

# *The Red Badge of Courage*

by Stephen Crane

This “seeded” edition of *The Red Badge of Courage* includes “seeds” of information about vocabulary, factual references, and phrasing that may have been easily understood in the 1890’s. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, however, some of these words and phrases are not so clearly understood and could make comprehension of the text more difficult. Additionally words and phrases can have multiple meanings. Therefore, “seeds” of explanation are included here to focus the reader on Stephen Crane’s contextual meaning in *The Red Badge of Courage*. This contextual meaning is found in parentheses and brackets as noted in the key that follows.

## KEY:

Vocabulary words are in **bold**, and the meaning is in (parentheses) i.e. His body vibrated from the weight and force of his **imprecations** (swearing). And he could string **oaths** (swears) with the **facility** (ease) of a maiden who strings beads.

Factual references are in **bold italics** and the meaning is in (parentheses) i.e They're going to ***Richmond*** (Virginia: could be around the time of the three-day Battle of Chancellorsville in May, 1863/two years before the end of the war), or some place, while we fight all the ***Johnnies*** (soldiers of The South).

Challenging phrases or sentence/s are underlined and the meaning is in [brackets] i.e. **Presently** (Now), men were running hither and thither [in different directions] in all ways.... The youth sat up and gave vent to [made] an enormous yawn.

# Reading Seeded Literature

- Get ready to **connect** information you already know to a little new information the author wants you to learn.
- In the beginning, it **will take more time** to read seeded literature because **word meanings and other kinds of information are added** to what the author has written.

## BUT...

- You will know more as you read.
- **You do not have to stop reading to look for information in a dictionary or on the internet, because it is right there where you are reading.**
- You will be thinking more as you read.
- You will be remembering more as you read.
- You will be able to answer “Why” and “How” questions more easily.
- As you read more and more seeded literature, **you will see that you are reading more quickly.** There will be less to read, because **you will teach yourself how to skip over information that you have already learned.**

# *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane

## CHAPTER 1

The cold passed **reluctantly** (not really wanting to) from the earth, and the **retiring** (lighter/thinning) fogs **revealed** (showed) an army stretched out on the hills, resting. As the **landscape** (trees/bushes/hills/fields) changed from brown to green, the army awakened, and began to tremble with eagerness at the noise of rumors. It cast its eyes [looked] upon the roads, which were growing from long **troughs** (ditches) of liquid mud to proper **thoroughfares** (roads). A river, **amber** (yellow-brown)-**tinted** (colored) in the shadow of its banks, **purled** (flowed with tiny waves) at the army's feet; and at night, when the stream had become of a sorrowful blackness, one could see across it the red, eyelike gleam of **hostile** (enemy) camp-fires set in the low **brows** (ridges/tops) of distant hills.

Once a certain tall soldier developed virtues [was being good] and went **resolutely** (surely) to wash a shirt. He came flying back from a brook waving his **garment** (shirt) **bannerlike** (like a flag). He was swelled with [excited about] a tale he had heard from a **reliable** (truthful) friend, who had heard it from a truthful **cavalryman** (horse soldier), who had heard it from his trustworthy brother, one of the **orderlies** (supply/messenger soldiers) at **division** (an army section of 20,000 soldiers) headquarters. He adopted the important air of [acted important like] a **herald** (messenger) in red and gold.

"We're goin' t' move t'morra--sure," he said **pompously** (acting important) to a group in the company street. "We're goin' 'way up the river, cut across, an' come around in behind 'em."

To his attentive audience he drew a loud and **elaborate** (detailed) plan of a very brilliant **campaign** (plan of attack). When he had finished, the blue-clothed men scattered into small arguing groups between the rows of **squat** (short/low) brown huts. A negro **teamster** (person who moves supplies) who had been dancing upon a cracker box with the **hilarious** (laughing) **encouragement** (cheers) of **twoscore** (forty) soldiers was **deserted** (left alone). He sat **mournfully** (sadly) down. Smoke drifted lazily from a multitude of [many] **quaint** (odd) chimneys.

"It's a lie! that's all it is--a thunderin' lie!" said another **private** (private/corporal/sergeant/lieutenant/captain/major/colonel/general) loudly. His smooth face was **flushed** (red), and his hands were **thrust** (pushed) **sulkily** (sadly) into his trouser's pockets. He took the matter as an **affront** (insult) to him. "I don't believe the derved old army's ever going to move. We're set. I've got ready to move eight times in the last two weeks, and we ain't moved yet."

The tall soldier felt called upon [asked/forced] to defend the truth of a rumor he himself had **introduced** (started). He and the loud one came near to fighting over it.

A **corporal** (private/corporal/sergeant/ lieutenant/captain/major/colonel/general) began to swear before the **assemblage** (group). He had just put a costly board floor in his house, he said. During the early spring he had refrained from [thought he shouldn't be] adding **extensively** (a lot) to the comfort of his **environment** (home) because he had felt that the army might start on the march at any moment. Of late [Recently], however, he had been **impressed** (made to think) that they were in a sort of **eternal** (forever) camp.

Many of the men engaged in a spirited debate [argued]. One outlined in a **peculiarly** (strangely) **lucid** (clear thinking) **manner** (way) all the plans of the commanding **general** (private/corporal/sergeant/ lieutenant/captain/major/colonel/general). He was opposed by men who **advocated** (believed) that there were other plans of **campaign** (battle). They **clamored** (yelled) at each other, numbers making **futile** (unsuccessful) **bids** (tries) for the **popular** (most) attention. Meanwhile, the soldier who had **fetched** (gotten) the rumor **bustled** (walked quickly) **about** (around) with much importance. He was continually **assailed** (challenged) by questions.

"What's up, Jim?"

"Th'army's goin' t' move."

"Ah, what yeh talkin' about? How yeh know it is?"

"Well, yeh kin b'lieve me er not, jest as yeh like. I don't care a hang [at all]."

There was much food for thought [a lot to think about] in the **manner** (way) in which he **replied** (answered). He came near to convincing them by disdaining to produce [ignoring their demands for] proofs. They grew much excited over it.

There was a youthful **private** (private/corporal/sergeant/ lieutenant/captain/major/colonel/general) who listened with eager ears to the words of the tall soldier and to the **varied** (different) comments of his **comrades** (buddies). After receiving a fill of discussions [listening to too much talk] concerning marches and attacks, he went to his hut and crawled through an **intricate** (tricky) hole that served it as a door. He wished to be alone with some new thoughts that had lately come to him.

He lay down on a wide bunk that stretched across the end of the room. In the other end, cracker boxes were made to serve [used] as furniture. They were grouped **about** (around) the fireplace. A picture from an **illustrated weekly** (newspaper) was upon the log walls, and three rifles were **paralleled** (lined up) on **pegs** (small, thick wooden nails). Equipments hung on handy **projections** (things that stuck out), and some tin dishes lay upon a small pile of firewood. A folded tent was serving as a roof. The sunlight, without, beating upon it, made it glow a light yellow shade. A small window shot an **oblique** (slanted/tilted) square of whiter light upon the **cluttered** (messy) floor. The smoke from the fire at times **neglected** (did not go up) the clay chimney and wreathed into (circled/went around) the room, and this **flimsy** (thin/weak)

chimney of clay and sticks made endless threats to set ablaze [burn] the whole **establishment** (place).

The youth was in a little **trance** (unreal dream) of **astonishment** (being amazed). So they were at last going to fight. On the morrow [Tomorrow], perhaps, there would be a battle, and he would be in it. For a time he was obliged to labor [forcing himself] to make himself believe. He could not accept with **assurance** (trust) an **omen** (sign/warning) that he was about to minge in one of those great affairs of the earth [be part of a great moment in life].

He had, of course, dreamed of battles all his life--of **vague** (unclear/blurred) and bloody conflicts that had thrilled him with their **sweep** (large size) and fire. In **visions** (dreams) he had seen himself in many struggles. He had imagined peoples **secure** (safe) in the shadow of his eagle-eyed **pro prowess** (skill). But awake he had **regarded** (thought of) battles as **crimson** (red) **blotches** (stains) on the pages of the past. He had put them as things of the **bygone** (past) with his thought-images of **heavy crowns** (kings) and high castles. There was a portion of the world's history which he had **regarded** (thought of) as the time of wars, but it, he thought, had been long gone over the horizon [far away] and had disappeared forever.

From his home his youthful eyes had looked upon the war in his own country with distrust. It must be some sort of a play affair [game]. He had long despaired of witnessing [wanted to see] a Greeklike struggle [gods at war]. Such would be no more, he had said. Men were **better** (more peaceful), or more **timid** (afraid/fearful). **Secular** (Real world) and religious education had **effaced** (erased) the throat-grappling [choking] **instinct** (feeling), or else firm finance [the world of business/money] held in check [controlled/stopped] the **passions** (strong feelings).

He had **burned** (been excited) several times to **enlist** (join the army). Tales of great movements shook the land. They might not be *distinctly Homeric* (like the famous war stories written by Homer thousands of years ago), but there seemed to be much glory in them. He had read of marches, **sieges** (long, patiently fought battles and blockades of castles, forts and cities), conflicts, and he had longed to see it all. His busy mind had drawn for him large pictures extravagant in [filled with] color, **lurid** (shocking) with **breathless** (exciting) deeds.

But his mother had discouraged him [did not want him to be a soldier]. She had affected to look with [felt] some contempt upon [hatred for] the **quality** (goodness) of his war **ardor** (desires) and **patriotism** (love for country/government). She could calmly seat herself and with no **apparent** (clear/plain) difficulty give him many hundreds of reasons why he was of **vastly** (much) more importance on the farm than on the field of battle. She had had certain ways of **expression** (speaking) that told him that her statements on the subject came from a deep **conviction** (belief). Moreover, on her side, was his belief that her **ethical** (good) motive in [reason for] the **argument** (discussion) was **impregnable** (not to be changed).

At last, however, he had made **firm** (a strong) **rebellion** (violent protest) against this **yellow** (caution) light thrown upon the color of his **ambitions** (goals/dreams). The newspapers, the gossip of the village, his own picturings, had **aroused** (excited) him to an uncheckable degree [so he would not be stopped from joining the army]. They were in truth fighting finely down there. Almost every day the newspaper printed **accounts** (stories) of a **decisive** (definite and important) victory.