

Teachers' Guide for Cobblestone

July/August 2014: America the Beautiful

By Debbie Vilardi

Debbie Vilardi is an author of poetry, lesson plans and works of fiction. She is seeking an agent and publisher for her chapter book, *Flood*, set during Hurricane Katrina.

Goal: To interpret the poem "America the Beautiful" by Katharine Lee Bates in the context of her time period and learn how those ideals apply to America today.

*Always have a parent or trusted adult help with web research.

Before Beginning:

Study the cover. Are you familiar with the song of the same title? What lyrics do you know? How do the lyrics fit the cover image?

"An Ode to America" by Marjorie Rackliffe (Pages 2-4)

Vocabulary: Orpheus, meter, hymn

Comprehension:

1. How did Ward use his musical talents to earn money?
2. Where was Ward when he was inspired to write the composition?
3. What did Ward do with his new song?
4. Why was Katharine Lee Bates' education considered unusual?
5. How did she earn a living?
6. Why did Bates travel across country?
7. Where did she compose the poem?
8. What did she do with her new poem?
9. What tunes did people initially select for it?
10. Why did Bates revise the poem?
11. What role did Clarence Barbour play in matching the music to the lyrics?

Math Activities: Use information in the article to answer the following questions.

1. In what year was the music composed?
2. In what year was the poem written?
3. In what year was Katharine Bates born?
4. How many years passed before the poem was revised to make it easier to sing?

Research: Samuel A. Ward, Coney Island, "O Mother, Dear Jerusalem", Katharine Lee Bates, Wellesley College, World's Columbian Exposition, Pike's Peak, *The Congregationalist*

"At a Crossroad" by Marjorie Rackliffe (Page 5)

Comprehension:

1. What were some of the causes of the increase in the population of the United States?
2. What actions did workers take in order to improve their working conditions?
3. How were Black Americans and Native Americans treated?
4. What were some of the new inventions of this time period?

Research: labor unions

"America the Beautiful" by Katharine Lee Bates (Page 6-7)

Analyzing Literature: Study the lyrics. Are these the lyrics you are familiar with? How do they relate to the cover image for this issue? How do they relate to America today?

Art Activity: Complete the Art Activity described on the bottom of page 7.

Music Activity: Listen to various renditions of the song. Discuss the differences and consider why the individuals may have made the changes that they did.

"Amber Waves of Grain" by Eric B. Schultz (Pages 8-11)

Vocabulary: breadbasket

Comprehension:

1. How does the term *Midwest* convey the changing feeling Americans had about the structure of their nation?
2. What crops were grown in the 1860s?
3. Why might Lincoln have seen agriculture as the country's "largest interest"?
4. What did the Homestead Act promise?
5. What improvements did the industrial revolution bring to farmers?
6. Why is the Midwest called "the breadbasket of the world"?

Math Activities: Use information in the article to answer the following questions.

1. If each tract of land contained 160 acres and 430 million acres were settled between 1870 and 1900, how many tracts of land were given out under the Homestead Act during those years?
2. What is the percent increase in wheat production between 1867 and 1900?

Geography Activity: Locate the states that make up the Midwest on a map. Look at this area on a topographic map. How did the topography impact land use?

Understanding Images: Look at the lithograph on page 8. How does each image relate to the caption and the information in the article?

Research: Abraham Lincoln, Department of Agriculture, Homestead Act, Industrial Revolution, wheat, corn, soy

“Purple Mountain Majesties” by Barbara D. Krasner (Pages 12-15)

Vocabulary: sublime, regal

Comprehension:

1. Why is Pike’s Peak important?
2. Why might it have been necessary to replace the horses pulling the carriage with mules?
3. What was the view from the summit like?
4. Who was John Muir?
5. What changes in attitudes and new inventions helped make the national parks popular with visitors?

Geography Activity: Locate each of the mountain ranges mentioned in the article on a map of the United States. Look at them on a topographic map as well and compare the topography to that of the Midwest. Which range contains Pike’s Peak?

Writing Activity: Have you visited a location run by the national park service? Write about your visit. Be sure to include details about why the location is important enough to preserve. If you have not visited any, research and write about an imagined visit to one of the locations mentioned in the article.

Research: John Muir, Sierra Nevada, Yosemite Valley, National Park Service, Glacier National Park, Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park, Grand Canyon, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Acadia National Park,

“Pilgrim Feet” by Kathiann M. Kowalski (Pages 16-19)

Vocabulary: feats, pilgrim, quotas

Comprehension:

1. How does the definition of pilgrim given in the article relate to American history and to the song?
2. What do pilgrims’ feet have to do with the making of America?

3. Who were the Pilgrims?
4. Where did the first wave of immigrants come from?
5. Where did the second wave originate?
6. What pulled most of these immigrants to America?
7. What pushed them to leave their home countries?
8. What do you think is meant by the term "migration chains"?
9. Where did many people in the second wave settle?
10. What new groups began arriving in large numbers as part of the third wave?
11. Who was prejudiced against newcomers?
12. What did the new immigrants do to earn a living?
13. Where are most people in the current wave of immigration from?
14. Why are some people opposed to immigration?
15. Why are others in favor of it?

Writing Activity: Most American families arrived as part of one of the waves of immigration. Ask older relatives about your own family history. Which wave of immigration was your family part of? What factors pushed or pulled your ancestors or your immediate family members to come to America? If your family was forced to come as part of the slave trade or is native to the United States, trace your history as far back as you can. Describe what caused your family to settle in the region of the United States you live in today.

Discussion Activity: Take sides in the immigration argument mentioned toward the end of the article.

Research: Cape Cod, Pilgrims, Wampanoag Indians, Ellis Island Immigration Station

"Crown Thy Good" by Eric B. Schultz (Pages 20-23)

Vocabulary: tenements, infrastructure

Comprehension:

1. Why was the Columbian Exposition referred to as "the White City"?
2. What prompted the construction of new buildings in Chicago?
3. How did rapid growth impact the city?
4. What were some of the new industries that helped build the nation's infrastructure?

5. What were factory jobs like?
6. What services did Hull House provide?
7. What were the goals of the Children's Aid Society?
8. What were some of the impacts of the Progressive movement?
9. What organizations and activities continue the work of the progressives?

Math Activities: Use information in the article to answer the following questions.

1. What was the population of Chicago in 1871?
2. What was the percent increase in settlement houses between 1891 and 1910?

Service Activity: Brainstorm activities you can complete to help make your community a better place. Select one or two to accomplish.

Research: Hull House, Jane Addams, College Settlement Association, Children's Aid Society, Charles Loring Brace, Progressive Era, City Beautiful movement, United Way of America, Corporation for National and Community Service, Make a Difference Day

"Did You Know" by Chris Ware (Pages 24-25)

Research: Queen Liliuokalani, Thomas A. Edison, Panic of 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner, Charles and Frank Duryea,

"Heroes Proved" by Barbara D. Krasner (Page 26-29)

Vocabulary: pacifist, isolationist

Comprehension:

1. What does the author suggest may have contributed to Bates being a pacifist?
2. Why did Bates want America to become involved in the conflict in Europe?
3. Why did America take an isolationist view?
4. What lines did Bates cut from her poem?
5. Why do you believe she made this change?
6. How do we celebrate war veterans today?
7. What is the origin of Memorial Day

8. What is the origin of Veterans Day?
9. Why was the name Decoration Day changed?
10. Why was the name Armistice Day changed?

Authentic Experience: Visit a local war memorial or veterans' cemetery.

Research: Woodrow Wilson, League of Nations, Oxford University, World War I, National World War II Memorial, Korean War Veterans Memorial, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial, Iwo Jima, Arlington National Cemetery, Memorial Day, Veterans Day

"Thy Gold Refine" by Kathiann M. Kowalski (Pages 30-33)

Vocabulary: squalor, guilt

Comprehension:

1. What is the author's interpretation of the meaning of the lines about gold?
2. What is the meaning of gilded?
3. Why does the Gilded Age appear to be a prosperous time?
4. What were the conditions for the working class like?
5. How did the wealthy live?
6. What reform occurred during the Progressive Era?
7. What caused a financial "down turn" in 2008?
8. How did the government respond?
9. What were the results for many citizens?
10. What reforms have occurred to prevent a similar "down turn" in the future?
11. What is the Occupy Wall Street movement?

Research Activity: Find out the total population and determine how many people were living in poverty in 2012. Has the percentage changed? Find out the nation's total income in 2012 and determine how much money the top 5% earned in 2012? How many people do those 5% represent? Have these percentages changed?

Discussion: Do you believe the economic gap should be corrected so that there are no super wealthy or poor individuals? If so, why? How would you accomplish this?

Research: Gilded Age, Mark Twain, Charles Dudley Warner, Andrew Carnegie, J. Pierpont Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, Cornelius Vanderbilt, Gini index, Jacob Riis, Social Security, 16th Amendment, Occupy Wall Street

"Alabaster Cities" by Marcia Amidon Lusted (Pages 34-37)

Vocabulary: Beaux-Arts, staff, Renaissance,

Comprehension:

1. What was the World's Columbian Expositions?
2. What was Burnham's goal in designing the fair?
3. How did the temporary nature of the structures impact construction?
4. How did the fair represent an American Renaissance?
5. In what ways was America "undimmed by human tears"?
6. Why was electricity important to the fair?
7. What other inventions and new products appeared at the fair?
8. Why does the author feel that American innovation is as prominent today as during the fair?

Art/Technology Activity: Brainstorm an idea for an invention you would like to see in the future. Use art supplies or available technology to create a model or design drawing for your invention.

Research: Daniel Burnham, Frederick Law Olmsted, Italian Renaissance, Epcot Center

Activities for the Entire Issue: Complete the activities on pages 42 and 43.