

## Response to *Across Five Aprils*

I recently read the book *Across Five Aprils* by Irene Hunt. This book takes place in southern Illinois on a farm during the civil war. The main character is a nine-year-old boy named Jethro. Throughout this book, he is faced with many difficult aspects of the war. He feels pressured to work well on the farm and take up all the responsibilities of being the only boy/man to work on the farm after his brothers leave for the war and his father has a heart attack. During the events that happen throughout this book and the war, Jethro matures a lot. He's able to take up the responsibilities of becoming a man. He shows his maturity these three ways.

The first time Jethro shows a great amount of maturity is when his father allows him to go to Newton all by himself. He hitches up their wagon and rides fifteen miles into town. It gives him a great feeling to know that his father trusts him that much.

It was fifteen miles to Newton; to cover that distance with a team, to do the chores and handle money—that was a man's job. To be trusted with it was a huge satisfaction (68).

In Newton, Jethro is badgered by a local man, Guy Wortman, about his brother Bill's choice to join the Southern army. Jethro sticks up for Bill and his family like a grown man and manages to keep himself under control. When he finally gets home, he tells his parents everything that happened instead of keeping it to himself.

The second way Jeth shows maturity is the way he takes all of the responsibilities of the farm after his father has a heart attack. He is eleven years old and he has to work with the strength of a man of thirty. This one quote from the book explains a lot:

If someone had asked Jethro to name the time when he left childhood behind him, he might have named that last week of March in 1862. He had learned a great deal about men and their unpredictable behavior the day he drove alone to

Newton; now he was to learn what it meant to be the man of a family at ten (92).

He manages everything: the farm, the fields, everything. Never once does he complain to his parents about the work he has to do. That shows strength of his heart. He doesn't want to set a burden on his parents.

The third way Jethro shows much maturity was how he deals with Eb. Eb is one of his cousins who went off to the war in the beginning with Jethro's brother Tom. Tom died on May 10, 1843. After Tom's death, Eb is sick of the war and he deserts. Government men come to the Creightons to warn them that Eb has deserted. They tell them that if they help Eb at all they will be tried in a court and punished the same way as Eb. A few weeks later Jethro is plowing the field and he hears someone calling his name. He goes into the woods and sees it's Eb. For the next week, although he knows he shouldn't, he feeds Eb and brings him food and blankets. He keeps the whole thing a secret. He feels bad about breaking the law, so he writes Abe Lincoln a letter explaining his problem. Mr. Lincoln writes back and sets up a plan for deserters to rejoin the army. Eb ends up going back to the war without a serious punishment. Jethro shows maturity by being able to handle that responsibility.

These are just three ways Jethro matures through the progress of the war. Many things happen and they cause him to think and grow, mentally and physically. I did not really enjoy this book, but I liked the way the characters changed throughout the book.

Introduction:

Background Information: Who, what, when, where, why, how, etc.

- Across 5 tips by Frenc Hunt
- Southern Illinois during Civil War
- Jethro must deal with difficult parts of war
- Father has heart attack + brothers have to must take care of farm

Thesis Statement:

Jethro shows his maturity in three ways

Body Paragraphs:

1	<p>Topic Sentence The first time Jethro shows a great amount of maturity is when he goes to Newton all by himself.</p>	Facts/evidence
2	<p>Topic Sentence The second way Jethro shows maturity is the way he takes all the responsibilities of the farm.</p>	
3	<p>Topic Sentence: The third way Jethro shows maturity</p>	

- ① goes 15 miles to Newton
- ② Quote
- ③ bothered by Guy Smithson
- ④ sticks up for family
- ⑤ tells parents
- ① takes responsibilities of farm
- ② Quote
- ③ Never complains
- ④ doesn't burden parents
- ⑤ handles responsibility
- ⑥ There are 3 ways Setho matures
- ⑦ He grew mentally + physically
- ⑧ Didn't really like book
- ① Explain who Eb is
- ② Eb deserts
- ③ Setho finds Eb in woods
- ④ brings Eb food + blankets
- ⑤ writes to Lincoln

Conclusion:

Restate Thesis  
Summarize main points  
So what?

explanation

Explanation

