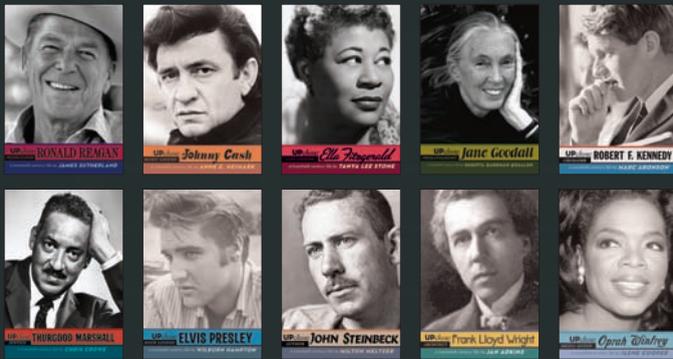


DISCUSSION GUIDE



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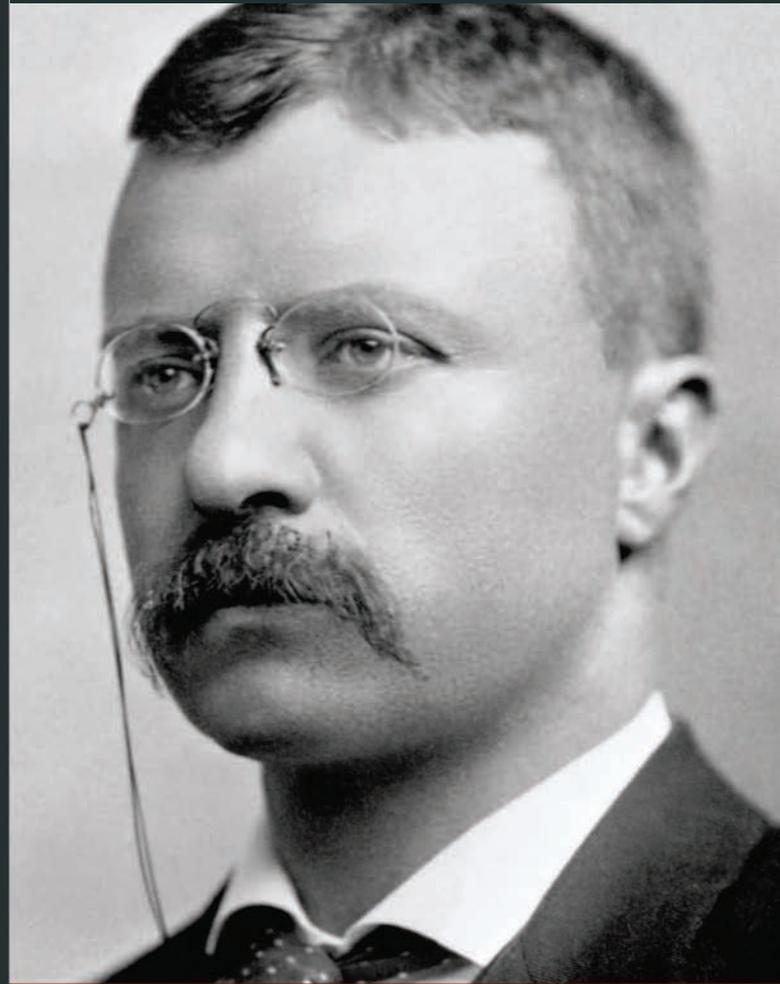
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UPclose: Theodore Roosevelt **ADVENTURER**

a twentieth-century life by **MICHAEL L. COOPER**



MICHAEL L. COOPER (www.michaellcooper.com) is the award-winning author of fifteen nonfiction books for children, including *Remembering Manzanar: Life in a Japanese Relocation Camp*, which received the Carter G. Woodson Book Award. He specializes in writing about American history and lives in Louisville, Kentucky.



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While reading **Up Close: Theodore Roosevelt**, ask your students to think about the following questions. Answers can either be written individually or discussed in groups to make for an interesting and thought-provoking classroom conversation.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

- What purpose does the introduction serve? Why do you think the author chose to lead with the assassination attempt? Despite what you may already know about Theodore Roosevelt, what insight does this give you into his character and personality?
 - Examine Roosevelt's childhood. How did his family life shape him? What were his interests? How did his father's death affect him?
 - Why do you think Roosevelt was so combative when first elected assemblyman? Do you think he was justified in behaving this way? How did other politicians as well as the American public respond to him?
 - What was Tammany Hall? In what ways did the ups and downs of 1884 affect Roosevelt's views of his future and career?
 - Describe Roosevelt's life on his ranch. Why do you think he ultimately returned to New York?
 - What was the Forest Reserve Act? Which events led to its establishment?
 - What position did Roosevelt take on in 1889? List his primary responsibilities. Was this a good fit for him? Why or why not? Explain the circumstances surrounding the post office scandal and Roosevelt's handling of the matter.
 - Who made up the Populist party? What were the party's goals? In the end, what was the result of the 1896 presidential election? Why did the winner have the advantage?
 - What was Roosevelt like as a father and a husband? Imagine being one of his children. How do you think you would feel as part of the Roosevelt family?
 - What were Roosevelt's goals as assistant secretary of the navy? How did he go about trying to accomplish them? Why did he resign from the position?
 - Who were Teddy's Rough Riders? Where did they come from? What happened at the Battle of San Juan Hill?
 - When and how did Roosevelt become president of the United States? What was he most concerned about? To which major issue of his administration did the term "Square Deal" refer?
 - Define imperialism and expansionism. How did the Panama Canal come to be? Why was it important to the U.S.?
- According to chapter 8, what was Roosevelt's biggest "political blunder"?
 - Why was Roosevelt awarded the Nobel Peace Prize?
 - In Roosevelt's opinion, why was it important for the government to regulate businesses? Why was this so difficult to achieve? What was *The Jungle*? What results did it help bring about?
 - Explain Roosevelt's stance on conservation of natural resources. Who was Gifford Pinchot? The environment has continued to be a major government concern. What environmental issues seem to be most talked about today?
 - Who did Roosevelt want to succeed him as president in 1908? Why did he later regret this choice?
 - Based on his previous remarks, do you think Roosevelt was justified in running for a third term as president? What were the main concerns about his returning to office? How did he manage to get nominated?
 - Under what circumstances did the U.S. enter World War I? How did Roosevelt react?

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES

- At the end of chapter 1, Roosevelt calls politics "rough and brutal and unpleasant to deal with." Now that you've read his biography, do you think this statement is accurate? Why or why not? Think about Roosevelt's political career. What do you think was his greatest accomplishment? What may have been his biggest failure? Who were his biggest opponents? Which issues were his biggest priorities?
- Define "yellow journalism" as the term is used in chapter 7. Pick an issue (it can be serious or not) and write a newspaper article in the style of yellow journalism. As a class, share your articles and discuss which tactics were successful in swaying others to agree with your opinion and which were not. How does media coverage—sensationalized, biased, or truthful—affect public outlook? Support your answer by watching a local or national news channel at home and reporting back to the class whether anything seemed sensationalized or not. How can you know if you are being told the truth?
- As a class, list the major political issues that Roosevelt tackled throughout his lifetime (expansionism, conservation, etc.). Divide into teams and assign two teams to each issue. Then hold a classroom debate, with the two teams debating opposite sides of the issue. After each issue is debated, discuss the arguments presented both for and against the matter. Which side was Roosevelt on? What actions did he take to deal with that issue?