

**CHAPTER**  
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**GUIDED READING** *The Changing Face of America*

**Section 4**

**A.** As you read this section, note three facts or statistics concerning each of the following important trends in the late 20th century.

<p><b>URBAN FLIGHT</b> The nation goes suburban.</p>	<p>1. 2. 3.</p>
<p><b>BABY BOOMERS</b> The nation turns gray.</p>	<p>4. 5. 6.</p>
<p><b>IMMIGRATION</b> The nation looks different.</p>	<p>7. 8. 9.</p>

**B.** Note one challenge the United States will face in each of the following areas during the 21st century.

<p>1. Urban and Suburban Life</p>	
<p>2. Aging Population</p>	
<p>3. Immigration Policy</p>	

**C.** On the back of this paper, define **telecommute**.

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**SKILLBUILDER PRACTICE** *Hypothesizing*

*Hypothesizing is the process of coming up with a possible theory or cause to explain historical events. This explanation can then be tested against the historical facts to see whether it is accurate. When you read history, hypothesizing is important because it helps you understand why events occurred, what the consequences of the events might be, and what the significance of the events is. Below is an examination of the so-called "graying" of America. After reading the text, use the chart below to determine a hypothesis as well as the facts that support it. (See Skillbuilder Handbook, page R13.)*

By the turn of the 21st century, America's population was increasing in age. The 2000 census revealed that Americans were older than ever before, with a median age of 35.3—two years older than a decade prior. In addition, experts predict that between 2000 and 2030, the percentage of Americans 65 and older will climb from 12.6 percent to 20 percent of the nation's population. The country's slowing birthrate, along with increased longevity and the aging of the baby boom generation are considered the primary reasons for the graying of America.

Observers fear that the growing elderly population will put a strain on Medicare, the federally funded program that helps pay medical expenses for senior citizens. The cost of the program, which exceeded \$200 billion by 2000, is expected to continue rising. Concerns also abound about Social Security, which is funded primarily by taxes from the nation's younger workers, may soon run out of money. Few issues loomed as large in the 2000 presidential election as how to address the potential problems stemming from the steady growth of the nation's elderly population.

Hypothesis	Fact 1	Fact 2	Fact 3

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RETEACHING ACTIVITY *The Changing Face of America*

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**Finding Main Ideas**

The following questions deal with changes in American society at the end of the 20th century. Answer them on the space provided.

1. What factors contributed to the movement of Americans out of cities?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. How did the flight of many Americans to the suburbs hurt the cities?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why do some observers refer to the present-day as the graying of America?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What pressing issues does the nation's aging population present to American society?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. How do the most recent immigrants to the United States differ from those of the earlier part of the century?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What strides did Native Americans make to improve their lives at the end of the 20th century?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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LITERATURE SELECTION **Selected Poems**

*In the debate over immigration that has erupted at different times in U.S. history, the personal side of the issue often gets lost or ignored. For most immigrants and their descendants, the American dream doesn't come without a cost. The poems collected here present the human side of the immigrant experience in some of its varied voices.*

***Immigrants***

by Pat Mora

wrap their babies in the American flag,  
feed them mashed hot dogs and apple pie,  
name them Bill and Daisy,  
buy them blonde dolls that blink blue  
eyes or a football and tiny cleats  
before the baby can even walk,  
speak to them in thick English,  
          hallo, babee, hallo,  
whisper in Spanish or Polish  
when the babies sleep, whisper  
in a dark parent bed, that dark  
parent fear, "Will they like  
our boy, our girl, our fine american  
boy, our fine american girl?"

***Latin Women Pray***

by Judith Ortiz Cofer

Latin women pray  
In incense sweet churches  
They pray in Spanish to an Anglo God  
With a Jewish heritage.  
And this Great White Father  
Imperturbable in his marble pedestal  
Looks down upon his brown daughters  
Votive candles shining like lust  
In his all seeing eyes  
Unmoved by their persistent prayers.

Yet year after year  
Before his image they kneel  
Margarita Josefina Maria and Isabel  
All fervently hoping  
That if not omnipotent  
At least he be bilingual

***Mexicans Begin Jogging***

by Gary Soto

At the factory I worked  
In the fleck of rubber, under the press  
Of an oven yellow with flame,  
Until the border patrol opened  
Their vans and my boss waved for us to run.  
"Over the fence, Soto," he shouted,  
And I shouted that I was American.  
"No time for lies," he said, and pressed  
A dollar in my palm, hurrying me  
Through the back door.

Since I was on his time, I ran  
And became the wag to a short tail of  
          Mexicans—  
Ran past the amazed crowds that lined  
The street and blurred like photographs, in  
          rain.  
I ran from that industrial road to the soft  
Houses where people paled at the turn of an  
          autumn sky.  
What could I do but yell vivas  
To baseball, milkshakes, and those sociologists  
Who would clock me  
As I jog into the next century  
On the power of a great, silly grin.

***Modern Secrets***

by Shirley Geok-Lin Lim

Last night I dreamt in Chinese.  
 Eating Yankee shredded wheat,  
 I told it in English terms  
 To a friend who spoke  
 In monosyllables,  
 All of which I understood:  
 The dream shrunk  
 To its fiction.  
 I knew its end  
 Many years ago.  
 The sallow child  
 Eating from a rice-bowl  
 Hides in the cupboard  
 With the tea-leaves and china.

***Saying Yes***

by Diana Chang

“Are you Chinese?”  
 “Yes.”

“American?”

“Yes.”

“*Really* Chinese?”

“No . . . not quite.”

“*Really* American?”

“Well, actually, you see . . .”

But I would rather say  
 yes

Not neither-nor  
 not maybe,  
 but both, and not only

The homes I’ve had,  
 the ways I am

I’d rather say it  
 twice,  
 yes

**Discussion Questions**

- Which one of these poems do you like best? Explain your choice.
- What did you learn about the immigrant experience from reading these poems? Point out specific examples in the poems.
- Gary Soto and Diana Chang are both native-born Americans. How do their poems differ in feeling and attitude from the others? How do you explain the difference?



## Section 4

## AMERICAN LIVES

# Wilma Mankiller

## *Overcoming Obstacles*

*“Cherokee people possess an extraordinary ability to face down adversity and continue moving forward. . . . The Cherokee culture is a well-kept secret.”*

—*Wilma Mankiller in Wilma Mankiller: A Chief and Her People (1993)*

Wilma Mankiller—like her people—has an extraordinary ability to face down adversity. She gained fame when she overcame huge obstacles to become the principal chief of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, the second largest Native American group in the United States.

Mankiller (b. 1945) learned of the tragic history of the Cherokees from her parents. She also learned of traditions, including self-government. In the 1950s, though, she and her family were taken off the land. New federal policy put Native Americans in cities, supposedly to enter mainstream American life. “One day I was [on a farm],” she later said, “and the next day I was trying to deal with the mysteries of television, indoor plumbing, neon lights, and elevators.”

Mankiller made the adjustment. She studied sociology and became a social worker. She married and had two daughters. Then, in 1969, a group of Native Americans seized Alcatraz Island to protest federal policy toward their people. The action awakened in her a desire to join the fight for Native American rights. She felt that she could not leave her children to take part in the Alcatraz protest. She raised money, however, and became active in Native American affairs. She went to college, divorced her husband, and moved with her daughters back to Oklahoma. She built a house on her family’s land and studied to complete her college degree.

With her background in social work and courses in economics, Mankiller was ready to work to improve conditions for Cherokees. Then tragedy struck. A serious auto accident almost killed her, and she needed 17 separate operations to recover. Just as she seemed to be finally recovering from the accident, Mankiller found that she had a disease causing her muscles to weaken. She had to withstand another round of difficult medical care. The setbacks gave her new dedication. “The reality of how precious life is enabled me to begin projects I

couldn’t have otherwise tackled,” she later said.

Determined to make a difference, Mankiller went to work. She stressed that the Cherokee people could best improve their lives by helping themselves. She became head of a community development organization within the government of the Cherokee Nation. She started many new projects. One had Cherokees restore houses and build a pipeline to bring water to their homes.

In 1983 Ross Swimmer, Cherokee principal chief, invited her to run as deputy chief when he stood for reelection that year. Swimmer and Mankiller won, making her the first woman to become deputy chief. Two years later, Swimmer left for a job in the federal government, and Mankiller finished his term—becoming the first woman to head a major Native American tribe. Many Cherokees did not think a woman should be principal chief. She faced often angry opposition. However, her dedication to improving Cherokees’ lives overcame prejudice. She was elected to a full term as principal chief in 1987 and reelected in 1991, resigning in 1994. In 1996 she served as a visiting scholar at Dartmouth College.

As the leader of the Cherokees, Mankiller launched many projects. She built new health clinics. One program helped Cherokee people start their own businesses. Another provided job training. Behind all the programs was Mankiller’s goal: to improve the lives of her people by helping them see how they could help themselves. “We are a revitalized tribe,” she wrote in her 1993 autobiography.

### Questions

1. What obstacles did Mankiller overcome?
2. How did her physical problems affect her?
3. How do people benefit by working to improve their own lives instead of being told by others what to do?