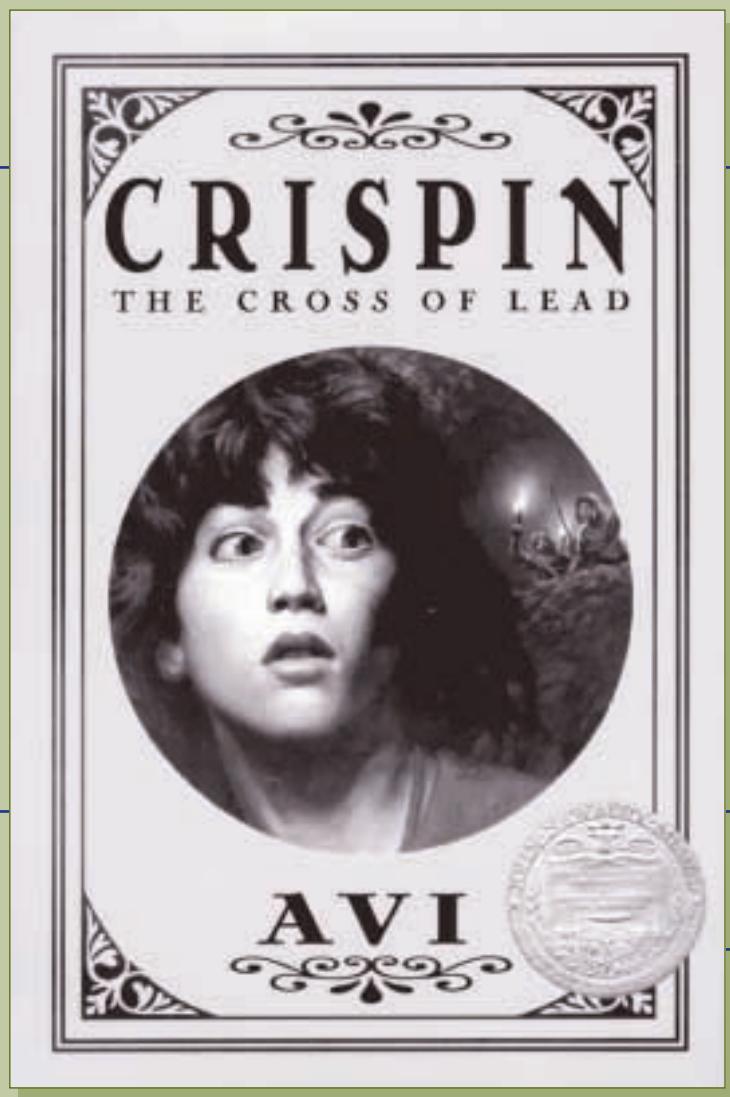


# CRISPIN: THE CROSS OF LEAD

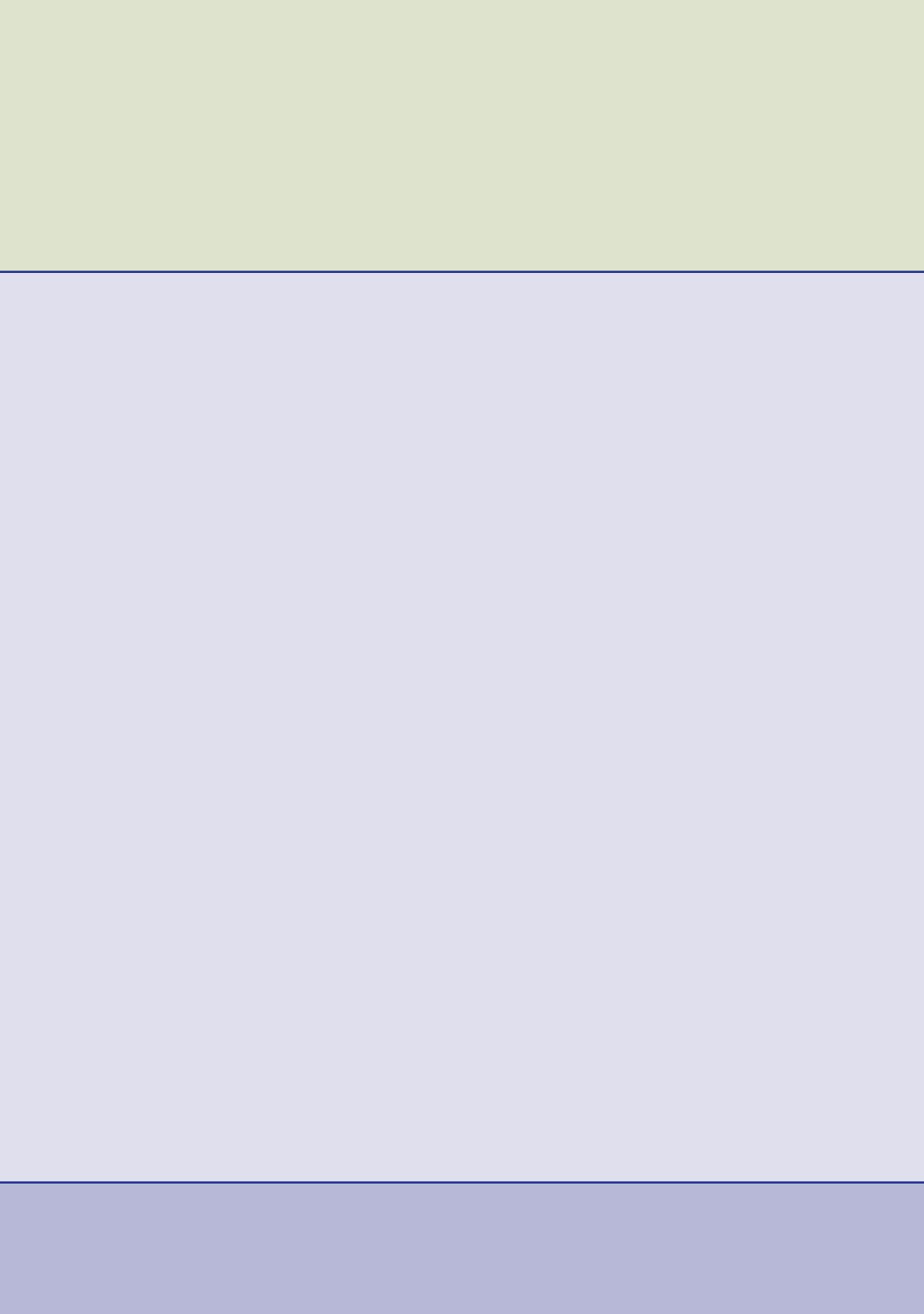
by Avi

Jacket illustration © 2002 by Tristan Elwell



TEACHER'S GUIDE  
HYPERION BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

LESSON PLAN SERIES



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## ENGLAND IN THE 14TH CENTURY

Historian Barbara Tuchman described the fourteenth century as “violent, tormented, bewildered, suffering and disintegrating . . . a time, as many thought, of Satan triumphant.” In a world where religion ruled all, immortal damnation seemed not only possible but likely.

Avi’s *Crispin: The Cross of Lead* takes place in the last part of the fourteenth century. The world had changed since the midcentury, and new movements were afoot. The following gives a brief description of major historical currents that shaped Crispin’s world. Crispin’s entire frame of reference is his village and the church when the story begins.

### PLAUE

The black death, or the “Great Mortality” as Crispin calls it, is a fresh memory. His mother tells him that his father died in the epidemic, and his journeys take him through villages ravaged by the plague. An estimated one-third of the population of Europe perished in the plague. The plague did not discriminate between rich and poor, urban or rural.

The effects of the plague were numerous and far-reaching. Fields lay fallow that were formerly tilled. Entire communities of learning were lost. Even the Hundred Years’ War between England and France ground to a halt. A heavy taxation was levied on the few who survived. If everything was subject to the will of God, why had God done this to them? Survivors searched for meaning amid the devastation.

### RELIGION

In fourteenth-century England, “religion” and “church” meant Roman Catholicism. This religion pervaded every aspect of life. Church attendance was compulsory. Church bells regulated the day through canonical hours (Prime, Matins, Compline, etc.), reminding everyone within earshot of the need to pray. Members of the clergy often held positions of power, prestige, and influence.

The church taught its followers that everything happened as a result of God’s will, and that their life on earth was but a prelude to the afterlife—either

Heaven or Hell. The authority of the church and the government was never questioned, because their leaders were in place as a result of divine will.

Yet religion also offered sanctuary and comfort. In *Crispin*, Bear notes that his training as a priest and his ability to read make it illegal to hang him. Father Quinel tells Crispin that he may claim sanctuary if he is discovered in the village church, though at best it is only a temporary refuge. And Crispin often prays in times of despair, although eventually he discovers that prayer alone cannot save him.

It is interesting to note that while religious images intended for the poor—such as those seen in Stromford Church—focus on the suffering of Christ and his mother, the images in Lord Furnival's chapel are of a glorious Madonna bestowing a blessing on a knight. The church clearly had different messages for its members, depending on their wealth and social standing: for the poor, the value of suffering; for the noble and wealthy, divine blessings.

## FEUDALISM

There were essentially three levels of people in the medieval world: those who prayed (clergy), those who fought and ruled (knights and nobility), and those who worked (serfs).

With God at the top of medieval society, and clergy as God's intermediaries on earth, many clergy had positions of influence and, at the very least, a smattering of education. The clergy were the spiritual leaders of medieval society.

Medieval society was built on the assumption of the divine right of kings. Though a temporal leader, the king was only the king because God had willed it so. To go against the king, was to go against God. *Crispin* takes place in the time immediately before the Peasants' Revolt.

The king was supported by the nobility and the knights. The duty of the nobles and the knights was the protection of earthly possessions. Their obligations were to bear arms and pledge allegiance to their social superiors. The Hundred Years' War gave them plenty of opportunities to practice their skills, and also made them generations of absentee landlords, leaving others to protect and care for their land and serfs.

Serfs were little better than slaves. Crispin knows his society's limitations:

"But how can I leave? I'm bound to the land. They'll never give me permission to go." To leave is to become an outlaw and exist outside his known world.

## REVOLT

By 1377 those at the bottom of feudal society—the great majority of the populace—were becoming restless and angry. Buffeted by heavy taxation and war, worn out by plague, some people formed new movements against the current overall and political structure. Serfs had little to lose by giving up their ties to the land.

In 1381 those emotions would take hold of the country, and the Peasants' Revolt would for a few precious days give victory to the common man.

In Crispin's time, a priest and scholar named John Wycliffe had been preaching that Christ was man's only overlord and that the Scriptures were the supreme authority. As Master of Balliol, one of the colleges of Oxford University, Wycliffe had one of the supreme scholarly pulpits in the country. Years after the revolt, he and his followers were the first to translate the Bible into English. His influence in Crispin's day was still primarily in clerical circles but would later affect those of the lower clergy.

One such member of that lower clergy was John Ball, who appears as a character in *Crispin: The Cross of Lead*. Though not affiliated with Wycliffe, Ball advocated ecclesiastical poverty and social equality for all citizens for nearly two decades before the revolt erupted. Ball was a medieval agitator, and many a local manorial insurrection sprang up after his sermons. It was John Ball who gave the revolt its political slogan: "When Adam delved and Eve span/Who was then the gentleman?" In other words, as mankind is descended from the one couple, whom Ball characterized as workers, no person could claim to be the lord of another. Ball was in prison when the revolt finally broke out and after a brief spell of freedom was captured and killed, a martyr to failed emancipation.

Though the Peasants' Revolt lasted only a few days, it marks the beginning of modern history for many historians. War and plague had depleted the nation's resources and as a result, the inherent value of labor had risen. The serfs now had a bargaining chip they had not discovered before. Wycliffe's and Ball's sermons sowed the seeds of independence that Crispin is ready to harvest at the end of *Crispin: The Cross of Lead*.

## PLOT SUMMARY

### A NAMELESS BOY

"Asta's son" is all he's ever been called. The lack of a name is appropriate, because he and his mother are the poorest of peasants in 1377 England. Their village is one of the meanest of the absent Lord Furnival's holdings.

Upon his mother's death, Asta's son and the priest Father Quinel bury her in a pauper's grave, only to be accosted by the village steward, John Aycliffe, with a demand for the death tax: the ox that was the family's sole possession. In despair over his plight and his mother's death, the boy runs into the woods, where later he witnesses a meeting between the steward and an unknown knight. The boy's presence is discovered, and the steward tries to kill him on the spot.

### A WOLF'S HEAD

The next day, the steward publicly accuses Asta's son of a crime he did not commit. The boy loses everything when he is declared a "wolf's head." Now officially less than human, he is legal prey of any man. Escape from his village is the only route for survival. With Father Quinel's help, he plans to leave, taking only his mother's cross of lead and his newly revealed name of Crispin. He discovers Father Quinel's body as he prepares to cross the boundary of the village.

### NO LONGER ALONE

Days later, hungry and frightened, the boy encounters a huge juggler named Bear in a village decimated by plague. Bear forces the boy to become his servant but paradoxically begins to teach him lessons of freedom. Bear becomes the first to call the ragged boy by his given name. As he instructs Crispin in the rudiments of music and they entertain in small hamlets, it becomes clear that Aycliffe is relentlessly pursuing Crispin.

Bear has a mysterious, prearranged appointment in Great Wexly and takes the boy to the large city. Once there, they learn that Lord Furnival has died, leaving no heirs and a power-hungry widow, a kinswoman of John Aycliffe. In spite of Bear's insistence that he not leave the inn where they are lodging,

Crispin explores the great city. But Aycliffe and his men are in Great Wexly, and Aycliffe recognizes Crispin in the cathedral. He makes a narrow escape and is reunited with Bear. They return to the inn, where they learn that the man Bear has come to see, John Ball, has arrived. A curious Crispin listens as Bear joins John Ball and others to discuss a peasant uprising. Bear counsels patience, but the others are eager for revolt.

## SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND RESCUE

As Bear leaves for an assignation the following day, Crispin realizes that his friend is being followed. He is able to warn the gathering in time for all to escape except Bear, who is captured and taken to Furnival's palace. A dismayed Crispin returns to the lodging but is anxious to find a way to help Bear. The landlady tells Crispin what the words say on his mother's cross of lead: "Crispin: Son of Furnival." He now understands why Aycliffe wants him dead.

That night, Crispin stealthily enters the palace, witnessing more wealth than he ever imagined. In the chapel, he sees a painting of a glorious Madonna and a knight and realizes the knight's face is his own. Aycliffe comes upon the absorbed boy, but Crispin is able to negotiate a deal with the help of a dagger pressed to the steward's throat: Spare his life and that of Bear in exchange for giving Aycliffe the cross of lead and renouncing any claim to the Furnival inheritance.

Crispin eventually rouses the tortured and bleeding Bear in the palace dungeons. They are led to the city walls, where Aycliffe declares that no one else is bound by his promise and that anyone may kill the wolf's head. Enraged, Bear challenges Aycliffe, who meets his end when Bear flings him at the spears of his men. Showing that he is a man of honor, Crispin places the cross of lead on Aycliffe's still chest.

## RESOLUTION: FREE AT LAST

They walk through the gate, where Bear recounts hearing "In the midst of life, there is death" chanted from within the cathedral. "But, Crispin," he says, "can't you see the new truth we've made? In the midst of death there's life!" Bear dubs Crispin a free man, "free of all obligations save to his God," as Crispin rejoices in knowing his true name in his heart.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

**Asta (Crispin's mother):** An outcast who was shunned by the community. She concealed her genteel upbringing from all but the priest.

**Bear (real name: Orson Hrothgar):** A juggler by trade, his true purpose is to gauge the possibility of a successful revolt and act as eyes and ears for John Ball and other reformers.

**Crispin:** Thirteen-year-old son of Asta, a cottar. The illegitimate son of Lord Furnival, Crispin becomes an unwitting threat to Lady Furnival's power and position.

**Duke of Lancaster:** This real-life historical figure was the third son of Edward III, also known as John of Gaunt. The Duke of Lancaster is one of the kingdom's wealthiest men. His eldest son became Henry IV after deposing Richard II.

**Father Quinel:** Village priest of Stromford and possible illegitimate son of Lord Furnival, the kindly Father Quinel is the only possessor of the secret of Crispin's parentage and is murdered on the night of Crispin's escape.

**John Aycliffe:** Steward of the manor, kin to the wife of the Lord Furnival and persecutor of Crispin. Aycliff is a tyrant to the serfs bound to Stromford Village and pursues Crispin with Javert-like persistence.

**John Ball:** One of the book's historical figures, John Ball was a zealous social reformer and was one of the principal instigators of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381.

**King Edward III:** An actual ruler of England whose claim upon the French throne precipitated the Hundred Years' War. In 1377 he is nearing the end of his reign, and his eldest son, known as the Black Prince, has died, leaving an ambiguous succession.

**Lady Furnival:** The widow of Lord Furnival, she is anxious to retain the power and wealth of her position and dictates that all possible offspring of her dead husband be killed.

**Lord Furnival:** Lord of Stromford Village, among other holdings. A veteran of the Hundred Years' War, he is Crispin's biological father and notorious for his depravity and cruelty.

**Richard of Bordeaux:** The factual grandson of Edward III and son of the Black Prince, Richard is the legitimate heir to the throne and later ruled as Richard II.

**Sir Richard du Brey:** A vassal of Lord Furnival, du Brey is the messenger who delivers Crispin's death sentence to John Aycliffe.

**Widow Daventry:** Landlady of the Green Man, an inn in Great Wexly. Twice widowed with all seven of her children dead, she is kind to Crispin and arranges his escape from the town.

## JOHN BALL

One of the key leaders of the Peasants' Revolt was John Ball, one of several historical figures portrayed in the story. When the revolution failed, he was executed.

While we do not know when John Ball was born, we do know that he was an English priest who was known for preaching radical ideas, such as the end of the feudal system (serfdom) as well as the common ownership of property. In 1364 he was excommunicated by the bishop of London, freed, and then again put in prison for life. During the rebellion, known as the Peasants' Revolt, he was freed by the rebels and became a leader of the movement, in which some 30,000 men took part. A contemporary historian Jean Froissart said of John Ball's 1381 sermon to the rebels that it was "the most moving plea for social equity in the history of the English language." After the rebellion was suppressed, Ball was caught, hanged, drawn, and quartered.



John Ball preaching to the rebels in 1381.

## KEY PLACES AND TERMS

**Christendom:** A common reference to the known world; those lands and peoples who are Christian and therefore, to the medieval mind, civilized

**Great Wexly:** A fictional city compared by Father Quinel in magnitude to London and Exeter; a place with its own liberties. It is here that Lord Furnival has his principal residence.

**Lodgecot:** A fictional village where Crispin first plays his recorder for Bear; another of Lord Furnival's holdings

**Stromford:** Crispin's home village, also fictional, one of the holdings of Lord Furnival. It is all Crispin knows of the world before his mother's death.

## GLOSSARY

**Alb:** a long-sleeved, white priestly garment

**Canonical hours:** any of certain periods of the day set aside for prayer or devotion ranging from Matins (first prayers of the day) to Compline (closing prayers of the evening)

**Cottar:** one who held no land in his or her own right

**Glaives:** long poles with sharp blades attached

**Mazer:** a large drinking bowl made of wood

**Moot:** an assembly of people exercising administrative and judicial powers

**Mummer:** an actor, especially a pantomimist

**Serf:** a person in medieval times who is bound in servitude to the land; the lowest position in feudal society

**Tonsure:** the part of the cleric's head, usually the crown, left bare by shaving

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Saint Giles is the patron saint of both Crispin and the beggars and cripples of fourteenth-century France. Stromford's church is named for Saint Giles, and Crispin was born on this saint's feast day. St. Giles's kindness in protecting a deer from the king's hunters resulted in his being crippled himself at the mouth of his hermit's cave. How is Saint Giles an appropriate saint for Crispin?



Portrait of Saint Giles (artist not provided)  
Source: The Catholic Forum Web Site

2. "I beg you to find your way to some town or city with its own liberties," pleads Father Quinel to a stunned Crispin. The concept of freedom is central to *Crispin: The Cross of Lead*. The treacherous Cerdic, the kindly Father Quinel, the protective and provocative Bear, and even Widow Daventry offer Crispin paths to freedom. Discuss the evolution of Crispin's idea of freedom and the liberty he finds at the end of the book.
3. Education is the province of the privileged in 14th century England. Who has access to learning and why? The ability to read is a sign of what profession? Why do you think Asta concealed her ability to read and write from her son? Discuss the implications of Bear's statement that his ability to read saves him from hanging.
4. What is a "wolf's head" and why would such a sentence be rendered in medieval society? Can you think of anyone who would be declared a wolf's head in present times? Who better deserves to be declared a wolf's head in *Crispin: The Cross of Lead*?
5. What is Bear's role in the group planning the revolt? Do you think John Ball's revolt will succeed or fail (see "Revolt" on page 4)? What are the signs being sought by John Ball and his comrades to see whether the country is ready for rebellion?

6. In what ways does religion rule the lives of Crispin and his fellow villagers? How does the church exert its influence on even a basic level? Describe how Crispin views God in the opening of the book. What role does God play at the end?
7. What is the significance of the painting of the knight in the chapel to Aycliffe? To Crispin? What is the significance of the lead cross? Why did Crispin give up the cross to Aycliffe? Was it wise for him to give it up?
8. What do you think becomes of Crispin? Ask students to write an outline for the first chapter of a sequel or a summary of his future life.
9. Although the story of Crispin takes place centuries ago, there are many parallels that may be drawn between fourteenth-century life in England and modern-day America. Have students name some examples, such as religious oppression, division of class and civil rights, for example. What contemporary figure could be compared to John Ball?

## ACTIVITIES

### CHESS: SOCIAL CLASS IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND

**Grade level:** This could be used with upper-elementary and middle-school students.

**Overview:** In *Crispin: The Cross of Lead*, a cross section of medieval society is in evidence. Crispin is clearly the pawn in a high-stakes game of power, and even King Edward III is mentioned. Use the game of chess to illustrate each character's role in the story. Remember that even pawns have power under the right conditions.

#### Resources

- One large set of chess pieces for display (you might even want to make your own).
- Enough chess boards so that everyone in your class can play. You might want to make up teams so that first-timers have help.

### **Classroom Activities:**

- Have a representative from a chess club give your class a brief history and overview of the game. Explain each of the pieces and its function, relating each one to its role in medieval society.
- Ask the class to discuss (either verbally or in an essay) how the moves and rules represent feudalism.

**NOTE:** Keep the chess boards around for future use as a refresher.

## **CRIME AND PUNISHMENT**

**Grade level:** Upper-elementary and middle-school students

**Overview:** Crispin's troubles begin when he is proclaimed a wolf's head for allegedly stealing from the steward. The true crime seems to be his slave status. It is no accident that *villein*, an alternate word for "serf", has transformed into today's *villain*.

### **Resources:**

- Access to your community's legal sentencing guidelines (check with town hall or juvenile court)
- You may want to invite a local lawyer or judge to participate as an "expert witness"

### **Classroom Activities:**

- Several crimes are mentioned in *Crispin: The Cross of Lead*. Have the class make a chart with three columns. In the first column, list each crime they find in the book. In the next, name the medieval sentence. In the last, list what would result from the conviction of a similar crime today.
- Discuss with the class the implicit crime at the beginning of the book: the illegitimacy of Crispin and de facto imprisonment of his mother, Asta. In this case, who received the sentence—the perpetrator or the victim? What other examples of unpunished crimes can you find in the book?
- Discuss how one set of laws applies to those at the bottom of medieval society while another set of rules is given to those at the top. Is it that way now?

## THE ADVENTURES OF BEAR: STORYTELLING AND IMAGINATION

**Grade level:** Upper-elementary and middle-school students

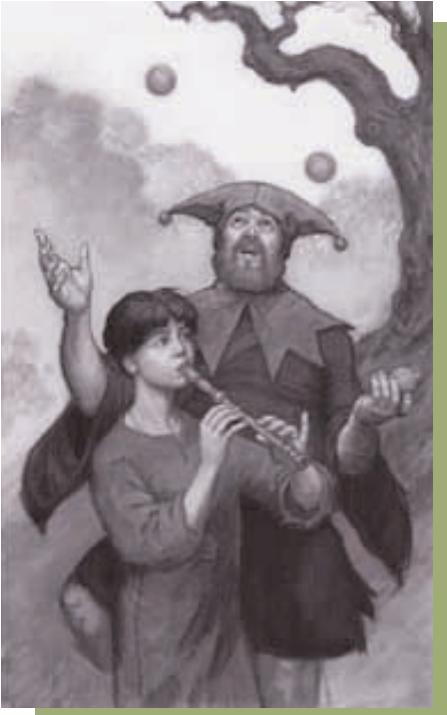
**Overview:** Engage your students in the Middle Ages through weaving stories about Crispin's most fascinating character.

### Resources:

- *Medieval Tales That Kids Can Read and Tell* by Lorna MacDonald Czarnota
- *The Storyteller's Guide: Storytellers Share Advice for the Classroom, Boardroom, Showroom, Podium, Pulpit and Center Stage* by David Holt and William Mooney

### Classroom Activities:

- Divide your class into groups. Have each one take a different aspect of Bear's life before he meets Crispin. Here are a few examples from Chapter 21:
  - Sold by his father to the church at the age of 12



- Joins the mummers just before he was to take final vows
- Travels with the mummers throughout the realm
- Becomes a soldier and meets Lord Furnival
- Ask each group to present its version of Bear's adventures to the class. This will build confidence in presentation skills as well as help students internalize some of the struggles of daily life in the Middle Ages.

## AVI: THE MASTER OF HISTORICAL FICTION REACHES A LITERARY MILESTONE\*

### Q: So much of your work is historical fiction. What author of the genre do you admire most?

**A:** The ultimate model for all my historical fiction is Robert Louis Stevenson—he epitomizes a kind of storytelling that I dearly love and still read because it is true, it has validity, and beyond all, it is an adventure.

### Q: What special challenge of writing about a different time do you enjoy the most?

**A:** We don't know fully what life was like, and you have to build a whole style and language to convey something. In other words, the whole thing is a stylistic construction, and you almost invent the language. I originally wrote the book in verse, but it would have been six hundred pages. [Laughs] So I took the linguistic structure and recast it back into a traditional narrative.

### Q: *Crispin* is set in fourteenth-century England. What attracted you to this place and time?

**A:** I write historical fiction the way I read history—there has to be something that engages my attention and that I find interesting to begin with. European culture is seeing the emergence of the ego at this time. It's eighty years before the Reformation. I am attempting to write a story that focuses on the reformation of a culture that is struggling to change its fundamental religious beliefs. I want to show just how shocking and difficult that transformation is. There's so much about nationalism emerging, there's a burst of universities, and the seeds of modern culture begin sprouting.

### Q: What sparked the idea that became *Crispin: The Cross of Lead*?

**A:** The impetus for this story was a wonderful series of lectures focused on the late Middle Ages, and *Crispin* is dedicated to Teofilo F. Ruiz, a lecturer in the series. I was enthralled by one of the things he said—that a peasant could achieve a kind of mobility if he escaped to a city with its own liberties for a year and a day.

\*In this interview, the term Peasants' Rebellion refers to the Peasants' Revolt.

**Q: How do you connect the problems of a fourteenth-century serf to a kid in the twenty-first century?**

**A:** I think the problem of writing historical fiction for young people in particular is how to convey the strictures of that earlier society. The rules of life in the fourteenth-century are so radically different from today that you have to create a context that is understandable. Music is something kids do relate to, and figuring out that there was music at that time is a way for them to connect.

**Q: How did you communicate the complexities and ubiquity of medieval religion?**

**A:** It was difficult to convey a sense of religion that is ultimately a way of life. It's not open to question and is so absolutely a permanent part of the breath that you take.

**Q: You actually have a real-life character in the story in the person of John Ball. What are the challenges of including a real person in a fictional story?**

**A:** When I was a freshman in college—a long time ago—I read something about the Peasants' Rebellion. I had decided to become a writer, but I was writing plays, and so I wrote a blank-verse play about the Peasants' Rebellion. I chose John Ball for *Crispin* because Froissart's *Chronicles* (a history of the fourteenth-century) contained speeches I could paraphrase, and I felt on firmer ground to expostulate and express his notions.

**Q: What do you think is valuable to the reader about historical fiction?**

**A:** I'm a believer that if you know there was a past and that it differs from today, there is a built-in inference that change is part of the human experience, so there is change potentially for the future. If you live in a world where change is visible, embedded in that is a philosophy for change.

**Q: This is your fiftieth book! What are your thoughts on reaching this milestone?**

**A:** One of the astonishing things about my career is that almost all of my books are in print. I think it's luck. If I had to give a reason for why they are all available, I'd have to say it's because they are so varied.

**Q: What were your thoughts on learning *Crispin* was honored with the Newbery Medal?**

**A:** I felt surprised, lucky, and very moved.

## REFERENCE RESOURCES

### BOOKS (for teachers)

- A Distant Mirror: The Calamitous 14th Century* by Barbara W. Tuchman  
*Medieval Britain (Very Short Introductions)* by John Gillingham and Ralph A. Griffiths  
*The Medieval Castle (Dover Pictorial Archives)* by A. G. Smith  
*The Oxford Illustrated History of Medieval England* edited by Nigel Saul  
*Medieval Wordbook* by Madeline Pelner Cosman  
*Ready-To-Use Medieval Illustrations 424 Different Copyright-Free Designs* Printed One Side (clip art, Dover) selected by Maggie Kate

### BOOKS (for upper-middle grade students)

- Favorite Medieval Tales* retold by Mary Pope Osborne, illustrated by Troy Howell  
*Medieval Britain* by Henry Loyn, Alan Sorrell, and Richard Sorrell  
*Medieval Tales That Kids Can Read and Tell* Contributor, Lorna MacDonald Czarnota

**Crosses of lead are not the author's invention. You can see a whole case of them on display at the British Museum in London, England.**

- Medieval World* by Philip Steele  
(Be sure to check out all three volumes of this series!)  
*Medieval World* (world history, (Usborne) by Jane Bingham  
*The Storyteller's Guide: Storytellers Share Advice for the Classroom, Boardroom, Showroom, Podium, Pulpit and Center Stage* by William Mooney, David Holt and Bill Mooney  
*The World of the Medieval Knight* (World of . . . series) by Christopher Gravett, illustrated by Brett Breckon

### WEB SITES:

Avi's official Web site: <http://www.avi-writer.com>

R.A.B.'s Resources for Middle School Medieval Studies:  
<http://home.epix.net/~rab1/index.htm>

Questia: The Online Library: <http://www.questia.com>

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



An amazingly versatile writer, Avi is the author of over fifty books for young people ranging from mystery, adventure, and fantasy to ghost stories, animal tales, and easy readers—and, of course, historical fiction. *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* and *Nothing But the Truth* each garnered Avi a prestigious Newbery Honor Award from the American Library Association.

*Crispin: The Cross of Lead* won the 2003 Newbery Medal, the highest honor bestowed in

children's literature. Starr LaTronica, chair of the 2003 Newbery Award Selection Committee, says of this work, "Avi masterfully weaves meticulously researched period details into a story that will leave contemporary readers breathless. Vivid descriptions of the indignities of daily life and injustices of the 14th century immerse the reader immediately into feudal society and propel the characters through the politics that led to the Peasant Revolt of 1381. Crispin's experiences and his relationship with Bear provide a credible, first hand account of those turbulent times and offer an auspicious opportunity to discuss current social issues that parallel those of the plot."

Even with all of his literary achievements, Avi remains well grounded and his love for writing is unwavering. He offers these words of encouragement to young writers: "Listen and watch the world around you. Try to understand why things happen. Don't be satisfied with answers others give you. Don't assume that because everyone believes a thing that it is right. Reason things out for yourself. Work to get answers on your own. Understand why you believe things. Finally, write what you honestly feel, then learn from the criticism that will always come your way."

To learn more about Avi, check out his Web site at [www.avi-writer.com](http://www.avi-writer.com)

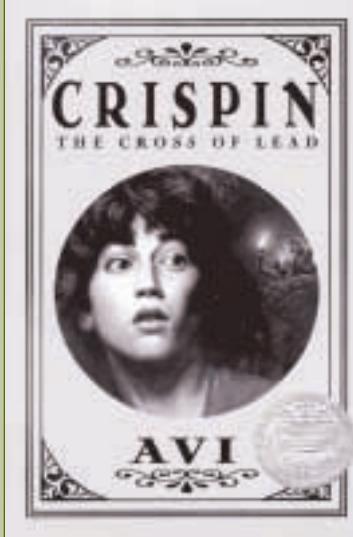
## ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE GUIDE

Ellen Everett Myrick received her degree in history and English from the University of Tennessee, a course of study that included a year studying medieval history at the University of Manchester in England. During her time in abroad, she focused on the literature and social history of fourteenth-century England. She has spent more than a dozen years in the book industry, and is the Executive Editor of *Children's and Teen Librarian*, a newsletter for children and YA librarians.

# CRISPIN: THE CROSS OF LEAD

by Avi

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