Video Questions
The Century
Peter Jennings
15 part series
1900-1914 The Century - Seeds of Change
1914-1919 The Century - Shell Shock
1920-1929 The Century - Boom to Bust
1929-1936 The Century - Stormy Weather
1936-1941 The Century - Over the Edge
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The Century
Seeds of Change  1900-1914

This episode introduces both the series and the twentieth century and documents some of the major themes of the turn-of-the-century. Events such as immigration, the Wright Brothers, Thomas Edison's inventions, the advent of the automobile, the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, suffrage, segregation, the silver screen, American imperialism and the Titanic are examined and survivors give first-hand accounts of life in the early years of the century.

Seeds of Change fulfills the following National Standards for History for grades 5-12: Chronological thinking, historical comprehension, historical analysis and interpretation, historical research capabilities, historical issues-analysis and decision-making for Era 7.

Vocabulary
abetting       impoverished
catastrophic  myriad
diverse        naive
elusive        proposition
foundry        relentless
hordes          seduce
suffragette    vanguard
sustained      wielded

Discussion Questions

1. Peter Jennings speaks about historical reminders in the opening sequence of this episode. What are historical reminders? What are the historical reminders in your community?

2. Attitudes towards women and African-Americans have changed dramatically in the twentieth century. Discuss some of the changes and progress made for women and African-Americans. Discuss some of the ways or areas in which more change is necessary.

3. How have politics and technology made the twentieth century the "killing century?"

4. Historians of immigration use a migration theory known as push/pull. Something "pushes" the immigrant from her homeland and "pulls" her to her new home. Discuss some of the push/pull factors for immigrants during the great waves of migration in the early twentieth century.
5. Discuss the changes and advances in technology during the twentieth century.

6. How did Henry Ford revolutionize the automobile industry, and American life?

7. Labor conditions at the beginning of the century were dangerous, dirty and miserable. Why were industrial conditions so bad? Why did these conditions go unchecked? Why weren't workers able to organize and unionize for better conditions?

8. What is Progressivism? How did the Progressive Movement shape early twentieth century history?

9. What were Jim Crow laws? How did these laws go against American ideals? Why were these laws allowed?

10. Newsreels were a standard part of movie entertainment. How did these newsreels "open the world" for their viewers?

11. How did the Panama Canal exemplify American technological prowess?

Extended Activities:
1. Imagine that you are an immigrant crossing the Atlantic Ocean to your new home. Create a diary or a journal that records your travel experiences and your reactions to your new home.

2. Create a chart or poster that illustrates the advance of technology in the twentieth century.

3. Interview your grandparents or any older relatives or friends about the changes they have seen during their lifetimes. How has the world changed for them in this century?
HISTORYTM CLASSROOM PRESENTS
THE CENTURY: AMERICA’S TIME
SHELL SHOCK
1914-1919

SHELL SHOCK

From the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarejevo in June of 1914 to Armistice Day in November of 1918, the world was embroiled in the First World War. World War I not only shaped much of the events of the twentieth century but also was truly unique since it was the first “mechanized” war. This episode documents the development of the war and American foreign policy regarding both war and peace.

VIDEO QUESTIONS

1. Why is this episode called Shell Shock? What does the term mean? When and how did it come into use?

2. A German U-boat sank the Lusitania off the Irish Coast. Despite the knowledge of a war waging in the Atlantic, passengers chose to sail in these waters. Why did the passengers of the Lusitania have a false sense of security?

3. Discuss some of the causes of World War I.
4. Why was World War I different from all previous wars? How was this war truly a product of the new century?

5. What was the “massacre of the innocents?” Why did this event bear this name?

6. The automobile is one of the most influential machines of the twentieth century. How did the automobile change American life in the early years of the century?

7. How did propaganda shape American views of World War I? How has propaganda shaped American views and mores during other twentieth century events?

8. The years 1915-1940 saw the great African-American migration, when millions of African-Americans migrated from the South to the North. How did World War II help foster this massive migration? How did this migration affect life in both the South and the North?

9. What is a “war of attrition?” Why was World War I a war of attrition?

10. Discuss the futility of the Battle of the Somme.

11. What were some of the causes of the Russian Revolution? What were the ramifications of this revolution for world events in the twentieth century?
The 1920s ushered in an era of great social change, general prosperity, Prohibition and what historians refer to as "modernity." This episode examines these great cultural changes and their effects on the nation. The 1920s, in stark contrast to the Victorian era, "roared," as bathtub gin flowed and more and more Americans moved to urban areas. But the decade also saw limited prosperity for many, especially farmers, and the unrest and discord between the values of small town America and the rapid pace of science and technology. The optimism of the decade would end in the most severe economic depression in American history. This episode presents some of the major events that shaped the decade including The Scopes Monkey Trial, Prohibition, the rise of leisure pastimes, and the impact of inventions such as the automobile, radio, movies and electricity.

Vocabulary
- agitator
- ascendancy
- aspirations
- autonomy
- consternation
- consumption
- emblematic
- ideology
- infrastructure
- intolerance
- narrative
- petrified
- phenomenon
- proprietors
- significant
- synonymous

Discussion Questions

1. Broadway is one of the most famous boulevards in American. Why is Broadway known as the "Great White Way?"

2. How did Prohibition help increase the presence of organized crime in America?

3. Discuss how the culture of the 1920s broke and transgressed different boundaries in American society, especially the accepted roles for women.

4. The media has had a tremendous influence on the twentieth century. What were the effects of the mass media on the 1920s?
5. The 1920s saw a burgeoning of African-American culture and talent, centered in the Harlem section of New York City. Discuss the contribution of the Harlem Renaissance to American art and literature.

6. Discuss some of the social tenets of the Harlem Renaissance.

7. In the 1920s, for the first time in the country's history, more Americans lived in an urban setting than a rural one. Discuss the process of urbanization and how it affected the country.

8. Compare rural and urban areas in the 1920s.

9. Discuss the role of advertising in the 1920s.

10. Discuss some of the changes for women in the 1920s.

11. How did the Scopes trial illustrate the clash between science and religion that was a hallmark of the early century?

Extended Activities:

1. Although many experienced economic prosperity in the 1920s, many did not. Research the economic history of the 1920s and discuss how many, especially farmers and factory workers, did not share in this prosperity. How did these economic conditions contribute to the Great Depression?

2. Design and create a poster illustrating the radical changes in styles between the Victorian Era and the 1920s.

3. Read F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby. How did Fitzgerald define the era?
The stock market crash of 1929 ushered in the greatest period of economic malaise in America's history. The Great Depression shaped the atmosphere for a decade; the most prosperous country on earth could not feed its own citizens. But even as Americans were trying to cope with poverty and hunger, the rumblings of a demagogue across the water became louder and louder. This episode examines the Great Depression and the decade of the 1930s, covering events such as the Bonus Army March, movies and radio, the Dust Bowl, FDR and the New Deal and the rise of Hitler in Germany.

Vocabulary

advocate  
animus  
bankruptcy  
barricade  
charisma  
demagogue  
demoralized  
instinctually  
knell  
lethargy  
ostensibly  
resonance  
solitude  
synonymous  
teeter  
unique

Discussion Questions

1. What was the Bonus Army? What were its demands? How did the Bonus Army exemplify the frustration of the American people during the Great Depression?

2. The Great Depression was the most severe economic crisis in American history. What were some of the causes of the Great Depression?

3. Almost everyone in the country felt the effects of the Great Depression. How did the depression affect average Americans?

4. Even though the economy failed, many Americans blamed themselves for their unemployment and hard times. Why did so many unemployed Americans blame themselves?

5. People still went to the movies in droves despite the hard times of the depression. Why did the motion picture industry continue to thrive when most other businesses failed?
6. What was the Dust Bowl? How did it exacerbate the Great Depression?

7. Why did more Americans join the Communist Party in the 1930s than any other time?

8. Adolph Hitler and the Nazi party came to power during the German depression. Why were Hitler and Nazism so appealing to Germans in the 1930s?

9. How did Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the president during the Great Depression, use radio to help restore American confidence in their government and the economy?

10. Was FDR's New Deal radical? Why or why not?

11. What finally ended the Great Depression?

12. What is the legacy of the Great Depression?

Extended Activities
1. Write and perform a radio serial.

2. Write and produce a short play that takes place during the Great Depression.

3. Read John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath and discuss how the novel depicts life and culture during the Great Depression.
This episode documents the years that led up to the beginning of World War II. From burning books to Kristallnacht, this episode examines the anti-Semitism that eventually dominated German thinking. It also analyses the new ways in which leaders were able to use the technology of the twentieth century, such as the media for propaganda purposes and offers a domestic view to the European conflict, and how and where Americans received their information.

**Vocabulary**
- Articulate
- Isolationism
- Beleaguered
- Lectern
- Blitzkrieg
- Magnetic
- Citizenry
- Sinister
- Ideology
- Stronghold
- Insulate
- Subversive

**Discussion Questions**

1. Germany hosted the 1936 Summer Olympics. How did Hitler use the 1936 Olympics to promote his Nazi Party?

2. American Jesse Owens' stunning victory in the 100-meter race angered Adolph Hitler. How did Owens' victory shatter the Nazi propaganda about Aryan supremacy?

3. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was a master of the media. How did he use the media to do battle in the Great Depression? How did he use the media to rally support during World War II?

4. Discuss the impact of radio on American history and American culture in the twentieth century.

5. How did Adolph Hitler use propaganda and the media to achieve his desired goals?

6. In the late 1930s, the Nazi Party in Germany burned books. Why did they do this? How can books be considered such a threat that some might find it necessary to burn them?

7. What were the Nuremberg Laws? How did they affect the Jewish population of Germany and German-occupied states?
8. World War II was not the first time anti-Semitism reared its ugly head. Discuss the history of anti-Semitism in Europe.

9. England and its Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, seemed to appease Hitler. Why did they choose this passive strategy?

10. What was Kristallnacht? What prompted this show of Nazi aggression?

11. Why did the United States refuse to let the St. Louis dock in the United States and allow its passengers to emigrate?

Extended Activities

1. Research Life magazine published during the years of the Great Depression and illustrate how it gave Americans a pictorial account of the depression.

2. Imagine that you are a Jew in Hitler's Germany. Keep a diary or journal that tells of your emotions and experiences.

3. Create a poster advertising the historic boxing match between American Joe Louis and German Max Schmelling.
Civilians at War (2 Parts)

World War II was a total global conflict that affected and changed not only the lives of soldiers fighting the war but also those of non-combatants living in war zones. The scale of the war encompassed three continents and millions of people. This episode analyzes the human costs of total warfare from the barbarity of Hitler's "Final Solution," to the atrocities committed by the Japanese against the Chinese people, to the devastation wreaked by the atomic bomb. At the end of the war, for the first time in history, the Axis leaders were held accountable for their "crimes against humanity," but the allied leaders were hailed as heroes whose atrocities were viewed as unfortunate but necessary.

Civilians at War fulfills the following National Standards for History for grades 5-12: Chronological thinking, historical comprehension, historical analysis and interpretation, historical research capabilities, historical issues-analysis and decision-making for Era 7.

Vocabulary

- annihilate
- atrocities
- barbarism
- bedraggled
- confiscate
- converge
- deity
- excrement
- excruciating
- exploit
- incendiary
- nondescript
- parameter
- pseudo
- pulverize
- rampant
- recounts
- sporadic
- sublime
- typhus

Discussion Questions

1. Why were there so many civilian casualties in World War II?

2. It can be argued that Adolph Hitler has had the most impact of any one person in the twentieth century. Discuss some of the goals and plans of Adolph Hitler to dominate the world. How might the world be different today if Germany had won World War II?
3. Why did Hitler attempt to eliminate all the Jews of the world?

4. The atrocities committed against the Jewish people in World War II are among the most horrific ever imagined. Why were German soldiers willing to commit these atrocities for their country and their leader?

5. Why did Heinrich Himmler, chief of Hitler's Gestapo, search for a more efficient method of killing Jews instead of continuing to shoot them?

6. What was the “final solution”?

7. How could the Holocaust have happened?

8. Although the odds were against survival in the death camps, some managed to live. How could these people survive against such overwhelming odds?

9. Compare Japanese and German racial ideology.

10. How were Japanese soldiers acculturated to being killing machines? How do states remove the burden of murder from the shoulders of its soldiers?

11. Who were the "Kamikaze" pilots? Why would anyone choose to go on a kamikaze mission?

12. Compare and discuss the immorality of all the participants of World War II.

13. Should the United States have dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima?

14. What did the Nuremberg Trials accomplish?

**Extended Activities**
1. Create a timeline of the events of World War II.
2. Create a poster that illustrates the conditions of the Jewish ghettos.
When Japan bombed Pearl Harbor in December of 1941, America was a country steeped in isolationist policies and ill prepared for war. Within a matter of weeks, the country made an amazing turnover from a peacetime nation suffering the final throes of a depression to the most efficient and productive "arsenal for democracy" that the world had ever seen. This was accomplished by the unity and sheer willpower of the American people, who backed the war effort almost unanimously. This episode examines the American homefront during World War II, how it came together in a unified effort, and the ways in which the war changed the lives of those left behind, especially the women whose contributions to the war effort helped to win the war.

**Vocabulary**

- celestial
- despicable
- embarkation
- endeavor
- fascism
- immersed
- incarcerated
- interminable

invulnerable
magnitude
naïveté
precocious
premeditated
somber
unprecedented
vigilant

**Discussion Questions**

1. Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Why did Japan bomb Pearl Harbor?

2. How did the American people react to the bombing of Pearl Harbor?

3. What is a citizen soldier? Why does the United States have a particular history of citizen soldiers?

4. Discuss the transition from a peacetime economy to wartime economy that occurred in the United States during World War II.

5. Women workers increased dramatically during the war. Why was there resistance at first to women working in war plants?

6. Why were women accepted in the defense industries after some initial reservations and resistance?
7. World War II was not fought on American soil. Nevertheless, the impact of the war was tremendous. How did World War II alter the American homefront?

8. How did the United States use propaganda to unify the American people behind the war effort?

9. Why were Japanese-Americans banished to internment camps? Why weren't German-Americans or Italian-Americans interned? Why is this one of the greatest civil rights violations in American history?

10. Discuss the impact of Frank Sinatra on American culture during World War II.

11. Discuss the impact of D-Day on the course of the war.

12. Discuss the impact of FDR's death.

**Extended Activities**

1. Create a recruitment poster for World War II.

2. Create a poster commemorating the end of World War II.

3. Write an obituary for Franklin Delano Roosevelt that conveys his importance in the Great Depression and World War
After the initial jubilation at the end of World War II, America faced severe domestic demographic problems and the international specter of communism and the Cold War. In response to the serious housing shortages exacerbated by the high marriage rates and subsequent baby boom of returning soldiers and the girls they left behind, the Truman administration created the GI Bill, which enabled veterans to secure low interest mortgages and college educations. But the domestic bliss of new homes and growing families could not alleviate the growing fears and hysteria of the new atomic age, and a demagogue from Wisconsin, Senator Joseph McCarthy, harnessed this hysteria for his personal political success. This episode covers some of the major events of the immediate post-war years such as the Korean War, McCarthyism, the Marshall Plan, the Berlin Airlift and the adjustment of returning soldiers.

The Best Years fulfills the following National Standards for History for grades 5-12: Chronological thinking, historical comprehension, historical analysis and interpretation, historical research capabilities, historical issues-analysis and decision-making for Era 7.

Vocabulary

Anarchy
Auspices
Beset
Demographic
Ferocious
Humiliate
Ideological
Indignant
Indiscriminate
Intoxicated
Ironic
Litmus
Obscure
Prosperity
Utilitarian
Vibrant

Discussion Questions

1. What is the difference between a "hot" war and a "cold" war?
2. Winston Churchill coined the famous phrase "iron curtain." What did Churchill mean by "iron curtain?"

3. The U.S. Government granted returning soldiers the GI Bill of Rights. What was the GI Bill of Rights? How did this bill of rights shape the coming decades?

4. What was the Baby Boom? How did it change America? What are they effects of this boom today?

5. Although the post-war economy was the most prosperous in American history, some Americans were excluded. How did the prosperity and economic advantages of the period exclude most African-Americans and women?

6. Discuss the devastating losses Europe suffered in the war and their effects during the post-war period.

7. Discuss the ideological conflicts and differences between the United States and The Soviet Union.

8. What was the Marshall Plan? How did it shape post-war foreign policy?

9. Many times conquering armies rape the women of the conquered nation. Why is this done?

10. What was the American reaction to the Soviets obtaining nuclear power?

11. Why was there such a different reception for Korean War veterans than World War II veterans?

12. What was a blacklist? How did political witch-hunts result in these lists?

Extended Activities
   1. Create a consumer advertisement for the post-war period.
   2. Design a bomb-shelter for your home.
The election of Dwight Eisenhower in 1952 ushered in one of the most prosperous eras in American history. The shortages of the war were a distant memory as consumers rushed to spend their wartime savings on the new homes, cars and appliances that were now abundant. The nuclear family as the haven from political and atomic anxiety depended on rigid gender roles and consumption, and television provided the images of themselves that Americans wanted to see. But beneath the complacency of the era lurked the indicators of a society waiting to rebel, and the realities of a nation divided by racial and class conflicts. This episode examines the "Happy Days" of the 1950s and the major events of those years such as the Baby Boom, suburbanization, the advent of television, Civil Rights, Brown v. Board of Education, youth rebellions and the fears of a society enmeshed in a cold war.

Vocabulary:
charismatic    heady
complacent    icon
conformity    infectious
desegregate    integral
deviate    rhetoric
extremists    risqué

Discussion Questions

1. Dwight David Eisenhower enjoyed immense popularity when he was president between 1953 and 1961. What was Ike's appeal? Why was he so popular?

2. The 1950s witnessed the most prosperous economy in American history. How did this prosperity transform the country?

3. Discuss gender roles in the 1950s. Why were these roles so rigid? How have these roles changed? How have they remained similar?

4. Television became part of almost every American home in the 1950s. What was the impact of television on 1950s culture?

5. Why was television so popular? How has the role of television in American society changed? How has it remained the same?
6. Rock-n-roll debuted in the 1950s and caused consternation among some of the older generation. Why were traditionalists so concerned about the effects of rock-n-roll?

7. Discuss the impact of Elvis Presley on American culture and American music.

8. Discuss the impact of the Baby Boom. How did this boom fuel rock-n-roll and the youth culture of the 1950s?

9. What is an icon? Discuss the impact of some of the icons of the 1950s.

10. African-Americans chose the 1950s as the decade to change the system of segregation. How did Martin Luther King, Jr. become the leader of this Civil Rights Movement?

11. Discuss the events that happened at Central High School in Arkansas. What was the impact for the rest of the nation?

   Extended Activities:

1. The 1950s ushered in the era of television advertising. Create a storyboard for a 1950s commercial.

2. Create a poster urging people to join the Montgomery Bus Boycott.
The Century - Poisoned Dreams 1960-1964

1. In 1960, in Greensboro, North Carolina, young African-American students demonstrated against segregation by sitting at luncheon counters that only served white patrons. Why were some white Americans, especially in the South, so opposed to integration?

2. How could young African-Americans be "freed" by being arrested and put in jail?

3. The early 1960s were unique in that it was truly a youth culture. Discuss some ways in which this is evident.

4. What is a "cold warrior?" How were both John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon cold warriors?

5. John F. Kennedy was one of America's most popular presidents. Why was JFK so popular? What was his special appeal?

6. Discuss the role of television in the 1960 presidential election. How does television influence the political scene today?

7. Psycho was one of the most popular movies of the early 1960s and remains a cult classic to this day. Why was this movie so popular?

8. Why did the Soviet Union erect the Berlin Wall?

9. Who were the Freedom Riders? What were their objectives? How are they true American heroes?

10. What is the "domino theory?" How did this theory influence American foreign policy in the 1960s?

11. Discuss the power of song in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

12. How did JFK's death affect America? What was the impact of this national loss?

13. Why was JFK's assassination the day America "lost its innocence?"
After the assassination of John F. Kennedy in November of 1963, America stood on the brink of domestic conflict and entrenched in the quagmire of the Vietnam War. The years 1963 through 1968 remain some of the most violent and destructive years of American history. This episode examines some of the major events of those turbulent years, including the murder of three civil rights workers in 1964, Freedom Summer, student protest and the Students for a Democratic Society, Lyndon Baines Johnson's Great Society, the counterculture, the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. And Robert F. Kennedy, and the 1968 Democratic convention.

Unpinned fulfills the following National Standards for History for grades 5-12: Chronological thinking, historical comprehension, historical analysis and interpretation, historical research capabilities, historical issues-analysis and decision-making for Era 7.

**Vocabulary**

- accommodating
- armada
- attrition
- charismatic
- cohesion
- dormant
- dubious
- escalate
- ferment
- imminent
- impotence
- impoverished
- inequities
- intimidation
- literacy
- literally
- mire
- odious
- opulence
- portend
- prognosis
- provoked
- rhetoric
- touted

**Discussion Questions**

1. Why did the New York Times call the 1964 World's Fair "a glittering mirror of our national opulence?"

2. In 1964, three civil rights workers, Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chaney were murdered. How did their murder help to mobilize the Civil Rights Movement?

3. The era of student protest began at University of California, Berkeley. What prompted these student protests?
4. How and why did the United States get involved in the Vietnam War?

5. Why was the Vietnam War different than any other type of war previously fought by the United States?

6. In the mid-1960s, the Civil Rights Movement began to splinter into separate factions. Why did the movement splinter?

7. Compare the ideologies and techniques of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X.

8. Analyze and discuss the music of the 1960s and its influence on the youth culture.

9. How was the counterculture symbolic of the generational conflicts in America in the 1960s?

10. The actions of the Women's Liberation Movement broke many of the gender boundaries and taboos of earlier eras. How did the Civil Rights Movement influence this movement?

11. Discuss the role of television in the Vietnam War.

12. Discuss the class antagonisms of the Vietnam War and the war protests.

Extended Activities

1. Create a poster for the 1964 World's Fair.

2. Create a timeline of the events of 1968.

The Century
1971-1975 Apocalypse Now

The turbulence of the 1960s paved the way for the election of Richard Nixon. Distraught at the violence and unrest of the nation, Nixon's "Silent Majority" voted loudly. But the turmoil of the decade continued with riots and generational conflicts, and, despite the success of Apollo 11 and Nixon's historic trip to China, the era ended in the disgrace of Watergate and the fall of Saigon.

Apocalypse Now fulfills the following National Standards for History for grades 5-12: Chronological thinking, historical comprehension, historical analysis and interpretation, historical research capabilities, historical issues-analysis and decision-making for Era 7.

Vocabulary

adversary  impudent
apex    masochism
bellicose metaphor
coup    obdurate
desecration placards
desolation rhetoric
effete sanctuary
elusive unmitigated
escalation vengeance
extortion vociferous

Discussion Questions

1. Richard Nixon became president in 1969. Why was Nixon such a poor choice for the divided nation?

2. Who were the "silent majority?" How was the image of the silent majority used as a political weapon?

3. In 1970, National Guardsmen killed four students at Kent State University. How did the killings at Kent State epitomize the destructive divide in America?

4. What are identity politics? Are they empowering or are they divisive?
5. American soldiers were better equipped, better fed and in better health than the Vietnamese soldiers. Yet, the American soldiers were not able to defeat the Vietnamese. Why were the Vietnamese soldiers so resilient?

6. Nixon's crowning achievement as president was his trip to China. Why was his trip to China so monumental?

7. Discuss some of the problems Vietnam veterans had adjusting to American society when they came home. Why did they have so many problems?

8. Why was Watergate such a scandal? How did it bring down the president of the United States?

9. Discuss the impact of the Watergate scandal on the American public, American confidence and American history.

10. How did the inability of the United States to defeat North Vietnam reveal cracks in the seemingly impenetrable military might of the country?

11. How did the fall of Saigon end an era?

Extended Activities:

1. Design a commemorative medal for the 1969 moonwalk.

2. Design a movie poster for Easy Rider.

3. Design a memorial for American POWs and MIAs of the Vietnam War.
In the aftermath of the turmoil of the 1960s and the disillusionment of Watergate, Americans turned to Jimmy Carter in an attempt to return to small-town values. But Carter's inability to deal with the overwhelming social, economic and political problems paved the way for a new conservatism led by Ronald Reagan, and the jubilation of the 1976 Bicentennial Celebration gave way to the despair and embarrassment of the Iranian Hostage Crisis. This episode examines the mid and late 1970s and some of the major events of the era such as the energy crisis, racial unrest, the rise of the "Me Generation," unemployment and inflation, and the problems with Iran.

Starting Over fulfills the following National Standards for History for grades 5-12: Chronological thinking, historical comprehension, historical analysis and interpretation, historical research capabilities, historical issues-analysis and decision-making for Era 7.

Vocabulary

- adversaries
- apathy
- epitome
- escapism
- euphoria
- exaltation
- galvanize
- idealism
- ideals
- malaise
- messiah
- obsolete
- prestige
- reconciliation
- rectitude
- thwarted
- toxic
- unorthodox
- vogue
- wane

Discussion Questions

1. In 1976, America celebrated its 200th birthday. Why was the Bicentennial celebration so important to America? Why was it so necessary?

2. Why was America's prestige, nationally and internationally, at an all-time low?

3. The 1970s is known as the "me" decade. What prompted the individuality and self-absorption that earned the decade this title?
4. In 1976, Georgia governor and peanut farmer Jimmy Carter became president of the United States. What was the appeal of this unlikely presidential candidate?

5. The 1970s were a time of political apathy. What caused this political apathy and malaise? Why had the American voters lost confidence in their government and leaders?

6. America in the 1970s experienced a severe energy crisis. Discuss how this crisis affected the American economy and society.

7. In 1978, Dan White, a disgruntled city employee in San Francisco, murdered mayor George Moscone and openly gay city supervisor Harvey Milk. How did these murders help to advance the Gay Liberation Movement?

8. How did the disco scene of the 1970s reflect the political and social apathy of the era?

9. Iranian students held Americans hostage for over 400 days in the late 1970s. Why was Iran so anti-United States?

10. Ronald Reagan won the presidency in 1980 and became one of America's most popular presidents. What was the appeal of this former actor?

Extended Activities

1. Compare the popular music of the 1970s with the popular music of the 1960s. How does the music reflect the attitudes, political and social, of the decades?

2. Create a celebration poster for the Bicentennial.

3. Research the Iranian hostage crisis and create a narrative that illustrates the course of events.

The Century
1981 – 1989 A New World

As the 1970s gave way to the 1980s, Americans were ready for a more conservative leader and they found the answer to their quest in Ronald Reagan. Reagan's folksy ways and familiar face created an aura of trust and he became one of America's most popular presidents. But Reagan's homespun ways could not forestall the economic crises of the 1980s and the widening economic divide between the haves and the have-nots. This episode examines some of the major events of the 1980s including the recession, aids, Wall Street, MTV, terrorism, televangelism and the fall of communism.

1. Why does Peter Jennings call the 1980s "a decade of revolution and renewal?"

2. What was unique about the 1980s? How did this decade differ from the 1970s or the 1990s?

3. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall was dedicated in 1982 amidst controversy and protest. Why was the "Wall" so controversial? How has the Wall helped America come to terms with the Vietnam War?

4. Why do people leave mementos and trinkets at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall?

5. America elected Ronald Reagan to the presidency in 1980. What was the appeal of this man? Why was Reagan one of the most popular presidents of the twentieth century?

6. A devastating new drug, crack cocaine, made its appearance in the 1980s. What were the effects of this drug, particularly in urban areas?

7. What were the principles of Reaganomics? Did these economic policies work?

8. Discuss the impact of personal computers in the 1980s on American life and culture.

9. In 1986, the space shuttle Challenger exploding killing the entire crew and a New Hampshire teacher, Christa McAuliffe. What was the impact of this terrible tragedy?
10. Television and religion blended together in the 1980s with the rise of televangelism. What was the appeal of televangelism? What happened to some of the leading televangelists of the decade?

11. Discuss the discovery and evolution of the AIDS epidemic in America. How did this disease change American social habits?
The Century
The 90’s and Beyond
Machine Dreams 1990 - 2000

The last episode in this series examines several major events of the 1990s and places them in a context that amplifies their thematic relevance. Included in this episode are the proliferation of computers, the Internet, communications revolutions and the technology of today poised to enter the world of tomorrow. Some of the highs and lows of the decade such as the Oklahoma City Bombing and The Million Man March are also examined, as is the contrast between military technology from World War I and the Gulf War.

Vocabulary

Abstract          Flux
Antithesis        Fundamental
Averted           Genuflect
Cavalcade         Haphazard
Celestial         Icons
Demographic       Ideological
Demonize          Obscurity
Exploitation      Obvious
Extrapolated      Omnipotent
Fervently         Prestige

Discussion Questions

1. Is the world today a "global village?"

2. The Internet is one of the most radical advances of the twentieth century. How does the Internet influence your life? How has it changed American life in the past decade?

3. Henry Luce, co-founder of Time, Inc., labeled the twentieth century "the American century." Has the twentieth century been the American century? Do you think the 21st century will be another "American century?"

4. Discuss the advances of military technology in the twentieth century. How is war different because of the new technology? How would you compare the Gulf War with World War I or World War II?
5. Why was the Oklahoma City bombing so devastating to the American psyche?

6. Government is very different at the end of the twentieth century than it was at the beginning of the century. What should the role of government be in America? What are your predictions for changes in government for the 21st century?

7. W.E.B. DuBois predicted that the problem of the twentieth century would be the problem of the "color line." Was DuBois correct?

8. Why has the Ku Klux Klan been popular in America despite its violent actions and intentions?

9. Discuss African-American history in the twentieth century.

10. What has been the impact of television on the twentieth century?

Extended Activities

1. Create a timeline of the twentieth century.

2. Create a poster that illustrates some of the technological breakthroughs of the twentieth century.