This ever-retreating frontier of free land is the key to American development.

Frederick Jackson Turner (1861–1932)

Why are Americans still so fascinated with life on the old western frontier, and how did the frontier shape American values?
BEFORE YOU READ

Preview Vocabulary

A. Work with a partner to answer the questions. Make sure you understand the meaning of the AWL words in italics.

1. If “spiritual” has to do with your soul, and “mental” has to do with your mind, what does physical have to do with?

2. If people are discussing a controversial topic, such as religion or politics, would you expect there to be a lot of agreement or disagreement?

3. If we say that the settlement of the western frontier had an impact on American culture, do we mean that it had some influence or that it was not very important?

4. If you wanted to reinforce your cowboy image, what would you wear?

5. Would someone who had a “can-do” attitude be an optimist or a pessimist?

6. Is gun control an issue in the United States, or do all Americans believe that everyone should have complete access to guns? What percentage of American households do you think have guns?

B. Read this paragraph from the chapter. Then use context clues and write the correct word next to its definition.

How Americans reacted to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, reveals another legacy of the frontier: Americans' willingness to take the law into their own hands to protect themselves and their families. This tendency usually appears when Americans believe the police cannot adequately protect them. For example, when the passengers fought with the terrorists on the 9/11 flight that crashed in Pennsylvania, they were hailed as heroes.

__________________________ 1. well enough for a particular purpose

__________________________ 2. described someone as being very good

__________________________ 3. shows something that was hidden

__________________________ 4. acted in response

__________________________ 5. a situation that exists as a result of things that happened at an earlier time
Preview Content

A. Read the quotation at the beginning of the chapter. Discuss these questions with your classmates.
   1. What is a frontier?
   2. Why do you think Turner says that the frontier is the “key” to understanding the development of America?
   3. Which of these can be a frontier?
      ___ the border between two countries
      ___ an unsettled region
      ___ space exploration
      ___ deep-ocean exploration
      ___ understanding how the mind works
      ___ new or experimental medical treatments
   4. What American movies about the Old West have you seen?

B. Before you read the chapter, look at the headings of each section. Examine the photos and other illustrations. Predict three values that were reinforced by the frontier experience. Write your predictions here.
   1. __________________________________________
   2. __________________________________________
   3. __________________________________________
1 Although the American civilization took over and replaced the frontier more than a century ago, the heritage of the frontier is still evident in the United States today. Many people are still fascinated by the frontier because it has been particularly important in shaping American values. When Ronald Reagan was president in the 1980s, he liked to recall the image of life on the frontier. He was often photographed on his western ranch—chopping wood or riding his horse, and wearing his cowboy hat. More recently, in the 2000s, President George W. Bush reinforced this cowboy image by inviting members of the press to photograph him on his Texas ranch, wearing his cowboy boots and hat.

2 For many years, the frontier experience was romanticized1 in popular movies and television shows that featured cowboy heroes fighting Indian villains. Little attention was given to the tragic story of what really happened to the Native Americans, also known as the American Indians. Today, most Americans are more aware of the darker side of the settling of the continent, when thousands of American Indians were killed and their lands were taken. When the buffalo were hunted and killed off by the white settlers, the Indians’ major source of food and clothing was lost, and much of their culture was destroyed. Today, there is a renewed interest in Indian cultures, and the Smithsonian has a museum in Washington, D.C. that is dedicated to Indian culture.

3 The frontier experience began when the first colonists settled on the east coast of the continent in the 1600s. It ended about 1890 when the last western lands were settled. The American frontier consisted of the relatively unsettled regions of the United States, usually found in the western part of the country. Here, both land and life were more rugged and primitive than in the more settled eastern part. As one frontier area was settled, people began moving farther west into the next unsettled area, sweeping aside the Native Americans as they went. By settling one frontier area after another, Americans moved across an entire continent that was 2,700 miles wide. They came to believe that it was their destiny to control all the land, and eventually they did. The Native Americans were given small portions of land, called reservations, to control, but the United States government broke many promises and created much misery for the Indian nations.

4 While most Americans have a more balanced view of the settling of the West, many Americans still see aspects of the frontier, its people, and their beliefs as inspiring examples of traditional American values in their original and purest form. How did the frontier movement, which lasted more than two centuries, help to shape these basic American values?

5 To be sure, the frontier provided many inspiring examples of hard work as forests were turned into towns, and towns into large cities. The competitive race for success was rarely more colorful or adventurous than on the western frontier. The rush for gold in California, for silver in Montana, and for fertile land in all the western territories provided endless stories of high adventure. When it was announced that almost 2 million acres of good land in Oklahoma would be opened for settlement in April 1889, thousands of settlers gathered on the border waiting for the exact time to be announced. When it arrived, the rush was on.

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1 romanticized: talked or thought about things in a way that made them seem more attractive than they really were
The rush to claim land in Oklahoma was, they literally\(^2\) raced into the territory in wagons and on horseback to claim the best land they could find for themselves.

Although daily life on the frontier was usually less dramatic than the frontier adventure stories would lead one to believe, even the ordinary daily life of frontier men and women exemplified\(^3\) national values in a form which seemed purer to many Americans than the life of those living in the more settled, more cultivated eastern United States.

Individual freedom, self-reliance, and equality of opportunity have perhaps been the values most closely associated with the frontier heritage of America. Throughout their history, Americans have tended to view the frontier settler as the model of the free individual. This is probably because there was less control over the individual on the frontier than anywhere else in the United States. There were few laws and few established social or political institutions to confine people living on the frontier. In the United States, where freedom from outside social controls has traditionally been valued, the frontier has been idealized, and it still serves as a basis for a nostalgic\(^4\) view of the early United States, a simpler time that was lost when the country became urbanized and more

\(^2\)literally: according to the most basic or original meaning of a word or expression  
\(^3\)exemplified: was a very typical example of something  
\(^4\)nostalgic: feeling or expressing a slight sadness when remembering happy events or experiences from the past
complex. Many people living in the West today still hold these beliefs about freedom from government controls.

**Self-Reliance and the Rugged Individualist**

8 Closely associated with the frontier ideal of the free individual is the ideal of self-reliance. If the people living on the frontier were free of many of society's rules, they were also denied many of society's comforts and conveniences. They had to be self-reliant. Men and women often constructed their own houses, hunted, tended their own gardens, and made their own clothing and household items.

9 The self-reliant frontiersman has been idealized by Americans who have made him the classic American male hero: the rugged individualist. This hero is a man who has been made physically tough and rugged by the conditions of frontier life. He is skilled with guns and other weapons. He needs no help from others and often appears in stories as alone, unmarried, and without children. Standing alone, he can meet all the dangers that life on the frontier brings and he is strong enough to extend his protection beyond himself to others.

10 There are two types of heroic rugged individualists. Each is drawn from a different stage of life on the frontier. In the early frontier, which existed before the Civil War of the 1860s, the main struggle was man against the wilderness. Daniel Boone is probably the best-known hero of this era. Boone explored the wilderness country of Kentucky in the 1760s and 1770s. On one trip, he stayed in the wilderness for two years, successfully matching his strength and skills against the dangers of untamed nature and hostile Native Americans. In 1778, Boone was captured by Native Americans who were so impressed with his physical strength and skills that they made him a member of their tribe. Later, he succeeded in making a daring escape. Boone's heroic strength is seen primarily in his ability to master the harsh challenges of the wilderness. Although he had to fight against Indians from time to time, he is admired mainly as a survivor and conqueror of the wilderness, not as a fighter.

11 The second type of heroic rugged individualist is drawn from the last phase of the western frontier, which lasted from the 1860s until the 1890s. By this time, the wilderness was largely conquered. The struggle now was no longer man against nature, but man against man. Cattlemen and cowboys* fought against farmers, outlaws, Native Americans, and each other for control of the remaining western lands. The traditions of law and order were not yet well established, and physical violence was frequent. The frontier became known as “the Wild West.”

12 It is not surprising, then, that the hero drawn from this period is primarily a fighter. He is admired for his ability to beat other men in fistfights, or to win in a gunfight. The principal source of his heroism is his physical prowess and he is strong enough to defeat two or three ordinary men at one time. This rugged individualist is typically a defender of good against evil.

13 This hero of the Wild West is based on memories of a number of gunfighters and lawmen of the time, men such as Jesse

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*Cattlemen were men who raised large herds of cattle as a business and needed large areas of land on which their cattle could graze before being sent to market. Cowboys usually worked for the cattlemen. They would spend most of the day on horseback rounding up the cattle or taking them on long drives to market.

*fistfights: fights using bare hands with the fingers curled in toward the palm

*prowess: great skill at doing something
the Wild West hero. The Wild West hero had more impact on the American idea of heroism than Daniel Boone, the hero of the earlier wilderness frontier. It is the Wild West hero who has inspired countless western movies; until the 1960s, 25 percent of all American movies made were westerns.

**American Macho Heroes**

14 Through movies and television programs, this Wild West hero has helped shape the American idea of “macho,” or male, strength. For the most part, almost all American male heroes on television and in movies have traditionally had the common ability to demonstrate their strength through physical violence. Once the western macho hero had been created, the model for this hero was used in other settings—for soldiers in battle, and tough detectives and policemen fighting crime. From the cowboy heroes to the Terminator, Captain America, and Jenko, these heroes can fight with their fists, guns, and other weapons. Although there are movie and TV heroes who are respected more for their intelligence and sensitivity than their physical prowess, these classic macho male heroes still dominate much of American entertainment and video games. There are now also female versions of this macho image, including Katniss Everdeen, who competes in the Hunger Games armed with just a bow and arrow.

15 The image of the rugged individualist has been criticized for overlooking many factors that played a central part in the development of the frontier. First, the rugged individualist image overstates the importance of complete self-reliance and understates the importance of cooperation in building a new nation out of the wilderness. Second, because the image has been traditionally masculine, it has overlooked the importance of pioneer women and their strength, hard work, resourcefulness, and civilizing influence on the untamed frontier.

16 Finally, the rugged individualist image is criticized because of its emphasis on violence and the use of guns to solve problems. On the frontier, men did use guns to hunt and protect themselves and their families, but western movies romanticized and glorified gunfights in the Old West. The good guys and the bad guys “shot it out” in classic westerns such as *High Noon*. Incidentally, the classic old western movies always featured the “good guys” wearing white hats, while the “bad guys” wore black hats. Gradually, however, the western hero was largely replaced in the movies by the soldier or the crime fighter—guns still blazing—and the violence in movies, and later on TV and in video games, increased.

17 Some Americans worry about the impact of these entertainment heroes on the lives and imaginations of young people. At the very least, many young people have become desensitized to the sight of violence and killings. In the twenty-first century, guns became a critical issue when there were shootings in several public schools and universities. It is all too easy for teenagers to get guns, and they are much more at risk of being killed by guns than adults are. The problem is particularly bad in the inner cities, where a number of young gang members carry guns. However, several of the most shocking incidents occurred in normally peaceful suburban communities, and now many schools require students to pass through metal detectors as they enter school buildings. Other recent mass shootings in public places included the wounding of Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords in

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*desensitized: made emotionally insensitive*
2011, and the killing of people in a movie theater and children in an elementary school in 2012.

Americans have a long history of owning guns, and many people strongly believe having a gun in their house is an important right. In fact, the right to bear arms is even guaranteed by the Second Amendment of the Constitution, although there is debate about what the founding fathers meant by this:

*A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.*

Today, there are well over 200 million privately held guns in the United States, enough for every adult to own one, and most estimates range from 270 to over 300 million. These are guns held by private citizens and do not include those possessed by the military or the police. Most firearms (rifles, shotguns, and hand guns) are owned by Americans who enjoy hunting, target practice, or gun collecting, and these individuals usually own more than one gun. Some firearms are owned by people who want their own gun for protection of their homes and families. For example, after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the sale of guns rose. Estimates are that anywhere from 25 percent to 45 percent of U.S. households now have at least one gun.

How Americans reacted to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, reveals another legacy of the frontier: Americans' willingness to take the law into their own hands to protect themselves and their families. This tendency usually appears when Americans believe the police cannot adequately protect them. For example, when the passengers fought with the terrorists on the 9/11 flight that crashed in Pennsylvania, they were hailed as heroes.

The issue of gun control is very controversial in the United States, and people on both sides of the issue have strong opinions. Many Americans favor stricter government controls on the sale of guns, and they would not consider having a gun in their home. Others who oppose gun control feel strongly enough about the issue that they have created powerful political pressure groups, such as the National Rifle Association (NRA), which has worked to prevent most gun control legislation from passing. They argue that limiting gun sales will keep law-abiding citizens, not criminals, from owning guns. On the other side are gun-control organizations such as the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence named after Jim Brady, who was shot and became paralyzed when a man tried to kill President Ronald Reagan, and a new organization founded by Gabrielle Giffords.

### Broad Public Support for Many Gun Policy Proposals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Proposal</th>
<th>Oppose</th>
<th>Favor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background checks for private and gun show sales</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventing people with mental illness from purchasing guns</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal database to track gun sales</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed security guards/police in more schools</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ban on semi-automatic weapons</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ban on assault style weapons</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ban on high-capacity ammunition clips</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ban on online sale of ammunition</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More teachers and school officials with guns in schools</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and her husband Mark Kelly, Americans for Responsible Solutions. These groups are especially concerned about the sale of handguns and automatic assault rifles. They argue that American homes, particularly where there are children, are safer without guns. Interestingly, public opinion about gun control has remained about the same for over a decade, with Americans equally divided for and against it. After each mass shooting, the sale of guns rises, while those who oppose firearms (particularly automatic weapons) call for stronger gun control.

**Inventiveness and the Can-Do Spirit**

21 While the frontier idealized the rugged individual as the great American hero, it also respected the inventive individual. The need for self-reliance on the frontier encouraged a spirit of inventiveness. Frontier men and women not only had to provide most of their daily life essentials, but they were also constantly facing new problems and situations that demanded new solutions. Under these circumstances, they soon learned to experiment with new ways of doing things.

22 Observers from other countries were very impressed by the frontiersman's ability to invent useful new farm tools. They were equally impressed by the pioneer woman's ability to make clothing, candles, soap, and many other items needed for the daily life of her family. Lord Bryce, a famous English observer of American life, believed that the inventive skills of American pioneers enabled them to succeed at tasks beyond the abilities of most ordinary men and women in other countries. Although Americans in the more settled eastern regions of the United States created many of the most important inventions in the new nation, the western frontier had the effect of spreading the spirit of inventiveness throughout the population and helping it to become a national character trait.

23 The willingness to experiment and invent led to another American trait, a “can-do” spirit, or a sense of optimism that every...
problem has a solution. Americans like to believe that a difficult problem can be solved immediately—an impossible one may take a little longer. They take pride in meeting challenges and overcoming difficult obstacles. This can-do spirit has traditionally given Americans a sense of optimism about themselves and their country. Many have said that if the United States can land a man on the moon, no problem on earth is impossible. In the 1830s, Alexis de Tocqueville said that no other country in the world "more confidently seizes the future" than the United States. Traditionally, when times are hard, political leaders have reminded Americans of their frontier heritage and the tough determination of their pioneer ancestors; the can-do spirit is still a source of pride and inspiration.

Equality of Opportunity

The frontier is an expression of individual freedom and self-reliance in its purest (and most extreme) forms, and it is also a pure expression of the ideal of equality of opportunity. On the western frontier, there was more of a tendency for people to treat each other as social equals than there was in the more settled eastern regions of the country. On the frontier, the highest importance was placed on what people could do in their own lifetimes. Hardly any notice was taken of their ancestors. Frontier people were fond of saying, "What's above the ground is more important than what's beneath the ground."

Because so little attention was paid to a person's family background, the frontier offered a new beginning for many Americans who were seeking opportunities to advance themselves. One English visitor to the United States in the early 1800s observed that if Americans experienced disappointment or failure in business, in politics, or even in love, they moved west to make a new beginning. The frontier offered millions of Americans a source of hope for a fresh start in the competitive race for success and for a better life. On the frontier, there was a continuing need for new farmers, skilled laborers, merchants, lawyers, and political leaders.

There were fewer differences in wealth between rich and poor on the frontier than in the more settled regions of the nation. People lived, dressed, and acted more alike on the frontier than in other parts of the United States. The feeling of equality was shared by hired helpers who refused to be called "servants" or to be treated as such. One European visitor observed, "The clumsy gait and bent body of our peasant is hardly ever seen here. . . . Everyone walks erect and easy." Wealthy travelers to the frontier were warned not to show off their wealth or to act superior to others if they wished to be treated politely.

The American frontier may not be the key to American development, as Frederick Jackson Turner said, but it is certainly one major factor. The frontier provided the space and conditions that helped to strengthen the American ideals of individual freedom, self-reliance, and equality of opportunity. On the frontier, these ideals were enlarged and made workable. Frontier ideas and customs were continuously passed along to the more settled parts of the United States as newer frontier regions took the place of older ones during a westward march of settlers which lasted more than two centuries. In this way, many of the frontier values became national values.

8 obstacles: things that make it difficult for someone to succeed
9 clumsy gait: walking in an awkward way
10 erect: in an upright position
AFTER YOU READ

Understand Main Ideas

A. Check the predictions you made on page 79 before you read the chapter.
Work with a partner. Answer these questions about the main ideas.

1. What are the three values that are traditionally associated with the frontier heritage?
2. What two new values are introduced in this chapter?
3. What are the two types of rugged individualists?
4. Describe someone with a can-do spirit.
5. What personal characteristics did the frontier settlers share?

B. In academic writing, paragraphs often begin with a topic sentence that contains the main idea. Read and highlight the first sentence of each paragraph of the reading. Then choose one main idea from each of the five main sections that you think is the most important. Write these ideas below. Compare your list with a partner's.

1. ____________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________
4. ____________________________________________
5. ____________________________________________

Understand Details

Write T if the statement is true and F if it is false according to the information in the chapter.

____ 1. The frontier experience began in about 1890 and is still continuing in the American West today.

____ 2. One reason why many Americans are still fascinated by the frontier period is that it represents a time when the traditional basic American values were expressed in their purest form.

____ 3. The settling of the frontier did little to affect the lives of the American Indians.

____ 4. Daniel Boone is an example of the earliest type of rugged individualist hero, a man who fights against the wilderness.

____ 5. The primary qualities of the American macho hero are intelligence, sensitivity, and caring for others.
6. It is difficult for the average American to buy a gun, so very few people own them.

7. Members of the NRA (and many gun owners) believe the right to own a gun is guaranteed in the United States Constitution.

8. The can-do spirit came from the willingness of the pioneers to work together on a cooperative project for the good of all.

9. On the frontier, family name and ancestry were more important than what a person could do.

10. On the frontier, the rich and the poor rarely mixed, and social class was more important than in the more settled regions.

Talk About It

Work in small groups and choose one or more of the following questions to discuss.

1. What effect do you think seeing violence on TV or in movies has on children? What happens when people become desensitized to violence?

2. What qualities should a true hero have? Who are some of your own personal heroes? Why do you admire and respect these people?

3. Would you have a gun in your own home? Why or why not?

4. If you were going to live in the wilderness for a week, what ten things would you take with you? Why?

5. Some Americans are nostalgic for the Old West, and there may be a period of your country’s history that is romanticized in a similar way. If you could travel back in time to anywhere in the world, what place and what period in history would you like to visit? Why?

SKILL BUILDING

Improve Your Reading Skills: Scanning

Scanning is looking for a specific piece of information. Scan the chapter to find these dates. Write what happened next to the date to complete the timeline. Some are done for you.

1600s: **Settlers established colonies on the East Coast**

1760s and 1770s:  

1778: **Boone was captured by Native Americans**

1860s:  

April 1889:  

88 * Chapter 4
Until 1960s: **25 percent of all American movies made were Westerns**

1980s: _____________________________

2001: _____________________________

**Develop Critical Thinking Skills**

_Evaluating Pros and Cons:_ Some consider space to be the final frontier, but spending money on space exploration has become controversial. Should we continue to support the international space station? Should we go to the moon again or plan to visit Mars? What are the benefits that have come from space exploration? What scientific discoveries have been made? Should we continue to send astronauts into space, or should we concentrate on unmanned missions? Think about the pros and cons of space exploration and fill out the chart below. You may wish to do some research on the Internet to get ideas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros of Space Exploration</th>
<th>Cons of Space Exploration</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Build Your Vocabulary**

**Use Context Clues**

Review the four kinds of context clues on pages 15–16 of Chapter 1. Use context clues to choose the correct words to fill in the blanks.

- desensitized
- fascinated
- nostalgic
- romanticize
- exemplified
- fists
- obstacles

1. In many action movies, the heroes are expected to be able to fight with their _____________.

2. Some people prefer to ____________ life on the frontier; they do not want to look at its negative aspects.

3. If you are reading a book that is so interesting that you can’t put it down, you are ____________ by the book.
4. Frontier people were good examples of the American national values; these people ______ these values.

5. In order to succeed, people living on the frontier had to overcome many difficulties and ______, such as clearing the land for farming.

6. Americans like to remember the days on the frontier; they feel ______ about the Old West.

7. Some Americans worry that their children are becoming ______ to the violence and killing on television. It doesn’t seem to bother their children.

More AWL Words
Test your knowledge of these AWL words in the chapter by matching the words with their definitions.

1. area
   a. someone who is still alive after almost being killed

2. automatic
   b. to keep someone in a place that they cannot leave

3. aware
   c. something that tests strength, skill, or ability

4. challenge
   d. someone paid to discover information

5. classic
   e. easily noticed or understood; obvious

6. confine
   f. the act of working with someone to achieve something

7. consist
   g. realizing that a problem exists

8. construct
   h. to build something large

9. cooperation
   i. designed to operate by itself

10. deny
    j. a fairly large area of a state

11. detective
    k. a single thing in a set, group, or list

12. evident
    l. to be made of a number of things

13. feature
    m. to say that something is not true

14. item
    n. considered important, with a value that lasts for a long time
15. phase  o. one of the stages of a process
16. region  p. something you notice because it seems interesting
17. survivor  q. a particular part of a country or city

Word Partners

Match the word partners to form collocations. Then use the correct collocations in the paragraph.

1. unsettled  a. fathers
2. law-abiding  b. spirit
3. can-do  c. individualism
4. founding  d. citizens
5. physical  e. region
6. rugged  f. prowess

Many Americans believe that when the ________ wrote the Constitution, they meant to ensure the right of the people to own guns. They would argue that ________ should be allowed to keep guns in their homes. The frontier strengthened the tradition of owning guns because it was an ________, and settlers needed guns for hunting and protection. They had to be tough, and part of the frontier legacy is the ________ and ________ of Western movie heroes. Frontier settlers were also known for their inventiveness and their ________.

Proverbs and Sayings

Ask Americans, if possible, to explain these proverbs and sayings about succeeding on your own or being tough. What similar proverbs and sayings are there in your culture?

1. Pull yourself up by the bootstraps.
2. If at first you don't succeed, try and try again.
3. Actions speak louder than words.
4. Life is what you make it.
5. Every problem has a solution.
6. When the going gets tough, the tough get going.
**Ask Yourself**

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? Put a check under the number that indicates how you feel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>+2</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>-2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I love action movies that have a lot of gunfights.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. A real man should be able to defend himself well and even win in a fistfight.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intelligence and sensitivity in a man are more important than physical strength.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Watching fights in movies and on TV shows probably doesn't hurt children.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Having a gun in your home is a good way to protect yourself against robbers.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I believe people should not own guns and there should be strict laws controlling the sale of them.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Every problem has a solution.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. What you do is more important than who your ancestors were.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Your teacher will place the numbers +2, +1, 0, -1, -2 around the room with the zero in the middle. As the teacher reads the above statements, walk to the number that reflects your opinion. Explain your choice.

**Ask Americans**

Read the statements from the previous exercise to several Americans. If this is not possible, try to interview people from several different countries. Ask them if they agree or disagree with each statement. Write their opinions in your notebook.
Think, Pair, Share

Think about this question, and write your answer. Then share it with a partner and with another pair of students.

In 2003, Arnold Schwarzenegger was elected Governor of California in a special election. During his campaign, he frequently referred to his movie role as “the Terminator” and talked about how he was going to clean up the state government. He was re-elected in 2006 and served as governor until 2011. Some people nicknamed him “the Governator.” Based on the information in this chapter, why do you think this image appealed to Californian voters?

People Watching

Americans are very conscious of space and have a strong sense of territory—that is, the idea that a particular space belongs to them. Children may have a special place to play with their toys; Mom may have her own desk; Dad may have a workshop. Observe Americans at home, in a public place, or in a social situation to see how they use space. (Watch TV shows, if you are not in the United States.) If someone has been sitting in a particular chair and gets up, does the person tend to come back to the same chair? When someone asks, “Is that seat taken?” what does that person mean?

Conduct the following experiment and record the results in your journal.

Rule: When an American sits down at a table where a stranger is sitting alone, the American will choose a seat across from the other person or at least one chair away. The space is divided in half between them, and personal belongings must be kept on each person’s respective side of an imaginary boundary line.

Observation: Observe people sitting in a public place where there are tables, such as a cafeteria or library. What happens when a stranger sits down at a table where a person is sitting alone? If someone sits down next to a stranger, what happens? How do the people acknowledge each other’s presence? Does the person who was sitting there first move his or her belongings?

Experiment: Choose a table where a stranger is sitting alone and sit down in the next chair. What happens? Sit across from someone at a table and put some personal belongings (such as books) on the table in front of you. Push them toward the other person so that they are more than halfway across the table. What is the person’s reaction?

Observe the Media

Work in small groups and choose one of the following activities to do together.

1. Cowboys and the Old West are frequently used in advertisements for blue jeans, SUVs, trucks, cars, and other American products. What image do they have? Why does this image help sell this or that product? Collect examples of ads in magazines or newspapers that use cowboys or western themes. Make a collage and share it with your classmates. Explain what the message is to the people who may buy these products.
2. Watch American TV shows or movies that have male heroes. Compare the
heroes of several shows. How do they compare with the description of
American macho presented in this chapter? What personality traits do they
have? Compare the heroes of several shows. Reread the section on page 83 for
help with descriptions.

Use the Internet

Choose one of these topics and do research on the Internet.

1. The rush to the West to find gold or silver created a number of very wealthy towns with
hotels, opera houses, and beautiful houses. Today, many of these cities are “ghost towns.”
Some towns have no people living in them; in others only a few people remain. Choose
one of these ghost towns and find information about it. Answer the questions, and then write
a summary of what you learned about the town.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bodie or Calico, California</th>
<th>Pinos Altos, New Mexico</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold Hill or Silver City, Utah</td>
<td>Goldfield, Nevada</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shakespeare Ghost Town, New Mexico</td>
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• Why did people come to the town?
• What can be seen there today?
• What did you find most interesting about the town?

2. From May 1804 until September 1806, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark
traveled from St. Louis, Missouri, to the Oregon coast, and back again. Work
with a partner to find out more about this historic trip. Do an online search
for “Lewis and Clark Expedition.” Answer these questions.

• Who was the U.S. President who ordered the expedition?
• What territory had the United States purchased from France in 1803?
• What was the purpose of the expedition?
• Who was Sacajawea?
• What route did Lewis and Clark follow?
• What important discoveries did they make?
Civilian Firearms Ownership: A United Nations Map of the World

This map shows the rate of civilian (or private) gun ownership in countries around the world. It indicates how many firearms are owned per 100 inhabitants in each country, not counting the military or police. The first bar graph below the map lists the top ten countries with the highest per capita (per 100 people) rate, and the other bar graph shows the total number of guns owned in selected countries. How does the United States rank by each measure? Notice that Switzerland, Finland, Sweden, and Norway are also on the top ten list. Why does the second bar graph compare the number of guns in the United States with India and China? Why is gun ownership so high in the United States?
This chapter has explored the profound influence of the historical frontier period on the values and beliefs of Americans. It includes an explanation of how the gun culture of the United States evolved on the frontier and continues today. Reread the parts of the chapter that talk about how Americans feel about guns, paragraphs 9, 12–14, 16–18, and 20. What do these paragraphs tell you about why the rate of gun ownership is so high in the country today?

Write a report about gun ownership in your country. Include information about the laws concerning owning firearms, how people feel about guns, whether there are as many handguns as rifles and shotguns, how guns are used, and any historical information that helps explain the ownership of firearms in your country. Use a graphic organizer to plan your composition. Fill out one of these "T"s for each paragraph. Write a clear topic sentence to express the main idea, and then list the supporting details. Remember to start with an introduction and end with a conclusion that refers back to the introduction, if possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Idea</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Details</td>
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</table>

**EXPLORE ON YOUR OWN**

**Books to Read**

Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson and the Opening of the American West*—This book is a best-selling account of the expedition by Lewis and Clark through the American West in the early 1800s, as they traveled from St. Louis, Missouri, to the Pacific Ocean.

Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West*—In this best-selling book, Brown presents a documented historical account of the systematic destruction of the American Indian during the last half of the 1800s.

Willa Cather, *O Pioneers!*—A classic novel written in 1913 about the physical hardships of the frontier and the enormous changes it brought to the United States.


O. E. Rölvaag, *Giants in the Earth: A Saga of the Prairie*—This is the classic story of a Norwegian pioneer family’s struggles as they try to make a new life on the American frontier.
Movies to See

_Bowling for Columbine_—In this controversial documentary, filmmaker Michael Moore explores the roots of America’s fascination with guns and violence.

_Dances with Wolves_—A soldier sent to a remote western Civil War outpost makes friends with wolves and Indians, eventually falling in love with a white woman raised by the Indians.

_Far and Away_—A young Irishman who loses his home after his father’s death decides to go to America to begin a new life and eventually goes to live on the frontier.

_High Noon_—In this classic movie, a sheriff who must face a returning deadly enemy finds that his own town refuses to help him.

_True Grit_—A young girl hires Rooster Cogburn, a Deputy U.S. Marshal, to hunt for the murderer of her father.