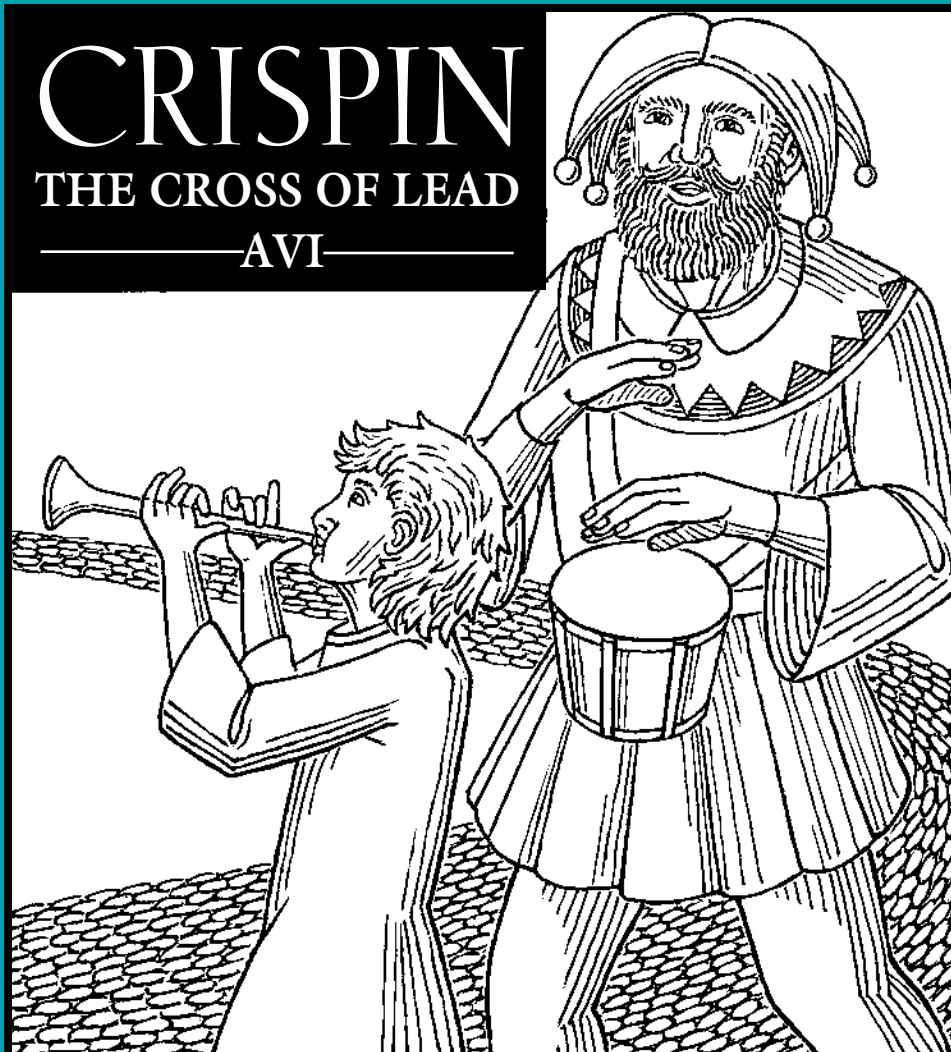


Novel·Ties

**CRISPIN**  
THE CROSS OF LEAD  
— AVI —



**A Study Guide**

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**LEARNING LINKS**

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## For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide consists of lessons to use in conjunction with the book *Crispin: The Cross of Lead*. Written in chapter-by-chapter format, the guide contains a synopsis, pre-reading activities, vocabulary and comprehension exercises, as well as extension activities to be used as follow-up to the novel.

In a homogeneous classroom, whole class instruction with one title is appropriate. In a heterogeneous classroom, reading groups should be formed: each group works on a different novel at its reading level. Depending upon the length of time devoted to reading in the classroom, each novel, with its guide and accompanying lessons, may be completed in three to six weeks.

Begin using NOVEL-TIES for guided reading by distributing the novel and a folder to each child. Distribute duplicated pages of the study guide for students to place in their folders. After examining the cover and glancing through the book, students can participate in several pre-reading activities. Vocabulary questions should be considered prior to reading a chapter or group of chapters; all other work should be done after the chapter has been read. Comprehension questions can be answered orally or in writing. The classroom teacher should determine the amount of work to be assigned, always keeping in mind that readers must be nurtured and that the ultimate goal is encouraging students' love of reading.

The benefits of using NOVEL-TIES are numerous. Students read good literature in the original, rather than in abridged or edited form. The good reading habits will be transferred to the books students read independently. Passive readers become active, avid readers.

**Middle Class**

Slowly, a middle class emerged in European society. After 1000 A.D., peddlers began to go from town to town selling goods. Agriculture became more profitable for the peasants, whose farms became larger and yielded more crops. The surrounding villages also grew. In time, the peddlers formed a merchant class, working to import and export goods from neighboring countries. The merchant class also included skilled workers such as masons, bakers, and armorers. To prepare for these skills, craftsmen trained apprentices. These craftsmen eventually formed guilds, the first trade unions, to protect them from competition and to command higher wages. The guilds were also responsible for establishing courts of law to settle local disputes among the townspeople. As trade increased, there were fewer and fewer peasants. In response to centuries of unfair taxation, the merchant class arranged to pay a fixed tax to the lord of the manor or king. This was the beginning of civic government as villagers undertook the rights and responsibilities of self-government.

**King Edward III**

Born in 1327 Edward spent his youth in his mother's court. He was crowned at age fourteen after his father was deposed. During his fifty-year reign, governmental reforms affirmed the power of the emerging middle class in Parliament while placing the power of the nobility into the hands of a few. The export of raw wool prospered and spread wealth across the nation but was offset by the devastation wrought by the Black Death. Early success in war ultimately failed to produce lasting results. Failed military excursions caused excessive taxation and seriously eroded Edward's popular support. In 1377, the year of his death, England faced political and social unrest as well as economic disaster.

**Plague**

The plague, or "Black Death," was a form of bubonic plague that ravaged Europe in the fourteenth century. It was a highly contagious disease that was transmitted by fleas from infected rodents and was characterized by high fever, weakness, and the inflammatory swelling of the lymphatic gland. The plague first hit England in 1348–1349; another plague struck in 1362 and again in 1369. An estimated one-third of the population of Europe perished in the plague, which did not discriminate between rich and poor, urban or rural.

**John Ball**

The specific date and place of birth of John Ball are not known. It is known, however, that he was a peasant priest in fourteenth-century England who was known for preaching radical ideas, such as the end of the feudal system and the common ownership of property. For preaching ideas that were in direct opposition to the Church, John Ball was excommunicated and imprisoned in 1364. He was freed, and then again put in prison for life. During the Peasant's Revolt of 1381, John Ball was freed by the rebels and became a leader of the movement. After the rebellion was suppressed, Ball was caught, hanged, drawn, and quartered.

**PRE-READING QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES**

- 1. Preview this book by reading the title and the author’s name and by looking at the illustration on the cover. What do you think this story is going to be about? Where and when might the action take place? Have you read any books or seen any films that took place in this era? Have you read any books by the same author?
- 2. Read the Background Information on page two of this study guide and do some additional research on the Middle Ages. Begin the K-W-L Chart on the Middle Ages below by filling in the first two columns before you read the book. Return to this K-W-L Chart to fill in the last column after you complete the book.

<b>The Middle Ages</b>		
<b>What I Know -K-</b>	<b>What I Want To Learn -W-</b>	<b>What I Learned -L-</b>