

TEACHER'S OUTLINE

LESSON 2: "Ropin' Will"/GRADES 9TH – 12TH

Key Concept: The Cherokee Kid & Indian Cowboy

This chapter focuses predominantly upon Will Rogers' beginnings as a young man seeking his purpose in life. It is during his journey to South Africa that young Will transitions from a ranch hand to a cowboy entertainer. Will's first opportunity as a professional entertainer was with Texas Jack's Wild West Show where he was quickly dubbed the "Cherokee Kid." The Cherokee Kid as an Indian Cowboy provided Will new opportunities to transition as a boy from Indian Territory to a world traveler and popular cowboy entertainer.

Learning Objectives:

1. Examine the concept of an "Indian Cowboy" in historic and contemporary popular culture
2. Increase understanding of stereotypical images of Native American during the time of Will Rogers and in contemporary society
3. Describe Will Rogers' transition from a Cherokee citizen in Indian Territory to a world traveler and cowboy entertainer
4. Understand the significance of the "Wild West Show" in American culture at the turn of the 20th Century
5. Make connections between the Wild West Show and contemporary popular culture's portrayal of cowboys and Indians
6. Analyze the historic correlation between the 1803 Louisiana Purchase and the many Native American exhibitions at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair

Video Clip:

Before completing the Learning/Media Activity or Student Handouts for this lesson, students should watch Chapter 2 of the documentary *Will Rogers & American Politics*. If time or resources do not allow, students should at a minimum, view the short video clip for Lesson 2. These clips can be viewed online by visiting www.insearchwillrogers.org, and clicking the "Learn About Will" tab in the main menu.

Learning/Media Activity: Will Rogers Comic Book Creator

Using the supplied cutouts included in this lesson plan and their own creativity, students will be asked to create a comic strip featuring Will during his time as a Wild West performer. Students may print images from the photo gallery at www.insearchwillrogers.org to use in their comic strip, or may choose to draw their own illustrations. As an instructor, you should score students based upon their use of creativity, originality, thoughtfulness, and artistry.

Student Handouts:

Students will be challenged to demonstrate their comprehension of material covered in Lesson 2. Additionally, students will be given the opportunity to further explore and discuss various topics covered in the lesson material.

WILD BILL'S WILD WEST SHOW

FEATURING WILL ROGERS,

INDIAN COWBOY

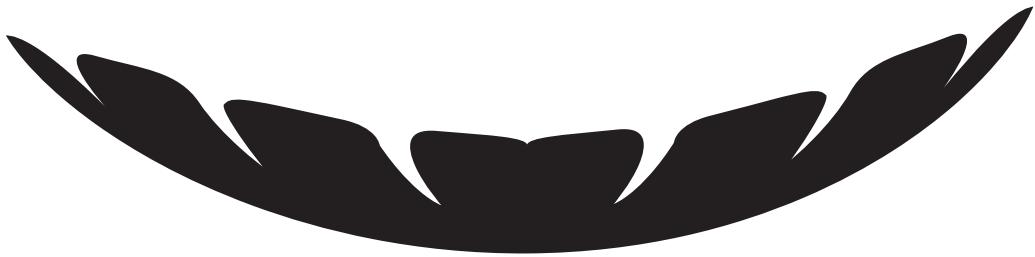
INSTRUCTIONS:

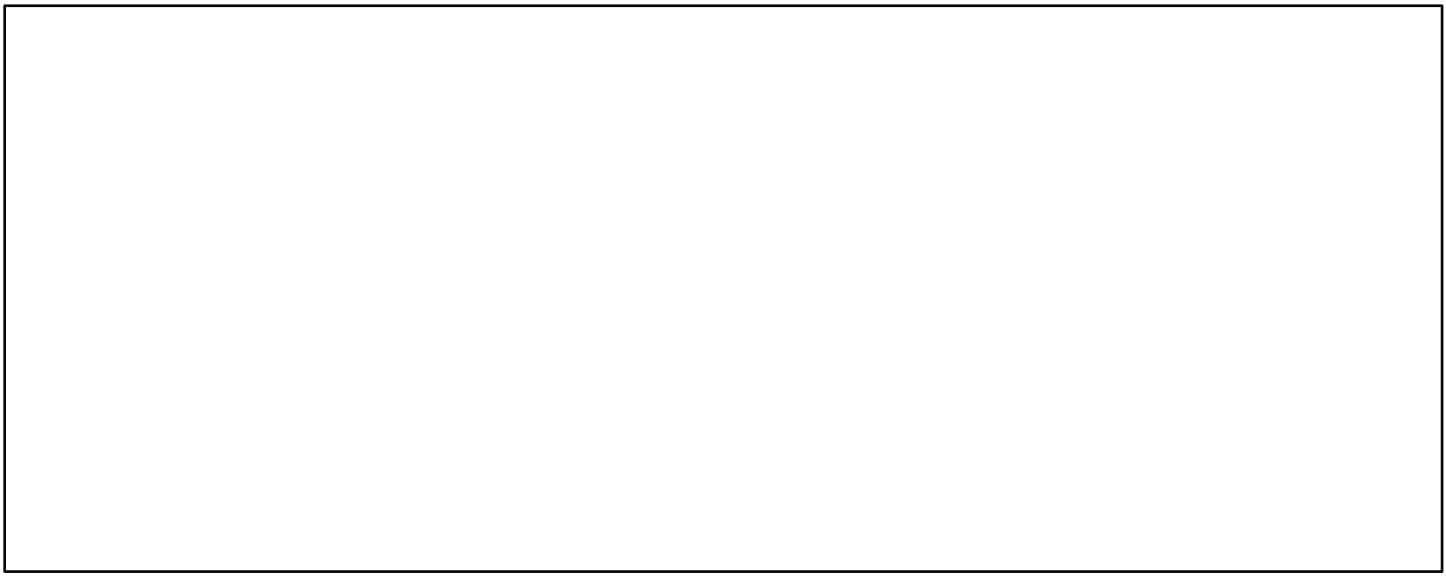
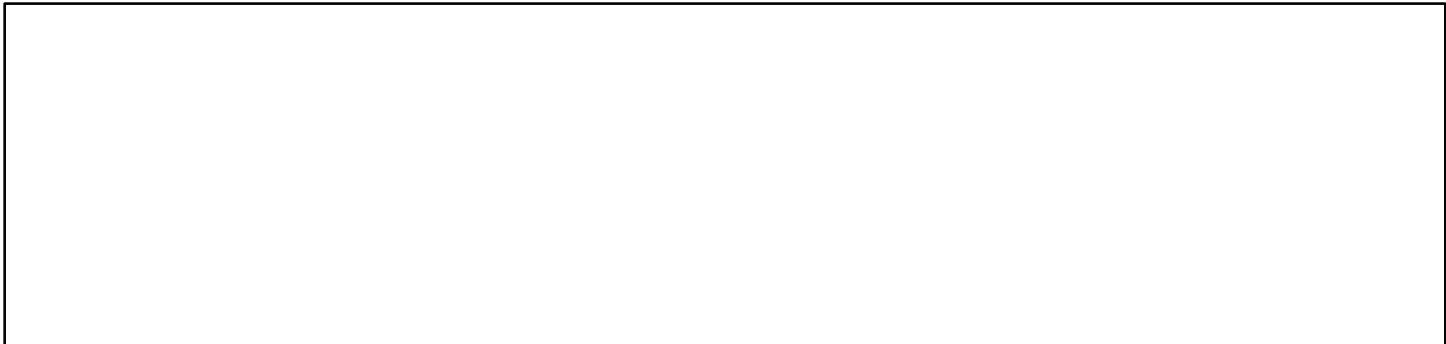
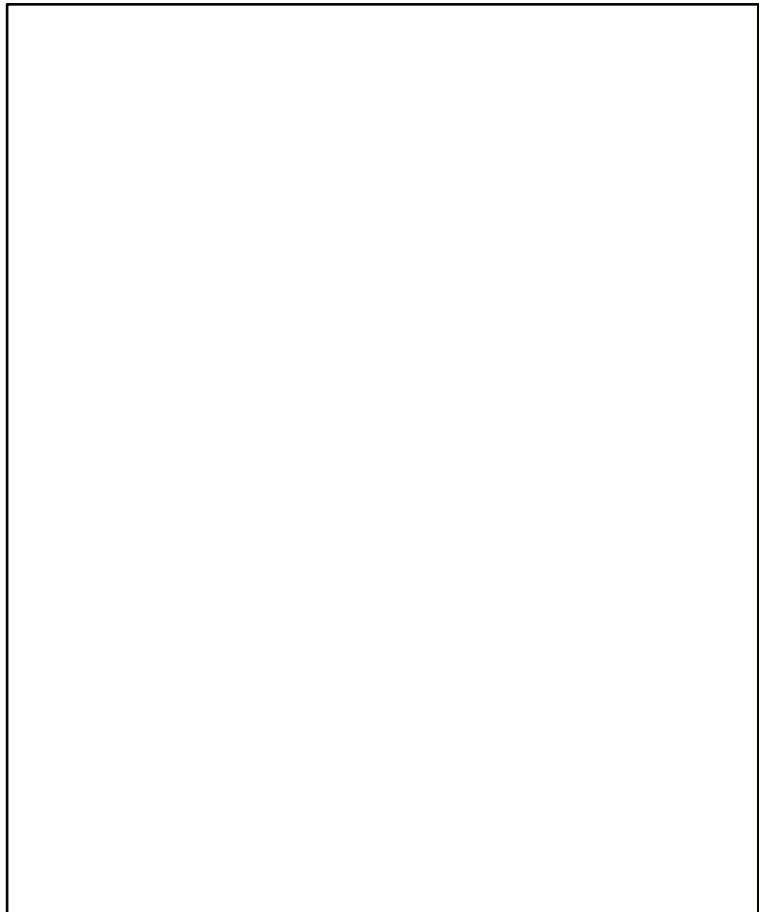
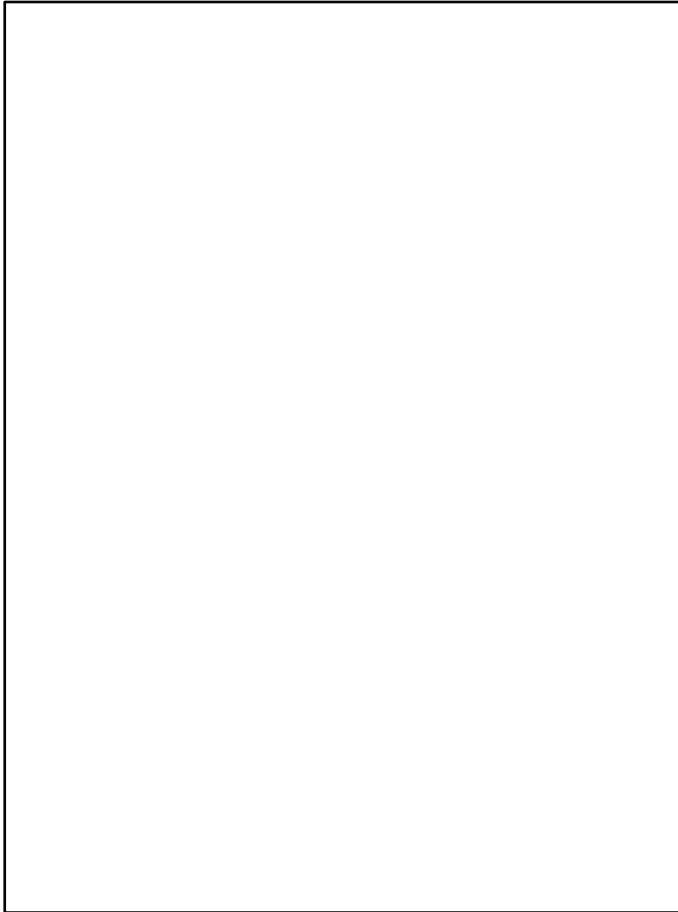
Welcome, Comic Book Creator! Your job is to create a comic strip that features Will Rogers' experiences as the Cherokee Kid and as a Wild West performer. You may choose to draw your own characters and/or print and cut images provided online by visiting www.willrogersed.org and clicking the image gallery menu item.

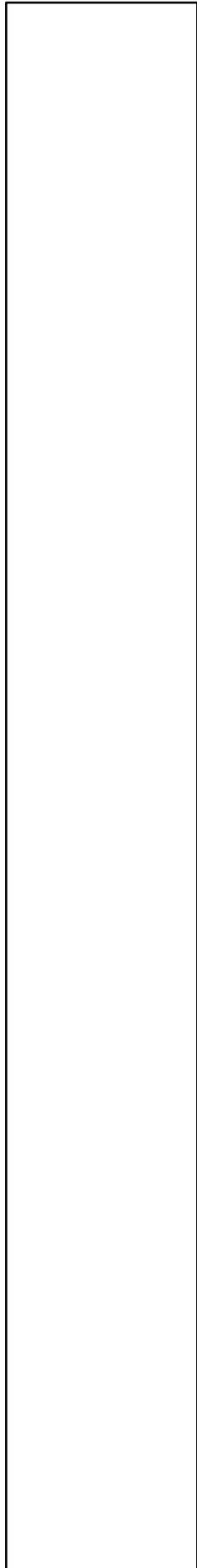
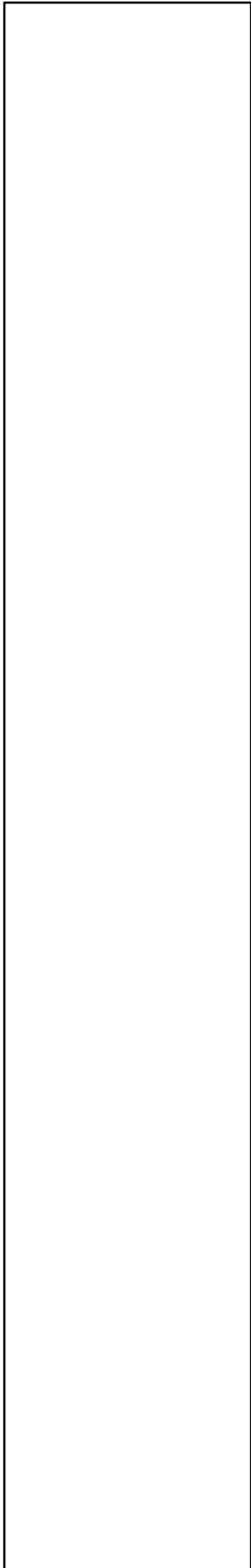
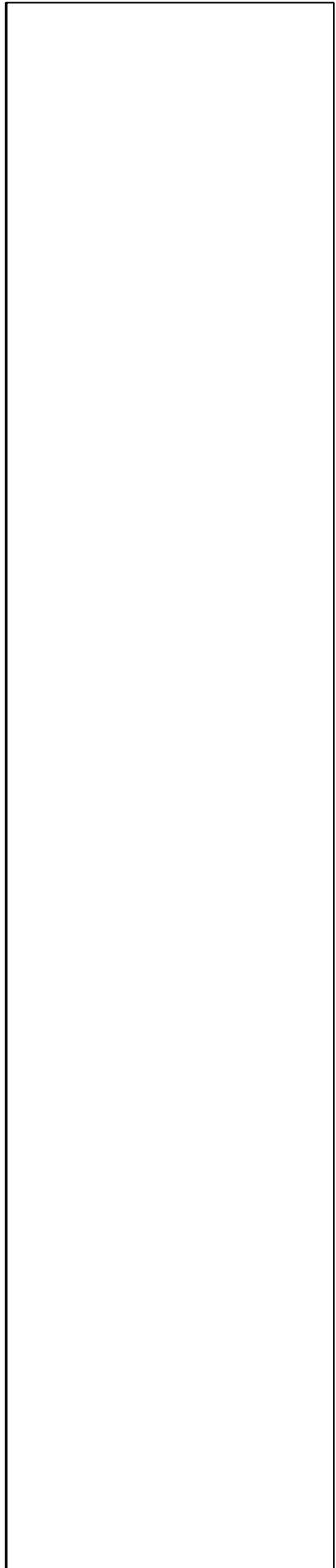
Don't forget to use the speech and sound bubbles provided to write your own script! Be creative and have fun!

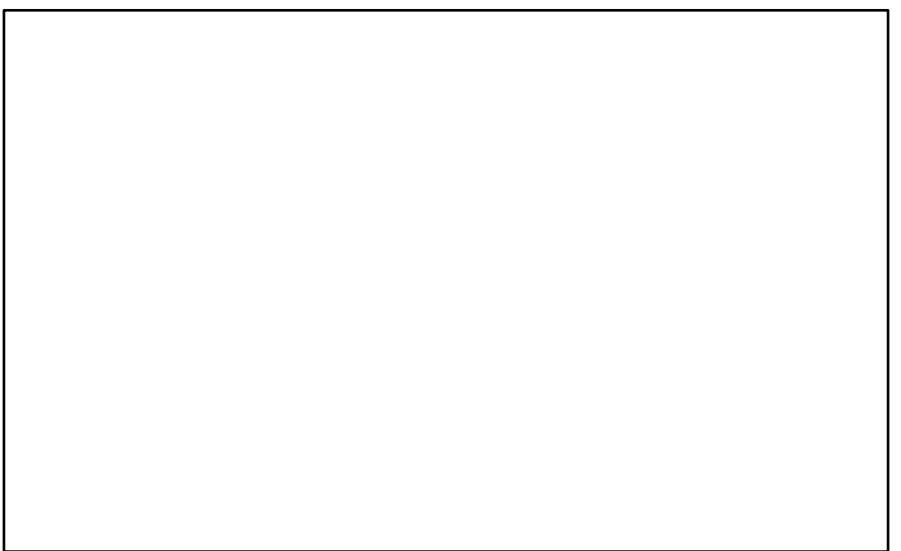
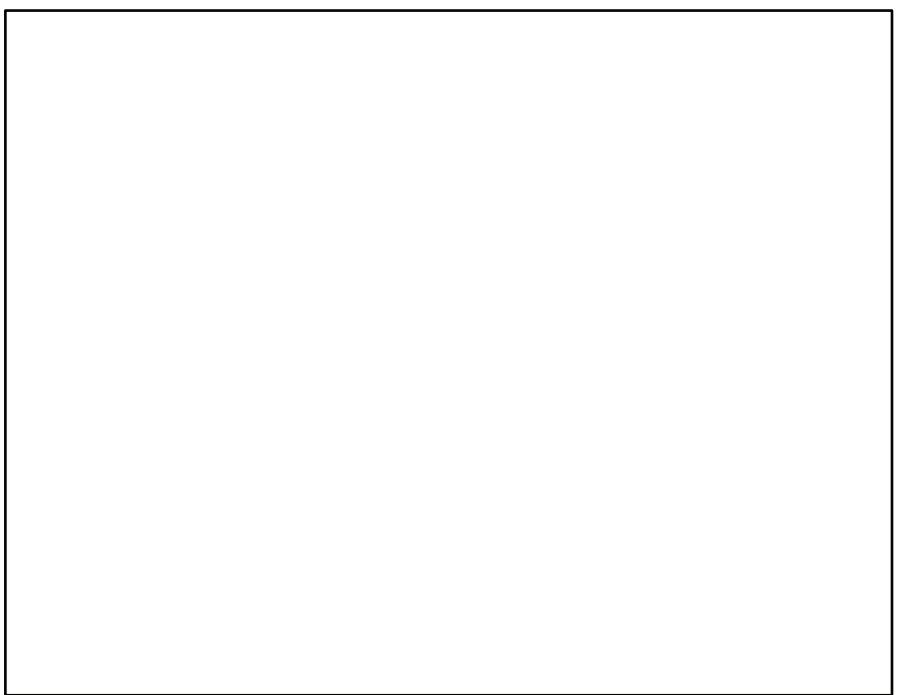
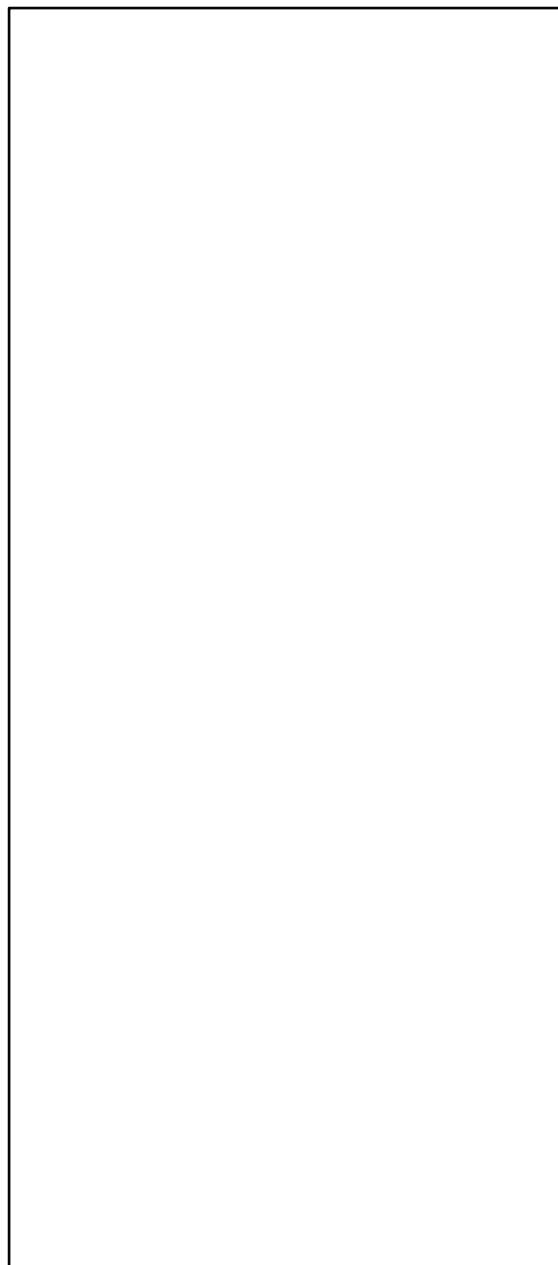
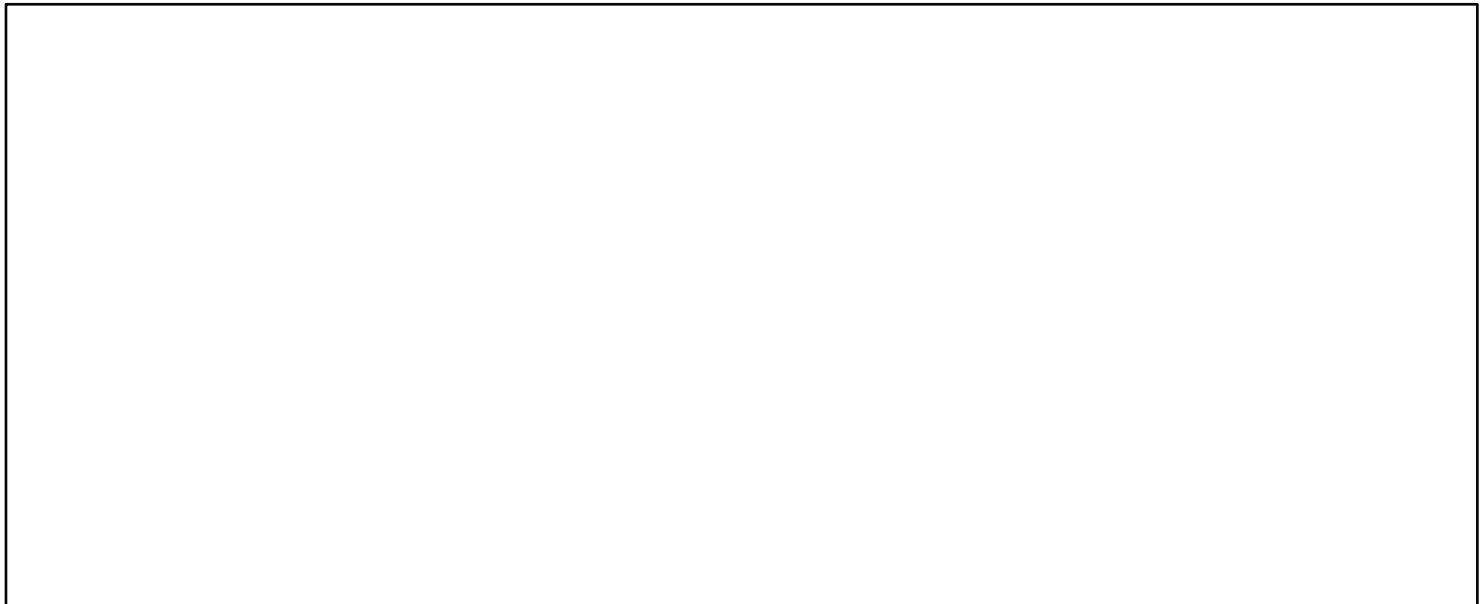
When you have finished, choose classmates to help you re-enact your comic in front of the class!

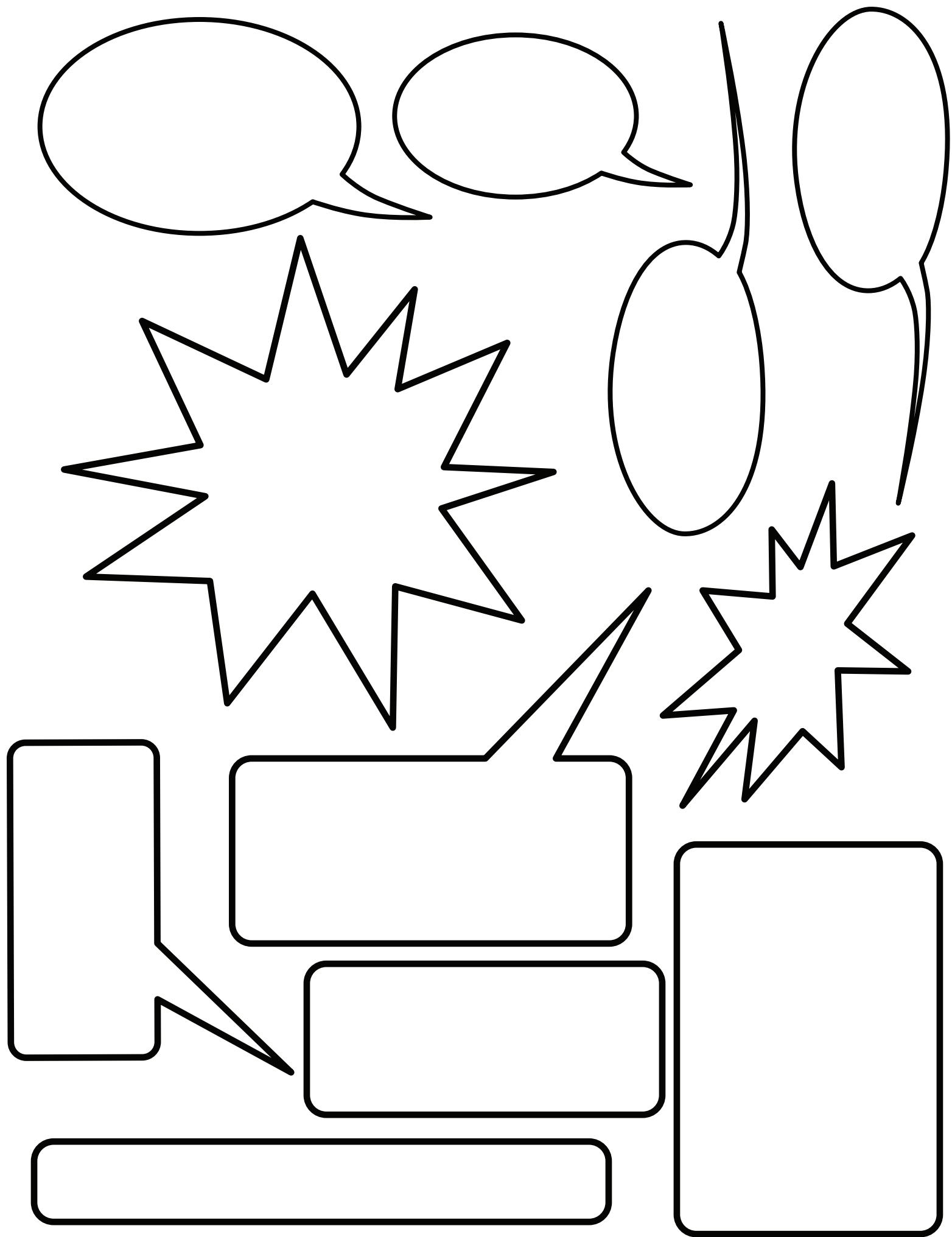
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STUDENT HANDOUT

LESSON 2: “ROPIN’ WILL”

9TH-12TH GRADE

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

CLASS: _____

CONTENT REVIEW

1. In 1902, Will Rogers “worked his way on a cattle boat” from South America to _____.

2. What role did the Texas Jack’s Wild West Show play in Will’s early adult life?

3. Will Rogers became famous as a rope performing cowboy and was headlined as the _____.

4. Rogers was lured back into show business at the 1904 World’s Fair held in what famous city?

5. What centennial event was the 1904 World’s Fair celebrating? Why was this event significant to Native Americans?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Does the idea of an Indian Cowboy seem strange? Why or Why Not?

2. In the film short, there were pictures from the 1904 World’s Fair of men dressed as Indians in headdresses. Such stereotypical images are common in history. Do you think that in 1904, these images would have seemed stereotypical? Why or Why Not?

3. Discuss the connections between the “closing” of the Western Frontier and the rise of the Wild West Show in America during the turn of the 20th Century?

STUDENT HANDOUT

LESSON 2: "ROPIN' WILL"
9TH-12TH GRADE

ANSWER KEY

CONTENT REVIEW

1. In 1902, Will Rogers “worked his way on a cattle boat” from South America to _____.

Africa or South Africa

2. What role did the Texas Jack’s Wild West Show play in Will’s early adult life?

It was Will's first chance to pursue a life as a full-time performer as an entertainer.

3. Will Rogers became famous as a rope performing cowboy and was headlined as the Cherokee Kid.

4. Rogers was lured back into show business at the 1904 World’s Fair held in what famous city? St.

Louis, MO

5. What centennial event was the 1904 World’s Fair celebrating? Why was this event significant to Native Americans?

The Louisiana Purchase - resulted in enormous land loss for Native Americans

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Does the idea of an Indian Cowboy seem strange? Why or Why Not?

TEACHER'S DISCRETION

2. In the film short, there were pictures from the 1904 World’s Fair of men dressed as Indians in headdresses. Such stereotypical images are common in history. Do you think that in 1904, these images would have seemed stereotypical? Why or Why Not?

TEACHER'S DISCRETION

3. Discuss the connections between the “closing” of the Western Frontier and the rise of the Wild West Show in America during the turn of the 20th Century?

TEACHER'S DISCRETION