

INTRODUCTION

It is important for students to have a general understanding of how events of the past helped create the world that exists today. Every student should have the opportunity to understand how the United States developed and became a world leader. This knowledge expands students' appreciation of the country in which they live.

The story of the United States is an exciting, interesting one. However, students sometimes get overwhelmed by the volume of information in their textbooks. Unfortunately, some students might "give up" and miss out on significant concepts that are being taught. This book is not intended to replace students' U.S. history texts. Rather, it is meant to complement existing materials.

This unique, reproducible book was designed for students of any age who need help learning the basic concepts covered in U.S. history classes. In order to help struggling readers understand complex historical events and issues, the lessons are written at a 3.0–4.5 reading level. These short, high-interest passages and activities are effective teaching tools for students with learning differences, attention or behavior problems, and limited reading skills. This book is also helpful for at-risk and ESOL students.

U.S. History Shorts features 28 one-page stories, or shorts, followed by activity sheets that reinforce the information. The shorts focus on key historical concepts and may be used in two different ways. You can use each one-page short as an introductory lesson and then use other resources to teach the topic in greater depth. The short can also serve as a quick overview for topics that you need to cover faster than others.

Following each short are four activity pages. These activities allow students to practice reading-comprehension skills while answering content area recall questions; interpreting maps, charts, and graphs; researching significant historical people, places, and events; and expressing opinions through writing. The activities include multiple-choice questions, crossword puzzles, short-answer questions, and extension activities. Each short is also accompanied by a visual activity, which consists of a map, chart, or graph.

A quiz follows the four activity pages. The one-page quiz tests students' comprehension and knowledge of the most important information in the short and includes questions that are written in standardized-test format.

Each standards-based short covers a significant person, place, or event in U.S. history from pre-colonization through Reconstruction. Included in this book are lessons on the geography of the continental United States; early Native Americans; European explorers; European colonization of the Atlantic Coastal Plain; the French and Indian War; the American Revolution; the new republic; land acquisitions, including the Louisiana Purchase and the Mexican Cession; Lewis and Clark's expedition; technological advances; the Civil War; and Reconstruction.