**Characteristics of the Text**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Nonfiction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text Structure</td>
<td>Third-person narrative with some direct address to the reader</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organized by topic in 5 chapters</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Underlying structures include description, problem/solution, and compare/contrast.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>The growth of the suburbs and car culture</td>
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<td></td>
<td>New products for the home and their effect on culture</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discrimination and gender roles in the 1950s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themes and Ideas</td>
<td>Most decades have had both positive and negative aspects.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Life in the 1950s was different for different groups of people in the United States.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The American dream lifestyle was new.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language and Literary Features</td>
<td>Proper names of cultural icons of the period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Complexity</td>
<td>Some complex sentences contain embedded, dependent clauses</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some sentences contain parenthetical material set off by dashes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Conceptual words, such as economy, require context and may require a dictionary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words</td>
<td>Some compound words: highways, homemaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some multisyllable words: comfortable, miraculous, misrepresented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations</td>
<td>Graphs represent complex ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book and Print Features</td>
<td>Fourteen pages of text, with graphics or photographs on every page</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Table of contents, headings, captions, map, call-outs, graphs</td>
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</table>

**Selection Summary**

Popular sentiment holds that the 1950s were a time of peace and prosperity. In many ways, they were—especially when compared with the 1930s and 1940s. However, discrimination and different expectations for men and women also were part of the 1950s. This text reviews the events and examines the culture of the 1950s.
Life in the 1950s  by Lalit Gupta

Build Background
Help students use their knowledge of American twentieth-century cultural history to visualize the selection. Build interest by asking questions such as the following: Have you ever watched old TV shows like I Love Lucy or Leave it to Beaver? What can you learn about living in the 1950s from these shows? Read the title and author and talk about the photograph. Explain that the image comes from an advertisement from the 1950s.

Introduce the Text
Guide students through the text, noting important ideas and nonfiction features. Help with unfamiliar language so they can read the text successfully. Give special treatment to target vocabulary. Here are some suggestions:

Page 2: Point out the Table of Contents. Suggested language: What are some of the topics you will read about? Who are some of the people who might be mentioned in the chapter on Rock and Roll?

Pages 4–5: Look at the photo. Ask: What details do you notice? Does it look like people in the photo are deprived, or denied of any comforts? Point out the graph on page 5. Explain that builders employed new methods for building houses in the 1950s. Ask: What does the graph suggest about Americans’ pursuit of the American dream during the 1950s?

Page 8: Have students find and read the word miraculous. Ask: What appliances do we take for granted that might have been considered miraculous in the 1950s? Now turn back to the beginning of the text to read about life in the 1950s.

Target Vocabulary
- contested – accuracy or rightness is called into question, p. 12
- culprit – person who is guilty of doing something wrong or committing a crime, p. 9
- deprived – have something taken away or denied, p. 4
- employed – used to accomplish something, p. 5
- grimly – carried out in a stern or forbidding manner, p. 9
- mentor – a wise advisor who helps a newcomer, p. 9
- miraculous – amazing and extraordinary, an unlikely outcome, p. 8
- pursued – the act of chasing after, p. 4
- scholastic – matters having to do with education and schools, p. 12
- tumult – a great, noisy, and sometimes violent commotion, p. 12

Grade 6
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Read
Have students read silently while you listen to individual students read aloud. Support their understanding of the text as needed.

Remind students to use the Infer/Predict Strategy ✓TARGET STRATEGY✓ and to use text clues to figure out text meaning as they read.

Discuss and Revisit the Text

Personal Response
Invite students to share their personal responses to the selection.  
Suggested language: How did your ideas about living in the 1950s change after reading this book?

Ways of Thinking
As you discuss the text, help students understand these points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking Within the Text</th>
<th>Thinking Beyond the Text</th>
<th>Thinking About the Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The 1950s was a time of prosperity for many, but people were also worried about war, and discrimination was common.</td>
<td>• Ideals don’t always match reality.</td>
<td>• Charts provide detailed information about the 1950s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cars, TV, and early rock ‘n roll music reflect the culture of the 1950s.</td>
<td>• The prosperity of the 1950s was not shared by minority groups who faced inequality every day during that decade.</td>
<td>• Photographs show typical scenes and cultural icons of the 1950s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A growing economy supported growth of suburbs and ownership of cars and consumer goods.</td>
<td>• A map shows the growth of the highway system.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Choices for Further Support

• Fluency Invite students to choose a passage from the text to act out or use for readers’ theater. Remind them to adjust their reading rate for a page of dense text such as that on page 12.

• Comprehension Based on your observations of the students’ reading and discussion, revisit parts of the text to clarify or extend comprehension. Remind students to go back to the text to support their ideas.

• Phonics/Word Work Provide practice as needed with words and word parts, using examples from the text. Remind students that some words derive from Greek or Latin roots. For example, scholastic is derived from a Greek word, scholastikos, meaning “of a school.”
Writing about Reading

Vocabulary Practice
Have students complete the Vocabulary questions on BLM 2.1.

Responding
Have students use their Reader’s Notebook to complete the vocabulary activities on page 15. Remind them to answer the Word Teaser on page 16. (Answer: contested)

Reading Nonfiction
Nonfiction Features: Introduction and Conclusion Remind students that nonfiction has many features to help readers find and understand important information. Graphics and photographs are two of these features. Tell students that graphics can be as important as the text in nonfiction books. They add to what is already explained in the text. Readers can look at them before reading, during reading, and then return to them after they have read the page. Graphics include charts and maps. Within these graphics, there might be other helpful information, such as labels, captions, and keys.

Have students turn to page 5 in the text. Ask them to identify the type of graph shown. (picture-graph) Have a volunteer tell what year home construction peaked. (1950) Based on this information, ask how this fact might have affected sales of cars, TVs, and appliances.

Explain that photos are another important source of information. They often add information that is not in the text. Photos can sometimes have a more authentic quality than illustrations.

Instruct students to examine the photograph and read the caption on page 14. Then have students write a longer caption for the photo based on what they see in the background.

Writing Prompt: Thinking Beyond the Text
Have students write a response to the prompt on page 6. Remind them that when they think beyond the text, they use their personal knowledge to reach new understandings.

Assessment Prompts
• What does the word conform mean on page 8?
• How does the map on page 6 help the reader understand the growth of the car culture?
• What are two sentences on page 10 that support the author’s statement that discrimination existed during the 1950s?
Target Vocabulary

Fill in the outer circles of the Web with words that relate to the Target Vocabulary word. Fill in the blanks in the example sentences with the Target Vocabulary word and a word from the Web. Then make a Web and write example sentences for two of the other Target Vocabulary words.

contested: disputed or challenged

Example Sentences:
The coach disagreed with the referee, so she contested the results of the game. They contested the final vote count and continued to argue the need for a recount.

Vocabulary

contested
discharged
grumpy
employed
miraculous

Writing About It

Write a paragraph using the words from the Target Vocabulary.

English Language Development

Reading Support
Pair advanced and intermediate readers to read aloud a few paragraphs of the text, or use the audio or online text. Or have beginning students read the captions.

Cultural Support
Some English language learners may not be familiar with the various cultural phenomena discussed in the text. Provide support for 3-D movies, TV dinners, and fallout shelters.

Oral Language Development

Check student comprehension, using a dialogue that best matches your students’ English proficiency level. Speaker 1 is the teacher, Speaker 2 is the student.

Target Vocabulary

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Thinking Beyond the Text

Think about the questions below. Then write your answer in one or two paragraphs.

Remember that when you think beyond the text, you use your personal knowledge to reach new understandings.

This book describes some people’s concept of an ideal life in the 1950s. Was life in the 1950s as ideal as some like to remember it? Who was not able to live the ideal 1950s life? What do you think it means to live an “ideal life?” Does such a thing really exist? Use your experience and examples from the selection to support your response.

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Vocabulary

- contested
- grimly
- mentor
- miraculous
- pursued
- employed
- culprit
- tumult
- deprived

Example Sentences:

The coach disagreed with the referee, so she _______________ the results of the game.

They contested the final vote count and continued to _______________ the need for a recount.
Life in the 1950s • LEVEL U

What do the 1950s make you think of? TV shows like I Love Lucy might come to mind. You might recall rock 'n' roll stars like Elvis Presley. Perhaps you picture a girl wearing a poodle skirt or a boy in rolled-up jeans. All of these things were part of the 1950s.

However, life in the 1950s was not all fun and games. Americans worried about nuclear war. They also worried about fitting in and being “normal.” Minority groups faced discrimination.

The 1950s had its problems, just like any other decade. Still, many people remember it fondly. Let's take a closer look.