

The Big Ideas

School-to-Home Connection

Three big ideas that dominated writing between 1500 and 1800 continue to resonate today. First, respect for the earth, expressed in Native American oral tradition, is reflected in present-day environmental concerns. Second, the United States has always been enriched by the cultural, social, and economic contributions of new immigrants. Third, challenges to liberty and freedom present an ongoing struggle.

ACTIVITY

Directions Talk with one or two people at home who may see parallels between experiences in earlier periods and the present day. Use the following questions as a guide.

1. Do you think that people have more or less respect for nature than the native peoples of North America? Why?

2. Do you believe that immigrants today face problems that are similar to or different from the ones newcomers faced in earlier centuries? Explain.

3. Do you think that women today enjoy the same liberties as men? Why or why not?

4. How have your ideas about individual freedom been affected by recent historical developments?

5. Do you think that the United States has made significant progress in demonstrating responsibility toward the natural world, tolerance toward others' beliefs, and political and social equality? Why or why not?
