

**EIGHTH GRADE CONTENT STANDARDS**

**TOPICS FROM THE CALIFORNIA STATE HISTORY~SOCIAL SCIENCE  
FRAMEWORK**

What students should know:

**United States History and Geography: Growth and Conflict**

**EXPLORING AND SETTLEMENT REVIEW**

~ Demonstrate an understanding of the forces that led to European settlement in America, and the subsequent interactions and conflicts among Europeans, Africans, and Indians.

**AMERICAN REVOLUTION REVIEW**

~ Review the principles underlying the American Revolution and the varied experiences of the American people during this time period.

~ Explain how the different economic and social systems impacted the lives of the diverse people who lived in those regions.

**CAUSES OF THE CIVIL WAR**

~ Explain the causes and consequences of the Civil War

**RECONSTRUCTION**

~ Analyze the Reconstruction period including the constitutional amendments and their connections to the civil rights movements of the 1960s.

**THE CONSTITUTION**

~ Demonstrate an understanding of the events, ideas, and individuals who shaped the Constitution and the nature of the government that it created.

~ Explain the challenges which faced the new nation and its leaders in the first quarter century of the republic under the Constitution.

**AMERICAN WEST**

~ Demonstrate an understanding of the reasons people moved into the American West and the impact of this move on the native population.

~ Evaluate the influence of the West on the politics, economy, and social development of the nation.

## NORTH/SOUTH GROWING DIVISION

- ~ Explain the importance of the industrial revolution in the Northeast and its impact on the nation.
- ~ Evaluate the importance of the South's agrarian economy and use of enslaved labor and explain their effect on the region's political, social, economical, and cultural development.

### Eighth Grade Skills Based on Standardized Tests

- ~ Compare and contrast evidence such as photographs or drawings about the past
- ~ Apply information from graphs to a map
- ~ Make inferences from maps-for example, understand the relationship between natural occurring events such as rainfall and people's way of life
- ~ Understand more complex geographic terms such as mesa, delta, isthmus, etc.
- ~ Understand how different map projections give different information

**EIGHTH GRADE CONTENT STANDARDS - HISTORICAL THINKING  
MIDDLE GRADES, 6TH - 8TH GRADE**

What students should be able to do:

**Chronological/Spatial Thinking**

1. Students know the key events of the historical eras they are studying, and place them in chronological sequence.
2. Students understand the relationships between a year (e.g., 1865) and the century (e.g., the nineteenth) in which it occurred. /
3. Students identify places on maps of neighborhoods, cities, and countries which they are studying.
4. Students understand that change happens at different rates at different times; that some aspects of a thing can change while others remain the same; that change is complicated and not always what it seems.
5. Students understand that we use periodization to divide the past into meaningful chunks of time (e.g., Middle Ages, the Civil Rights Era, the Reagan years).
6. Students understand that the present is connected to the past. They identify both similarity (continuity) and difference (change) between past and present (e.g., compare a historical photograph of a street scene with the same street today).

**Evidence**

1. Students become familiar with artifacts, photographs, stories, music and short written sources from other times. They use these sources to generate questions about the past.
2. Students identify the uses of an artifact. They identify parts of the artifact and how they might contribute to its usefulness, They identify the main subject of a photograph. They identify details in a photograph and explain how they contribute information to the picture. The students understand the meaning of the vocabulary used in written sources and accurately read information from them. They identify the main idea or ideas stated in the source as well as supporting details.
3. Students understand that some sources are more reliable than others. They compare reliable and unreliable sources and offer reasons why a particular source is more or less reliable than another
4. Students understand that primary sources can tell us about the person or people who created them. They use the source to help figure out the purposes and

perspectives of the author(s). He or she identifies vocabulary in printed documents which reveal the author's perspectives.

5. Students begin to relate two or more different primary sources from a time period to each other They explain the influence of the time in which they were produced.

### **Diversity/Multiple Perspectives**

1. Students examine beliefs, values, and conditions of life of a variety of different people from different times and places.
2. Students imaginatively place themselves in the position of others in different circumstances-today or in the past-and explain what things would look like from those other' people's positions. They explain differences between two or more participants' views of a particular event. They tell a story incorporating the views of two or more characters.
3. Students understand the importance of considering the actions and perspectives of all of those involved in a particular event. They discuss how a person's circumstances were connected to how they viewed the world (e.g., a person who lived in the desert valued water highly; an enslaved person saw being able to travel at will as part of the meaning of freedom). They understand how actions of different people are connected to their values, beliefs, and circumstances.
4. Students do not dismiss others because they are different. They value diversity; they value the attempt to understand why others act as they do.

### **Historical Interpretation**

1. Students understand that historical accounts may be provided through stories about real people or fictional characters.
2. Students understand that it is possible to tell different stories about the same events.
3. Students identify differences in two or more historical accounts,
4. Students understand that historical accounts on television, in film, in fiction and elsewhere, are interpretations which can be subjected to critical questioning.
5. Students use several sources to construct a narrative of a historical event.

**Historical/Geographic Significance**

1. Students explain how the people, events, and trends they are studying are significant for people today.
2. Students explain how certain events and decisions had consequences for others. They evaluate the consequences as positive or negative (or a combination of the two).
3. Students distinguish between the significant and trivial detail~ in relation to a particular historical development or account.

## **HISTORICAL THINKING: SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS- EIGHTH GRADE**

### **Chronological and Spatial Thinking**

- On an outline map of the 13 colonies, identify each colony and label the location of major events in the struggle for Independence or encounters, such as the Boston Massacre, the drafting of the Declaration of Independence, etc.
- Arrange 16 important events, acts, and encounters between the colonists and the British in chronological order. Once arranged in chronological order, have students divide these events into two columns, action and reaction, that illustrate the relationship between the two events.
- On a map of the United States have students outline land that was originally part of Mexico. Have students create, within that territory, symbols that illustrate aspects of Mexican life before the loss of the land and the enduring legacy of that culture in the United States.
- Draw a map which identifies the location of Native American tribes before American expansion.
- Make a time line of important events that demonstrate African-American resistance to slavery.

### **Examining Evidence**

- Read the letters and speeches of abolitionists and develop a chart that shows their different approaches to the abolition of slavery (e.g., Frederick Douglass, John Brown, Sojourner Truth, William Lloyd Garrison).
- Read the Seneca Falls Declaration and make a list of demands that women wanted.
- Read excerpts of song lyrics, novels, and poems of people who moved into the West (including African Americans, Chinese, European immigrants, etc.) and speculate on reasons for moving.
- Listen to the Gettysburg Address and then select lines which they believe might have motivated Northern soldiers to keep fighting. Have individual students read their lines to the class.
- Read several Jim Crow laws and analyze who had power in Southern society and what they were doing with that power.

### **Diversity / Multiple Perspectives**

- As a free African-American living in Boston, write a paragraph that explains whether you choose to be a patriot or a loyalist. Include a discussion of what you hope to gain from your choice.
- After reading several accounts of mill life, write a storyboard for a film about a young girl in Lowell..
- Examine the Dred Scott decision from the point of view of people living in different areas of the U.S. to understand the impact of location on people's perspectives.
- Using the letters, diaries, and narratives of women from a variety of backgrounds and regions during the Civil War, have students respond to the question, "Did women support their sons', husbands', and brothers' decisions to go to war?"
- Write an account of Westward expansion from the point of view of a Sioux Indian.
- Write accounts of Westward Expansion and Manifest Destiny from the perspectives of a Sioux Indian, A Mexican citizen living in Texas and a "Californio" living in California.

### **Interpretation**

- Compare two historians' interpretations of why the colonists rebelled against Great Britain and using information taken from the text, decide which interpretation is most accurate.
- View the portions of *Glory* and *Gone With the Wind* that deal with why soldiers went to war, making sure that students recognize that these are two different accounts of the same question. Have students select, or create, a soldier (from any background or region) and then write a scene for a movie in which that soldier explains to his mother or wife why he is going to war.
- Read the chapters on Reconstruction from *American Nation* and *The African American Experience* and compare the two interpretations of this time period.
- Compare accounts of the Battle of the Alamo and its results from the point of view of a Mexican citizen living in Texas and an American citizen living in Texas.

### **Determining Historical/ Geographical Significance**

- Identify three core ideas from the introduction to the Declaration of Independence-equality, consent of the governed, and a right to rebellion. Write a paragraph that applies these ideas to a hypothetical situation. For example, how could they be applied to the governance of a middle school?
- Write a paragraph which discusses and explains whether they, if they were alive in 1861, would have been willing to fight and die in the Civil War.
- Watch segments from *Glory* and *Gone With the Wind*. Have students speculate as to why the person who made *Glory* chose to tell that story, and not the story of white soldiers.
- Write an essay stating which amendment-the 13th, 14th, or 15th, has had the greatest impact on America.

<b>MODEL UNIT FOR EIGHTH GRADE — RECONSTRUCTION IN THE UNITED STATES, 1865-1876</b> <b>Sample Question: What Does Freedom Really Mean?</b>	
<b>Historical Thinking Standard</b>	<b>Assignments/Activities</b> To show evidence of standards, students might:
<b>Chronological/Spatial Thinking</b> ✓ Location ✓ Sequencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Draw a map of the U.S., coloring in Northern states, the territories, and Southern states. Label those states in the South that had Reconstruction governments.</li> <li>■ Using a set of cards with major events of the Reconstruction (e.g., passage of the 13th amendment that abolished slavery in 1877; Reconstruction ends). Students will work in groups and, using the textbook, sequence these events.</li> </ul>
<b>Examining Evidence</b> ✓ Examining primary sources (such as photos, artifacts, and documents) ✓ Relationship between primary sources and historical/geographical context ✓ Author's intentions/perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Read the letters and oral histories of freedmen and women that express their hopes, dreams, and fears for their new lives; identifying specific civil rights that were identified and demanded.</li> <li>■ Read and discuss "Black Codes," laws created by white Southern state governments.</li> </ul>
<b>Diversity/Multiple Perspectives</b> ✓ Influences (such as location, race, gender, class, age, sexual orientation) ✓ Empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Students write and discuss their own definition of freedom, establishing criteria for what it means to be free.</li> <li>■ Given the following scenario, groups of students create five laws that would assist freed men and women and help them to improve their situation. Scenario: Millions of formerly enslaved people are now free but they are without land, jobs, education, the vote, etc.</li> <li>■ Take lecture notes on a history of Reconstruction.</li> <li>■ Make a T-chart, one side identifying African American demands, the other side identifying how those demands were met.</li> </ul>
<b>Interpretation</b> ✓ Constructing historical accounts ✓ Comparing historical accounts ✓ Moral judgment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Citing evidence, write a one- to two-page history of Reconstruction. Conclude by answering the question, "Did African Americans gain freedom after the Civil War?" Compare these accounts with the account in their textbook and an account from a textbook written before 1955.</li> </ul>
<b>Determining Historical/Geographical Significance</b> ✓ Connect past and present ✓ Causation ✓ Evaluation ✓ Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Write a reflective essay that focuses on the definition of freedom created in an earlier assignment and how it might apply to your own life.</li> </ul>

## **California History-Social Science Framework**

### **GRADE EIGHT-UNITED STATES HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY GROWTH AND CONFLICT**

The eighth-grade course of study begins with an intensive review of the major ideas, issues, and events preceding the founding of the nation. Students will concentrate on the critical events of the period—from the framing of the Constitution to World War I.

#### **Early Modern Europe: The Age of Exploration to the Enlightenment**

This unit begins with the age of exploration, with special attention given to Spanish and Portuguese explorations in the New World. Mapping activities will clarify the routes and empires established in these voyages of exploration and conquest. A brief review of the great heights attained by the Aztec and Incan civilizations should help students place in perspective the plunder and destruction of native cultures that followed the Spanish conquest of these lands. The drama of the Spanish galleons and maritime rivalries between Spain and England culminated in the English defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588; the consequences of that event should be analyzed.

Northern European seaports thrived as enterprising merchants expanded international commerce. In the 1600s Holland and England welcomed the return of the Jews, who brought their highly developed culture and commercial experience. By focusing on the origins of modern capitalism and the development of a market economy in seventeenth-century Europe, students should deepen their understanding of economics.

This unit concludes with a study of the Enlightenment and its impact on the future of Western political thought, including the political ideas and institutions of the United States. The Enlightenment provoked a clash of ideas between reason and authority, between the natural rights of human beings and the divine right of kings, and between experimentalism in science and dogmatic belief. Students will learn about the major figures of the Enlightenment and their influence on the ways Europeans viewed government and society. They also will see how the principles implicit in the Magna Carta were embodied in the English Bill of Rights, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, and the American Declaration of Independence.

#### **Connecting with Past Learnings: Our Colonial Heritage**

This year's study of American history begins with a selective review of significant developments of the colonial era with emphasis on the development of democratic institutions founded in Judeo-Christian religious thinking and in English parliamentary traditions; the development of an economy based on agriculture, commerce, and handicraft manufacturing; and the emergence of major regional differences in the colonies.

### **Connecting with Past Learnings: A New Nation**

This unit begins with an in-depth examination of the major events and ideas leading to the American War for Independence. Readings from the Declaration of Independence should be used to discuss these questions: What are "natural rights" and "natural law"? What did Jefferson mean when he wrote that "all men are created equal" and "endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights." What were the "Laws of Nature" and "Nature's God" to which Jefferson appealed?

Close attention should be paid to the moral and political ideas of the Great Awakening and its effect on the development of revolutionary fervor. By reading excerpts from original documents such as sermons of the Great Awakening and Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, students should be able to understand the revolutionary and moral thinking of the times. Students should become familiar with the debates between Whigs and Tories, the major turning points in the War for Independence, and the contributions of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and other leaders of the new nation. Students should understand the significance that the American Revolution had for other nations, especially France.

### **The Constitution of the United States**

In this unit students concentrate on the shaping of the Constitution and the nature of the government that it created. Students should review the major ideas of the Enlightenment and the origins of self-government in the Magna Carta, the English Bill of Rights of 1689, the Mayflower Compact, the Virginia House of Burgesses, and the New England town meeting. This background will help students appreciate the framers' efforts to create a government that was neither too strong (because it might turn into despotism) nor too weak (as the Articles of Confederation proved to be).

Excerpts from the document written at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia should be read, discussed, and analyzed. Students should consider the issues that divided the Founding Fathers and examine the compromises they adopted. Although the Constitution never explicitly mentions slavery, several compromises preserved the institution; namely, the three-fifths rule of representation, the slave importation clause, and the fugitive slave clause. Why were these provisions so important to southern delegates? Why were these contradictions with the nation's ideals adopted? What were their long-term costs to black men and women and to the nation?

To analyze these issues, students must recognize that the American Revolution had transformed slavery from a national to a sectional institution and that nine out of ten American slaves lived in the South. Students should discuss the status of women as reflected in the Constitution of 1787. They should recognize as well the great achievements of the Constitution: (1) it created a democratic form of government based on the consent of the governed—a rarity in history; and (2) it established a government that has survived more than 200 years by a delicate balancing of power and interests and by

providing a process of amendment to adapt the Constitution to the needs of a changing society.

### **Launching the Ship of State**

In this unit students consider the enormous tasks that faced the new nation and its leaders through this difficult period; for example, Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Hamilton, and the Adamses. The new nation had to demonstrate that its government would work, and in 1812 it had to fight a war to prove its sovereignty. Students should discuss the belief of the nation's founders that the survival of a democratic society depends on an educated people. Students should analyze the connection between education and democracy symbolized in the Northwest Ordinance and in Jefferson's dictum, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be." Attention should be paid to the types of education received in church schools, dame schools, and at home.

Students also should examine the daily life of ordinary people in the new nation, including farmers, merchants, and traders; women; blacks, both slave and free; and American Indians. Reading excerpts from works by James Fenimore Cooper and Washington Irving will help bring this period alive.

### **The Divergent Paths of the American People: 1800-1850**

This unit follows the nation's regional development in the West, Northeast, and South. Throughout this study students should be encouraged to view historical events empathetically as though they were there, working in places such as mines, cotton fields, and mills.

*The West.* The West should be studied for its deep influence on the politics, economy, mores, and culture of the nation. It opened domestic markets for seaboard merchants; it offered new frontiers for discontented Easterners; and it provided a folklore of individualism and rugged frontier life that has become a significant aspect of our national self-image.

The election of Andrew Jackson in 1828 reflected the steady expansion of male suffrage, symbolized the shift of political power to the West, and opened a new era of political democracy in the United States. President Jackson was both a remarkable man and a symbol of his age. Jacksonian Democracy should be analyzed in terms of the continuing expansion of opportunities for the common person—a recurring theme in American history. The democratizing effect of frontier life on the relations between men and women should be noted. Original documents show the varied roles played by frontier women such as California's Annie Bidwell, who promoted women's rights and worked for social change.

In studying Jackson's Presidency, students should debate his spoils system, veto of the National Bank, policy of Indian removal, and opposition to the Supreme Court. Alexis de

Tocqueville's nine-month visit to the United States at this time, seeking to identify the general principles of democracy in America, can provide students an opportunity to compare his description of national character in the 1830s with American life today.

The story of the acquisition, exploration, and settlement of the trans-Mississippi West, from the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 to the admission of California as a state in 1850, should be reviewed. This was a period marked by a strong spirit of nationalism and "manifest destiny." To deepen their understanding of the changing geography and settlement of this immense land, students might read from the journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition to the Northwest; map the explorations of trailblazers such as Zebulon Pike; discuss the searing accounts of the removal of Indians and the Cherokees' "Trail of Tears"; and interpret maps and documents relating to the long sea voyages and overland treks that opened the West. Attention should be given to the role of the great rivers and the struggles over water rights in the development of the West. Students should study the northward movement of settlers from Mexico into the great Southwest, with emphasis on the locations of Mexican settlements, their cultural traditions, their attitudes toward slavery, their land-grant system, and the economy they established in these regions. Students need this background before they can analyze the events that followed the arrival of westward-moving settlers from the East into these Mexican territories. Special attention should be given to the Mexican-American War, its territorial settlements, and its aftermath in the lives of the Mexican families who first lived in the region.

*The Northeast.* The industrial revolution in the Northeast had important repercussions throughout the nation. Inventions between 1790 and 1850 transformed manufacturing, transportation, mining, communications, and agriculture and profoundly affected how people lived and worked. Skilled crafts-persons were replaced by mechanized production in shops, mills, and factories, so well depicted by Charles Dickens in his *American Notes* and in the letters written by young women who left home to work in the mills of Lowell, Massachusetts. Immigrants flocked to the cities. Periods of boom and bust created both progress and poverty.

An age of reform began that made life more bearable for the less fortunate and expanded opportunities for many. Students should imagine what life was like for young people in the 1830s in order to appreciate Horace Mann's crusade for free public education for all. Students should read excerpts from original documents explaining the social and civic purposes of public education. Typical schoolbooks of the period should be used with attention to their elocution exercises, moral lessons, and orations (for example, *The Columbian Orator*). Role playing should enable students to imagine life in a mill or factory and a day in a Lancastrian school. Students should learn about the major impetus given to the women's rights movement by leaders such as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. They should read and discuss the Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiment and compare it with the Declaration of Independence. Efforts by educators such as Emma Willard and Mary Lyon to establish schools and colleges for women should be noted. Major campaigns to reform mental institutions and prisons should be

explained by vividly portraying the conditions that evoked them. Students also should become familiar with the work of Dorothea Dix and the significance of Charles Finney as the leader of the second Great Awakening, inspiring religious zeal, moral commitment, and support for the abolitionist movement. Students should examine the relationship of these events to contemporary issues.

*The South.* During these years, the South diverged dramatically from the Northeast and the West. Its aristocratic tradition and plantation economy depended on a system of slave labor to harvest such cash crops as cotton, rice, sugarcane, and tobacco. Black slavery, the "peculiar institution" of the South, had marked effects on the region's political, social, economic, and cultural development. Increasingly at odds with the rest of the nation, the South was unable to share in the egalitarian surge of the Jacksonian era or in the reform campaigns of the 1840s. Its system of public education lagged far behind the rest of the nation.

The institution of slavery in the South should be studied in its historical context. Students should review their seventh-grade studies of West African civilizations before the coming of the Europeans and compare the American system of chattel slavery, which considered people as property, with slavery in other societies. Attention should be paid to the daily lives of slaves on the plantations, the inhuman practices of slave auctions, the illiteracy enforced on slaves by law, and the many laws that suppressed the efforts of slaves to win their freedom. Students should observe how these laws became increasingly severe following the 1831 slave revolts in South Carolina and Virginia. Particular attention should be paid to the more than 100,000 free blacks in the South and the laws that curbed their freedom and economic opportunity.

The dramatic story of the abolitionist movement, led by people such as Theodore Weld and William Lloyd Garrison, should be told. Attention should be given to what blacks did themselves in working for their own freedom: their organizations, which mobilized legal action; their petitions to Congress for redress of the fugitive slave laws and for emancipation of the slaves; the activities of leading black abolitionists such as Frederick Douglass, Charles Remond, and Sojourner Truth; and the direct actions of free blacks such as Harriet Tubman and Robert Purvis in the underground movement to assist slaves to escape.

Excerpts from Frederick Douglass's *What the Black Man Wants*, David Walker's *Appeal*, Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Fanny Kemble's *Description of Life on a Southern Plantation*, as well as excerpts from slave narratives and abolitionist tracts of this period, will bring these people and events alive for students.

### **Toward a More Perfect Union: 1850-1879**

In this unit students concentrate on the causes and consequences of the Civil War. They should discover how the issue of slavery eventually became too divisive to ignore or tolerate. They should understand the significance of such events as the Wilmot Proviso, the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Ostend Manifesto, the Dred

Scott case, and the Lincoln-Douglas debates. Students should understand the basic challenge to the Constitution and the Union posed by the secession of the southern states and the doctrine of nullification. The war itself should be studied closely, both the critical battlefield campaigns and the human meaning of the war in the lives of soldiers, free blacks, slaves, women, and others. Special attention should be paid to Abraham Lincoln's Presidency, including his Gettysburg Address, the Emancipation Proclamation, and his inaugural addresses.

The Civil War should be treated as a watershed in American history. It resolved a challenge to the very existence of the nation, demolished (and mythologized) the antebellum way of life in the South, and created the prototype of modern warfare. To understand the ordeal of Reconstruction, students should consider the economic ruin, disease, and social chaos that swept the South in the aftermath of the war. They should learn of the postwar struggle for control of the South and of the impeachment of President Andrew Johnson. A federal civil rights bill granting full equality to black Americans was followed by adoption of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments. Black citizens, newly organized as Republicans, influenced the direction of southern politics and elected 22 members of Congress. Students should examine the Reconstruction governments in the South; observe the reaction of Southerners toward northern "carpetbaggers" and to the Freedman's Bureau, which sent northern teachers to educate the ex-slaves; and consider the consequences of the 1872 Amnesty Act and the fateful election of 1876, followed by the prompt withdrawal of federal troops from the South.

Students should analyze how events during and after Reconstruction raised and then dashed the hopes of black Americans for full equality. They should understand how the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments to the Constitution were undermined by the courts and political interests. They should learn how slavery was replaced by black peonage, segregation, Jim Crow laws, and other legal restrictions on the rights of blacks, capped by the Supreme Court's *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision in 1896 ("separate but equal"). Racism prevailed, enforced by lynch mobs, the Ku Klux Klan, and popular sentiment. Students also should understand the connection between these amendments and the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Although undermined by the courts a century ago, these amendments became the basis for all civil rights progress in the twentieth century.

### **The Rise of Industrial America: 1877-1914**

The period from the end of Reconstruction to World War I transformed the nation. This complex period was marked by the settling of the trans-Mississippi West, the expansion and concentration of basic industries, the establishment of national transportation networks, a human tidal wave of immigration from southern and eastern Europe, growth in the number and size of cities, accumulation of great fortunes by a small number of entrepreneurs, the rise of organized labor, and increased American involvement in foreign affairs. The building of the transcontinental railroad, the destruction of the buffalo, the Indian wars, and the removal of American Indians to reservations are events

to be studied and analyzed. Reading Chief Joseph's words of surrender to U.S. Army troops in 1877 will help students grasp the heroism and human tragedy that accompanied the conquest of this last frontier. By 1914 the frontier was closed, and the forty-eighth state had entered the Union.

Progress was spurred by new technology in farming, manufacturing, engineering, and producing of consumer goods. Mass production, the department store, suspension bridges, the telegraph, the discovery of electricity, high-rise buildings, and the streetcar seemed to confirm the idea of unending progress, only occasionally slowed by temporary periods of financial distress. Yet, beneath the surface of the "Gilded Age," there was a dark side, seen in the activities of corrupt political bosses; in the ruthless practices of businesses; in the depths of poverty and unemployment experienced in the teeming cities; in the grinding labor of women and children in sweatshops, mills, and factories; in the prejudice displayed against blacks, Hispanics, Catholics, Jews, Asians, and other newcomers; and in the violence associated with labor unrest.

Attention should be given to the developing West and Southwest during these years. The great mines and large-scale commercial farming of this region provided essential resources for the industrial development of the nation. Families from Mexico increasingly provided the labor force that developed this region. Students should understand the social, economic, and political handicaps encountered by these immigrants. Yet, Mexican-American communities survived and even thrived, strengthened by their rich cultural traditions and community life.

Students should examine the importance of Social Darwinism as a justification for child labor, unregulated working conditions, and laissez-faire policies toward big business. They consider the political programs and activities of Populists, Progressives, settlement house workers, muckrakers, and other reformers. They should follow the rise of the labor movement and understand the changing role of government in ameliorating social and economic conditions.

The consolidation of public education in the United States and the dramatic growth of public high school enrollments should be noted. By discussing what a typical day was like for their counterparts during these years and reading Stories and poems from the McGuffey Readers, which were used by more than half the school-age population in the late nineteenth century, students gain a sense of what these schools were like.

This period also was notable for the extension of the United States beyond its borders. Students can trace the major trends in our foreign policy from George Washington's Farewell Address to the Monroe Doctrine, from our involvement in the Spanish-American War to interventionist policies of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, culminating in our entry into World War I. By discussing and debating the issues, students should be able to formulate appropriate questions about the American role in these wars.

Literature should deepen students' understanding of the life of this period, including the immigrant experience, portrayed in Willa Cather's *My Antonia* and O. E. Rolvaag's *Giants in the Earth*; life in the slums, portrayed in Jacob Rils's books; and Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, unsurpassed as a sardonic commentary on the times.

### **Linking Past to Present**

In this last unit students should examine the transformation of social conditions in the United States from 1914 to the present. They should assess major changes in the social and economic status of blacks, immigrants, women, religious minorities, children, and workers. Students should analyze the economic handicaps on the life chances of a person without an education then and now. They should understand how economic changes have eliminated certain kinds of jobs and created others. They should have a sense of the economic growth in twentieth century America that has drawn most people into the middle class while leaving a significant minority behind.

To understand the changes that have occurred in social conditions over time, students should analyze the role of the Constitution as a mechanism to guarantee the rights of individuals and to ban discrimination. Teachers should encourage discussion of the citizen's ethical obligation to oppose discrimination against individuals and groups and the converse obligation to work toward a society in which all people enjoy equal rights and a good life. In this unit students should ask themselves: How have things changed over time? Why did these changes occur? They should discuss how citizens in a democracy can influence events and, through participation, apply ethical standards to public life.