HANS HELPS CHANGE THE WORLD



by Kimberly Feltes Taylor
illustrated by Paul Fisher-Johnson

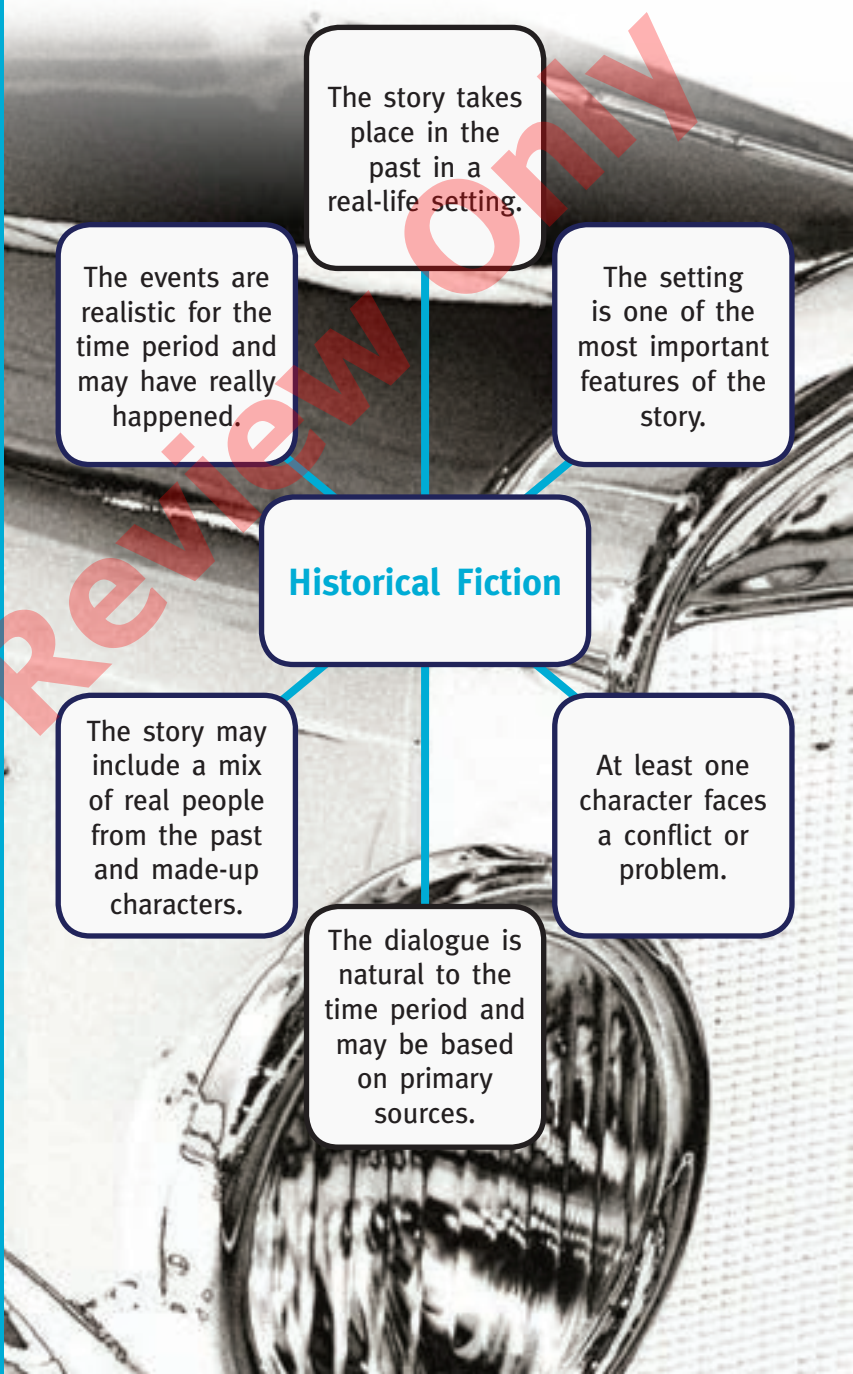
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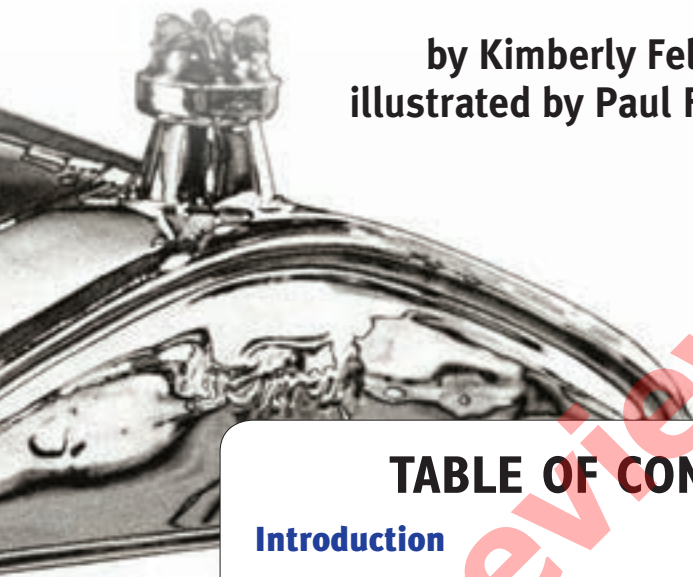
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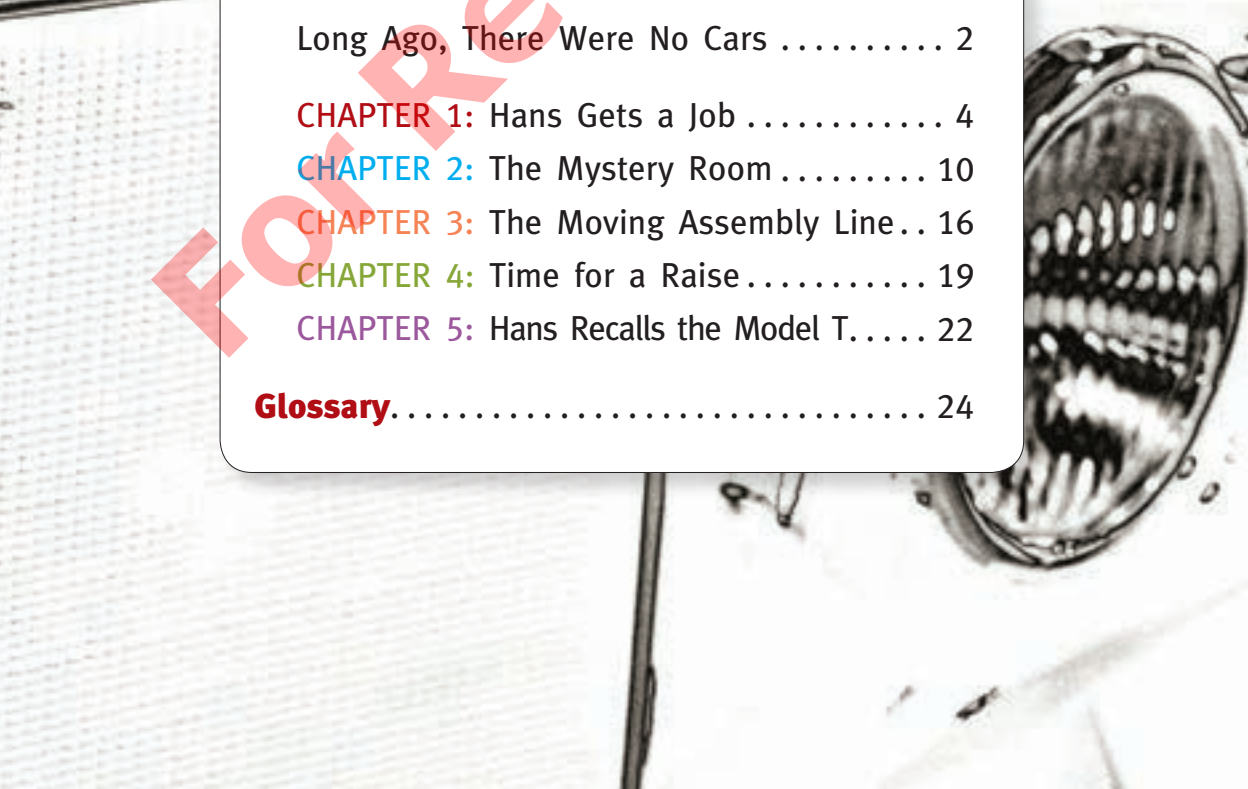
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Long Ago, There Were No Cars

Cars are a big part of life today. But long ago, there were no cars. People walked. They rode horses. They rode bikes. They also traveled on horse-drawn buggies and wagons. Going only three miles in a buggy could take an hour or more. Most roads were just dirt paths.

People who lived near water could also travel on boats. And, in the early 1800s, people began to travel by train. But boat and train travel could be expensive. As a result, most people rarely went more than fifteen miles from their homes.

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In the 1800s, different inventors were building new ways to travel. Early **automobiles** were very expensive. Only wealthy people could afford them. By 1900, America was home to more than seventy-six million people. But only about 8,000 people owned cars.

Henry Ford thought everyone should be able to buy a car, not just the wealthy. In 1903, he founded the Ford Motor Company in Detroit, Michigan. His goal was to make a car that any working person could afford. He achieved that goal—and much more. The Ford Motor Company has continued to make cars ever since.

This book tells the fictional story of a young man working at the Ford Motor Company more than a hundred years ago.

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Hans Gets a Job

Hans, his mother, and his father sat at the dinner table. On most nights, their dinners together were full of laughter and happy words. But tonight was different.



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"You're making a big mistake," Hans's father said. "Why would you want to work at a factory? Why would you want to be stuck inside all day? You should go work on Uncle Peter's farm."

"But I don't want to plow fields," Hans said. "I want to build automobiles!"

"Those horseless carriages are just a **fad**!" Hans's mother said. "But people will always need food. And Uncle Peter has no children. You could take over the farm one day."

"Life on a farm isn't for me," Hans said. "Trust me. I'm making the right decision. I start at the Ford factory tomorrow. So please, wish me luck!"

But later, when Hans went to bed, he wondered about the decision he had made. *Maybe they're right,* he thought. *Maybe I am making a mistake.*

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The next morning, Hans waved goodbye to his parents and began the twenty-minute walk to the factory. He was soon lost in thought about what his new life held for him. He wondered, *What task will they assign me? Will I be good at it? Will I make any friends? Will I get to meet the great Henry Ford? Will he like me?*

Before he knew it, Hans was just steps away from the front of the Ford factory. He saw a man standing near the entrance. *Maybe he is the factory supervisor,* Hans thought to himself. Hans walked over to the man and introduced himself.



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"It's my first day," Hans said nervously.

"Glad to have you," the man said. "Check in with the third-floor supervisor, Carl Weber."

Hans thanked the man and headed into the building. Another worker entering the building came up behind Hans. "That was Henry Ford!" he whispered.

Hans quickly turned around to stare at Henry Ford. "Come on," the worker said, pulling on Hans's arm. "You don't want to be late on your first day."



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