

An Overview - Using the Study Guides

A guide to selecting, sequencing, and using the Prescott Girls study guides in the classroom.

Purpose of This Guide

This overview shows how to use *The Prescott Girls* study guides together to build lessons in history, literacy, and critical thinking. Rather than serving as a lesson plan, it provides a framework for using the guides together effectively.

Each study guide focuses on a specific theme, historical concept, or artifact connected to the story. This overview helps you determine where to begin, how to group the materials, and how to adapt them to your classroom.

About the Book

The Prescott Girls is a middle-grade historical novel grounded in real nineteenth-century artifacts, places, and family history.

At the center of the story are three sisters—Beckie, Louisa, and Sallie—whose lives change after the death of their father and their move to the Old Pownalborough Court House in Dresden, Maine.

What makes the story distinctive is its foundation in documented historical objects, including needlework samplers created by members of the Prescott family. These artifacts provide insight into the education, daily life, and values of children in early nineteenth-century America.

Together, the novel and accompanying study guides invite students not only to read about the past, but to think like historians—examining evidence, asking questions, and considering how people made choices in their own time.



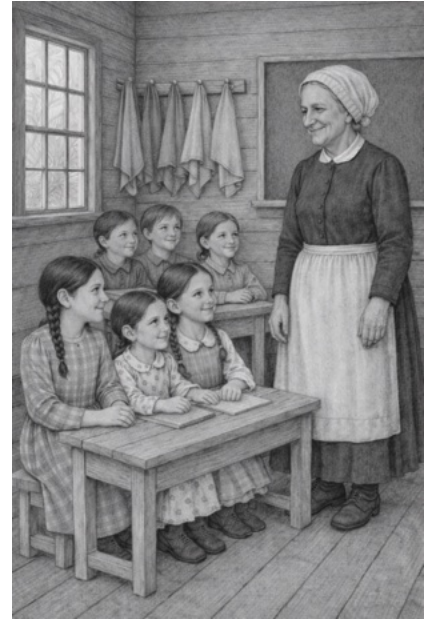
Recommended Grade Levels

This book and its accompanying materials are well suited for:

- Grades 4–7
- Middle-grade literature units
- American history units (early nineteenth century)
- Homeschool literature and history studies

The materials can be used for:

- Read-aloud experiences
- Independent reading
- Cross-curricular units combining history, literacy, and art



Getting Started

Once you are familiar with the book and its themes, begin with:

Study Guide – Discussion Questions

This guide introduces students to the story as a whole and encourages initial engagement with characters, themes, and setting. It provides a foundation before moving into more focused topics.

From there, you may choose to follow a thematic path based on your instructional goals.

Suggested Pathways

The study guides can be used in a variety of sequences depending on your focus. Below are several suggested approaches.

Historical Context

To help students understand daily life and setting:

- *Study Guide – Life in 1830s Maine*
- *Study Guide – Geography*
- *Study Guide – The Old Pownalborough Court House*

These guides provide background on where and how the Prescott family lived, grounding the story in real historical conditions.



Material Culture and Artifacts

To explore how historians learn from physical objects:

- *Study Guide – Beckie’s Sampler*
- *Study Guide – How Historians Trace Artifacts*
- *Study Guide – Family Trees*

These guides introduce students to primary sources, historical evidence, and the process of connecting artifacts to real people and events.



Communication and Literacy

To examine how people shared ideas in the 19th century:

- *Study Guide – Letters and Communication in the 1830s*
- *Study Guide – Creating the Illustrations*

These materials explore written communication, storytelling, and how information was recorded and preserved.



Social Themes and Critical Thinking

To engage students in discussion of larger ideas:

- *Study Guide – The Sugar Boycott*
- *The Prescott Girls – Facts and Fiction*

These guides encourage students to think about historical choices, ethical questions, and the relationship between fiction and real events.



Needlework and Education

To explore learning and daily life through needlework:

- *Study Guide – Needlework and Education*
- *Study Guide – Beckie’s Sampler*

These guides highlight how girls learned, practiced skills, and expressed ideas through their work.

