

A Common Core State
Standards-Aligned Discussion &
Activity Guide

Who Is Tibet's Exiled Leader?: The 14th Dalai Lama

EAN/UPC: 9780593384602

Written by Teresa Robeson

Illustrated by Angela Poon

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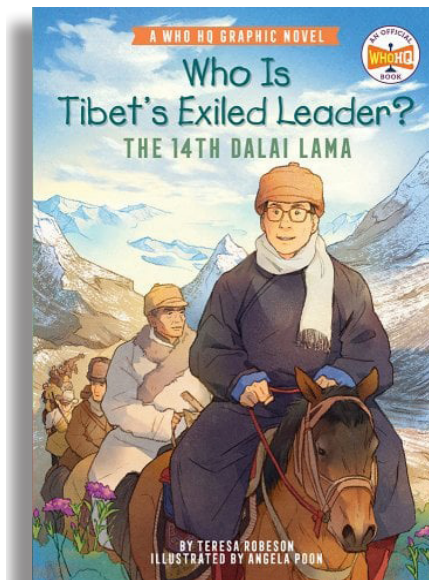
Follow the Fourteenth Dalai Lama's harrowing escape to India in 1959, as he fled Chinese suppression of a national uprising in Tibet. A story of risk and political tension, this graphic novel invites readers to immerse themselves in the incredible story of the Tibetan spiritual and political leader -- brought to life by gripping narrative and vivid full-color illustrations that jump off the page.

Guide created by
Debbie Gonzales, MFA



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Pre-reading Discussion

Consider the illustration on the front cover of the book:

- Examine the scene depicted on the front cover of the book. The word treacherous means precarious and life-threatening. Consider how traveling by horseback through mountainous regions such as the one depicted in the illustration would be treacherous.
- The word *exile* means forced-out, expulsion, and alienation. Make a connection between the word exile and the scene featured on the cover of the book. Who is being ‘forced-out’? How do you know?
- Tell all that you know about the Dalai Lama.
- Predict what this book is going to be about.

Meet the author - Teresa Robeson:

Teresa Robeson is the APALA Picture Book Award-winning author of *QUEEN OF PHYSICS* (also ILA Nonfiction PB Honor and NCTE Orbis Pictus Nonfiction Recommended Book). Other publications include *TWO BICYCLES IN BEIJING* and an essay in *NONFICTION WRITERS DIG DEEP*, edited by Melissa Stewart. Her upcoming works include a nonfiction poem in *NO WORLD TOO BIG*, edited by Dawson, Metcalf, and Bradley; two biographical graphic novels with Penguin Workshop, one on the Dalai Lama (2023) and the other on Bruce Lee (2024); as well as two picture books, the informational fiction *CLOUDS IN SPACE: THE NEBULA STORY* with MIT Kids/Candlewick (2024) and an own-culture picture book with Astra Young Readers (2024). Teresa and her family try to live a self-sufficient lifestyle on 27-acres where they’ve been raising chickens for twenty years and growing and processing much of their own vegetables. When not writing or washing veggies for hours on end, Teresa enjoys knitting, soap-making, sewing and doing art.



Meet the illustrator - Angela Poon:

Angela is a freelance illustrator and comic artist based in Mississauga, just outside of Toronto. Contrary to popular belief, she loves dogs just as much as rabbits. The books she has illustrated are *FRED & MARJORIE: A DOCTOR, A DOG, AND THE DISCOVERY OF INSULIN* by Deborah Kerbel with Owlkids Books (2021), *WHO IS TIBET’S EXILED LEADER?: THE 14TH DALAI LAMA* by Teresa Robeson with Penguin Workshop (2023), and *VEE IN BETWEEN* by Valerie Kaiyang Wood with Second Story Press (2023).



Post-reading Discussion

Pages 1 to 40

The Chinese government offers their congratulations for your attaining the Geshe Lharampa degree (pg. 7).

- In 1951, just eight years before the 14th Dalai Lama attained the Geshe Lharampa degree, the Seventeen Point Agreement (pg. 16) between the Tibetan people and the People's Republic of China was signed. Explore reasons why the people of Tibet found the Seventeen Point Agreement to be oppressive, crushing their hopes of freedom as a nation.
- In this scene, officials from the Chinese government have arrived to congratulate the 14th Dalai Lama for attaining the Tibetan Buddhist Academic Degree for monks. Is this acknowledgement of good will sincere? Explain your answer.
- The officials followed their praise for the Dalai Lama's achievement with an invitation to attend a dance performance, followed by a statement about 'further instructions'. Tell why the Dalai Lama found the phrase 'further instructions' to be questionable or confusing.



There's evidence that the Chinese are hatching a plan for the Precious Protector...A trustworthy source tells me that the Chinese intend to kidnap the Precious Protector... (pg. 14).

- How would the People's Republic of China benefit by kidnapping the Dalai Lama?
- Predict what might happen to him if their efforts were successful?
- Explain why keeping the Precious Protector safe is important to the people of Tibet, and/or the world at large?



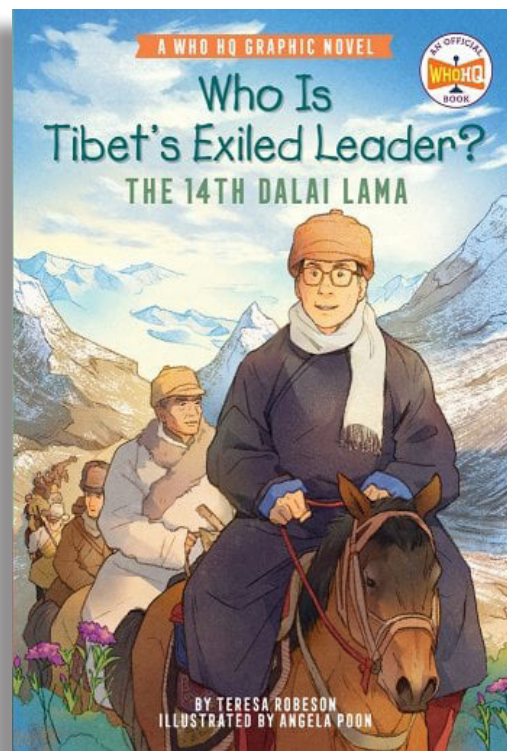
It's only a temporary measure. I intend to be back as soon as it's safe to do so. I want you to beg the crowd to not provoke the PLA, for their own safety. Understood (pg. 30)?

- Determine why the Dalai Lama warned against provoking the PLA (the People's Liberation Army of China). List reasons for his deep concern for the welfare of the Tibetan people.
- The Tibetan people were being brutalized by the PLA. On page 22, the Dalai Lama said, "We must not think of them [the PLA] as the enemy." Tell how doing so might encourage the Tibetan people to remain calm.
- The 14th Dalai Lama is a Buddhist priest. Consider how his faith guided his concerns, decisions, and actions.



Take a last look at Lhasa, Precious Protector. What a glorious sight it is from up here on the Che La Pass (pg. 40).

- In this scene the Dalai Lama and his entourage are pausing to gaze upon the path they had traveled knowing that the people of Tibet were being tormented by the PLA. Discuss the emotional significance of looking back upon Lhasa.
- On page 38, the Dalai Lama became aware that, for the first time in his life, he felt afraid. Analyze the reasons for his fear. Is he more apprehensive for the safety of the people of Tibet or for himself?
- The word ‘faith’ is defined as conviction, belief, and serenity. Examine ways that the Dalai Lama is led by his faith. Identify moments where his dedication to practicing his Buddhist faith guided his steps along the way.



Who Am I? Where Am I? What's Happening?

“Please tell me what I should do to prevent my people from coming to harm” (pg.24).

Objective: Determine central ideas and themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

Materials:

- WHO IS TIBET’S EXILED LEADER? THE 14TH DALAI LAMA, the book
- The Who Am I? Where Am I? What Is Happening? Template (Guide, pgs. 7 and 10)
- Pencil

Procedure:

- Print and distribute copies of the Who Am I? Where Am I? What’s Happening? template to each student.
- Instruct students to reference the template as they read and discuss WHO IS TIBET’S EXILED LEADER? THE 14TH DALAI LAMA. Encourage them to make note of all of the individuals listed on the Who Am I? Where Am I? What’s Happening? template by recording the historical events that occur in the first half of the books in the follow way:
 - Who Am I?: Identify the significance of each individual. Are they leaders of some sort? If so, describe their role as it relates to this particular time in history.
 - Where Am I?: Pinpoint the physical location in which they played an important role in specific historical events.
 - What’s Happening?: Describe the events that took place. Explain how their actions impacted others.
- Explain that the information the students record on the Who Am I? Where Am I? What’s Happening? template will serve as a reference when creating a follow-up graphic novel-like scene.

Who Am I? Where Am I? What's Happening?		
Pages 1 to 40		
DALAI LAMA	Who am I?	What's happening?
	Where am I?	
CHAIRMAN MAO ZENDONG	Who am I?	What's happening?
	Where am I?	
PHUNTSOG TASHI TAKLHA	Who am I?	What's happening?
	Where am I?	
PHALA THUPTEN WODEN	Who am I?	What's happening?
	Where am I?	
DORJE DRAKDEN	Who am I?	What's happening?
	Where am I?	



Who Am I? Where Am I? What's Happening? - Part 1

Pages 1 to 40

As you read and discuss Who Is Tibet's Exiled Leader? The 14th Dalai Lama follow all of the characters and compare their journeys as they experience the historical events that take place in the stated section of the book. Update the chart below as you read.

DALAI LAMA	Who am I?	What's happening?
	Where am I?	
CHAIRMAN MAO ZEDONG	Who am I?	What's happening?
	Where am I?	
PHUNTSOG TASHI TAKLHA	Who am I?	What's happening?
	Where am I?	
PHALA THUPTEN WODEN	Who am I?	What's happening?
	Where am I?	
DORJE DRAKDEN	Who am I?	What's happening?
	Where am I?	



Post-reading Discussion

Pages 41 to 61

We don't know whether the prime minister of India will grant me asylum (pg.43).

- The word *exile* means expulsion, forced out, and separation. The Dalai Lama was forced into exile because of mass revolts occurring in Lhasa, Tibet's capital. Consider the worry and deep concern the Dalai Lama must have felt when having to leave his people and flee for safety.
- The word *asylum* means shelter, a hiding place, cover, and a place of safety. List reasons why The Dalai Lama is seeking asylum in India. Predict what might happen to the Dalai Lama if his request for asylum is denied. How would such denial impact the people of Tibet.
- List reasons why the Prime Minister of India might not be willing to grant asylum to the Dalai Lama. Would doing so be dangerous for the people of India? How so?

The PLA has attacked Lhasa officials and others who are accused of being anti-Chinese have been arrested and are being publicly humiliated (pg. 45).

- The phrase *de facto* means unofficial, practical, and functional. Prior to 1950, Tibet enjoyed de facto independence from Chinese rule. They lived as subsistence farmers and herders on the Tibetan Plateau, a place they referred to as the Land of the Snow Lion (pg. 41). In late 1951, The Seventeen-Point Agreement was formed, forcing Tibet to submit to Chinese government rule...but not without a fight from the Tibetan people. Consider the high-stakes of the Dalai Lama's departure. Did the Dalai Lama's exile serve to embolden the PLA with determination to inflict harm upon the Tibetan people? Explain your answer.
- At this point in his journey, what would be lost if the Dalai Lama decided not to seek asylum in India?

I was a fool to think it was possible to negotiate and live peaceably with Mao and the PLA. We must officially sever all ties with them. As soon as we reach the Lhuntse Dzong, I will make the declaration (pg. 45).

- The word *diplomacy* means managing relations between nations through the use of peaceful and constructive dialogue. Diplomacy focuses on fostering understanding, building trust, and finding solutions that are mutually agreeable for all groups involved. The Dalai Lama had hoped to use diplomacy to negotiate and live peacefully with Mao and the PLA. Determine why the promotion of trust building, communication, and the pursuit of common interests would be ineffective when dealing with the PLA.
- Do you agree with the Dalai Lama that it was foolish to think that the PLA might be open to discussing issues such as human rights, freedom, and peace. How so?
- To *aspire* means to yearn for, desire, or envision. Do you think that peaceful relations between Tibet and the Chinese government is something that the Dalai Lama aspired to see happen? If so, why?



Prime Minister Nehru and his government are willing to receive you and our group (pg. 49).

- Imagine the deep sense of relief the Dalai Lama and his group must have felt when they received the news that the Prime Minister of India had granted their request for asylum. Tell how this is good news for not only the Dalai Lama, but the people of Tibet, as well.
- Explain why Prime Minister Nehru sent a military escort to guide the Dalai Lama and his group to Bomdila. Is this gesture an act of diplomacy? How so?



Yes, your holiness, you are the story of the century (pg. 58)!

One of the 14th Dalai Lama's favorite prayers reads:

*For as long as space endures,
And for as long as living beings remain,
Until then may I, too, abide
To dispel the misery of the world (pg. 61).*

- Identify ways that, while traveling the harrowing exile journey, the Dalai Lama's prayers were answered. Tell how he demonstrated his deepest desire to "dispel the misery of the world". Cite references from the text to verify your claim.
- Consider how one brilliant, yet extremely humble and prayerful man such as the 14th Dalai Lama, might have such a powerful impact on the people of the world. How can small acts of kindness and devotion multiply to such remarkable proportions that the entire world celebrates one's exile to freedom?
- The word *anointed* means someone who is chosen, appointed, or set apart for a particular purpose or role. Such individuals are said to be blessed with special qualities, authority, or abilities. Do you think that the 14th Dalai Lama is anointed? If so, by whom? Cite references from the text to support your claim.



Who Am I? Where Am I? What's Happening? - Part 2

Pages 41 to 61

As you read and discuss Who Is Tibet's Exiled Leader? The 14th Dalai Lama follow all of the characters and compare their journeys as they experience the historical events that take place in the stated section of the book. Update the chart below as you read.

DALAI LAMA	Who am I?	What's happening?
	Where am I?	
THE SNOW LION	Who am I?	What's happening?
	Where am I?	
PRIME MINISTER NEHRU	Who am I?	What's happening?
	Where am I?	
RESISTENCE FIGHTERS	Who are we?	What's happening?
	Where are we?	



Map Skills: The 14th Dalai Lama's Exile Route

Head in the southeast direction! This is the exact route you must take to avoid coming to harm (pg. 25).

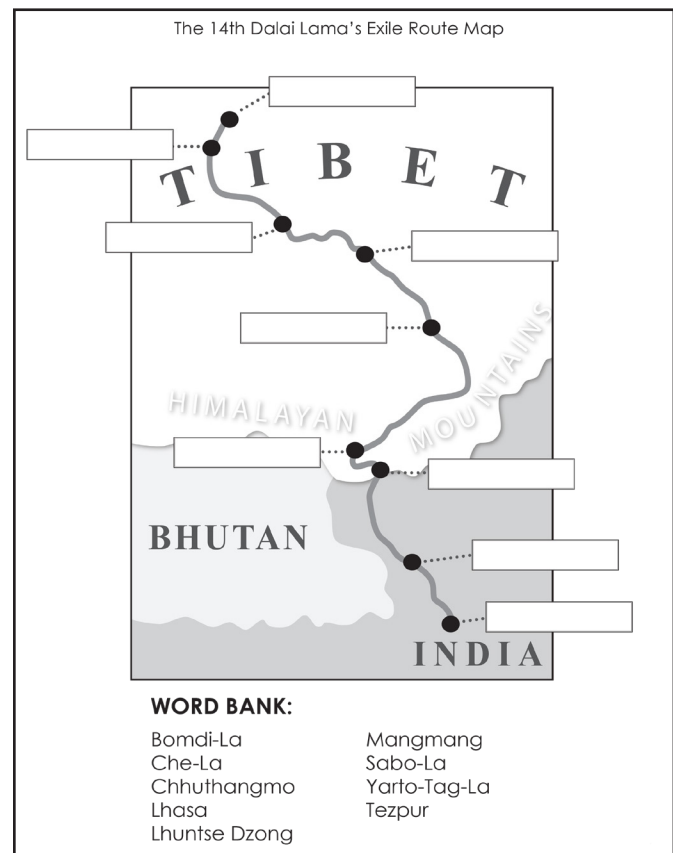
Objective: To integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and verbally.

Materials:

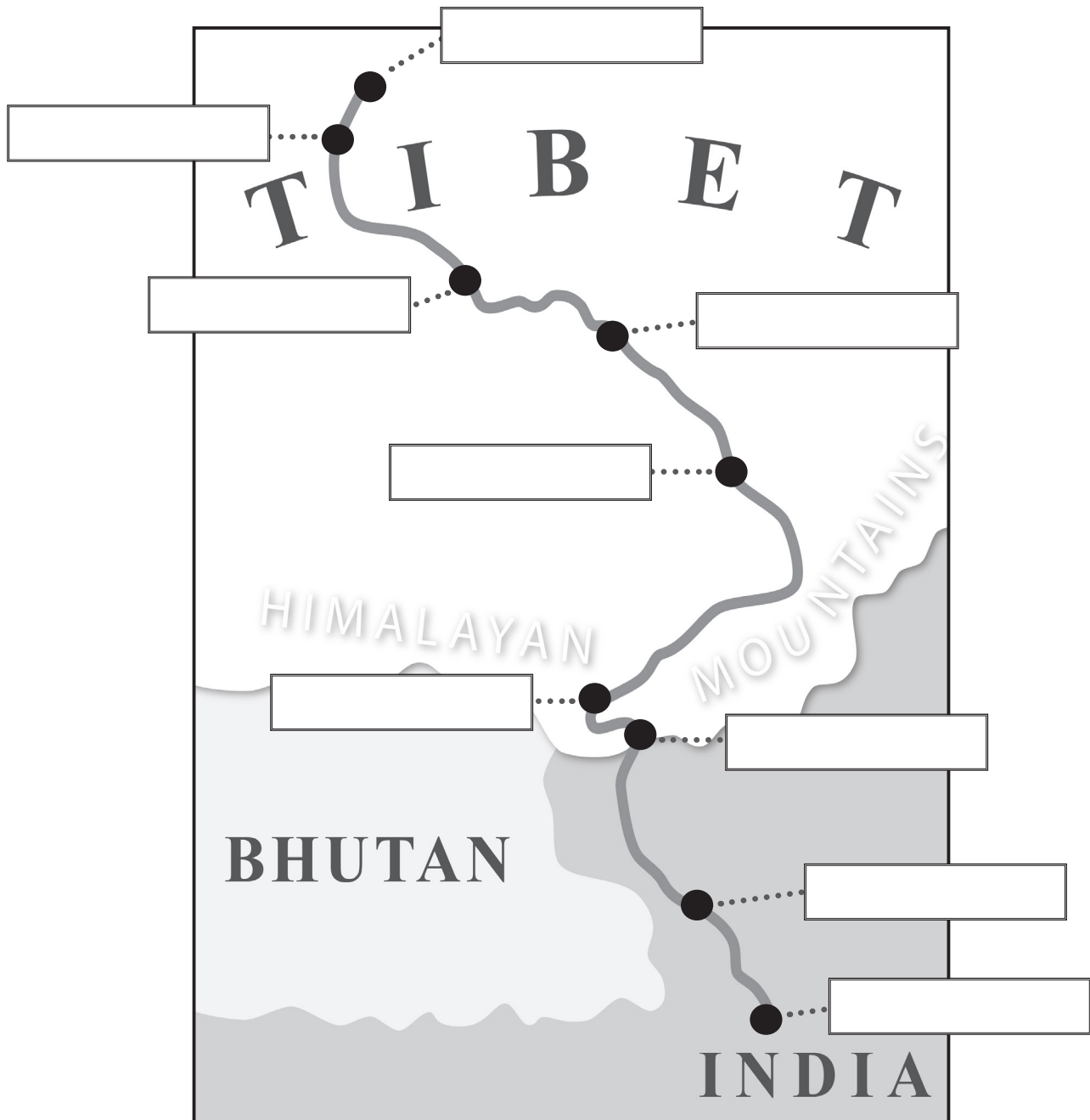
- WHO IS TIBET'S EXILED LEADER? THE 14TH DALAI LAMA, the book
- The 14th Dalai Lama's Exile Route Labeled Map (Guide, pg. 12)
- The 14th Dalai Lama's Exile Route Labeled Map Answers (Guide, pg. 13)
- An Atlas or Map Studies reference

Procedure:

- Print a blank copy of the 14th Dalai Lama's Exile Route Map, found on page 12 of this guide. Distribute a copy to each student.
- Explain that the locations designated on the 14th Dalai Lama's Exile Route Map were essential stops along the route to exile and safety.
- Instruct students to use WHO IS TIBET'S EXILED LEADER? THE 14TH DALAI LAMA, the book, and an atlas as reference. Have them discover and identify locations listed in the Word Bank found at the bottom of the 14th Dalai Lama's Exile Route Map worksheet.
- Use the 14th Dalai Lama's Exile Route Map Answer guide.
- Lead a discussion regarding the significance of each location as it pertains to the Dalai Lama's journey. Explore the bravery, tenacity, and courage required for the Dalai Lama and his team to journey through the Himalayan Mountains in search of asylum.
- Encourage the students to choose one location to incorporate as the setting in the following exercise – Graphic Novel Crafting (Guide, pgs. 15).



The 14th Dalai Lama's Exile Route Map



WORD BANK:

Bomdila

Che La

Chhuthangmo

Lhasa

Lhuntsé Dzong

Mangmang

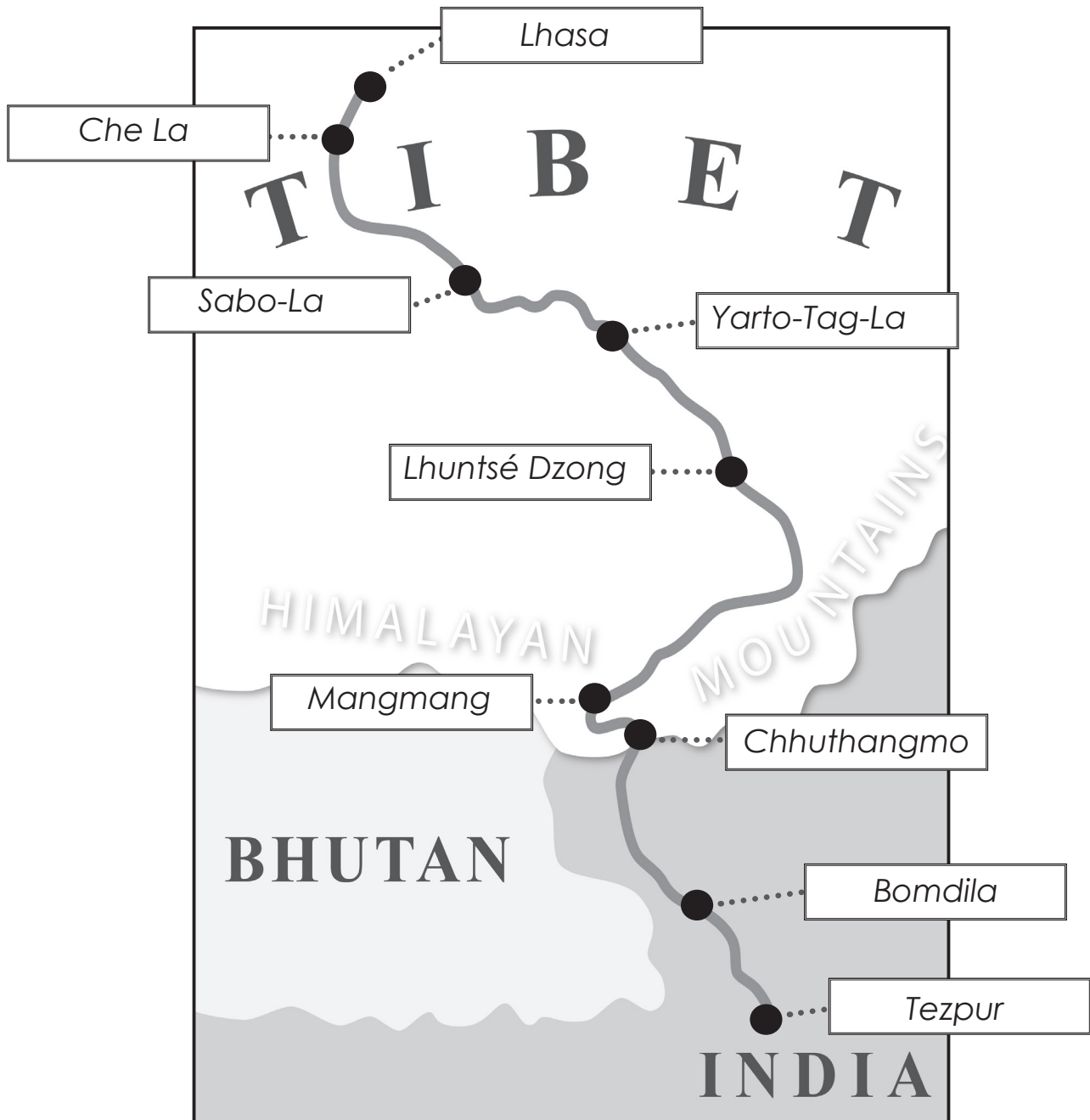
Sabo-La

Yarto-Tag-La

Tezpur



The 14th Dalai Lama's Exile Route Map Answers



WORD BANK:

Bomdila

Che La

Chhuthangmo

Lhasa

Lhuntsé Dzong

Mangmang

Sabo-La

Yarto-Tag-La

Tezpur



Graphic Novel Crafting

Objective: Gather relevant information from print and graphic novel resources to create sequential illustrations representing a relevant scene from the historical text.

Materials:

- WHO IS TIBET’S EXILED LEADER? THE 14TH DALAI LAMA, the book
- Graphic Novel Template (Guide, pg. 15)
- Pencil
- Colored pencils or markers

Procedure:

- Print and distribute copies of the Graphic Novel Template, found on the following page.
- Explain that they will be using the Graphic Novel Template as a guide to create an illustrated scene inspired by WHO IS TIBET’S EXILED LEADER? THE 14TH DALAI LAMA in the following way.
 - Identify a scene that best represents the conflicts the Dalai Lama faced on his journey to India.
 - Record the date the event took place in the space provided.
 - Determine the location of the event. Record it in the space provided.
 - In the space labeled Historical Relevance, briefly describe the importance of the event as it pertains to the Dalai Lama’s exile.
 - Decide upon two key figures to represent in the scene. Write their names in the spaces provided on the template. Sketch an illustration of each of them. Write a phrase of dialogue expressing their point of view of the historical event depicted.
 - Use the rectangles at the base of the template labeled Comic Strip Depiction to explore the significance of the relationship or conflict that occurred between the key figures chosen in true graphic novel fashion. Establish the historic implications of the conflict.
- Instruct students to write a short synopsis of the event represented in the Comic Strip Depiction series.
- Encourage students to share their work with the class.

Date event took place:		KEY FIGURES:	
Location:		Write dialogue here.	
Historical Relevance:			
Comic Strip Depiction			



Graphic Novel Template

Date event took place:

Location:

Historical Relevance:

Comic Strip Depiction

KEY FIGURES:

Write dialogue here.

Write names here.

Making a Difference in the World: The Pinwheel Perspective Historical Analysis

*For as long as space endures,
And for as long as living beings remain,
Until then may I, too, abide
To dispel the misery of the world (pg. 61).*

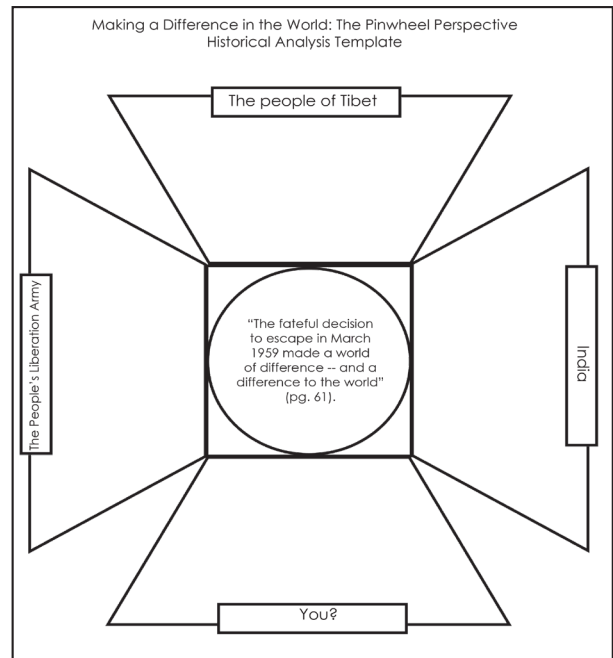
Objective: To determine central ideas, explore themes, and to analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Materials:

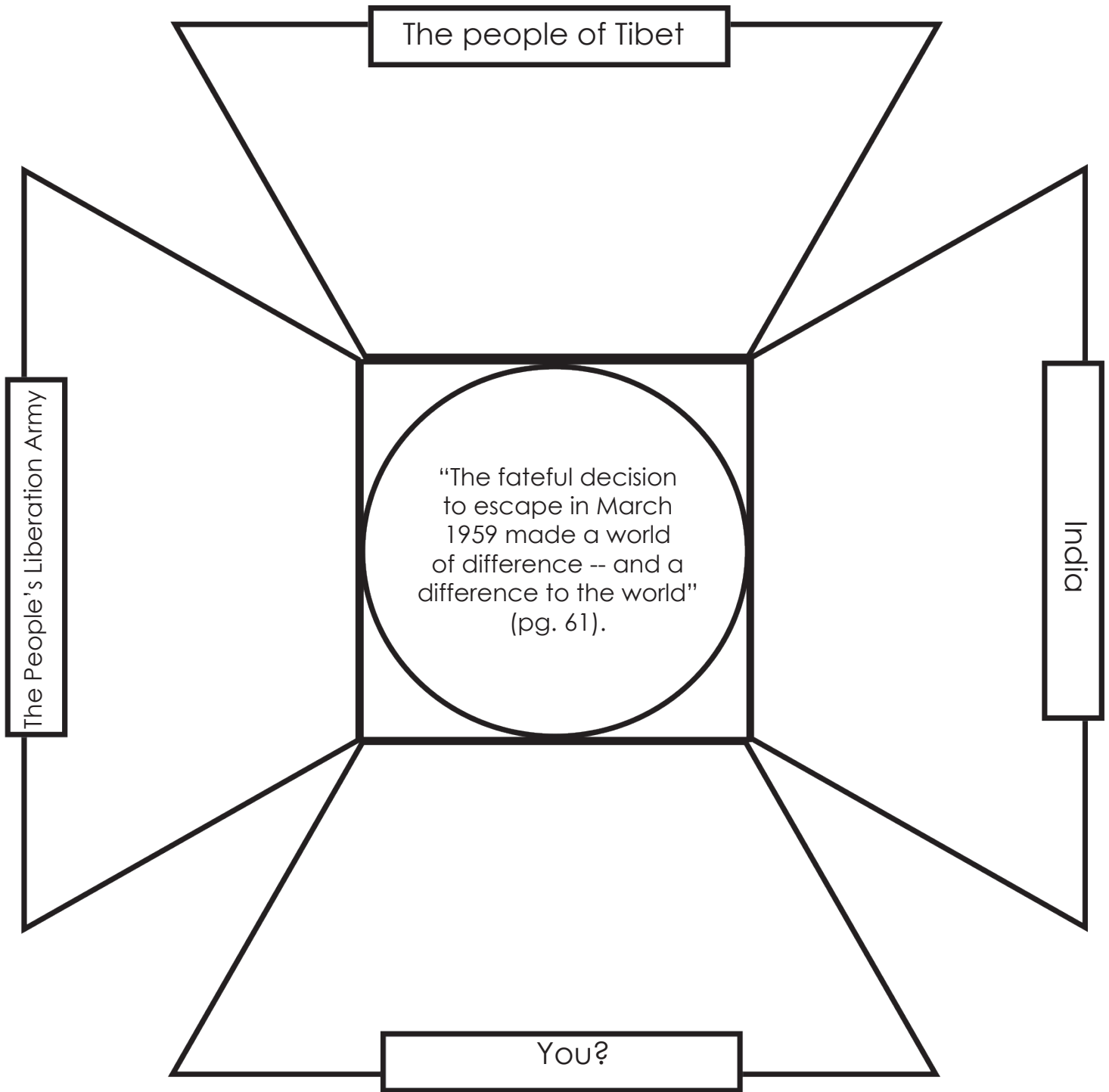
- WHO IS TIBET’S EXILED LEADER? THE 14TH DALAI LAMA, the book
- The Pinwheel Perspective Template (Guide, pg. 17)

Procedure:

- Distribute copies of the Pinwheel Perspective Template to the students. Using the template as a guide, instruct students to briefly summarize in spaces provided:
 - The influence the 14th Dalai Lama’s exile had upon the people of Tibet.
 - The impact the 14th Dalai Lama’s exile had upon the Chinese People’s Liberation Army.
 - The ramification the 14th Dalai Lama’s exile had upon the nation of India.
 - The impressions and new awareness the 14th Dalai Lama’s exile had upon you, the reader.
- Instruct students to write an essay summarizing the interpretations expressed in the Pinwheel Perspective Template. Encourage them to share their work with the class.



Making a Difference in the World: The Pinwheel Perspective Historical Analysis Template



Common Core State Anchor Standards Alignment

		Discussion	Who? Where? What's Happening?	Map Skills	Graphic Novel Crafting	The Pinwheel Perspective
College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading						
CCRA-R1	Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CCRA-R2	Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CCRA-R3	Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CCRA-R4	Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CCRA-R6	Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CCRA-R7	Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CCRA-R8	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CCRA-R10	Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing						
CCRA-W2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.		✓		✓	✓
CCRA-W7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.		✓		✓	✓
CCRA-W9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.		✓		✓	✓
College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening						
CCRA-SL1	Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CCRA-SL2	Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CCRA-SL4	Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CCRA-SL5	Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

