

in our own words

TEACHER DISCUSSION GUIDE



Students from Lakeview High School created *In Our Own Words*, a 40-minute audio tour of the exhibition *Chicago: Crossroads of America*.

This discussion guide expands on the topics, artifacts, issues, and historical arguments presented in *In Our Own Words*. Questions are grouped thematically and presented in chronological order. This approach will provide students with a local context for national history and suggest the ways our urban environment has changed and influenced the United States. To best utilize the audio tour, we suggest that you:

- **Distribute the questions prior to your visit.** A pre-visit review will allow students to identify key topics presented in the exhibition and audio tour.
- **Set aside 20 to 30 minutes for a post-exhibition discussion.** If you would like to facilitate your discussion at the Museum, please reserve space in advance of your visit.
- **Use *Great Chicago Stories* to supplement your curriculum.** This online resource includes six historical fiction narratives that address topics covered in the audio tour, including labor, immigration, the Great Migration, and political activism. The narratives and accompanying unit plans are available at www.chicagohistory.org.

We hope this guide supports your coursework and would appreciate your feedback. Please send comments to:

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



'L' Car

- How did the 'L' shape Chicago's business development?
- What would the city be like without the 'L'?

Marquette and Joliet

- How did Chicago's location help establish the area as a trading hub?
- How did European settlers interact with American Indians?

Industry

- What major industries shaped the city's economy from the 1860s through the 1940s?
- How does work in the city today reflect the shift from the industrial economy of the late 19th and early 20th centuries to the service economy of the late 20th century?

Great Chicago Fire

- What steps did Chicago take to recover from the fire? Who helped?
- What long-term effects did the fire have on the city?

Great Migration and the 1919 Race Riots

- When did the Great Migration occur? How did it change the city?
- How did the Great Migration affect the development of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s?

Hull-House

- Who went to Hull-House? What did they do there?
- Do we still need the services Hull-House provided? If so, who provides those services today? If not, why?

Haymarket

- Why were workers provoked to strike? What did they achieve?
- What is the legacy of this labor unrest?

Gangland Chicago

- What were the social, political, and economic factors underlying the rise of gangs in Chicago between 1900 and 1940?
- Why has Chicago's reputation as a gangster town persisted?

1968

- What incidents brought national attention to Chicago in 1968?
- What effects did the events of 1968 have on the city?

Atomic Bomb

- Why did the U.S. government initiate the Manhattan Project?
- How did the discovery of the atomic bomb affect U.S. and world history?

Architecture

- How do the architectural styles displayed in the exhibition reflect the era in which they were designed? How are these styles different from those of today's buildings?
- In the past, people looked for buildings that "radiated security." Why was this a priority?

Jazz and Blues

- How does Chicago's cultural scene contribute to the identity of the city?
- How do the city's cultural attractions unite the city? How do they divide it?

