



AMERICA: THE LAST BEST HOPE

How To Create Lessons Using Resources in the Student View

The Roadmap that accompanies *America: The Last Best Hope* is designed to provide teachers with great resources to support what we in Team HOPE believe is a compelling narrative that will engage students in the story of their nation's past. These resources should never overshadow what we believe will make *Last Best Hope* unique among textbooks – that is the fact we believe it is a book students will actually *read*, and isn't that a revolutionary idea?!

So, reading selections from *Last Best Hope* should be the primary assignments given to students. To reinforce the readings, the Roadmap provides teachers with classroom debates, plays, and a variety of lesson plans. But beyond these, teachers may want to assign students to do individual or small group work that will also reinforce the material they learn when reading each chapter of the text.

These additional reinforcement activities for students can be drawn directly from the multitude of resources students can access on the student side of the Roadmap. Here are some ideas teachers can use to develop lesson plans and activities that have students directly utilize the Roadmap:

1. One activity teachers can create for students before they read the chapter is described by Team HOPE member Mark Ingerson in [web tutorial #20](#). In brief, it involves having students go to the “Key People You Should Know” link and dividing the names into people they know, people they think they have heard of, and people they do not know at all. For the people they don't know, they can go to the link provided, learn key points about that person, and speculate as to why Dr. Bennett included him or her in the narrative. This activity creates curiosity and prepares them to read the chapter with a stronger foundation of pre-knowledge.
2. Have students link to the chapter “Timeline” and write short explanations of the key events. Or have them choose two events on the timeline they believe are related: did one lead to the other (cause and effect) and if so, how and why?
3. As students read the chapter or after they have completed the chapter, teachers can ask students to review key people by using one of the review games also described in [web tutorial #20](#).
4. Each chapter on the Roadmap has links to key primary sources. Team HOPE strongly encourages teachers to ask students to read and interpret these primary sources and to *be historians* themselves. The National Archives provides great [worksheets](#) that can help students analyze almost any type of primary source.



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5. The “Teacher Toolkit” on the Roadmap has some great [ideas](#) for activities teachers can use to help students build their vocabulary using *Last Best Hope*.
6. Ask students, after reading the chapter, to go to “Key Historical Points” and add sub points to each that further explain those key points.
7. Students can link to maps under “Chapter Images and Maps” and teachers can create geography exercises for students relating to those maps: refer to [web tutorial #25](#) or [web tutorial #15](#) for some great ideas, including how to incorporate the Five Themes of Geography.
8. After they have read the chapter, have students listen to Dr. Bennett’s “Beyond the Chapter” audio. Students can either take notes of his key points, or write a short essay answering one of the questions he raises.
9. Develop creative writing assignments where students write first person accounts about their involvement in a past event: ask that they include people, terms or events listed under “Key People You Should Know,” “Critical Events,” and “Historic Terms and Places.”
10. Ask students to choose an entry under “Laws and Legislation” they believe still impacts life in our nation today. How and why?