

# *Caroline*

## **Learning Guide**

Learn about patriotism, sacrificing for the common good, and everyday heroes through the stories of Caroline, set during the War of 1812.

Developed by  
American Girl and  
the Smithsonian's  
National Museum of  
American History





Caroline

## About the Caroline Books

Caroline Abbott is growing up during the War of 1812. Her stories teach readers about the war that is sometimes called “America’s Second War of Independence.” Students will also learn about the importance of staying strong, making good decisions, and taking action.

After the American colonies won the Revolutionary War, the United States grew rapidly, but Great Britain refused to treat its former colonies as a truly independent nation. Americans were angered by British policies that hurt U.S. trade and were outraged that American sailors were captured at sea and forced to serve in the British Navy. Britain also tried to slow U.S. expansion and settlement by provoking hostilities along America’s northern and westward frontiers.

Caroline’s family lives near the frontier, on the shore of Lake Ontario. When war breaks out, her father, a shipbuilder, is captured and imprisoned by the British. Caroline feels frightened and helpless, but she promises her father she will stay steady. She helps her mother keep the household and shipyard running, smuggles information to help her father escape, saves an American supply boat from British capture, and shows great bravery when her village is attacked. As she navigates the challenges of wartime, Caroline proves her steadiness and strength—much as the fledgling United States fought the War of 1812 to secure its standing as a truly independent nation.

The six books of the core series are:

**Book 1:** *Meet Caroline*

**Book 2:** *Caroline’s Secret Message*

**Book 3:** *A Surprise for Caroline*

**Book 4:** *Caroline Takes a Chance*

**Book 5:** *Caroline’s Battle*

**Book 6:** *Changes for Caroline*

## Instructions for Teachers

Assign or read aloud to your students some or all of the books in numerical order. As needed, print copies of the work sheets on pages 4–9 that you would like to use in class. Before assigning the work sheets to your students, consider the talking points and discussion questions for each work sheet, provided below. Note: It’s not essential to read all six books in order to complete the work sheets.

## Talking Points and Discussion

### Patriotism and the War of 1812

The War of 1812 was fought in many locations, including the Great Lakes region, Washington D.C., Baltimore, and New Orleans. By winning several key battles against the British—the strongest fighting force in the world at that time—the young United States proved its strength and independence. It was the War of 1812 that gave Americans their national anthem, created a reverence for the American flag, and established a sense of national pride and confidence. *Discussion questions:* What does it mean to be patriotic? How do Americans show patriotism?

### Design Your Family Flag

*Adapted from the Smithsonian’s “Design Your Own Family Flag” activity.* Find the expanded version at: [http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/starspangled/Design\\_Flag.pdf](http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/starspangled/Design_Flag.pdf)

The morning after the bombardment of American forces at Fort McHenry, Francis Scott Key watched as the American flag was raised high over the fort in triumph. He was so moved that he wrote the words to a song he called “The Star-Spangled Banner,” which would eventually become our national anthem. In *Caroline’s Battle*, Caroline experiences a meaningful moment much like Key’s when she sees the American flag flying over Sackets Harbor after the British attack the town. For both Key and Caroline, the flag symbolizes the nation’s strength and perseverance during the War of 1812. *Discussion questions:* The flag, like any other symbol, can mean different things to different people. What is a symbol? What does the American flag symbolize for you?

The design of the American flag we have today symbolizes our country’s history. The red and white stripes represent the original thirteen colonies and the fifty white stars stand for the fifty states. But the government has never given official meanings to the colors on the flag. *Discussion questions:* What are the colors on the American flag? What do these colors mean to you and why?

### Make Your Own Map Sampler

*Inspired by the Smithsonian’s “Neighborhood Navigator” activity.* Find the original version at: [http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/smalls/smalls\\_navigator.pdf](http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/smalls/smalls_navigator.pdf)

Caroline loves living in Sackets Harbor, a small port village on the shore of Lake Ontario in northern New York. The lake is particularly important to Caroline, who dreams of becoming a ship captain just like her father someday. *Discussion questions:* What do you love about where you live? What parts of your town are most important to you?

### Sacrificing for the Common Good

Caroline faces many situations in which she has to choose between her own desires and the common good. Gradually, she learns to master her impulsiveness and balance her own interests against those of her family, community, and country. *Discussion questions:* What is the definition of the “common good”? What does it mean to “sacrifice for the common good”?

### Everyday Heroes

Caroline is an ordinary girl who faces extraordinary challenges when war breaks out. She often doubts herself and sometimes makes mistakes, and she certainly doesn’t think of herself as a hero. But by facing difficult situations squarely and giving of herself without expecting anything in return, Caroline becomes the kind of real, everyday hero that anyone can be. *Discussion questions:* Who are some everyday heroes in your community? What makes these people heroic?



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This museum is home to one of our nation’s treasured icons—the Star-Spangled Banner, the actual flag that inspired the national anthem.

### **Smithsonian’s History Explorer**

Find hundreds of free standards-based resources for teaching American history:  
<http://historyexplorer.si.edu>

#### Smithsonian Online Exhibits

##### **The Star-Spangled Banner:**

<http://americanhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner/>

Reading Activities:

<http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/starspangled/>

Educational Resources:

<http://americanhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner/educational-resources.aspx>

##### **On the Water—Maritime History:**

<http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthewater/>

Educational Resources:

<http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthewater/info/resources.html>

Reading Activities:

<http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/water/>

Snapshots in Time Activity:

[http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthewater/info/resources\\_snapshots\\_in\\_time.html](http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthewater/info/resources_snapshots_in_time.html)



Caroline

## Answer Key

### Patriotism and the War of 1812

1. Answers may include the following: Many Americans wanted to take control of Canada and expand American territory northward, but the British would not give up their control of the land; Americans believed that the British were urging the Native Americans to stand up to the U.S. settlers who had taken over their land; Even after the Revolutionary War ended, the British continued to capture American sailors at sea and force them to serve in the British Navy; The British blocked American ships from landing in other countries to trade, making it very difficult for American farmers, merchants, and tradesmen to sell their products and make a living.
2. Answers will vary.

### Sacrificing for the Common Good

1. Answers may include the following: After Papa is captured, Caroline must take on more of the household chores so that Mama can run the family's shipyard. Although she would rather be at the shipyard, Caroline swallows her protests and pitches in at home. Later, she makes more difficult sacrifices to help protect her community from attack and prevent the British from obtaining ships and supplies.
2. Answers will vary.

### Everyday Heroes

1. Being heroic means doing good deeds or performing courageous acts to help someone in need.
2. Answers will vary, but may include the following:

Caroline gives up her new carpet and brings it to the gun crew to wrap around the cannonballs, putting herself in great danger as she delivers it in the midst of a British attack.

Mama takes over the shipyard in Papa's absence to ensure that it can continue to contribute to the war effort.

Grandmother courageously stays all alone at home so that Caroline and Mrs. Shaw can take the carpet to the gun crew during the attack.
3. Answers will vary.

### Cargo Crossword Puzzle

1. books, 2. stockings, 3. paint, 4. tea, 5. sailcloth, 6. (across) fabric, 6. (down) flour, 7. thread, 8. chocolate, 9. china, 10. nails, 11. sugar, 12. salt, 13. spices



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## Patriotism and the War of 1812

1. Caroline hoped that there would not be a war, but her friend Seth thought it was “high time for war” against the British. What were some reasons Americans were angry with the British in 1812?

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2. List some things you love about America. Would you be willing to go to war to protect these things? Explain your answer.

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3. Francis Scott Key wrote the “The Star-Spangled Banner” after the British attacked a fort in Baltimore, Maryland, during the War of 1812. All night, the British bombarded the fort with bombs. Key was afraid the fort would fall. The next morning, when he saw the American flag flying, Key was filled with patriotism. He wrote lyrics and set the words to a popular tune. It became the national anthem in 1931.

Think about what makes you feel patriotic. Then write a poem about it on a separate piece of paper.

### The Star-Spangled Banner

O say can you see, by the dawn’s early light,  
 What so proudly we hailed at the twilight’s last gleaming,  
 Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,  
 O’er\* the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?  
 And the rocket’s red glare, the bombs bursting in air,  
 Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there,  
 O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave  
 O’er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

\* “O’er” is the shortened form of the word “over.”  
 It is often used in poetry and song lyrics.





Caroline

## Design Your Family Flag

1. On the left-hand side of the chart below, write four words that describe your family. For inspiration, think about your favorite family memories and traditions or any places, people, objects, or ideas that are important to your family. On the right-hand side of the chart, brainstorm pictures or colors to use as symbols for each word. (For example, if you have six people in your family, you could write *six* on the left and then draw a six-pointed star on the right.)

Words to describe your family	Symbols (colors or pictures)

2. Look at your chart and think about the pictures and colors on the right-hand side. For each idea on the left-hand side, choose only one picture or color to use as a symbol. Circle the four symbolic colors and images you would want to include on a flag that represents your family.
3. On a separate sheet of paper, draw a flag that represents your family using the symbols you circled.



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## Make Your Own Map Sampler

When Caroline was growing up, girls embroidered samplers to practice their skills in needlework. Map samplers were considered a good way for girls to learn geography as they stitched.

In *Caroline's Secret Message*, Caroline stitches a map sampler of Lake Ontario's eastern shoreline. When she needs to find a way to communicate a secret message to her father after he is captured by the British, she sews clues into the map in hopes of helping him return home safely.

In this activity, you will create a map sampler of a place you know well, using a pencil and paper instead of needle and thread. Imagine you are creating the map for somebody who has never been to this place. What important details will you include to help that person find the way?



At left, Caroline's sampler. Above, a detail from a map sampler stitched in 1829. The sampler was made by 15-year-old Elizabeth Ann Goldin, and it is now a part of the collection at the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum.

Activity:

1. **Choose a place:** Think of a place that you know well, such as your home or your neighborhood, to draw on your sampler.
2. **Take a trip:**
  - If you chose your home, take notes as you go from room to room. How are the rooms arranged—is your room next to the bathroom, or do you have to walk down the hall to get there? How is the furniture arranged in each room? Where are the windows and doors in each room?
  - If you chose your neighborhood, ask a parent to come with you as you walk, bike, or ride in a car from your house to a destination of your choice. As you travel to your destination, take notes on what you see. How many houses or buildings are on each street? Are there any special landmarks to point out? Think about what you have to do at a specific landmark, such as continuing to go straight or taking a turn. Notice the path of the road or sidewalk. Is it straight or does it curve? Is it wide or narrow?
3. **Make your sampler:** Use your notes to draw a map sampler of your home or neighborhood on a separate sheet of paper. Be sure to include the details you wrote down, such as arrangement of furniture or location of landmarks.



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## Sacrificing for the Common Good

1. Caroline often chooses to do what's best for her family, community, or country instead of what she wants to do. Describe two situations in which Caroline makes a sacrifice for the common good, either by doing something she didn't want to do or by giving up something she wanted.

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2. Think of a time when you placed the needs of your family, friends, or community above your own wishes. Your sacrifice could be giving up something of value, or it could be spending your free time to help others or make someone else happy. Then answer the following questions:

What would you have preferred to do? \_\_\_\_\_

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What did you do instead? \_\_\_\_\_

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Who benefited from your sacrifice? \_\_\_\_\_

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How did you feel about it afterward? \_\_\_\_\_

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Would you make the same type of sacrifice again? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Everyday Heroes

1. Caroline’s stories are about ordinary people who face extraordinary challenges in a time of war. By rising to the challenges they face, they become “everyday heroes.” Although they don’t become famous, their actions are still heroic and very important to their community and country. In your own words, describe what it means to be heroic.

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### War Heroes

The Revolutionary War had famous heroes, such as George Washington and Paul Revere. They are still famous today for their bravery and leadership. The War of 1812 didn’t have many famous heroes, but it had plenty of *everyday heroes*—ordinary people who showed great courage, made sacrifices for the common good, and helped fight the war.

2. In the chart below, describe something each character does in *Meet Caroline* that makes her an everyday hero, and tell why the action is heroic.

Character	What the character does	Why it’s heroic
Caroline		
Mama		
Grandmother		

3. Think of an everyday hero—someone who isn’t famous but who has done things you admire. Your everyday hero might be someone you know personally or just be someone you’ve read about. It could be an adult or a child. Tell about the person and why you admire her or him.

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## Cargo Crossword



Caroline and Hosea, the sailmaker at Abbott's Shipyard, watch for Irish Jack's boat, which is carrying much-needed supplies for the village. Fit the names of the supplies into the grid according to their length. Start filling in the 3- and 4-letter words. There's only one place the words will fit. Then fill in the rest of the puzzle.

**3 letters**

TEA

**4 letters**

SALT

**5 letters**

BOOKS

CHINA

FLOUR

NAILS

PAINT

SUGAR

**6 letters**

FABRIC

SPICES

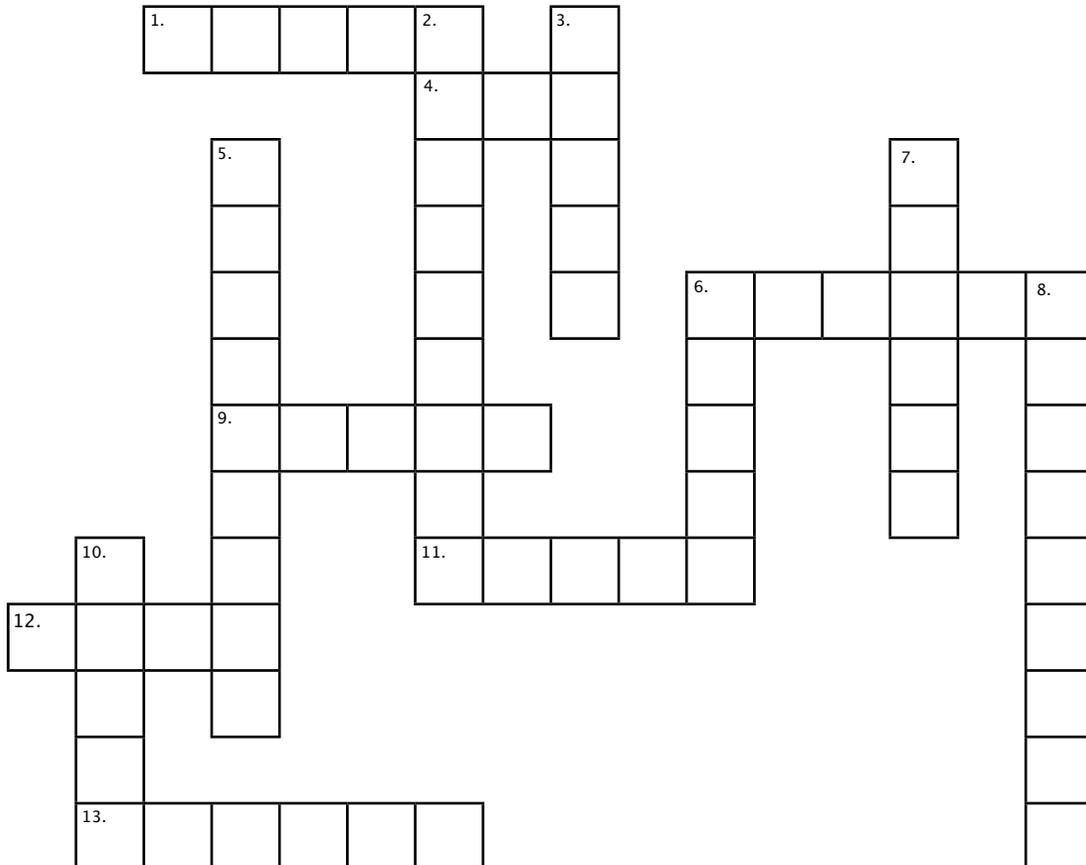
THREAD

**9 letters**

SAILCLOTH

STOCKINGS

CHOCOLATE



READ ALL OF CAROLINE'S STORIES,  
available at bookstores and *americangirl.com*.

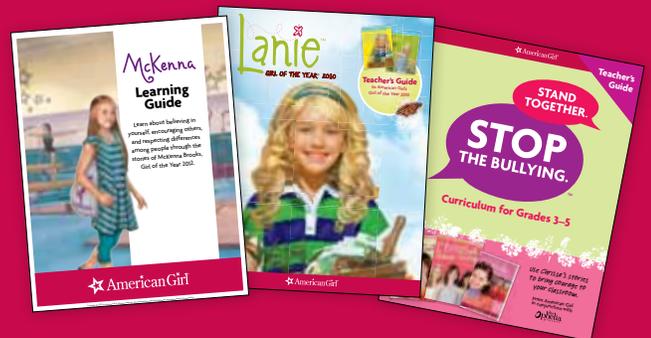


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American Girl and the Smithsonian Institution are proud to join together to bring you curriculum materials that will help your students learn about patriotism and heroism— just as Caroline does in 1812.

