen came out to join them in Denver. p. 21  
Latitude 39.74 N, Longitude 104.98 W **Denver, CO**

## Handout 2: The Trip to Montana

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1. April 1863. Mollie and her family left Denver for Montana. pp. 25-28  
Latitude 39.74 N, Longitude 104.98 W **Denver, CO**
  
2. The Sheehans' wagon train passed Independence Rock, Wyoming. A party of fur traders who camped here on July 4, 1824, named the landmark, now a state park. Many emigrants inscribed their names on the large granite rock. pp. 25-28  
<https://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/independence-rock>  
Latitude 42.49 N, Longitude 107.13 W **Independence Rock, WY**
  
3. Devil's Gate, Wyoming, is a natural rock formation a few miles southwest of Independence Rock. It was a major landmark on the Mormon Trail and the Oregon Trail. pp. 25-28  
<https://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/devils-gate>  
Latitude 42.45 N, Longitude 107.21 W **Devil's Gate, WY**
  
4. South Pass City, Wyoming. The first boom came in the summer of 1868, several years after the Sheehans passed through. pp. 25-28 <https://travelwyoming.com/places-to-go/cities/south-pass-city/>  
Latitude 42.47 N, Longitude 108.80 W **South Pass City, WY**
  
5. Fort Bridger, Wyoming, was first established in 1843 as a trading post by Jim Bridger and his partner Louis Vasquez. It is now a historic site. pp. 25-28  
<http://www.legendsofamerica.com/wy-fortbridger.html>  
Latitude 41.32 N, Longitude 110.39 W **Fort Bridger, WY**
  
6. Fort Hall, Idaho, was constructed in 1834. Nathaniel Wyeth sold Fort Hall to the Hudson Bay Company in 1837. Approximately 270,000 emigrants reached Fort Hall on their way west. pp. 25-28 <https://www.legendsofamerica.com/id-forthall/>  
Latitude 43.03 N, Longitude 112.44 W **Fort Hall, ID**
  
7. June 1, 1863. The Sheehans reached Bannack, Montana Territory. "The diggings ... were nearly worked out," so Mollie's father loaded his wagon with supplies and made his own road to follow the trail of gold seekers to Alder Gulch, eighty miles away. Mollie said he brought the first wagonload of supplies to Virginia City. pp. 28-29. Bannack is now a state park. <http://www.bannack.org/>  
Latitude 45.16 N, Longitude 113.00 W **Bannack, MT**
  
8. Virginia City, Montana Territory. About a week after taking the load of supplies to Alder Gulch, James Sheehan moved his family from Bannack to Virginia City. pp. 29-30  
<http://www.virginiacitymt.com/>  
Latitude 45.29 N, Longitude 111.95 W **Virginia City, MT**

## Handout 3: Mary Grows Up (Her Teenage Years)

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1. July 1865. Mary and her family left Virginia City with a loaded wagon and headed to Last Chance Gulch, Montana Territory. On December 26, 1866, a meeting was held and Last Chance Gulch was renamed Helena. pp. 50-71 <http://mtplacenames.org>  
Latitude 46.59 N, Longitude 112.04 W **Helena, MT**
  
2. March 1869. Mary's father became angry about her engagement to Peter Ronan. Mary broke off the engagement and the family traveled by covered wagon to Sheridan, Montana. pp. 68-71, 79 <http://mtplacenames.org>  
Latitude 45.46 N, Longitude 112.20 W **Sheridan, MT**
  
3. Summer 1869. Corinne, Utah, was booming when the Sheehans stopped there to earn money for their journey. It was the supply and employment center for the construction work during the final months of the building of the Union Pacific Railroad. Mary and her stepmother cooked for boarders, while her father worked as a teamster. pp. 80-82  
<https://www.ghosttowns.com/states/ut/corinne.html>  
Latitude 41.55 N, Longitude 112.11 W **Corinne, UT**
  
4. Autumn 1869. Mary's family left Corinne after most of the construction was completed. They headed for San Diego in a prairie schooner. Mary said they followed the old stage route. p. 82  
[https://www.uen.org/utah\\_history\\_encyclopedia/c/CORRINNE.shtml](https://www.uen.org/utah_history_encyclopedia/c/CORRINNE.shtml)  
Latitude 41.55 N, Longitude 112.11 W **Corinne, UT**
  
5. 1869. Los Nietos, California, was a rancho not far from Los Angeles. During this time the roads were dirt and Los Angeles was a desert town with fewer than 6,000 inhabitants. Mary and her family stayed two weeks before setting off again for San Diego, California. (Los Nietos is now part of Los Angeles.) pp. 84-85 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rancho\\_Los\\_Nietos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rancho_Los_Nietos)  
Latitude 33.97 N, Longitude 118.07 W **Los Nietos, CA**
  
6. 1869. On their way to San Diego, the Sheehans learned that the stories they had heard about the boom in San Diego were untrue. James Sheehan decided to stay right where they were, in San Juan Capistrano. Mary helped her father build their four-room house. pp. 85-89 <https://www.sanjuancapistrano.org/About-Us/History>  
Latitude 33.50 N, Longitude 117.66 W **San Juan Capistrano, CA**

7. School year, 1871-1872. Padre Mut made arrangements for Mary to attend the Academy of St. Vincent de Paul in Los Angeles. Mary attended with the intention of getting her teacher's certificate. She graduated June 14, 1872. pp. 99-103, 110  
Latitude 34.05 N, Longitude 118.24 W **Los Angeles, CA**
  
8. Summer 1872. Mary returned to San Juan Capistrano, California. Through an exchange of letters she agreed to marry Peter Ronan. pp. 111-15 <https://www.sanjuancapistrano.org/About-Us/History>  
Latitude 33.50 N, Longitude 117.66 W **San Juan Capistrano, CA**

## Handout 4: The Wedding Journey

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1. January 13, 1873. Mary Sheehan and Peter Ronan were married at the San Juan Capistrano Mission, in California. pp. 116-18 <https://www.missionsjc.com/history-preservation/>  
Latitude 33.50 N, Longitude 117.66 W **San Juan Capistrano, CA**
2. January 14, 1873. They left San Juan Capistrano by stagecoach and stopped for dinner at the Mission of San Luis Rey. p. 119 <https://www.sanluisrey.org/Museum/Historic-Features>  
Latitude 33.23 N, Longitude 117.32 W **Mission of San Luis Rey, CA**
3. January 14, 1873. The Ronans arrived in San Diego and stayed for the first week of their honeymoon at the Horton House. p. 119. <https://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/1956/april/horton-3/> Latitude 32.72 N, Longitude 117.16 W **San Diego, CA**
4. January 20, 1873. The Ronans traveled on the steamer *Senator*. It departed at 5:00 p.m. Their destination was San Francisco. p. 119 <https://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/1957/july/senator/>  
Latitude 37.77 N, Longitude 122.42 W **San Francisco, CA**
5. January 21, 1873. The Ronans arrived in San Pedro, California. The ship was going to be in the harbor for a few hours, so Mary and Peter arranged to travel into Los Angeles to visit the Sisters at the Academy. (San Pedro is now part of Los Angeles.) p. 120  
Latitude 33.74 N, Longitude 118.29 W **San Pedro, CA**
6. January 22, 1873. The Ronans returned to the steamer, which left San Pedro at 6:00 p.m. on January 21 and arrived in Santa Barbara at 4:00 a.m. on January 22. p. 120  
Latitude 34.42 N, Longitude 119.70 W **Santa Barbara, CA**
7. January 22-31, 1873. Peter and Mary spent a week or more in San Francisco, California. They met up with old friends from Montana and went sightseeing. Several of the ladies and Mary went shopping. p. 121  
Latitude 37.77 N, Longitude 122.42 W **San Francisco, CA**
8. February 1873. The Ronans traveled on the Union Pacific Railroad to Corinne, Utah.  
Latitude 41.55 N, Longitude 112.11 W **Corinne, UT**
9. February 8-16, 1873. At Corinne, Utah, the Ronans caught the Gilmer, Salisbury and Company stage for Helena. They arrived in Helena, Montana, the evening of February 16, 1873. The trip by stage line took nine days. p. 122 <https://mhs.mt.gov/education/docs/CirGuides/Schwantes-Transportation.pdf>  
Latitude 46.59 N, Longitude 112.04 W **Helena, MT**

## Handout 5: Mary's Married Life

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1. 1873. Mary and Peter Ronan lived for three months at the St. Louis Hotel in Helena, Montana, before moving into a three-room house on Wood Street. p. 125 [https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4254h\\_pm004550](https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4254h_pm004550)  
Latitude 46.59 N, Longitude 112.04 W **Helena, MT**
  
2. January 9, 1874. A fire destroyed Peter's newspaper business. This was the third time his business had burned. Four months later, on May 1, 1874, the Ronans' son Vincent was born. pp. 128-32. [http://www.helenahistory.org/fire\\_tower.htm](http://www.helenahistory.org/fire_tower.htm)  
Latitude 46.59 N, Longitude 112.04 W **Helena, MT**
  
3. May 1874. At the end of May, Mary and baby Vincent moved to Blackfoot City, Montana Territory, to join Peter. Peter had gone to Blackfoot a few months earlier to mine for gold, having given up on the newspaper business. p. 132-34. Today Blackfoot City is no longer on the map. Only a few log cabins mark the site, which is near present-day Avon. <http://mtplacenames.org/>  
Latitude 46.68 N, Longitude 112.54 W **Blackfoot City, MT**
  
4. End of June 1875. Mary and Vincent returned to Helena by spring wagon to await Mary Ellen's birth on July 8, 1875. p. 135 <http://www.lemen.com/imageDemocrat1.html>  
Latitude 46.59 N, Longitude 112.04 W **Helena, MT**
  
5. August 1875. Mary and the children returned to Blackfoot City. Today Blackfoot City is no longer on the map. Only a few log cabins mark the site, which is near present-day Avon, Montana. p. 136 <http://mtplacenames.org/>  
Latitude 46.68 N, Longitude 112.54 W **Blackfoot City, MT**
  
6. Winter 1875. The Ronans moved back to Helena. Peter was appointed undersheriff for Lewis and Clark County. Their third child, Gerald Patrick, was born March 17, 1877. p. 138 <http://www.helenahistory.org/maps.htm>  
Latitude 46.59 N, Longitude 112.04 W **Helena, MT**
  
7. May 31, 1877. The Ronans began their trek to Jocko Valley, on the Flathead Indian Reservation, where Peter served as Indian agent. They spent the first night in Deer Lodge, Montana Territory. pp. 139, 147 <https://historicmt.org/items/show/16#:~:text=Situated%20on%20a%20key%20gold.and%20even%20a%20bowling%20alley>  
Latitude 46.40 N, Longitude 112.73 W **Deer Lodge, MT**
  
8. June 1, 1877. The Ronans stopped briefly at New Chicago. Also known as West Chicago, New Chicago is south of present-day Drummond. Today it is a ghost town and is no longer on the map. p 147 <https://philipsburgmt.com/ghost-towns.php>  
Latitude 46.63 N, Longitude 113.14 W **New Chicago, MT**

9. June 1, 1877. The Ronans stopped for the night at the stage station at Bearmouth, Montana Territory. A ghost town, Bearmouth is no longer on the map. p. 147 <https://www.ghosttowns.com/states/mt/bearmouth.html>

Latitude 46.71 N, Longitude 113.33 W **Bearmouth, MT**

10. June 2, 1877. On the third day of their trip, the Ronans stayed in Missoula. p. 148

<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4254m.pm004600>

Latitude 46.87 N, Longitude 113.99 W **Missoula, MT**

11. June 3, 1877. The Ronans reached the Flathead Indian Agency (Old Agency), where Peter served as agent until his death in 1893. While living on the Flathead Reservation, Mary had five more children. p. 149 <https://opi.mt.gov/Portals/182/Page%20Files/Indian%20Education/Social%20Studies/K-12%20Resources/Flathead%20Timeline.pdf>

Latitude 47.32 N, Longitude 114.30 W **Old Agency Flathead Indian Reservation**

12. August 20, 1893. Peter Ronan died at age fifty-five, and his clerk, Joseph T. Carter, became the new agent. Mary and her children continued to live at the agency. Joseph T. Carter married Mary and Peter's daughter Mary Ellen on August 21, 1895. When Joseph Carter's term as agent ended in 1898, Mary moved her family from the Old Agency to Missoula. Mary lived in Missoula until her death in 1940. p. 220

Latitude 46.87 N, Longitude 113.99 W **Missoula, MT**

# Using Historic Digitized Newspapers to Understand Mary Ronan's World

Lesson 5: What Can You Buy? What Could Mary Buy?, Lesson 6: Same Event, Different Accounts, and Lesson 7: Found Poetry all ask students to explore pages or stories published in the *Montana Post*, Montana's first newspaper, which was published in Virginia City between 1864 and 1869.

The Chronicling America Newspaper Project is a joint partnership between the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress National Digital Newspaper Program. By 2011, twenty-eight states were participating, including Montana. The Montana Historical Society has digitized a complete run of the *Montana Post* as well as selected date ranges for many other Montana papers. (A complete list of digitized Montana newspapers can be found at <https://mhs.mt.gov/Research/collections/newspapers/mt-news>).

For Lessons 5-7, educators have the option of either having students work with preprinted pages of selected newspapers or having students work with the newspapers online.

## Preprinting Selected Pages of the *Montana Post*:

This is easy if your district has a large-format printer. Simply download and send the PDF of the page that you want to the person who controls that printer (usually to create posters), and ask him or her to print out a newspaper-sized print. If your district does not have a large-format printer, a local newspaper, mortuary, or building contractor may have one. Often these businesses will print items as a public service.

If you do not have access to a large-format printer, you will need to print sections of the

paper and tile them. See [Appendix B](#) for detailed instructions.

## To View Selected Pages of the *Montana Post* Online:

You will need computer terminals with internet access (one for each group of students) to access the free Chronicling America website. Before class, copy the URLs that you wish the students to access and save them somewhere that students can find them. Have students click on the selected links to open the PDF files (or have them copy the URL into the address bar).

When the PDF file displays, have students use the navigational tools at the top of the page to enlarge the image and the arrow keys on the keyboard to view different parts of the page. Use the search function to find an article with specific words.

For the lessons below, we have selected specific newspaper pages for you and your students to use. Instructors may wish to explore Chronicling America to find other newspaper articles of interest and/or to teach their students how to conduct research in the digital newspapers. For more information and additional lesson plans using Chronicling America, see "Thinking Like a Historian: Using Digital Newspapers in the Classroom," by Ruth Chandler Ferris (<https://mhs.mt.gov/education/docs/ThinkingLessonPlan.pdf>).

## Lesson 5 What Can You Buy? What Could Mary Buy?

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### Overview

Students “shop” for themselves and an important adult in their lives, first in a current newspaper and then in the *Montana Post*.

### Instructional Outcomes

1. Students will understand more what types of products were available on the gold rush frontier.
2. Students will recognize ways that transportation, technology, and consumption patterns have changed the world in which they live.

### Materials

- Several copies of a current newspaper, including the advertising supplements
- Printouts of pages from the *Montana Post* showing advertisements;
- or laptops with an internet connection to allow students to use the digitized newspaper
- Student Worksheet ([see Appendix A](#))

### Procedure

Ask your students how they or their siblings earn money and compare the ways current youth earn money to how Mary and her sister earned money (see pages 36, 43). Then ask students what Mary bought with her earnings (see page 36). Have them speculate: What would they have purchased if they were Mary?

Next, provide students with a copy of the worksheet ([see Appendix A](#)), a current copy of your hometown newspaper, including the advertising supplements, and have them choose one item they would like to buy for themselves and one item they would like to buy for an adult in their life. Then, have students look at advertisement pages from the *Montana Post*

(either ones you have printed out or online), again selecting one item for themselves and one item for a favorite adult.

Lead a wrap-up discussion. Possible questions for discussion include:

- What surprised them about the advertisements in the *Montana Post*?
- Did they find everything they hoped to find?
- How are the goods that were available similar to and different from what is available today?
- How are the advertisements in the *Montana Post* similar and different from the advertisements in today’s newspapers?
- What accounts for those differences?

### Option

For questions comparing then and now, you may wish to create Venn diagrams as a class, projecting the Venn Diagram in [Appendix A](#) using a document camera or by drawing a Venn diagram on the whiteboard.

## Lesson 6: Same Event, Different Accounts

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### Overview

Students will read about an event described in *Girl from the Gulches*, use a Venn diagram to compare Mary's description with the description in the newspaper, and then write a paragraph either comparing and contrasting the two accounts or combining the two perspectives into a single description.

### Instructional Outcomes

1. Students will learn to analyze two texts on the same topic in order to build knowledge and/or to compare the approaches the authors take.
2. Students will learn to summarize information and combine information from different sources to tell a more complete story.

### Materials

- Printouts of pages from the *Montana Post* showing advertisements;
- or laptops with an internet connection to allow students to use the digitized newspaper;
- Student Worksheet ([see Appendix A](#))

### Procedure

Explain to students that they are going to look at pages from the *Montana Post*, a newspaper published in Virginia City during the time that Mary lived there. Distribute handouts with instructions. Have students read selected articles (either online or on printed pages) and reread the related passage in *Girl from the Gulches*. Ask them to complete the Venn diagram comparing the newspaper article(s) with Mary's account. Then have them write a paragraph either comparing and contrasting the different accounts or synthesizing the sources into a single story.

Instructors may wish to assign students specific topics to compare or allow students to choose one of the following topics for which information is found in both *Girl from the Gulches* and the *Montana Post*. Links to the newspaper are provided as well as what page the topic is found in *Girl from the Gulches*.

### The Hanging of J. A. (Jack) Slade

*Girl from the Gulches*, pp. 40-41

“The Vigilantes of Montana. A Full and Complete History of the Chase, Capture, Trial, and Execution of All the Outlaws Who Figured in the Bloody Drama. Chapter XXIII. The Arrest and Execution of Captain J. A. Slade,” *Montana Post*, January 27, 1866. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025293/1866-01-27/ed-1/seq-4.pdf>

**Note:** Thomas Dimsdale, the editor of the *Montana Post* and, for a short time, Mary's teacher, wrote this account of the hanging of Jack Slade as part of a longer work, *The Vigilantes of Montana*, the first book published in Montana Territory. He serialized his book in the *Montana Post*. Note that this account was published two years after Jack Slade's death. Slade was hung on March 10, 1864; the *Montana Post*'s first issue was published in August 1864. Thus, there are no contemporaneous articles recording the hanging.

### The Flour Riot

*Girl from the Gulches*, p. 45

“Warning to Housekeepers,” *Montana Post*, September 9, 1864. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025293/1864-09-24/ed-1/seq-3.pdf> (Article about probability of an upcoming flour shortage.)

“Flour,” *Montana Post*, April 22, 1865.

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025293/1865-04-22/ed-1/seq-3.pdf>

(Description of men searching for hidden flour.)

“From Salt Lake,” *Montana Post*, September 1, 1866. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025293/1866-09-01/ed-1/seq-5.pdf>  
(Article about flour supplies, emphasizing that a repeat of the flour riots is unlikely.)

**Note:** Dorothy Johnson wrote an article on the flour riots: “Flour Famine in Alder Gulch, 1864, *Montana The Magazine of Western History*, 7 (Winter 1957), 18-27, which can be accessed here: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4516123>

### **Fourth of July 1865**

*Girl from the Gulches*, p. 48

*Montana Post*, July 7, 1865.

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025293/1865-07-08/ed-1/seq-3.pdf>

**Note:** The newspaper contains two articles: one detailing the festivities and the other describing an accident at the parade, during which a small girl fell off a float and was run over.

### **The Circus Comes to Town**

*Girl from the Gulches*, p. 56

*Montana Post*, July 6, 1867. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025293/1867-07-06/ed-1/seq-8.pdf>

**Note:** Mary Sheehan saw the circus in Helena while the article describes the circus performance in Virginia City. Although they describe two different performances, the sources are very likely talking about the same traveling circus.

## Lesson 7: Found Poetry

### Overview

Students will create a found poem, based on an article in the *Montana Post*.

### Instructional Outcomes

1. Students will determine the central ideas or information of a primary source.
2. Students will master new vocabulary.
3. Students will engage with a primary source and make it their own by retelling the story as a poem.

### Materials

Classroom set of an article from the *Montana Post*.

### Procedure

Before class, find an interesting article on Chronicling America and make copies of it. Interesting articles can be found in almost every issue of the *Montana Post*. For example, the *Montana Post*, August 2, 1864, p. 3, includes the article “Virginia City,” describing the town to encourage immigrants, and “The Use of Deadly Weapons,” an article about a ban, issued by the Vigilance Committee, on discharging weapons. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025293/1864-08-27/ed-1/seq-3.pdf>

Distribute whichever article you choose and let each student read it quietly. Have them write for two to three minutes about what they think about this story, what they know about it, or what they think they know about it. When they are finished, have them “pair/share.”

Then, as a class reread the article, analyzing it using the worksheet “How to Look at a Written Document,” reprinted in [Appendix A](#). This will help the students practice observing and making inferences. It will also provide opportunities for classroom discussion and vocabulary building.

Explain to students that they will be creating a “found poem.” Explain that found poetry is about taking non-poetic text and choosing words and phrases to change it into poetry. You may wish to share an example of a found poem with students for inspiration (see following page.)

Then, as a class or in pairs, reread the article a third time, working with students to extract meaningful and interesting words and lines. Remember to keep them in the same order as the original piece. Alternately, have the students underline their choices.

Once students have a collection of words and phrases, have students cut out the boring and unimportant words. This is also where they will experiment with lines and stanzas. Tell them that they may change tense, punctuation, and capitalization. True found poetry limits the number of words the writer may add that are not from the original article. The writer chooses how long he or she wants the poem to be.

### Background Resources for Teachers

Poetry for Children, “Poetry and the Newspaper.” <https://poetryforchildren.blogspot.com/2007/04/poetry-and-newspaper.html>

“Teacher’s Guide Primary Source Set: Found Poetry,” Library of Congress, Teaching with Primary Sources. <https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/found-poetry/>

Here is the found poem "Winter," by Ruth Ferris, created from the article "On Skating," from the *Montana Post*, February 2, 1867.

**On Skating.**

"Gris," who is evidently a brick, writes as follows to the *Cincinnati Times*. We commend the item to all skaters and everybody else who can enjoy a laugh:

"Winter is the coldest season of the year, because it comes in the winter, mostly. In some countries winter comes in the summer, and then it is very pleasant. I wish winter came in summer in this country, which is the best Government that the sun ever shone upon. Then we could go skating barefoot and slide down hill in linen trowsers. We could snowball without our fingers getting cold—and men who go out sleigh-riding wouldn't have to stop at every tavern, to warm, as they do now. It snows more in the winter than it does at any other season of the year. This is because so many cutters and sleighs are made then.

"Ice grows much better in winter than in summer, which was an inconvenience before the discovery of ice houses. Water that is left out of doors is apt to freeze at this season. Some folks take in their wells and cisterns on a cold night and keep them by the fire, so they don't freeze.

"Skating is great fun in the winter. The boys get their skates on when the river is frozen over and race, play tag, break through the ice and get wet all over (they get drowned sometimes and are brought home all dripping, which makes their mothers scold, getting water all over the carpet in the front room,) fall and break their heads, and enjoy themselves in many other ways. A wicked boy once stole my skates and ran off with them, and I couldn't catch him. Mother said 'never mind, judgment will overtake him.'

"Well, if judgment does, judgment will have to be pretty lively on his legs, for that boy runs bully.

"There ain't much sleigh-riding except in the winter. Folks don't seem to care about it in warm weather. Grown-up boys and girls like to go sleigh-riding. The boys generally drive with one hand and help the girls to hold their muff with the other. Brother Bob let me go along a little way once when he took Celia Ann Crane out sleigh-riding, and I thought he paid more attention to holding the muff than he did to holding the horses.

"Snow-balling is another winter sport. I have snow-balled in the summer, but we used stones and hard apples. It isn't so amusing as it is in winter, somehow."

Winter is the coldest season  
It comes in the winter  
Some countries  
Winter comes in the summer

I wish winter came in the summer here  
We could go skating barefoot  
slide down the hill  
in linen trousers

We could snowball  
Without our fingers getting cold  
It snows more in winter  
Than any other season

Ice grows better in winter  
Than in summer  
Which was an inconvenience  
Before the discovery of ice houses

Water left out is apt to freeze  
Some folks take in their  
Wells and cisterns  
And keep them by the fire.

Skating is great fun  
Boys get their skates on  
When the river is frozen  
They race, play tag.

Break through the ice  
Get wet all over  
They drown sometimes  
Get brought home dripping

They fall  
And break their heads  
And enjoy themselves  
In many other ways

A wicked boy  
Once stole my skates,  
I couldn't catch him.

Mother said, "Never mind  
Judgment would overtake him."

Well if judgment does  
Judgment will have to be pretty lively  
That boy runs bully.

# Chapter Summaries, Comprehension Questions, and Critical Thinking Questions

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## Book One: Mary Ronan, "Into the Land of Gold"

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### Early Recollections (Chapter 1, pp. 9-14)

**Chapter Summary:** Mary retraces her early childhood journey from Louisville, Kentucky, to Montana, to California, and then back to Montana and illustrates the life of an early pioneer family who take on incredible hardships. Without hesitation or self-doubt, they head west to find a better, richer life, in spite of the obstacles that lie before them.

#### Chapter 1 Questions

1. How many different states did Mary and her family live in during her lifetime? Trace her travels on a map of the United States.
2. What role did Mary's extended family (aunts, uncles, cousins, friends) play in her life?
3. What treasures did Mary hold from her mother? Why do you suppose the items were so few?

### Overland to Colorado (Chapter 2, pp. 15-20)

**Chapter Summary:** Mary and her father spend six long but satisfying weeks on the wagon trail between St. Joseph, Missouri, and Denver, Colorado. This is the first of their many journeys together.

#### Chapter 2 Questions

1. Why did the Sheehans use mules rather than horses to pull their wagon across the plains?
2. What was unusual about the songs Mary learned from her father?

3. Why do you suppose Mary was left in Denver with the German couple while her father continued on to Nevada City?
4. What does Mary tell us about her father's view on education?
5. What tells us that the trails James Sheehan rode were full of danger?

### Denver Days (Chapter 3, pp. 21-24)

**Chapter Summary:** The Sheehans move to Denver, apparently for financial reasons. Money is extremely tight, and Mary learns much about the life of a miner's daughter.

#### Chapter 3 Questions

1. What occurred in Black Hawk that seems to foreshadow what Mary's life will be like?
2. What Catholic instruction did Mary break and how did she have to correct it?
3. Why was Mary especially happy to reach Bannack?

### The Long Trek (Chapter 4, pp. 25-30)

**Chapter Summary:** Mary and her family leave Denver headed for Montana in April 1863.

#### Chapter 4 Questions

1. How does Mary describe the daily routine of their life on the trail and what impression did the journey make?
2. What was the significance of Bridger's Cutoff?
3. Nelson Story and Jack Gallagher were two very different characters among the members of the wagon train bound for Montana. What important roles did they later play?

4. What were Mary's impressions of her new home, Bannack?
5. Why did Mary "stake her claim" in Alder Gulch and how did she do this?

### **Alder Gulch (Chapter 5, pp. 31-49)**

**Chapter Summary:** After a very brief time, the Sheehans follow the rush of miners from Bannack to a new gold discovery in Alder Gulch. Here Mary describes early-day Virginia City and the people who gave it a lasting history.

#### **Chapter 5 Questions**

1. What did Mary and her friends do to entertain themselves in Virginia City?
2. How did Mary meet Peter Ronan, her future husband?
3. Describe the school Mary attended.
4. How did Mary and her friends earn spending money?
5. What crime had Jack Slade committed that caused him to be hung?
6. Why did Mary's father need to protect himself while hauling freight, and what kept him "safe"?
7. What impertinent question did Mary ask Granville Stewart?
8. How did Mary's classmates react to news of Abraham Lincoln's assassination?

### **Last Chance Gulch (Chapter 6, pp. 50-71)**

**Chapter Summary:** Mary and the Sheehans move to Helena, another rich Montana gold-mining town, where Mary grows into a young woman in a wild, yet cultured community.

#### **Chapter 6 Questions**

1. What did Mary like about Helena?
2. Describe the Sheehans' cabin and their liv-

ing conditions in their new hometown.

3. Why did Mary's father leave the family for long periods of time?
4. Mary met again with Peter Ronan. What was his business at this time?
5. Mary loved the theatre. Why did her stepmother refuse to allow her to perform in *Richard III*?
6. What was Peter's connection to the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth?
7. How did Mary's father feel about her being engaged, and what changes came as a result?
8. Who were Major and Mrs. Maginnis?

### **Book One Critical Thinking Questions**

1. Why do you think Mary was allowed to witness the executions of Montana outlaws? Why did Helenans leave a body swinging from a tree branch for three days? Evaluate that decision.
2. Why do you think Mary had as much freedom as she did growing up? How would her life have been different if her father had not traveled?
3. Why do you suppose that men of nearly middle age were dating girls in their teens in early-day Helena?
4. Do you think Mary's stepmother was a good mother? Why or why not?

### **Book Two: Youth and Romance**

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#### **Peter Ronan (Chapter 7, pp. 75-79)**

**Chapter Summary:** Mary details the life story of Peter Ronan, an Irishman who came west from Rhode Island as a young man. They have much in common, as both the Sheehans and Ronan experienced the rough and tumble of

adventuring across the U.S. just before the Civil War, always headed to the goldfields of the West.

### **Chapter 7 Questions**

1. How did Peter get involved in the printing business, and what got “in the way” that curtailed his work?
2. What was Peter’s next stop after Kansas?
3. What was his job in Virginia City and then in Helena?

### **Critical Thinking Question**

1. Why was Mary’s mind almost blank as she and her family travel to Corinne, Utah, and then to California?

### **Bound for San Diego (Chapter 8, pp. 80-86)**

**Chapter Summary:** The Sheehan family seizes opportunity in Corinne, Utah, as they move on in search of their dream in the West.

### **Chapter 8 Questions**

1. Why was the city of Corinne booming in the summer of 1869 when the Sheehans arrived?
2. How did the Sheehans earn money in Corinne?
3. What were Mary’s memories about early-day Salt Lake City and other Mormon communities they encountered along the trail?
4. In the fall of 1869, the Sheehans moved on. Why did they make that decision and where were they bound?
5. Describe Mary’s first glimpse of early-day Los Angeles.
6. Why did the Sheehans decide to settle in San Juan Capistrano?

### **Critical Thinking Question**

1. What type of work did Mary perform in Corinne and what conclusions can you draw about women’s roles and women’s work from her descriptions?

### **Casa Blanca, San Juan Capistrano (Chapter 9, pp. 87-98)**

**Chapter Summary:** Upon arriving in San Juan Capistrano, the Sheehans are encouraged. Here they can finally buy a piece of land and settle in the beautiful and warm village community filled with Spanish culture and influenced by the Catholic mission.

### **Chapter 9 Questions**

1. Describe the tract of land on which the Sheehans filed a claim.
2. What was their “Casa Blanca” like? Describe its construction.
3. Describe the old mission and the art, décor, and culture of the institution.
4. Who took the Sheehans’ land disputes to the Supreme Court of the U.S. to gain their clear title?
5. What did Mary discover about Peter Ronan when she received a letter from Father Van Gorp in Helena? Who else wrote to Mary to encourage her to marry Peter Ronan?
6. Who, and what, helped Mary overcome the stigma of being a squatter’s daughter?
7. Who was Richard Egan, and what was his role in the mission village?

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

1. Why did the Mexicans consider Mary’s family to be “squatters”?
2. What is something that surprised you about the fiesta Mary attends?

3. Describe Richard Egan's relationship to Mary and her family.

### **School Days in Los Angeles (Chapter 10, pp. 99-110)**

**Chapter Summary:** Mary moves a few miles north to the city of Los Angeles to study at the Academy of the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul from 1871 to 1872. Her goal is to become a teacher.

### **Chapter 10 Questions**

1. Who from Mary's earlier days in Nevada City helped her settle into her new school in Los Angeles?
2. What did Mary like about life in the convent school?
3. What reignited Mary's feelings for Peter Ronan, and what did he convey in his Valentine's Day letter of 1872 to Mary?
4. What was Mr. Sheehan's reaction to the reappearance of Peter Ronan in Mary's life and how did Mary handle that reaction?
5. Why were Mary's plans to become a teacher dashed, and what three things concerned her when she realized she would not get a teaching certificate?

### **Critical Thinking Question**

1. Mary encounters many people in California that her family knew from Helena. Do you think this would be as likely if her story took place today? Why or why not?

### **Letters, Clippings and a Journal of 1873 (Chapter 11, pp. 111-124)**

**Chapter Summary:** Mary sends for Peter to come to San Juan Capistrano so they can decide whether to marry. When he finally arrives, he greets Mary and their lifelong love is reignited.

### **Chapter 11 Questions**

1. Why was Peter's long-awaited trip to Southern California postponed? What does that event tell you about the construction of businesses in early-day Helena?
2. When Peter finally arrived in San Juan Capistrano, what did Mary discover about their relationship?
3. Describe their wedding and reactions from Mary's family.
4. Trace the journey of their honeymoon as they return to Montana. Describe their stops in California and their train and stage route home to Helena.
5. After their wedding reception in Helena, what was Peter's gift to Mary? Detail the significance of that gift.

### **Critical Thinking Question**

Why did Mary choose to marry Peter Ronan? What made this a particularly difficult choice?

### **Vicissitudes Aplenty (Chapter 12, pp. 125-31)**

**Chapter Summary:** Mary and Peter begin to settle into their new life together in Helena. Good times are short, however, as another disaster befalls Peter's business and the couple must change locations again.

### **Chapter 12 Questions**

1. What was life like for Mary when she first returned to Helena? Describe her first home.
2. Who were the two famous "black robes" who came to Helena?
3. Why did Mary care for Mrs. Reinig and her baby? What does it suggest about early Helena?

- How did the Helena fire change Mary and Peter's lives?

### Critical Thinking Question

What role did religion play in Mary's life? Why do you think the clergy she knew were so important to her?

### Blackfoot City (Chapter 13, pp. 132-39)

**Chapter Summary:** Early in spring 1874, Peter relocates to Blackfoot City to begin his mining operation. Mary does not follow until she delivers their first child, Vincent Rankin, who was born in May. At the beginning of summer, all three Ronans restart their life together in a small four-room log cabin thirty miles from Helena and four miles outside the rough-and-tumble mining town of Blackfoot City.

### Chapter 13 Questions

- For whom did Mary and Peter name their eldest child?
- Describe Mary and Peter's life in 1874. How did they spend their winter months?
- For whom did the Ronans name their second child? What does this suggest about their values?
- What misfortune befell the Ronans in fall 1875 and who did they suspect? Why do you think they did this?
- To what political position was Peter appointed and how did this affect Mary?

### Critical Thinking Question

Appointments to government positions in the nineteenth century were highly political. Yet Mary writes that Peter was chosen as Indian agent "without any solicitation." Why do you think she claims this? Who likely helped Peter gain this appointment?

## Book 3: Life among the Flatheads

### Jocko Valley (Chapter 14, pp. 143-53)

**Chapter Summary:** Mary and Peter find a new home where they will spend the next twenty years, experiencing in a most intimate way the changes and challenges that Native Americans of western Montana face as they are moved onto the reservation. Mary and Peter become fast friends with their neighbors and try to lessen their turmoil as they eke out their existence on the Flathead Reservation.

### Chapter 14 Questions

- Why does Mary include two descriptions of the Jocko Valley at the beginning of this chapter?
- What evidence does Mary offer that suggests her husband was a good Indian agent?
- What was Mary's day-to-day life like on the Flathead Reservation?
- Why did the Ronans have so many house-guests? How did they feed so many?
- What was Peter Ronan's salary? What did he have to do to make sure his staff was paid?

### Critical Thinking Questions

- Why do you think that Peter Ronan was reappointed for the next sixteen years by both Democrat and Republican administrations in Washington, D.C.?
- Do you think Mary enjoyed her life as an agent's wife? Why or why not?

### Thunder Traveling Over the Mountains and the Nez Perce War (Chapter 15, pp. 154-70)

**Chapter Summary:** As Peter and Mary and their family settle into their outpost settlement in the Jocko, the Nez Perce War clouds the

horizon. Real danger and perceived danger lurk just over the southern hills of the Jocko and make all the reservation people very nervous.

### **Chapter 15 Questions**

1. Describe Mary's encounter on the front porch of her Jocko home with Chief Arlee and Baptiste Morengo.
2. What was the scare that hit the agency in July 1877 regarding the Nez Perce?
3. What did Michelle, chief of the Pend d'Oreilles, and Chief Arlee pledge to Mary and Peter Ronan?
4. Who appealed to Peter Ronan to be allowed to settle on the Flathead Reservation?
5. In the midst of the Nez Perce trouble, who came to the agency in July 1877? Describe the visit of those dignitaries and their findings about the Flathead Reservation.
6. What happened to Captain George's daughter?

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

1. Why did Chief Charlot issue an ultimatum to Chief Joseph and Chief Looking Glass regarding their passage through the Bitterroot?
2. Why did Michelle refuse to join Sitting Bull's warriors?
3. How does this chapter reveal that different tribes had different customs, beliefs, and histories?

### **One Small Domain (Chapter 16, pp. 171-81)**

**Chapter Summary:** Mary and Peter begin to settle in on the reservation and find that the job is seemingly never ending. They have many official guests and visitors and often go calling on others on the reservation as well.

### **Chapter 16 Questions**

1. Mary had various cooks and nannies. Why did the women often leave?
2. What were the meals like at the reservation headquarters?

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

1. Do you find Mary condescending in her observation of her household help on the reservation? Why do you suppose she spoke as she did about the Native Americans?
2. How does Mary describe the gift-giving habits of the Indians? Do you think it is accurate?

### **Indians, Customs and Religion (Chapter 17, pp. 182-93)**

**Chapter Summary:** Mary describes her neighbors, both Indian and white, and their observations of special occasions and their attitudes toward religion.

### **Chapter 17 Questions**

1. Mary observes the dress of several of the chiefs on the reservation. Describe several of them.
2. How did the buffalo herds fare each year, and how did the Allard/Pablo buffalo herd begin?
3. How does Mary describe the Indian's challenge with the concept of living in the same home year after year?
4. Detail Michael Rivais's history and his role as an interpreter. What languages did he speak?

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

1. In what ways, and why, did the missionaries integrate tribal rituals into Catholic ceremonies?
2. What did it mean to Michele to give the Ronans' third son his name? What did it mean to the Ronans? Compare the two perspectives of this gift.

## Melange (Chapter 18, pp. 194-208)

**Chapter Summary:** Mary shares details of the lives of people who surround her home in the Jocko.

### Chapter 18 Questions

1. Mary's father visits in 1879. What has become of her stepmother and stepsister, Kate?
2. What help did Mary have caring for and educating her children?
3. Who was Willie Murphy and what did his presence say about the Ronans' household?
4. In 1890 an altercation ends with a hanging in Missoula. How did the *Missoula Weekly Gazette* portray the event? What was the Ronans' perspective on the same event?

### Critical Thinking Questions

1. Mary describes in detail a shotgun Father Ravalli gives to Peter. How did that gift reflect the family's relationship with the priest?
2. How did the construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad change life on the reservation?

## Little Claw of a Grizzly Bear (Chapter 19, pp. 209-16)

**Chapter Summary:** Charlot, who is also known as Little Claw of a Grizzly Bear, remains steadfast in his determination to remain in his homeland in the Bitterroot Valley near Stevensville, Montana, rather than be resettled on the Flathead Reservation. In this chapter, Mary describes how he resisted pressure from senators, presidents, and even her husband until the fall of 1891, nearly forty-four years after the Hellgate Treaty was signed.

### Chapter 19 Questions

1. Why did Charlot refuse to leave the Bitterroot Valley for the Jocko Reservation?

2. What role did Peter Ronan play in encouraging the Bitterroot Salish to move to the reservation?
3. When did Chief Arlee die? Describe his funeral.
4. How does Mary describe the arrival of Charlot's band to the Jocko Reservation?

## Critical Thinking Question

1. Mary writes that the Indians of Charlot's band were "less tractable than those whom we had been living among." What does she mean by this?

## Last Years at the Agency (Chapter 20, pp. 217-20)

**Chapter Summary:** Mary describes a peaceful period from 1890 to 1893, when there is little trouble on the reservation. The railroad arrives and brings many new visitors to the Ronan household. There are clouds gathering on the horizon, however, when Peter discovers he had a severe heart condition.

### Chapter 20 Questions

1. How did newspaper correspondent Alice Palmer Henderson describe her visit to the Ronans'?
2. Why did Peter decide to retire in 1893, and what did he plan to do to support his family?
3. Why did Peter have to leave the Flathead and go to Seattle and Victoria? What happened on his return?
4. Why was Mary allowed to remain on the reservation after Peter's death? Where did she eventually move?

## Epilogue (pp. 221-22)

**Epilogue Summary:** Mary writes of an old Indian man who comes to visit her more than thirty years later. He attempts to repay her

with two silver dollars, for the blanket and hammer that he says he stole from her some forty-five years previously. She claims they have a warm, personal exchange in spite of the fact that he does not speak English, and he reaffirms her thought that this "shows the innate goodness and honesty of Indian nature."

### **Epilogue Critical Thinking Question**

1. What did Mary's encounter with Blind Michel say about Mary, her view of Native American culture, and the times in which she lived?

## Vocabulary by Chapter

### Chapter 1 - Early Recollections

undulate	cryptic
reticent	portentous
vague	wrathful
looming	ominous
shanty	quadrilles
brooches	parasol

### Chapter 2 - Overland to Colorado

jerkline	proprieties
allotted	mortification
tailings	condiments
pious	offhand
askance	utterly
marauders	encampment

### Chapter 3 - Denver Days

emigrants	arrears
dispossession	premonition
pathos	admonition
dispelled	luxuriance
catechism	frock
penance	reversal

### Chapter 4 - The Long Trek

mess-kit	primly
elusive	desperado
refrain	adulation
kempt	reconnoitered
gruesome	vigilant
indomitable	perilous

### Chapter 5 - Alder Gulch

pay dirt	ravishing
lashed	wraith
loafers	depravity
hurdy-gurdy	improvised
gaudy	consecrated
flaunted	turbulent

### Chapter 6 - Last Chance Gulch

waxing	flamboyant
exotic	coquettish
apprehended	inauspicious
gruesome	hilarity
insipid	avowed
bandied	temporal
tempestuous	cynicism

### Chapter 7 - Peter Ronan

epitomized	partisan
apprentice	temperament
ferment	obstruct
instituted	resourcefulness
innovation	yearning
suppression	venture

### Chapter 8 - Bound for San Diego

speculating	inconsistencies
chivalrous	oasis
patronizing	jaded
dapper	rancho
implied	pretentious
prairie schooner	greenbacks

### Chapter 9 - Casa Blanca, San Juan Capistrano

alcalde	vaqueros
sequestered	sinister
siesta	integrity
inertia	arroyo
squatter	caballero
elaborate	expatriation

### Chapter 10 - School Days in Los Angeles

straits	missive
endeavor	wretch
injunction	efface
tumult	tinker
sibilant	quaintly
vivacious	effusive

## **Chapter 11 - Letters, Clippings and a Journal of 1873**

assurance	savoir faire
bewail	proprietor
inclement	repast
cloister	countenance
ambient	ensued
motive	carousal

## **Chapter 12 - Vicissitudes Aplenty**

chronicler	blissfully
refined	linguist
deprivation	maimed
deferential	conflagration
expedients	inducements
endeavored	vicarious

## **Chapter 13 - Blackfoot City**

placer	optimistic
proprietor	seclusion
congeniality	tractable
poignant	flume
dejected	calamity
solicitation	opportune

## **Chapter 14 - Jocko Valley**

breadth	confluence
husbandry	patriarch
misappropriation	notorious
retinue	pageant
perpetual	futile
appropriation	idyllic

## **Chapter 15 - Thunder Traveling Over the Mountains...**

trekking	deferential
gallantry	usurpers
derision	misgivings
gesticulate	ascertain
stolidity	annihilation
ultimatum	audacious

## **Chapter 16 - One Small Domain**

adjudicate	cavalcade
tender	erratic
haughty	pathetic
guttural	illustrious
ailment	compendium

## **Chapter 17 - Indians, Customs, and Religion**

scepter	pompous
protruding	perpetual
bestow	dejection
condiment	quaint
eloquent	wanton
festooned	dispersed

## **Chapter 18 - Melange**

poignant	vicissitudes
indomitable	anecdote
precipitous	omnipresent
limelight	inducements
genial	memento
lewd	idyllic

## **Chapter 19 - Little Claw of a Grizzly Bear**

forging	delegation
tatters	chattels
motley	cortege
orations	impoverished
wavered	semblance
induce	exile

## **Chapter 20 - Last Years at the Agency**

robust	entanglements
confederated	impassive
desolate	abundant
profusion	unscrupulous
lineage	arrayed
forlorn	heralded

## Appendix A

# Student Handouts: Rubric for Reader's Theatre (Lesson 2)

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Read the statements below. Then indicate the number from the following scale that reflects your assessment of the student's or group's work.

**1 = Weak 2 = Moderately Weak 3 = Average 4 = Moderately Strong 5 = Strong**

1. The presentation includes the appropriate number of performance elements.

1 2 3 4 5

2. Each group member makes an appropriate contribution to the presentation.

1 2 3 4 5

3. The group works together to present a cohesive theme.

1 2 3 4 5

4. The presentation reflects the chosen topic and time period.

1 2 3 4 5

5. The presentation indicates an understanding of the topic or events portrayed.

1 2 3 4 5

6. Factual information is appropriate and accurate.

1 2 3 4 5

7. Group members speak clearly and loudly enough to be heard by the entire audience.

1 2 3 4 5

8. Group members perform in a dramatic and effective style.

1 2 3 4 5

9. Group members perform with confidence.

1 2 3 4 5

10. The presentation is informative and entertaining.

1 2 3 4 5

**Additional Comments:**

## Appendix A

# Student Handouts: What Can You Buy? What Could Mary Buy? (Lesson 5)

---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

In the book *Girl from the Gulches*, Mary tells how she and her sister worked to make money. She also told some of the things she spent her money on.

Think about all the things that are available for purchase today. Look at advertisements in a current newspaper and choose one item you would like to buy for yourself. Describe it.

What would you purchase for an important adult in your life?

Look at the ads in the *Montana Post* newspaper. What one thing would you purchase for yourself? Describe it.

What would you buy for an important adult in your life?

What types of things are advertised in the current newspaper?

What types of things were advertised in the *Montana Post*?

How were the two newspaper advertisements different? How were they the same?

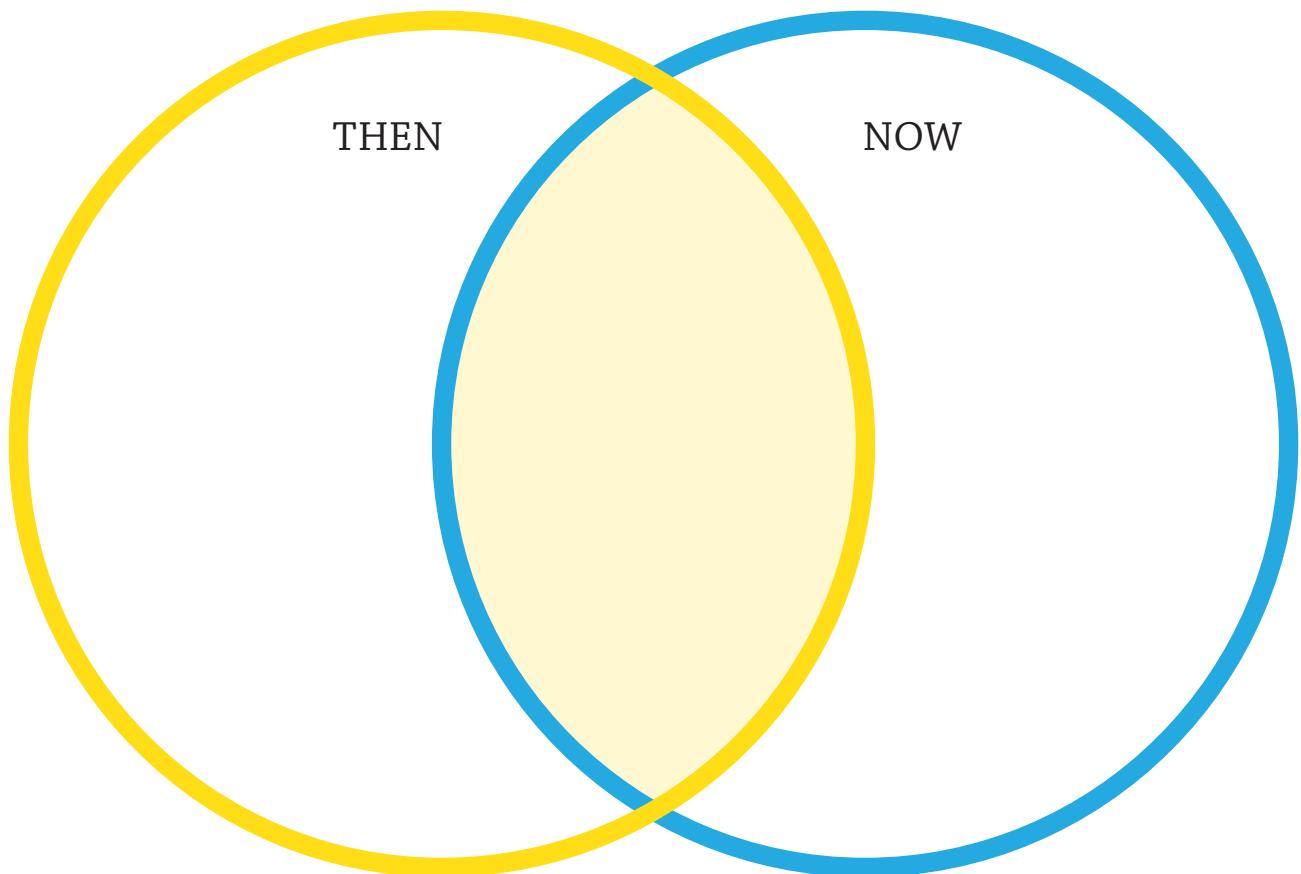
Appendix A

**Student Handouts: Venn Diagram:  
Comparing Then and Now (Lesson 5)**

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix A

# Student Handouts: Same Event, Different Accounts (Lesson 6)

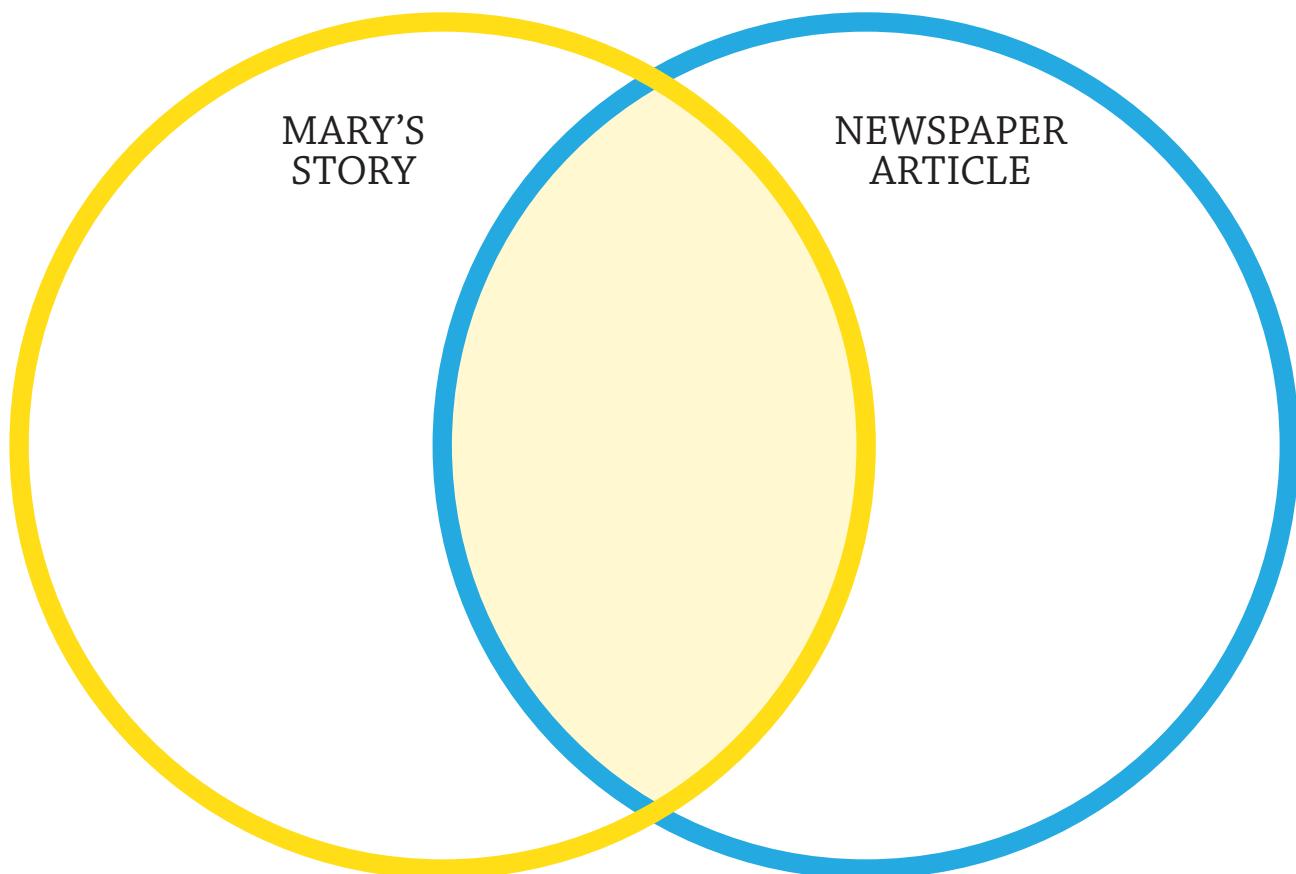
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Read two different passages about the same topic.
2. Write the characteristics of the topic as described in *Girl from the Gulches* in the circle on the left.
3. Write the characteristics of the topic as described in the *Montana Post* in the circle on the right.
4. Write the characteristics that both passages have in common in the overlapping section in the center of the diagram.
5. Analyze the data you have entered.
6. Write your own passage using the data you entered.

Venn Diagram: Comparing Accounts



## Appendix A

# How to Look at a Written Document

## (Adapted from the National Archives and Records Administration Written Analysis Worksheet.)

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**Document:** A written paper bearing the original, official, or legal form of something and which can be used to furnish decisive evidence or information.

1. Type of document:

<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper	<input type="checkbox"/> Journal	<input type="checkbox"/> Press Release	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
<input type="checkbox"/> Letter	<input type="checkbox"/> Map	<input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement	<input type="checkbox"/> Census Record
<input type="checkbox"/> Patent	<input type="checkbox"/> Telegram	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	

2. Which of the following is on the document:

<input type="checkbox"/> Letterhead	<input type="checkbox"/> Typed Letters	<input type="checkbox"/> Stamps
<input type="checkbox"/> Handwriting	<input type="checkbox"/> Seal	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

3. Date or dates of document: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Author or creator: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Who was supposed to read the document? \_\_\_\_\_

---

6. List two things the author said that you think are important:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

7. List two things this document tells you about life in Montana at the time it was written:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

8. Write a question to the author left unanswered by the document:

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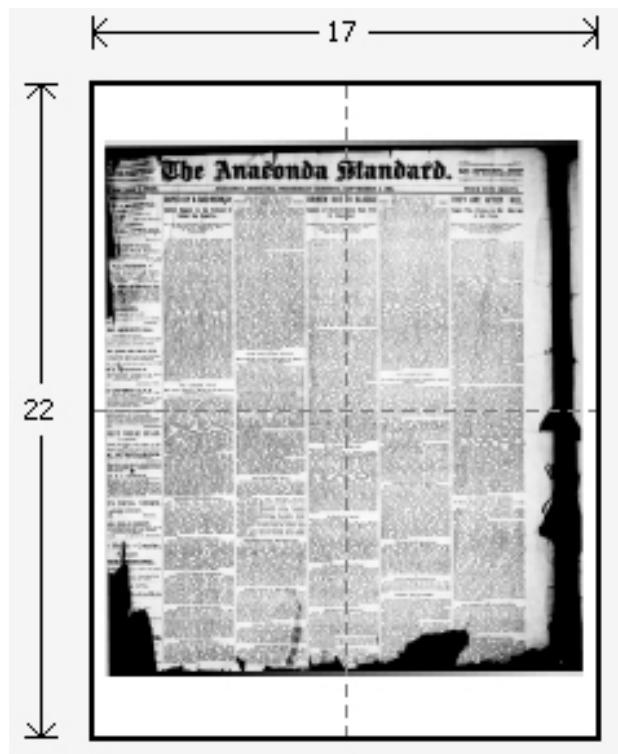
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## Appendix B: Printing Newspaper Pages from Chronicling America

Some districts have large-format printers. If so, you can send a PDF to the person who controls that printer (usually to create posters), to print out a newspaper-sized print. If your district does not have a large-format printer, your local newspaper or mortuary may have one. Often they will print items as a public service.

If you do not have access to a large-format printer, you will need to print sections of the paper and tile them. These instructions show how to print a newspaper page in Chronicling America using Internet Explorer. The instructions explain how to “tile” your printout across four or nine sheets of  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$  paper.

1. Make sure the newspaper page you want to print appears in the image viewer.
2. Click the PDF link above the image. The PDF will now appear in your browser window.
3. At upper left of the browser window, click the File menu.
4. In the File menu, click Print.
5. In the Print dialog box, under Printer, select your printer from the list.
6. At bottom left, under Page Handling, locate the Page Scaling dropdown list.
7. In the list, click Tile large pages.
8. In the Overlap box, enter 0.005.
9. Check the image under Preview: Composite at bottom right. To print the newspaper page across four sheets of paper, you should see two dotted lines: one vertical and one horizontal, as shown in Figure 1.
10. Now examine the image in Preview: Composite. If you see four sections, you are ready to print. To print, click OK.



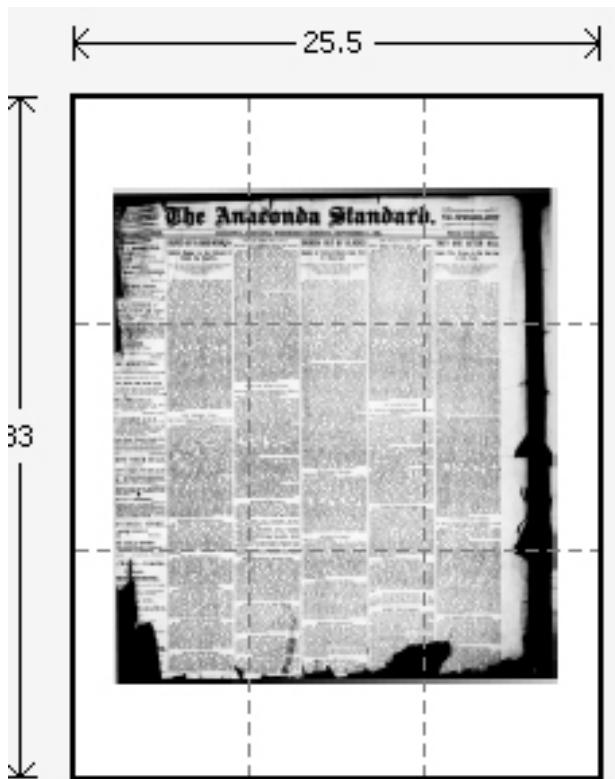
**Figure 1** Newspaper page shown divided into four sections. It will print across four sheets of  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$  paper.

If you do not see the page divided into four sections, as shown above, you can rescale it. In the Tile Scale box, replace the 100 with a lower percentage, for example, 90.

**Note:** The percentage required in the Tile Scale box will vary from one printer to the next, so be prepared to enter different numbers until Preview: Composite shows the desired segmentation.

**Hint:** If you want the type to be even larger—and you don't mind printing more than four sheets of paper—you can rescale the newspaper page so that it prints across nine sheets of paper. In the Tile Scale box, replace the 100 with a larger percentage, for example, 125 or 150.

To confirm, check the image in Preview: Composite. You should see four dotted lines: two vertical and two horizontal, as shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2** Newspaper page shown divided into nine sections. It will print across nine sheets of  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$  paper.

**Note:** The percentage required in the Tile Scale box will vary from one printer to the next, so be prepared to enter different numbers until Preview: Composite shows the desired segmentation.