

The Great Chicago Fire: *Rising from the Ashes*

By Kate Hannigan ✍️ Illustrated by Alex Graudins

Teaching Guide 5th & 6th Grades

Inspire a love of history, encourage reluctant readers,
explore new ideas, promote critical thinking skills
& much more!



Based on the first in the
History Comics
series from First Second!

:01
First Second

Includes:

- *Lesson Plan*
- *Key Vocabulary*
- *Discussion Questions*
 - *Activities*
 - *Rubric*



About the book

History Comics: The Great Chicago Fire tells the true story of how a city rose up from one of the worst catastrophes in American history, and how this disaster forever changed how homes, buildings, and communities are constructed. A deadly blaze engulfs Chicago for two terrifying days! A brother, a sister, and a helpless puppy must race through the city to stay one step ahead of the devilish inferno. But can they reunite with their lost family before it's too late?



About the author

Kate Hannigan used to work for daily newspapers but now she writes fiction and nonfiction for young readers, digging up remarkable people from history and sharing their stories. Her work includes the middle-grade historical fantasy series, *The League of Secret Heroes*, featuring *Cape*, *Mask*, and *Boots*; the historical mystery *The Detective's Assistant*; and a picture book biography of Belva Lockwood, *A Lady Has the Floor*.



About the illustrator

Alex Graudins is a Rhode Island-based cartoonist known for illustrating *Science Comics: The Brain*. She graduated from the School of Visual Arts' cartooning program in 2016 and has since contributed comics to sites like the Nib and CollegeHumor. In her free time, Alex likes to draw autobiographical comics about living with anxiety.



About the curriculum writer

Eric Arnall is a special education teacher in Chicago. He has taught elementary and middle school and, before becoming a special education teacher, he was a school librarian. He has a PhD in curriculum and instruction from St. Louis University. His favorite hobbies are reading mysteries, playing tennis, and traveling. Learn more at ScribblersBindle.com

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How to use this Guide

Struggling, average, and advanced readers will LOVE Kate Hannigan’s graphic novel, *The Great Chicago Fire: Rising from the Ashes*. The text, using fictive siblings to tell about The Great Chicago Fire of 1871 and the Columbian Exhibition of 1893, is informative and entertaining. Hannigan’s graphic novel is a great way to introduce a difficult topic like *scapegoating* and to get students excited about exploring history and imagining what Chicago life was like in the late 1800s.

The ideas presented in this guide can be used to plan anything from **a multi-lesson unit** to a **single lesson**. Beginning with an **essential question**, possible **objectives**, and **key vocabulary**, ideas are centered on the subject of *scapegoating* and presented chronologically according to six stages of the learning cycle:

- **Warm-Up** - Introduce the unit/lesson
- **Learn** - Establish foundational knowledge to build upon
- **Explore** - Lead students to discover information from the text
- **Wrap-up** - Provide an activity that allows students to demonstrate what they have learned
- **Assess/Evaluate** - Critique student work based on a scoring guide
- **Dive Deeper** - Challenge students with discussions and academically rigorous activities

Touch on each of these briefly to create a single lesson, use each category to create a six-lesson unit, combine them in ways to create fewer lessons, or expand each into more than one lesson. Make it work for your class, according to the time you have!

Online resources and **Connections to *The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy*** are also provided to help you meet the academic needs of your students.

Mrs. O’Leary Was Scapegoated!



Essential question

How might knowing about the Great Chicago Fire affect how we treat people?

UNIT/LESSON OVERVIEW

Teaching about scapegoating and its effects will help kids recognize reasons why this kind of bullying happens and strategies they can use when they see or hear a person being scapegoated, or they are the target of scapegoating. This lesson will help kids help each other, making our school communities stronger and more inclusive.

Possible Unit/Lesson Objectives. Students will be able to:

1. Identify the factors that led to Mrs. O’Leary being blamed for the Great Chicago Fire.
2. Describe what happened after the fire that caused the scapegoating to become a common belief.
3. Reflect on scapegoating and bullying and their effects.
4. Create a Google SLIDES or Microsoft presentation about scapegoating.

Key Vocabulary:

bully

n. a person who abuses, mistreats, and/or threatens another student

Etymology: *Bull+y*. From Old Norse. *Bull* comes from *boli* meaning a male domestic cow. The *y* ending denotes *one who*. Literally, bully means *one who is like a bull*.

bully

v. to abuse, mistreat, and/or threaten another student

bullying

n. the act of abusing and mistreating a student at school

emigration

n. the act of leaving one’s own country, moving to another country

Etymology: from Latin. *e+migrat+ion*. The *e* is shortened from *ex* which means *out*. *Migrat* is from *migrare* which means *to move*, and *ion* denotes a noun ending, or *that which*. Literally, the word means *that which moves out*.

emigrate

To leave one's own country

immigration

n. the action of moving INTO another country to live

Etymology: from Latin. *Im+migrat+ion*. *Im* is from *in* which means *in*. Immigration is difficult to pronounce, so the *n* was changed to an *m* to make the word *immigration*. *Migrat* is from *migrare* which means *to move*, and *ion* denotes a noun ending, or *that which*. Literally, the word means *that which moves in*.

immigrant

n. A person who moves INTO a new country to live

scapegoat

n. Someone who is blamed for the mistakes of others

scapegoat

v. to make a scapegoat of someone

Etymology: *Scape+goat*. The word originates from a Hebrew term in the Bible. A goat would be sacrificed for the sins of the people. *Scape* comes from *escape*. It means *blaming or punishing another for the mistakes or sins of others*.

scapegoating

n. the act of blaming someone for the mistakes of others.

UNIT/LESSON IDEAS

Warm Up: Compare and contrast scapegoating with predators and prey

Put students into groups.

Show students the image entitled, “African wild dogs surround hyena” from this link:

<https://www.animalfactsencyclopedia.com/African-wild-dog-facts.html>



Ask students to describe what they see in the picture.

Expect something like: The wild dogs are surrounding and attacking the hyena, or the wild dogs are working together to attack the hyena.

Allow students to use computers to look up *scapegoat*.

Ask students, *How is the image LIKE scapegoating? How is scapegoating DIFFERENT than what is happening in the picture?* Answer: The wild dogs are attacking one animal just like a group of people attacked Mrs. O’Leary. In Mrs. O’Leary’s case, the group is blaming her for something she didn’t do. In the picture, the animals are not blaming the hyena for anything. Instead, they are attacking for food.

Learn: Mrs. O'Leary

Explain the vocabulary words listed above. Assign words to each group or individuals. Have them research the word and share their findings. Have them explain the vocabulary in their own words.

Reread pages 23-27 *The Great Chicago Fire: Rising from the Ashes*. Everyone can read silently, or aloud in their groups.

Check for understanding: What names did they call the Irish Catholics? Irish Catholics were immigrants from Ireland. What is an immigrant? What were some of the stories people made up to explain the fire? Why did people blame Mrs. O'Leary? What really caused the fire? What happened in 1997?

Ask: According to the text, *who was the scapegoat? Who did the scapegoating?*

Explore: Making Connections

Show: *Scapegoat: The Story of a Goat Named Oat and a Chewed-Up Coat*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qyn0fyziXgE>

Ask: How were the goat in the story and Mrs. O'Leary similar? What was the lesson of the book? What can we learn from Mrs. O'Leary? What was the purpose of declaring Mrs. O'Leary and her cow to be innocent of the Great Chicago Fire? Do you agree with the decision?

Wrap Up

Assign: Working in a group or individually, create a Google Slides presentation or Microsoft PowerPoint on *scapegoating*. Have the student or group do an oral presentation for the class. Discuss the RUBRIC that will be used to evaluate the project. (See below.)

Assess/Evaluate: See Rubric

ORAL PRESENTATION: *The Great Chicago Fire* by Kate Hannigan

Evaluation Rubric

Student Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Presentation	Well-rehearsed with smooth delivery that holds audience attention.	Rehearsed with fairly smooth delivery that holds audience attention most of the time.	Delivery not smooth, but able to maintain interest of the audience most of the time.	Delivery not smooth and audience attention often lost.
Attractiveness	Makes excellent use of font, color, graphics, effects, etc. to enhance the presentation.	Makes good use of font, color, graphics, effects, etc. to enhance to presentation.	Makes use of font, color, graphics, effects, etc. but occasionally these detract from the presentation content.	Use of font, color, graphics, effects etc. but these often distract from the presentaiion content.
Content	Covers topic in-depth with details and examples. Subject knowledge is excellent.	Includes essential knowledge about the topic. Subject knowledge appears to be good.	Includes essential information about the topic but there are 1-2 factual errors.	Content is minimal OR there are several factual errors.
Organization	Content is well organized using headings or bulleted lists to group related material.	Uses headings or bulleted lists to organize, but the overall organization of topics appears flawed.	Content is logically organized for the most part.	There was no clear or logical organizational structure, just lots of facts.
Oral Presentation	Interesting, well-rehearsed with smooth delivery that holds audience attention.	Relatively interesting, rehearsed with a fairly smooth delivery that usually holds audience attention.	Delivery not smooth, but able to hold audience attention most of the time.	Delivery not smooth and audience attention lost.

Dive Deeper (Extend the lesson OR use in a following lesson):

Present *The Bully and the Shrimp*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOd60NVY6Wk>

Ask students to *compare* and *contrast* the Shrimp with Mrs. O’Leary.

Compare the definitions of bullying (imbalance of power, threatening) and scapegoating (falsely blaming).

Have students think of ways to prevent and/or stop SCAPEGOATING and BULLYING. Have them make a poster sharing their suggestions.

Online Resources:

Images of The Great Fire from the Chicago History Museum

<https://images.chicagohistory.org/search/?searchQuery=Great+fire&assetType=default>

Immigration Lesson Plan from Scholastic Grades 3-5

<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plans/teaching-content/immigration-lesson-plan-grades-3-5/>

Ellis Island Virtual Tour

https://www.nps.gov/hdp/exhibits/ellis/Ellis_Index.html

Scapegoat: The Story of a Goat Named Oat and a Chewed-Up Coat

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qyn0fyziXgE>

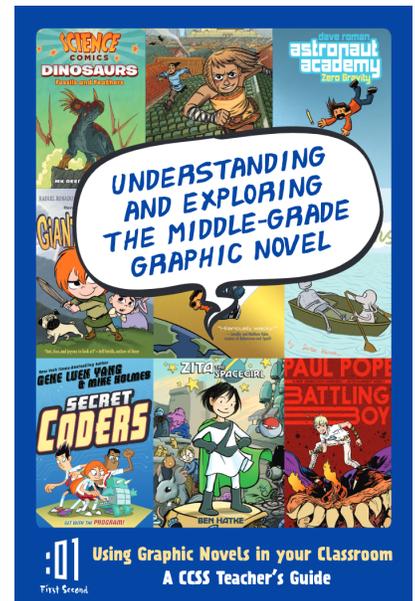
Face Bullying With Confidence: 8 Kidpower Skills We Can Use Right Away

https://www.kidpower.org/library/article/prevent-bullying/?gclid=CjwKCAjwzIH7BRABEiwAoDxxTsRIWcPHA3id73Zd2UajSqYzyVvldWh6yyccOHXWnv9tpEYSBct3BBocpvYQAvD_BwE

Using graphic novels in the classroom:

<https://firstsecondbooks.com/resources/>

<https://www.scholastic.com/content/dam/teachers/lesson-plans/18-19/Graphic-Novel-Discussion-Guide-2018.pdf>



Connections to *The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy*

CC.5.R.L.1 Key Ideas and Details: Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CC.5.R.L.3 Key Ideas and Details: Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).

CC.5.R.L.9 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Compare and contrast stories in the same genre on their approaches to similar themes and topics.

CC.5.R.I.1 Key Ideas and Details: Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CC.5.R.I.3 Key Ideas and Details: Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

CC.5.R.I.4 Craft and Structure: Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.

CC.5.R.I.5 Craft and Structure: Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts.

CC.5.R.I.6 Craft and Structure: Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.

CC.5.R.I.7 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

CC.5.R.I.9 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

CC.5.R.F.3 Phonics and Word Recognition: Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

CC.5.R.F.3.a Phonics and Word Recognition: Use combined knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology (e.g., roots and affixes) to read accurately unfamiliar multisyllabic words in context and out of context.

CC.5.R.F.4 Fluency: Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.

CC.5.R.F.4.a Fluency: Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.

CC.5.R.F.4.c Fluency: Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

CC.5.W.1.a Text Types and Purposes: Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose.

CC.5.W.1.b Text Types and Purposes: Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details.

CC.5.W.1.c Text Types and Purposes: Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., consequently, specifically).

CC.5.W.1.d Text Types and Purposes: Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

CC.5.W.2.a Text Types and Purposes: Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

CC.5.W.2.b Text Types and Purposes: Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.

CC.5.W.2.d Text Types and Purposes: Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

CC.5.W.4 Production and Distribution of Writing: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

CC.5.W.7 Research to Build and Present Knowledge: Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

CC.5.W.9 Research to Build and Present Knowledge: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CC.5.SL.1 Comprehension and Collaboration: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CC.5.SL.2 Comprehension and Collaboration: Summarize written a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CC.5.SL.4 Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas: Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

CC.5.SL.5 Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas: Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, sound) and visual displays in presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.

CC.5.L.1 Conventions of Standard English: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CC.5.L.2 Conventions of Standard English: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

CC.5.L.4.b Vocabulary Acquisition and Use: Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., photograph, photosynthesis).

CC.6.R.L.1 Key Ideas and Details: Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CC.6.R.L.9 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

CC.6.R.I.1 Key Ideas and Details: Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CC.6.R.I.3 Key Ideas and Details: Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).

CC.6.R.I.7 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

CC.6.W.1.b Text Types and Purposes: Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

CC.6.W.2.a Text Types and Purposes: Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

CC.6.W.2.b Text Types and Purposes: Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

CC.6.W.2.d Text Types and Purposes: Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

CC.6.W.2.f Text Types and Purposes: Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.

CC.6.W.3.d Text Types and Purposes: Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.

CC.6.W.3.e Text Types and Purposes: Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

CC.6.W.6 Production and Distribution of Writing: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.

CC.6.W.8 Research to Build and Present Knowledge: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.

CC.6.W.9 Research to Build and Present Knowledge: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CC.6.SL.1 Comprehension and Collaboration: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CC.6.SL.1.d Comprehension and Collaboration: Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

CC.6.SL.5 Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas: Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.

CC.6.SL.6 Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas: Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 6 Language standards 1 and 3 on page 53 for specific expectations.)