Chapter 9: Liberty and Empire, 1800 - 1815

Overview
By 1800 Americans were working through the meanings of liberty. Some took freedom for granted; others, for whom liberty was either limited or denied, sought a redefinition of their lack of freedom. The election of Thomas Jefferson in 1800 ushered in a new administration in more ways than one. The Republicans were committed to “the principles of limitation.” In Jefferson’s inaugural address, he promised to support the ideals of equal justice, to guard against “anti-republican tendencies,” and to encourage small manufacturers and farmers. He advocated a reduction in the nation’s spending. Ironically, Jefferson and his administration continued many of the policies of Federalist administrations. Wars in Europe and new traffic to the Indian Ocean produced new markets for American products. The economy grew and for the time being Jefferson’s advocacy of a political economy based on free international trade seemed vindicated. For Jefferson the right of empire was fundamental to the political economy of the republic. For many Americans, geographical expansion enlarged the opportunities for freedom; for others it enlarged the area where slave labor could expand. The nation’s geographical expansion also imperiled Indian lands and their freedom. The purchase of Louisiana in 1803 illustrates the dual consequences of expansion. Jefferson’s second term was begun with high hopes: the economy was growing, the physical size of the U.S. had grown, and the nation’s debt was falling. The Republicans controlled both houses of Congress and Jefferson and the Republicans were favorably inclined to use some federal money for internal improvements but all of this halted because of events in Europe.

Key Topics The information in chapter 9 introduces your students to the following key topics:
- Expanding expectations of liberty
- The decline of the Federalists and the rise of Jeffersonian Republicanism
- The growth of commerce in the United States
- The cotton boom and the expansion of slavery
- The Louisiana Purchase
- Indian resistance and Tecumseh's Confederation
- The War of 1812

Chapter Outline
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The Second War with England
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The War of 1812  
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Conclusion

Annotated chapter outline with review questions

Gabriel's Conspiracy for Freedom: Gabriel was a slave in Virginia who dreamed of freedom. His dream resulted in his execution on October 10, 1800. Like other later slave revolts, Gabriel’s plans involved other slaves and they wanted to free not just themselves but other slaves as well. Like other rebellions, Gabriel’s plans were disclosed by co-conspirators who were also executed. Their offense was in desiring the same freedom that other Americans expected; their guilt, as far as the rest of the population was concerned, was obvious because of their color.

Voluntary Communities in the Age of Jefferson: By 1800 Americans were working through the meanings of liberty. Some took freedom for granted; others, for whom liberty was either limited or denied, sought a redefinition of their lack of freedom.

One of the earliest ways Americans had begun to act on their changing conceptions of liberty was by forming new communities of faith. Americans sought freedom from state supported congregations and many sought new denominations. The evangelical denominations offered a more egalitarian vision of the community of believers and was attractive to the poor and disfranchised—including women, free and enslaved African Americans. Americans came to see politics in religious terms.

• For no other group of Americans were the promises of liberty emptier than for African Americans. In many respects the struggle for freedom harmed slave communities. News of rebellions and reports of conspiracies caused southerners to limit individual emancipations and to tighten the legal control of slaves. Free blacks, who often lived in urban areas like New York, Boston, and Philadelphia endeavored to establish their own communities in spite of widespread racial discrimination. They formed mutual aid societies and took control of the education of their children. In Philadelphia there were four black Masonic Lodges, but it was black churches that nurtured the black community. Methodism drew many freed blacks to its congregations. As early as 1794, African American members founded the African Church of Philadelphia and the African Methodist Episcopal Church was established in Baltimore and Philadelphia in 1817 because of attacks on blacks and black churches. However, obstacles were everywhere. The federal government began to categorically deny certain jobs, such as mail carrier, to blacks and the army and navy tried to exclude blacks. White Americans formed the American Colonization Society in 1816, to remove free African Americans from the land of their birth to Africa.

• Changes in the American manufacturing economy changed the nature of work for many American laborers. What had once been shops with owners presiding over and often working alongside journeymen and apprentices were replaced with businessmen who subdivided the tasks of production which allowed them to hire cheaper less-skilled workers. The changes brought more profits to the owners and poverty and destitution to workers who were displaced from the workforce. Worker discontent often took on an ethnic cast as native born workers conflicted with immigrant workers. By 1800, manufacturers lobbied for a protective tariff. The economic changes and forces of the market were felt in many areas of American society.

In what specific ways did Jefferson’s philosophical emphasis on the importance of agriculture and commerce reflect everyday life in the United States in 1800?

Jeffersonian Republicanism: Politics of Transition: The election of Thomas Jefferson in 1800 ushered in a new administration in more ways than one. The Republicans were committed to “the principles of limitation.” In Jefferson’s inaugural address, he promised to support the ideals of equal justice, to guard against “anti-republican tendencies”, and to encourage small manufacturers and farmers. He advocated a reduction in the nation’s spending. Ironically, Jefferson and his administration continued many of the policies of Federalist administrations.

• Jefferson was the first president inaugurated in Washington DC, at the nearly completed Capitol. Jefferson’s life was one of paradoxes and contradictions. His political and economic world view was shaped by mercantilism but he recognized the importance of national commercial independence if the republic was to remain free and socially virtuous. He was also a democrat, willing to experiment with
social institutions. No issue revealed the two sides of Jefferson than his views on slavery. Jefferson owned slaves and in his lifetime he only freed five. He maintained a long-term intimate relationship with one, Sally Hemmings. Jefferson was almost solely responsible for the exclusion of slavery from the Northwest Territory and he signed a bill outlawing slavery. Jefferson’s presidency was also multifaceted. Although he advocated limited decentralized government he found himself proposing legislation that favored merchants. His actions also laid the foundations of America’s industrial economy. He also came to use the implied powers clause to buy Louisiana.

- Jefferson’s plans to limit the power and expense of the federal government backfired in some ways. Following the election of 1800 in which Jefferson and Burr were tied for president the Congress sent the 12th Amendment to the states for ratification. It provided for party tickets in national elections. He and the Congress then turned their attention to the judiciary branch. Because federal judges are appointed by the president and approved by the Senate, the Republicans worried about a pro-Federalist bias in the court system. The Republicans went after a Federalist plan to expand the federal courts and uphold the necessary commissions for the new judges. One of the rebuffed appointees, William Marbury, sued. Chief Justice John Marshall’s ruling in Marbury v. Madison established the principle of judicial review, that is the power of the Supreme Court to declare a law unconstitutional if it violates the Constitution.

- Jefferson promised to reduce the size of the federal government and one area targeted for reduction was the army and navy. He reduced the budget by more than two-thirds. The Republicans also paid off all payable debts by 1807. However, frugality was soon displaced by a shipping dispute in the Mediterranean Sea. The North African nations had traditionally charged a “tax” on foreign ships traveling the Mediterranean; nonpayment usually resulted in attacks by pirates. Jefferson opposed any threats to free trade and Republicans tended to oppose war because it was costly and war tended to expand the powers of the government. War seemed the only viable option, so Jefferson supported a bill to increase the navy’s budget.

What was the “empire of liberty”? What did it represent to Jefferson? To potential white settlers? To enslaved African Americans? To Indians?

Liberty and Expanding Commerce: Wars in Europe and new traffic to the Indian Ocean produced new markets for American Products. The economy grew and for the time being Jefferson’s advocacy of a political economy based on free international trade seemed vindicated.

- Compared to other varieties, short staple cotton could be successfully grown in many areas of the south. With a machine to pick the seeds from the lint, short staple cotton changed everything. Before 1793, cotton was not important to the nation’s economy. After 1800 cotton was the United States’ largest single export item. Profits set off an explosion of migration into the interior of the south which caused land prices to soar. Cotton also reinvigorated the institution of slavery. Because profits from cotton were so high, farmers focused solely on cotton and ignored more conservative farming methods. As a result farmland was exhausted and those who could moved to new productive land to repeat the same practice.

- America’s other industry was shipping. Whether in direct exports, re-exports, or simply carrying goods between two ports, maritime trade brought prosperity to the U.S. as American vessels sailed the world. Prosperity was possible because the U.S. stayed out of European conflicts. The sea also offered opportunity to Americans, including some women and many African-Americans, willing to weather the danger of the sea.

- The expansion of economic opportunity went hand in hand with advances in science and technology. Water-powered machines, mechanized spinning and the concept of interchangeable parts revolutionized the way products were manufactured in the United States. The government encouraged scientific exploration both at U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, and in the field. West Point’s curriculum reflected an emphasis on science and technology and the army conducted mapping expeditions of the west while performing their day-to-day activities. Americans had long emphasized the importance of the written and therefore knowable law to the preservation of the republic. In an increasingly more complex world of contracts, patents, and land claims, lawyers and judges became increasingly important as they argued, defined, interpreted, and applied the law. Law was an important institution on the frontier where the holders of land titles came in conflict with one another.
Why did many westward migrants and members of new evangelical sects perceive the Jeffersonian Republicans as preferable to the Federalists? What aspects of Republican thoughts and/or style might have appealed to them?

The Political Economy of an “Empire of Liberty:” For Jefferson the right of empire was fundamental to the political economy of the republic. For many Americans, geographical expansion enlarged the opportunities for freedom; for others it enlarged the area where slave labor could expand. The nation’s geographical expansion also imperiled Indian lands and their freedom. The purchase of Louisiana in 1803 illustrates the dual consequences of expansion.

- When Spain turned over Louisiana to France and thereby jeopardized America’s use of the Mississippi River, Jefferson dispatched Robert Livingston to France to try and purchase West Florida. Livingston suggested that the U.S. might be willing to purchase Louisiana if France would include West Florida in the deal. When the deal was finalized the U.S. acquired all of Louisiana for $15 million. Acquiring Louisiana presented Jefferson with a dilemma: would an amendment to the constitution be required to enable the government to acquire additional lands? In the end Jefferson settled for the Constitutional implied powers clause to justify the purchase. Jefferson rationalized the acquisition in his belief that the nation needed that land for future agricultural expansion.

- The purchase of Louisiana presented Jefferson with the opportunity to put into place a plan of exploration that he had been working on for some time. Leading the expedition west was Captain Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. Jefferson was interested in Lewis and Clark coming back with two things: detailed descriptions of the natural environment including geology and an assessment of the possibilities of American trade with the Indians. He also wanted Lewis and Clark to ascertain the existence of a river route to the Pacific.

- The west, real and mythical, excited Americans. Some saw the west in terms of national glory, others, like Aaron Burr, looked to the west for personal enrichment and self-aggrandizement. Burr, a wealthy New York politician and vice president of the U.S., was an unprincipled opportunist whose public career was ruined when he mortally wounded Alexander Hamilton in a duel. Disgraced, Burr headed west. There, he dreamed of some sort of scheme to invade Mexico or Florida. When rumors of his actions reached Washington, D.C., Jefferson ordered Burr’s arrest for treason. He stood trial in Richmond, Virginia, before Chief Justice Marshall. Because Jefferson refused to turn over subpoenaed documents, the conviction was in question. Marshall also used a very narrow definition of treason and with the absence of any witnesses to Burr’s plans, Burr was acquitted.

- American expansion into the Northwest Territory and the upper regions of the south collided with Native American economic practices. White settlers wanted unfettered access to land but the Indians claimed the land. Both groups were convinced that their existence depended on access to the land and the result was armed conflict. Many Americans, including Jefferson, believed the Indians had no real choice but to adapt to American cultural values and that it was not just desirable but inevitable that Indians would abandon their traditions in favor of American values. Jefferson the pragmatist believed that Indians must give way to American settlement. Since this was a desirable end, Jefferson saw expansion as not only good for the economy but also good for the Indians. Jefferson’s view of inevitability was not shared by many native peoples whose traditions and cultures served them well. But resistance was the path taken by many, it resulted in a revitalization movement designed to cleanse followers of their Euro-American practices. Two Shawnee leaders, Tecumseh and his half-brother Tenskwatawa organized a pan-Indian alliance to reject all aspects of white culture. Tecumseh’s resistance to Americans caused him to ally himself and his followers with the British during the War of 1812. His death on the battlefield marked the end of organized Indian resistance east of the Mississippi River.

In his first inaugural, Jefferson said “We are all Republicans, we are all Federalists.” In what ways was this an accurate statement?

The Second War with England: Jefferson’s second term was begun with high hopes: the economy was growing, the physical size of the U.S. had grown, and the nation’s debt was falling. The Republicans controlled both houses of Congress and Jefferson and the Republicans were favorably inclined to use some federal money for internal improvements but all of this halted because of events in Europe.
• In the European conflict between England and France and their allies, the U.S. was caught in the middle. Neither nation respected American neutrality and both nations seized American ships and impressed sailors into their navies. Congress passed an act limiting which American ships could sail into foreign ports and prohibited foreign ships from the export trade. Maritime shipping and related industries were thrown into chaos and farmers had trouble finding foreign markets for their produce. The economy settled into depression in 1808. The first embargo act was followed by others that were more repressive and that struck out at Americans’ liberties. The Embargo Acts represented the final failure of Jefferson’s agrarian political economy. The acts were repealed March 1, 1809, three days before Jefferson left office.

• The embargo effected almost all Americans. An unintended consequence was its effect on the American politics and especially on the Republican party which was split over what appeared to be Jefferson’s duplicity on several topics including a willingness to buy France’s support for the claim that the U.S. bought West Florida when it bought Louisiana. By 1808 a splinter group of Republicans, known as the “Tertium Quid,” threatened to support James Monroe instead of James Madison in the upcoming election. Rather than risk a public battle, the loyalist Republicans met in a closed meeting and chose Madison who won the election. The Republicans controlled the federal government from 1801-1829. Jefferson and Madison had previously warned against a time when a small group of men would meet in secret to choose the nation’s ruler.

• James Madison inherited the international problems of his friend Thomas Jefferson. Madison continued to follow the same policies of neutrality and free trade as well as the occasional commercial coercion. Congress passed the Non-Intercourse Act in 1809, repealing the Embargo Act. Madison requested the Congress to declare war on Great Britain on June 1, 1812. By June 18, the Congress complied—two days after Britain announced it was revoking its anti-American trade policy. War with Great Britain was not nationally popular. Westerners and southerners tended to support it; northerners opposed it. Indians and American party politics figured prominently in American’s anti-British sentiment. The American military was poorly led and suffered significant losses. In the south, the war provided the cover for an Indian war in Spanish Florida.

• The Federalists, angry over declining profits, opposed the war. They called a convention of New England states in October, 1814, in Hartford, Connecticut. Extreme Federalists argued for separation, other more moderate voices prevailed. Britain signaled a readiness to end the war and the war ended with the Treaty of Ghent 1814. The treaty was silent on the issues that caused the war. One bright spot in the dismal American performance was Jackson’s attack on New Orleans. The Americans scored an impressive victory and the victory shut down the Hartford Convention.

Characterize the differences between Jefferson’s first administration and his second.

**Feature: Focus on Youth: Jarena Lee:** Jarena Lee was a free black woman who became a minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Her progress to such an elevated and rather unique position is the story of one woman’s commitment to her faith, her people, and herself.

**Conclusion:** Buoyed by American successes in the war of 1812, the market grew, social constraints loosened, and the foundations of an industrial political economy were laid.

**Making links to other ideas** Using the maps and websites, in addition to your prepared lectures and other assignments, can give you more resources to enable your students to see that history is much more than memorizing names and dates. You will find that the websites are even more comprehensive and adaptable than described and because they have been collected here in one volume you have a world of information no further away than the click of your mouse. If you are new to the web's opportunities, you will be pleasantly surprised at the breadth and depth of the information available in these sites.

Map 01: Using the map trace the route of the Lewis and Clark expedition; trace the route of Pike, Freeman, and Long. What were they looking for? What did they find? What importance were these expeditions to the nation?

Map 02: Who was Tecumseh and what was his message? How did he convey his message to others? What sorts of events were going on in the same region that Tecumseh was traveling and talking?
Map 03: What is a naval blockade? How did it effect the American economy? Trace the war areas of the War of 1812. With the exception of the Battle of New Orleans, were the southern battles between Americans and Indians or Americans and the British?

**Web connections and resources** Consider using these websites to supplement your students’ reading and analytical skills. The sites were chosen because of their relevance to the material in the chapter -- not just to mirror it but to provide additional materials and perspectives. Questions from the student study guide have been included so that you can use or amend them to your own needs. Your students may find it insightful for you to guide them through the site as you help them develop research strategies.

"Liberty and Empire" [www.prenhall.com/boydston/machinery](http://www.prenhall.com/boydston/machinery)

In 1793 the first factory in the United States began operation in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. Machines made all the difference in a nation's economy, turning small enterprises such as weaving cloth into large-scale industries. Machines could do the same work as humans only faster, and with more consistency and endurance. Increasingly, the work of humans, was to tend the machines. How did the widespread use of different machinery change the life experience of laborers and business people?


Containing over 2,700 quotes from Thomas Jefferson, read in his own words Jefferson’s thoughts on the theory and structure of Republican government, citizens’ rights, and judicial review. Also, this site offers numerous links to other resources that contain additional writings of Jefferson.

2. In the category “Native American Policy” what is Jefferson’s philosophy about the future of native Americans?
3. In the category “Racial Policy” compare Jefferson’s quotes with his letter (chapter 8) to Banneker. What similarities and differences can you ascertain?

“Eli Whitney” [http://eliwhiteny.org/ew.htm#two](http://eliwhiteny.org/ew.htm#two)

This site contains information about Whitney and his invention of the cotton gin, which made cotton and slavery even more viable staples in the Southern economy.

1. In what way was Eli Whitney’s cotton gin revolutionary? What did it revolutionize? What were the consequences of his revolution for the south and the nation’s economy?


Containing text and photos of Slater’s Rhode Island mill operation and his mill villages, this site also provides information on the textile workers, adult and children and how early industrialization shaped their lives. You can also take a virtual tour of the Slaterville Mill and Industrial Villages.

1. Who was Samuel Slater? What were his organizational methods? In what ways did they change the nature of work and the nature of families that worked in these situations?

“The Louisiana Purchase Treaty, April 30, 1803” [http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/diplomacy/louis1.htm](http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/diplomacy/louis1.htm)

Read the full text of this historic treaty that greatly enlarged the nation and helped to fulfill the republican hopes for Westward expansion of territory.

1. What of the Treaty of San Ildefonso 1800 (between Spain and France) caused Jefferson to begin plans to purchase a part of Louisiana? What American and Spanish treaty did the Treaty of San Ildefonso invalidate?
2. What boundaries, if any, are described or mentioned in the text of the treaty?


Trace the discoveries of Lewis and Clark in what was the Jeffersonian West though this web site. Timelines, maps, academics’ assessments of their journey, and a question-and-answer section put their important trek in historical perspective. The site also contains portions of Lewis, Clark diaries that are searchable on line.
1. Why did President Jefferson urge the Congress to fund the Corps of Discovery? Why did he believe their discoveries should be important to the United States?

2. Why would President Jefferson stress the collection and compilation of all of the documentary information he wanted from Lewis and Clark's expedition? What good would all of this information do for the nation?

3. What value did Lewis and Clark's maps have for those Americans living in the settled part of the United States?


Providing links to over fifty primary source documents concerning the War of 1812, especially newspaper articles and reports, this site addresses the debates among Americans on entering the war, militia campaigns in the North West, and eyewitness accounts of the battle of New Orleans.

1. Read the newspaper editorials contained under “Debate on the Entry into the War (1812).” What points do they have in common for entering the war? Are any arguments unique compared to the others?

2. Read the editorials on peace (1815). What points do the editorials have in common? What points are different or unique to one that the others do not share?

3. Between 1812 and 1815 have the original objectives for entering the war been obtained by the end of the war or does it seem as if the original objectives have changed over the course of the war?

Analytical reading

Your students may need more experience analyzing a short reading passage so that he or she can determine its component parts. They may need help identifying primary and supporting information as well as the author’s analysis. The analytical reading passages and the questions from the student study guide have been duplicated in the instructor’s manual for your use. Your students may need direction and encouragement in using them.

The contingent character of Jefferson's presidency was captured concretely in the new national capital where he was inaugurated on March 4, 1801. The city (named Washington, District of Columbia, after the nation’s first president) had been in the planning since Jefferson and Hamilton had struck their bargain on the assumption of state debts in 1790. George Washington had turned supervision of the project over to Jefferson who had, in turn, secured the services of French engineer Major Pierre Charles L’Enfant. Ironically, for the model of the capital of the world's first permanent republic, L’Enfant chose Versailles, the palace of French kings.

President and Abigail Adams moved into the new executive mansion in the fall of 1800, just in time for Adams to fail in his re-election bid. Abigail Adams did not mind the brevity of her stay in Washington: she found the city dirty, its inhabitants disreputable, and the executive mansion damp and cold. She eventually commandeered the “great, unfinished audience-room” as a “drying-room . . . to hang the clothes in.” Visitors to the city agreed, describing it as “both melancholy and ludicrous.” Like the Executive Mansion, the capitol was not complete. Congress took up its duties under an unfinished roof, and the Supreme Court set to work in temporary chambers in the basement. The community, such as it was, consisted of mud-mired streets connecting clusters of boardinghouses, workers' shanties, and half-framed buildings. It gave the appearance, as one visitor put it, “of a considerable town, which had been destroyed by some unusual calamity.”

It was in the unfinished Capitol that Thomas Jefferson took the oath of office. Few people better embodied the transitional state of the republic than the new president himself. Jefferson was born in 1743 and survived until July 4, 1826 (the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence), a life span that witnessed the flowering and decline of the European Age of Reason and the birth of the American market revolution. Jefferson belonged to both. A “zealous amateur” of Newtonian physics and the new sciences of botany, zoology, and mathematics, Jefferson was drawn to eighteenth-century ideals of order, a quality evident both in his political writings (most notably the Declaration of Independence) and in his personal habits. He shunned crowds and public controversy, preferring quiet discussions in private salons to the power-broking of politics.

1. Describe the early Washington, D.C.
2. In what ways was the new capitol symbolic of the young nation?
3. In what ways did President Jefferson belong to both eras, the European Age of Reason and the birth of the American market revolution?

Writing  The questions or writing prompts from the student study guide have been duplicated here for your use. These writing topics make good lecture topics especially if you help your students see the development of the idea in lecture format before they refine the idea in their writing assignments.

1. Compare the lives, fortunes, and ideals of Gabriel and Jarena Lee.
2. In what ways did the new Jeffersonian Republicans reflect the Americans of the time? Why did the Federalists fail to change along with the American electorate?
3. What was important about the Louisianna Purchase, the Lewis and Clark Expedition?
4. Americans’ expectations of liberty expanded, Americans’ opportunities expanded with the economy and the growth of the nation, but the opportunities for native Americans were continuously restricted. Based on your readings so far, how would white Americans justify their actions? How would Tecumseh respond? Why did his plan for a confederation fail?
5. Compare and contrast Jefferson’s first administration with that of his second.

Lecture Strategies  Ultimately the lecture is where you impart, or profess, your knowledge for the benefit of your students. These strategies were designed around the textbook and if your classroom strategy is to use the organization of the text to organize your course content, these lecture ideas may prove helpful. However, if you lecture around themes please see the section entitled “Thematic Lecture Topics.” You may find that you are more comfortable with and your students are more responsive to a combination of the two. Consider, too, the projects suggested in the student study guide. If your students complete these before your lecture, their comprehension will surely be enhanced.

Thomas Jefferson is the topic of this chapter which means that you can discuss his personality and nature, his views on government and science, and slavery. The Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark expedition (and Sacajawea) provide more than enough material for classroom study. With the evolution of the nation's economy you also have the discussions of workers and employers; the birth of the market economy. Aaron Burr is also an interesting topic as is Chief Justice Marshall’s development of a very narrow definition of treason. Burr's and Hamilton's relationship as well as the radical Federalist plans for separation are also interesting. The importance of the War of 1812 to subsequent events and subsequent chapters must be considered.

This chapter, like the other chapters, offers too many interesting topics. Winnowing them down to a manageable amount is the challenge.


See also Olaudah Equiano, The Interesting Narrative and other Writings, edited with an introduction and notes by Vincent Carretta. New York: Penguin Books, 1995. Published in 1789, Equiano's account is among the earliest autobiographical accounts of the colonial slave trade and the effects on its victims. Equiano's slavery spans the period from about 1755 to 1766 but it is also his life story that is interesting. For several narratives, see Henry Louis Gates, Jr. The Classic Slave Narratives, edited with an introduction by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. New York: A Mentor Book, 1987. The first-hand stories of Olaudah Equiano, Mary Prince, Frederick Douglass, and Harriet Jacobs introduce the reader to slavery from the inside (and over the period of American slavery) and more importantly what it means to be free.

and Americans remains prophetic, insightful, and fresh. It offers much for discussion whether you assign written questions or use it to spark classroom discussion

Meriwether Lewis, The Journals of Lewis and Clark, edited and with an introduction by Frank Bergon, New York: Penguin Books, 1989. The journal entries, the descriptions, and the maps are an excellent supplement to the classroom discussions of the expedition and what it found.