



WHEN THE BORDER VANISHES



Points of Emphasis

The following points should be emphasized when using the DVD and activities in the instructional package.

GLOBAL ISSUES

- Today Americans face a range of complex issues, known as *global issues*.
- Today's global issues are unique in three ways: they cross multiple international borders and effect more people than ever before; many governments have to cooperate to find a solution; and non-diplomats play important roles in publicizing, supporting and sometimes implementing solutions.
- Two global issues, the spread of disease and damage to the environment, are of great importance to 21st century Americans.

DISEASE

- The health of the American people makes the United States strong.
- Diseases like yellow fever and malaria have had a devastating effect on the United States throughout history. Yellow fever brought the federal government to the brink of collapse in 1793 and decimated the city of Memphis in 1878.
- The successful expansion of U.S. power into the Caribbean and Central America in the 20th century depended on the control of yellow fever and malaria.
- New threats to health emerged in the 20th century, including H1N1 (1918 and 2009), and HIV/AIDS (1981).
- Private individuals, including John D. Rockefeller and Bill Gates and some American businesses like the United Fruit Company have played an important role in fighting disease worldwide.
- In 2000, world leaders agreed on eight Millennium Goals at the United Nations to make the world a better, safer, and healthier place.
- Good health keeps our nation strong and improving the health of other nations may keep us safe.

ENVIRONMENT

- Borders define nations and determine who has access to their natural resources.
- In colonial times, Americans believed that North America's resources were unlimited. This belief had an important long term-effect on environmental policy decisions.
- German explorer Alexander von Humboldt was the first to understand that man could have a negative effect on the environment. Today we call that concept, "climate change."
- Two strains of environmental thought developed. *Conservationists*, such as Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot, wanted to protect—but still continue to use—natural resources and wilderness. *Preservationists*, such as John Muir, wanted to keep the wilderness untouched and unspoiled.
- Environmental problems are even more difficult to resolve when the problem crosses our border. The first international environmental agreements focused on Great Lakes fishing limits and protection for migratory birds.
- Growing American concern for the environment and the preservation of natural resources did not always apply overseas. More than 262 million cubic tons of earth were moved to create the Panama Canal.
- During the 1960s, American missions in space, showed people a unified world, which seemed to have no borders."
- Author Rachel Carson was the first to realize that chemicals such as DDT were destroying the environment and were dangerous to humans.
- The first Earth Day in April 1970 made Americans more aware of environmental problems. The movement spread around the world and the first UN conference on the environment was held in 1973.
- The most difficult environmental problems of the 21st century will be those that cross international borders. Continuous diplomacy will be necessary to find a solution. ■