

LAST in a LONG LINE of REBELS

a novel



Aligned to the Common Core Grades 4-8

Discussion points, activities, and writing prompts to help educators use *Last in a Long Line of Rebels* as a classroom read aloud or as a selection for independent reading. Great for book clubs, too!

About the Author

Lisa Lewis Tyre grew up in a small town in Tennessee surrounded by her fun-loving family and neighbors. She learned early on that not every child had a pet skunk, a dad that ran a bar in the front yard, or a neighbor that was so large his house had to be torn down to get him out. What else could she do but write? Lisa now makes her home in Atlanta, Georgia with her own fun-loving husband and daughter, and has still been known to spy on her neighbors.



Last In A Long Line of Rebels is her debut novel. Learn more at www.LisaLewisTyre.com

About the Guide

This guide was created by Marcie Colleen, a former teacher with a BA in English Education from Oswego State and a MA in Educational Theater from NYU. Marcie can often be found writing books of her own at home in San Diego, California. Visit her at www.thisismarciecolleen.com.

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About the Book

Lou might be only twelve, but she's never been one to take things sitting down. So when her Civil War-era house is about to be condemned, she's determined to save it—either by getting it deemed a historic landmark or by finding the stash of gold rumored to be hidden nearby during the war. As Lou digs into the past, her eyes are opened when she finds that her ancestors ran the gamut of slave owners, renegades, thieves and abolitionists. Meanwhile, some incidents in her town show her that many Civil War era prejudices still survive and that the past can keep repeating itself if we let it. Digging into her past shows Lou that it's never too late to fight injustice, and she starts to see the real value of understanding and exploring her roots.

Praise for *Last In A Long Line of Rebels*

** "Accomplished debut. . . Strong secondary characters, including Lou's thrice-divorced flirtatious grandmother, help build the strong sense of small-town community. Tyre masterfully weaves historical details into Lou's discoveries in ways that never feel facile, while deftly and satisfyingly resolving past and present puzzles."*—Publishers Weekly, **STARRED REVIEW**

"Louise Duncan Mayhew's perspective in the 1860s is an intriguing contrast to Lou's modern narration at the turn of the 21st century. . . The story addresses injustice in plain language that is accessible to young readers who enjoy whodunits."—Kirkus Reviews

"The rumors of the gold, a found diary, and the arrival of a visitor strangely interested in Lou's house add up to an engaging amateur sleuth story, complete with a satisfying ending. A fine readaloud, this might also provide an approachable and entertaining supplement to a classroom unit on the Civil War."—*The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

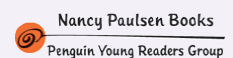
Cover Illustration: Gilbert Ford **Guide Graphic Design:** Lisa Lewis Tyre

Common Core Aligned for Grades 4-8

4th grade: ELA. RL.4.1,2,3,4; RI.4.3,5,7; W.4.1,2,3,4,7,8,9
5th grade: ELA. RL.5.1,2,3,4,5; RI.5.3,5,7; W.5.1,2,3,4,7,8,9
6th grade: ELA. RL.6.1,2,3,4,5; RI.6.1,2,3,4,7; W.6.1,2,3,4,7,8,9
7th grade: ELA. RL.7.1,2,3,4; RI.7.1,2,3,4; W.7.1,2,3,4,7,8,9
8th grade: ELA. RL.8.1,2,3,4; RI.8.1,2,3,4; W.8.1,2,3,4,7,8,9
6th-8th grade: RH.6-8.1,2,7; WHST.6-8.2,4,7,8



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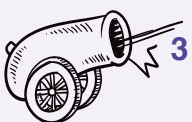


LAST in a LONG LINE of REBELS

Before You Read...

1. **Take a close look at the jacket illustration (both the front and back covers) of *Last in a Long Line of Rebels*. Describe what you see.**
 - a. Can you make any predictions of the time period or setting of the novel?
 - b. Can you predict what this book might be about? What from the illustration and title of the book supports your prediction?
2. **Read the text on the back cover. What do you learn about the book from this blurb?**
 - a. Explain the phrase “run the gamut of rebels, rascallions, and even a bona fide hero.” Use the dictionary for words you do not understand.
3. **Read the copy on the front jacket flap. Does any new information support your predictions of what the book is about?**
4. **List at least five questions that you now have about this novel.**
5. **Look closely at the design of the book: the colors, text, any illustrations, word choice. How would you describe the design of the book?**
6. **Who do you think is the intended audience of this book? If you saw this book on a shelf, would you want to read it? Why or why not?**
7. **Read Lisa Lewis Tyre’s biography. Why do you think Tyre was interested in writing this story? What about her background might have led to this novel?**

Write one paragraph describing your thoughts about *Last in a Long Line of Rebels*, and include one question you have that you hope to learn the answer to when you read. Share your paragraph with the class.



LAST in a LONG LINE of REBELS

Vocabulary

Last in a Long Line of Rebels contains many words that may be new for you. Some of these words are specific to the American Civil War. Prior to reading, it might be beneficial to acquaint yourself with a few of the more difficult or unfamiliar words.

- Using the vocabulary list below, investigate the definitions.
- As a class, create a Master Vocabulary List of the words below with their definitions for easy reference while you read *Last in a Long Line of Rebels*.
- Once the Master Vocabulary List is created, review the words and definitions.
- Can you make predictions about the kind of story or any incidents that might occur in the story based solely on this vocabulary list?
- What kind of story would you tell if you were to use all of these words?

Rebel
Secession
Tariffs and taxes
Abolitionist
Infantry
Calvary

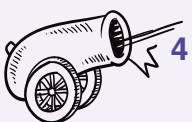
Company
Munitions
Regiment
Union
Confederacy
Manumission

Yanks
Resilient
Plantation
Dysentery
Larder
Sympathizers

Additional Vocabulary Exploration:

While you read *Last in a Long Line of Rebels*, look carefully for additional words you do not know. As soon as you come across a new vocabulary word, jot it down on the Master Vocabulary List.

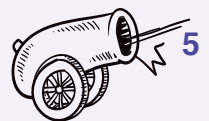
- Look up the unknown word in the dictionary.
- Come up with a way to remember what the word means. Using Total Physical Response, create an action that symbolizes the word and helps you remember it.
- Use context clues from the text to infer the meaning.



LAST in a LONG LINE of REBELS

Chapters 1-5

1. ***Last in a Long Line of Rebels* begins at the start of summer vacation. Describe this opening scene.**
2. **It is often said, “One man’s junk is another man’s treasure.” What, in your own words, do you think this common saying means? How does it relate to Lou and her family?**
 - a. What do you think Lou means when she says, “you can tell a lot about a person from their garbage?”
 - b. Look in your own recycling bin or trash can. What does your garbage say about you?
3. **If *Last in a Long Line of Rebels* is set in 1999 and Lou’s house was built 175 years prior, what year was the house built?**
 - a. Conduct an Internet image search for houses built in the same time period. Bonus if you can find houses in Tennessee built during this time. Can you find any similarities between these houses and Lou’s house?
 - b. Using the description on pages 12 to 13, draw a picture of Lou’s house.
4. **Using the text as a guide, create a written script of the Bible scene complete with stage notes for the action.**
5. **What does Benzer think could be the answer to their prayer for a “not boring” summer?**
6. **As a junkman, Lou’s dad travels from estate sales to auctions to pick up unwanted items. What does he do with the items he collects?**
 - a. What is an estate sale? Why would anyone want to get rid of family heirlooms?
 - b. In regard to estate sales, what is the family history between the Wilsons and Mayhews?
7. **Explain in your own words the situation between Coach Peeler, Isaac, and the UT scholarship. Do you think this is discrimination? Why or why not? Use the text as evidence where possible.**
8. **Franklin believes that Lou’s house might be threatened by eminent domain. What is eminent domain?**
 - a. Search the Internet for eminent domain cases that have occurred in your own town or a nearby city. What was the outcome of the case?
 - b. Why could being listed as a historical property save Lou’s house?
9. **What do you think Pastor Brian means when he says, “God can use them (youth) now, just as they are?”**
 - a. How does Lou feel this relates to her and her circumstances?



LAST in a LONG LINE of REBELS

Making Connections:

Lou is very upset about the news she overheard about possibly losing her house. Put yourself in her shoes. How would you feel if you heard you might lose your home?

Write a farewell letter to your home. Include what details you are going to miss and what memories you are going to take with you.

If These Walls Could Talk

What is the difference between a house and a home?

If the walls in your home could talk what would they say? Choose a memory and write about it from the perspective of the walls of your home.

Genealogy

Genealogy is the study of ancestral stories or our family's past. Interview someone in your family about a story from the past. It can be about something that happened a really long time ago or recently.

Who is Lou?

Draw an outline of a human figure, which will represent Lou, on a large piece of paper.

Using Chapters 1-5 as evidence, write any known details about Lou inside the outline.

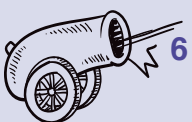
Outside the outline, discuss and write any questions about Lou that you might have.

Predict:

Uncovering history is like trying to solve a mystery. Using the information from chapters 1-5, what clues have been gathered about Lou's family's past?

Create your own notebook of The Verified Truth about The Mayhews. Be sure to list all details, names, and places that have been mentioned so far.

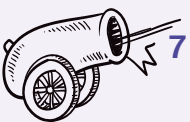
How do you think Louise Duncan Mayhew's diary entries that start each chapter will fit in to the story as a whole?



LAST in a LONG LINE of REBELS

Chapters 6-10

1. **What do you know about the American Civil War?**
 - a. As a class, create a quick list of what you know about the war.
 - b. Visit the library or computer lab. Then, find out as much as you can about the American Civil War in thirty minutes.
 - c. Create a list of facts.
 - d. Report your researched facts to the class.
 - e. Add the researched facts to the list and verify if all of the previous facts on the list were correct.
2. **Why is it important for Lou to find the gold? Will it save her house? Why or why not?**
3. **Who is Mr. Neely? Why does Lou think Mr. Neely could be “the key to this whole thing?” Why does Lou’s father say he will be glad when Mr. Neely is gone?**
4. **Visit ebay.com and search for American Civil War relics such as gold, buttons, and slugs. What items can you find? How much are they? Print out some photos to share.**
5. **Lisa Lewis Tyre brings the county fair to life through the use of sensory imagery. Create a list of how she describes the scene through the five senses.**
6. **There are many witnesses surrounding Isaac as he continuously throws balls to dunk Coach Peeler in the dunking booth. Retell the scene from the first person point-of-view of someone on Isaac’s side and then from the first person point-of-view of someone on Coach Peeler’s side.**
7. **What do you think Pastor Brian means when he says that, “God is for us, not against us?”**
 - a. Create a list of the people that you think are “for” Lou and her house. And then create a list of people you think are “against” Lou and her house.



LAST in a LONG LINE of REBELS

Making Connections:

Many battles of the American Civil War were fought in the state of Tennessee, including the bloody Battle of Shiloh.

During the American Civil War, the state of Tennessee was fractured. While East Tennessee was against secession, West Tennessee was all for it. Use the library and the Internet to research what life was like in Tennessee during the American Civil War and create a timeline to show this history. Then, add to the timeline any details depicted in the diary entries from Louise Duncan Mayhew.

The Plan

Lou has created a very detailed plan on how to retrieve the book from George Neely's hotel room. Using details mentioned in the text, draw a map of the area, marking clearly Lou's plan from the antique store to the hotel.

Other important landmarks, such as antique store back door and the lattice should be included, as well as the placement of each person.

Be creative and add other details based on what you know about Zollicoffer.

Your Family Tree

More so than a Family Tree, a Family Crest has long been a symbol of a family's identity and values. Originally used to identify warriors dressed in armor, family crests or coats of arms have been passed down through generations.

What kinds of symbols and colors do you think would represent Lou's family? Look closely at the image of the tree in Gilbert Ford's cover art. Can you find any symbols that might represent Lou's family?

Create your own family "tree" illustration using symbols and colors to represent and identify who your family is. Refer to the cover illustration for inspiration.

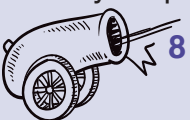
Predict:

In your own words, describe Lou's plan as detailed in Chapter 10.

Do you think it will work?

What do you predict will happen when the kids attempt to retrieve the book from Mr. Neely's hotel room?

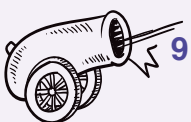
Write your prediction in the form of a chapter.



LAST in a LONG LINE of REBELS

Chapters 11-16

1. **Mr. Vinter's visit reveals to Lou that the Mayhew's used to own slaves. What does Mr. Vinter say that makes Lou realize this? How does it make Lou feel?**
 - a. How would you feel if you found out your family used to own slaves? Is there anything you can do about it now to make it better? Would you rather know the truth or no? Why or why not?
 - b. What do you think Lou's dad mean when he says, "It's important that we never forget our history and the awful things that man is capable of?"
 - c. Why is Thelma Johnson so worried that Mr. Vinter is at the Mayhew house? How does Lou react to Thelma's response?
2. **The plan goes awry and Lou ends up stuck beneath George Neely's hotel bed. What would you do in this situation?**
 - a. How does Patty save Lou?
 - b. Do you have any other ideas on how you would have gotten Lou out of the situation? Explain your answer.
3. **Why do you think George Neely had the Mayhew auction list? What important piece of history does the auction list lead Lou to discover? How?**
4. **Chapter 14 and Chapter 15 contain entries from Louise Duncan Mayhew's diary. Read them carefully and then sum up the information in your own words.**
 - a. How do you think this diary can help Lou and her fight to save her house?
5. **What do you think caused the dark bruise on Isaac's cheek? Support your opinion with textual evidence.**
6. **Using the description of the old photograph of Lou's house in Chapter 16, draw another picture to display right next to the one you previously drew. How has the house changed over the years?**
7. **Create a script detailing Lou's television interview about Isaac.**
8. **Why do you think the oak tree outside her house so important to Lou?**



LAST in a LONG LINE of REBELS

Making Connections:

Benzer and Lou find historic photographs of Zollicoffer in the library. They are fascinated to see how the area has changed over the years.

Visit your local library, historical society, or conduct an Internet image search for historic photographs of your town or city. Then, create a map of the area integrating the images you have found.

My Home

A person's home can say so much about them.

Look closely at your home. What details stand out to you? Choose five items from your home. What do these five items say about you?

Write a description of your home, as if you are a character in a novel. Be sure to use the five items and any other details to help the reader better understand your character.

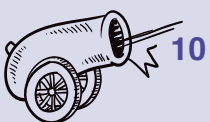
Compare and Contrast

Lou and Louise live in different times. Using a Venn Diagram, write the ways their lives are different on the outer parts of the circles. Right the ways their lives are similar where the circles overlap.

Predict:

Before the end of Chapter 16 Lou asks God to give her an obvious and quick sign regarding whether she should keep looking for the gold. And then she arrives home to see her oak tree being cut down.

Do you think Lou will take this as a sign from God? How so? Explain your answer.



LAST in a LONG LINE of REBELS

Chapters 17-22

1. **Lou's mama said that they didn't want to worry Lou over the situation with the house, which is why they didn't tell her. Do you agree with their thinking or would you have told Lou from the beginning? Why or why not?**
2. **What does Bertie mean by "home is where the heart is?"**
 - a. Is there evidence to this saying in Lou's life? How so?
 - b. What about your own life? Agree or disagree with this saying based on experience from your own life.
3. **Where was the gold buried?**
 - a. What clues led Lou and Benzer to its discovery?
 - b. Can you think of another way of retrieving the gold that would not have resulted in the damage to the library? Brainstorm a list of possibilities.
4. **While Lou would like to use the gold to save her house, Mr. Mayhew does not believe the gold is theirs to keep. In fact, many members of Lou's family have different opinions about the gold. Write one sentence that sums up each of the following character's mind set regarding the gold:**
 - a. Lou
 - b. Mr. Mayhew
 - c. Mrs. Mayhew
 - d. Bertie
 - e. Franklin
 - f. Patty
 - g. Aunt Sophie
5. **What was the Underground Railroad?**
 - a. What clues lead the Mayhews, and George Neely, to think that their house was used as a stop on the Underground Railroad?
 - b. How can the information regarding the house and the Underground Railroad save the house from being torn down?
6. **What is the plan for the gold?**
 - a. What is Isaac's plan for college?

LAST in a LONG LINE of REBELS

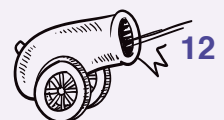
After You Read...

Below are a few final project ideas for the conclusion of *Last in a Long Line of Rebels*.

1. **Using the Internet, research existing memorials or monuments for the American Civil War or the Underground Railroad. Then in groups of 3-4, create your own tribute to either. Use both words and visuals. Share these tributes with the rest of the class.**
2. **Create a written and visual overview of your home state in the American Civil War. The project must be a type-written 5 page paper with additional:**
 - Pictures
 - Timelines
3. **Why do you think the book is called *Last in A Long Line of Rebels*? If you were writing your family story, what would you title it?**
4. **Lisa Lewis Tyre is from a small town in Tennessee and therefore wrote *Last in the Long Line of Rebels* in order to bring that heritage to life and share with others.**

If you were to write a historical novel based on your own heritage, where would you set it?

- Research a country or area that some of your ancestors are from and pick a significant historical event that happened in that country.
 - For example, maybe your family is Irish and you decide to set your story during the Irish Potato Famine of 1845-1852. Or maybe your ancestors are from California during the time of the Gold Rush.
 - o Research the historical event in the library or on the Internet.
 - o Once you have the historical facts, set yourself in that story and build the fiction.
 - o Create a 500-word synopsis of the historical fiction story based on your own heritage.
5. **Create a book trailer for *Last in a Long Line of Rebels*. Carefully choose music, visuals, and words to create an overall feel for the book.**
 6. **From the point of view of Lou, write a 500-word “My Summer Vacation” essay, recapping the events of the book.**
 7. **Bertie tells Lou that the Mayhews are “made out of steel.” What are properties of steel? What do you think Bertie meant by the comparison? Describe what the family would be like if she had described them differently? Stone? Rubber? Butter? OR Rewrite the sentence using different items - stone, butter, rubber, iron, etc. Does it change how you perceive the Mayhews?**



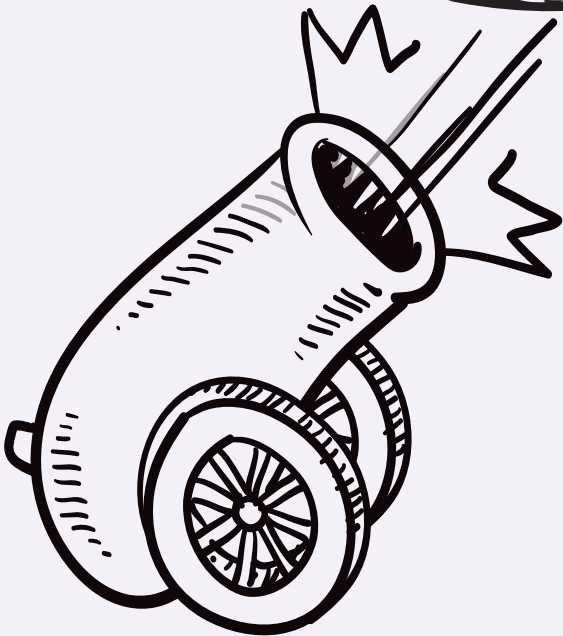
LAST in a LONG LINE of REBELS

Present Day Lou

Civil War Louise

Venn Diagram

Compare and Contrast
the life of Lou Mayhew and
that of her ancestor, Louise



Last In A Long Line of Rebels by Lisa Lewis Tyre

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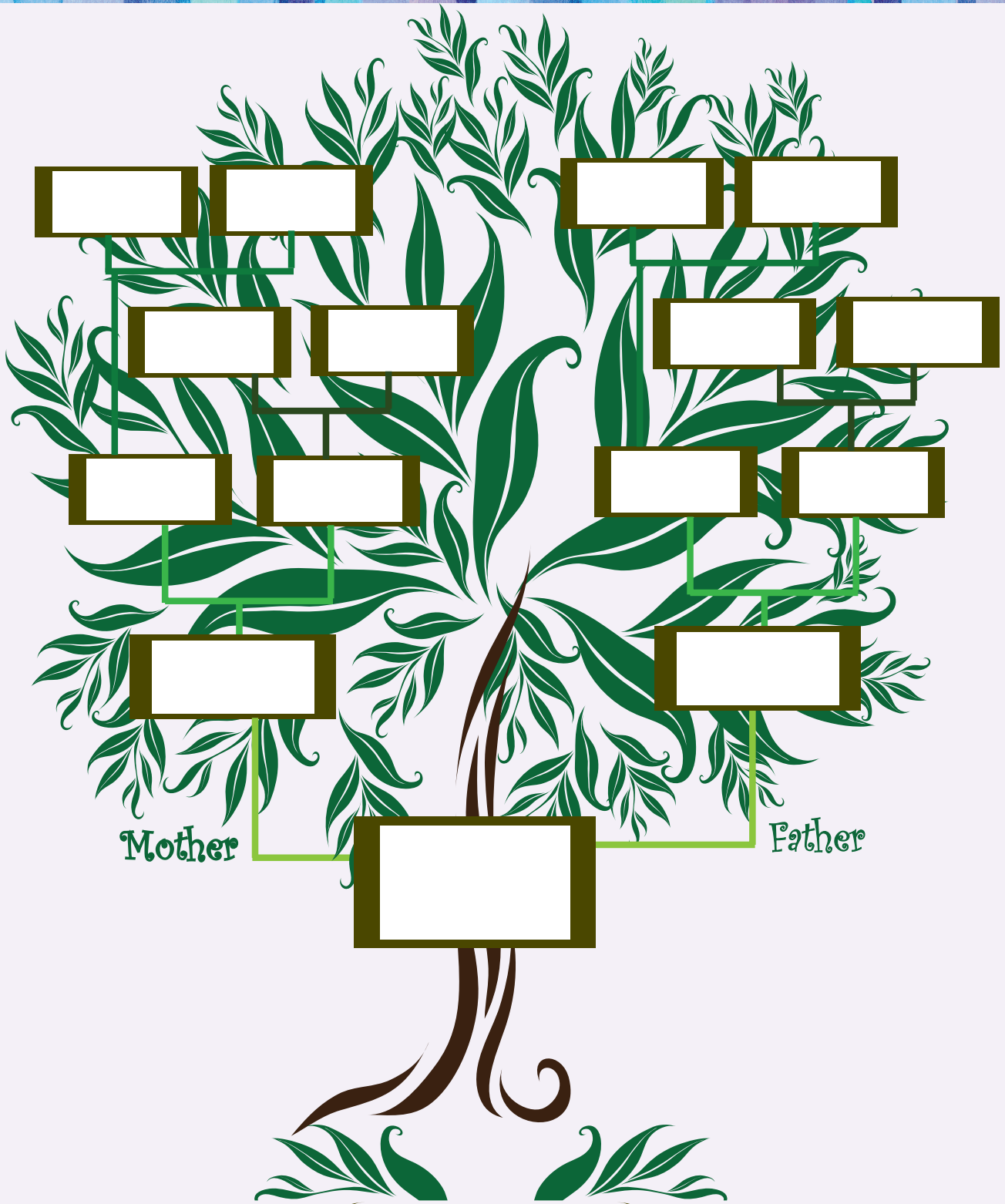
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LAST in a LONG LINE of REBELS



My Family Tree

50 Family History Interview Questions

