

# Experiencing History

1. Do the activities your teacher listed in the Assignments box.
2. Write in your work at the bottom of each assignment.



Assignments	Due Date

Assignment 1: Draw a Book Cover Inspired by History	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Read</b> the “What Is Historical Fiction?” infographic, including the book passage in the bottom left corner.</li> <li>2. <b>Reflect</b> on what you think the people in the photo are doing. Think about:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What might be in their bundles?</li> <li>● What can you imagine about how the adults and kids are feeling based on their faces (facial expressions) and how they are sitting?</li> <li>● How did people travel then? How do people travel now?</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>Page 5</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. <b>Look at</b> the different book covers in the Resource Packet (starting on page 6).  What does the art on the cover tell you about the time period and the characters?</li> </ol>	<p>Pages 6–8</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. <b>Complete</b> the “Draw a Book Cover” activity.</li> </ol>	<p>Page 9</p>

**Exit Slip:** Write an outline of the story that matches your book cover. Include:

- What time period does your character live in?
- What is your character's challenge (problem)?
- How do you combine history and your imagination?

### Assignment 2: Interview Family Members

1. Choose a family member to interview.

2. Ask the questions from the "Discovering Family History" activity.

Page 10

**Exit Slip:** What did you learn about your family member? How was life different when they were your age?

### Assignment 3: Write Dialogue With Powerful Verbs

1. **Read** the descriptive verbs on the “Say It With Feeling!” chart. Page 11

2. **Read** the sentences of dialogue in the “Powerful Verbs” reading sample. Page 12

What do the verbs tell you about each character’s personality?

**Practice:** Write a paragraph with two or more characters that includes at least THREE lines of dialogue. Don’t forget to use quotation marks around the dialogue. Then rewrite the paragraph and use new (and more powerful) verbs in your THREE lines of dialogue.

### Assignment 4: Write About a Historical Event

1. **Complete** the “Find the Facts, Then Tell a Story!” activity. Page 13

**Project:** On a separate sheet of paper, write a story or newspaper article about this event. Show how the event affected young people’s lives.

### Assignment 5: Journal About a Challenge

1. **Read** the Challenging Situations reading passages, or ask a family member to read aloud to you. Pages 14–16

2. **Identify** the challenges the characters are facing. Reflect on the following questions:

- Why is this a challenging moment for the character?
- What does the character do to overcome the challenging situation?

**3. Discuss** a time when you faced a challenge. Explain to your family member how you handled the situation at the time. Consider these strategies:

- Adopt a positive mindset or attitude.
- Ask for help from a friend or adult.
- Acknowledge mistakes and make a plan for how to do better.
- Use positive self-talk.

Discuss the strategies with your family member.

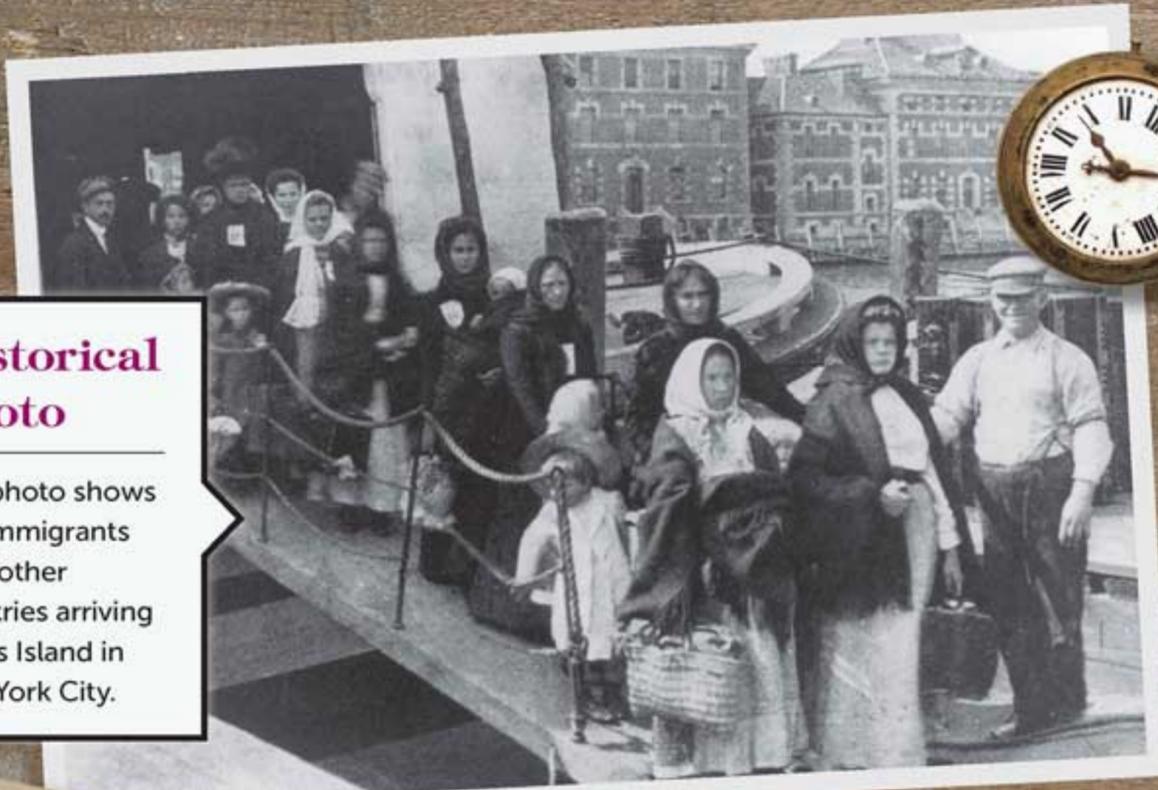
**Exit Slip:** Write a journal entry about a challenging moment you have encountered. Explain how you overcame the challenging moment or how you would like to deal with a similar situation in the future.

# What Is Historical Fiction?

It's a story with a setting based on historical facts, but the details of the characters and plot are made up.

## Historical Photo

This photo shows real immigrants from other countries arriving at Ellis Island in New York City.



## Illustration

This painting is inspired by historical photos. It's in a fictional book about a girl who welcomes her cousin to America.



## Historical Artifact

This Ellis Island ledger lists the people on a ship who immigrated to America.



Explore historical fiction through the American Girl Character series!



American Girl®

## Chapter Book

This scene is from a historical fiction book. The story is made up, but it includes real details based on historical facts.

Rebecca squinted through the fog at the brick immigration building on Ellis Island. She was worried about her cousin Ana. Her uncle had sent a telegram weeks ago saying they had escaped Russia with great difficulty. Rebecca felt sure that if Ana arrived safely, the two of them would be like sisters.

Illustration and excerpt from *Rebecca and Ana* by Jacqueline Dembar Greene

★ American Girl®

**KAYA**  
1764

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

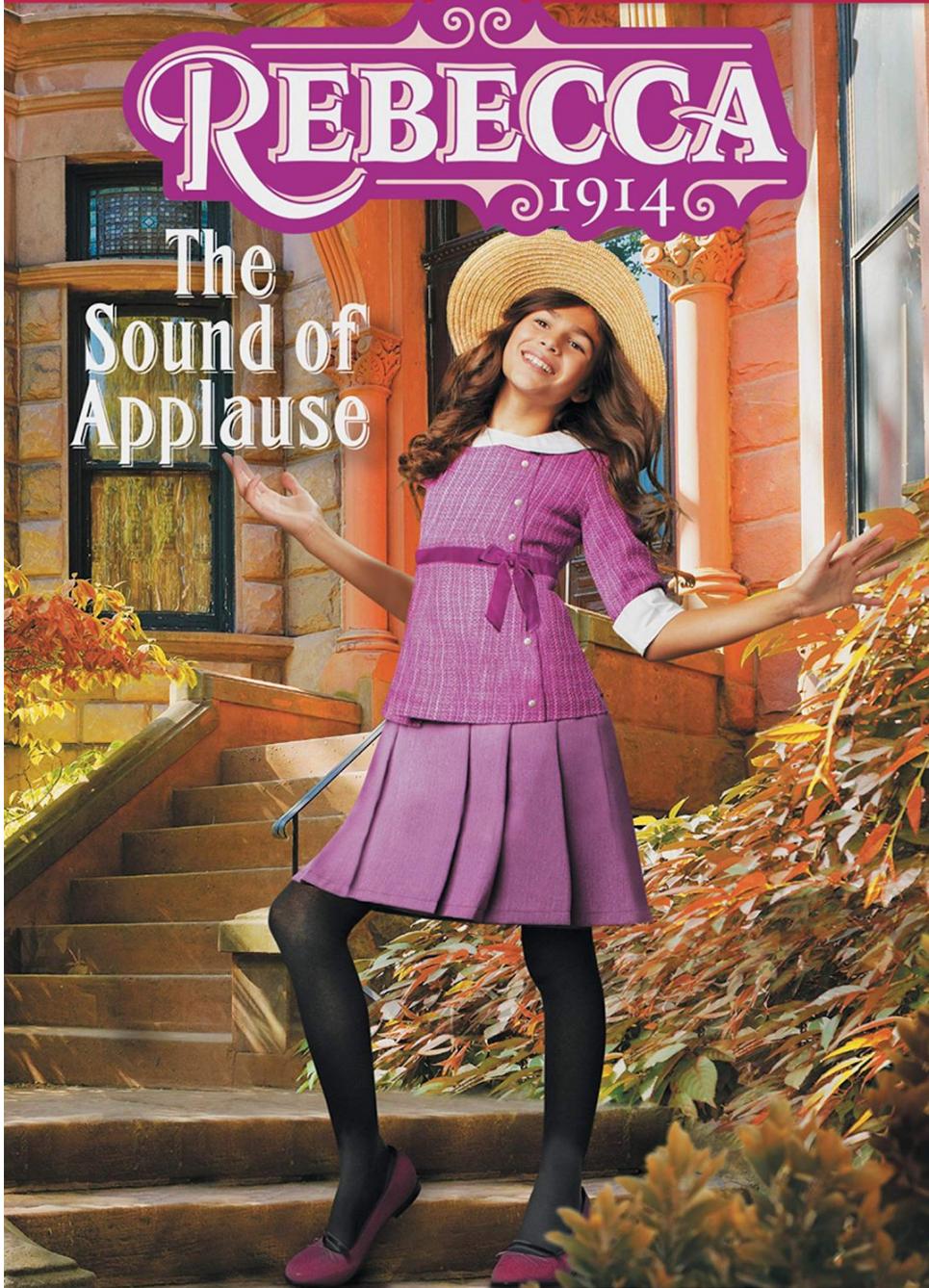


★ American Girl®

# REBECCA

1914

The  
Sound of  
Applause



★ American Girl®

# MELODY

1964

Never Stop  
Singing



Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Draw a Book Cover!

Illustrate your own historical fiction book cover. How will you show that the story happens in the past?



## 1. Prepare

Analyze the covers of historical fiction books.

You can look at...

- Clothes and objects
- How people traveled
- How buildings looked

## 2. Pick your setting

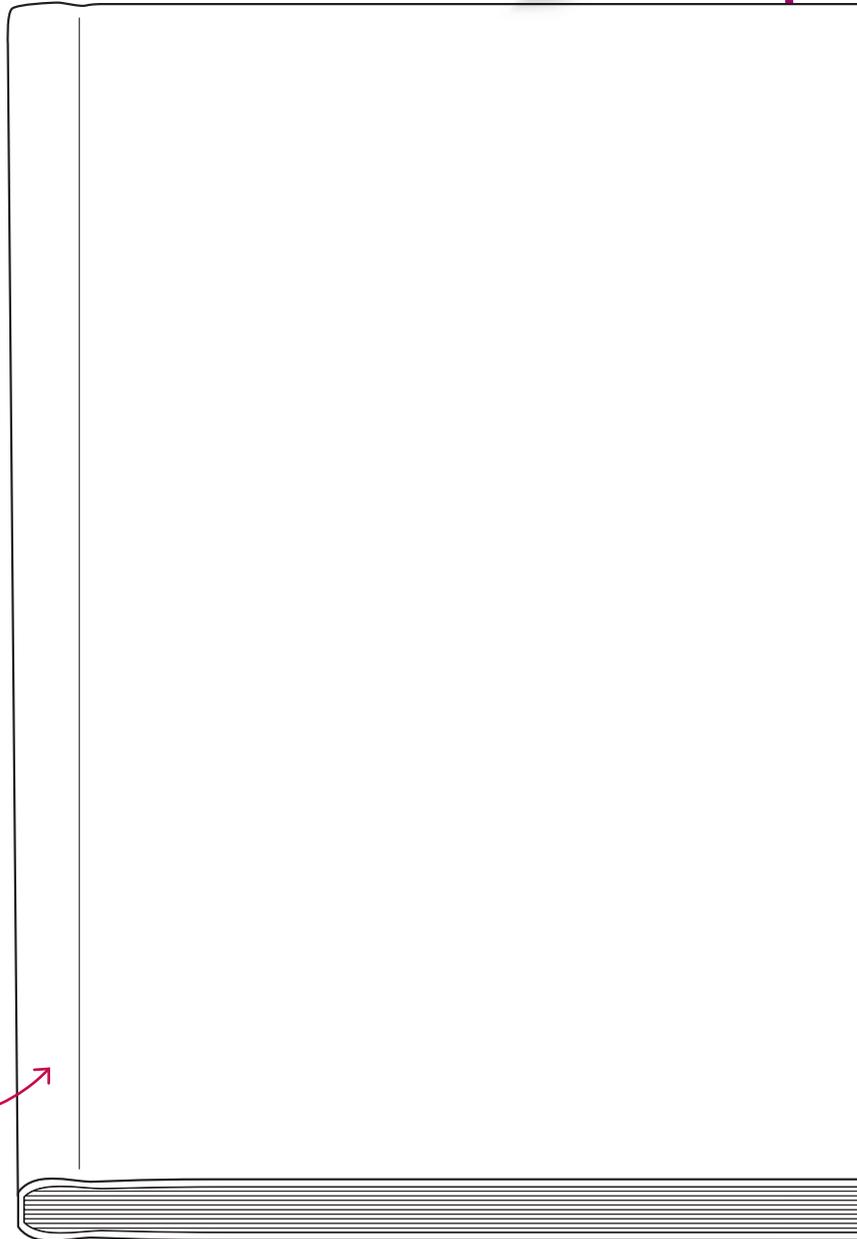
- **1770**—people traveled by horse-drawn carriage or boat
- **1870**—people traveled by steam train or boat
- **1970**—people traveled by car, train, or airplane
- **Another time** in the past

## 3. Pick your plotline

- Moving to a new home
- Getting lost
- Making a new best friend
- Your own idea

## 4. Draw your cover

Include clues that show both the **historical** and **fictional**.



**Create a book blurb** about your story on the back of this page. What is your character's challenge? How do you combine history and your imagination?

# Discovering Family History

Help your child build family connections while learning about history.

- Have them **interview** a parent, grandparent, or other special family member.
- Let them use your phone to **video-record the interview**.
- Have them **write down notes** below or on a separate sheet of paper.
- Help them **trim the video** into a short “news report” to share with the whole family.



**1.** What year was it when you were my age? \_\_\_\_\_

**2.** What major news event happened when you were a kid? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**3.** Where did you go to school? What was it like? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**4.** What music did you listen to? \_\_\_\_\_

**5.** How did you keep in touch with your friends? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**6.** What is your favorite memory of being my age? Least favorite? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Say It With Feeling!

Show your characters' emotions by using descriptive verbs and adverbs after dialogue.



## Instead of "said," try...

- ◆ "What are we doing?" Kit **whispered.** → nervous about the situation
- ◆ "Oh dear," **fussed** Mrs. Howard.
- ◆ "Aunt Millie!" Dad **exclaimed.** → excited or surprised
- ◆ "I'll get it!" she **called.**
- ◆ "Yes!" **barked** Uncle Hendrick.
- ◆ "I don't think so," **sighed** Kit.

## Or add an adverb:

- ◆ "Ah, that's too bad," said Papá **sadly.**
- ◆ "Are you all right?" Ana asked **kindly.** → shows compassion
- ◆ "No," she answered **seriously.**
- ◆ "But why?" asked Josefina **indignantly.** → feeling annoyed!



Get to know Kit and Josefina with the American Girl Character historical fiction series!

These sentences are from the book *Kit: Read All About It!*

**Directions:** Find the verbs that describe the dialogue. Then, use the verbs to infer the character's personality.

### **Uncle Hendrick**

- "What are *you* doing here?" he bellowed.
- "Take these shoes to be shined," Uncle Hendrick commanded.
- "Yes!" barked Uncle Hendrick.

### **Mrs. Howard**

- "Oh dear!" fussed Mrs. Howard.
- "My land!" shrieked Mrs. Howard.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Find the Facts, Then Tell a Story!

Use this sheet to plan a story or article about a historical event in your state. If you need more space, record your research on the back of this page.

## ➔ Part 1: Research

1. Choose an event from your state's history. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What happened?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. When and where did it happen?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Who was involved?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. How did it change young people's lives?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## ➔ Part 2: Write

On a separate piece of paper, write a story or newspaper article about this event. Show how the event affected young people's lives.

## READING PASSAGE OPTION 1

*Kit: Read All About It!*, excerpts from pages 27-30

After dinner, Kit climbed slowly up the stairs to the attic. She looked around at the lumpy, dusty piles that surrounded her. Then she sank down to the floor, overwhelmed by sadness. When she'd been wishing for change so that she could have a dramatic headline, she'd never imagined *this*! Terrible changes! And so many! And so fast! Dad had lost his job. She had lost her room. And in a way, they were going to lose their house. They'd still be living in it, but it wouldn't be the same when it was filled up with strangers. Nothing would ever be the same.

Kit almost never cried. She bit her lip now and fought back tears. [...]

Kit looked around the long, narrow attic. The ceiling was steeply pitched. There were regular windows at each end of the room, and dormer windows that jutted out of the roof and made little pointy-roofed alcoves, each one about as wide as Kit was tall. The windows went almost all the way to the floor of the alcoves. Kit managed to open one of the heavy windows. She knelt down, stuck her head out, and came face-to-face with a leafy tree branch.

At that moment, Kit got a funny excited feeling. Suddenly, she knew exactly what she wanted to do.

Over the next few days, Kit was glad that no one seemed to care what she was up to up in the attic. When she wasn't helping Mother downstairs, she hauled buckets of soapy water up there and scrubbed the windows till they sparkled. She swept the floor and pushed the boxes far to one end of the room. Finally the cleaning was done, and the fun part began.

In one alcove, Kit put a desk and a chair and her typewriter. That was her newspaper office alcove.

In another alcove, Kit tacked up her photo of Ernie Lombardi. On a nail, she hung her catcher's mitt. That was her baseball alcove.

In the third alcove, Kit made bookshelves out of boards and arranged all her books on them. She found a huge chair that was losing its stuffing, and she shoved it into the alcove and softened it with a pillow. That was her reading alcove.

The last alcove was Kit's favorite. She put a lumpy mattress on an old bed frame and pushed the bed into the alcove with the pillow near the window. She surrounded the bed with some of Mother's potted plants. That was her tree house alcove.

## READING PASSAGE OPTION 2

*Josefina: Second Chances*, excerpts from pages 23-26

While Tía Magdalena cleared up after their tea, Josefina went back to the storeroom to finish dusting. All the while, she was remembering what Tía Magdalena had said. How she wished there were some way to prove to Tía Magdalena that she was the right kind of person to be a curandera!

Josefina looked at the big blue-and-white jar on the shelf and thought about how it had been handed down from curandera to curandera. The jar was dusty. Surely Tía Magdalena would be pleased if she dusted it as a surprise for her. Josefina stood on her tiptoes to take the jar off the shelf. She could reach it with only one hand. She tapped the jar to move it to the edge of the shelf so that she could lift it off with both hands and . . . CRASH!

The jar fell to the floor and smashed into a thousand pieces. Josefina's heart stopped beating. For a terrible moment she stood still, staring in horror at what she had done. Then, without thinking, Josefina ran from the room. She flew past Tía Magdalena, out the door, and ran away as fast as she could.

*Shame, shame, shame!* The word pounded in Josefina's head with every step she took. Josefina ran all the way to the orchard. She climbed up into her favorite apricot tree. *How could I have been so clumsy?* she thought. *Tía Magdalena treasured the blue-and-white jar, and I destroyed it. Then I ran away! What a stupid, childish thing to do! I'll never be able to face Tía Magdalena again!*

[...]

[Josefina's Tía Dolores finds her and talks to her about what happened.]

She hugged Josefina and said, "You know what you must do right now, don't you?"

"Sí," said Josefina. "Sweep up the mess I made, and apologize to Tía Magdalena."

"And you must ask her to give you a second chance," said Tía Dolores. Josefina sighed hopelessly.

"Spring is the season for second chances," said Tía Dolores. "Didn't your mamá's flowers sprout again? Didn't Sombrita get another chance to live when you promised to take care of her?" Tía Dolores smiled. "We're all given second chances. We just have to be brave enough to take them."

Josefina hugged Tía Dolores. She hoped Tía Dolores was right. Oh, if Tía Magdalena would give her a second chance, she would be so grateful!

Tía Magdalena had only one thing to say after Josefina apologized. "The jar cannot be repaired," she said. "But perhaps your hopes can."

Whenever Josefina made up her mind to do something, it cheered her. She felt awful about what she had done at Tía Magdalena's. But she wasn't going to let her mistake kill her hopes.

# Keep Kids Reading All Year Long!

Prep your child to rest, recharge, and *read* over summer vacation! When school's out, continue the learning going at home with these top tips.

THE  
SUMMER  
SLIDE

*If kids don't read and write over the summer, they can lose some of their reading abilities.*



**1 Let them choose their own books.** It's fine if your child goes for an "easy" book or wants to reread a favorite.

**2 Set up a reading nook.** Use comfy pillows and a few blankets to create a special kids' space that's just for reading.

**3 Be a reading role model.** Kids are more likely to view reading as a fun activity when they see you reading. Put down your phone and pick up a book!

**4 Start a family book club.** Choose a chapter book that you each read on your own (or read out loud together)—then "meet" as a family to discuss it!

**5 Go on a time-travel adventure.** The American Girl series features characters from different time periods—as far back as the 1700s. Kids may even be interested in reading fiction and nonfiction focused on the same era.

**6 Create a family newspaper.** The character Kit Kittredge from the American Girl series reports on events happening in her family's home (and even writes an editorial for the local paper). Encourage kids to look for newsworthy stories throughout their summer vacation.

**7 Write letters to faraway family members.** Like Josefina's family in the American Girl series, kids can write letters to a relative they don't see often. Help children mail letters to share news, suggest visits, and stay in touch.

**8 Keep an adventure journal.** Give your child a spiral notebook and encourage them to write about exciting summer projects, describe fun family outings, or plan a dream trip to a distant place.