

Social Studies Thematic Unit: Who Are We?

Introduction

Goals and Aims:

The primary goal of this unit is to help the student to think analytically, to interpret events and ideas from different cultural and historical perspectives, and to help prepare students to be aware, reflective, and morally responsible citizens of the United States and the world. Building on their skills as historians, it is hoped the student role as a historical inquirer will continue. To get this off the ground at the beginning of the year, students will write a biography of someone of their choice, someone they have recognized as having history with a unique perspective that can be learned from.

Note: This tenth grade unit is designed specifically to coordinate with the ninth grade unit, Who are You?

Rational:

This global community of which the students are a citizen involves them in a complex and constantly changing world. To be able to function successfully in the local, state and national and world communities, students need to know who “we” as a nation relate to others and understand our common characteristics and differences. They will continue to see the history all around them and how they are part of that and how others are as well. Students continue their role as historians, making historical inquiry and asking questions about perspective and reliability of sources. Students are naturally curious and want to learn, and they can use the world they are familiar with to become even more familiar with their neighbors, their world, and themselves.

National Council for the Social Studies Standards

Time, Continuity, and Change
Individual Development and Identity

Alaska State Content Standards

History:

A1, A2, A6, A8, A9, B3, C2, C4.

English:

B3, C4, E1.

Technology:

A1.

Instructional Framework

Enduring Understandings:

1. All people have history.
2. The history of America affects all the people who live here; it connects us.
3. History is interpretive; it can be biased; it has a perspective.
4. In a culturally diverse society, students need to understand multiple perspectives from their own culture and from that of the society in which they live.
5. Historians make judgments about what to include/exclude in history.
6. The past is linked to the present and the future.
7. Historical data comes in many different forms.

Essential Questions:

1. What is historical perspective?
2. How are people's perspectives different?
3. How does my neighbor's history affect me?
4. How are historical contexts important to historical events?
5. How do we conduct historical inquiry?
6. What is bias and how is it identified?

Expected Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this unit students will:

1. Understand that everyone has history and culture and understand this can help to understand groups of people as well as individuals
2. History connects people.
3. Understand chronological frameworks for organizing historical thought.
4. Understand history is interpretive and can change.
5. Conduct an historical inquiry and author an historical narrative.
6. Reflect on how knowledge of their own and/or others will help them in their day-to-day lives and in the future.

Assessment Framework

Ongoing assessment happens when the teacher asks the class to define some of the concepts discussed previously. If there is lack of understanding, the teacher might ask for definitions to be written in the notebook. They will self-assess, as well as peer review and peer edit, their biographies, as well as get an assessment score from the instructor. Documents to help you do that are attached, but the teacher might wish to develop their own rubrics with the class for better buy-in with what is acceptable and what is not.

Instructional Design

Calendar:

Day 1. Review historical terms in small group format with butcher paper looking for group answers. Review small group work instructions such as a. Everyone participates and everyone discusses at the end in the large group presentation of your small group's answers. Ideas to cover are: What is historical significance? How does understanding history make you a better citizen? What is bias and how does one identify it? In what way do you need to be aware of bias in history? What is historical inquiry? Who

conducts it and about what? How is history interpretive? Does history ever change? Does history happen to people or to countries? The important parts of these questions, of course, is in the explanation. Reserve the last 20-25 minutes for time for groups to give answers. Assign particular questions to groups or let them pick.

Recommendation: Have students bring a spiral bound composition notebook or a bound composition notebook to use exclusively for this class. The sooner, the better.

Day 2. Review the previous day's events and vocabulary from the discussion questions. Have the students take notes on these in their notebooks. Put the essential questions on the wall for reference. If you're not using a notebook, paper would be fine.

Recommendation: Use the rest of the class to explain classroom rule, homework, etc. Play a get to know you game.

Day 3. Discuss the Who are We? Biography. Tell them to start thinking about who in their lives they would have access to and be able to learn from. Discuss what kind of questions one might ask, and then brainstorm some questions, using you, the teacher, as the person being interviewed. Discuss the difference between open and closed questions. Make sure students ask 4 or 5 questions about history, such as what in your lifetime has made you proud to be an American? Has there ever been a time you weren't proud and if so, what and why? Provide a couple of names from school personnel who you have already talked with about being interviewees for students who can't think of people to interview. The person being interviewed really needs to be at least 20 years older than the student. Give time in class to brainstorm at least 20 questions. Review the questions. Pass out a packet of parent permission for this project and possible people they are signing up to interview, as well as the timeline for the project. Each student must sign up for a particular person and turn in the parent permission for by Day 6.

Recommendation: Parent permission is good because parents love this assignment and if a student is asking questions of someone outside the home, it's good to have their permission.

Days 4 and 5. Have the students make a general timeline of the past 40 years to identify history benchmarks they might ask their person about. Things like civil rights protests, Vietnam protests, the Watergate scandal. Help them remember either in a small group format or in the larger whole class. This will give them a couple of chronological postholes for their interview. The next day is useful for determining what they know about the Age of Exploration and how Europeans came to be in the Americas.

Day 6. Parent permission slips should be in and students signed up for particular people to interview. Talk about decorum during an interview, taking notes, how to keep the interview on track, etc. Students should have their 20 or more questions approved, and should have a plan in the next week or so to conduct the interview. This involves them also having a plan as to where and when the interview will take place, if it will be by

phone, over email, on telephone or in person. This can go on the sign up sheet that the teacher keeps.

Day 7. Computer lab. Again, you need several days to accommodate the students conducting the interviews before you can schedule computer lab time for rough drafts. If this was all explained early, by day 3, then you should be about ready for the computer lab. Show students how to develop/access their own files. Anyone who finishes early may start to edit. They only have two days in the lab to do this, so it is crucial they have enough material. Add detail. Tell why this date is significant. If you are allowing time, develop a writing rubric for the biographies. If you don't wish to do this, you are welcome to the one attached. Rough drafts must be finished before by hand before a student is allowed to use the computer for this assignment. Final drafts should be about 4 pages typed, double spaced, in 14 point New York, Geneva, Times or Helvetica.

Day 8. Computer lab to complete rough drafts. Today is the last day in class for working on this.

Day 9. Peer editing. Schedule on day in class for peer response and editing. See attach worksheets. Have each student read and peer edit at least 3 – 4 other papers than his or her own. The big key here is to have students make real comments that are feedback to the writer and not just – “Yeah, it’s great.” See “Peer Review Worksheet”(double-sided) attached.

Day 10. Computer lab for final drafts. When students are finished, they should assess themselves using the form attached, “Author Writing Evaluation Form” or one the teacher created. After they turn in the piece, they need to reflect on the whole process in their notebooks. This form, rough draft, and peer edit worksheets are all handed into the teacher in a packet at the same time.

Days 11 - 13. Some teachers will want to have students present (talk about the person and some of the events – NOT read the biography to the class). Anyone who is not comfortable in front of the class sharing for any reason may come in at lunch or after school and get their presentation points by presenting just to the teacher.

Peer Review Worksheet

Name _____ Period _____

Name of author _____

The key to making peer review useful is to be very specific. Don't say, "I liked it." Say exactly what you liked, "I loved the part where you talked about your grandmother's attic. You had great description and I really like some of the description..like spider den, archaeological dig, broken furniture and broken dreams." Don't say, "You need more punctuation." Say, "Put commas in the list of cousins."

List at least 3 – 5 things/parts/phrases/words you specifically liked about the piece:

A few (3 things) that could use revision:

signature of person evaluating (get at least 3 – one may be a parent)

Turn these in with the rough draft. See other side.....

Peer Review Worksheet continued

Scoring scale: 1 poor 2 3 average 4 5 excellent

| Rough draft: | Score 1 – 5 | Comments and Suggestions |
|--|----------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Did the writer use a well-defined introduction? | | |
| 2. Were the ideas developed and interesting? | | |
| 3. Were supporting details and examples used? | | |
| 4. Was word choice engaging? | | |
| 5. Was the conclusion effective? | | |
| 6. Were the paragraph topic sentences related to the thesis? | | |
| 7. Did the paragraph order reinforce the content? | | |
| 8. Were the transitions effective and varied? | | |
| 9. Was sentence structure varied and interesting? | | |
| 10. Was punctuation/spelling free of errors? | | |
| 11. Was the author's voiced clearly evident and appropriate? | | |
| Other comments: Total score = | | |

Author's Writing Evaluation Form

Author _____ Period _____

| | Student author Assessment | Teacher Assessment | Points |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------|--------|
| 1. First draft completed on time. | | | |
| 2. Helpful suggestions given in Peer Editing Group to other Writers. | | | |
| 3. Revision notes made on first draft. | | | |
| 4. Revisions incorporated into final draft. | | | |
| 5. Careful editing of final draft for spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors. | | | |
| 6. Final draft completed on time. | | | |
| 7. Historical information used correctly. | | | |
| 8. Ideas supported with detail. | | | |
| 9. Sentences clear and understandable. | | | |
| 10. Appropriate format and organization. | | | |
| <p>Student author comments:</p> <p>Teacher comments:</p> | | | |

This is where the writing rubric would go – but it is in landscape layout and needs to be added manually.