Peggy Hoekenga is an assistant professor at the University of North Alabama, where she taught first grade at Kilby Laboratory School for seven years and is currently beginning her fifth year as the Alabama Reading Initiative reading coach for grades K-6. She received her Master’s Degree in Early Childhood Education from the University of Mississippi. In 2008, the Northwest Alabama Reading Council selected her as Reading Teacher of the Year. She currently lives in Florence, AL, with her husband of 34 years, Paul.
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Summary

Forty-six-year-old David Ponder feels like a total failure. Once a high-flying executive in a Fortune 500 company, he now works a part-time, minimum wage job. His wife makes more money than he does by cleaning houses, and he drives an old car with a mismatched fender and a heater that no longer works.

Then an even greater crisis hits: his daughter becomes ill, and he can’t afford to get her the medical help she needs. When his car skids on an icy road, he wonders if he even cares to survive the crash.

But an extraordinary experience awaits David Ponder. He finds himself traveling back in time, meeting leaders and heroes at crucial moments in their lives. From the European theater of World War II to an ancient Middle Eastern king’s throne room, from a Civil War battlefield to a warehouse in heaven, David encounters some of the wisest people who ever lived. Abraham Lincoln, King Solomon, Anne Frank, Harry Truman, and others teach him unforgettable life lessons. By the time his journey is over, he has received seven secrets for success—and a second chance to create a life worth living, no matter what opposition or obstacles he might face.

*The Traveler’s Gift* offers a modern day parable of one man’s choices—and the attitudes that make the difference between success and failure.
About the Author

Hailed by a *New York Times* writer as “someone who has quietly become one of the most influential people in America,” ANDY ANDREWS is the author of *New York Times* Bestsellers *The Noticer* and *The Traveler’s Gift*, and is also an in-demand speaker for the world’s largest organizations. *The Noticer* and *The Traveler’s Gift* were featured selections of *ABC’s Good Morning America*, have been translated into nearly 20 languages, and continue to appear on bestseller lists around the world.

Andy has spoken at the request of four different United States presidents and toured military bases around the world, being called upon by the Department of Defense to speak about the principles contained in his books. Arguably, there is no single person on the planet better at weaving subtle yet life-changing lessons into riveting tales of adventure and intrigue—both on paper and on stage.

He lives in Orange Beach, Alabama, with his wife, Polly, and their two sons.
Before Reading Activities

Build Background Knowledge

Ask your students the following questions:

• Have you ever wished that you could talk with a famous person from the past?
• What questions would you ask them?

Have students participate in a “quick write.” They will write down the person from history whom they would most like to talk to and then they will write down as many questions to ask their famous person as possible. Students must write as quickly as they can, because they will only have two minutes in which to write.

After students write for two minutes, have everyone stop. Then, have students share with their neighbor or in small groups what they have written down. Give students two to three minutes for discussion. While students are still in groups, ask them to discuss this next question:

• What things can you learn from the famous historical figures you chose and how could they influence us today?

Give students two to three minutes to discuss their answers with each other. Then, have one student from each group report what they have discussed.
Set Purpose for Reading

Choose one of the following to set the purpose for reading:

1. Tell students they will be reading a book about a man who learns several valuable life lessons from people in the past. Ask them to make a list of each lesson as they read, using the graphic organizer on p. 9 and 10.

2. Fill a small suitcase with the following items:

   - a copy of the Gettysburg address
   - a diary
   - a Bible
   - a crown
   - a world map
   - a small globe
   - a notecard with “The Buck Stops Here” written on it
   - a picture of a Union Soldier
   - a pink rose
   - a Star of David
   - a copy of the Presidential Seal

   Have students list these items on their graphic organizer. Then, as they read the story, they should figure out with whom these items are associated. Some items might be readily identified with more than one character, and some characters may be identified with more than one item. As they list the items, have them explain why they've chosen the item(s) to go with each character. They may use the Graphic Organizer on p. 11.

3. Show students the front of the book and read the title to them. Ask students to make predictions about the traveler’s identity and what the traveler’s gift might be. They may also predict where they think the traveler might be going and what he/she will do when they get there.
## Seven Life Lessons Learned from Famous Historical Figures

**Directions:** Complete the Graphic Organizer as you read about each famous person that David Ponder encountered in his travels. Include the place and time period for the meeting (i.e. 1863, Gettysburg, PA). Then, in your own words, give a brief summary of the lesson that David learned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Period and Location in History</th>
<th>Lesson Learned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
Before Reading Activities

Person: __________________________________________________________

Period and Location in History: ______________________________________

Lesson Learned: ____________________________________________________

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____________________________________________________________________
What’s in the Traveler’s Suitcase?

Seven Life Lessons Learned from Famous Historical Figures

Directions: List the items that were found in the suitcase in the box below. As you read, list the character the item or items signify. Some items may be suitable for more than one character. Briefly explain why the item or items might represent that particular character.

Contents of Suitcase: ________________________________________________________________

...........................................................................................................................

...........................................................................................................................

...........................................................................................................................

1. Character: ________________________________
   Item(s): ___________________________________________
   What is the relationship of the item(s) to that person? __________________________________
   ...........................................................................................................................
   ...........................................................................................................................

2. Character: ________________________________
   Item(s): ___________________________________________
   What is the relationship of the item(s) to that person? __________________________________
   ...........................................................................................................................
   ...........................................................................................................................

3. Character: ________________________________
   Item(s): ___________________________________________
   What is the relationship of the item(s) to that person? __________________________________
   ...........................................................................................................................
   ...........................................................................................................................
Before Reading Activities

4. Character: ____________________________
   Item(s): ________________________________
   What is the relationship of the item(s) to that person? ________________________________

5. Character: ____________________________
   Item(s): ________________________________
   What is the relationship of the item(s) to that person? ________________________________

6. Character: ____________________________
   Item(s): ________________________________
   What is the relationship of the item(s) to that person? ________________________________

7. Character: ____________________________
   Item(s): ________________________________
   What is the relationship of the item(s) to that person? ________________________________
Introduce Vocabulary

The vocabulary should be introduced prior to reading. The words are listed by chapters below, and on the pages that follow. Determine how many chapters you will assign to your students and then introduce the corresponding vocabulary. You may choose all the words in each section, or select the ones that best suit the ages, needs, and knowledge-base of your students.

Vocabulary activities are on the pages following the vocabulary lists. These activities have been divided into grade-level lists, but you may wish to use activities from both lists based on the abilities and interests of your particular students.

Chapters 1 & 2

devastating (p. 1)
feverishly (p. 3)
conglomerate (p. 3)
stopgap (p. 4)
résumés (p. 4)
immersed (p. 4)
severance (p. 7)
incredulous (p. 13)

Chapter 3

ornate (p. 17)
warily (p. 29)
platoon (p. 30)
endure (p. 30)
adversity (p. 34)

Chapter 4

jostling (p. 35)
pungent (p. 36)
elaborate (p. 36)
awe-inspiring (p. 37)
maneuvered (p. 37)
vantage (p. 37)
fundamentals (p. 47)
Chapter 5

- trance (p. 54)
- complement (p. 54)
- myriad (p. 58)
- projectile (p. 60)
- flank (p. 60-65)
- rhetoric (p. 63)
- stoic (p. 67)
- mediocrity (p. 70)

Chapter 6

- gingerly (p. 74)
- pronounced (p. 77)
- financiers (p. 80)
- convictions (p. 80)
- contingent (p. 83)
- refrain (p. 84)
- gambit (p. 84)
- insolence (p. 85)

Chapter 7

- resolutely (p. 94)
- annex (p. 97)
- convey (p. 100)
- mimic (p. 102)
- murmuring (p. 107)

Chapter 8

- tentatively (p. 112)
- orator (p. 113)
- enthralled (p. 113)
- disheveled (p. 117)
- propensity (p. 119)
- enlightening (p. 122)
- honing (p. 122)
- transfixed (p. 124)
- rivulets (p. 127)
- vilified (p. 129)
- dastardly (p. 131)
### Chapter 9

- **peripheral** (p. 143)
- **perpetual** (p. 149)
- **diverted** (p. 150)
- **agonized** (p. 153)
- **renders** (p. 154)
- **flayed** (p. 155)
- **calamity** (p. 159)
- **dissolution** (p. 159)
- **metallurgy** (p. 160)
- **precipice** (p. 162)
- **peril** (p. 162)

### Chapters 10 & 11

- **astonishment** (p. 170)
- **argon** (p. 171)
- **edifice** (p. 171)
- **precariously** (p. 173)
- **suppress** (p. 175)
- **vantage** (p. 177)
- **ovation** (p. 179)
- **duress** (p. 180)
- **legacy** (p. 180)
- **bead** (p. 189)
- **illusion** (p. 190)
- **vaguely** (p. 195)
Vocabulary Activities

1. Use the Word Sort Graphic Organizer on page 17 so that students can identify the parts of speech for the vocabulary words that you select. You may want to include the page numbers where the words are found if you use words from multiple chapters.

2. Students continue to get confused when asked to spell words with inflectional endings. They aren’t sure if they need to double the final consonant, drop e, change y to i, or if the base word stays the same. If you have students who are having trouble with this skill, then have them sort the vocabulary words with inflectional endings using the sorting activity on page 18.

3. Have students define the vocabulary words that you select using the graphic organizers on page 21.

4. Have students write the vocabulary words that have prefixes and/or suffixes. Then, they should write the base word for each of these words. Next, they should write as many other forms of the word as possible by adding different prefixes and/or suffixes. They can use their own paper or the grid on page 22. You may want to provide the students with a Prefix and Suffix Word Bank. If so, there is one on the page following the graphic organizer, but don’t limit them to the word banks.

5. Have students write a short story or a poem using all the vocabulary words from one or two chapters.
Before Reading Activities

Vocabulary Word Sort

**Find the words that can be used as multiple parts of speech. Then, locate the word in the text and indicate which part of speech it is in the book.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Adverb</th>
<th>More than One**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Word** | **Page Number in Book** | **Part of speech as used in text**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Page Number in Book</th>
<th>Part of speech as used in text</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

Name ________________________________________________
Directions for use:

Students should cut out the above words and write the base word for each word in the first column of their blank grid (following page). Next, they should sort and glue them into the appropriate column on the blank grid. If you have students who are struggling readers and spellers, manipulating the words will be most helpful for them. When they finish sorting and gluing them in the correct column, you may also want to have them follow up by making their own grid and writing the words on another sheet of paper, exactly as they have them sorted. You might even want them to conduct a word search in other reading materials for words with inflectional endings, and add them where they would belong in the sort. For students who don’t need as much practice, or to conserve paper, teachers might choose to post the vocabulary words and have students do a writing sort with the words, simply writing them in the appropriate column on their sheet.

When students have completed the sorting, ask them if there are any generalizations that they can make about when to drop e, make no changes, etc. This helps them form their own rules about when to make these changes and makes it more likely they will remember them, as opposed to you giving them the rules and exceptions to rules.
### Vocabulary Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Base Word</th>
<th>e drop</th>
<th>Change y to i</th>
<th>No change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Answer Key

for Inflectional Word Endings  
Sort Vocabulary Word Graphic Organizer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Base Word</th>
<th>e Drop</th>
<th>Change y to i</th>
<th>No change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>devastate</td>
<td>devastating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immerse</td>
<td>immersed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jostle</td>
<td>jostling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inspire</td>
<td>awe-inspiring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maneuver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>maneuvered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pronounce</td>
<td>pronounced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enthrall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>enthralled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dishevel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>disheveled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enlighten</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>enlightening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hone</td>
<td>honing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transfix</td>
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<td></td>
<td>transfixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vilify</td>
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<td>vilified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divert</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>diverted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agonize</td>
<td>agonized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>flay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>flayed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Name ____________________________________________

Vocabulary Word Graphic Organizer

Word: ____________________________________________

Short Definition (in your own words):

________________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synonyms</th>
<th>Antonyms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visual representation of the word. How would you illustrate this word?

________________________________________________________________________

Use the word in a sentence.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
How Many Words Can You Create?

Choose a vocabulary word that has a prefix and/or a suffix. Then, identify the base word in the word. How many new words can you create by adding different prefixes and/or suffixes to the base word?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary Word</th>
<th>Base Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Words:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary Word</th>
<th>Base Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Words:</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary Word</th>
<th>Base Word</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Words:</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary Word</th>
<th>Base Word</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Words:</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary Word</th>
<th>Base Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Words:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Word Banks

#### Before Reading Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Prefixes</th>
<th><strong>Prefix</strong></th>
<th><strong>Meaning</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>anti-</td>
<td>against</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dis-</td>
<td>not, opposite</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in-, im-</td>
<td>in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mis-</td>
<td>not, wrongly</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>non-</td>
<td>not</td>
<td></td>
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<td>pre-</td>
<td>before</td>
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<td>re-</td>
<td>again</td>
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<tr>
<td>un-</td>
<td>not</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Suffixes</th>
<th><strong>Suffix</strong></th>
<th><strong>Meaning</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-able, -ible</td>
<td>can be done</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-en</td>
<td>made of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-er</td>
<td>compare two things</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-est</td>
<td>compare more than two things</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ful</td>
<td>full of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ly</td>
<td>like (adverb)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ment</td>
<td>action of process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ness</td>
<td>condition of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-y</td>
<td>like (adjective)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vocabulary Activities

1. Have students locate the vocabulary words that you have chosen from the suggested vocabulary lists in the text. Then, have them write the sentence where they appear in the text and compose a definition for the word based on context clues and their current knowledge. Students can use the graphic organizer on page 26 to complete this activity.

2. You can differentiate the vocabulary lists by allowing students to choose their own words. They would choose the words that are new to them, or words that they already know, but are used in a different context in this book. They should make a list of the words and then locate their meanings in a dictionary. They can use the graphic organizer on page 27.

3. Students can identify the parts of speech of each vocabulary word. For words that have multiple meanings and uses, they can indicate how they are used in the text. They can use the graphic organizer on page 17 to write their answers as they sort the words in the proper category. (The same “Vocabulary Word Sort Parts of Speech” grid from the Grades 6-8 Section.)

4. Assign the vocabulary words from one, two, or several chapters, and allow students to use them to write a poem, song, or newspaper article about those chapters.

5. Identify the Greek/Latin roots from the following vocabulary words: awe-inspiring (spir), projectile (ject), resolutely (solv), and dissolution (solu). Then, have the students use the charts on page 28 to build new words. The more exposure we can give our students to affixes and root word meanings, the better prepared they will be to decode unfamiliar words and their meanings. This will be an asset for them when they must take SATs, ACTs, and other standardized tests.
6. Have students locate the base word in words that have prefixes, suffixes, and/or inflectional endings. Then, have them indicate the language of origin of the base word and its meaning. Next, have them list all the words they could make with the same base word by using different prefixes, suffixes, and inflectional endings.

7. Download the “Concept of Definition” graphic organizer from www.readingquest.org/strat/cdmap.html for students to use to gain a better understanding of the most difficult vocabulary words.
Vocabulary Word Definitions Using context clues

Word: ________________________________  Page # found in text: __________________

Sentence used from text:

________________________________________________________________________

Your definition based on context clues:

________________________________________________________________________

Word: ________________________________  Page # found in text: __________________

Sentence used from text:

________________________________________________________________________

Your definition based on context clues:

________________________________________________________________________

Word: ________________________________  Page # found in text: __________________

Sentence used from text:

________________________________________________________________________

Your definition based on context clues:

________________________________________________________________________
Vocabulary Word Graphic Organizer

Word: __________________________ Definition: __________________________

Synonym: __________________________ Antonym: __________________________

Source of definition: __________________________

Word: __________________________ Definition: __________________________

Synonym: __________________________ Antonym: __________________________

Source of definition: __________________________

Word: __________________________ Definition: __________________________

Synonym: __________________________ Antonym: __________________________

Source of definition: __________________________

Word: __________________________ Definition: __________________________

Synonym: __________________________ Antonym: __________________________

Source of definition: __________________________
Define the vocabulary words below. Then identify the Greek or Latin root in each word and the meaning of the root. Next, use the root words from each of the words to build more words with the affixes that surround the roots in the boxes below the words. You may use more than one affix in a word.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Root</th>
<th>Root Meaning</th>
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<td>awe-inspiring</td>
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Before Reading Activities

Building with Affixes and Roots

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During Reading Activities

Questions for Discussion and Comprehension

Chapter One

1. Why did David miss Jenny’s birthday? *He was too busy at work. He worked all the time.* If you were Jenny, how would you feel about Dad “forgetting” your birthday? *Accept any reasonable answers*

2. Read the following from page 6, “But his work at the plant, while it did provide a living, never seemed to provide a life.” Explain what the author meant by this statement. *Students’ answers might include: he didn’t have much of a life because he worked all the time; his work was his life; he was so busy working that he missed out on living; he missed all the important events in the life of his daughter and wife, etc...*

Chapter Two

1. Again, David mentions not having a purpose. He has a wife and a child. Why do you think he feels as if he has no purpose? *Accept any reasonable answers. They should include statements like: he doesn’t spend any time with his family, so he has no personal attachment to them; working provides money to live, but it can’t be your only purpose in life; people need to make emotional attachments to feel they have a purpose...*

2. Do you think David wrecked his car on purpose? Why or why not? *Accept any reasonable answers*

3. After reading these first two chapters, what conclusions can you draw about Jenny and David? What kind of people are they? Write a description of the two main characters, David and Jenny. *This can be done using a compare/contrast T chart, Venn diagram, or students can write a narrative-style description.*

4. What do you think will happen next? *Accept any reasonable answers*
Chapter Three

1. Where is David when he wakes up?  Describe the setting in great detail.  *(He is in a second floor room of a building and he’s sitting on a large Persian rug in a very ornate room. The room has high ceilings. There is a globe in the room and a chair with a back made of mahogany wood. There’s a man across the room from him who is sorting papers. It is hot and humid in the room. The location is Potsdam, Germany, and it is Tuesday, July 24, 1945.)*

2. Whom does David meet? *(Harry Truman)* Is David dreaming? Explain your answer. *(Answers will vary, some students may include some of the language from page 22.)*

3. On page 25, it says, “The ultimate outcome of anyone’s life is a matter of personal choice.” Do you agree with this? Why or why not? *(Answers will vary)*

4. In this chapter, we learn that the first decision for success is, “The buck stops here.” Explain what this means in your own words. Can you apply this to your life today? How? *(Accept any reasonable answers, but their explanation should include something about taking responsibility for your problems and the actions you take, or that each person is responsible for their past, present, and future successes…)*

5. So often in life, people try to blame others for their own misfortune and/or mistakes. Have you ever said, “It’s not my fault”? Why do we say this? Why do we try to put the blame on others? *(Accept any reasonable answers)*

Chapter Four

1. Describe the setting at the beginning of Chapter 4. How is it different or similar to the setting in Chapter 3? Use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the settings in these two chapters. *(Chapter 4 setting description: Very large room filled with people, smells of cedar, marble flooring. There were huge columns supporting the ceiling, a large, loud gong was sounding. In the room, there was a throne made of ivory with gold etchings. There were huge statues of lions in the room. In comparing and contrasting the two settings: Same—Large, ornate rooms, not in America… Different—Locations, number of people in rooms, time period, …)*
2. What special ability had David Ponder acquired on his journey? *(He was able to speak or communicate in various languages and comprehend them as well)*

3. Who did David meet this time? How did this person describe wisdom? *(He met King Solomon. He said that wisdom was a gift that could not be bought. It is something that you have to look for and that it can't be found by just anybody. He said wisdom enables you to be content and successful.)*

4. How does a person seek wisdom? *(Answers will vary)*

5. What concerns did David express about his daughter’s choice of friends? *(He was worried about the effects they have on her, both good and bad. He knows her friends can influence her decisions, behavior, and attitudes. They can even influence the clothes she wears!) Do you agree or disagree with this? Why? *(Answers will vary)*

6. What role does wisdom play in choosing your friends? Why should you choose your friends carefully and wisely? Give some examples. *(Accept any reasonable answers)*

**Chapter Five**

1. The next encounter finds David right smack in the middle of a famous Civil War battle, speaking to a Colonel whom he had never heard of, Joshua Chamberlain. Where were they and how did Chamberlain explain their reason for being there? *(Gettysburg, PA – He thought it wouldn’t last long and that it would be fun. It was his patriotic duty and the right thing to do. He did it to give others their freedom…)*

2. What did Chamberlain say was his greatest advantage in this battle? *(The fact that he was stubborn and that he would never give up or run away, he was a man of action) Why do you think he said this? (Accept any reasonable answer)*

3. David stayed to watch the battle, even though he was afraid. What do you think he learned from watching the end of this battle? *(Accept any reasonable answer)*
4. The third decision for success was, “I am a person of action.” Based on the words Chamberlain had written on the paper, describe a person of action from his point of view. (Answers will vary, but may include: Energetic, seize opportunities, moves quickly, not lazy, smiles, inspires others, leader, consistent, confident, can make decisions, courageous, bold, not afraid, brave, never quits or gives up…) Are you a person of action? Why or why not?

**Chapter Six**

1. Columbus told David that he did not care at all about what other people think of him. Why did he say you shouldn’t worry about what others think of you? (He said if you worry about what others think of you, then you will never do anything, because you don’t want them to criticize you or your actions. You shouldn’t need the permission of others before you act, nor think that they know any more than you do.) Do you agree? Why or why not?

2. Explain what passion is, as it is described in this chapter. (Answers will vary, but should include: From the heart; helps you achieve your dreams; motivates you to accomplish great things; helps you inspire others; helps you achieve the impossible; keeps you going…) What are you passionate about? Why?

3. On page 82, Columbus tells David, “Today, you will not see land off the bow of my ship. You will see land only by looking into my eyes.” Explain what he meant when he said this. (Accept any reasonable answers)

4. Reread pages 85 and 86 and then explain what Columbus meant when he said, “Nothing great is ever accomplished by a realistic person.” Do you agree with this? Why? (Accept any reasonable answers)

5. How are passion and a committed heart related? (Answers will vary, but should include: If you’re committed, you are decided, not waivering in your decisions; passion motivates you and helps you commit to something; passion keeps you focused on staying committed; passion helps you believe in yourself and others and motivates you to stay committed…)

6. What are some of the characteristics of a person who has a decided heart? (Answers may include, but aren’t limited to: brave, committed, motivated, bold, dreamers, passionate, have a vision, inspire others to follow, don’t care what others think, people of action…) Are you a person with a decided heart? Why or why not?
Chapter Seven

1. Anne’s father said complaining is an activity. Explain what he meant. (Her father compared complaining to an activity such as jumping rope or listening to the radio. He said it was your choice to either turn on the radio or not turn it on. He said complaining was no different. You can choose to complain, or you can choose not to complain. Do you ever complain? Why? (Answers will vary)

2. For what was Anne grateful? (Having a place that could hide eight people, the family who uses their ration card for food and is generous to share it with those in hiding, the one extra dress she and her sister have when others have nothing)

3. On page 103, Anne’s father explains that “it’s what’s inside that makes all the difference.” If that’s true, explain how your friends, the movies you watch, the books you read, and the music you listen to can influence what’s inside of you. (Accept any reasonable answers)

4. Make a list of the character traits Anne exhibits. (Answers will vary, but may include: optimistic, kind, cheerful, thoughtful, brave, sincere, creative…). Is she the kind of person whom you would want to have as a friend? Explain your answer. (Answers will vary)

5. In this chapter we learn that happiness is a choice. How and why can you choose to be happy when things aren’t going well? What are the benefits of choosing to be happy when life is difficult? Think about Anne’s attitude. Is happiness dependent upon your situation? (Accept any reasonable answers)

Chapter Eight

1. Describe Abraham Lincoln through David Ponder’s eyes. (Very tall, large hands, a bit over-sized, well-dressed, neatly trimmed beard, a high-pitched voice like that of a tenor, somewhat disheveled, arms, hands, legs, and face seem to be too long…)

2. Where was President Lincoln and why was he there? (Gettysburg, PA, to dedicate a cemetery and, secondly, to meet David)
During Reading Activities

3. On page 118, a glass of water is lifted and an unusual toast is made to “two men experiencing the worst life has to offer.” Who were the two men and what horrible events was he referring to? (President Lincoln and David—Lincoln’s son, Willie, had died and now another son, Tad, was gravely ill. For David, he lost his job, he is broke, he can’t pay his bills, his daughter is sick and needs surgery that he really can’t afford…)

4. President Lincoln explained that it was important to ask yourself to think about how other people see you and ask yourself what they don’t like about you. Why is this important? (Mr. Lincoln said that in order to have an influence over people, they must like you and want to be around you. He didn’t mean that you should try to please people, but that you should attract them to yourself by your good manners and thoughtful speech and actions. You need to be a person that others want to be with and be like. Answers will vary as to why this is important.)

5. What did Lincoln say was the “single most important action I can take on a regular basis?” (That you must forgive)
   Explain what he meant by this statement. (Answers will vary, but should include some of the following: It allows you to be more effective; if you don’t forgive, you are robbed of your own joy; it is powerful; others will forgive you; it’s a gift that you give yourself and others; it frees you from anger and hatred toward others…)

Chapter Nine

1. Explain what David saw and where he was at the beginning of chapter nine. (He was surrounded by paper, photographs of children, racks of coats, wheelchairs, beds, bicycles, legal documents, shoes, heaters, marriage licenses, money…David thought he was in Heaven, but Gabriel explained that it was not Heaven, just a brief stopover)

2. Gabriel told David that his civilization was in great trouble. David’s civilization would include the world as we know it today. Why did Gabriel say this? What reasons did he give? (Gabriel said that most of the human race lacks the faith that is necessary for producing greatness. He referred to us as “a wandering, questioning pack of rebels teetering on the brink of dissolution.” He said that we are ungrateful, impatient, arrogant, and not as advanced as we might think…refer to pages 159-162) Do you agree or disagree with Gabriel? Why? (Accept any reasonable answers)
3. David learns a valuable lesson from Gabriel. So often when things in life get too hard for us, we give up and quit, even though it’s something we really wanted or desired. We just give up! You can choose to give up, or you can continue on, no matter how hard things get. What does it mean to persist without exception? Re-read pages 165-167, then explain it in your own words. (Answers might include: Do not give up, no matter what; be strong and persevere; look ahead to your goal and keep your focus there; keep the faith in yourself, others, and God; look ahead and not behind, keeping your eyes fixed on the goal and keep the faith, no matter what happens along the way…)

4. Have you ever given up or quit when something got too complicated or difficult? Explain what happened. What were the consequences of giving up? (Answers will vary)

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Chapter Ten

1. On page 179, the book mentioned that David was unnerved by a reference to the Seven Decisions. List the Seven Decisions and the person who was responsible for revealing each decision to David. (1. The buck stops here. I am responsible for my past and my future. - Harry Truman 2. I will seek wisdom. I will be a servant to others. - King Solomon 3. I am a person of action. I seize the moment. I choose now. - Col. Joshua Chamberlain 4. I have a decided heart. My destiny is assured. - Christopher Columbus 5. Today I will choose to be happy. I am the possessor of a grateful spirit. - Anne Frank 6. I will greet this day with a forgiving spirit. - Abraham Lincoln 7. I will persist without exception. I am a person of great faith. - Archangel Gabriel)

2. The speaker David was listening to said, “Your example, your actions, and yes, even one decision can literally change the world.” Explain what he meant by this statement. Do you agree with this? Why or why not? (Answers will vary)

3. Later on in Chapter 10, we are reminded that the decision of one man most likely changed the course of the Civil War. Who was this man and what did he do? (Joshua Chamberlain. He told his men to charge and keep fighting against all odds; persisted…) If the North had lost the Civil War, how might it have changed the course of America and the rest of the world? (According to historians, there might not be an America like we know today, there might be two or three countries instead; a superpower would not exist to feed the poor countries and defend and support the weaker ones; the end results of WWI and WWII would have been different…)
4. What were the personal rewards that Joshua Chamberlain experienced as a result of his decision? *(He led other successful battles in the Civil War; he was promoted to major general; received numerous citations for heroism; elected governor of Maine by the largest majority in the history of the state and was re-elected three times; president of Bowdoin College…)*

5. Several years after the Civil War, Chamberlain received a letter from a southern soldier from Alabama. Explain why this soldier said he could not fire his weapon upon Chamberlain. What do you think? How would you explain this? *(Answers will vary…see pages 188-190)*

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**Chapter Eleven**

1. In this chapter, David makes a list of the Seven Decisions for Success. Look at David’s list and choose the decision that you think is the most important in living a successful life. Which decision did you choose? Give a brief explanation as to why you chose this decision. Why is it more important than the others? *(Answers will vary)*

2. What do you think Andy Andrews’ purpose was in writing this book? What do you think he wanted his readers to know? *(Answers will vary)*
After Reading Activities

Enrichment/Extend the Learning

1. Use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the traits and personality of the main character, David Ponder, at the beginning and end of the story. In some ways, he was the same, but in other ways, he was very different.

2. You are a reporter covering President Lincoln's trip and speech at Gettysburg, PA. Write the article that would be published in the newspaper that day. Be sure to include the following in your article:
   - Who was he talking to?
   - What was the tone of his speech?
   - How does he feel?
   - What is the theme of his speech?

   The Gettysburg address is found on pages 136 and 137.

3. Each decision was revealed by a different famous person from history. Which person did you find most interesting? Google this person online and find out more about him/her. Then, fill out the graphic organizer on page 39.

4. Use the Compare/Contrast Chart on page 41 to compare the two presidents from the story. Students may need to do further research on these men in order to complete the chart. They should compare educational background, upbringing, public opinion about them as president, age when president, what they are most noted for during their presidency, time period they served, and anything else the teacher determines as important.
After Reading Activities

5 Travel back in time to one of the places that David visited on his journey. Write about it as though you were writing in a travel journal or log. Write entries for several days of traveling. Be sure to answer the following questions: How far did you go (miles and years)? What did you see there? What were the people like? What was going on? What did you do there? Who did you talk to? Gather information and artifacts to bring back to share with your classmates.

6 Allow students to collaborate with a partner or in small groups for this project. Write a biography for young children (second or third grade). It should be written in the format of a children’s book, not like a report, telling a story. Include important events in this person’s life. Tell about their family, where they grew up, what they did to make them so famous. Explain what type of person they were and what character traits they possessed (i.e. determination, perseverance, honesty, courage…). Think of a catchy title that would appeal to young children and include illustrations.

7 Divide your class into small groups to collaborate on this assignment. They will try to sell the idea of producing a movie from this book. They will be writing a proposal to a production company. In the proposal, they must include a list of current actors and actresses who should play each main character in the book. They will also need to compose a script for one scene from the movie to submit with their proposal. Remind them that this is a movie script, so it should have dialogue and stage directions. The teacher should determine the requirements of how many pages, or minimum number of words, and spacing that is required for this assignment.

8 Use any of the History Frames or Story Mapping strategies found on:
http://www.readingquest.org/strat/storymaps.html

9 Have students complete the graphic organizer on page 40 to identify what they admire most about each character listed.
The Most Interesting Person

Who: ____________________________

Era of history: ______________________

Brief description of person: __________________________________________

Why do you find them so interesting? ______________________________________

How did they affect history? ____________________________________________
Characters from The Traveler’s Gift

Characters

What I admire about this person...

David Ponder

Ellen Ponder

Harry Truman

King Solomon

Joshua Chamberlain

Christopher Columbus

Anne Frank

Abraham Lincoln
**Compare, Contrast, and Draw Conclusions**

### Two Presidents

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Harry Truman</th>
<th>Abraham Lincoln</th>
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<tr>
<td>Different</td>
<td>Same</td>
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Based on these comparisons, what conclusions can you draw about these two men and their leadership of the US and popularity amongst the citizens? *(Continue your answer on back, if necessary)*
Vocabulary Quiz

Circle the best answer.

1. In the following sentence, which definition is not correct for the word *feverishly*? They *feverishly* solicited the stockholders for support in the takeover of the company.
   a.) feels hot
   b.) has a fever
   c.) in an excited manner
   d.) in an angry manner

2. Which of the following is not a definition of *conglomerate*?
   a.) clustered together
   b.) a business deal
   c.) rock formed by pebbles
   d.) group of companies belonging in a corporation

3. Which of the following vocabulary words refers to a person?
   a.) financier
   b.) argon
   c.) orator
   d.) both a and c
   d.) all of the above

4. Choose the most appropriate antonym for *adversity*.
   a.) prosperity
   b.) disastrous
   c.) hardship
   d.) distress
In the following sentence from the book, the word **elaborate** means: “The back of the *elaborate* chair was rounded at the top and had armrests on each side.”

a.) perfected
b.) huge
c.) ornate
d.) expanded

Which vocabulary word means basic principles or rules?

a.) renders
b.) fundamentals
c.) rivulets
d.) edifices

What is a synonym for the word **suppress**?

a.) release
b.) restrain
c.) encourage
d.) support

Which vocabulary word is the best choice to use in this sentence? Their eyes were __________ on the speaker as his words pierced their hearts.

a.) agonized
b.) immersed
c.) pronounced
d.) transfixed

The Latin root meaning “loosen” is found in the word dissolution. Which of the following is the root?

a.) solu
b.) dis
c.) tion
d.) di
Which of the following words contains a suffix?

a.) peril
b.) stopgap
c.) severance
d.) platoon

The **murmuring** amongst the crowd was heard by all in attendance. **Murmuring** means:

a.) low grumbling
b.) loud shouting
c.) softly crying
d.) speaking out clearly

The base word of **vilified** is?

a.) vil
b.) vilifi
c.) ed
d.) vilify

If you **enlighten** someone, you are:

a.) lighting them
b.) instructing them
c.) confusing them
d.) scaring them

**dependent upon; conditional**

a.) mimic
b.) complement
c.) contingent
d.) vantage
The base word for **devastating** is:

a.) devas  
b.) devastate  
c.) devastat  
d.) ing

**Stoic** means:

a.) unemotional  
b.) happy  
c.) angry  
d.) sad

Which is not a meaning of **perpetual**?

a.) everlasting  
b.) permanent  
c.) discontinuous  
d.) enduring

Which pair of words includes synonyms?

a.) mediocrity-excellence  
b.) myriad-countless  
c.) dastardly-bravely  
d.) jostling-soothing

**Vantage** is:

a.) an adjective  
b.) a verb  
c.) a noun  
d.) an adverb

An antonym for **precariously** is:

a.) hazardly  
b.) safely  
c.) uncertainly  
d.) doubtful
The Traveler’s Gift Test

1. In the beginning of the book, David Ponder feels as if he has no purpose. There are many reasons he feels this way, but which of the following is not part of the problem?
   a.) He lost his job
   b.) He is behind on paying his house payment
   c.) He isn’t able to pay his car payment
   d.) His wife gets a job

2. Along his travels, David visited some interesting places. Which of the following did he visit twice?
   a.) Potsdam, Germany
   b.) Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
   c.) The Atlantic Ocean
   d.) Amsterdam

3. David acquired a special ability during his journey. What was it?
   a.) a special ability to fly
   b.) a special ability to see through walls
   c.) a special ability to communicate and comprehend
   d.) a special ability to make others like him

4. According to David, your friends can influence:
   a.) Your speech patterns
   b.) Your attitudes
   c.) The way you dress
   d.) How you respond to your parents
   e.) All of the above
Before he was a soldier, Joshua Chamberlain was a:

a.) school teacher
b.) farmer
c.) preacher
d.) lawyer

Joshua Chamberlain admitted he joined the Union Army for the following reasons:

a.) He was patriotic
b.) He was bored
c.) He thought it would be fun
d.) He thought it was the right thing to do
e.) Both A and D
f.) All of the above

Based on his actions in the story, Chamberlain seemed to be:

a.) persistent
b.) selfish
c.) worried
d.) tolerant

A person who has a decided heart:

a.) has no problems
b.) does not have a vision
c.) does not procrastinate
d.) is not passionate

What did Harry Truman and Abraham Lincoln have in common?

a.) Both were members of the Republican Party
b.) Both were clerks in a clothing store at one time
c.) Both were President of the United States
d.) Both A and C
e.) None of the above
10 What did Abraham Lincoln describe as the most important action he takes on a regular basis?
   a.) Tells the truth
   b.) Forgives himself and others
   c.) Writes letters to his wife
   d.) Reads

11 Which of the following statements would Christopher Columbus most likely have made?
   a.) At times, I am not very sure where I am going
   b.) We are sailing across a flat world, and I hope we don’t fall off the edge
   c.) The opinions of others are very important to me
   d.) Without passion, you can’t motivate others or achieve excellence

12 A trait that Anne Frank and Christopher Columbus had in common was:
   a.) A positive outlook
   b.) Shyness
   c.) Bitterness
   d.) Fear

13 The archangel Gabriel told David that today’s civilization was on the brink of dissolution. What were the reasons he gave to support this statement?
   a.) We are rebellious and question everything
   b.) We don’t have faith
   c.) We are arrogant and ungrateful
   d.) Both A and C
   e.) Both B and C
   f.) All of the above

14 Which of the following would be the best choice as the theme of The Traveler’s Gift?
   a.) The most important thing in life is to be rich and successful
   b.) Your choices and attitudes can determine your successes and/or failures
   c.) When life gets tough, you should give up
   d.) You should always do what other people tell you to do
The author most likely wrote this book to:

a.) entertain us with a fascinating story about famous people from history
b.) to inform us about things that make life difficult
c.) explain similarities and differences between famous people and how they view life
d.) persuade us to consider some valuable life lessons that could help us make wise choices for successful living

**Answer the following questions on the back of this page.**

16 Use a T Chart or a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast David Ponder’s feelings and outlook on life at the beginning of the book with his feelings and outlook on life at the end of the book.

17 What do you think Harry Truman meant when he said, “The buck stops here”? Explain it in your own words and explain why these are important words to live by.

18 What do you think was the most important lesson that David learned during his travels? Who taught it to him? Why do you consider this the most important lesson?
16. Accept any reasonable answers, but in comparing and contrasting David’s feelings and outlook, you should see something similar to the chart below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>David at the Beginning</th>
<th>David at the End</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hopeless</td>
<td>hopeful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confused</td>
<td>Still a bit confused, but for different reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt he had no purpose in life</td>
<td>Felt his future was assured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desperate</td>
<td>Ready to face life again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sad</td>
<td>encouraged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had no money, no job</td>
<td>Still has no money or job, but feels he has a future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt he had let his family down</td>
<td>Feels like things are going to be okay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Answers will vary, but answers should include something about accepting responsibility for your actions and not blaming others for your mistakes.

18. Accept any reasonable answer