TIME TRACES

An interactive historical fiction unit in which students generate and solve clues about mystery eras

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PURPOSE

In TIME TRACES, small teams of students randomly choose an historical era—an era whose identity is a mystery to the other teams in the class. Era Teams read historical fiction and conduct research to learn about their historical time periods. Teams then create clues and challenge their classmates to identify the historical eras on Mystery Era Day. The unit concludes with History Alive, performances of original historical fiction plays written and performed by Era Teams.

By taking part in TIME TRACES, your students will experience the following:

Knowledge
- Recognizing the distinction between historical fact and historical fiction
- Understanding elements of literature (characterization, plot, setting, anachronism)
- Learning about significant people, events, discoveries and customs of historical time periods

Skills
- Using graphic organizers to compile and synthesize information
- Analyzing and interpreting historical facts
- Taking notes and documenting reference sources
- Improving communication skills through group discussions
- Presenting knowledge in written, oral and visual formats
- Using clues for inductive reasoning
- Writing creatively within the boundaries of a specific historical setting
- Planning in order to accomplish long-term goals
- Script writing and acting techniques

Attitudes
- Appreciating history and the relationship between past, present and future
- Valuing historical fiction as a literary genre
- Building confidence in speaking and performing in front of an audience
- Feeling pride in individual and group accomplishments
- Realizing the value of cooperation in achieving success

OVERVIEW

TIME TRACES includes 23 one-hour lessons divided into three phases: Historical Fiction, Research and Mystery, and History Alive.

PHASE 1: HISTORICAL FICTION

To begin TIME TRACES, the class forms six Era Teams. Each team randomly chooses a slip of paper bearing the name of one of six time eras: Ancient Egypt, Middle Ages, American Revolutionary War, American Westward Expansion, American Civil War or World War II. Each team knows the identity of one era only—its own. After each team reads a short description of its historical era, students choose historical fiction novels set in that time period. Students read the novels and complete activities to learn about elements of literature: plot development, characterization, the use of historical facts and anachronism. As students read their novels, the identity of each team's historical era remains unknown to other teams.

PHASE 2: RESEARCH AND MYSTERY

In Phase 2, students research their historical eras and prepare a clue presentation for Mystery Era Day. To create clues, each student researches two topics associated with his or her team's era: art/architecture, artifacts/discoveries, events/geography, people/famous quotes, food/music or military affairs/politics. On Mystery Era Day, Era Teams present these clues and the class attempts to name each mystery era. An optional Era Enrichment activity in this phase gives students a chance to complete additional projects such as a time line or an original song.

PHASE 3: HISTORY ALIVE

In Phase 3, each Era Team creates and produces a short historical fiction play which they perform for the culminating event, History Alive. Parents, relatives, classmates and administrators may all be invited to observe and enjoy the performances.

SETUP DIRECTIONS

1. **Before you begin**
   Be sure to read the entire Teacher Guide and Student Guide before beginning TIME TRACES.

2. **Assigning student teams**
   In TIME TRACES, students work in cooperative Era Teams. The unit is designed for six teams of no more than six students each. You may choose to assign teams in one of several ways. Depending upon the needs of your class, you may strategically assign students to teams (balancing for gender, learning styles, personalities and so on), have students choose their own teams, or randomly assign students to teams.

TEACHING TIPS

Depending upon your resources and your class needs, you may choose to have students within each team read the same rather than different novels. The authors ask students to read different titles to enrich learning about each historical era.

To facilitate novel selection, it is a good idea to have more novels than the number of students in each team. Also, novels available should represent a range of reading levels. To ensure that Mystery Eras remain secret, do not show the Historical Fiction Novel List to the students.

3. **Selecting and preparing novels**
   Each Era Team reads books from one of six eras in history (Ancient Egypt, Middle Ages, American Revolutionary War, American Westward Expansion, American Civil War and World War II.) Students within an Era Team read different titles from the same historical era. At the end of Phase 2, students will be asked to guess the era of classmates' books. It is extremely important to keep the time eras and the novel titles a secret! Following are suggestions for preparing historical fiction novels for your class.

   - **Collect novels for each Era Team**   Gather historical fiction novels for each Era Team. To help teachers choose appropriate novels, this unit includes an annotated Historical Fiction Novel List. Place each Era Team's novels in a separate paper bag or small box.
   - **Cover novels** After collecting the needed books, cover the novels from each historical era with paper (a different color for each era, if possible). Covering the books will help the eras remain a mystery.
   - **Number novels** Each era has been assigned a number. Write this number on the covered books. Also write the era number on the outside of the box or paper bag that holds each team's books.

Era Number	Era Name
1	Ancient Egypt
2	Middle Ages
3	American Revolutionary War
4	American Westward Expansion
5	American Civil War
6	World War II

4. **Preparing reference books**
   As with the novels, it is important to keep the titles of reference books a secret. By Day 5 you will need to collect and prepare books for student research. Follow the same procedure that is listed for **Selecting and preparing novels**. For each Era Team, select reference books from the library, cover the books with paper, and number the books with their corresponding historical era number. For suggested reference book titles, see the **Reference Book List**.

5. **Assigning student roles**
   Each Era Team member has specific responsibilities. You may pre-assign roles or allow students to choose their roles on Day 1. The following list includes six roles. You may adapt these roles as needed.
   - **Team Manager** The Team Manager draws one of the Mystery Era Identities from the envelope on Day 1 and is responsible for the team folder throughout the unit.
   - **Novel Coordinator** The Novel Coordinator leads the team in choosing novels and helps the team set reading goals and gather supplies for Phase 1.
   - **Research Coordinator** The Research Coordinator helps the team choose research topics and collects research materials during Phase 2.
   - **Clue Master** The Clue Master helps the team devise clues and design the Clue Poster for Mystery Era Day.
   - **Play Director** The Play Director helps coordinate the Era Team's acting, props and scenery for the History Alive play production.
   - **Event Planner** The Event Planner sends out invitations to History Alive, plans the refreshments and welcomes guests.

6. **Arranging the classroom**
   - **Classroom library** Establish a classroom library utilizing the suggestions from the extensive resource lists included with the unit. See the Resources section.
   - **Bulletin board** Arrange a bulletin board area for each Era Team. Once the presentations are made on Mystery Era Day, display the Clue Posters on this bulletin board.
   - **Supply center** Various arts and crafts materials may be needed by the teams for their presentations on Mystery Era Day and for the History Alive performances. You may wish to create an arts and crafts supply center within the classroom.

- **Team arrangement** To keep their Mystery Eras secret, Era Teams will need privacy. Seat Era Teams together with enough distance between teams so that private team discussion can occur.

7. **Planning for History Alive**
   The unit comes to a close with History Alive, a student production of short, original historical fiction plays for the class and guests. This event may be as simple or elaborate as you choose. Following are some suggestions if you would like to plan ahead.
   - **Choose a date and time** Use the Unit Time Chart to assist you in choosing a date and time for your History Alive event.
   - **Decide the scope** Decide how big your event will be. Will performances be just for your class or for additional guests such as parents and administrators?
   - **Secure a site** Based upon the size of the event, choose an appropriate site. If you wish to hold the History Alive performances in an auditorium, inform the appropriate administrator.
   Note: opportunities to write invitations and plan refreshments with your class are included in the Daily Directions.

8. **Era Enrichment activities**
   The Teacher Guide includes an Era Enrichment section. Era Enrichment projects give students an opportunity to extend their explorations of their historical eras. Era Teams choose one of five projects to complete: Time Line, Big Book, Picture Glossary, Roller Movie or Original Song. Era Enrichment projects require additional research and will add a few instructional days to TIME TRACES. If you wish for students to participate in this enrichment activity, the authors recommend conducting the activity during or after Phase 2. You will find Daily Directions for Era Enrichment at the end of the Teacher Guide.

9. **Assessing student learning**
   - **Record sheet** To assist you with tracking student progress, a Record Sheet is included after the Day 1 Daily Directions. The sheet includes suggested point values for each activity.

- **Rubrics** The Daily Directions section includes rubrics to assess three student products: Mystery Era Day presentations, History Alive performances and the Era Enrichment activity. These rubrics can be used for evaluation by the teacher, for students to evaluate their peers and/or for students to evaluate themselves. The Daily Directions include opportunities to share rubrics with students as they begin these three activities. Sharing rubrics with students helps to clarify expectations.

10. **Adapting the unit**
    - **Shorten** If you are short on time, you may choose to conclude the unit at the end of Phase 2. This choice will shorten the 23-day unit to 16 days. Another option is to shorten Phase 1 of the unit by having students do the majority of their historical fiction reading at home. This choice could save you time during Phase 1.
    - **Extend** If you wish to extend the unit, you might consider adding an Era Enrichment activity during or after Phase 2. This option will add about four days to the unit. See **Enrichment activity**.

11. **Duplicating materials**
    Any handouts or transparencies needed are noted each day in the Daily Directions. To minimize duplication of student handouts, most activities are included in the Student Guide.

12. **Additional supplies**

PHASE 1: HISTORICAL FICTION

- Manila folders—*one per team*
- Envelope (8.5" x 11")—*one*
- Historical fiction novels, covered with paper—*class set* (see Historical Fiction Novel List and Setup Directions)
- Reference books, covered with paper—*class set* (see Reference Book List and Setup Directions **Preparing reference books**)

SETUP DIRECTIONS

PHASE 2: RESEARCH AND MYSTERY

- Audio visual equipment (for student presentations)—*as needed*
- Butcher paper (*24" x 36"*)—*one section*
- Glue—*one per team*
- Markers and/or colored pencils—*one set per team*
- Masking tape—*one roll*
- Note cards—*several per student*
- Paper clips—*class set*
- Poster paper—*one per team*
- Reference books, covered with paper—*class set* (see Reference Book List and Setup Directions **Preparing reference books**)
- Scissors—*one per team*
- Scratch paper—*several sheets per team*

PHASE 3: HISTORY ALIVE

- Extra chairs—*enough for guests*
- Paints and/or markers—*for scenery (optional)*
- Paper (8.5" x 11") lined or unlined, white or colored—*class set, for invitations*
- Poster paper—*for scenery (optional)*
- Refreshments—*enough for class and guests (optional)*

ERA ENRICHMENT

- Audio visual equipment (tape or CD player, video tape player)—*as needed*
- Cardboard box (at least 12" x 12" x 12")—*one*
- Cardboard cutter—*one*
- Dictionary—*one per student*
- Large white construction paper—*several sheets*
- Lined paper—*several sheets*
- Markers, crayons or paints—*enough for team*
- Music and/or instruments—*as needed*
- Scissors—*enough for team*
- Scratch paper—*enough for team*
- Stapler—*one*
- Tape—*one roll*
- White paper (8.5" x 11")—*several sheets*
- White construction paper (24" x 36")—*several sheets*
- Wooden dowels (as wide as the box, plus 2 inches)—*two*

13. **Ordering additional Student Guides**
    This unit includes a set of 16-page Student Guide. You may order additional Student Guides from Interact at 1 (800) 359-0961.

DAILY DIRECTIONS

DAY 1: INTRODUCTION

TEACHING TIPS

Materials
- MYSTERY ERA IDENTITIES—*cut apart and place in an 8.5" x 11" envelope*
- Envelope (8.5" x 11")—*one*
- Student Guides—*class set*
- Manila folders—*one per team*
- Historical fiction novels, covered with paper—*one numbered set per team* (see Historical Fiction Novel List and Setup Directions **Selecting and preparing novels**)
- INTRODUCTION—*transparency*
- RESPONSIBILITIES—*transparency*

Procedure

1. Explain to students that they are about to begin a unit on historical fiction. Ask students if they have ever heard the phrase "historical fiction." Have the class try to come up with a definition. Prompt the class to think of the definition of history (recorded events from the past) and fiction (made up or imagined). Aim them toward a definition similar to the following: *historical fiction is a story, set in the past, that weaves together imagined and real characters and events*. To help the definition take hold, ask students to think of a movie or a book that includes some historical facts and some fictional elements.

2. Distribute the Student Guides and have students write their names on the cover. Refer students to the **Introduction** on the first page. Using the INTRODUCTION transparency, read the Introduction to TIME TRACES. Answer any general questions that may arise.

Secrecy is essential for the mystery component of this simulation.

3. Divide the class into Era Teams. Aim for no more than six teams with no more than six students in each (See Setup Directions **Assigning student teams**). Explain that each Era Team will study a different historical era, and that each team's era must remain secret from the other teams. Have teams relocate their desks or tables to different areas of the classroom.

4. Assign Era Team roles. Refer students to the **Job Descriptions** on page 2 of the Student Guide. Using the RESPONSIBILITIES transparency read the role descriptions with the class. Either assign team roles or have students choose their own (see Setup Directions **Assigning student roles**). Ask students to fill in the names of their team members next to the corresponding role and description in their Student Guides.

5. The class is now ready to select Mystery Eras. The Team Manager approaches the teacher and chooses a MYSTERY ERA IDENTITY from the envelope. Each team then reads the MYSTERY ERA IDENTITY to learn the name and some historical background of its Mystery Era. Remind students to keep the names of their Mystery Eras secret from other teams.

6. Announce that during this unit each Era Team will be known by a number. Have each team read you the number written at the top of its identity slip. Following is a list of numbers and corresponding eras (for your eyes only!).

Era Number	Era Name
1	Ancient Egypt
2	Middle Ages
3	American Revolutionary War
4	American Westward Expansion
5	American Civil War
6	World War II

7. Give each Era Team a folder in which to store its work. Have the Team Manager write the team's number and student names on the folder. Remind students not to write the name of the Mystery Era on the folder. The first item to go into the folder should be the team's MYSTERY ERA IDENTITY.

8. Distribute one set of novels to each team's Novel Coordinator. Be sure that the team's number corresponds with the number on the set's bag or box. Explain that inside each set are different novels, each one taking place during the team's selected historical time period. Each student selects a novel from his or her team's set. The Novel Coordinator from each team leads students in this process.

DAILY DIRECTIONS

9. After students have selected their books, refer them to the **Daily Reading Goal** section on page 2 of the Student Guide. Explain that each student will set reading goals to complete his or her novel. Using the RESPONSIBILITIES transparency guide students through the process of setting a Daily Reading Goal.

10. Allot any remaining class time for students to begin reading their novels.

11. Ask students to hand in their books to their Novel Coordinator, or encourage students to continue reading at home to meet their reading goals.

12. Have Team Managers place Student Guides into team folders, then collect team folders.

13. After class, prepare the Record Sheet. Write down the names of students from each team. You may refer to Era Team folders where names of team members are recorded. For suggestions regarding how to use the Record Sheet, see Setup Directions **Assessing student learning**.

Student's Name: _____

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Student Guide (vertical sidebar text)

INTRODUCTION

Historical fiction is a doorway to the past. You are about to step through that doorway and explore historical periods of long ago. Your journey includes three phases.

PHASE 1: HISTORICAL FICTION

To begin TIME TRACES, you will become a member of an Era Team. Each team randomly selects one of six Mystery Eras. (The identity of your team's historical era is a mystery to all of the other teams!) After you read a short description of your Mystery Era, you will choose an historical fiction novel set in that time period. The books have been covered and numbered by your teacher to preserve secrecy. As you read your novel, you will complete assignments to help you to understand your book and your historical era.

PHASE 2: RESEARCH AND MYSTERY

In Phase 2, you will prepare clues to present to the class on Mystery Era Day. To create challenging clues, you will research to learn more about your Mystery Era. On Mystery Era Day, your Era Team will present its clues and other teams will try to guess the identity of your era. If your Era Team guesses the most Mystery Eras correctly, you will be the "Mystery Masters."

PHASE 3: HISTORY ALIVE

After the identities of the Mystery Eras are revealed, you will have a chance to make history come to life. You and your Era Team will write a short historical fiction play and perform it for guests at an event called History Alive.

So get ready to learn the identity of your Mystery Era. And remember, it's a secret!

RESPONSIBILITIES

STUDENT'S NAME	JOB TITLE	JOB DESCRIPTION
	Team Manager	The Team Manager draws one of the Mystery Era Identities from the envelope on Day 1 and is responsible for the team folder throughout the unit.
	Novel Coordinator	The Novel Coordinator leads the team in choosing novels and helps the team set reading goals and gather supplies for Phase 1.
	Research Coordinator	The Research Coordinator helps the team choose research topics and collects research materials during Phase 2.
	Clue Master	The Clue Master helps the team devise clues and design the Clue Poster for Mystery Era Day.
	Play Director	The Play Director helps coordinate the Era Team's acting, props and scenery for the History Alive play production.
	Event Planner	The Event Planner sends out invitations to History Alive, plans the refreshments and welcomes guests.

DAILY READING GOAL

Divide the number of chapters in your book by the number of reading days to determine your Daily Reading Goal.

Number of chapters ÷ Number of reading days = Daily Reading Goal

_____ ÷ _____ = _____

Fill in the chart below with the date and which chapters you plan to complete that day. Check off each Daily Reading Goal when complete.

DATE	CHAPTERS	COMPLETE	DATE	CHAPTERS	COMPLETE

ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

Phase	Title	Started	Finished	Phase	Title	Started	Finished
1	Character Web			**2**	Note Cards		
	Fact and Fiction				Source List		
	Plot Development				Prepare a Clue		
	Anachronism				Mystery Era Day Present.		
	Novel Comparisons				Guess Forms		
				3	Planning a Play		
					History Alive Performance		
				Extra	**Era Enrichment Project**		

TEACHER RECORD SHEET

Use the following chart to record points or grades. Numbers listed are suggested point values for each activity.

ERA TEAM	STUDENT NAME	ASSIGNMENT													TOTAL POINTS
		Phase 1					Phase 2					Phase 3			
		Character Web 10	Fact and Fiction 10	Plot Development 10	Anachronism 10	Novel Comparisons 10	Note Cards 10	Source List 10	Prepare a Clue 10	Mystery Era Day Presentation 50	Guess Forms 10	Planning a Play 10	History Alive Performance 50	Era Enrichment Project 50	
1															
2															
3															
4															
5															
6															

DAILY DIRECTIONS

DAY 2: CHARACTER WEB

Materials
- Historical fiction novels, covered with paper—*one numbered set per team* (see Historical Fiction Novel List and Setup Directions **Selecting and preparing novels**)
- Era Team folders—*one per team*
- CHARACTER WEB—*transparency*

Procedure

1. Have students sit with their Era Teams.

2. The Team Manager retrieves the team folder. If students have taken their novels home, ask them to take out their novels; if students stored their novels in the classroom have the Novel Coordinators distribute them.

3. Have students open their Student Guides to the **Daily Reading Goal** chart on page 2 and record their reading progress.

TEACHING TIPS

You may choose to model this activity with characters from a book that your class has read together.

4. Refer students to the **Character Web** assignment on page 3 of their Student Guides. Explain that a web is a graphic organizer used to collect and group information. Using the CHARACTER WEB transparency, demonstrate how to fill out the Character Web. The name of the book goes in the center circle, surrounded by character names and descriptions. Suggest that students include in their Character Web physical traits as well as thoughts, feelings and behaviors that describe each character.

In the authors' classrooms, all historical fiction activities are due on Day 9, at the end of Phase 1.

5. Explain that this Character Web is an on-going assignment; students will add to it every day. Assign a due date and have students write the due date at the top of the Character Web page in their Student Guides.

As students read you may also check students' reading progress by having students show you their Daily Reading Goal charts.

6. Allow students time to write information on their Character Webs and read their novels. Guide individual students as needed to ensure understanding of the Character Web assignment or their novels.

7. Encourage students to continue reading at home to meet their reading goals.

You may suggest that students take their Student Guides home to continue to add information to their Character Webs as they read.

8. Have students place Student Guides into their team folders, then collect team folders.

CHARACTER WEB

Assignment Due _____

As you read your novel, use the web below to record descriptions of the book's characters. Write the title of the book in the center circle and the names of characters in the surrounding circles. Use the space around each character's circle to write descriptive words. Be sure to include physical descriptions, thoughts, feelings and behaviors of characters.
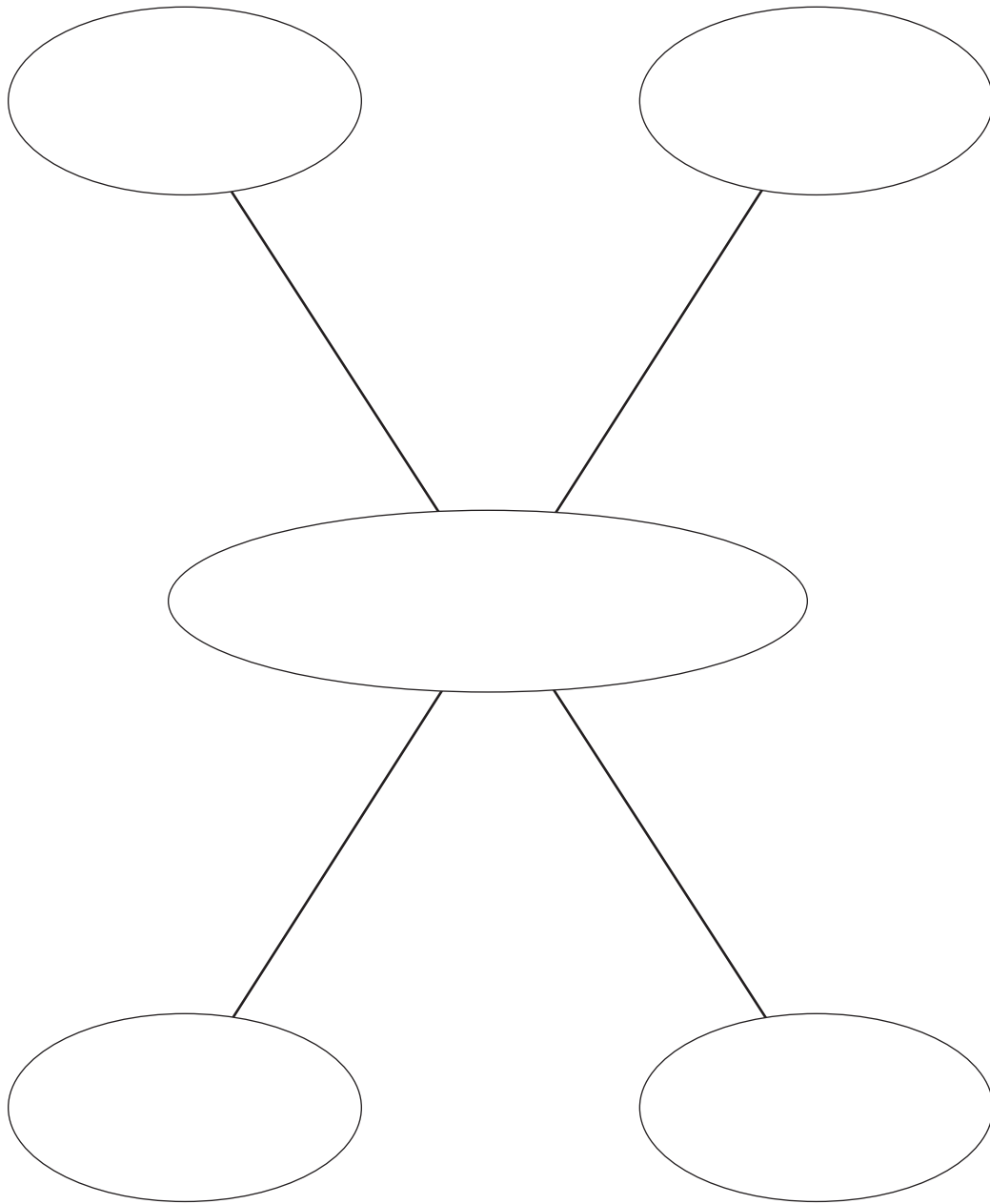
DAILY DIRECTIONS

Materials
- Historical fiction novels—*class set*
- Era Team folders—*one per team*

Procedure
1. Have Team Managers and Novel Coordinators distribute team folders and novels. Ask students to open their Student Guides to the **Daily Reading Goal** chart on page 2 and record their reading progress.

2. Give students an opportunity to share their Character Webs with their Era Teams. On the board or on an overhead projector, write the discussion topic: "Describe the main character of your book." Explain to students that the main character is the person (or animal, sometimes) who is at the center of the action in the book. Give your class 10 to 15 minutes to ensure that all students in each team have the opportunity to discuss their main characters.

3. For the remainder of class, have students read their novels and work on their on-going Character Web assignments. You may also choose to check individual reading progress at this time.

4. Encourage students to continue reading at home to meet their reading goals.

5. Have students place Student Guides into their team folders, then collect team folders.

DAILY DIRECTIONS

DAY 4: FACT AND FICTION

Materials
- Historical fiction novels—*class set*
- Era Team folders—*one per team*
- FACT AND FICTION—*transparency*

Procedure

1. Have Team Managers and Novel Coordinators retrieve team folders and novels. Ask students to open their Student Guides to the **Daily Reading Goal** chart on page 2 and record their reading progress.

2. Refer students to the **Fact and Fiction** assignment on page 4 of their Student Guides. Using the FACT AND FICTION transparency, read the directions for **Part 1: My Inferences**. In this assignment, students infer the difference between historical fact and fiction. On Day 5, students will complete **Part 2: Evidence** to verify some of their inferred facts by using non-fiction reference books.

3. Tell students that this Fact and Fiction assignment is on-going; students will add to it every day. Assign a due date and have students write the due date at the top of Fact and Fiction page in their Student Guides.

4. Allow students time to work on their Fact and Fiction assignments. Guide individual students as needed to ensure understanding.

5. For the remainder of class, have students read their novels and work on their on-going assignments. You may also choose to check individual reading progress at this time.

6. Encourage students to continue reading at home to meet their reading goals.

7. Have students place Student Guides into their team folders, then collect team folders.