

Possible Answers to Reflection Questions

Fight or Light

Introduction

- **What are the questions the historian wanted to explore?** *What was the impact of the 1910 wildfires on fire policy of the Forest Service over the next century? Why did those fires have such a strong and lasting impact?*
- **How do you think the historian explored his questions?** *This is an individual question. Students should think about what a historian would need to do to get answers to his or her questions. Some possible answers include interview people who either lived through the fires or had some other connection to the fires, read newspaper accounts, read government documents, and look at photographs.*

Methods

- **Look at the photographs in figures 3 and 4. What are some of the advantages of having photographs if you are a historian?** *Students will need to come up with their own answers, and they should give logical reasons for their positions. Some ideas include that seeing photographs can add different information to whatever documents are available; photographs sometimes help you to understand more fully what happened; and photographs might include information that was not recorded in writing.*
- **Historians must write history as accurately as possible. A story of historical fiction must be clearly identified. Why should stories of historical fiction be clearly identified as such?** *A story of historical fiction is also called a historical novel. Historical novels, while based on real events, include events that*

are made up. If a historical novel is not identified as such, people may mistakenly believe they are reading an accurate account of a historical event.

Findings

- **What one thing is still out of the control of people in regard to wildfires?** *The weather.*
- **How has research helped foresters to do a better job of managing fire?** *Research has shown that fire suppression is not the best approach to managing wildfires. It has also shown that fire is healthy for some forested ecosystems. Forest managers can now use fire as a tool to reduce the severe impact of large wildfires in areas where people live and work.*

Discussion

- **Before reading this article, did you think all wildfires should be put out?** *All of the answers to this and the following questions in this reflection question are individual. Students should back up their answers with logic. **How do you think your opinions about wildfires have been influenced by hearing about wildfires in the news? How is the shaping of your opinion similar to the reaction to the wildfires of 1910? How is it different?***
- **Describe another instance where learning about the past can help make decisions about the future.** *This is an individual question, and students may come up with a number of ideas. Some include the American Revolution and the Civil War, or the civil rights story of the 1960s. The story of invasive plants may also be noted. (People used to think that there was no danger in planting plants from other countries.) Students may come up with local examples.*