

Dear Levi: Letters from the Overland Trail
by Elvira Woodruff

Historical fiction can be used to integrate social studies across the curriculum. For example,

* Language Arts: You've already made it to Oregon. Write a letter to Austin offering him specific advice and encouragement.

* Reading: As you read pioneer books over the next two weeks, make journal entries about how you would feel in the main characters' shoes.

* Math: Conduct a five-question survey to see what at least fifteen fifth-graders know about wagon trains. Analyze your data and write a conclusion.

* Geography: Sketch three landmarks Austin might see on his journey on the Overland Trail.

* Health: Using the computer, research one disease or condition that pioneers frequently suffered from.

* Art: Design a button you would give Reuben to sew on his special "button coat."

* Music: Create a new verse for "Oh Susannah!" that reflects Austin's experiences.

* Critical thinking: Identify a problem Austin faced. With a partner, brainstorm at least three alternative solutions. Circle the one you like best and tell why.

* Physical education: Learn a square dance.

Source: Lindquist, Tarry (1997). Ways That Work: Putting Social Studies Standards Into Practice. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Dear Austin: Letters from the Underground Railroad (Dear Levi Series) by Elvira Woodruff Paperback \$6.99. In Stock. Ships from and sold by Amazon.com. As he makes his way across the country, Austin writes home to his brother Levi, describing life on the rugged Overland Trail. Extensively researched, with episodes based on true incidents, "the epistolary format and character development offer solid reading."--"Booklist An IRA Teachers' Choice. About the Author. Elvira Woodruff is the author of more than 20 picture books and novels for young adults. In 1851, 12-year-old orphan Austin Ives joins a wagon train headed for California. As he makes his way across the country, Austin writes home to his brother Levi, describing life on the rugged Overland Trail. Extensively researched, with episodes based on true incidents, "the epistolary format and character development offer solid reading."--"Booklist. An IRA Teachers' Choice. Sign up to hear the latest from all of your favorite Random House series, authors & brands! " Parents Newsletter. Get age-specific book recommendations, engaging printable activities, as well as news about the latest