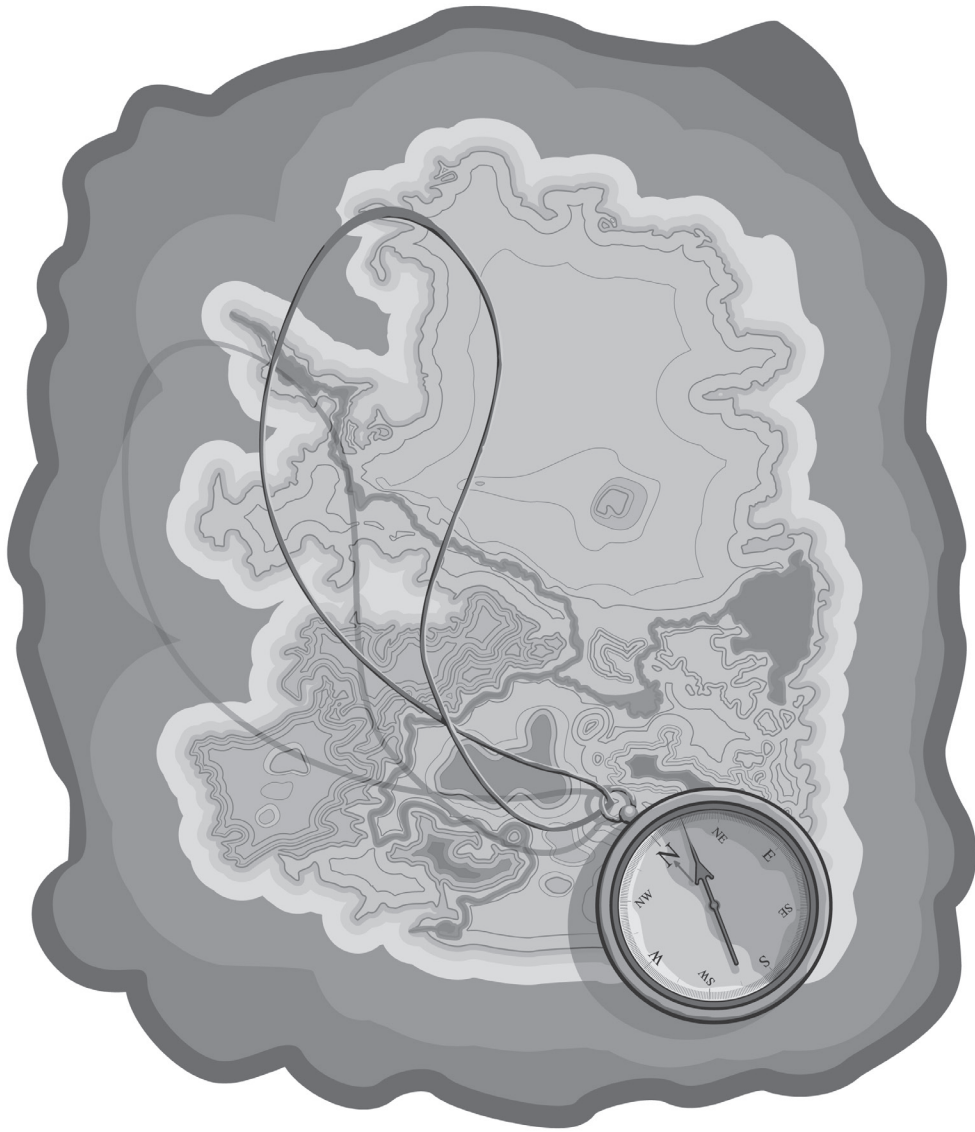


Expeditions in Your Classroom

English Language Arts

for Common Core State Standards, Grades 6–8



Henrietta List

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Introduction

Adult Relationships

Students connect with adults with relevant expertise. They observe them, work with them, and get support and feedback.

Assessment

Students play an active role in defining their goals and assessing their progress. Adults around them give them ongoing and varied opportunities to demonstrate progress.

Project Format and Materials

Each project contains the following materials:

Teacher Pages

- **Introduction:** includes an overview of information on project learning goals, plus information on prior knowledge or experience needed by students, time and materials needed for the project, key vocabulary, suggested assessment, and team formation
- **Suggested Steps:** a day-by-day view of how to implement project activities
- **Project Management Tips and Notes:** suggestions for how to handle possible issues or information on project options and variations
- **Extension Activities:** suggested activities for extending the project or exploring related areas
- **Common Core State Standards Connection:** a list of standards your students will address through the project
 - * Lettered standards that are marked with asterisks vary slightly by grade. The skills most prominently addressed are included in the standards section, listed on the teacher pages for each expedition. For the full text of each standard by grade, see the CCSS for ELA at www.corestandards.org.
- **Answer Key:** answers for Skill Check questions (Some answers may vary, and therefore, have been omitted from the answer keys.)

Student Pages

- **Expedition Overview:** a description of the project challenge, learning objectives, key vocabulary terms, materials needed, and Web resources students use for project activities
- **Before You Go:** lead-in activities designed to review fundamental skills or knowledge needed for the project
- **Off You Go:** activities that support the core project, including guidelines and instructions for final products or presentations
- **Expedition Tools:** handouts and worksheets associated with project activities
- **Check Yourself:** two assessment tools that students use to check skill development (practice problems or questions) and evaluate their project performance overall

Project Skills Chart

Projects always challenge students to flex more than one mental muscle at a time and integrate skills they often see dissected and covered in discrete units of study. Each project in this book has a core skill focus, but also gives students an opportunity to practice other skills. Use this chart as a reference to help you find the best project for your needs.

C = Core skill

X = Other skills covered (sometimes optional)

Project	<i>Grammar/mechanics</i>	<i>Writing skills</i>	<i>Creative writing</i>	<i>Critical reading</i>	<i>Communication/public speaking</i>	<i>Visual presentation</i>	<i>American literature</i>	<i>Literary genres/responding to literature</i>	<i>Research skills</i>
Making History	X	C	X	C			C	C	
The World Around You	X	C	C			C			X
Who, Me?	X	C					C		
College Sales		C		X		C	X	X	
Taking a Stand	X	C		C	C	X			C
Your Quest	X	C		C	C	X			C
Finding Your Roots	X	C							
Class Ezine	C	C			C	C		C	
You're the Playwright			C		C		C	C	
The Great Debate		C			C			C	C

Project Assessment Rubric

English Language Arts Project Assessment Rubric

	% of grade	4 (Excellent)	3 (Good)	2 (Fair)	1 (Poor)
Knowledge and skills specific to the project		Defines all key vocabulary, with examples. Actively uses terms, methods, and skills and transfers them to other situations and contexts.	Defines majority of terms, with examples. Majority of skills or methods are applied correctly. Sometimes transfers them to other situations or contexts.	Definitions and explanations are confusing or incorrect. Some skills used correctly.	No evidence of knowledge or skill development. Few correct methods, few correct answers.
Research		Work shows high-quality research on topic or theme. Research is used consistently to support main claims or points. Sources are reputable and cited correctly.	Work reflects solid research. Research is used to support most main claims or points. Sources are reputable and cited correctly.	There is little evidence of research, or research is used inconsistently to support claims or points. Citations are incorrect or incomplete. Sources are questionable.	There is no evidence of research. No citations are provided.
Grammar, spelling, and punctuation		Excellent use of mechanics. Sentences are well constructed. Student reviews work methodically for errors.	Uses mechanics consistently. There is some variety in sentence construction. Student reviews work for errors.	Inconsistent control of mechanics. Student reviews work for errors.	There are serious errors. There is little or no attempt to check work.
Writing		Purpose or argument is focused, well presented, and insightful. Includes excellent supporting detail. Shows creativity.	Purpose is clear and presented in an organized, engaging way. Includes relevant supporting detail.	Purpose or argument is vague. Organization is weak or inconsistent.	Topic is unclear. There are few supporting details and little evidence of organization.
Critical reading/responding to literature		Provides excellent summaries of main ideas and themes. Pays close attention to detail and context. Insightful understanding of the author's purpose or point of view.	Summarizes ideas and themes adequately. Pays attention to details and context. Good understanding of the author's purpose or point of view.	Can summarize action or characters but struggles to summarize ideas and themes. Some difficulty interpreting information or drawing conclusions.	Cannot summarize ideas or themes. There is little or no attention to detail or context. Contributes little or nothing to discussion.
Final product		Meets all criteria. Organization and information exceed expectations. Reflects excellent understanding of project content.	Meets all criteria. Organization and information presented clearly. Reflects good understanding of project content.	Meets most criteria. Some elements or components are missing.	Did not contribute; did not submit or missing major components.
Presentation		Completed within specific time. Evidence of preparation is obvious. Emphasizes most important information. All team members are involved.	Almost completed within time. Preparation evident. Covers majority of main points. Most team members involved.	Almost completed within time. Little preparation evident. Misses a number of important points. Not all team members involved.	Did not participate, no preparation, way under or over time, or information is confusing and disjointed.
Teamwork		Workload divided and shared equally by all members.	Most members, including student, contributed fair share.	Workloads varied considerably. Student did not contribute fair share.	Few members contributed. Student made little to no contribution.
Class participation		Contributed substantially.	Contributed fair share.	Contributed some.	Contributed very little.

Making History

Overview

Students explore the lives of teenagers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They examine primary sources to understand how these documents provide a picture of life during that time period. Students create a journal of a day in their life in their community to be archived for historians in the future.

Time

Total time: 8 to 10 hours

- **Before You Go—Getting Acquainted with Characters, Settings, and Plot:** one class, pp. 11–13
- **Activity 1—What’s in My Reading?** one class and 30 minutes of homework, pp. 14–18
- **Activity 2—It’s in the Details:** one class and 20 minutes of homework, pp. 19–21
- **Activity 3—Recording My Life:** one class and 30 minutes of homework, pp. 22–23
- **Activity 4—For All Time:** three to four classes, pp. 24–29
- **Check Yourself! Skill Check** and **Self-Assessment and Reflection** worksheets: 30 minutes of class time or homework, pp. 30–31

Materials

- notebook
- reading material (historical fiction excerpt or whole book)
- computer access (optional)

Skill Focus

- character
- setting
- descriptive and narrative writing skills
- editing

Prior Knowledge

- active reading
- writing process

Team Formation

- Students work individually, in small groups, and as a whole class.

Making History

Lingo to Learn—Terms to Know

- **biography:** a written account of another person's life
- **character:** the identity of an individual figure in a story
- **characterization:** the method a writer uses to develop a character
- **historical fiction:** a story that may not be true but is based on actual facts, places, a time period, or an event
- **narrative:** the telling of fictional or real events
- **plot:** the plan of the events in a story or the actions taken by the characters in a setting
- **setting:** the time and place of an action in a story

Suggested Steps

Preparation

- Review all the materials and activities for the expedition. Note printables that you'll need to copy.
- Select historical fiction or biographies for your students to read about children's lives from the 1860s to 1920s. You can choose whole books or short excerpts. The materials can be varied in order to match reading levels of your students. The time period can fluctuate; it is just important to provide a historical perspective.
- Students must complete their reading before starting these activities. The activities enable them to apply their understanding of character development and setting in literature. While students read, direct them to take notes on the main characters, describing the relationships between the characters and personality traits. Students should also take notes on the main plots, especially noting the settings.
- This expedition is in three steps:
 1. Students read the historical fiction or biography (completed before the beginning of the project).
 2. Students build a picture of the historical context from primary sources.
 3. Students write a journal entry for a recent event, expanding upon it to create a journal entry for a significant event that can be archived.
- It might be beneficial to enlist the support of a social studies teacher in the project.
- The project is best done in partnership with the local historical society. Consider inviting a speaker from the local historical society to your class. You can find information about historical societies in your state at the National Archives Web site at www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/state-archives.html.

Making History

Day 1

1. Give an overview of the project. Explain that students will be developing a booklet of journal pages that represent what present life is like. These personal accounts can then be archived, perhaps with help from the local historical society. In the future, individuals can use them as background for writing biographies or historical fiction.
2. If possible, have a representative from a local historical society speak to the class about life at the turn of the century and the role of archived records from individuals.
3. As a whole class, complete and discuss **Before You Go: Getting Acquainted with Characters, Settings, and Plot** (p. 11), along with **Expedition Tool: *Times* Excerpt** (pp. 12–13).

Day 2

1. Distribute **Activity 1: What's in My Reading?** (pp. 14–15) and **Expedition Tool: Charting Character, Setting, and Plot** (pp. 16–18).
2. Read out loud the first section of the reading material you selected for the lower-level readers in the class. Have students reading that selection follow the text in their books. The other students can listen. It is best if you stop periodically, and then go back and review each section while pointing out what might be appropriate to place in the Expedition Tool.
3. Conduct a whole-class discussion, summarizing what students have learned.
4. Pair students by those who have read the same materials. Assign pairs to complete the Expedition Tool for their reading.

Homework

Students should complete the Expedition Tool.

Day 3

1. Pair students based on common readings. Facilitate a review of the completed Expedition Tool assignment.
2. Invite pairs to share their favorite part of their reading with the whole class, describing why it was chosen.
3. Compile all responses to create a master list of characteristics of good writing. Identify how these qualities relate to character, setting, or plot development.
4. Distribute **Activity 2: It's in the Details** (p. 19) and **Expedition Tool: Part of the Story** (pp. 20–21). Once students have rated the selections, tally the votes.

Making History

5. Discuss the selections with students, having voters express why they liked a particular selection. Add to the master list of the characteristics of good writing.
6. Have students work in pairs to identify how the selections with the fewest votes could have been improved. Ask students to discuss their ideas with the whole class.

Homework

Have students revise the selection with the fewest number of votes.

Day 4

1. Review the definition of historical fiction. Invite students to reflect on their reading and cite examples of text that is historically accurate and examples of text that is fictional. (For example, the story might be about slavery, which was an historical event, but the specific characters and their actions were fictional.)
2. Define and discuss the term *primary source*. Explain that a primary source is an actual item or document from an individual's everyday life. Examples include journals, letters, bills, and so forth.
3. Read aloud a primary source journal entry to the class. Choose a document from the pertinent era and geographic region (such as New England or the Midwest). Discuss the difference between the primary source and the literature students are reading. Note how authors use primary sources as research for developing their biographies of historical figures and historical fiction.
4. Use an overhead projector and transparencies, or a computer and projector to show some historical photographs of the appropriate era.
5. Identify the differences in settings, both geographically and in the scenes.
6. As each image is shown, invite students to describe what they see. Encourage them to enrich their descriptions by describing the actions, objects, or expressions in detail.
7. Distribute **Activity 3: Recording My Life** (p. 22) and **Expedition Tool: My Journal** (p. 23).
8. Explain that journaling is a type of narrative or story-telling. It is a written account of a person's activities. Connect it with familiar forms such as diaries, blogs, hunting or exercise/training logs, letters, photo journals, or lyrics.

Homework

Have students complete the Expedition Tool. They will write a journal entry that describes an event they did over the past weekend using what they have learned about quality descriptions.

Making History

Day 5

1. Give students time to share their journal entries. Encourage them to give one another positive feedback on their work and to identify the qualities of good writing.
2. Distribute **Activity 4: For All Time** (pp. 24–25) and **Expedition Tool: A Day in the Life of . . .** (pp. 26–29).
3. Explain that students are to draft another journal entry to be archived. Use the primary source documents from the turn of the century as models. Remind students that their journal entries will be read in the future to provide an understanding of what life was like during this time period.
4. Model the planning process with the Expedition Tool.
5. Have students work in pairs, taking turns to describe their own personal idea or event they want to convey to the reader. Pairs are to provide feedback to each other, revise their ideas, and then share with the whole class.
6. Select one idea from those presented by the class. Use this as an example to show the next steps in the writing process. Have students work with their partners to identify some supporting details. Have students share these, and select a few.
7. Student pairs should then add details of both setting and characters to the supporting details, indicating where these might appear in the story. Discuss as a class.

Homework

Have students continue to follow the steps in the writing process and arrange the supporting details for the example in a logical sequence. Students can review their notes from class to check that the original idea and the supporting details still match. If necessary, they should revise their work.

Day 6 (Narrative Writing)

1. Have students share their homework with a partner.
2. Give students time to work independently on authoring their own journal narrative. If students have difficulty selecting an idea, have them brainstorm a list of events that they have participated in during the past year—birthdays, sports, class projects, and so forth.
3. Once students have created an outline, have them share it with a partner for feedback and revise as needed.
4. Provide time for students to begin writing. Students can review their notes on qualities of good writing. Remind them that their journals will be read by students 30, 50, or 100 years in the future who may not know anything about the culture that students are describing.

Making History

5. Facilitate a one-to-one writer's conference with each student to support his or her planning and writing.
6. As students finish their writing, have them use the Writing Checklist on the **Check Yourself! Self-Assessment and Reflection** worksheet (p. 31). Have them revise their work as necessary.

Homework

Students should continue with their writing.

Day 7 (Revision and completion)

1. Direct students to share their narrative with a partner. Partners should pay particular attention to the amount of detail. Have them use their notes on the qualities of good writing from earlier classes to assess the text. Have the author revise it as necessary.
2. Once a revision is completed, students should find another partner to proof the writing, checking it for grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
3. When final papers are turned in, compile them into a booklet.
4. If possible, present the booklet to the local historical society.

Final Day

1. Have students complete the **Check Yourself! Skill Check** questions (p. 30).
2. Check and review answers.
3. Have students complete the **Check Yourself! Self-Assessment and Reflection** worksheet (p. 31) and submit it (optional).

Project Management Tips and Notes

- When selecting the readings for students, choose ones that focus on history from your geographic region.
- Contact your local or regional historical society well before the start of the project. They might be able to assist you in finding readings, images, and primary source documents from their collections.
- The writing assignment can be supported by obtaining images of children during the selected time period from the Library of Congress Prints & Photographs Online Catalog (<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/>). A search under “children playing 1860–1920” will result in a wide variety of images from around the country that can be downloaded and printed. Make sure to select “Match any words” from the advanced search options. You may also be able to search for images of your particular state or region.

Making History

- Create a word wall with the terms used throughout the project. This allows students a quick reference point for their vocabulary when discussing the materials. Students can also keep a descriptive writing journal in which they write adjectives and adverbs that are new to them, as well as notes on techniques for adding descriptions.
- Doing a quickwrite in the first 5 minutes of each class in which students respond to a prompt with a description will help students become more fluid in their writing.
- When students share their writing, the class can build a stronger understanding of quality work. It is also a good opportunity to focus on applications of recently studied rules in grammar, punctuation, or spelling.

Suggested Assessment

Use the Project Assessment Rubric or the following point system:

Team and class participation	10 points
Before You Go	10 points
Activity 1	10 points
Activity 2	10 points
Activity 3	10 points
Activity 4	45 points
Self-Assessment and Reflection	5 points

Extension Activities

- Students can illustrate their journals.
- Students can add more historical details to what they have already written.
- Students can extend their journal entry to a short story.

Common Core State Standards Connection

Reading—Literature: Craft and Structure

RL.6.5. Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

Reading—Literature: Key Ideas and Details

RL.8.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot....

RL.7.3. Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

Making History

Reading—Literature: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RL.7.9. Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.

Writing: Text Types and Purposes

W.6.3, W.7.3, W.8.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

- a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.*
- b. Use narrative techniques, such as ... description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.*
- d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.*

Writing: Production and Distribution of Writing

W.6.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

Language: Conventions of Standard English

L.6.1, L.7.1, L.8.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.6.2b, L.7.2b, L.8.2c. Spell correctly.

Language: Knowledge of Language

L.6.3, L.7.3, L.8.3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

Answer Key

Check Yourself! Skill Check

1. A plot is the series of events in a book or story.
2. A character is one of the individuals described in a story.
3. Setting is the time and location in which a story takes place.
4. An author can increase the descriptions of the setting, involve the characters in conversation, or include an item or thoughts with which the reader can identify.
5. Historical fiction is a story that has elements of factual information, such as a real place, time, or person. It properly reflects what is known about that time period by historians. However, the characters and the events do not have to be true. They can be fictional.

Making History

Expedition Overview

Challenge

Have you ever wanted to be a time-traveler? Have you ever wanted to see the future or investigate the past? Would you like to leave a record of who you are for everyone in the future to read? Many individuals have written journals of their lives that allow us to see what life was like during the historic period in which they lived. Now you will create a journal entry that will be kept for future time-travelers to discover.

Objectives

- To understand how an author reveals and develops character
- To strengthen your narrative and descriptive writing skills

Project Activities

Before You Go

- Getting Acquainted with Characters, Settings, and Plot

Off You Go

- Activity 1: What's in My Reading?
- Activity 2: It's in the Details
- Activity 3: Recording My Life
- Activity 4: For All Time

Expedition Tools

- *Times* Excerpt
- Charting Character, Setting, and Plot
- Part of the Story
- My Journal
- A Day in the Life of . . .

Other Materials Needed

- notebook
- reading material (provided by your teacher)

Lingo to Learn—Terms to Know

- biography
- character
- historical fiction
- characterization
- narrative
- plot
- setting

Making History

Expedition Overview

Helpful Web Resources

- escrapbooking—E-scrap: Autobiography, Personal Accounts, & Travel Narratives
<http://escrapbooking.com/escraps/autobiography/index.htm>
- Federal Resources for Educational Excellence
<http://free.ed.gov/index.cfm>
- Google News Archive Search
<http://news.google.com/archivesearch?ned=us>
- The Library of Congress—American Memory Timeline
www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/
- The Library of Congress—American Memory: Voices from the Days of Slavery
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/voices/index.html>
- The Library of Congress Prints & Photographs Online Catalog
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/>

Making History

Before You Go

Getting Acquainted with Characters, Settings, and Plot

Goal:	To understand characters, settings, and narratives as literary tools
Materials:	notebook, pen or computer
Tool:	<i>Times</i> Excerpt

An important part of creating a story is deciding on the setting. The setting is the time and place of an action in a story. If the story isn't true but it includes real people, places, or events, the story might be historical fiction. If a story is about an actual person who lived at an earlier time, it is a historical biography.

Characters are the individuals about whom stories are told. When writing a story, an author might describe personality traits of a character. For instance, a character could be humorous, angry, or moody. Authors will also create a physical description of the character so the reader can imagine the character's appearance. An author creates the character by showing how the individual reacts to various situations in the story.

The plan of the events in a story or the actions taken by the characters in a setting are pieced together into a plot. Sometimes a story can have more than one plot. It can move between groups of characters that are doing different things at the same time. For instance, a group of students could be studying at school—this is a plot. However, some of those students might be in an English class doing one set of things, while others could be in a math class doing another set of activities. These are the subplots to the main story.

When you read a story, imagine that you are trying to follow the clues to solve a mystery. You must first find out who is involved—the characters. Next, you find out where each character is located—the setting. Finally, you find out what they were doing—the plot.

Making History

Expedition Tool

Times Excerpt

Three Dying Foes Made Friends

(Adapted from an article in *The Hartford Courant*, Jan. 14, 1915.)

To the Editor of The Courant:

I have read nothing more tender and moving than the letter found by a Red Cross agent at the side of a dead officer and forwarded to the person to whom it was addressed. The writer was a French cavalry officer engaged to a young American girl in Paris. It was written as he lay dying from wounds received in battle. Let it speak for itself. *E.P.P.*

THERE are two other men lying near me. I do not think there is much hope for them either. One is an officer of a Scottish regiment and the other a German private. They were wounded after me, and when I came to, I found them bending over me, giving me first aid.

The Britisher was pouring water down my throat from his flask, while the German was trying to stop the bleeding of my wound. The Highlander had one of his legs shattered, and the German had several pieces of shrapnel buried in his side.

In spite of their own sufferings, they were trying to help me. When I was fully conscious, the German gave us a morphine injection and took one himself. His medical corps had provided him with the injection and the needle.

After the injection, feeling wonderfully at ease, we spoke of the lives we had lived before the war. We all spoke English, and we talked of the women we had left at home. Both the German and the Britisher had only been married a year. . . .

I wondered, and I supposed the others did too, why we had fought each other in this war. I looked at the Britisher, who was falling asleep, exhausted. In spite of his drawn face and mud-stained uniform, he looked the picture of freedom. Then I thought of the flag of France and all that France had done for liberty in fighting this war. Then I watched the German they had fought against, who had ceased to speak. He had taken a Prayer Book from his knapsack and was trying to read a service for soldiers wounded in battle.

And . . . while I watched him, I realized what we were fighting for. . . . He was dying in vain, while the Britisher and myself, by our deaths, would probably contribute something toward the cause of civilization and peace.

(The letter ends with a reference to the failing light and the roar of guns.)

Adapted from *The New York Times. Current History—A Monthly Magazine: The European War, March, 1915.*

Making History

Off You Go

Activity 1: What's in My Reading?

Goal:	To apply understanding of character, setting, and plot as literary components to your recent readings
Materials:	notebook, pen or computer
Tool:	Charting Character, Setting, and Plot

Directions

You have recently completed a reading that describes life in America at the turn of the twentieth century. During your reading, you should have taken notes on the characters, settings, and plot described. Use your notes to complete the charts in the **Charting Character, Setting, and Plot Expedition Tool** according to the instructions below.

1. In the first column of the **Main Characters** chart, list the names of the three to five key characters in the story you read. These characters are discussed throughout most of your reading.
2. In the second column, write a physical description of each character (age, gender, hair color, height, and so forth).
3. In the third column, describe the personality of the character (kind, thoughtful, mean, humorous, etc.).
4. In the fourth column, describe any relationships to the other main characters (son, brother, husband, and so forth).
5. In the first column of the **Main Settings** chart, identify the main locations in which the story occurs. This could be a farm where the main character lives. Or it could be a wagon train crossing the country.
6. In the second column, identify when the characters are in that setting. This could be a year, or it could be the age of a character.
7. In the third column, write a physical description of each setting. This could include the location being a woodland, mountain, or prairie. It could be a town with wide unpaved streets, a few stores, and a hotel, or it could be a tepee, a log cabin, or an urban two-story home.

(continued)

Making History

Off You Go

8. Fill out the chart **The Main Plot**. Beginning with the first box, describe the character's first actions in the story. This could be an action such as moving from a town to a farm. Or it could be a family gathering at home before a character goes off to war.
9. Draw an arrow from that action (for example, family gathering) to another box, and describe the next action (character goes off to war).
10. If the story separates into two storylines, perhaps one for each character, draw an arrow from the first box (family gathering) to another box. Indicate the action (for instance, the sister takes over farming the fields).
11. Continue until you have diagrammed all the main actions in the story plot.

Making History

Expedition Tool

Charting Character, Setting, and Plot

Main Characters

Character name	Physical description	Personality	Relationship to others

Making History

Expedition Tool

Charting Character, Setting, and Plot

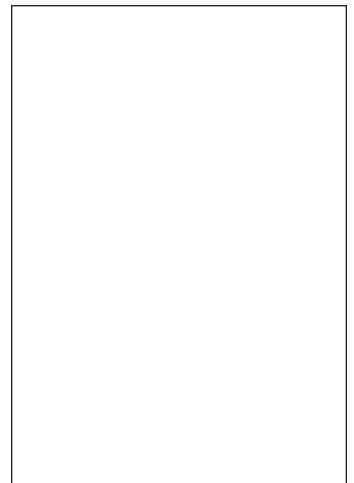
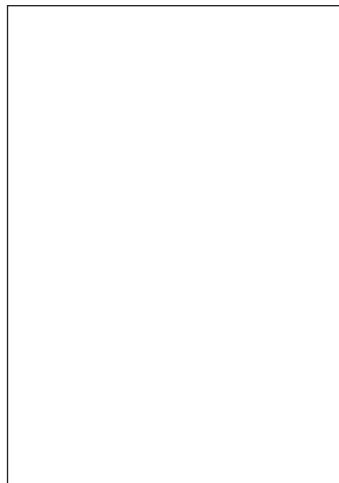
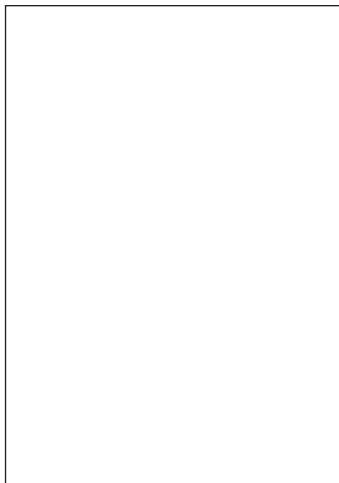
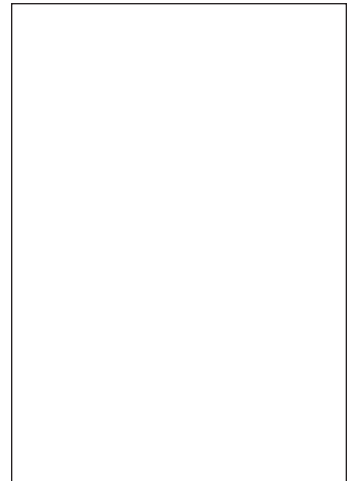
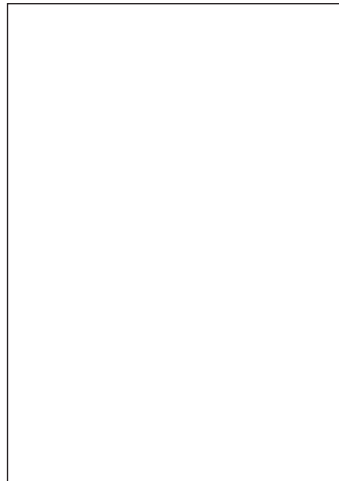
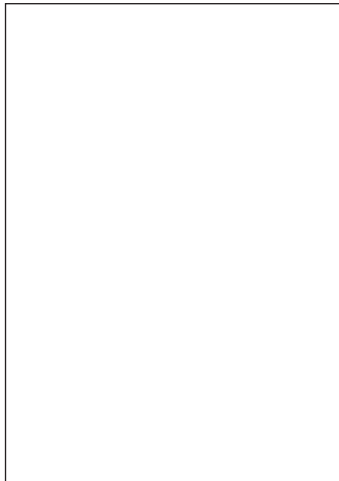
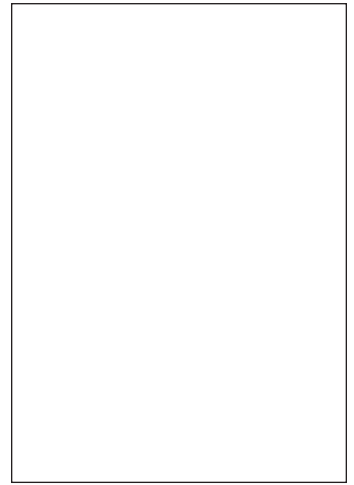
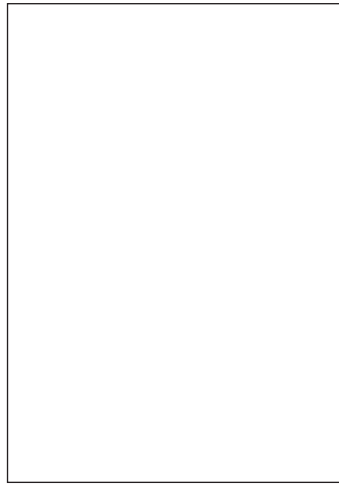
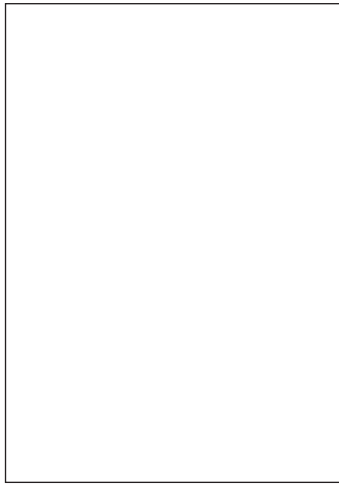
Main Settings

Location	Time period	Description

Making History

Expedition Tool

Charting Character, Setting, and Plot
The Main Plot



Making History

Off You Go

Activity 2: It's in the Details

Goal:	To learn how descriptive details enhance writing
Materials:	pen or computer
Tool:	Part of the Story

Directions

1. Read the selections in the **Part of the Story Expedition Tool**.
2. Decide which selection you like the most. Number the selections from your favorite (number 1) to your least favorite (number 4).
3. Write three reasons why you like your first and second favorite selections. Be prepared to share your ideas with the class.

Making History

Expedition Tool

Part of the Story

1. The women's work there is chiefly the planting of sweet potatoes, taro and other things. They also weed the gardens; and in the afternoon, they get food from the gardens and firewood from the bush. They bring all of this home to the village. They also have to clear the undergrowth from newly cleared bush. The men's work is mainly planting yam, banana and sugar cane. Each one is planted in its season. The men must also cut down the big trees and make fences in order to make new gardens.

Williamson, Robert W. *The Mafulu: Mountain People of British New Guinea*. London: Macmillan and Co., 1912.

Your rating: _____

2. As she walked this morning in her garden, her dark eyes were troubled. She let her grey garments sweep the ground unheeded. She imagined she followed Prince Radiance, who had come for one brief hour into her dull life. She could only wonder whether she must be always lonely as she now was. She wondered whether she must always wish in vain for such happiness as his land could give. Up and down the alleys of the garden she went. For a long time no one came to disturb her. Eventually, a voice broke in upon her thoughts.

Adapted from Crownfield, Gertrude. *The Shadow Witch*. New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1922.

Your rating: _____

3. If you travel through the flat plains of Australia, you may hear a strange sound. Beginning softly, you hear a high, whirring noise. It slowly grows louder and louder. Eventually, it becomes a fluttering, windy roar. If you are a newcomer to the area, you may be very puzzled. If you have been in Australia before, you may recognize the bull-roarer. The sound is from the native populations celebrating their tribal mysteries. The roaring noise is made to warn all women to keep away.

Adapted from Lang, Andrew. *Custom and Myth*. Longmans, Green and Co., 1884.

Your rating: _____

(continued)

Making History

Expedition Tool

4. What can be more delightful than a day in the woods after a good snow! If you have a good friend or two along, and perhaps your dogs, you ought to be happier than a king is.

A forest is a fine place at any time, but when the ground is well covered with snow with a hard crust—the woods seem to possess a peculiar charm. You can go anywhere then. In the summer, the thick undergrowth, intertwining vines, and heavy lower branches, make it difficult to see into the dark forest. But in the winter all is open. Even the low, wet places are frozen and are easy to explore.

Adapted from Stockton, Frank R. *Round-about Rambles in Lands of Fact and Fancy*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910.

Your rating: _____

Making History

Off You Go

Activity 3: Recording My Life

Goal: To create an interesting journal entry

Materials: notebook, pen or computer

Tool: My Journal

Directions

1. Make a plan to write a journal entry that describes an activity that you did last weekend.
2. Think about the ways you learned about to make writing interesting. These might include the following:
 - adding adjectives and descriptive details to increase a reader's ability to picture a scene
 - using items in your descriptions a reader can personally identify with
 - describing the setting in which an activity is done
 - including interactions between characters that illustrate their personalities
3. With these in mind, describe the activity. Use the **My Journal Expedition Tool** to record your journal entry.
4. Write at least a page describing the activity. Use your own paper if you need more space. Be sure to introduce and describe the setting and all the individuals involved. If you have photographs of the event, you can use those to help add detail.

Making History

Expedition Tool

My Journal

Date: _____

Making History

Off You Go

Activity 4: For All Time

Goal: To use character, setting, and plot to create an interesting journal entry to be archived

Materials: notebook, pen or computer

Tool: A Day in the Life of . . .

Directions

Organizing Your Journal

1. Using the **A Day in the Life of . . . Expedition Tool**, write a few sentences describing the event you will write about in your journal entry. This could be as general as “We celebrated my birthday at my grandmother’s house. My mother’s whole family was there.”
2. Under **Supporting Details**, write at least three details about the event. This gives more detail to the plot and can create subplots. These can be such things as conversations between individuals or specific activities.
3. Number your supporting details in the order in which you will write about them.
4. Under **Individuals Involved**, list the characters that will be included in the story. You can create other names for people if you do not want readers to be able to identify them. Show where in the story people will be introduced by also listing them under the proper supporting detail.
5. After each person’s name, note what he or she will be doing and write one or two physical characteristics of the person.
6. Next, describe the setting(s) for the activity. Describe each location so that a reader can clearly imagine it. Your description should include the following:
 - where the story takes place geographically (such as the town and state)
 - when the story takes place
 - a description of the surrounding landscape (such as downtown or farmland)
 - specifics about the buildings and rooms if appropriate
7. Decide when you will introduce the descriptions of the settings. List these under the supporting details.

(continued)

Making History

Off You Go

Writing Your Journal

1. After you have organized your ideas, write a draft of your journal entry on a separate sheet of paper. Be sure to include the date of the event.
2. Use the Writing Checklist in the **Check Yourself! Self-Assessment and Reflection** sheet to review your draft. Make any revisions needed.
3. Once revised, share your work with a partner to get any suggestions. Proofread the journal. Make any necessary revisions in grammar, punctuation, or spelling.
4. Create a final draft.

Making History

Expedition Tool

A Day in the Life of . . .

Writing Focus (Plot)

Describe the event.

Supporting Details

List at least three specific scenes you might describe.

1. Summary: _____

Characters: _____

Setting: _____

(continued)

Making History

Expedition Tool

2. Summary: _____

Characters: _____

Setting: _____

3. Summary: _____

Characters: _____

Setting: _____

(continued)

Making History

Expedition Tool

Individuals Involved

1. Name: _____

Action: _____

Characteristics: _____

2. Name: _____

Action: _____

Characteristics: _____

(continued)

Making History

Expedition Tool

3. Name: _____

Action: _____

Characteristics: _____

Setting

State: _____

Town: _____

Date: _____

Landscape: _____

Buildings: _____

Making History

Check Yourself!

Skill Check

1. In literary terms, what is plot?

2. In literary terms, what is a character?

3. In literary terms, what is setting?

4. How can an author make his or her writing more interesting?

5. What is historical fiction?

Making History

Check Yourself!

Self-Assessment and Reflection

Writing Checklist

- My story has an interesting beginning.
- My story contains clear descriptions and adequate detail.
- My story allows the reader to connect the story to his or her own life.
- My story includes interactions between characters that show their personalities.

Reflection

1. What were the most challenging aspects of this project for you and why?

2. Which skills did this project help you develop?

3. If you did this project again, what might you do differently and why?
