

GRAPHIC NOVEL

Summaries and Activities

for

DISCOVERING OUR PAST:
THE AMERICAN JOURNEY TO WORLD WAR I

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SUMMARIES & ACTIVITIES

THE AMERICAN JOURNEY TO WORLD WAR I

The following pages contain additional information about each individual graphic novel. You will find background information, brief summaries of each novel, and two activities to help you guide your students' understanding of each graphic novel. The first activity is designed to help the student utilize the story presented to complete the assigned task. The second activity is more broadly focused, allowing students to make connections between the graphic novel and the larger historical context of the period.

CHAPTER 1, PAGES 76–111

THE SEA OF POSSIBILITIES

SUMMARY

This graphic novel opens with two sailors loading supplies onto their ship. They are discussing the possibilities of their voyage and disagreeing about what they are getting themselves into. One sailor is looking forward to the riches of Asia, while the other is considering the possibilities that there is something greater awaiting them in the ocean. Only toward the end do we discover that these sailors are sailing with Christopher Columbus on the *Santa María*.

ACTIVITIES

- 1 Ask students if they think the sailors on the *Santa María* will be successful finding a route to Asia. What do students think the sailors will find? Do they think the sailors will return home disappointed or as heroes? Have students illustrate 3–4 panels using the characters from the *The Sea of Possibilities* that depict what they think will happen to the sailors. The corresponding dialog for the panels should reflect the emotions and concerns of the sailors.
- 2 After reading the graphic novel, ask students to identify panels that explain what the captain and crew of the *Santa María* hoped to find on their voyage. Have students explain why discovering a western route to Asia was so important.

CHAPTER 2, PAGES 112–163

LIBERTY'S STAND

SUMMARY

Each American colony had its own group of part-time militia. These men were not professional soldiers, but they participated in frequent training sessions,

provided their own equipment, and were ready to gather and fight when needed. Some groups of militia called themselves “minutemen” because they claimed they could be ready on a minute’s notice. In this graphic novel, a member of the militia has received notice that he is needed, and he is preparing his equipment. In the pages that follow, he explains to his daughter why he must leave her and be prepared to fight.

ACTIVITIES

1 Tell students to look at the father’s and daughter’s faces throughout the story. What emotions do they see? What is happening that might cause the [name of the emotion]? What might the father say to explain each of the following events so that his daughter understands what is happening and why it is important?

- the Boston Massacre
- the Boston Tea Party
- the battles at Lexington and Concord

Next, organize the students into pairs. Tell the pairs to write narrative boxes and dialogue for this graphic novel. Their story should be historically accurate, but it should also demonstrate how the father and daughter feel about each other and the events. Have volunteers share their stories with the class.

2 After the class has read about the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, and the battles at Lexington and Concord, refer students to the graphic novel “Liberty’s Stand.” Help them determine that the father is explaining something to his daughter. Then as a class, choose which panels refer to the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, and the battles at Lexington and Concord. Have volunteers state facts that describe these events.

CHAPTER 3, PAGES 174–213

THE PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION: AN ANN SPECIAL REPORT

SUMMARY

The everyday business of running a nation required the states to work together, but the Articles of Confederation made cooperation difficult. For example, when multiple states used a river for trade, they often enacted conflicting laws. Congress did not have the power to resolve such problems. One such situation concerned Virginia and Maryland and the Potomac and Pocomoke Rivers. Because of James Madison’s work, representatives from these states met in 1785 at the Mount Vernon Conference. The conference’s success led the Virginia legislature to invite all the states to another meeting—the Annapolis Convention. Its goal was to make recommendations to Congress about how to improve domestic and foreign trade. Only five states sent delegates and these individuals did not feel they had the authority to take action. Alexander Hamilton and James Madison convinced them, however, that they should recommend a national meeting with two goals—to judge the effectiveness of the Articles of Confederation and

to recommend ways to strengthen it. The resulting report suggested that all the states meet in Philadelphia on the second Monday of May in 1787.

The graphic novel begins twelve days into the convention and imagines that modern-day media existed at that time. Jonathan Williams, the news commentator, provides background on what has happened so far. He and an expert guest also make guesses about what is going on behind the convention's closed doors. In addition, Williams tries unsuccessfully to get information from delegates as they leave the convention.

ACTIVITIES

1 Explain to students that news accounts often contain details from unnamed “informed sources.” These people know information about an event and are willing to talk to the press, but they do not want their identities known. Have students draw frames that show what an informed source has revealed to Williams about events at the convention during a recent day. These frames should relate to a key issue confronting the convention.

2 Have students read about the problems that the United States faced under the Articles of Confederation. Then refer them to the panels in which the news commentator interviews Professor Williamson. According to the professor, what may be on the convention's agenda? Why is Shays's Rebellion important? Next, ask students to name other problems that might be on the agenda and to explain why they are important.

CHAPTER 4, PAGES 214–269

WE THE PEOPLE

The 55 delegates who attended the Constitutional Convention had a common goal—to create a constitution that would pull the thirteen states together as a nation, yet still allow each one control of its own affairs. This difficult task took 116 days. The group had many issues to overcome in order to create a constitution that all could live with.

The issue being discussed at the beginning of this graphic novel is one of many obstacles the delegates faced during the Convention. The issue of fair state representation in the national government was vital. One vote per state was not completely fair at times considering that the population and type of industry varied from state to state. Yet on some issues, an equal number of votes per state would be most effective.

After the Constitution was written, the ratification process began. At least nine states were needed to approve the Constitution. Many people were unsure about the power given to the federal government by the Constitution, as they feared individual rights would be in jeopardy. With a promise to add a bill of rights, enough states agreed to ratify the Constitution and the new government was in place.

As the novel closes, we see modern day students looking at a painting of the Convention and speculating on the efforts of the delegates. The writers of the Constitution did not always agree, but they worked tirelessly to find compromise.

ACTIVITIES

- 1** When the novel opens, the year is 1787 and the delegates to the Constitutional Convention are discussing representation. They want to ensure fair representation within the national government and they examine different ways to go about it. As a class, review the novel and name the two ways the characters suggest that representation should be handled. List those on the board, and have the class provide the pros and cons of each position. Then ask students to explain what is beneficial about the ultimate discussion of a two-house legislature.
- 2** Americans reacted to the proposed Constitution in different ways. Those who opposed the Constitution, called Antifederalists, felt that it gave too much power to the national government and took too much away from the states. The Antifederalists also objected to the absence of a bill of rights. Supporters of ratification, the Federalists argued that the nation would not survive without a strong national government, as provided in the Constitution. Organize students into two groups. One group will be Federalists and the other Antifederalists. Have each group research their position and develop a presentation for the class on their findings. They should include the basic outline of their position, sound reasoning behind the position, and cause-and-effect relationships that would make their position the best choice. Afterward, the groups should debate the issues. Close by discussing the actual outcome.

CHAPTER 5, PAGES 274–301

WASHINGTON'S AMERICA

SUMMARY

George Washington led the American army during the Revolutionary War. He helped the thirteen colonies win their independence from the strongest power in the world. In 1789, Washington was elected as the first president of the United States. He led the American army and the country at times when it was uncertain whether the United States would continue to exist as a nation. During both those times, Washington had to solve many problems that the country had never dealt with before. This graphic novel shows Washington toward the end of his presidency. He is sharing his personal experiences and his opinions about the United States and its future.

ACTIVITIES

- 1** In “Washington’s America,” there are pictures with his statements. Ask students to describe each image and what it might represent. Here are some possibilities.
 - Flying eagle: It is the country’s national bird. It might stand for freedom.
 - Declaration of Independence: The Patriots declared their independence from Britain. Now no king can take their rights away.
- 2** Have students read about Washington’s presidency. Then ask student volunteers to choose two phrases in the graphic novel and explain what they might refer to. A phrase could be a reference to something from his personal life, the Revolution, or his presidency.

CHAPTER 6, PAGES 302–333

ELECTION DEADLOCK: AN ANN SPECIAL REPORT

SUMMARY

In the presidential election of 1800, the Electoral College provided a challenge for the young republic. But what is the Electoral College? Why was it created? During the Constitutional Convention, there were debates about how to choose the most qualified people for president and vice president. It was considered dangerous to let people vote directly for these offices. Instead, the framers had states choose electors. A state would have electors equal to the total number of its representatives and senators. Each state could decide how to choose its electors. In the early days of the country, the state legislature usually selected its electors.

The electors from all the states were known as the Electoral College. After a presidential election, the Electoral College would meet to vote for the president and vice president. Each elector could vote for two candidates. Only one of them could come from his own state. To become president, a candidate had to receive the greatest number of votes and a majority of the electors' votes. The runner-up became vice president. The electors had no way to show that they wanted one candidate for president and another for vice president. This weakness in the system resulted in Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr receiving the same number of electoral votes in the election of 1800.

The graphic novel “Election Deadlock” begins towards the end of Election Day, 1800. The anchorperson, Jonathan Williams, describes the election returns. Jefferson and Burr are tied for president. His expert guest, Samuel Williamson, explains why a tie could happen. After a six-day wait, Williams updates citizens on the situation. Then Williamson comments on what may be going on behind the scenes. Finally, the deadlock is broken, and Jefferson is elected president.

ACTIVITIES

1 In “Election Deadlock,” the election of 1800 is presented as it might appear on modern-day television. The illustrator wanted to make the program seem realistic. How did he use the following for this purpose: Jonathan Williams? Samuel Williamson? Dialogue? Pictures and labels? Was the illustrator successful? Why or why not? Ask students to add a couple of frames showing either candidate’s reaction to the results.

2 Ask students to read in their textbook about the election of 1800. In the graphic novel, Jonathan Williams suggests that Congress may call for an amendment relating to presidential elections. Was such an amendment passed? If so, which amendment is it? How does it correct the situation that occurred in 1800?

CHAPTER 7, PAGES 334–371

GALLANTLY STREAMING

In the early 1800s, American overseas trade prospered as Europe’s two greatest powers, Great Britain and France, waged war with one another. By 1805, however,

both countries began to ignore America's neutral rights and raided American ships in order to shut down their enemy's trade. Britain even began to impress, or force, U.S. sailors into service in the British navy. Hoping to damage British trade and force Britain to change its policy regarding American shipping, President Thomas Jefferson put in place an embargo, which restricted all U.S. trade. The embargo, however, hurt American merchants far more than it affected British trade, and the ban was soon lifted. The British violations at sea continued, and many Americans also believed that the British supported Native American attacks on settlers west of the Appalachians. In 1812, the United States declared war on Great Britain.

In the early years of the war, neither side held an advantage. In 1814, Britain's war with France ended, and the British were able to send more troops and ships to fight the Americans. In August of that year, the British won a stunning victory, capturing Washington, D.C., and burning many of the government buildings there. The British then attacked Baltimore, the third-largest U.S. city.

The British army that was attacking Baltimore needed naval support. Standing in the way of the British navy, however, was Fort McHenry. On the morning of September 13, British ships began a 25-hour bombardment of the fort. Francis Scott Key, a local lawyer, watched the battle from the deck of a ship in Baltimore harbor. He had sailed out to the British warships to bargain for the release of an American civilian prisoner. As the sun rose, Key was overjoyed to see the U.S. flag still flying over the fort. The British abandoned their attack, and Baltimore was safe.

Thrilled by the American victory, Key, an amateur poet, immediately began to write a verse expressing his emotions. The poem, at first titled "Defense of Fort McHenry," was quickly published in a Baltimore newspaper, then in newspapers up and down the East Coast. When put into song, the poem became "The Star-Spangled Banner," and in 1931 it was adopted as the national anthem.

ACTIVITIES

- 1 Have students research more about the Battle of Fort McHenry/Baltimore, Francis Scott Key, or the writing of "The Star-Spangled Banner." Then have them draw one or more panels to accompany the current art for "Gallantly Streaming."
- 2 Ask students to discuss the major events of the War of 1812. What might have been the mood of American citizens at the time of the attack on Fort McHenry/Baltimore? How might that mood have changed after the battle? How did the country's eventual victory in the war affect American confidence in the future?

CHAPTER 8, PAGES 378–417

AN ELECTION CAROL

SUMMARY

This graphic novel is based on the classic Charles Dickens's tale, *A Christmas Carol*. Instead of being visited by the ghosts of Christmas past, present, and future, Susanna is visited by figures representing woman suffrage of the past, present, and future. Susanna states some of the opinions that many Americans

have about the act of voting—that all politicians are the same and that her single vote will not make a difference. Certainly the 2000 presidential election, decided by a few hundred votes cast in Florida, shows that every vote is important. Susanna also says that her initial reason for not voting was that she did not have the time to go to the voting booth. Such thoughts are common among many voters today. Susanna realizes after her dream that voting is an important right and responsibility of every citizen, and she takes action by making the time to vote.

Chapter 14 discusses many social reform issues that citizens faced in the 1800s and early 1900s, such as slavery, temperance, the creation of public education, and suffrage. Through protesting, personal action, and legislation, many improvements were made in how people lived and worked in America. For further reading on many of these issues, refer to the Documents of American *History* section and various Supreme Court case summaries, located in the back of the textbook.

ACTIVITIES

1 Focusing on the story's issue of lack of time to vote, ask students what ideas they have that would make it easier for people to vote. Students might suggest that Election Day be declared a national holiday, or that employers give employees paid time to go to the polls. As ideas come up, challenge students to think of how they could be put into place and what positive and negative effects each idea could have.

2 The 1800s and early 1900s were a time of great social reform in America. Women were stepping into society and making an impact. Not only did they win the right to vote in 1920, but they also attended college and became doctors and other professionals. During this time, we also witnessed much social reform geared toward education and African American freedom in the United States. Our society was focusing on improving human opportunities and rights in the United States. Ask students to create a graphic organizer to compare and contrast the woman suffrage and temperance movements.

CHAPTER 9, PAGES 418–441

STRANGERS ON A TRAIN

SUMMARY

Starting in colonial times, the North and the South developed different economies. Climate, geography, and resources contributed to these differences. In this graphic novel, a Portuguese businessman, Vitor Romão, is traveling to Raleigh, North Carolina. He is looking for investment opportunities in the United States. On the train, he meets the Miller family from the North and a man from the South. Both Mr. Miller and the Southerner have very good reasons why Mr. Romão should invest in their region of the country. The conversation ends when the Millers and the Southerner change to a different train.

ACTIVITIES

1 Remind students that a story needs a plot, one or more characters, and a setting. Explain that in the beginning an author may only have a general idea

of what he wants to write about. The idea might be as simple as what it was like to be a colonist at Jamestown or what Valley Forge was like in the winter of 1777–1778. Ask students what the general topic of “Strangers on a Train” is. Next, point out that for this story, the writer had to figure out a realistic way to bring Northerners and Southerners (the characters) together. He needed to provide a reason why they would talk about their economies. Then ask questions such as the following: Whose ideas do the Millers present? Why do you think the author chose a train as the *setting*, or location, for the story? Is it important that Romão is a foreigner? Why or why not? How does this help the *plot*, the action in the story, move along? Is the train an effective setting for this story? Why or why not? Then organize students into small groups. Tell each group to create several frames for “Strangers on a Train.” They should show where Mr. Romão decided to invest and why he made that decision.

2 After students have read Chapter 13 and “Strangers on a Train,” hold a brief class discussion on the differences between the North and the South at the time of the story, especially economic differences. Then have students form small groups. Each group will act as a “public relations firm” for either the North or the South. Using their textbooks and outside resources, student groups should create short presentations emphasizing the benefits of living in/investing in one of the regions in the pre-Civil War era. Students should expand on the issues raised in the novel, offering more details, facts, and figures in their presentations. Have groups present their information to the class. Then discuss which region, North or South, appeared to offer better opportunities at the time.

CHAPTER 10, PAGES 442–465

SEQUOYA AND THE CHEROKEE NATION

SUMMARY

The Cherokee lived mostly in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Georgia. Many white Americans settled near them, and the Cherokee wanted to show that they were not dangerous. During the late 1700s and early 1800s, they, therefore, adopted many of the ways of white Americans.

A Cherokee named Sequoya wanted to create a written form of the Cherokee language. He borrowed some letters from English. He changed some of those letters, and he invented new ones. Sequoya assigned a different letter to each separate sound in the Cherokee language. When he was done, there were 86 symbols and a system for reading and writing Cherokee. Many Cherokee learned to read and write their language. In 1828, Sequoya and a minister named Samuel Worcester began printing a newspaper called the *Cherokee Phoenix*.

The Cherokee also developed a government similar to that of the United States. Their government had judicial, legislative, and executive branches.

The graphic novel “Sequoya and the Cherokee Nation” shows Cherokee attempts to adapt to white American ways. In addition, the novel includes their legal fight against forced relocation and ends with the Trail of Tears.

ACTIVITIES

1 Ask students to read all except the last two pages of “Sequoya and the Cherokee Nation.” Ask students why the Cherokee adopted white American ways. What kinds of changes did they make? How did they feel about these changes? Have students look at the last two pages of the novel. Ask students how the Cherokee used the U.S. legal system to stay on their lands. Is the illustrator sympathetic toward Jackson or the Cherokee? Have students defend their opinions with examples—pictures and text—from the novel.

2 Ask students to read about the removal of the Cherokee and the other four Civilized Tribes from the Southeastern United States. Why did white Americans want Cherokee lands? Was Jackson for or against relocation? Tell students to look at the last three frames in the graphic novel. How did Jackson react to the Supreme Court’s decision? How do you know if Jackson carried out the Court’s decision? What does the relocation of the Cherokee show about the relationship between the Supreme Court and the president at this time?

CHAPTER 11, PAGES 466–517

FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA!

SUMMARY

The concept of Manifest Destiny became popular in the United States during the 1840s. There were idealistic and practical reasons behind the belief that the United States should possess all of North America. White Americans believed that democracy was the best kind of government. They thought that it was their duty to spread democratic ideas. On the practical side, the white population of the United States had grown greatly from around 5 million in 1800 to more than 23 million in the mid-1800s. Since most of these people were farmers, the country needed land for them. The vast, open areas that belonged to British Canada and Mexico seemed to be natural places into which the United States could expand.

In this graphic novel, a father and son attend a speech given by the president. It focuses on the spread of the United States from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific. The president’s speech honors mostly white Americans whose efforts have made this achievement possible. The father is impressed by the speech. The son, however, wonders about the personal costs to the people who were affected by these events.

ACTIVITIES

1 In his speech, the president names several places that Americans fought for or acquired in some other way. Ask students these questions: In your opinion, why does the president have a map hanging behind him? Whose contributions does the president especially want remembered? Then have students explain the following:

- Why the president compared the expansion of the United States to pieces in a puzzle
- Whether “From Sea to Shining Sea” is an appropriate title for this graphic novel

Finally, ask volunteers to research—either in a book of quotations, such as *Bartlett’s Familiar Quotations*, or online—the origin of the expression “from sea to shining sea.”

2 Remind the class that the United States bought the Louisiana Territory from France. Tell students to list the other places and purchases shown on the map behind the president. Explain that students may use their textbooks and other sources to determine the following about each area:

- Any other country or countries that claimed the area
- How the United States gained control of the area

As a class, have students use this information and their own background knowledge to answer the questions that the son asks on the last page of the graphic novel.

CHAPTER 12, PAGES 524–565

SEEING THE LIGHT

SUMMARY

In the years leading up to the Civil War, our nation was battling with the issue of slavery. Violence broke out in many cities between those who supported slavery and the abolitionists who opposed it. Several court rulings and laws added to the tension, as the government tried to determine the best way to keep peace among the states. As the nation grew, adding states and new territories became increasingly difficult as both sides were vying for power.

While the government was debating what to do, average Americans were finding ways to help the anti-slavery movement. Many risked their lives and broke laws to assist enslaved African Americans escaping from Southern bondage. The Underground Railroad, a series of secret paths dotted with safe houses and helpful people, played a key role in helping many people escape enslavement and get out of the South.

This graphic novel tells the story of a husband and wife, who are just average Americans struggling with the decision to help escaped African Americans on the Underground Railroad. The story shows the couple trying to take on this commitment, while also showing the escape efforts of an enslaved worker heading north. The Northern wife wishes to help, while the husband is more reluctant. However, when he is confronted by the brutal reality of one enslaved woman’s experience, he becomes committed to the effort. The end of the graphic novel shows several ways that people secretly escaped the South—hiding in secret wagon compartments or in cellars and barns, or looking for the symbols and signs (like a lantern in the window) that signaled that a house was a safe haven.

ACTIVITIES

1 When the husband in the novel realizes that the escaped slave is a girl, he is shocked. When he sees that she was badly hurt he is immediately ready to assist. Having never personally faced the reality of slavery, he had not realized how horribly enslaved people were treated nor had he realized that

they were not just men, but women and children, too. Have the students change the enslaved character to a man, and speculate if the story would continue in the same direction or change in any way.

- 2** One issue causing the division of the Union was slavery. The two sides could not compromise, and separation was looming. The chapter in the textbook discusses the debate on secession in greater detail. Discuss what issues could arise in creating separate countries on common soil with a common history.

CHAPTER 13, PAGES 566–619

THE ROAD TO EQUALITY

SUMMARY

This graphic novel is a visual time line of events that resulted from the Emancipation Proclamation. Once emancipation from enslavement was announced by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863, these other events throughout the history of the United States were possible, if not guaranteed. Each of these events and individual acts of conscience and heroism helped bring the United States closer to its democratic ideal. These events were crucial in creating a life of social, economic, and individual equality for African Americans in the United States.

The Emancipation Proclamation was announced in 1863, but actual laws and change in social attitude concerning African Americans occurred gradually over the next 100 years. The Emancipation Proclamation technically freed African Americans enslaved in the Confederacy. It was a bold step by Lincoln in his effort to end the war. It led to the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865, which freed all enslaved Americans.

The Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment were first steps in bringing about freedom and liberty for African Americans. Yet at the time, many people still felt that equality, freedom, and liberty should not be granted or that they should be handled differently for the different races. Huge, sweeping changes in society can be difficult to achieve and can take a very long time to implement. Laws must be passed to give citizens a reason to honor actions, but unless society changes to support the laws, the legislation alone is meaningless.

ACTIVITIES

- 1** In the second panel, we see an African American family with a man holding a chain. Most enslaved people were not required to wear chains, unless they were punished. They were held in bondage in other ways, yet still able to move around the property to perform their duties. Discuss with the students how the chain in the novel is a metaphor for experiences of formerly enslaved people.
- 2** From the time of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 to the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964, our nation made a transformation. One hundred years of legislation coupled with growth in public support helped to make

this transformation. Discuss with students why it took so long for laws to take effect and for things to change. What other groups in our society have had to struggle to gain the rights and freedoms afforded in the Constitution?

CHAPTER 14, PAGES 620–655

A SMALL VICTORY

SUMMARY

Immediately following the Civil War, the status of the freed African Americans in the South was unclear. Some politicians wanted to grant the former slaves all rights held by the country's white citizens. Others, including President Andrew Johnson, sought a more gradual approach to awarding rights to African Americans. Those in favor of granting equal rights, the Radical Republicans, soon took control of Reconstruction and passed very important legislation.

The Thirteenth Amendment, which abolishes slavery, was passed in early 1865. The passage of the Fourteenth Amendment granted citizenship to African Americans born in the United States. The Fifteenth Amendment, granting voting rights to African American men, along with other legislation, soon followed. Still, many whites in the South found ways to oppress African Americans in spite of this progress. Southern state legislatures passed other laws, such as the black codes and Jim Crow laws, designed to exploit and restrict African Americans.

The Jim Crow laws segregated the races for more than 50 years. African Americans and whites had separate stores, hotels, and restaurants, as well as churches and schools. It was not until the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that these laws were overturned. The act prohibited racial discrimination by facilities that provide goods and services to the public. This story takes place just after the Supreme Court's decision in the 1964 *Heart of Atlanta Motel, Inc. v. United States* case. The Court's decision on this case stated that the desegregation of public accommodations established in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is legal. Finally, the ideals of the Radical Republicans were to be realized in all of the states. While the Court's decision meant that change was coming, this change did not occur overnight. The decision to uphold the Civil Rights Act of 1964 had been made, but enforcement and acceptance were not yet active.

ACTIVITIES

- 1** The title of the novel is "A Small Victory," yet no obvious victory is depicted. Is it the court ruling? Is it the fact that the driver was served coffee? Was the victory something personal to him—like having the courage to go into the diner? Ask students to write a paragraph explaining what they think the victory in the story is.
- 2** Though it took decades for the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to take full effect, they were and still are vital and important additions to the U.S. Constitution. Chapter 17 of the textbook briefly discusses these amendments. Ask students to create a graphic organizer listing each one with a description of their meaning and impact.

CHAPTER 15, PAGES 662–701

BOOM & BUST

SUMMARY

In the later half of the 1800s, settlement of the Western United States increased greatly. The West contained many natural resources, including precious metals, that attracted people hoping to “strike it rich” in unsettled, unexplored territory. This graphic novel tells the story of a solitary miner who discovers gold and excitedly tells others of his discovery. Almost immediately, the area is overrun by prospectors, and a wealthy, bustling town quickly grows. Almost as quickly, however, the gold is extracted, the miners move on to other areas, and the town is left empty.

While some individual miners struck it rich in the West, extracting the greatest portion of the ore was best done by groups using more complex equipment and crews of workers. As the number of miners in the mining camps grew, a number of services opened alongside the camps. Soon small, booming towns developed. Such towns had taverns, banks, churches, jails, and other buildings like those in settled areas in the East.

Many of the towns did not survive. Once the ore was gone, the miners and townspeople moved on to other mining locations. The transformation from boomtown to ghost town occurred in many places in the West. A town was likely to survive if the railroad passed by, or if ranchers and farmers settled in the area. Otherwise, many mining towns simply vanished over time.

ACTIVITIES

1 Have students choose one of the characters from the novel and write a letter home from that person’s point of view describing his or her experiences in the story. Students may choose a miner, shopkeeper, sheriff, or another person visible in the story. Students’ letters may describe life when much gold is being found and people are making their fortunes, or after the gold has become scarce and the local economy is suffering. Have students share their letters with the class if they wish.

2 Ask students to discuss the types of businesses that might have prospered in a boomtown. Then have students work in groups to determine exactly which businesses should open in a mining town and draw a map or a street plan for a new boomtown. Students should consider which businesses might be logically located near one another and where government buildings should be placed. Students may wish to make models of their town using poster board or other materials.

CHAPTER 16, PAGES 702–735

THE DOFFER

SUMMARY

The late 1800s and early 1900s were times of great advances in business and invention in America. Chapter 19 of the textbook discusses the development of big business across the nation. Improvements in technology and transportation helped many cities grow and led to the formation of new companies and industries. Some people became very wealthy and large corporations developed. This industrial growth provided many jobs, yet most American families remained poor because the pay was very low. In order to make ends meet, several members of the family had to find employment—even the children. Many children worked in factories where the conditions were unsafe. The children’s small hands and small size allowed them to maneuver easily in the cramped working areas. However, the unsafe equipment and the demands placed on the children led to many workplace accidents.

Children and adults worked long hours for six or seven days a week. Labor laws were newly developed and largely ignored. People worked under harsh conditions with little pay and no benefits. Unions were formed in an effort to improve conditions and increase pay. At first, unions had little success. In time, however, many developed into influential groups that brought about many positive changes for workers.

ACTIVITIES

-  Ask students if they have ever worked for their parents or a neighbor. How would they compare their work to the work of the doffer in this novel? Even after child labor laws were passed, children were still working up to 10 hours a day and received only a few years of schooling, if any at all. How do the students feel about this? Ask them if they think they could work that hard to help provide for their families. What other activities besides school would they miss if they had to work like the doffer?
-  This chapter discusses the positive changes and advancements in America during the late 1800s and early 1900s. It also points out the misery and abuse suffered by the poor. Very often, a society may advance economically while social issues are ignored. Have students create PowerPoint presentations comparing the advances made in an industrial society and the social ills that often develop. Students should describe the issues and any cause-and-effect relationships that exist.

CHAPTER 17, PAGES 736–789

COUNTRY MOUSE, CITY MOUSE

SUMMARY

This graphic novel tells the story of a country mouse who chooses to move away from his rural life and family, and takes a chance on making a new life for himself in the growing city. The central character discovers that city life is different than what he is used to—much more crowded; much more impersonal. The job that he acquires is mostly hard labor, and his living quarters are crowded and full of strangers. Though he is disillusioned, he does not say so in the letter he sends to his family. He also includes some of his weekly pay with the letter.

This experience is typical of what many people faced in the late 1800s—whether they were Americans moving within the country or people immigrating to the United States. Many immigrants settled in the growing urban areas, such as New York City, Chicago, Cincinnati, or San Francisco. They struggled to make a life for themselves in the city and send money home to their families—either to help them afford passage to the United States or to make their lives better at home. Many people came from Eastern and Southern Europe. These immigrants arrived in America with a different language and different customs. Some had family in the United States who would help them, but many had to find a job and living quarters on their own, much like the mouse in the novel.

ACTIVITIES

1 Life for the mouse looks bleak by the end of the novel. Having experienced both the country life and city life, the mouse can consider going back home. Ask students to write or draw an ending to the novel representing what they would do if they were the mouse. Would they go home? Would they consider trying another city or job? Would they stay in the city?

2 Remind students that most Americans today have ancestors who were immigrants at one time. People are still coming to the United States from other countries in hopes of a better life for themselves and their children. Ask students if they know any immigrants. What issues do they think immigrants face today? What can they do to help or support immigrant students in their school?

EPILOGUE, PAGES 792–819

THE LOSS OF INNOCENCE

SUMMARY

Up until the United States's entry into World War I, the country had followed a strict policy of neutrality and had been determined to stay out of foreign affairs. Because of that history, many Americans believed that the war in Europe did not affect the United States. As the war dragged on, however, it did begin to hinder the U.S. economy. Maintaining neutrality, while continuing international trade,

became increasingly difficult. Another issue affecting American neutrality was the ethnic background of its citizens. Many Americans had ties to the countries that were fighting in Europe. All of these factors helped lead America toward involvement in the war.

When the United States entered the war, there was much excitement on behalf of many of the country's young men. They had never experienced a war, and many were eager to enlist. Some believed that this war would be glorious and that enlisting served as a rite of passage into manhood. This graphic novel tells the story of how the expectations of these new soldiers crumbled under the reality and horror of war.

The entry into World War I represented a loss of innocence for these soldiers and, to an extent, the country itself. By the end of the war, an estimated 9 million soldiers, and nearly that many civilians, died around the world. Our young nation helped turn the tide in a long devastating war, and, in the end, America stepped on the world stage as a major power—a spot it continues to occupy today.

ACTIVITIES

- 1** Since this novel has no dialogue, have students write their own dialogue and narration boxes to establish a plot that centers on the life of a specific character. Ask students to have that character keep a short journal or write letters back home, explaining his experiences and emotions. Have the students share their journal or letters with the rest of the class.
- 2** Tell students to read in their textbooks about the activities of American troops in World War I. Ask students where the battle scenes in the graphic novel may have taken place. Then organize students into small groups. Have groups research the locations of these battles. Next, tell each group to make a map that shows these battlefield locations. Finally, ask each group to research one of these battles and to share the results with the class.