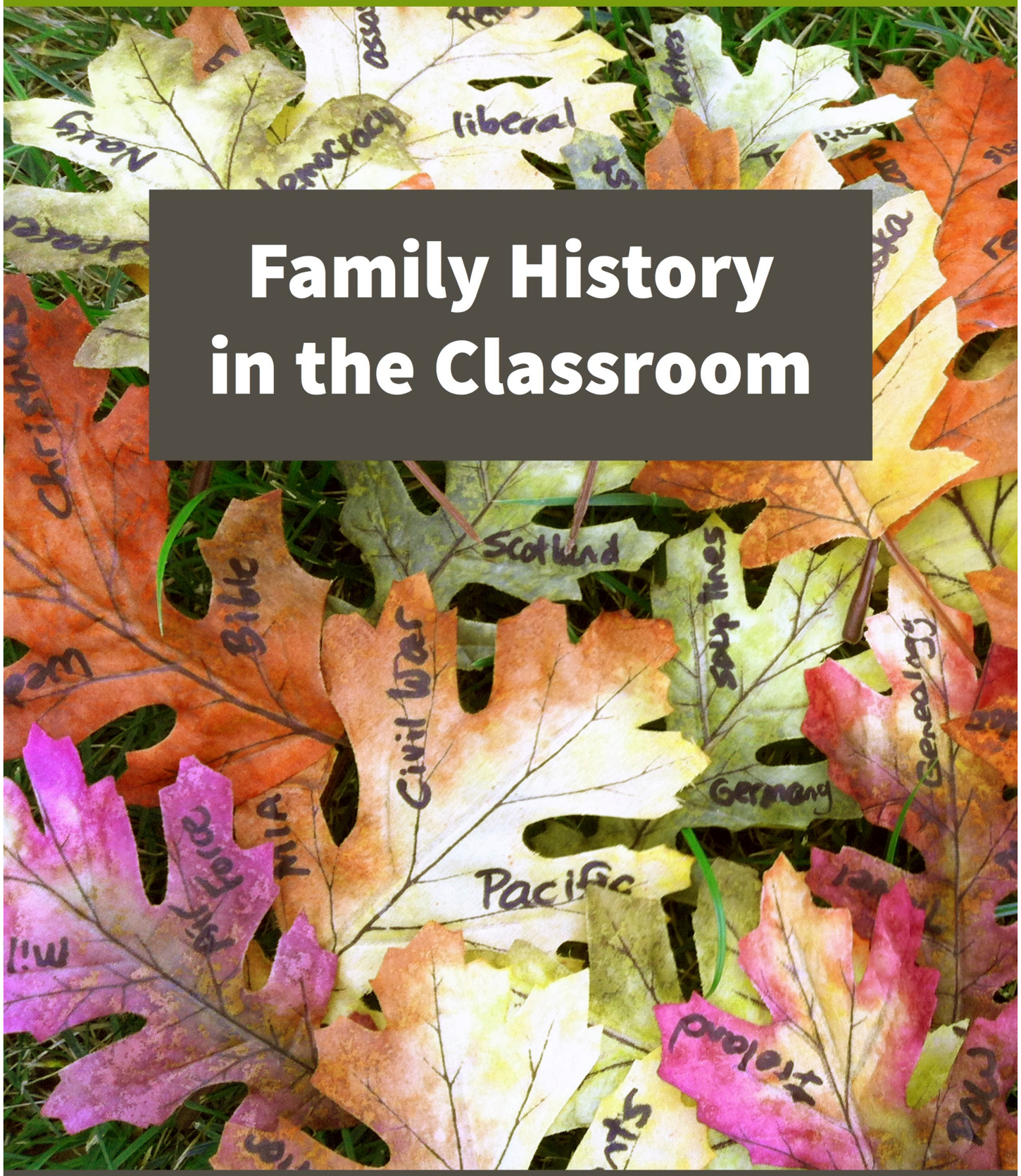

Family History in the Classroom

RESOURCES FOR AND REFLECTIONS ON TEACHING WITH FAMILY HISTORY

Family History in the Classroom

Resources for and Reflections on Teaching with Family History

LEARN NC ancestryK12™

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Schools and Teachers Involved in the Family History in the Classroom Project

The Ancestry K-12 Grant Program

The authors of the chapters in this enhanced digital textbook are educators who were granted access to Ancestry, Newspapers.com, and Fold3.com databases for the purposes of this project. If you would like to use these databases in your classroom, you may apply for a grant at http://ancestryk12.com/grant-program/.

The grant provides access to records in all three databases free of charge. Due to CIPA and COPPA regulations, it does not provide access to Ancestry's tree building functions or forums. For the specific terms of the grant license, visit http://ancestryk12.com/grant-program/.

Introduction

Taylor Elizabeth Corrigan
B: 12-12-1999- Altamonte Springs, FL

Michele Lynn Cairns
B: 08-31-1968- Wiesbaden, Germany

Reese Stoll McCauley
B: 05-19-1927- PA

Carrie Marie Carlson
B: 10-19-1899- PA
D: 10-28-1994- FL

Donald Neagley Mc Cauley
B: 08-29-1899- PA
D: 06-1968

Johan Erik Carlsson
B: 01-21-1845 Sverige, Sweden
D: ?- PA

Catharina Carlsson
B: 04-1864- PA
D?

Catharine Cassel
B: 1837
D?

Ole Carlson
B: 1817- Sweden
D?

Harry Cassel
B: 1809- PA
D?

Elizabeth Cassel
B: 1810- PA
D?

Jacob Bricker
B: 07-23-1676- Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany
D: 1706- PA

William Stephen Cairns
B: 9-11-1920
D: 08-04-1991- Broward, FL

Jennie White
B: 1892- Dublin, Ireland
D?

Thomas Cairns
B: 01- 1886- NY
D?

Stephen William Cairns
B: 08-05-1946- Middletown, NY

Arnold C. Wilbur
B: 01-26-1897- NY
D: 11-1972- Otisvil

John Leslie Wilbur
B: 12-1865
D?

Mary Jane Wilbur
B: 10-25-1841- Masonville, NY
D: 05-09-1922- Otisville, NY

John Wilbur
B: 02-1831- Owego, N
D: 1910

Solomon Wilber
B: 10-14-1799- NH
D: 12-01-1879- NY

Mary Ann Campbell
B: 1811
D: 01-02-1881- NY

Eliphalet Wilbur
B: 01-21-1801- NH
D: 02-03-1850- Owego, N

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Section 1

How and Why Ancestry Works in the K-12 Classroom

Teaching allows us to help students identify their place in the context of the greater world. Teaching history in any setting reveals how we came to be. Historical record serves as both justification for and judgment of our actions. Recent developments in the educational environment, led by the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, now call us to focus on skills through the lens of discipline-specific content.

Heather Williams, professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, explains that students must consider their place in the world.

The great challenge of teaching is now integrating literacy skills in all disciplines, encouraging and assessing analytical thinking, and creating opportunities for collaboration communication, and connection. As students practice, struggle, and succeed in these endeavors, they grow as intellectual beings and form an appreciation for their own education. This kind of in-depth growth only occurs when teens and adolescents are engaged. They grow when they buy in; they buy in when they see connections to their own lives and experiences. Challenging students to engage in family history has the potential to accomplish engagement and lead to achievement, but we found it offered so much more for both our students and ourselves as educators.

The Project and the Process

The goal of this project was to generate, implement, and evaluate K-12 curricula that demonstrate the value of family history and the vast digital archive of family historical sources provided by the Ancestry family of websites. A team of teachers was tasked to seek out and develop ways in which students might investigate their own personal history, that of their families

(however those families may be constructed), and how they fit into the context of community and history. An elemental theme throughout all of these challenges is the recognition, understanding, and creation of connections and relationships.

Families both past and present look very different from each other in their structure, status, and culture, but the connections found in family units are some of the most powerful in family members' lives. Those connections as well as the connections between educators, between educators and students, and most importantly among the students themselves are at the center of each chapter of this work.

In January of 2014, LEARN NC hosted a summit bringing together 10 educators from across the state of North Carolina to work with faculty and staff of the University of North Carolina. Over the next three days, the educators were exposed to both the resources available through the Ancestry databases and the ways in which researchers at universities across the country were using those resources. Members of Ancestry's corporate team shared research tools specific to the sites, as well as the purposes and opportunities that lie in Ancestry, Newspapers.com, and Fold3.com.

Dr. Robert Allen, of the University of North Carolina invited the team to visit his Digital Innovation Lab and a course on family history to see the work they've done create digital maps using primary sources. Dr. Heather Williams, another UNC historian. discussed marginalized voices in historical documentation and shared her research and publication on using family history research to document the lives of African Americans before, during and after the Civil War. Dr. David Hicks of the University of Virginia focused on new ways to engage middle grades students with primary sources and analytical thinking. Finally, Dr. Tim Marr of UNC's American Studies program spoke of the opportunities available to teachers beyond any academic goal. He focused on the changing nature of what family is in America, and the ways that researching and comparing family history can create connection among students during what may be a difficult times in their lives.

At times the phrase "drinking from a fire hose" came up, but each teacher was excited at the opportunity and potential of these extensive resources, and we all returned to their classrooms to begin our own individual processes of creation.

The vast potential of family history offers educators the opportunity to create and follow their own paths as personal experience and school or class culture may dictate. All of the teachers involved in this project left the summit with ideas and inspiration that transformed into varying forms of sound pedagogy. As we considered our own goals, we were able to bounce ideas off of each other and see the ways in which others hoped to integrate new understanding and a wealth of resources with different ages and subjects in mind.

Using Moodle, the LEARN NC staff created an online PLC as a place for the team to communicate, congregate, and collect ideas and resources. In that PLC, the group met a number of times to discuss progress and set up times during which the LEARN NC staff could visit each teacher as they implemented their ideas. By June, each teacher had spent time in the classroom completing all or part of their plans for the use of family history and the Ancestry.com resources. Everyone returned to the LEARN NC offices for a series of writing and feedback workshops where we discussed the concepts behind our work and the successes and challenges that we all experienced.

Each teacher has compiled a chapter of this work that reflects both their experience and the resources they can offer to teachers across the state and nation. As broad ranging as the abundance of resources available through Newspapers.com, Fold3.com, and Ancestry are, so too are the directions in which this work can be taken with all levels of middle and high school students. This work seeks to offer aspirational examples of what may be done, resources that can make the implementation of such important work possible, and reflections on the experience of ten educators who had the opportunity to do this in their own classrooms.

Pedagogy, Skills, and the Common Core

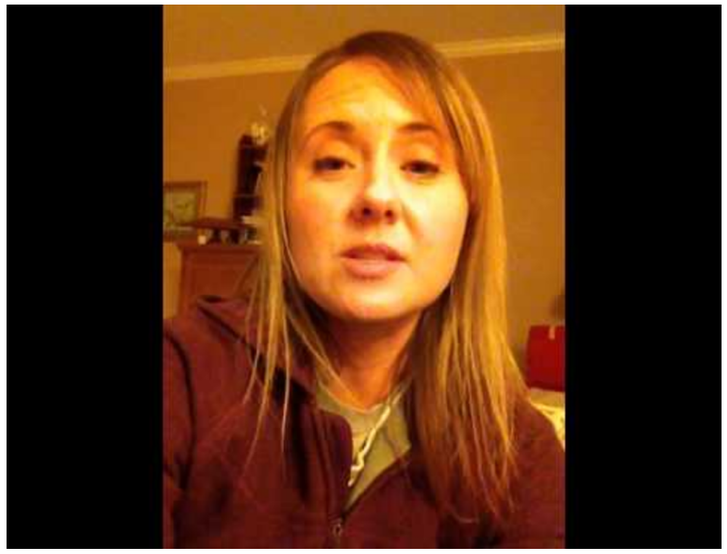
Middle and high school students see themselves both as stark individuals, and as regular people making their way. The intense pace of curricula often does not allow students to connect to

Professor Heather Williams and teacher Mike Williams explain how family history makes history relevant to students.

what they are asked to study and learn. At one time or another, we've all dreaded that one student who always asks ,"Why do I have to know this?!" Scientific theories and truths, great works of literature, and the functions of great writing, as well as sweeping movements in history, all build the context of the greater world, but rarely do they encourage students to consider their own place in that context. Family history inquiry can do just that. As students navigate one of the most exciting, turbulent periods of their lives, family history offers them the chance to look in detail at the experiences of others and compare the joys and challenges of those individuals with their own. In short, it can create educational relevance by bringing stories, experiences, and history to life.

The development and practice of primary source analysis skills were among the elemental goals of all teachers involved in this project. Historical records are making their way into the 21st century, digitized into vast databases such as those offered by Ancestry. The ever growing access available to students offers both opportunity and challenge. During the Summit, Dr. Allen referred to the wealth of access available through Ancestry as "the awesomeness of hyper abundance." The sheer amount of resources could be as daunting and intimidating as it is exciting. If students are to be able to navigate that challenge and take advantage of the opportunities available, they must spend time in close contact with a variety of historical sources. As a school librarian, Kendra Allen sought to use the variety of resources to develop multiple literacies, and collaborated with another teacher, Tommy Ender, to model their own genealogical work as varying examples of how digital historical sources can be used in first person family research.

Discussions about the opportunities and pitfalls of first person versus third person research began informally during the summit, and became more nuanced through further online discussion. While Mike Williams and Wendi Love used third person research to invite high school and middle grades students to reflect on the ways in which significant historical events shaped their local landscape, Jeff Nesbitt sought to explore the ways in which place and regional identity affect reactions to major events. As an early college English teacher, Elizabeth Wiggs was able to use historical sources to not only help students develop the ability to create narratives based on historical sources, but encourage them to tackle increasingly difficult texts. While all of these teachers' work is presented as an example of the wide variety of possible use of these resources, their inclusion is also meant to act as conceptual inspiration for any and all of us who realize the pedagogical value of family history as an educational tool.



Kendra Allen muses on the decision to pursue first or third person research.

The Common Core State Standards Initiative calls for three major shifts in the way that language arts, literacy, and social studies are to be taught. In order to prepare for the rigor of college and succeed in modern careers, students need to engage with complex texts and academic language, draw and communicate evidence-based conclusions, and develop their content knowledge through the use of analytical and critical thinking

skills. Historical source inquiry, a central theme in all of the projects developed in this work, is an essential part of implementing the Common Core State Standards. Family history research offers students of all abilities and backgrounds both challenges and opportunities as they pursue this type of inquiry, requiring students to create their own understanding and build skills that will be valuable across all curricula and for the rest of their lives.

Jeff Nesbitt explains how the Family History in the Classroom project ties into the Common Core.

Compassion, Connections, and Collaboration

Education is not only meant to develop cognitive skills, but to help students grow as individuals. Family history research not only revealed students' place in history, but also encouraged them to consider their own individual identities and cultivate interpersonal connections through collaboration and shared experience. After examining her own family history and the reasons that she became an educator, Sarah Henchey used family historical inquiry to lead her students to develop and recognize their own powerful identities. Elizabeth Wiggs redirected her own research and the course of her curriculum development after examining race and gender biases evident in historical records . Mike Williams also recognized this theme as he led students with historically marginalized backgrounds to see the impact that an individual can have on his or her community. When these students began to see themselves and their own value in their work, they engaged further with the material because they became invested in their own empowerment and growth not only as students, but also as individuals.

This kind of empowerment shows on students' faces when they gain confidence through academic and social discoveries, making the effort of quality teaching worthwhile. Collaboration between students, teachers, and community members offers each of these educational stakeholders opportunities for building confidence and intellectual relationships. Many of the chapters included here involve students working in teams to encourage and facilitate

family research in varying ways. Elizabeth Wiggs invited UNC history professor Heather Williams to videoconference with her class so that they could benefit from an academic text and discussion with its author. These shared experiences among students, between students and teachers, and even between students and practicing historians created greater understanding of the power of historical resources and the lives that they can reveal.

Students involved with these interactive projects were also able to discover new connections through collaboration and develop empathy toward other individuals and cultures. Middle and high school students often feel alone and flock to those of similar circumstance and backgrounds. Historical inquiry using the kinds of resources available in the Ancestry databases can offer students the opportunity to gain perspective on the lives of those around them that come from different cultures and backgrounds.

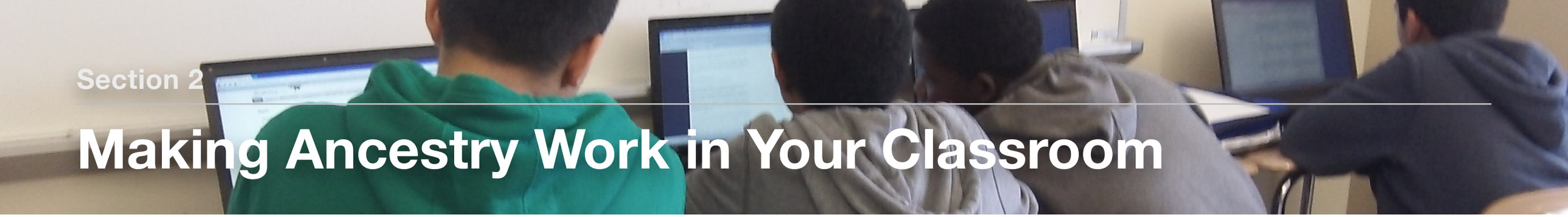
Jeff Nesbitt encouraged students to seek out similarity among the immigrant stories of their parents, grandparents, and ancestors with the goal of creating understanding between students of varying backgrounds Wendi Love designed her entire curriculum to help her ESL students empathize with students of other cultures and recognize how cultural history can affect the actions of those around them. Discoveries like these go beyond standards, grades, and tested skills to point to the heart of what teaching and education can be.

Wendi Love explains how she used teaching about African-American history to build empathy in her ESL students.

Teachers come into the profession to make connections with students and share their excitement about teaching and learning. Changing content, increasing bureaucracy, and expanding responsibilities all pull us away from those original goals as educators. The collaborative nature of this project reinvigorated all those who took part in it, and offers its audience the opportunity to seek out that kind of shared experience. Working with teachers from across the state as well as faculty from the University of North Carolina reminded us all why we do what we do. The teachers working on this project were able to learn in a collegial atmosphere. Historians, ethnographers, and professors joined with middle and high school teachers to create a cloud of ideas from which each individual was able to develop and implement educational opportunities of their own design.

These designs would not have been possible without the professional learning community created by that collaboration. The freedom to develop our ideas (insert command center pic) and learn from each other as we worked made the experience more powerful. That kind of supportive academic environment translates into the classroom as we all continue to develop and improve our efforts with the confidence that such an atmosphere can encourage more powerful learning experiences for students and more connected communities wherever we as educators are able to take it.

Mike Williams discussed the connectedness that the study of family history can bring to communities that haven't been part of the dominant historical narrative.



Section 2

Making Ancestry Work in Your Classroom

It is easy to associate this type of project with a Social Studies class, but the educators working on this project tailored it to fit a variety of disciplines at both the elementary and secondary levels. One reason the project worked well in so many different settings was the volume of resources available to these educators. Resources such as Ancestry, fold3.com, and newspapers.com. The diversity of resources available through Ancestry also provided educators opportunities to explore new approaches to teaching.

One of these was the opportunity to including members of the larger community when planning this project. Some educators ended up connecting with local historians. Others encouraged their students to make connections with kin keepers and oral historians. In all instances, the educators encouraged their students to establish relationships to learn more about themselves, their family ancestry, and history.

While all of the educators on the project experienced an element of success in carrying out this project, they also faced challenges. Three major challenges stood out: time, technology, and incorporating all students into the project. In the following sections, you will find suggestions to help you plan your Ancestry project and anticipate these challenges.

“Time is a Beast!”

Educators know the power of time in a school. Time can be a teacher’s best friend or our worst enemy. Time frames the amount of learning taking place in the classroom. Managing time was, by far, the biggest challenge of this project. One educator, Wendi Love, remarked how she wished she could have had more time for this project. Another educator, Jeff Nesbitt, wrote that certain life events (in his case, the birth of his son) limited the time he had to carry out the project. Tommy Ender constantly paid close attention to his lesson plan calendar as state testing season approached. Susan Drakeford wrote about how she simply ran out of time in trying to reach her goals and objectives for this project. Time is, in Wendi Love’s words, “a beast” to consider.

To ensure your Ancestry project achieves all of its goals and objectives, it is very important to consider time when planning your Ancestry unit. Kristen Ziller and her collaborator, Laura Richardson, will implement this project as a year long

assignment in the future. Sarah Henchey suggested implementing this project following a long break and continuing it for a number of weeks. Beverly Schieman started work on this project with a couple of students through a summer program with the hope of continuing into the traditional school year. As you plan, consider the timing within a single class period as well as across the unit.

Technology

Whether it is the ability secure a cart full of laptops or tablets for a certain time, using computer labs on certain days, or even getting access to technology in your classroom, educators have to find ways to connect with students who enjoy full reciprocity with the Internet. These students contribute to online dialogue as much as gaining information from it. This family history project relies on this reciprocal association. Ancestry's vast collection of online databases has changed the way individuals can research family history. One example is fold3.com, which houses records from all branches of the United States military. Before fold3.com was available, the process of locating primary military documents was quite difficult. The challenge is ensuring students have access this database and others for this project, in addition to learning how to navigate them.

The educators in this project encountered a wide variety of technology experiences. In Susan Drakeford's case, she had minimal access to technology at her school. Susan managed to counter this challenge by requesting access for a set number of Fridays. While she was able to guarantee her students access to technology for a number of classroom days, the limited number of days forced her to cut out important aspects of her original lesson plan.

Access to technology remains a difficult process in many schools. When planning this unit, consider the overall access to technology in the school setting. If your school has in-house computer labs or mobile technology carts, then it is important to understand the protocol for securing access on the days needed for this project. Also, it is important to understand the level of outside Internet access students have. Depending on your circumstances, taking advantage of outside access and personal devices may prove to be useful in responding to these challenges.

Teachers and schools tend to have limits or prohibitions on students using personal devices. If you plan to allow student use of mobile devices, it is imperative that you shared your Ancestry project plans with administrators first. If you justify use of mobile technology in the Ancestry project by demonstrating its unique ability to support learning goals and curriculum objectives, then school administrators will be more inclined to allow its use. Kendra Allen and Tommy Ender's students had access to personal mobile devices. Using these devices in the classroom, however, ran counter to their school's policy. To resolve this

challenge prior to implementation, Kendra and Tommy met with the school administration to discuss the project at length. Only after the administrators granted permission for the use of mobile technology in class did Kendra and Tommy implement the project.

Before beginning your Ancestry unit, survey the technological resources at your school and outside the school setting. Once these tasks are completed, then you will have a better idea how you can use technology to bring this project to life in your classroom.

Incorporating All Students

Developing and delivering a family ancestry project needs to take into account the immediate backgrounds of the students. The students in our classrooms come from a wide variety of cultural and academic perspectives. Educators' experiences reflected those perspectives.

Sarah Henchey had to pay close attention to how she presented the project to her students. Many students in her class did not fit the "normal family unit" structure often recognized socially. She had students who were adopted, lived in single-parent settings, or were being raised by individuals other than their biological parents. Teaching newly arrived Karen students, students from the Burma/Thailand region of Asia, Beverly Schieman noted that these students came from settings where documenting family histories were not common social practices.

Elizabeth Wiggs mentioned how at one point of the unit, her students refused to continue working. The students had just completed a benchmark exam modeled after a state test and felt defeated, losing confidence in their academic ability. She ultimately convinced them to work through constant positive reinforcement. Mike Williams's students' interest in United States history increased as the unit progressed. Initially, his students felt little connection to history, but as they worked through the project, they felt their histories were more visible now to them than they had previously been. Finally, Jeff Nesbitt mentioned how the students in his project actually volunteered to participate via an enrichment class. His students continued engaging in dialogue long after he left the project.

Given the complexities of learning family history, it is very important to take into consideration the classroom's demographics. Teachers need to know general information about their students' immediate backgrounds. Conversations with previous teachers, guidance counselors, special education teachers, and school administrators will help you learn more about the students. It is also a good idea to ask the students themselves for guidance. You could ask questions such as "What are your thoughts on doing family research?" or "What are your thoughts on doing online research?" This approach will help teachers gauge the students' interest levels and provide glimpses into potential areas of difficulty.

Conclusions

The Ancestry project provides a myriad of learning possibilities for educators and students. For educators, this project presents pedagogical opportunities to connect primary sources and personal family histories with curricula already in place.

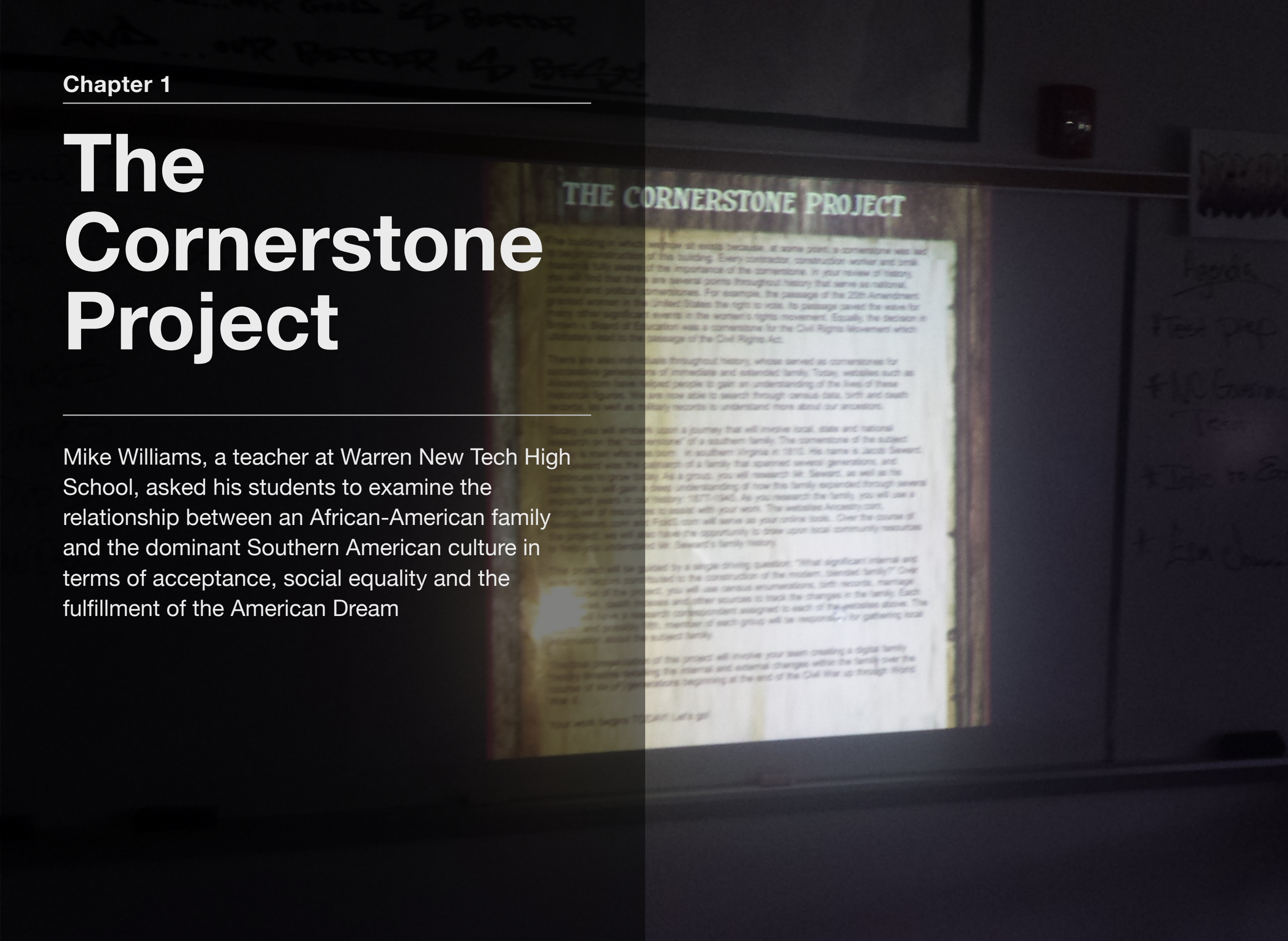
Educators tailored this Ancestry project to fit the needs of their students. This project engaged them from the onset by providing opportunities to study themselves, their ancestral lineages, or the lineage of local community members or celebrities. The project allowed them to associate certain events within their ancestral history with historical events that took place at the same time.

Some educators connected their students with local historical narratives. The following chapters, written by the educators themselves, discuss in detail their experiences, reflections on the ancestry project, and offer models for designing future projects.

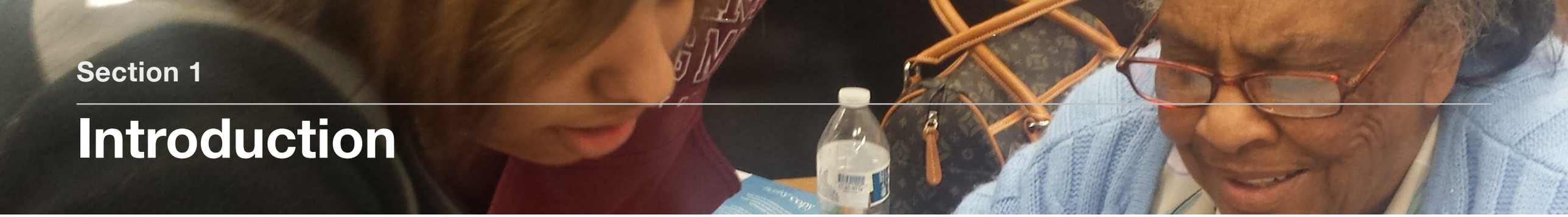
Chapter 1

The Cornerstone Project

Mike Williams, a teacher at Warren New Tech High School, asked his students to examine the relationship between an African-American family and the dominant Southern American culture in terms of acceptance, social equality and the fulfillment of the American Dream



Mike Williams introduces the Cornerstone Project.



Section 1

Introduction

THE CORNERSTONE PROJECT

"The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone"

- Psalms 118:22

Deeply entrenched in the history of Warren County, a rural, poor community in northeastern North Carolina, lie stories of economic, racial and environmental struggle. Well-known as the "Birthplace of the Environmental Justice Movement," it is a county that is largely African-American and overwhelmingly poor. The ethnic composition of the county has its roots in a strong agricultural tradition dating back to the era of colonial exploration. Many of the residents in the community have a common ancestry forged together by way of the transatlantic slave trade.

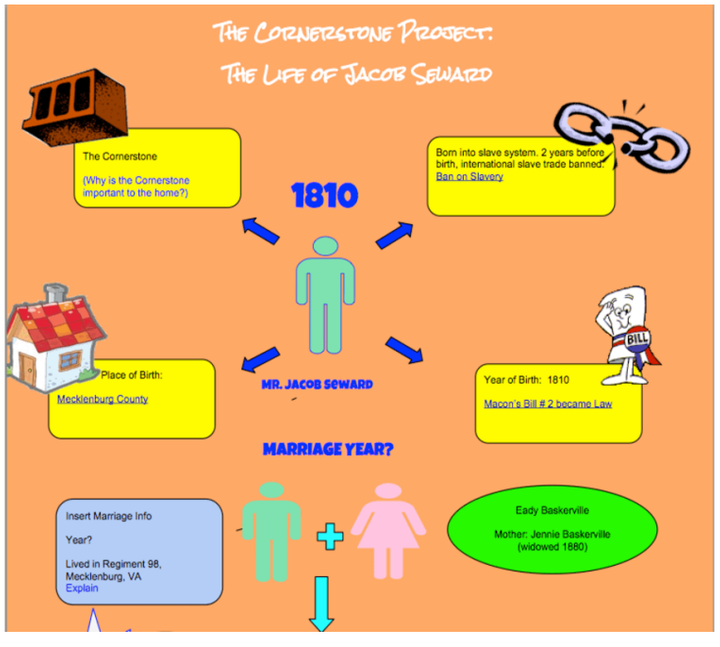
Local students are well aware of their roots in the historical "Black Second" Congressional District. It is doubly a source of pride and pain for those keenly aware of the legacy of the antebellum south. A deep understanding of the African-American struggle for equality and the quest for the American Dream formed the basis for the "Cornerstone Project." The project is designed to promote historical and cultural awareness and serve as a tool to empower all the cultures in the community.

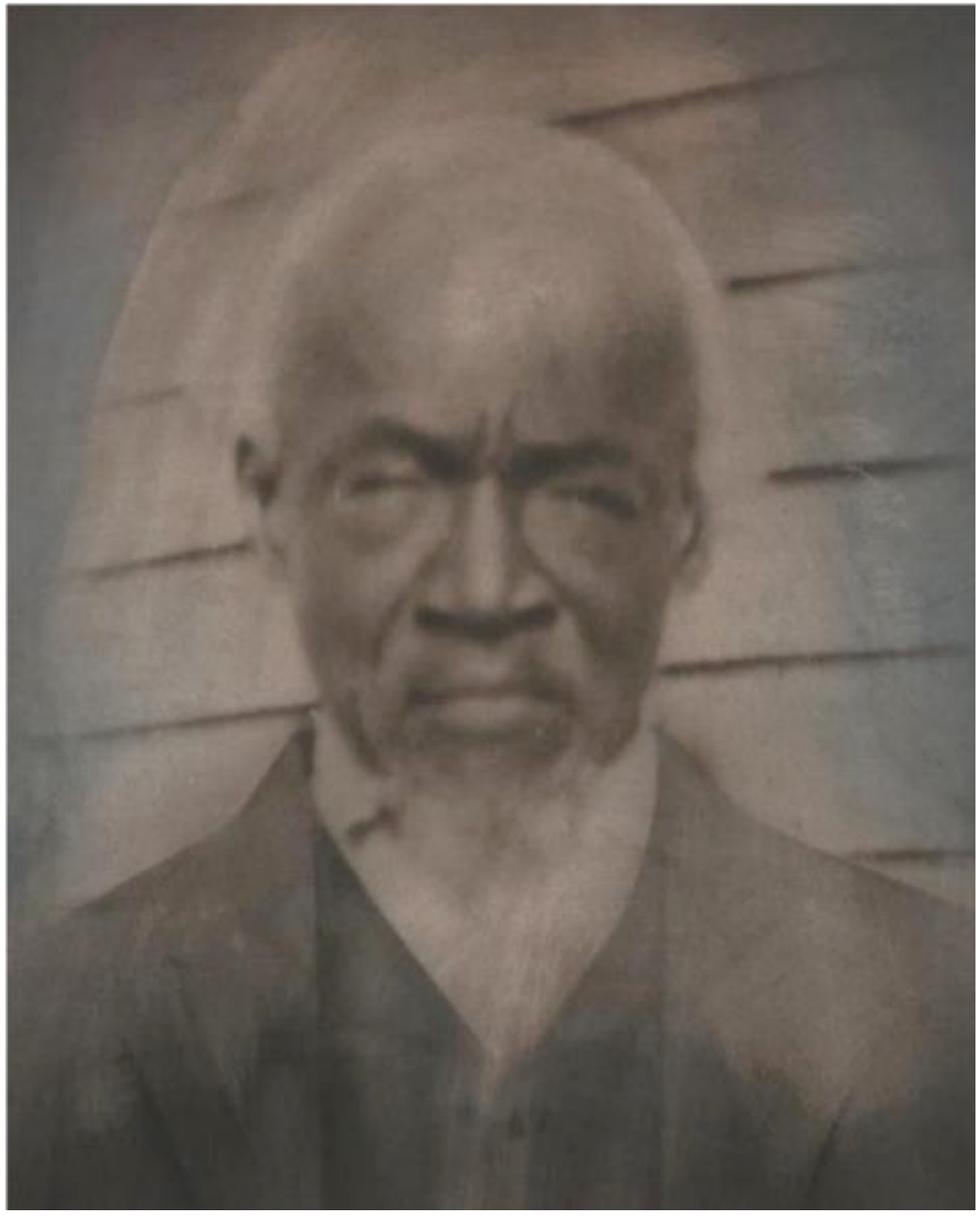
The primary objective of the project is to critically examine the relationship between a post-Civil War, African-American family and the dominant Southern American culture in terms of acceptance, social equality and the fulfillment of the American Dream. The project used the combined resources from Ancestry, Newspapers.com and Fold3.com, along with local community resources, to create a comprehensive view of circumstances affecting the "construction" of the family.

The interplay of the local, state and national circumstances were all born of the American experience, and, appropriately, America is the proverbial builder in this, the Cornerstone project.

The final student product is the creation of an infographic family tree detailing the changes within the family over the course of four generations. Students relied on the Ancestry websites, along with the New Tech learning platform, ECHO, and Google Drive for online collaboration, documenting research, and creating the infographic family tree. The project concluded with students presenting their findings to local citizens and community leaders, as well as members of the subject family.

Infographic: US History





Mumford Smithson, son-in-law of Jacob Seward and the patriarch of the Smithson family.

Section 2

Foundation

THE CORNERSTONE PROJECT

Cornerstone:

/ˈkôrnərˌstōn/

1. A stone that forms the base of a corner of a building , adjoining two walls.

1.1 An important quality or feature on which a particular thing depends or is based.

Essential Skills:

✦ Analyze the American political, economic and social turning points from the early 1800s to World War I and the effects on the growth and migration of the subject family.

✦ Critically examine the relationship between a post-Civil War, African-American family and the dominant Southern, American culture in terms of acceptance, social equality and the fulfillment of the American Dream.

✦ Extract significant ideas and recurring historical themes from the available resources to create a written and oral presentation detailing the progression of the family from 1810 to 1920.

Background:

Nathaniel Macon, the North Carolina Statesman and Revolutionary War Veteran, remains a local hero to the citizens of Warren County, North Carolina. As he proposed “Macon’s Bill Number 2” in an effort to end British Trade Restrictions and avoid a second war with Great Britain, the foundation of our subject family was being laid in a rural community in Mecklenburg County, Virginia. The cornerstone was laid in the year 1810, and his name was Jacob Seward.

Mecklenburg County, Virginia

Located in Southern Virginia, Mecklenburg County was formed out of Lunenburg County in 1765.

Much like many southern towns, Mecklenburg County had a slave population that represented sixty three (63%) percent of its total population. The same racial percentages remain in this area to this day. It was among these numbers that the subject of our unit, Jacob Seward, was born. He was born in the 1810 to a farming family. Contemporaneous with Jacob's birth, the United States was experiencing a tense rivalry with Great Britain. The rivalry, intensified by British trade restrictions and its encouragement of American Indian resistance, would later result in the country's second war with royal power, the War of 1812. Through the digital archives of Ancestry.com, Newspapers.com, Fold3.com and other local resources, the students were able to understand the impact of the War, and other local/national events on the life of Jacob Seward.

The Students:

The target group of 24 students were enrolled in a semester-long United States History course. The students attended Warren New Tech High School, a member school of the New Tech Network . As a New Tech Member School, the curriculum is based on the Project Based Learning (PBL) model where the learning outcomes of collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity guide students in applying academic content to authentic problems.

The core of Project Based Learning (PBL) lies in the collaborative work environment. PBL is centered around student-centered, group learning. It offers students the opportunity to work hands-on in teams to solve essential questions and engage in the process of academic discovery. In our rural area, the New Tech students hail from farming and blue collar households where hands-on work has been the norm, and, as such, they are comfortable completing assignments using similar methods. The

goal of the cornerstone project was to tap into the learning outcomes and the students' varied experiences as they track the growth of the heirs of Jacob Seward.

While the project was based in the Social Studies curriculum, the project could be applied to English Language Arts (ELA)courses by modifying the project and final product to literacy-based activities. I have discussed the option of creating a cross-curricular project with an English teacher who also has the same grade-level students. The project could also be used in Digital Media Courses where students would focus on using the various technology resources to create a digital family tree, infographic, or similar product.

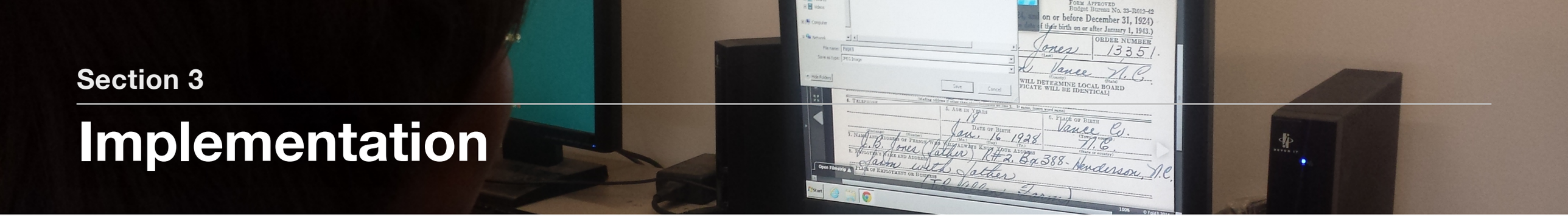
Community Connections:

Themes of rural tradition and southern culture resonate throughout this project. The students constantly experience these components of their community in school and at home. Understanding the strength of these connections, the project was designed to build on their prior knowledge of local history and expand it to larger historical events. The online portals would serve as the vehicle to facilitate the expansion. Similarly, students would rely on strong community connections to kick off the project.

In creating the project, officials in local government, such as the Clerk of Court and Register of Deeds, were readily available to assist with the local records. In addition, I drew upon the experience and knowledge of local historians and the Preservation Warrenton historical group to assist with local histories. Noel Robertson, Preservation member and former educator, proved invaluable in providing historical perspective for our students

Preservation Warrenton

http://www.preservationwarrenton.com/index.shtml

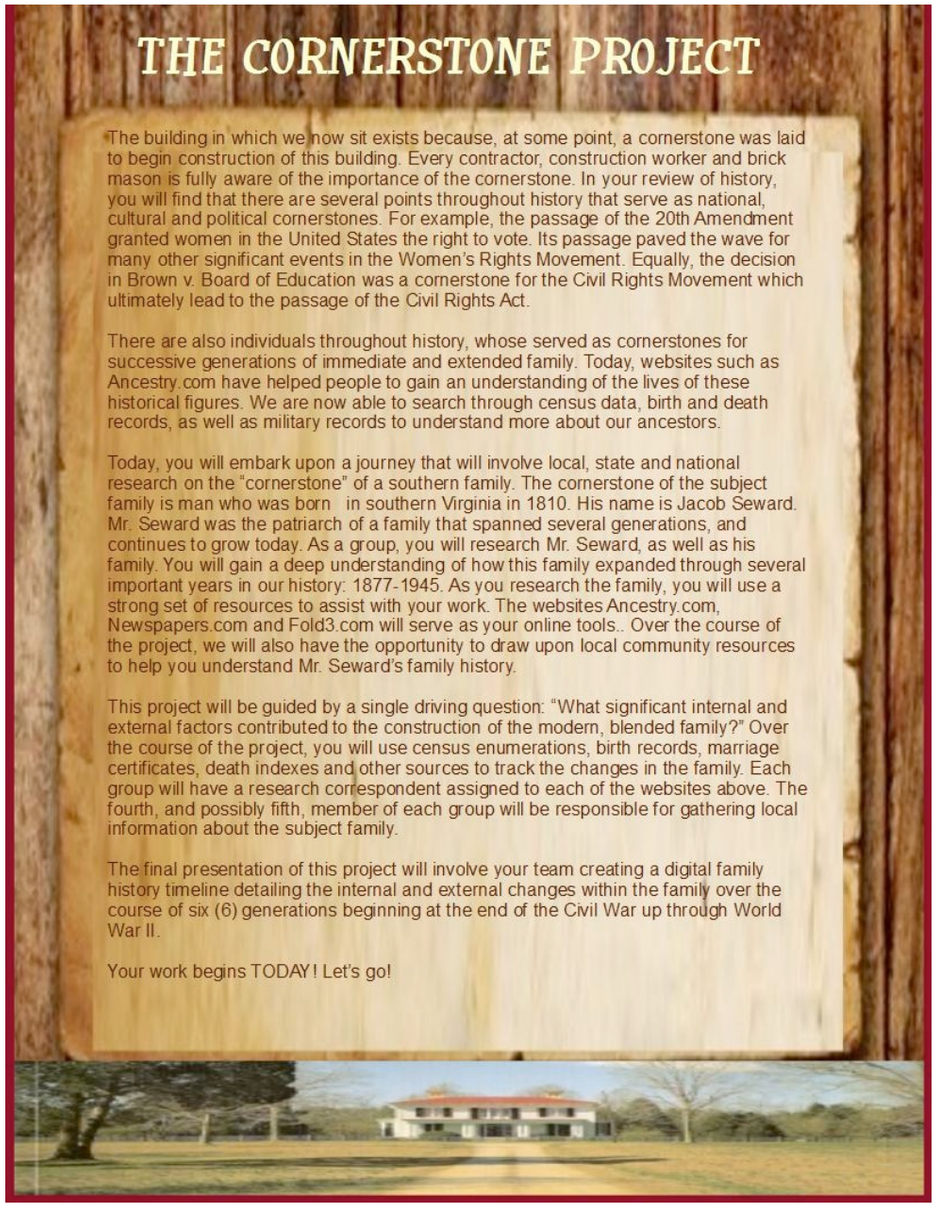


Section 3

Implementation

The Entry Event

Every PBL activity begins with an entry event to kick-start the project. The entry event serves to both “frame” the project and spark the interest of the students. Prior to receiving the entry document, the students reviewed the factors leading to the Civil War in their “Growing Sectionalism” unit. Students were also gaining an understanding of the role of our local history in the study of the Civil War. They reviewed topics such as the antebellum Bragg family, local “Hot Springs” resorts, and slavery in Warren, as well as surrounding counties. As a result, students had sufficient knowledge to create historical context and grasp the material.



THE CORNERSTONE PROJECT

The building in which we now sit exists because, at some point, a cornerstone was laid to begin construction of this building. Every contractor, construction worker and brick mason is fully aware of the importance of the cornerstone. In your review of history, you will find that there are several points throughout history that serve as national, cultural and political cornerstones. For example, the passage of the 20th Amendment granted women in the United States the right to vote. Its passage paved the wave for many other significant events in the Women’s Rights Movement. Equally, the decision in Brown v. Board of Education was a cornerstone for the Civil Rights Movement which ultimately lead to the passage of the Civil Rights Act.

There are also individuals throughout history, whose served as cornerstones for successive generations of immediate and extended family. Today, websites such as Ancestry.com have helped people to gain an understanding of the lives of these historical figures. We are now able to search through census data, birth and death records, as well as military records to understand more about our ancestors.

Today, you will embark upon a journey that will involve local, state and national research on the “cornerstone” of a southern family. The cornerstone of the subject family is man who was born in southern Virginia in 1810. His name is Jacob Seward. Mr. Seward was the patriarch of a family that spanned several generations, and continues to grow today. As a group, you will research Mr. Seward, as well as his family. You will gain a deep understanding of how this family expanded through several important years in our history: 1877-1945. As you research the family, you will use a strong set of resources to assist with your work. The websites Ancestry.com, Newspapers.com and Fold3.com will serve as your online tools.. Over the course of the project, we will also have the opportunity to draw upon local community resources to help you understand Mr. Seward’s family history.

This project will be guided by a single driving question: “What significant internal and external factors contributed to the construction of the modern, blended family?” Over the course of the project, you will use census enumerations, birth records, marriage certificates, death indexes and other sources to track the changes in the family. Each group will have a research correspondent assigned to each of the websites above. The fourth, and possibly fifth, member of each group will be responsible for gathering local information about the subject family.

The final presentation of this project will involve your team creating a digital family history timeline detailing the internal and external changes within the family over the course of six (6) generations beginning at the end of the Civil War up through World War II.

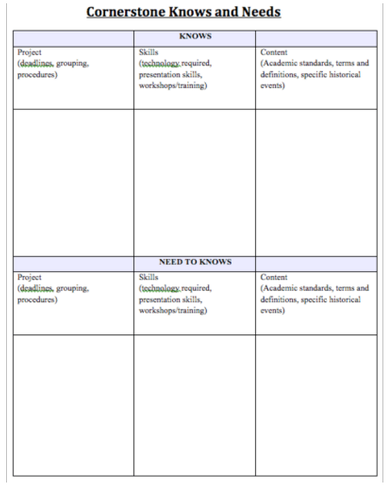
Your work begins TODAY! Let’s go!

Following several informal pre-assessment discussions, students received the entry document.

After reviewing the Entry Document, a simple “Know/ Need To Know” chart was projected onto the board. The “Know/Need To Know” discussion allowed the students to better understand the assignment and ensure that they were perfectly clear on the requirements of the project. The student questions ranged from “Who was Jacob Seward?” to “What are the duties of the research correspondents?”

As students presented their questions, I provided more specifics on the project. The questioning process benefits both student and teacher in that students gain clarity and the teacher fills in any areas that she/he may have overlooked. Once the “Knows/ Need To Knows” were completed, the students had a significantly better understanding of the task to be completed.

Cornerstone Knows and Needs



Cornerstone Knows and Needs

	KNOWS	
Project (deadlines, grouping, procedures)	Skills (technology required, presentation skills, workshops/training)	Content (Academic standards, terms and definitions, specific historical events)
	NEED TO KNOWS	
Project (deadlines, grouping, procedures)	Skills (technology required, presentation skills, workshops/training)	Content (Academic standards, terms and definitions, specific historical events)

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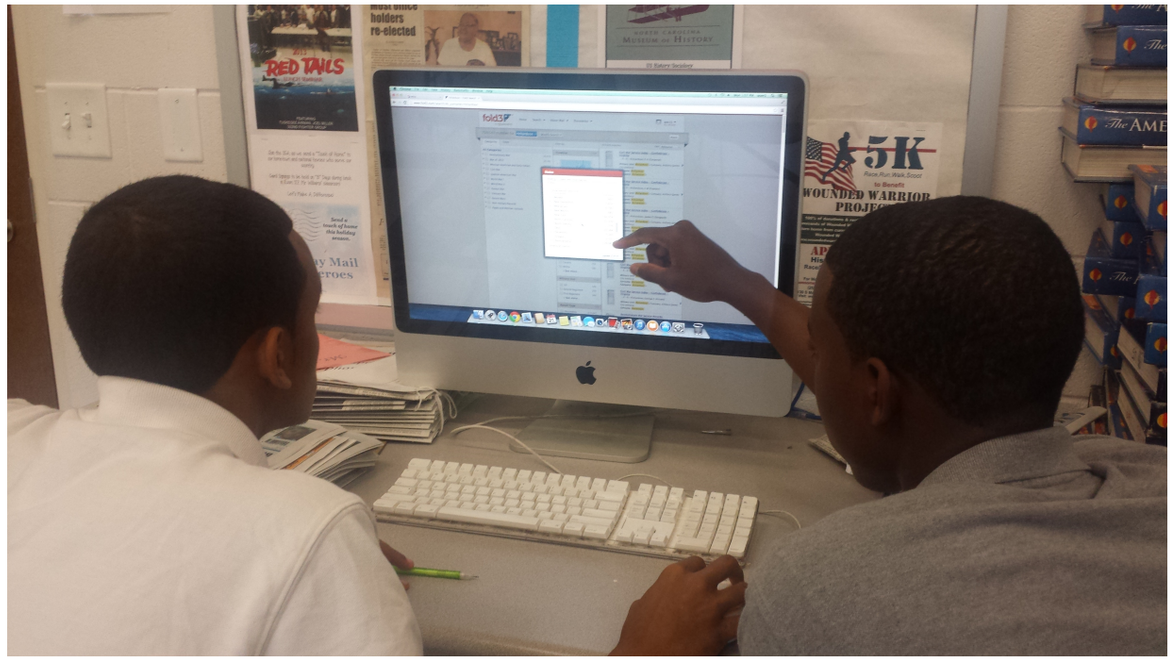


Student teams kicking off their research by exploring the Fold3.com website.

Task Groups

Following the class “Knows/Need To Knows,” I placed students in groups of four to five students. Ideally, groups of four work better under the PBL model, because it provides for more active engagement by the students who are less likely to become passive participants in larger groups. In some instances, however, the teacher will have to adjust the group sizes based on larger, oddly numbered classes. Once the students were grouped, the students were assigned their respective roles. Group roles are important to the overall success of a project, and teachers should assign roles with an understanding of the individual students’

work ethic, leadership/participation style, and technological proficiency. The roles for this project were:

Ancestry Correspondent

The correspondent used Ancestry record collections, such as birth, marriage, death, and census records to detail the occupations, family members, birthplaces, and addresses of the Cornerstone's family.

Newspapers.com Correspondent

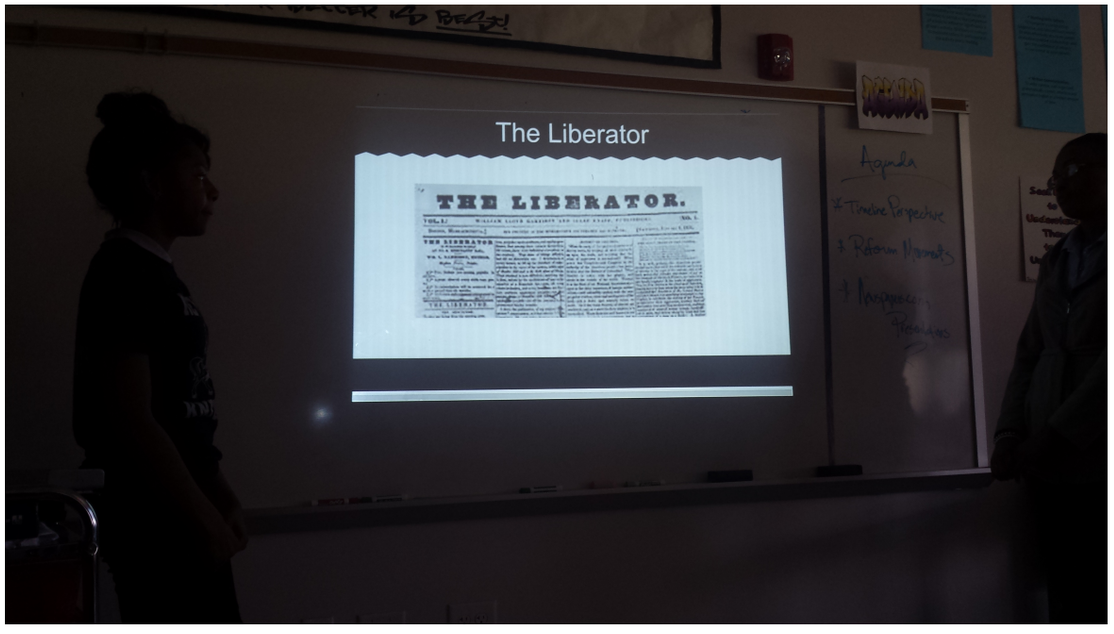
The correspondent accessed Newspaper.com's extensive database of US historical newspapers to gain an understanding of the effect of local, state, and national events on the growth and migration of the Seward family.

Fold3.com Correspondent

The correspondent had complete access to Fold3.com's military records, individual stories, photos, and personal documents of men and women who served in our armed forces. The correspondent used the service to supplement the Ancestry.com record collections and understand the role of military service and conflict in the lives of the Seward family.

Local Correspondent

The correspondent was responsible for connecting local historical events to the researched information from the online resources. With the assistance of local officials, the correspondent had access to court records, deeds, and estates detailing the lives of the Seward family members. During class time, while group members were conducting online research, the Local Correspondent organized and collected group research to complete the online timeline and infographic.



Newspapers.com Correspondents presenting their initial research to group members.

Group Contract

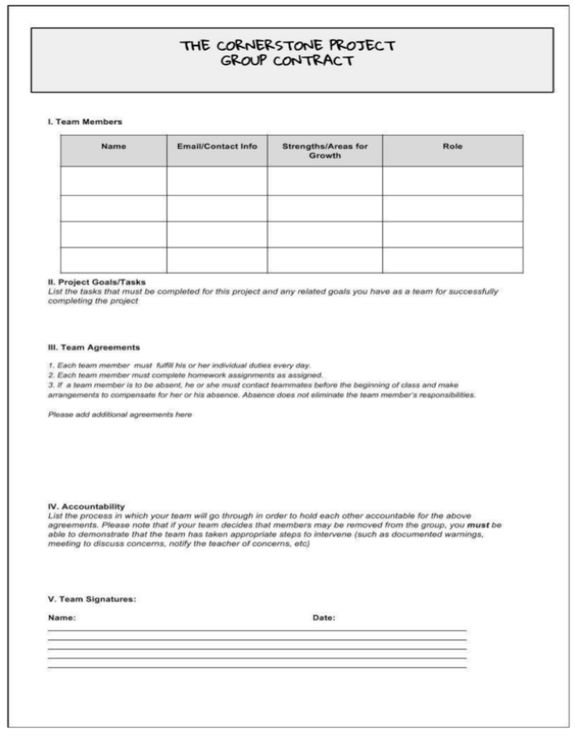
Collaboration in the PBL model binds the students together throughout the entire project. As a measure to ensure that the students understand their respective duties and obligations, the students complete a group contract outlining the roles, contact information, individual strengths and areas for growth, project

goals/tasks, and an accountability clause. In drafting the contract, the students understand that they are are now operating under a binding, mutual exchange of promises that, if broken, could result in their removal from the group. The contract reinforces the accountability principle and also drives home the authenticity and real-world nature of the PBL experience.(Skill) Building The Foundation

As a technology-based school, many of our students are tech savvy. I was confident that the students would be able to handle the task of conducting basic research on the sites. Even with that proficiency, I understood that the more detailed research would require a series of skill-building workshops to sharpen their knowledge of each site. In an introductory session with LEARN NC and the Ancestry team, I received training in effectively using each website. In class skill-building/foundational workshops, I successfully passed along most of the information from the training to the students.

Prior to the first task, the students were allowed to conduct basic family research using their assigned sites. This introductory workshop allowed the students to gain familiarity with the websites and served as an excellent way to build confidence in the project. For example, an Ancestry Correspondent, Justice, was personally invested in finding answers to a life-long question relating to her grandmother's sister. Within the span of several minutes, she was able to locate the death certificate of her grandmother's twin sister who passed away in 1942. The death certificate revealed the true cause of her great aunt's death, and cleared up a lifelong misconception held by her grandmother. It just so happened that, on the date of the workshop, her grandmother was at our school substitute teaching, and Justice was able to immediately share her findings with her. It was a moment that I will never forget.

Cornerstone Group Contract



THE CORNERSTONE PROJECT
GROUP CONTRACT

I. Team Members

Name	Email/Contact Info	Strengths/Areas for Growth	Role

II. Project Goals/Tasks
List the tasks that must be completed for this project and any related goals you have as a team for successfully completing the project

III. Team Agreements

1. Each team member must fulfill his or her individual duties every day.
2. Each team member must complete homework assignments as assigned.
3. If a team member is to be absent, he or she must contact teammates before the beginning of class and make arrangements to compensate for her or his absence. Absence does not eliminate the team member's responsibilities.

Please add additional agreements here

IV. Accountability
List the process in which your team will go through in order to hold each other accountable for the above agreements. Please note that if your team decides that members may be removed from the group, you ***must*** *be able to demonstrate that the team has taken appropriate steps to intervene (such as documented warnings, meeting to discuss concerns, notify the teacher of concerns, etc)*

V. Team Signatures:

Name: Date:

Tap or click this widget to view the document as a PDF.

Justice revealing newfound family history to her grandmother

Project Tasks

Following the introductory workshop, students began their work on the project tasks.

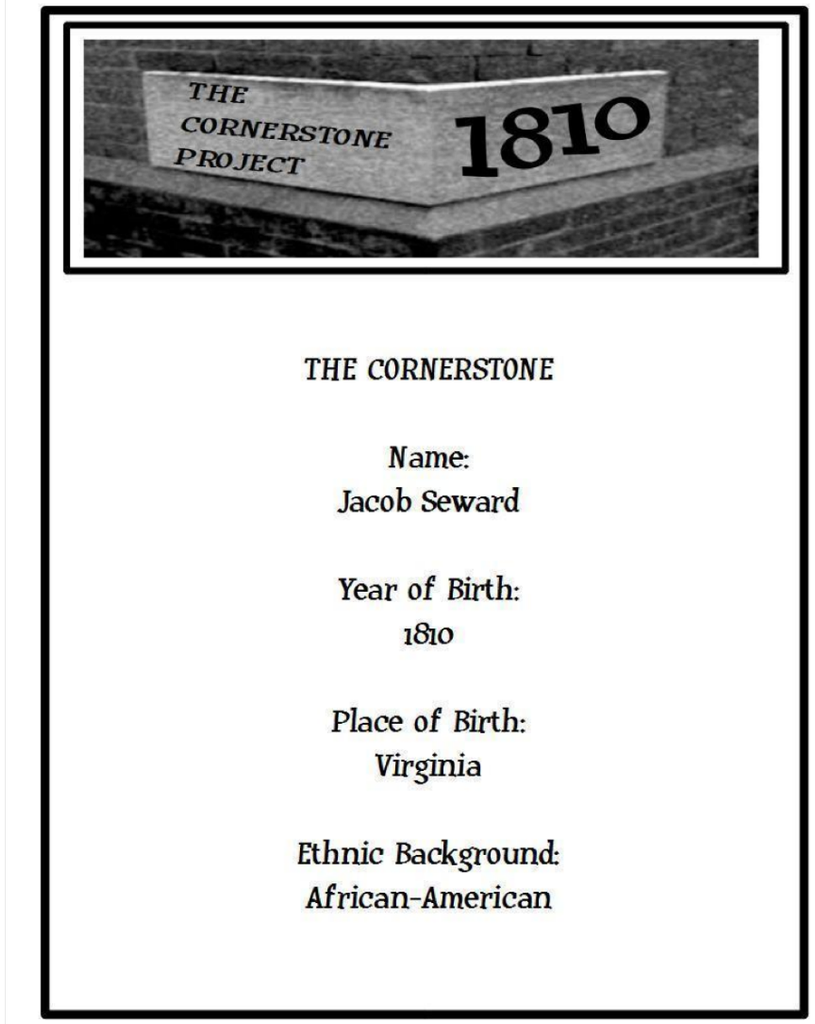
Task 1: "Laying the Cornerstone: The House of Jacob"

Once the students were comfortable with their sites, I provided them with the prompt at left to begin their first task and research assignment. The assignment required students to conduct a basic search of Jacob Seward using only his name, year of birth, place of birth, and ethnic background/race. As noted earlier, the students had completed a unit on Rising Sectionalism, Slavery, and Causes of the Civil War, so they were aware of the challenge of locating a substantial amount of information on Jacob Seward, a former slave. I was aware that the census enumerations after 1860 would provide the most information about Seward. In addition, I was aware that there would be little to no information in the newspapers about his existence.

It was important to allow the students to develop the research skills and technological proficiency to explore the sites in search of meaningful results. The Ancestry correspondent's task included using the search function to locate family, social, and demographic information on Seward. The Newspapers.com Correspondent was charged with locating Seward's social, professional, and vocational activities. The Fold3.com Correspondent was responsible for locating Seward's military service record and any noteworthy conflicts and/or engagements that he may have participated in. The Local Correspondents received several hard copies of estate files detailing posthumous bequests of property, including slaves, to remaining family members. The Local Correspondents were able to locate the names of several large slaveholding families in our community, including the Seward family.

Task 2: "A House Divided: Local Connections and National Conflict"

As sectional tensions escalated in the early 1800s, there was a substantial amount of press coverage on reactions in northern and southern states. With that in mind, the next task was led by



Task 1 focused on obtaining basic information on the subject.

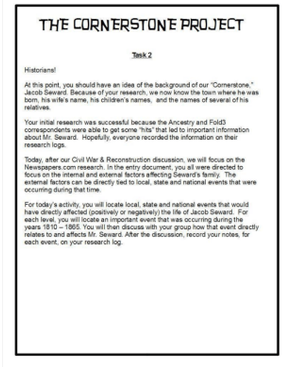
our Newspaper.com Correspondent. The task ranged from 1810, Seward's birth year, to 1865, the year the Civil War ended. The students were required to locate newsworthy local, state, and national events that directly affected the Seward family. The task allowed the students to evaluate the significance of the historical articles and assess project relevance. Sorting through the bulk of the search results proved to be a necessary challenge for the students. However, the varied opinions and colorful accounts of the Civil War experience kept the students engaged.

"Grandma Jennie" - The grand-daughter of Jacob Seward, and daughter of Ella Seward and John Littlejohn.

The Newspapers.com Correspondent was responsible for facilitating a “peer workshop” where she/he gave basic instructions on how to conduct searches using Newspapers.com. Following the workshop, the Newspapers.com Correspondent located national events that directly related to the experiences of the Seward family. The Ancestry Correspondent was responsible for researching state events that were relevant to our subject family. The Fold3.com Correspondent was responsible for searching for local events that were covered in any of the newspapers cataloged on the site. The Fold3.com Correspondent partnered with the Local Correspondent who was responsible for supplementing the online research with research from local offline resources, such as the hard copies from the town newspaper archives. In their research, the students discovered that the Seward patriarch, Jacob, assisted in the Confederate war effort. This proved to be a notable topic for discussion, considering Jacob was born into a chattel system that the Confederacy was fighting to protect

Following their research, the individual correspondents from each group met to discuss their findings. For example, all of the Fold3.com Correspondents met as a group to sort through the coverage of local events on the Newspapers.com website. The discussions also served to prioritize the articles and determine the events that would make it into the final timeline and infographic.

Cornerstone Project Task 2


THE CORNERSTONE PROJECT

Task 2

Historians!

At this point, you should have an idea of the background of our "Cornerstone," Jacob Seward. Because of your research, we now know the town where he was born, his wife's name, his children's names, and the names of several of his relatives.

Your initial research was successful because the Ancestry and Fold3 correspondents were able to get some "hits" that led to important information about Mr. Seward. Hopefully, everyone recorded the information on their research logs.

Today, after our Civil War & Reconstruction discussion, we will focus on the Newspapers.com research. In the entry document, you all were directed to focus on the internal and external factors affecting Seward's family. The external factors can be directly tied to local, state and national events that were occurring during that time.

For today's activity, you will locate local, state and national events that would have directly affected (positively or negatively) the life of Jacob Seward. For each level, you will locate an important event that was occurring during the years 1810 – 1865. You will then discuss with your group how that event directly relates to and affects Mr. Seward. After the discussion, record your notes, for each event, on your research log.

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Braxton Bragg (left) - Civil War General and Warrenton native for whom the military base, Fort Bragg, is named.

Task 3: “Digging Deeper”

The focus of Task 3 was to continue building upon the Seward Family history, and to encourage the students to conduct deeper examinations of newly discovered facts. For example, one of Jacob’s daughters, Ella, would become a pivotal figure in the Cornerstone Project, as she was responsible for bringing the Littlejohn and Smithson families together by marriage. This discovery only heightened the amount of interest in the project for the students who began to recognize many of the local names.

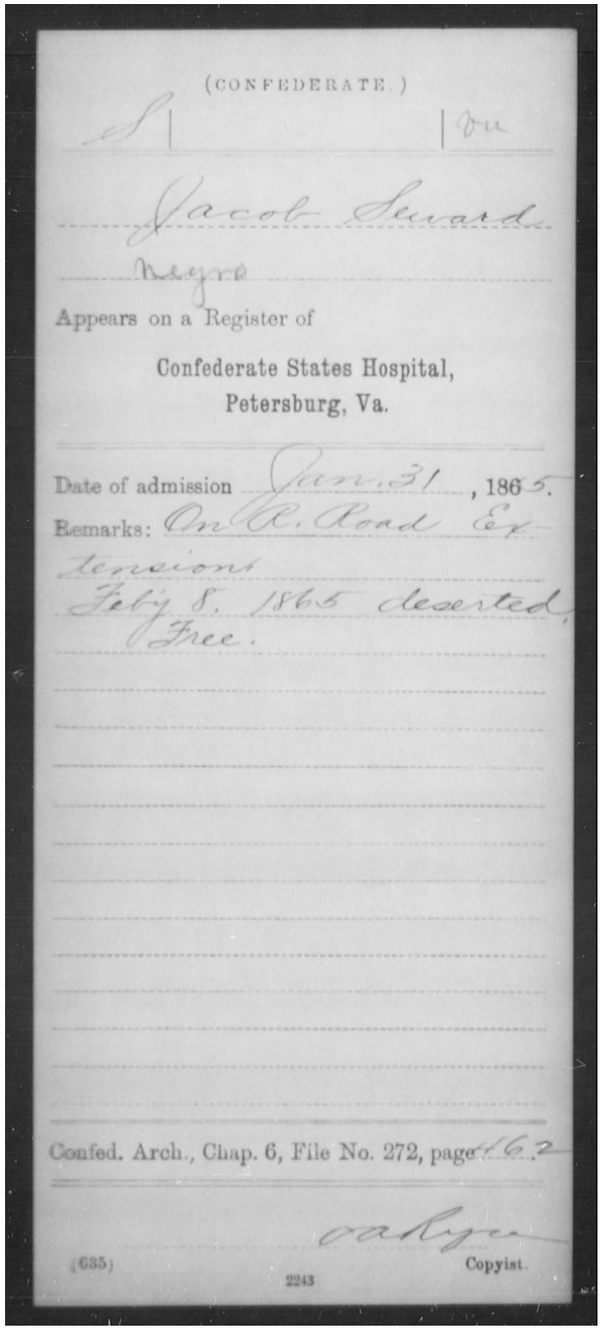
During the task, the Ancestry and Local Correspondent partnered together to complete an offline family tree detailing the next generation of Seward heirs, their spouses, and places lived. As they were researching, the Newspapers.com and Fold3.com Correspondents moved into the 20th century to analyze the

effects of World War I on the family. More specifically, the Newspapers.com Correspondent was responsible for locating an article detailing the experience of a North Carolina soldier in World War I. Similarly, the Fold3.com Correspondent was responsible for researching the early 20th Century military records of the Seward family heirs to determine the extent of their involvement, if any, in World War I.

Students discovered that, at the turn of the century, the census data, birth, and death records also became more detailed and offered more complete answers to their questions. For example, students were able to understand that the mid-1800s “mulatto” categorization sometimes referenced the American Indian population in our community. This information proved beneficial as the students became aware that several Seward/Littlejohn family heirs had American Indian ancestors who provided them with their fair complexions and blue eyes. More notably, the military draft card of Jacob’s grandson, Boyd, described him with brown hair and blue eyes, features he inherited from his American Indian father John Littlejohn.

Task 4: “Final Touches”

Task 4 was designed with the intent of finalizing the project and preparing the students for presentation. With the vast amount of information gathered from all three websites, as well as local resources, it was necessary to devote an entire class period to organizing the student research. I scheduled teacher-group


(CONFEDERATE.)

Jacob Seward

Negro

Appears on a Register of

Confederate States Hospital,
Petersburg, Va.

Date of admission Jan. 31, 1865.

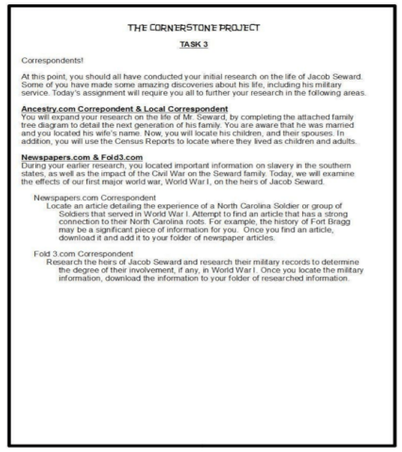
Remarks: On R. Road Extensions
Feby 8. 1865 deserted,
Free.

Confed. Arch., Chap. 6, File No. 272, page 462.

(635) 2243 Copyist.

Confederate States Hospital Register (right)- Jacob Seward, the cornerstone, was admitted to the hospital during the Siege of Petersburg and later departed the hospital with the notation as “free.”

Cornerstone Task 3



THE CORNERSTONE PROJECT

TASK 3

Correspondents!

At this point, you should all have conducted your initial research on the life of Jacob Seward. Some of you have made some amazing discoveries about his life, including his military service. Today's assignment will require you all to further your research in the following areas.

Ancestry.com Correpondent & Local Correspondent
You will expand your research on the life of Mr. Seward, by completing the attached family tree diagram to detail the next generation of his family. You are aware that he was married and you located his wife's name. Now, you will locate his children, and their spouses. In addition, you will use the Census Reports to locate where they lived as children and adults.

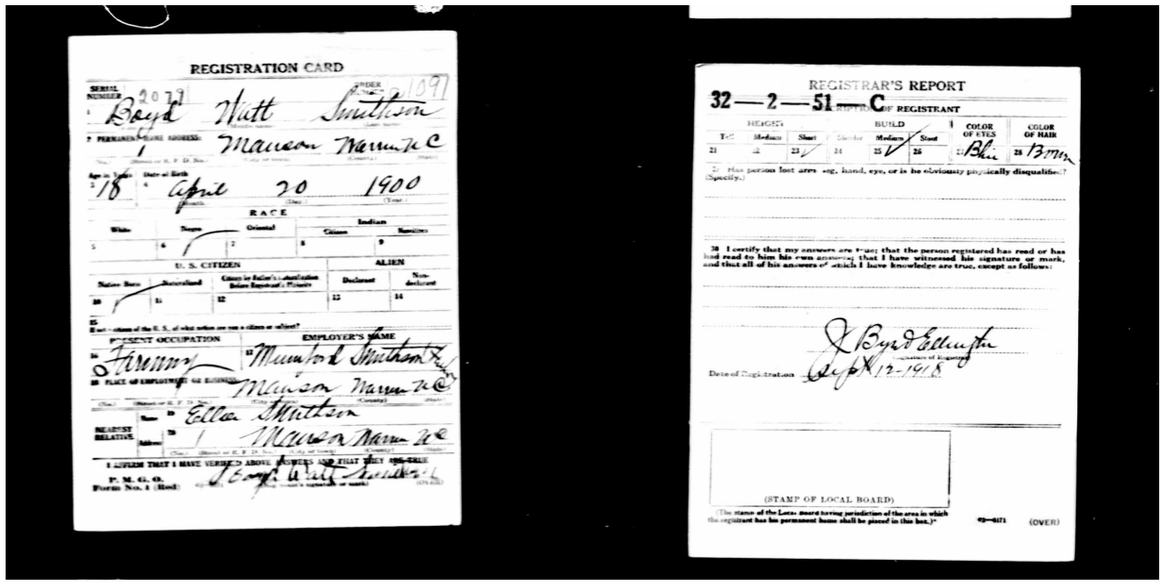
Newspapers.com & Fold3.com
During your earlier research, you located important information on slavery in the southern states, as well as the impact of the Civil War on the Seward family. Today, we will examine the effects of our first major world war, World War I, on the heirs of Jacob Seward.

Newspapers.com Correspondent
Locate an article detailing the experience of a North Carolina Soldier or group of Soldiers that served in World War I. Attempt to find an article that has a strong connection to their North Carolina roots. For example, the history of Fort Bragg may be a significant piece of information for you. Once you find an article, download it and add it to your folder of newspaper articles.

Fold 3.com Correspondent
Research the heirs of Jacob Seward and research their military records to determine the degree of their involvement, if any, in World War I. Once you locate the military information, download the information to your folder of researched information.

Tap or click the widget to view this document as a PDF.

meetings with the students as a means of checking on their progress. Prior to the meetings, the students were given group meeting time to review their group performance thus far. Students were provided with the worksheet below to summarize their work on the tasks. The worksheets also contain an attestation requiring the students to affirm that they have completed the tasks. After collecting the documents, and meeting with the teams, it was important to ensure that all bases had been covered and that they were on schedule to present their findings as a single group. As a teacher, this required that I review the project requirements and assess the work product of each student.



REGISTRATION CARD

Boyd Watt Smithson

Manson North Carolina

April 20 1900

REGISTRAR'S REPORT

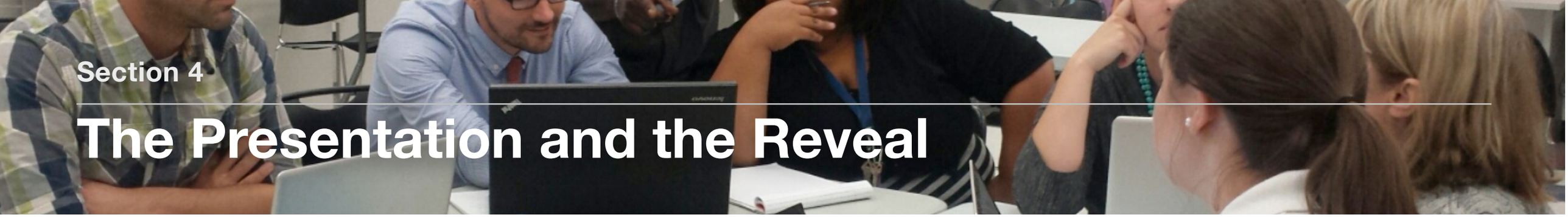
32—2—51—C

The World War I Military Registration Card of Boyd Watt Smithson detailing his brown hair and blue eyes; traits inherited from his American Indian ather, John Littlejohn.

Task 4:
Cornerstone
Workshop

Role	Task
Local Correspondent	•Complete Family Tree in Infographic •Add HyperLinks •Add Newspaper articles •Spice up the infographic!
Ancestry.com Correspondent	•Complete Family Trees to 4th Generations •Provide Information to Local Correspondents for the Infographic
Fold3.com	•Find the connection between the Seward Family and WWI; Hint: Boyd Watt Smithson •Research Braxton Bragg and be prepared to do a summary on him for the infographic
Newspapers.com	•Meet with the other Newspapers.com correspondents •Decide on the top 2 articles from 1810-1877 that are relevant to Warren County. •Decide on the top 2 articles from WWI that are relevant to Warren County. Hint: Camp Bragg Connection

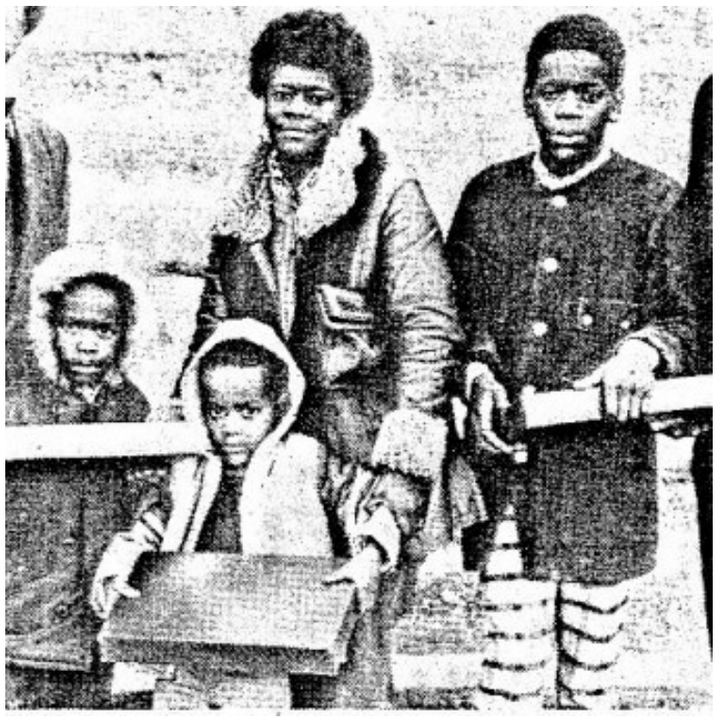
Once I evaluated the correspondents' work, this chart was drafted to streamline the project for final presentation.



Section 4

The Presentation and the Reveal

A SHARED HISTORY



Shown here as a child (far left), Williams drew upon his family background and humble upbringing to create a transparent project that allowed his personal history to become a part of the US history course.

As the project concluded, the students began to ask more in depth questions about the Seward-Littlejohn-Smithson families. Several students began to realize that they shared a common ancestry with members of the families. When planning the project, I was fully aware that, in our small community, there were a number of people who were closely related, including my students. In particular, there was one student, who I discovered was a relative of mine by way of the Littlejohn-Smithson family connection. Two days prior to the presentation, I notified the students that I was the subject of the project and that they were studying my ancestors. I also informed the student above that she was my cousin. The students' reaction left me speechless.

At the outset of the project, the students were unaware that this project was deeply personal for their teacher. The origins of the project began when researching my own family history and discovering all of the possibilities within each website. The myriad of stories that I discovered along with the rich local history provided an excellent area of study for a PBL project. As the stories unfolded, I became more and more willing to open myself up to my students, and allow my personal history to become a part of my US History course. Now that the project has concluded, I would recommend that all teachers allow themselves to become a subject in their classrooms. My personal research was amplified when placed in the hands of 24 enthusiastic and invested learners. I am more than

comfortable saying that I learned more from them, during this experience, than they learned from me.

Littlejohn-Smithson - “Cousin Earl” (James Earl Campbell (right), the oldest living Littlejohn, is shown here with Mr. Williams, a Smithson decedent. Campbell provided a rich, oral history for the students.

Post-Script & P.D. (Professional Development)

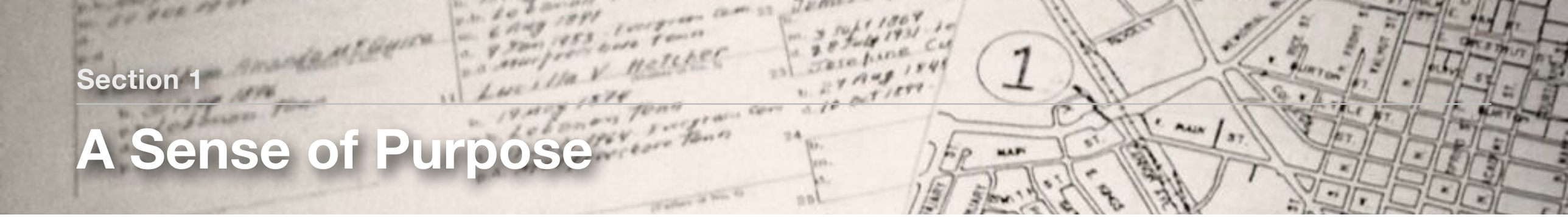
Following the conclusion of the project, I spoke to several administrators and district officials about the success of the project. As we prepared for the next school year, I was invited to present my work at our annual beginning-of-the-year professional development program. The program is a district-wide initiative that allows the teachers and staff to present their exemplary projects to their fellow staff members over the course of a day. My session was titled “Cornerstone: Bringing Family History Into The Classroom.”

During the session, we discussed my personal investment in the project, the community connections, and the study of family history as a means of empowering marginalized communities. Many of the teachers share similar ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds to mine, and, until now, could not see the value in researching their families beyond their respective oral histories. This changed after our Cornerstone session. During our discussion, the teachers began to see the wealth of information that could be uncovered in the three websites and our local archives. They began to see how their ancestors’ lives and experiences were cataloged in the census enumerations, birth, death, marriage, newspaper and military records. The teachers, all with different levels of classroom internet access, immediately brainstormed ways to bring family history into their classrooms. In the end, the most telling responses were the smiles, the “Wows” and the collective “We didn’t know.” Again, another unforgettable moment, and a great way to start the new year.

Chapter 2

At-Risk Adolescents: Using the Past to Help Find a Future

Elizabeth Wiggs, a teacher at Lee Early College, used the Ancestry databases and family history as a way to reach at-risk adolescents. Her end-of-the-year unit on Perspectives challenged students to investigate a historical event through the different perspectives of the individuals who lived through this event.



Section 1

A Sense of Purpose

When I first started working with the Ancestry databases through LEARN NC, I felt that I already had a good grasp of how to do ancestral research. My mother's side of the family has been traced back to pre-Revolution times, and our family still owns the house built by one of my great-grandfathers, a Murfree, in the town of Murfreesboro, TN. Mapping out my family tree seemed pointless. I would need to do my own ancestral research in order to provide an authentic experience for my students, but I couldn't find a legitimate jumping off point. I wasn't interested in that side of the family, because there was nothing to find—the research had already been done. I procrastinated.

At our collaborative work session with LEARN NC in January, we had the good fortune to listen to Dr. Tim Marr, a professor of History at UNC, explain the complications with modern day family history research. One of his points struck a chord with me; these definitely aren't his words, but more how I interpreted them:

People always trace their families patrilineally, since that's where we get our last names, but this is problematic for a wide variety of reasons, one of which is that this is an incredibly sexist practice.

I finally knew how to get started. My dad's side of the family had been minimally researched, and I am extremely close with my grandmother (MawMaw). Tracing her history matrilineally became my goal. I didn't think this would give me an idea for how to use Ancestry.com with my students, but I knew that it would give me enough familiarity with the site to be able to troubleshoot any technological or historical record issues when they arose.

I began tracing, and found it to be incredibly difficult to trace women, especially impoverished women. I hit an insurmountable roadblock in 1859; I couldn't seem to go beyond Martha "Mattie" A. Roan, my great-great-great-grandmother. That year, Mattie married Private Dan Nellums of the Tennessee Infantry. He left their home for war that summer, and Mattie died in childbirth in February of 1862, two days after Private Nellums was captured

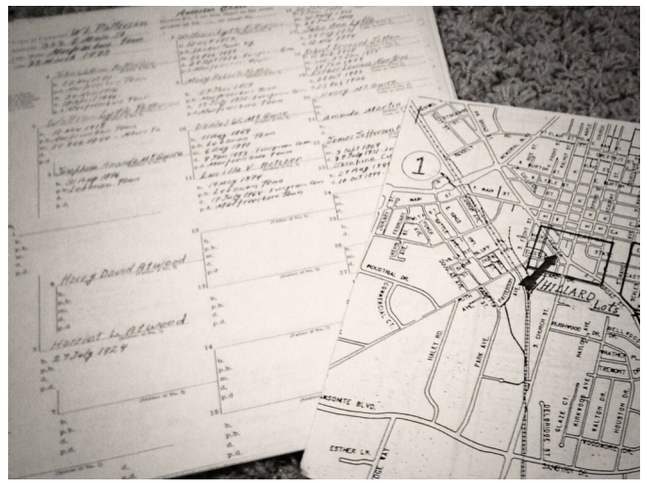
Author Elizabeth Wiggs, her grandmother (MawMaw), and her great-grandmother (Carrie)

Carrie

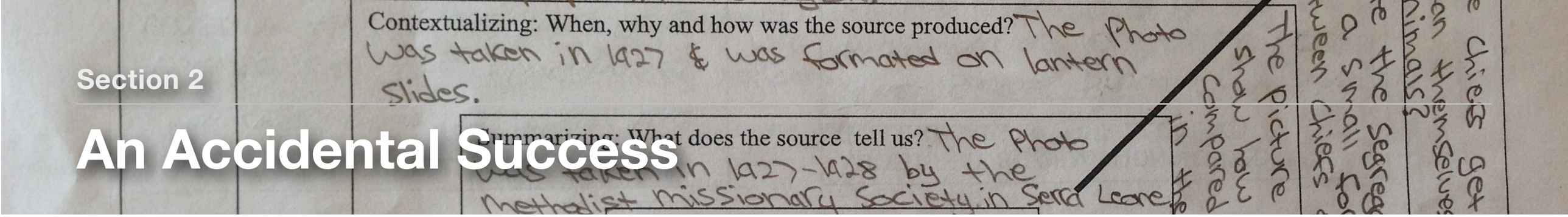
as a prisoner of war at Camp Douglas. The child she left behind, Maggie, is my great-great-grandmother.

From this tracing experience, I definitely gained enough competency to be able to help my students troubleshoot. But, more importantly, I learned something much less quantifiable: a feeling that combines belonging, the sadness of loss, and a sense of purpose. These women, my ancestors, led important, heartbreaking lives without documentation, and their legacy, whatever it might have been to them, lives on in me.

While I didn't know how I could incorporate these ideas into my classroom, I knew that the powerful conclusions I had reached could also be beneficial for my students. Many of my students at Lee Early College come to me disenfranchised not only with education, but also with many other aspects of society, including employment opportunities and social barriers. They feel bullied by their experiences with a system that they don't understand how to navigate; they feel that reading and writing are games that they simply don't have the skills to play. As a teacher, I can't simply just teach my students those skills; I also have to generate buy-in. They have to understand why these literacy skills are valuable to cultivate and how they are vital to any kind of success. I began to see that using the Ancestry databases could help develop this buy-in while simultaneously giving my students the opportunity to hone their reading and writing abilities, but I still didn't know exactly how I would incorporate this project into my classroom.



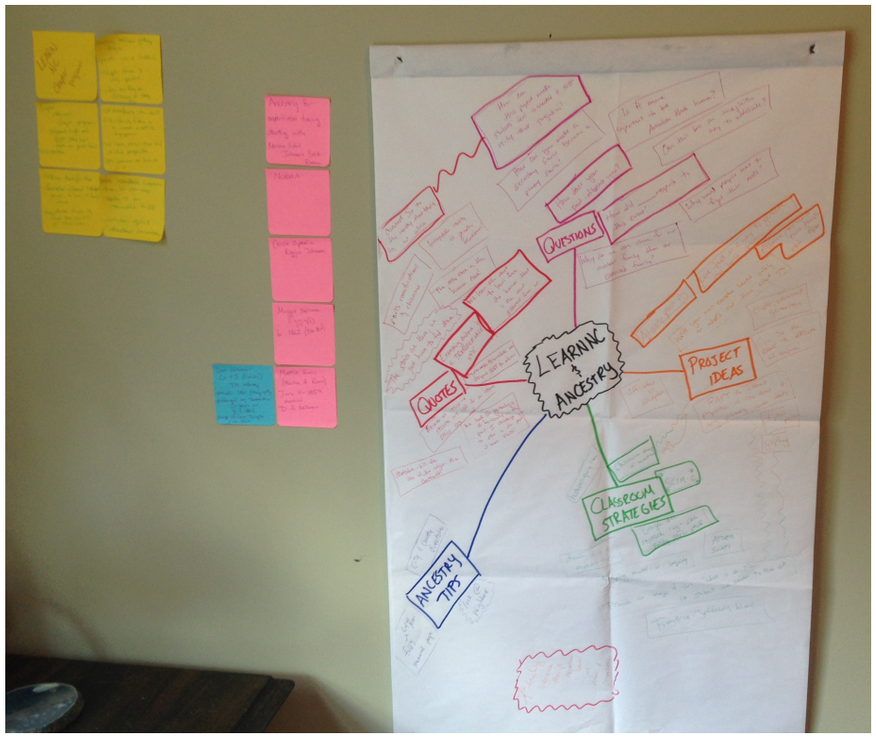
Family History



Section 2

An Accidental Success

At this point, I had played with the Ancestry databases, I had spent three days at the LEARN NC training, and I had plenty of rambling ideas, but nothing concrete. I spent hours in my office (which my husband redubbed “The Command Center”) trying to figure out how to incorporate this work into my classroom.



The Command Center

I developed a project that I would incorporate in my classroom in the last few weeks of school, and got back to work with my everyday teaching life.

Teaching freshmen for the first time, and preparing them for an English II End of Course (EOC) exam, I was experimenting with some new ideas. As I mentioned, I had quite a few reluctant readers and writers, so instead of reading through the literary canon as I might normally do, I decided to let each student select a book of his/her choice to read as we worked through concepts like metaphor and symbolism. I took the students to the library, let them bring books from home (or buy

ebooks), and even brought in every single book I owned from home. Within my massive carload of books, I had included one I picked up through LEARN NC: Help Me To Find My People by Dr. Heather Williams. We spent a day flipping through books, making suggestions, and discussing good books, which ended with a faction of girls yelling about how great *Twilight* is while the other half decried it for its writing style—quite a lot of fun to watch, actually. At some point during the day, some of my most reluctant readers selected Williams's book, which surprised me. Why would they pick these difficult works of nonfiction over *Harry Potter*?

Book Cover

As the class worked through their respective books, the reluctant readers remained engaged; Williams's book, with its heartbreaking honesty and clear research, kept my students interested. We began to practice annotating, an important skill for any good reader, and the students reading Williams's book absolutely filled their books with sticky notes and highlighting. These students were learning how to engage with difficult text in the way good readers do.

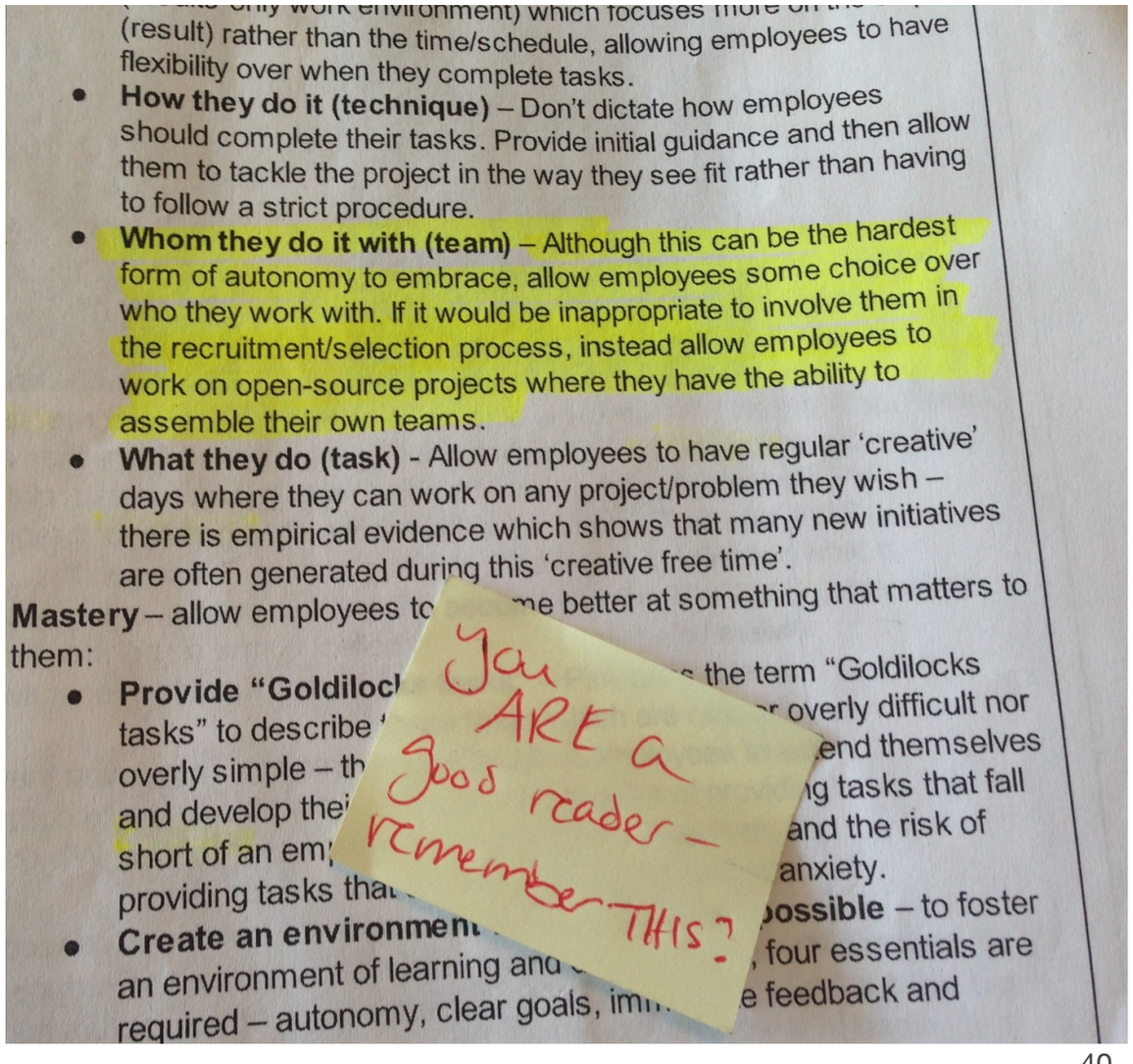
Williams's work kept my students interested because it was so relevant to their lives: *Help Me To Find My People* deals with the same themes my disillusioned students experience on a daily basis. The former slaves examined in this book were trapped in a system that was not of their creation, and while success in finding their loved ones was highly unlikely, they still persevered. Similarly, my students are frustrated by their educational experience, and feel that success is virtually impossible. This book speaks to them, and the dedication and persistence of the former slaves provides motivation. I began to see my students enlightened with the same indescribable sense of purpose that I felt when I completed my own ancestral research.

Dr. Williams, a professor at UNC Chapel Hill, graciously agreed to video-conference with my students about her book. Without being prompted, the students generated enormous lists of questions to ask Dr. Williams, and the conference was a spectacular experience. While most of the

conversation centered around the book, Dr. Williams made an incredibly powerful statement that I was able to discuss with my students later: “We, all of us, can make different choices. We don’t have to go down the same roads. It might cost you something, but you can do something different.” Many of my students feel trapped by their circumstances; it’s important for them to hear, as often as possible, that different options are available.

After speaking with Dr. Williams, my students began to demonstrate interest in researching their own families on Ancestry. We set up times after school where we could sit down and dig through census data and birth and death records. It was incredibly informal, but it served an enormous purpose for me as an educator: these informal work sessions got me the buy-in I needed in order to provide my reluctant readers with the process skills they needed for success in literacy. They had been reading difficult nonfiction, interpreting government records, and had been having discussions with a university professor. Now, when we would read other material in class, the students were able to transfer their annotating skills. I began to provide them with more and more difficult nonfiction, and the students were up to the challenge.

At one point in the semester, I gave a benchmark exam that mirrored the kinds of reading and questions the students would see on the EOC. Sensing a challenge, and with such low self-esteem about their literacy skills, my struggling readers shut down. Several of them didn’t even pick up their pencils. Thank goodness I hoard all my students’ work. While they sat there, refusing to participate in the game of education, I dug through all of their old papers and found the best examples of their reading and annotating. I wrote “You ARE a good reader. Remember this?” on each of their papers and silently handed them back. I

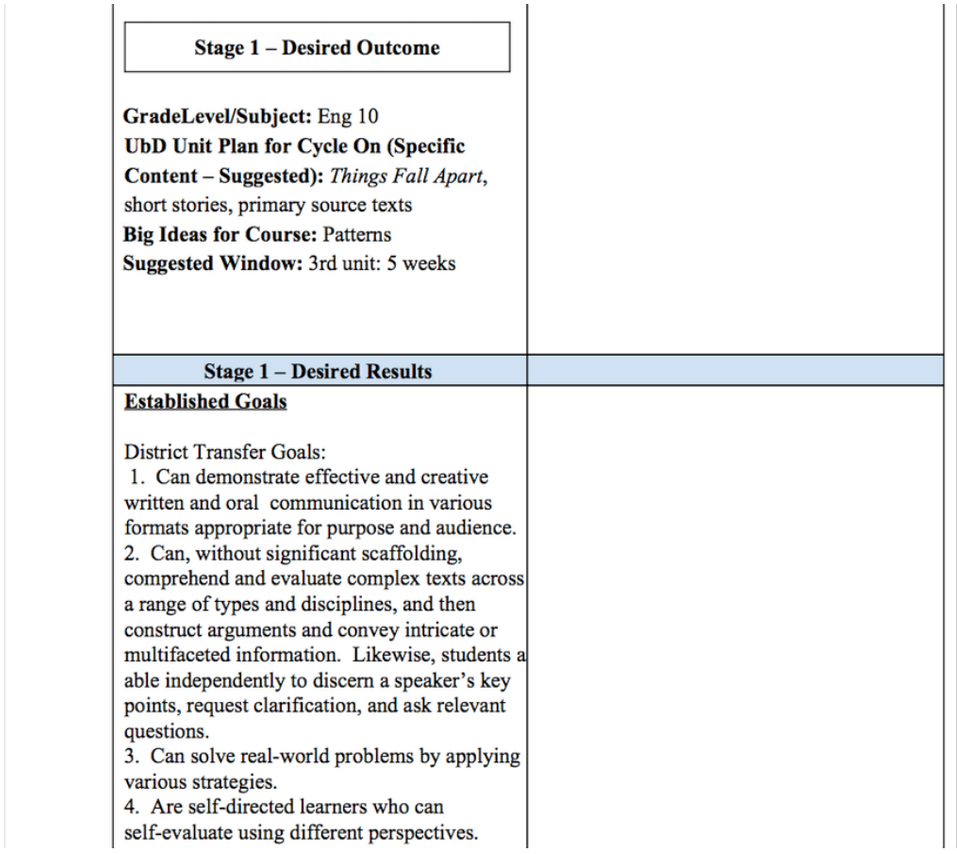


Motivation for reluctant readers

immediately received the “you must be crazy” look, but they picked up their pencils and started working.

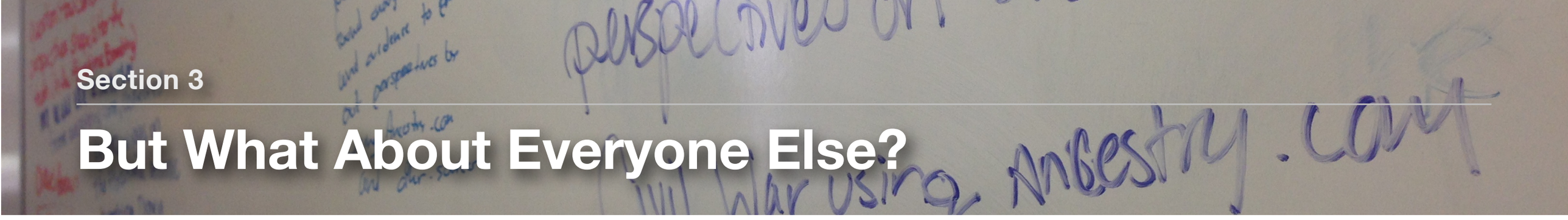
My decision to bring *Help Me To Find My People* to school led to completely unforeseen and incredibly fortuitous results, and helped further prove that relevant reading is an absolutely essential component to improving literacy skills.

Unit Plan



Stage 1 – Desired Outcome	
GradeLevel/Subject: Eng 10 **UbD Unit Plan for Cycle On (Specific Content – Suggested):** *Things Fall Apart*, short stories, primary source texts **Big Ideas for Course:** Patterns **Suggested Window:** 3rd unit: 5 weeks	
Stage 1 – Desired Results	
Established Goals District Transfer Goals: 1. Can demonstrate effective and creative written and oral communication in various formats appropriate for purpose and audience. 2. Can, without significant scaffolding, comprehend and evaluate complex texts across a range of types and disciplines, and then construct arguments and convey intricate or multifaceted information. Likewise, students a able independently to discern a speaker’s key points, request clarification, and ask relevant questions. 3. Can solve real-world problems by applying various strategies. 4. Are self-directed learners who can self-evaluate using different perspectives.	

Tap or click this widget to view a PDF of Elizabeth’s Unit Plan.



Section 3

But What About Everyone Else?

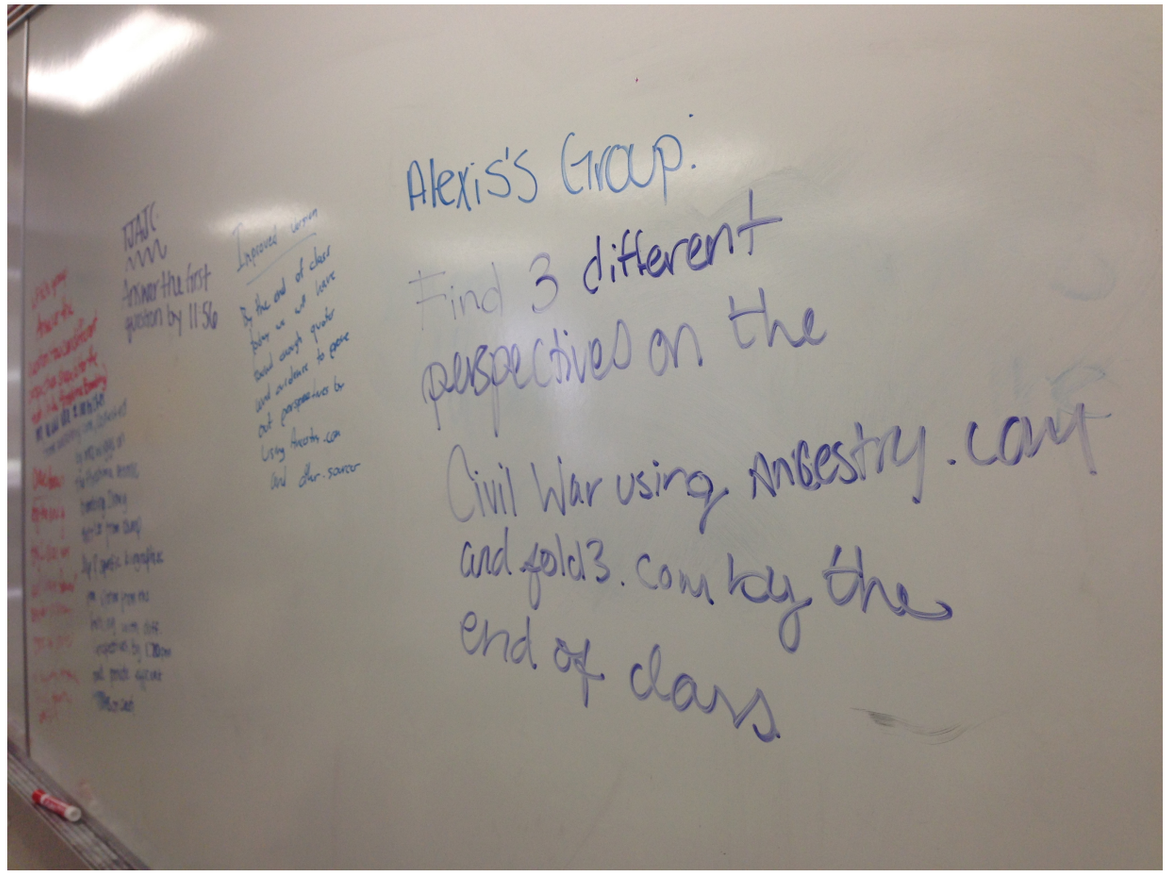
At this point, I still wanted to use my Ancestry project in the classroom to see how it would work with all of my students. Within the context of a six-week unit on Perspectives, small groups of students had to select a historical event of their choice and use primary source texts to help them identify the various perspectives of people who experienced the event.

Since they had to pay for accounts, only a small handful of students chose to use Ancestry and students who did not sign up for accounts subsequently did not have the personal buy-in generated by examining family members. The students who set up accounts with Ancestry most certainly had the best experience with the project; they were able to use their own families to examine how people reacted to various events, most often the Civil War. [**Editor's Note:** To learn about getting your students access to Ancestry's databases free of cost, read The Ancestry K-12 Grant Program.]

One student found that her grandfather had a moral objection to serving for the Confederacy, so he became a postmaster in order to avoid conscription. She found a formal presidential pardon attached to his records in Fold3.com. Another student interviewed her grandmother about the civil rights movement; she had never even considered discussing this momentous event with her, but her interview was so powerful that it became the sole focus of the group's project.

While the students using their own family members definitely had the most positive experience with the project, every student was still able to practice inference. We used Dr. David Hicks' SCIM-C method whenever we examined primary source texts. SCIM-C is a strategy for examining primary sources that asks students to focus on Summarizing, Contextualizing, Inferring, and Monitoring the information available to them, and them Corroborating all of the information to come to final conclusions. Inference is such an incredibly crucial part of the reading process, but also a difficult skill to break into component parts. The class had several discussions about how, exactly, inference works, both in the context of primary sources as well as fiction.

Another skill we addressed was goal-setting. Since the students were in groups working on totally different projects with different final products, it was important for them to set and accomplish step-by-step goals. Everyday, we would come into class and the



SMART Goals

groups would create a group-wide SMART goal for the day, with mini-tasks for each group member to complete. The students would hang these lists on chart paper, and each time a student completed a task, he/she would check it off on the wall.

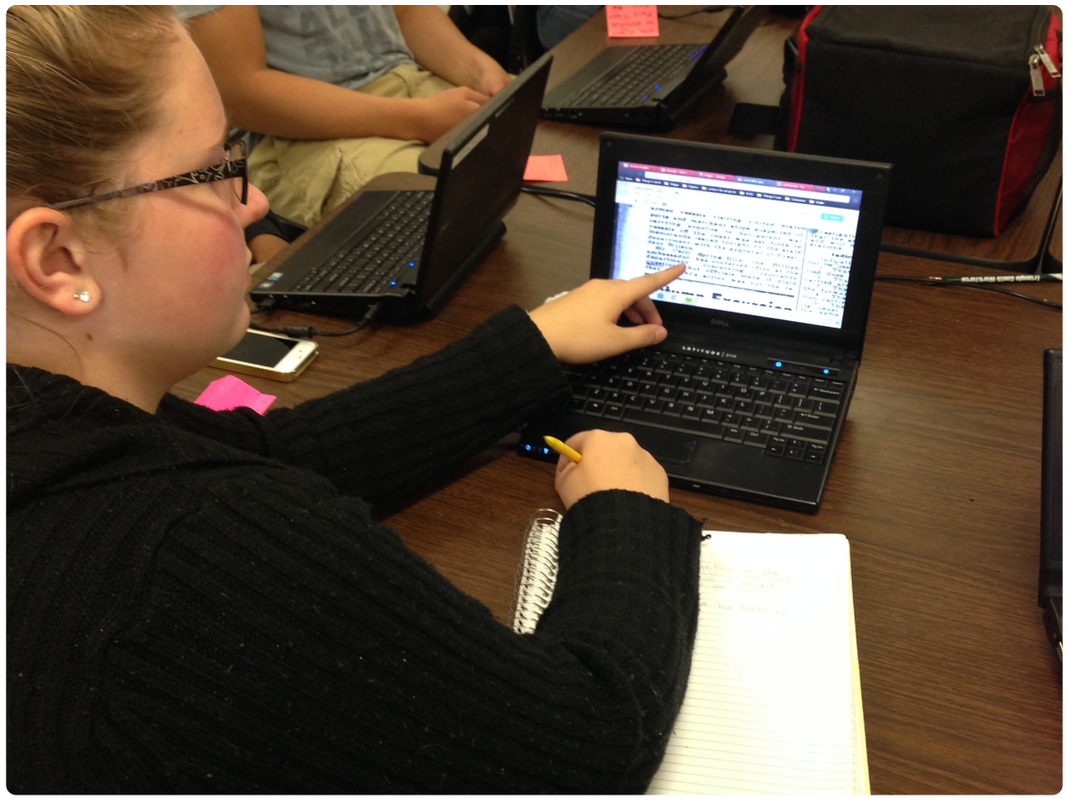
In general, the students enjoyed this project. There were definitely some drawbacks that I will need to address the next time around. I plan on being more descriptive with what I expect out of the final products. This time around, I gave the students quite a bit of leeway for what kind of product they could submit, and while they were all good, if I provided clearer guidelines, the students would have been more clearly focused on honing their research skills.

YouTube Video explaining SMART goals

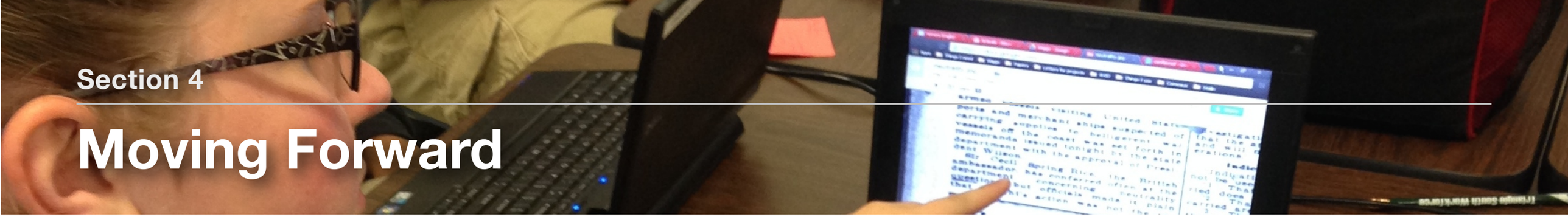
List of student projects

Group Members	Historical Event	Link to Project
Isabel, Rebekah, Carson, Kirill	Prohibition	http://.tumblr.com/
Elizabeth, Keren, Sam, Brook, Emily	Titanic Sinking	http://thetitanicsinkingproject.weebly.com/
Minerva, Neko, Sergio, Payton, & Damaris	Stonewall Riots	http://prezi.com/_vmhxvwaqagq/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy
Jamie, Parker, westley, Hannah	Hiroshima Bombed	http://youtu.be/ruuG4klPKBM
Amil, Yared, Jane, Joel, Ahtziri	Assassination of Abraham Lincoln	http://popplet.com/app/#/1828328
Ginevra,Rebekah, Samyra, Cynthia, and Amalia		https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AVAYCEnhfXGpfHlabYVY
i	John F. Kennedy Assassination	http://jfkassasrspectives.weebly.com/
Katelyn, Janaysha, Keyona, Nick, Jennifer	Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.	http://padlet.com/ktayl646/tuzqp8r9negxhttp

Examples of student work



Classwork example 1



Section 4

Moving Forward

While I would love to say that, because of this project, all my students have As in all of their classes and full-rides to Harvard, I can't say that. However, I can say that every single one of my students improved their reading skills at least on some level, and I believe this improvement is due to two factors:

1. This project allowed for the creation of closer relationships which generated the buy-in I needed in order to help teach my students.

2. This project provided for much more relevant reading—from Dr. Williams' book to the census data, the nonfiction my students were reading was interesting to them.

Teenagers are trying to find themselves. They're trying to navigate the waters of who they are, where they come from, and where they're going. Exposure to real and relevant historical texts helps disenfranchised students understand that they do have a clear place in history while creating an opportunity for open dialogue about where they came from and where, with perseverance and the right skills, they can go.

Project Assessment Options

Question to Answer (choose only 1)	**Sources for Research (choose at least 2)**	**Methods for Presentation of Information (choose only 1)**	**Methods for reflection (choose at least 1; must provide reflection at least twice during this process):**
How does a person's perspective affect how they deal with conflict or change?	Ancestry.com: census data, birth records, death records	Group essay: minimum of 3 pages	30-second video clip--emailed to Mrs. Wiggs
How does perspective shape or alter truth?	Newspapers.com: newspapers (both new and old) from around the country	Group video: between 3 and 5 minutes.	Thoughts posted on Padlet: http://padlet.com/ewigg636/vq4shr0w75ig
How does history affect ordinary people?	Fold3.com: military records (both new and old) from around the country	Group presentation: between 3 and 5 minutes.	Hand-drawn illustrations of thoughts (ie: comic, doodles, or concept map)
How can background shape perspective?	Slave Narrative site: http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/snintro00.html	Group digital workspace: Padlet.com, thinglink.com, glogster, blogspot, googlesites, popplet, linoit, etc.	Digital explanations of reflections: gifboom, juxtaposer, tellagami
	Library of Congress:	Got a better idea?	

Tap or click this widget to see Elizabeth's Project Assessment Options as a PDF.

Chapter 3

Res2arch To Nug6ets

Genealogy research involves collecting nuggets of information from a variety of research sources. Kristen Ziller, school library media specialist, and Laura Richardson, classroom teacher, asked 26 Social Studies students at Durant Road Middle School to create an individual focus question based on their own family history. The students then embarked on a unique research journey to dive deeper into a story on their family tree and gather information from a variety of sources. Students self-selected a web-based production tool that best expressed their findings to their classmates, parents, and special guests.

Section 1

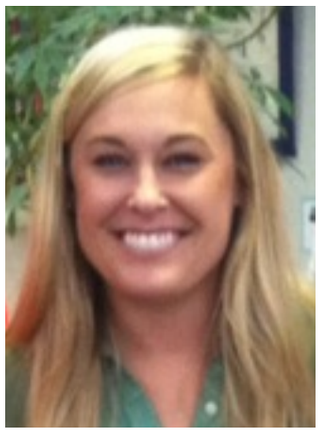
Collaboration

Social Studies Teacher / Library Media Specialist Collaboration

Kristen Ziller: Collaboration is a two-way dialog. It's giving, taking, sharing, and creating. Collaborative partnerships are not merely cooperative. They involve shared vision, distinct roles with 'to do list' items for each partner to accomplish, lessons to teach, students to check in with, and assignments to evaluate.

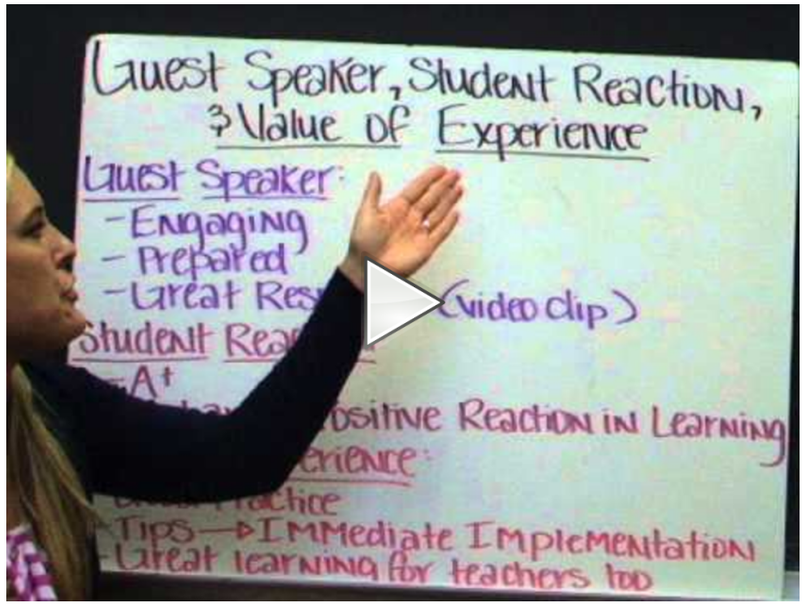
From the moment I began my role as library media specialist at my school, my approach to collaboration has been to focus on building relationships with the staff and students. Observing, listening, and bringing value-added contributions to discussions opened doors to teachers' project planning and access to their students. I never want teachers to see my involvement as another thing on their plate. My commitment to building helpful and cooperative relationships leads to greater trust in my role as collaborator down the road. All it takes is one positive project collaboration and the classroom teacher seeks me out in subsequent project planning.

Collaboration on the Res2arch Nug6ets project was powerful. Both Laura and I were already passionate about our own family history, so our enthusiasm for this topic led to meaningful preparation and a rich authenticity for our students' learning experiences.



Laura Richardson: Planning for any long-term project can be overwhelming at first, especially when you are the type of teacher who wants to think about the "what ifs" beforehand. Having a super-organized media specialist who makes collaboration both fun and gratifying can make this process easier is. The key is to go ahead and write down a list of ideas you have and what you want to accomplish in this process, and then add these ideas to a calendar. The details of the lesson can be worked out once you see your starting point and end point.

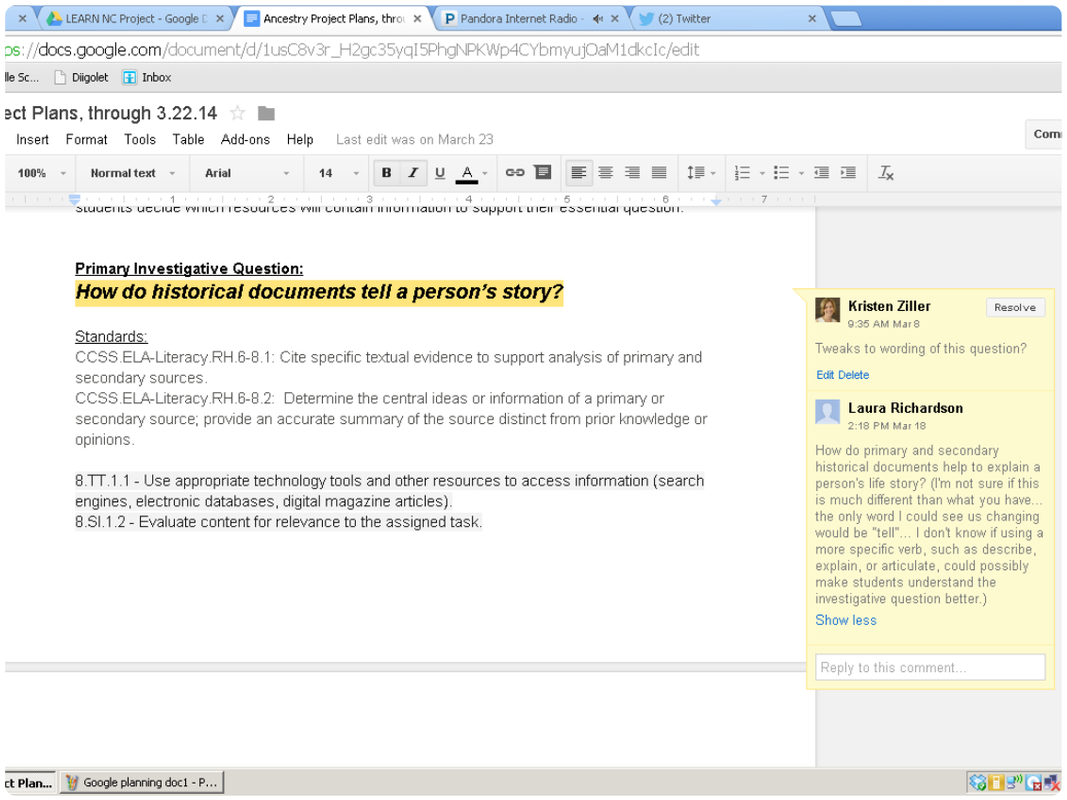
Video outlining the beginning of the research project.



Laura Richardson explains the challenges of organizing and implementing the project.

One of our main goals as teachers is to prepare students for the next level of education. As an 8th grade Social Studies teacher, I always strive to ensure that my students will leave with skills that will make them successful in high school. Research skills are an independent skill-set that many high school teachers expect their students to already have in their tool belt. As we know, however, many of our students are not leaving middle school with authentic research skills. They might have an idea of how to do basic research, but fail to really engage with the material.

Examples of Collaboration



Section 2

Pre-Research

The activities described in the following How To guides were conducted prior to the research and implementation days. These instructional strategies could be completed on separate days or combined together depending on time available.

Tap or click here for a year-long pacing guide.

Kristen Ziller: We used a variety of instructional strategies for this project. Through our planning, we determined that there was much preliminary work for students to complete ahead of their independent research. Each of these pieces formed a foundation that:

- helped students define terms.
- created a space for both formal and informal family discussions.
- provided an introduction to historical documents and family history resources.
- allowed time for thoughtful, personal reflection.

Together, these pieces became building blocks to prepare students to write a unique focus question for their research.

Although these strategies are parts of a whole, they could easily be used as stand-alone lessons to engage students in family-focused conversations, immerse them in historical documents, and foster discussions on ancestry.

HOW TO host an Ancestry Lunch

The Ancestry Lunch marked the launch of this project. It was intended to be a casual dialog that allowed for students to begin sharing who they are as individuals, the stories of their family, and a peek into their ancestry.

How we did it:

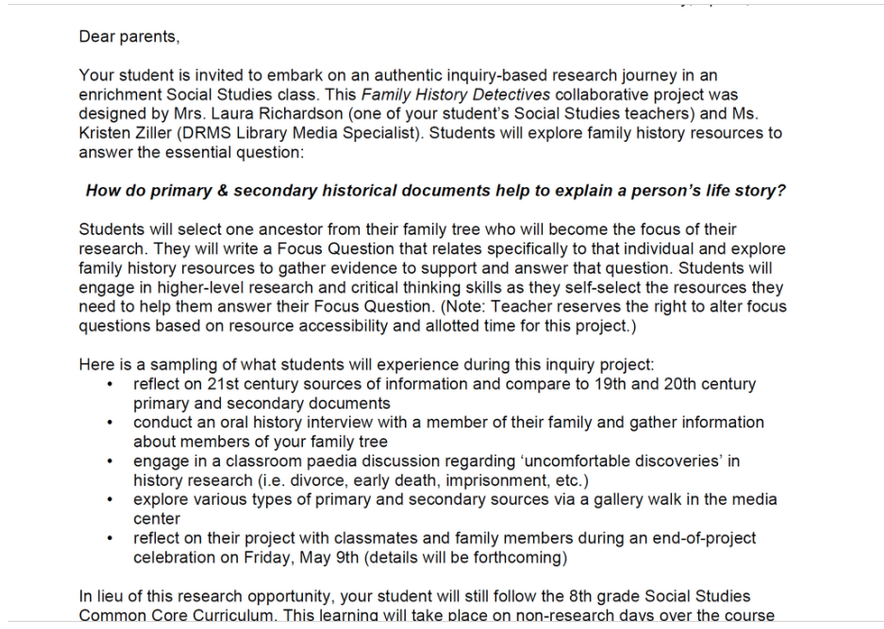
Students sat in groups of four and ate their lunch in the media center. They each brought in three distinct artifacts: one that represented them, one that represented their family, and one that represented their heritage. Discussions around tables were group-led by several Table Talk questions that emphasized sharing meaningful reflections with each other. We both observed and moved from table to table to listen to student stories.

Classroom management was unnecessary since students were focused and genuinely interested in the discussions at their tables. If there's one thing I've learned about middle school students . . . it's that they love to talk about themselves!

Improvements for the future:

- Students will share in larger groups so they can experience more examples.
- Create an exit ticket for student reflection at the close of this activity.

Letter to Parents Explaining the Ancestry Project



Dear parents,

Your student is invited to embark on an authentic inquiry-based research journey in an enrichment Social Studies class. This *Family History Detectives* collaborative project was designed by Mrs. Laura Richardson (one of your student's Social Studies teachers) and Ms. Kristen Ziller (DRMS Library Media Specialist). Students will explore family history resources to answer the essential question:

How do primary & secondary historical documents help to explain a person's life story?

Students will select one ancestor from their family tree who will become the focus of their research. They will write a Focus Question that relates specifically to that individual and explore family history resources to gather evidence to support and answer that question. Students will engage in higher-level research and critical thinking skills as they self-select the resources they need to help them answer their Focus Question. (Note: Teacher reserves the right to alter focus questions based on resource accessibility and allotted time for this project.)

Here is a sampling of what students will experience during this inquiry project:

- reflect on 21st century sources of information and compare to 19th and 20th century primary and secondary documents
- conduct an oral history interview with a member of their family and gather information about members of your family tree
- engage in a classroom paedia discussion regarding 'uncomfortable discoveries' in history research (i.e. divorce, early death, imprisonment, etc.)
- explore various types of primary and secondary sources via a gallery walk in the media center
- reflect on their project with classmates and family members during an end-of-project celebration on Friday, May 9th (details will be forthcoming)

In lieu of this research opportunity, your student will still follow the 8th grade Social Studies Common Core Curriculum. This learning will take place on non-research days over the course

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Table Talk

Take turns sharing your 'Museum of Me' with others at your table and answer the following questions in your discussion.

1. How does this artifact represent YOU? Why did you select it?
2. How does this artifact represent YOUR FAMILY? Tell a family story that goes along with it.
3. How does this artifact represent YOUR ANCESTORS? What is something interesting you know about your ancestry?

HOW TO help students reflect on themselves

Since the most valuable tools for this project include resources and documents with which the students have little to no experience, we created an activity where students brainstormed modern-day primary and secondary resources as related to their own personal story.

How we did it:

Daily Lesson Plan:

1. (5 minutes - Kristen) Students brainstorm the various sources where information about them can be found (examples might include: Google search results, school yearbook, photographs, school papers, etc.).

    a. Students use ABCNotes app to brainstorm all sources they can think of and email their notes screen to Ms. Ziller.

2. (15 minutes - Laura) Students reflect in small groups about those sources and complete graphic organizers (see gallery 1.2). Small-group discussion questions:

- How do these sources define who you are?
- What information about who you are is missing from these sources?

3. (5 minutes - Kristen) Students share out with the whole group

4. (10 minutes - Laura) Students log into their wiki account for the first time.

5. *Student homework* (respond on the wiki discussion board by Monday):

- Individual Student Reflection Question: Pretend that you weren't here to 'tell your story.' What would be the most convincing sources others would use to find out about your life?

Primary and Secondary Document exercise

Name: _____

Primary & Secondary Sources – What's the Difference?

Primary Sources	Secondary Sources

Summarize: _____

_____

_____

Name: _____

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Improvements for the future:

- Allot more time for ample discussion and to complete all assigned tasks.
- Have students log into their wiki account on a different day to allow more time for the lesson.
- Elaborate on or give examples of Individual Reflection homework question to minimize student confusion.

HOW TO host an oral history interview guest speaker

Local historical societies, libraries, and universities are wonderful resources for finding local guest speakers who will talk to students for little or no fee.

How we did it:

Sandra Davidson, founder of Living Narratives, gave a presentation to our students on conducting a family history interview. Ms. Davidson's presentation included the following:

1. Students took notes on the steps involved in scheduling and conducting an interview with a family member in preparation for their own family history interview.

2. Students watched a video clip that featured family stories and lore.

3. Students were given time to reflect at the end of class by practicing their interview skills with a partner and brainstorming questions to ask their relative.

Following this presentation, students had one week to schedule, conduct, and record their family history interview.

Cornell Note-Taking Sheet, Guest Speaker Interview Questions and Checklist, and Guest Speaker Note-Taking Sheet

Guest Speaker Note Taking Sheet

Answer the following questions about your guest speaker.

1. Today's Date: _____
2. Guest Speaker's Name: _____
3. Guest Speaker's Job Title: _____
4. List 4 significant points that you learned from your guest speaker.
   a. _____
      _____
   b. _____
      _____
   c. _____
      _____
   d. _____
      _____
5. What did you like most about the presentation?

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Improvements for the future:

Increasing from one guest speaker to a panel of speakers who could present in different classrooms on various topics. This would allow for small group opportunities and even lunch talks between students and speakers.

Students may need longer than a week to reach out to relatives for their interview. Allot closer to two weeks for students to schedule, conduct, and record their interview.

Additional Resources:

http://storycorps.org/animation/

HOW TO help students reflect on their interview & write their focus question

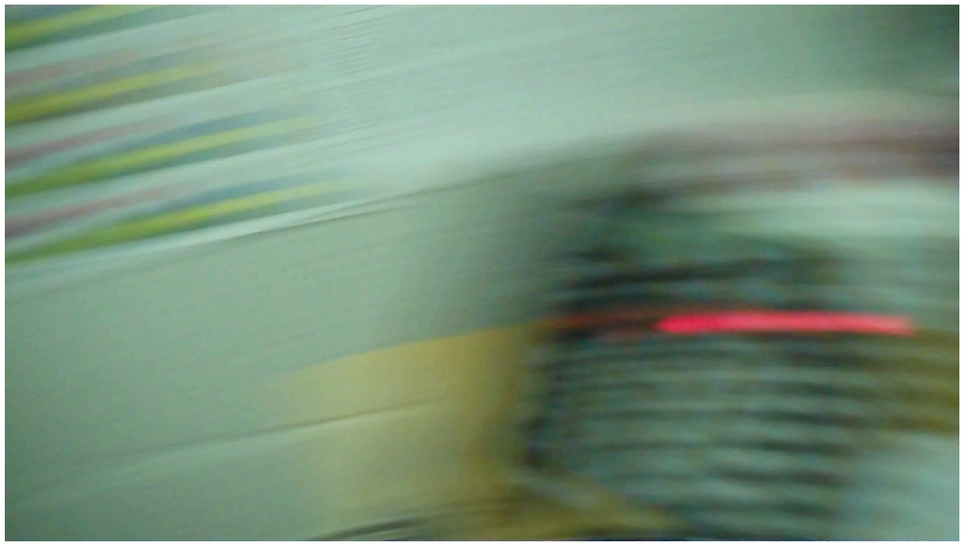
How we did it:

Students used two different graphic organizers, along with a one-on-one discussion with their teacher for the project to narrow down their interests and write a clearly stated, researchable focus question.

At this point in the project, students were assigned their 'teacher' for the project. The class was divided into two groups so each of us had a smaller group to follow through their research journey. Our one-on-one conversations with students proved to be incredibly powerful in each student's individual research journey.

The groups were chosen based on a grading scale. This allowed us to have an even number of students, as well as an even ground of ability levels. Oddly enough our class was evenly split between boys and girls, which allowed us to create some great learning partnerships later in the project.

Narrowing Down the Research Project

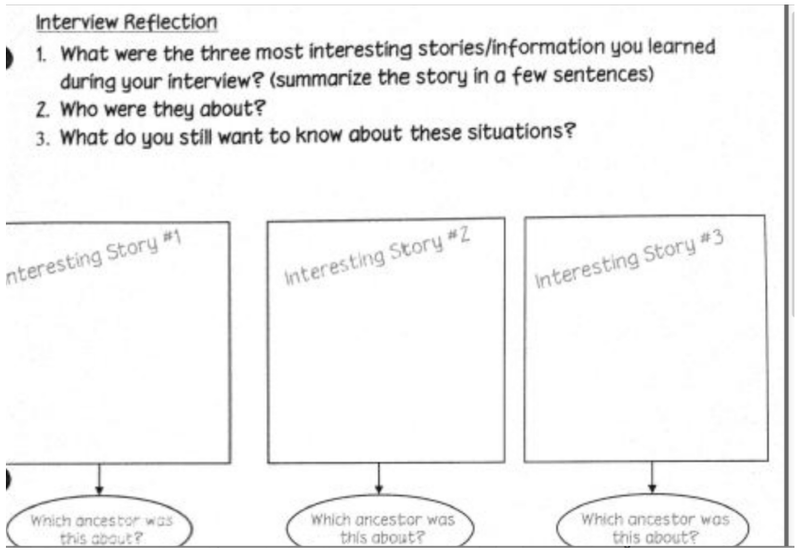


In this video, Kristen Ziller explains how she and Laura Richardson help students narrow down their research topics.

Improvements for the future:

- Students need to be reminded to bring their actual interview in with them (on their cell phones or recording device), along with earbuds for listening and analyzing their notes.
- We need to define the terms 'focus question' and 'essential question' for students.
- Allow more time for students to complete these activities.

Interview Reflection Graphic Organizer



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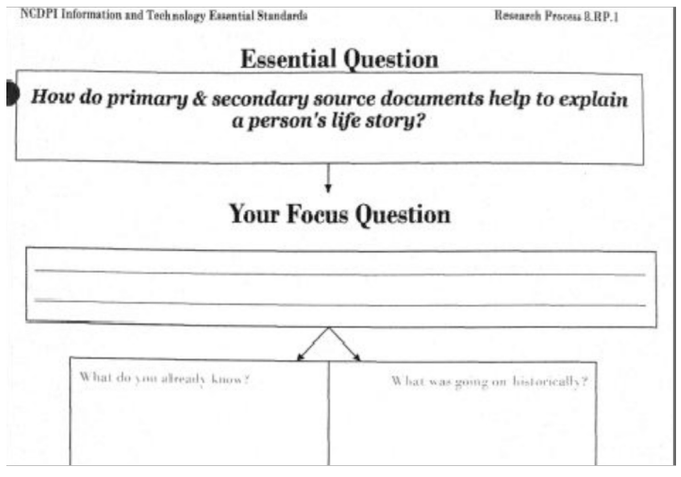
Establishing Your Focus Question Graphic Organizer



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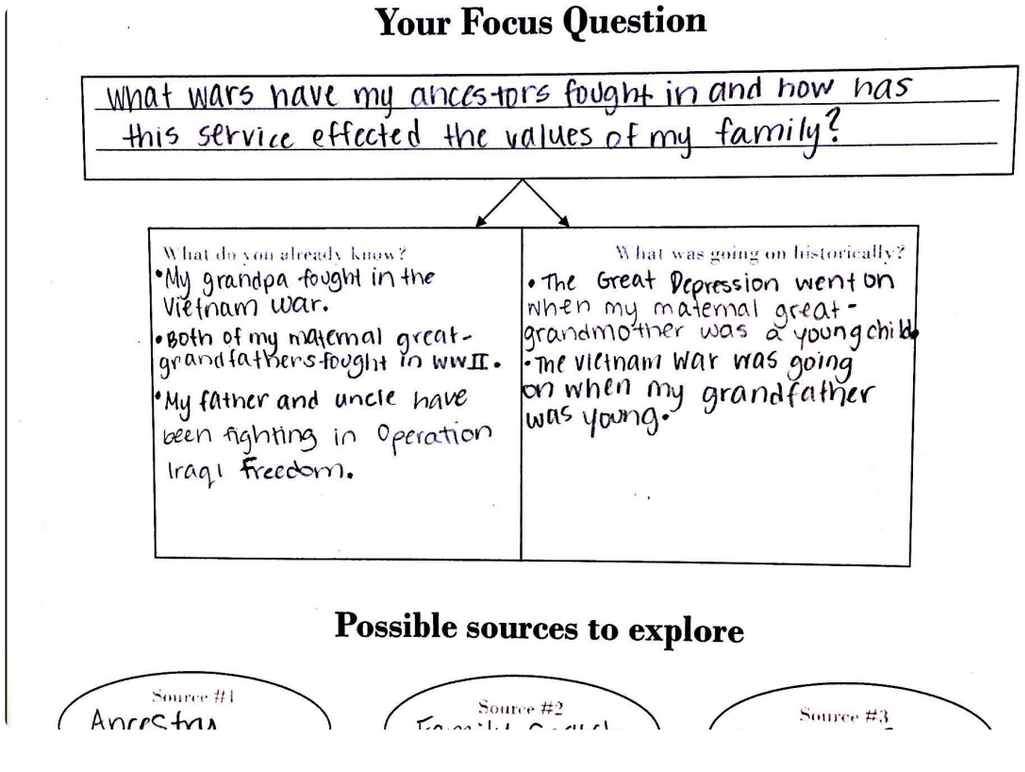
Examples of Student Work



Your Focus Question

What wars have my ancestors fought in and how has this service effected the values of my family?

What do you already know?
- My grandpa fought in the Vietnam war.
- Both of my maternal great-grandfathers fought in WWII.
- My father and uncle have been fighting in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

What was going on historically?
- The Great Depression went on when my maternal great-grandmother was a young child.
- The Vietnam War was going on when my grandfather was young.

Possible sources to explore

Source #1 Ancestry

Source #2

Source #3

1 of 11

HOW TO host a Paedeia seminar

How we did it:

KZ: I got a funny look from my assistant principal when I asked her to approve the use of a clip from "Running Zack," a *Saved by the Bell* episode from the 1990s. The topic of this particular episode features Zack and his friends as they completed a family history project for their Social Studies class. We selected this resource after discussing the importance of student awareness of uncomfortable discoveries they may encounter in their research.

LR: Who doesn't love 90s sitcoms? *Saved By The Bell* is one of my all-time favorite TV shows, and I remembered an episode that truly tied into what we were trying to accomplish in our Paideia seminar. Of course, 90s sitcoms always attempted to tackle various difficult issues, so why shouldn't there be one about interesting family history?

KZ: During the Paedeia seminar, Laura had questions projected on the screen that students had answered for homework the night before, after reading an article about slave-owning relatives in your family tree. This, along with the "Running Zack" episode, was the jumping off point for a discussion about uncomfortable discoveries students may encounter in their research.

LR: I was truly impressed with how much the students enjoyed this activity. Not only did they beg us to finish the episode (since we only showed a short clip) but they really dove into the article and the attached questions. The students seemed to deeply ponder the idea that they themselves could uncover information in their personal history or even their family history that could cause them angst, anxiety, or bewilderment. One of the most important pieces to this lesson is that the students gained awareness of the variety of information they might uncover.

Improvements for the future:

- Students need to have practiced Paedeia skills and document annotation prior to doing this lesson.

Kristen Ziller explains how she and Laura Richardson used Saved by the Bell *and a Paideia seminar to ask students to consider uncomfortable discoveries in family history.*

Coming to Terms with Slave-Owning Ancestors Document and Article Rubric

Article of the Week Rubric

Requirement	Points Earned	Points Possible
Annotation/Interaction with the text Examples: • Underlining important terms • Circling definitions and meanings • Writing key words and definitions in the margin • Signaling where important information can be found with key words or symbols in the margin • Writing short summaries in the margin at the end of sub-units • Writing the questions in the margin next to the section where the answer is found • Indicating steps in a process by using numbers in the margin		10
Summary • At least one paragraph (5 sentences) that exhibits a thorough, accurate understanding of the article		10
Reflection • At least one paragraph (5 sentences) that shows connections between the student and the article. This paragraph may include: o Feelings, Thoughts, Reactions		15
Evidence of Critical Thinking • The response shows inferences and opinion is informed by 3 pieces of evidence within the article		15

Summary (5 Sentences):

Reflection (5 Sentences):

Evidence (3 Direct Quotes & Critical Thinking Connected to Each):

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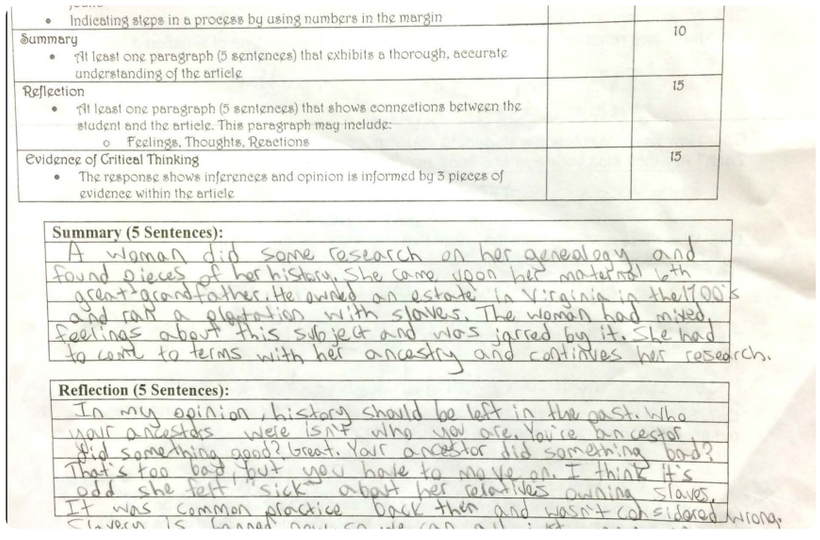
Student Examples of Running Zack Assignment



- Indicating steps in a process by using numbers in the margin

Summary • At least one paragraph (5 sentences) that exhibits a thorough, accurate understanding of the article		10
Reflection • At least one paragraph (5 sentences) that shows connections between the student and the article. This paragraph may include: o Feelings, Thoughts, Reactions		15
Evidence of Critical Thinking • The response shows inferences and opinion is informed by 3 pieces of evidence within the article		15

Summary (5 Sentences):

A woman did some research on her geneology and found pieces of her history. She came upon her maternal 6th great-grandfather. He owned an estate in Virginia in the 1700's and ran a plantation with slaves. The woman had mixed feelings about this subject and was jarred by it. She had to come to terms with her ancestry and continues her research.

Reflection (5 Sentences):

In my opinion, history should be left in the past. Who your ancestors were isn't who you are. You're ancestor did something good? Great. Your ancestor did something bad? That's too bad, but you have to move on. I think it's odd she felt sick about her relatives owning slaves. It was common practice back then and wasn't considered wrong.

Kristen Ziller explains the impulse behind creating student learning labs to practice skills needed for family history research.

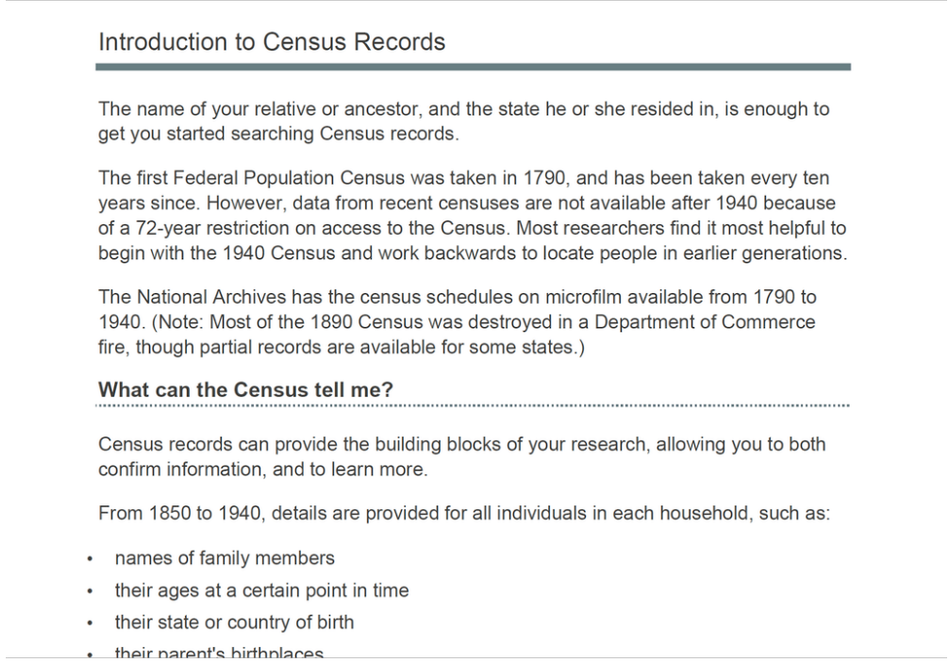
HOW TO conduct student learning labs

Learning labs are a set of 'stations' that each provide students with a short-term skill and learning goal to achieve. Each station is a different topic, where students learn, do, and reflect on the activity at that lab station. Students are divided into several small groups and rotate through each learning lab over the course of a class period.

Lab #1: Census Records

For this lab, I created an online tutorial for students to watch before navigating the ancestry census database themselves. This gave them an introduction to the resource since none of the students had accessed this tool before.

Introduction to Using Census Records



Introduction to Census Records

The name of your relative or ancestor, and the state he or she resided in, is enough to get you started searching Census records.

The first Federal Population Census was taken in 1790, and has been taken every ten years since. However, data from recent censuses are not available after 1940 because of a 72-year restriction on access to the Census. Most researchers find it most helpful to begin with the 1940 Census and work backwards to locate people in earlier generations.

The National Archives has the census schedules on microfilm available from 1790 to 1940. (Note: Most of the 1890 Census was destroyed in a Department of Commerce fire, though partial records are available for some states.)

What can the Census tell me?

Census records can provide the building blocks of your research, allowing you to both confirm information, and to learn more.

From 1850 to 1940, details are provided for all individuals in each household, such as:

- names of family members
- their ages at a certain point in time
- their state or country of birth
- their parent's birthplaces

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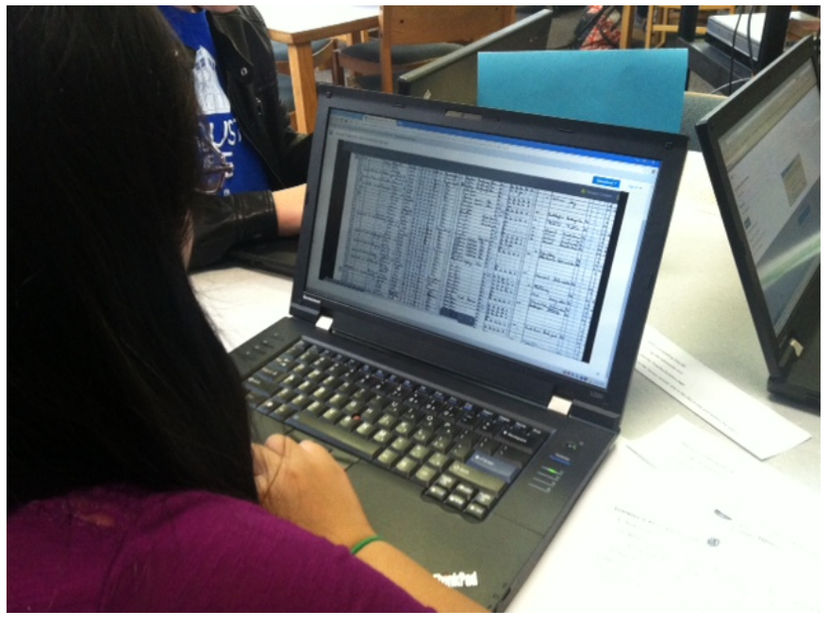
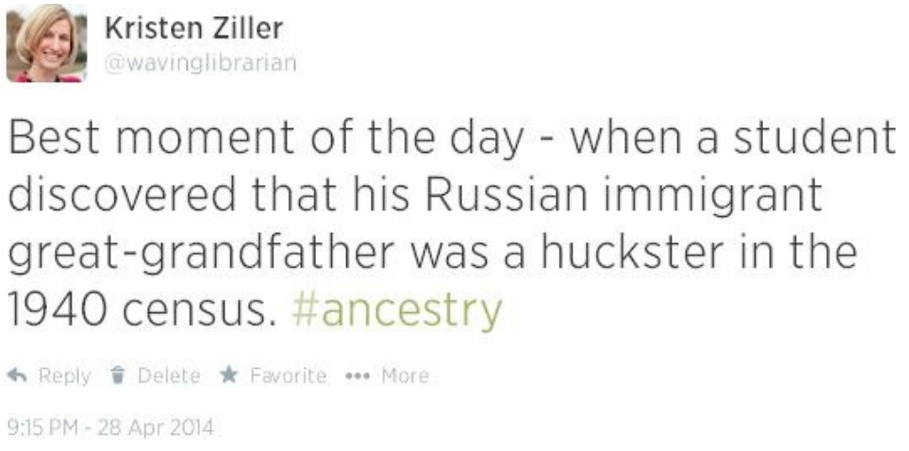


Picture of a student using census records



Lab #2: Historical Newspapers

Students looked at three short newspaper articles from various sources and different periods of Neil Armstrong's life. They reflected on what information they gleaned from this source that they wouldn't find elsewhere.

Lab #3: Old-Fashioned Handwriting

Many of our middle school students struggle to read 'fancy handwriting.' With all of the handwritten historical documents our students would encounter on their research journey, a station on cursive writing was a must. Students first practiced writing their own names in cursive, then they transcribed the first sentence of the constitution.

Lab #4: Analyzing Photographs

Students selected one of two photographs to analyze. Both photographs pertained to Neil Armstrong's Apollo 11 mission. Students studied the photograph for clues about the event, people, and time period.

Improvements for the future:

- Timing at stations worked pretty well at 12 minutes per station. The census station could definitely have had more time. Then again, I don't think you can spend enough time exploring the census!

- Historical newspaper articles could have used some more guiding questions such as:

  - What similarities do you notice?

  - What information can you glean from one article and not the others?

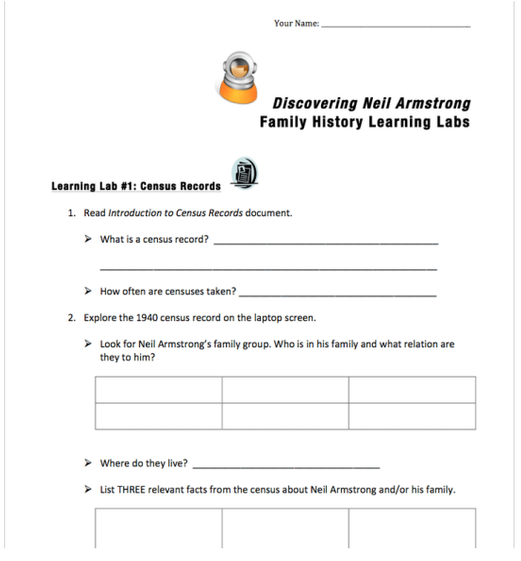
  - What is valuable about an original historical document such as this?

- What kind of information do these articles give you that other sources would not?

Additional Resources:

http://durantroadms.wcpss.net/web/itlms/2014/04/23/discovering-neil-armstrong/

Discovering Neil Armstrong - Family History Learning Labs



Your Name: _____

Discovering Neil Armstrong
Family History Learning Labs

Learning Lab #1: Census Records

1. Read *Introduction to Census Records* document.
   - What is a census record? _____
     _____
   - How often are censuses taken? _____
2. Explore the 1940 census record on the laptop screen.
   - Look for Neil Armstrong's family group. Who is in his family and what relation are they to him?

   - Where do they live? _____
   - List THREE relevant facts from the census about Neil Armstrong and/or his family.

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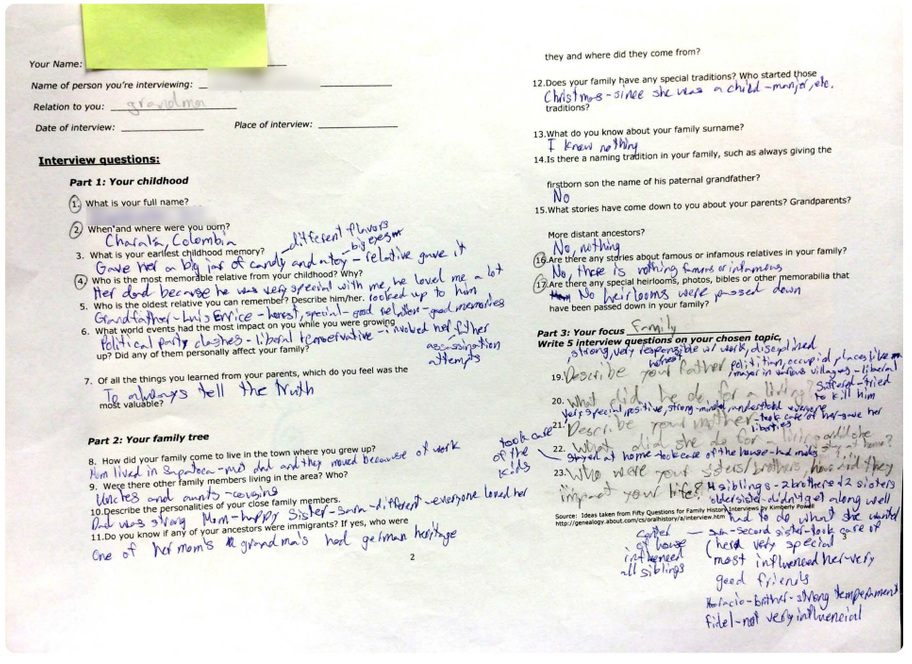
Student work examples



Your Name: _____
Name of person you're interviewing: _____
Relation to you: grandma
Date of interview: _____ Place of interview: _____

Interview questions:

Part 1: Your childhood

1. What is your full name?
2. When and where were you born? Charata, Colombia
3. What is your earliest childhood memory? Gave me a big bag of candy and toy - different flavors - big eyes
4. Who is the most memorable relative from your childhood? Why? Her dad because he was very special with me he loved me a lot
5. Who is the oldest relative you can remember? Describe him/her. Grandfather - Luis Enrice - honest, special - good relation - good memories
6. What world events had the most impact on you while you were growing up? Did any of them personally affect your family? Political party clashes - liberal conservative - involved not father assassination attempts
7. Of all the things you learned from your parents, which do you feel was the most valuable? To always tell the truth

Part 2: Your family tree

8. How did your family come to live in the town where you grew up? Mom lived in Spartaco - mom and dad and they moved because of work
9. Were there other family members living in the area? Who? Uncles and aunts - cousins
10. Describe the personalities of your close family members. Dad was strong Mom - happy Sister - Sara - different - everyone loved her
11. Do you know if any of your ancestors were immigrants? If yes, who were One of her mom's & grandma's had german heritage

they and where did they come from?

12. Does your family have any special traditions? Who started those traditions? Christmas - since she was a child - mom/pa, etc.
13. What do you know about your family surname? I knew nothing
14. Is there a naming tradition in your family, such as always giving the firstborn son the name of his paternal grandfather? No
15. What stories have come down to you about your parents? Grandparents? More distant ancestors? No, nothing
16. Are there any stories about famous or infamous relatives in your family? No, there is nothing famous or infamous
17. Are there any special heirlooms, photos, bibles or other memorabilia that have been passed down in your family? No heirlooms were passed down

Part 3: Your focus Family

Write 5 interview questions on your chosen topic.

19. Describe your father - strong, very responsible at work, disciplined, loved partition, occupied places like ... remain in ... villages - liberal
20. What did he do for a living? Soldier - tried to kill him
21. Describe your mother - very special, positive, strong-minded, understandable, courageous, hard-working, took care of her sister
22. What did she do for a living? Stayed at home because of the house - had many children
23. Who were your sisters/brothers? How did they impact your life? 4 siblings - 2 brothers 2 sisters - older sister - didn't get along well - had to do what she wanted

took care of the kids

Source: Ideas taken from Fifty Questions for Family History Interviews by Kimberly Powell http://genealogy.about.com/cs/oralhistory/a/interview.htm

Carpet of house - in between - all siblings

(Heidi very special - most influenced her - very good friends

Marcio - brother - strong temperament

Fidel - not very influencial

Section 3

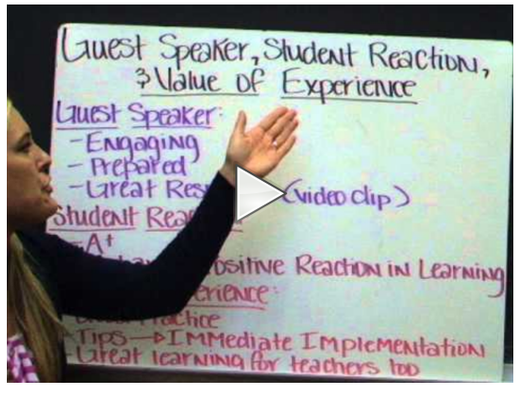
The Virtual Classroom

Project Research & Implementation

Kristen Ziller: I already had several years of experience using a wiki with my book club students as a place for them to share announcements, deadlines, and most importantly, a space for students to share their reading with each other. The wiki is a student-created space and a way for them to share with each other outside of in-person meetings. It provides a running dialog of discussions and allows every student a voice. These were precisely the reasons for deciding on a wiki for our project virtual classroom.

Laura Richardson: Prior to creating a Wiki Classroom, I had utilized Wikispaces as my school website. I had seen all of the wonderful capabilities that a wiki could provide (discussion boards, posting documents, progress monitoring, etc.) but I had never attempted to use this resource as something accessible for students. My immediate reaction after using the wiki the first time with our kids was, “Why didn’t I do this sooner?” The virtual classroom allows 24/7 access to your teacher, collaboration between students even when they aren’t at school, as well as a chance for students to show just how much they’ve been working; notifications allow the teacher to stay “in-the-know”. We couldn’t only proceed during school hours on our research, so we allowed students access to their classroom at all times. Wikis also allow some neat features, like if your students delete a page accidentally, you can quickly look at the page history and restore it back to the original. However, one little piece of advice to novice wiki users would be to ensure that you unlock your wiki pages, otherwise students cannot post to the discussion boards. I quickly learned in this project that trying something new or using a tool in a new way can be nerve-wracking but so rewarding when you see student learning as it’s happening. Click here for a tutorial on using Wikispaces.

Using Wikispaces



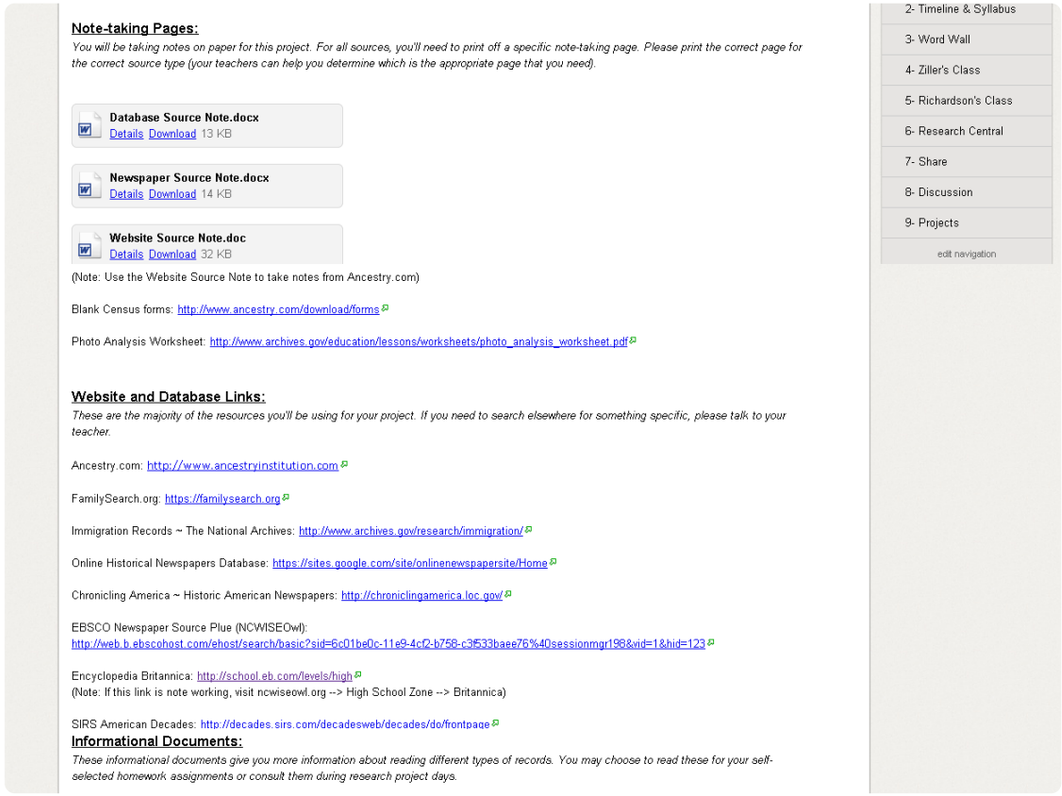
Laura Richardson explains the use of Wikispaces for their student projects/collaboration.

Student Ownership of Research Process: ~ The Student-Created Research Process

Day 1

KZ: With their research plan of sources to explore, students began their independent research. Our higher-order thinking students really struggled with where to start. We usually provide some sort of framework in the way of resources to use and in a specific order, but this project required students to develop their own research strategy and timeline. I was surprised when ALL students seemed to want to jump on ancestry.com and look up family members, when that was not necessarily the most appropriate path for their question.

Research and Discussion Boards



Day 1 Reflection

LR: Students had to realize that their research was going to lead them in a certain direction, and it was a direction of **their choosing, not the teacher's**. This is also difficult for some teachers, as well. We want to have an end goal fleshed out and explicitly described to our students to ensure learning, when in fact we are preventing learning by not allowing students to be their own guide. Autonomy in their research was challenging at first, but eventually students realized that they actually enjoyed being their own teacher. Ironically, the students that I normally

would feel the need to give more structure to were the ones who relished the idea of having freedom.

Day 2

KZ: With an introductory day to research under their belts, students fell into a rhythm today. I shared some reminders with them as they started their day, including printing out their own notes pages to take notes on and exploring sources that support their specific focus question. We also encouraged students to post any sources they found useful that were outside of the suggested list of resources we provided for them to the discussion board on the wiki. If students were to truly take ownership of their research process, they also needed to determine which sources were credible and would provide them with the best information to answer their focus question.

Additional Documents for Day 2

Guest Speaker Note Taking Sheet

Answer the following questions about your guest speaker.

1. Today's Date: _____
2. Guest Speaker's Name: _____
3. Guest Speaker's Job Title: _____
4. List 4 significant points that you learned from your guest speaker.
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____
   d. _____
5. What did you like most about the presentation?

Database, Newspaper, and Website source documents

Day 3

KZ: I can't stress enough the importance of the one-to-one conversations we had with each of our students. I found I helped quite a few students tweak their focus question at that time. After two solid days of research, some students found themselves at a dead-end with little information and no options for sources to explore next.

LR: Students got the opportunity to work on a Wordle project in which we gathered meaningful phrases or words from their project experience thus far. Students were to post on the discussion board 10 words (or more) that they feel were relevant to their project experience. The wide array of verbiage was incredible! The final product of placing all the words together into one giant word art piece was completed by Kristen, and she displayed this to the students the following work day. Wordle makes words that are repeated bigger than other words, so it was really impressive to view the differences and similarities amongst our students' backgrounds. We could have allowed a discussion board time or an open discussion about what the Wordle meant.

Day 3 Reflection, Part 1

Day 3 Reflection, Part 2

Day 4

KZ: Just as it's important for students to reflect on their research findings with their teachers, we thought it was equally important that they reflect with each other. We decided to have students engage in virtual conversations with another classmate. Laura paired students in the class. Most were boy/girl pairings. Students addressed five discussion questions in their conversation. Looking back, we didn't allow kids nearly enough time to complete this task. This was valuable reflection time and cutting it short so we could 'stay on schedule' with students' independent research is definitely something I would change for next time.

Day 4 Reflection

LR: Today's lesson was so powerful because we got to actually watch the students write in their own language. Of course, our English teachers would cringe at the Twitter and texting verbiage used in today's activity; however, it was that language that made today's conversations so authentic. Pulling back on the rules allowed students to feel comfortable in their conversations. Watching the text stream between pairs was incredible, and I was astonished at how quickly they began to engage with a peer. Although, any wiki-using teacher needs to remove the discussion board email notifications (I myself wound up with 300+ emails in a class of 26 students). After seeing the benefits gained from the discussion board opportunity, I feel that we could have utilized this tool more. Students could have written daily reflections on their projects, rather than completing response questions or having peer conversations on rare occasions.

Day 5

KZ: At this point in the project, most students had a collection of evidence that supported their focus question. We wanted students to begin thinking about the way they would express their research findings to others. How would they share what they'd found?

Day 5 Reflection

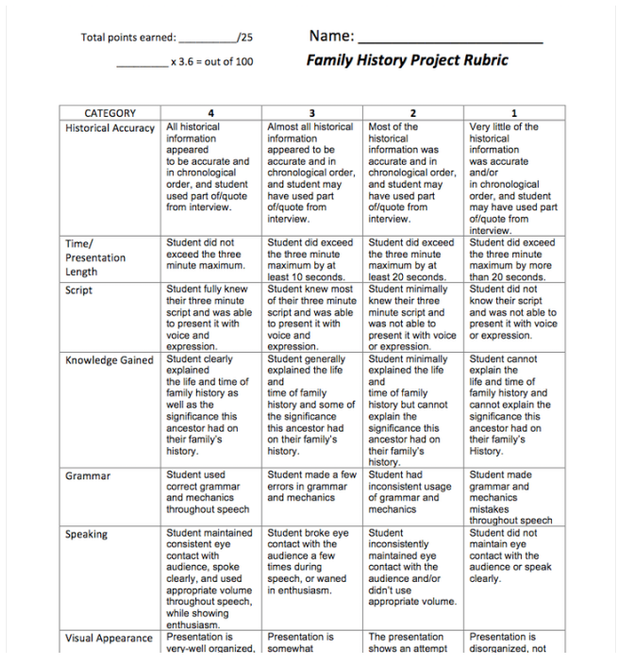
Day 6

KZ: Students began exploring presentation tools in earnest today. Most had identified the type of tool that would best showcase their research findings, whether it be a timeline, guided presentation set to music, or a slide show. Today was a day to see if those findings 'fit' a particular tool and to find any additional research nuggets that would complete their experience.

LR: I was so fascinated watching students choose their own presentation format. So often teachers force students to create only one or two types of projects, so the student has to fit their research into this structured format. A lot of times this process frustrates an 8th grader, or even diminishes their creativity. I

watched many students test out a new tool and then independently realized that this particular tool was not the best choice. These were students who designed their own independent research process. Their research and presentation experiences would only be that much better because of how we empowered through this project.

Ancestry Project Presentation Rubric



Total points earned: _____/25

_____ x 3.6 = out of 100

Name: _____

Family History Project Rubric

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Historical Accuracy	All historical information appeared to be accurate and in chronological order, and student used part of/quote from interview.	Almost all historical information appeared to be accurate and in chronological order, and student may have used part of/quote from interview.	Most of the historical information was accurate and in chronological order, and student may have used part of/quote from interview.	Very little of the historical information was accurate and/or in chronological order, and student may have used part of/quote from interview.
Time/ Presentation Length	Student did not exceed the three minute maximum.	Student did exceed the three minute maximum by at least 10 seconds.	Student did exceed the three minute maximum by at least 20 seconds.	Student did exceed the three minute maximum by more than 20 seconds.
Script	Student fully knew their three minute script and was able to present it with voice and expression.	Student knew most of their three minute script and was able to present it with voice and expression.	Student minimally knew their three minute script and was not able to present it with voice or expression.	Student did not know their script and was not able to present it with voice or expression.
Knowledge Gained	Student clearly explained the life and time of family history as well as the significance this ancestor had on their family's history.	Student generally explained the life and time of family history and some of the significance this ancestor had on their family's history.	Student minimally explained the life and time of family history but cannot explain the significance this ancestor had on their family's history.	Student cannot explain the life and time of family history and cannot explain the significance this ancestor had on their family's History.
Grammar	Student used correct grammar and mechanics throughout speech	Student made a few errors in grammar and mechanics	Student had inconsistent usage of grammar and mechanics	Student made grammar and mechanics mistakes throughout speech
Speaking	Student maintained consistent eye contact with audience, spoke clearly, and used appropriate volume throughout speech, while showing enthusiasm.	Student broke eye contact with the audience a few times during speech, or waned in enthusiasm.	Student inconsistently maintained eye contact with the audience and/or didn't use appropriate volume.	Student did not maintain eye contact with the audience or speak clearly.
Visual Appearance	Presentation is very-well organized,	Presentation is somewhat	The presentation shows an attempt	Presentation is disorganized, not

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Day 7

KZ: This was the last day devoted to student research. The next three days would be reserved for product work and presentation practice. I could feel students' stress levels rise a bit as they were unsure if the evidence they had collected was sufficient. The 'student-guided research process' for this project made many of these honor students uncomfortable. Throughout the project, they wanted consistent confirmation that they were on the right track. Laura and I continuously asked students if they had enough research evidence to support their focus question and if they had appropriate visuals - images and scans - to help tell that story.

LR: One way that Kristen and I kept in contact with our students, as well as with each other during the process, was to document our conversations in notes via a Google Doc. We had split the class in half to allow each of us to have a smaller group of students, and yet I still didn't always feel that I had enough time to talk to each kid. It's amazing how powerful education could be if we could do this process consistently throughout an entire school year. The students also seemed to really appreciate the one-on-one time with their teachers. They had an opportunity to ask questions for clarification and in some cases, if a student was struggling to proceed in their research, we could lead them in the right direction. In one particular case, I had a student who could not find any information on her grandmother. I suggested that she contact the alumni board at her grandmother's college and see if they had any information on her. Eventually, the alumni board

responded and told her what her grandmother's major was, what clubs she was a part of, and more.

Collaborative Sharing and Communication

Day 8

KZ: One of the brilliant benefits of teachers collaborating with the library media specialist is that it cuts the student-to-teacher ratio in half. For this project, Laura and I each had 13 students in our 'class' and were able to gain thorough knowledge of each of our students' work. Today our students met with each of us for our last one-on-one conference. They gave an overall status update of their project and shared research notes and images that answered their focus question. They also explained how and with what tool they would present this information to others.

LR: You could feel the tension and the intensity today as students began to finalize their final product. The media center was buzzing from students poring over the last few details of their projects. I began to reflect at this point about all the different aspects of the project that allowed this kind of environment to be possible. Of course, the collaboration with an incredible media center coordinator was one, the virtual classroom another, and then finally giving students the opportunity to express themselves in their own format. They had taken ownership not only over their learning, but also over the type of project they were choosing to create.

Day 8 Reflection

Days 9 & 10

KZ: I consistently expressed to students that you are the presentation. You have wonderful visuals for the audience to look at, but you are the one guiding them through those images. You are the one telling that story.

LR: Due to some preemptive practice in another speaking project they had completed this school year, I felt pretty confident that our students would be able to present well to their peers and parents. I did feel, however, that we could have provided more practice to our students prior to asking them to present. Teachers can never allow too much time for practice.

Kristen Ziller gives students tips on their final presentation.

Days 9 & 10 Reflection

Day 11 ~ Students Express their Research Findings to Others ~ Project Presentations

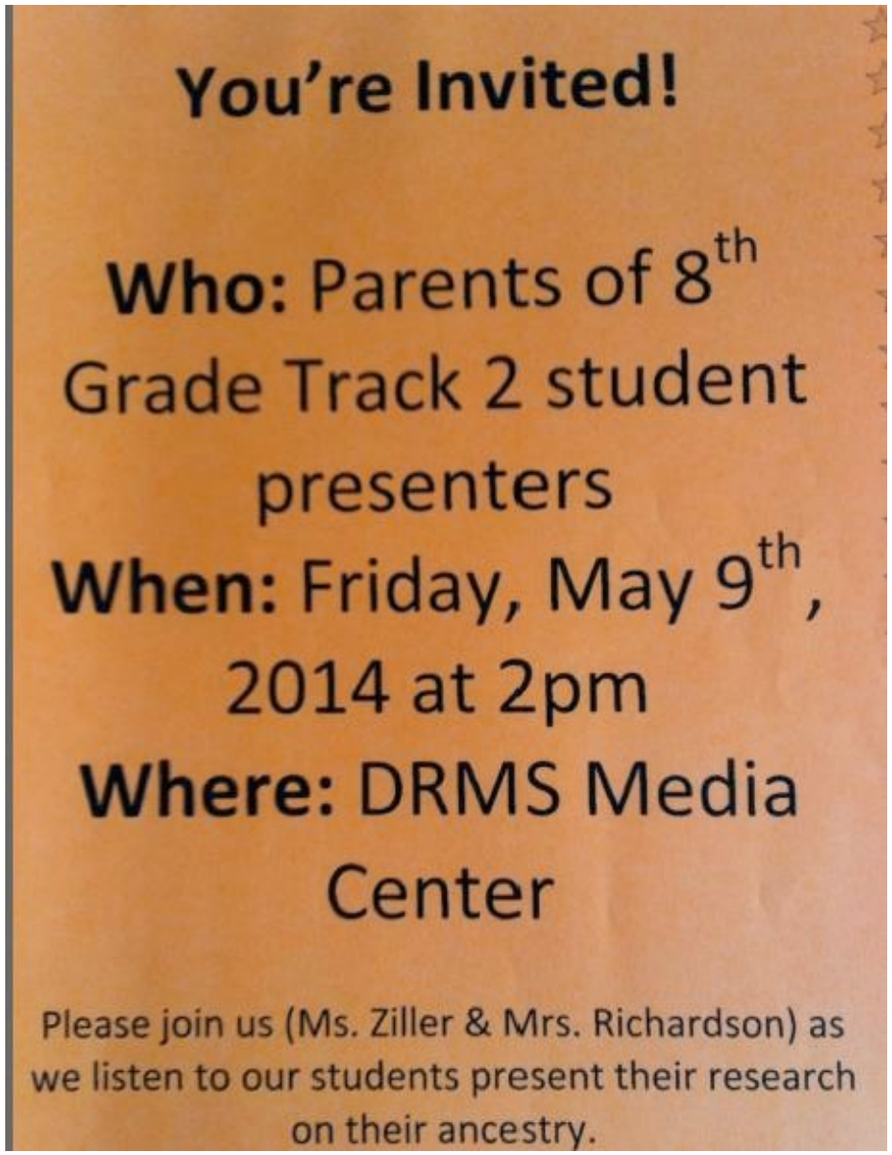
KZ: Laura and I wanted our students to share their research findings outside of their class. We thought it important to invite representatives from central office, including the offices of the area superintendent, middle school programs, and library media and instructional technology. Staff from our school as well as parents of the students involved in the project were encouraged to attend.

The media center was rearranged into three sections: two distinct presentation areas, one for my class and one for Laura's class, and an area for refreshments afterwards. Rows of seats were

placed where library tables usually reside and an LCD projector, laptop, speakers, and screen rounded out the equipment needed.

Read Kristen Ziller's blog about the final presentations.

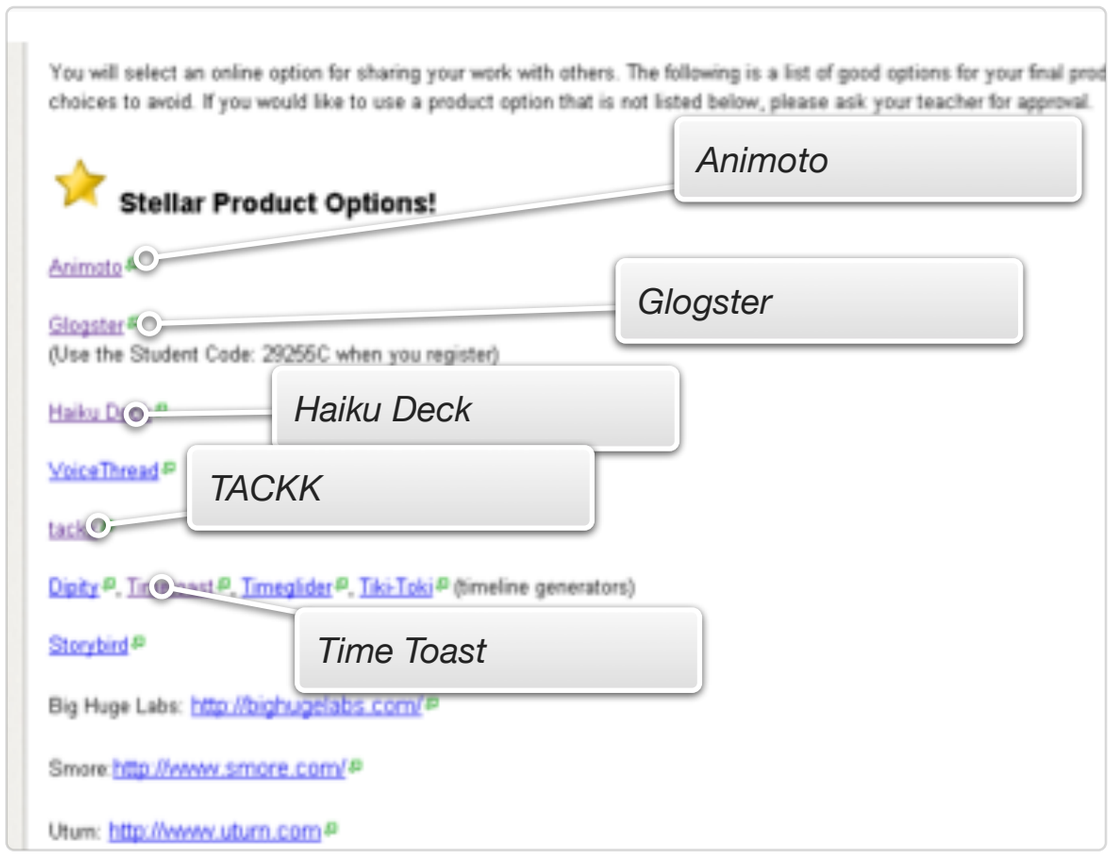
Invitation



Select Student Presentations

LR: Something that did in the end help them through the presentation process is that fact they were each talking about themselves, their heritage, and their families. Many student's personalities truly shone through, and some were downright hysterical in their speeches. One particular young man, who had struggled academically in the past, proved to be quite the comedian when he presented his childhood experience in comparison to his father's. The audience was completely engaged and this was a chance to see this particular student shine in an academic setting.

Student's quotes about choosing certain presentation methods



1 2 3 4 5

Student Presentations

Student Presentation 1

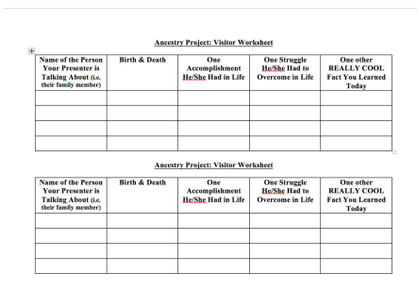
Section 4

Reflections

Audience Reflections

LR: Students who were not involved in the actual Ancestry Project, but were students on the same team of teachers, were able to be a part of parent-peer audience on Presentation Day. We gave these students a response slip to prove that they were listening, engaged in the presentations, and learning new information. I had used a similar “exit slip” during our team’s Wax Museum Projects, in which I wanted to make sure that the students who were listening to my students’ presentations were participating in an academically appropriate way. This extra step ensured success, not only for our presenters, but also for the audience.

Handout of Student Presentation Audience Participation slips



Ancestry Project: Visitor Worksheet

Name of the Person Your Presenter is Talking About (i.e. their family member)	Birth & Death	One Accomplishment He/She Had in Life	One Struggle He/She Had to Overcome in Life	One other REALLY COOL Fact You Learned Today

Ancestry Project: Visitor Worksheet

Name of the Person Your Presenter is Talking About (i.e. their family member)	Birth & Death	One Accomplishment He/She Had in Life	One Struggle He/She Had to Overcome in Life	One other REALLY COOL Fact You Learned Today

Tap or click this widget to view this document as a PDF.

*

Student Reflections

KZ: A culminating student survey to gather reflections from the entire journey is invaluable for closure of the project. This data is helpful for Laura and I in professional reflection and future project planning. We created the survey using Google Drive and included many open-ended responses for students to reflect on their individual experiences.

Ancestry Project Final Reflections

Answer the following questions thoughtfully and using complete sentences. This is your reflection on various parts of the Ancestry Project and your responses are valuable for Ms. Ziller and Mrs. Richardson as they plan for projects similar to this in the future.

* Required

Your First and Last Name *

Did you learn more about your family history by doing this project? *
- Definitely!
- No, I did not learn anything new about my family

If you answered 'no' in the above question, explain why.

Did working on this project spark an interest in further exploration of your family tree? *
- Definitely! I plan to explore more of my family history over track-out.
- Yes, I will explore more about my family history at some point in the future.
- Maybe
- No

What did you enjoy most about conducting an oral history interview? *

Name of ancestor/relative who is featured in your project and their relation to you. *
ex. John Smith, he was my maternal great-grandfather

What was the final version of your Focus Question? *

What source gave you the best information and why? *

What has surprised you? Inspired you? Made sense? Caused your jaw to drop? What connections have you made? Tell me about it! *

What presentation tool did you use and why did you choose it? *

What did you enjoy most about this project? *

What was most challenging about this project? *

What would you have done differently if you were to do this project again? *

What skills did you learn from this project that will help you in the future? *

What feedback do you have for Ms. Ziller and Mrs. Richardson? What could have been done differently? We appreciate your positive suggestions!

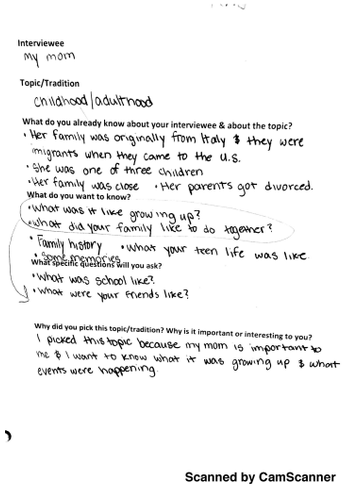
Student Audience Response Slips

Ancestry Project: Visitor Worksheet

...on ...s ...e. ...r)	Birth & Death	One Accomplishment He/She Had in Life	One Struggle He/She Had to Overcome in Life	R... Fa...
...nt	November 23, 1950	Survived the Vietnam war	her parents weren't there (mom dead)	she fa...
...de	6 May, 1911	his great grandad survived WWII	almost dying	he ...
...t	1923 - 2004	he made a lot of money	parents died	star... stor...
...		joined military	school and work	wor... was

WHAT DID YOU LEARN MOST FROM CONDUCTING AN ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW?

Tap or click on the image of the interview to read student comments/reflections.



Interviewee
my mom

Topic/Tradition
Childhood/adulthood

What do you already know about your interviewee & about the topic?
- Her family was originally from Italy & they were immigrants when they came to the U.S.
- She was one of three children
- Her family was close
- Her parents got divorced.

What do you want to know?
- What was it like growing up?
- What did your family like to do together?
- Family history
- What your teen life was like
- Specific dreams/wishes

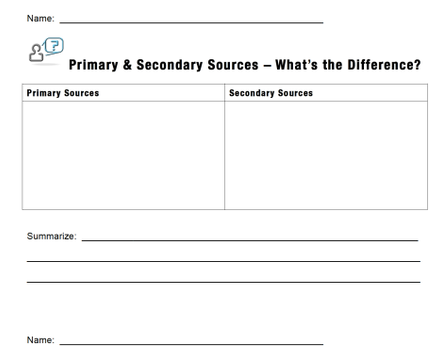
What specific questions will you ask?
- What was school like?
- What were your friends like?

Why did you pick this topic/tradition? Why is it important or interesting to you?
I picked this topic because my mom is important to me & I want to know what it was growing up & what events were happening

Scanned by CamScanner

WHAT SOURCES GAVE YOU THE BEST INFORMATION AND WHY?

Tap or click on the image of the primary source sheet to read student comments/reflections.



Name: _____

Primary & Secondary Sources – What's the Difference?

Primary Sources	Secondary Sources

Summarize: _____

_____

_____

Name: _____

School district blog highlighting the student presentations

Common Threads

Learning, Leading and Engaging Minds

Home | WCPSS

Monday, May 12, 2014

School Media Spotlight

Recently, 8th grade students at Durant Road Middle school completed an enrichment project in which they conducted an oral history interview with a family member, wrote a unique focus question inspired by their interest in their own family history, explored primary and secondary source documents to gather information and images supporting that focus, and culminated their results using an online tool that best expresses their findings to others.

The project was the result of collaboration between the media specialist Ms. Ziller and social studies teacher Ms. Richardson at DRMS. Students demonstrated competence with a variety of presentation tools such as Animoto, Haiku Deck, and Glogster while they gained valuable experience speaking in front of a crowd. Going forward, all student work will be published in an iBook.

We are...

the Instructional Technology and Library Media Services team for the Wake County Public School System in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Our Philosophy of Work

We build supportive relationships by guiding students and educators in using the right resources and tools for the right learners at the right times.

Subscribe To

Posts

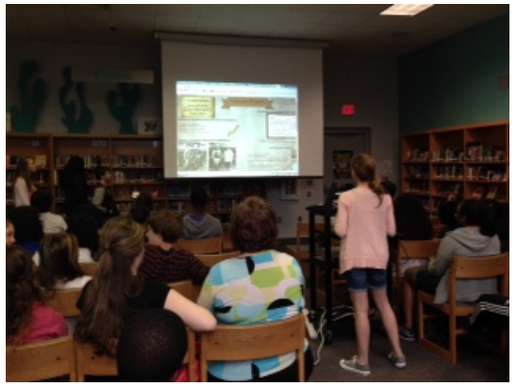
Comments

WHAT HAS SURPRISED YOU? INSPIRED YOU? MADE SENSE? CAUSED YOUR JAW TO DROP? WHAT CONNECTIONS HAVE YOU MADE? TELL ME ABOUT IT!

Tap or click on the wordle below to read student comments/reflections.

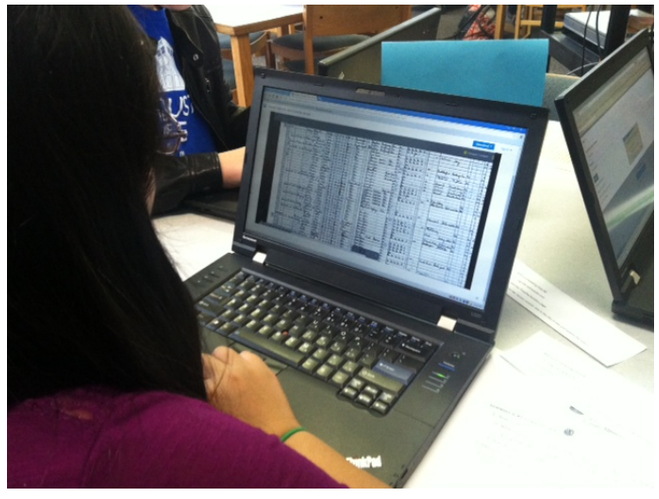
WHAT DID YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT THIS PROJECT?

Tap or click on the photo of the presentation below to read student comments/reflections.



WHAT WAS MOST CHALLENGING ABOUT THIS PROJECT?

Tap or click on the image of the computer below to read student comments/reflections.



Administrator Reflections - Dawn Edwards, Assistant Principal at Durant Road Middle School

When the idea of ancestry comes to mind; one immediately thinks of family history and lineage. It can be difficult to research one's ancestry using historical data and records. Mrs. Richardson and Ms. Ziller worked collaboratively to present the concept of ancestry to 8th grade students at Durant Road Middle School. They developed a curriculum framework for exposing students to a variety of resources and requiring them to use diverse sources for more comprehensive research. Students were posed the following question: How do primary and secondary source documents help to explain a person's life story. In this review, I will summarize the activities of this project and identify relevant outcomes that have occurred as a result of the research.

When assigning research projects, teachers must decide the various types of information students will utilize in efforts of accomplishing the desired instructional goal. This research has shown that the implementation of a myriad of activities provided students with a strong understanding of ancestry that can be transferred and utilized in the future. Mrs. Richardson and Ms. Ziller integrated various instructional components to include oral history interview questions, family investigations, family tree discoveries, individual student research, student presentations, and reflective thoughts. Given that the intended outcome was to determine how primary and secondary sources explain a person's life, integrating multiple instructional activities into a culminating presentation was very critical to promoting this type of inquiry-based learning.

Researching kinship and ancestry can be a very rewarding experience. Students who participated in this project were able to:

- become aware of genealogical research tools, web sites, and other available source documents.
- explore and gain a better understanding of their family history.
- interview family members to discuss historical information.
- share and present their own genealogy research to family, peers, and community stakeholders.

Mrs. Richardson and Ms. Ziller provided students with a world-class research experience. The students will be forever grateful for having the opportunity to gain historical information regarding their family history. The staff and students of Durant Road Middle School are very proud of the accomplishments associated with the combined efforts of teachers, the media specialist, and students who participated in Ancestry project. I encourage administrators to create opportunities for staff to collaborative and develop learning projects that provide students with a rich and fulfilling experience.

Section 5

Appendix

Daily Agendas

Daily Agendas

Welcome, Mrs. Richardson's class

Day 1 of Ancestry Project

Today's agenda:

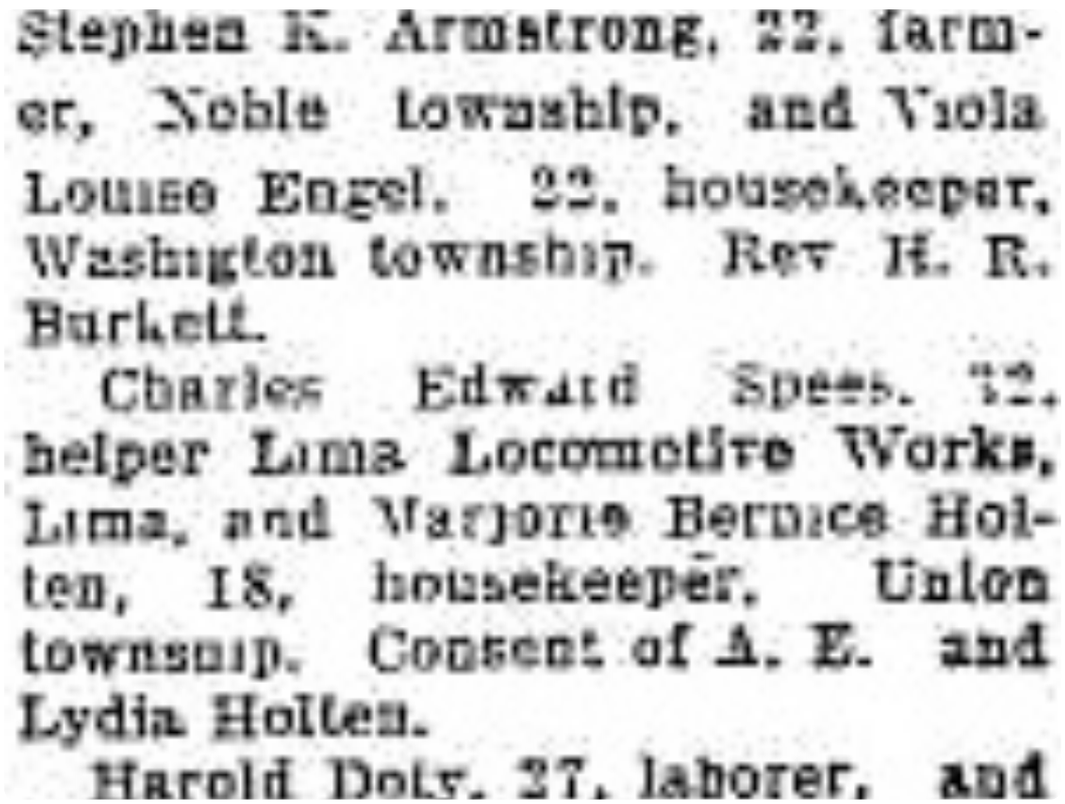
1. Introduction to Family History Detectives wiki & Ancestry Word Wall.
2. Primary & Secondary sources review.
3. 21st Century Sources activity
4. Log into wiki account for first time.

Day 1

1 of 13

Historical Newspapers - Looking at Neil Armstrong

Newspaper articles retrieved from www.newspapers.com



Stephen K. Armstrong, 22, farmer, Noble township, and Viola Louise Engel, 22, housekeeper, Washington township. Rev H. R. Burkett.

Charles Edward Speer, 22, helper Lima Locomotive Works, Lima, and Marjorie Bernice Holten, 18, housekeeper, Union township. Consent of A. E. and Lydia Holten.

Harold Doty, 27, laborer, and

Handwriting and Analyzing Photographs

Images for Labs 3 & 4

Copying a line from the Constitution

Pacing Guide

Year-Long Pacing Guide

Ancestry Project Year-Long Pacing Guide

Date/Timeline	Lesson Title	Lesson Details	Lead Teacher
July	"Museum of Me"	-Students bring three objects -Round Table discussion -Prep students for "Kin Keeper Dinner Table conversation"	
August	"Avatar Day"	-Students will create an avatar that they will use during their project on the wiki	
September	"Primary vs. Secondary Sources"	-Explain word wall -youtube video on sources -student Q & A -Brainstorm on various sources -students test wiki log-ins	Kristen Ziller
October	"Guest Speaker Panel"	-students listen to various guest speaks on interview techniques, etc.	
November	"Student Investigation into Family"	-Students reflect on family interview and decide direction -complete essential question WKST -Record Focus Question	
December	"Family Ancestry Paideia"	-Watch Saved By The Bell episode -AOTW Discussion	Laura Richardson
January	"Learning Labs"	-Stations on various sources and what they can give you in an investigation	
January	"Web 2.0 Tools and Notetaking"	-Teach students how to print screen and save their images -Teach students how to use the various source notes pages during their research	

Tap or click the widget to view the pacing guide as a PDF.

Res2arch Nug6ets ~ Student Focus Questions

1. What is my Peterson bloodline?

2. What holiday/traditions did my mother celebrate as a child?

3. What is the earliest piece of evidence I can obtain about my family in 2014?

4. What are the cultures/traditions of where my father grew up in Mexico?

5. Is the way I'm being raised different from how my dad was raised?

6. What wars have my relatives fought in and how has this service affected my family values?

7. How did the LA race riot affect my father in 1992?

8. What types of things/events did my great-grandfather have to endure in Colombia because of his liberal beliefs during La Violencia?

9. What was it like being a woman in Rhode Island during the 1940's?

10. What was my great-grandfather's brother's role in the service and what happened leading up to his eventual capture?

11. How did my great-grandfather's participation in World War II impact my family and what does that mean to me today?

12. What is the origin of the surname on my maternal side?

13. Why did my family emigrate from Russia to America?

14. How did the Vietnam War affect children during the 1950s and until the end of the war?

15. What was life in Casabo, Montevideo, Uruguay like when my mom was growing up there?

16. How did my grandfather get his wealth?

17. What is my grandfather's heritage/culture?

18. What would have happened if my mother’s great grandparents hadn't had come to America? What would her life be like now?

19. Why did my grandfather's family move to Nebraska?

20. What were some of my grandfather's war stories?

21. There is a tradition to pass a family name down sons in each generation. How far back does that go?

22. What was it like traveling during your childhood?

23. "What was my great-great-grandfather's childhood was like and the time period leading up to his death?" (i.e. he died from drowning early in life.)

24. How did my ancestors make a better life for future generations?

25. What job my grandpa did growing up and how it affected his life and those around him?

26. How did the Great Depression impact my family and what does that mean to you today?

Chapter 4

Connecting Past and Present

Wendi Love, an English as a second language teacher in a high-poverty middle school in Durham, North Carolina, used the Ancestry databases to connect current issues regarding gangs with historic issues of segregation and the Civil Rights movement.

Section 1

Family History

What makes a family? Is it a group of people you like? Blood connections? People you emotionally relate to? In some communities, and among adolescents, close friends may be described as brothers, sisters, cousins, or other family labels that are, by strict Merriam Webster terminology, untrue. As the search for identity begins around middle school, and the students often look to their peers for validation, creating bonds that are nearly familial in intensity is common. Immigrant populations at this age may develop relationships that are even more intense than average due to the compounded demand for cultural identity. Moving between two cultures, languages, and the throes of adolescence propels these students to cling even more tightly to those in similar situations so that they may navigate unfamiliar territory together. So how does that fit into an examination of family history?

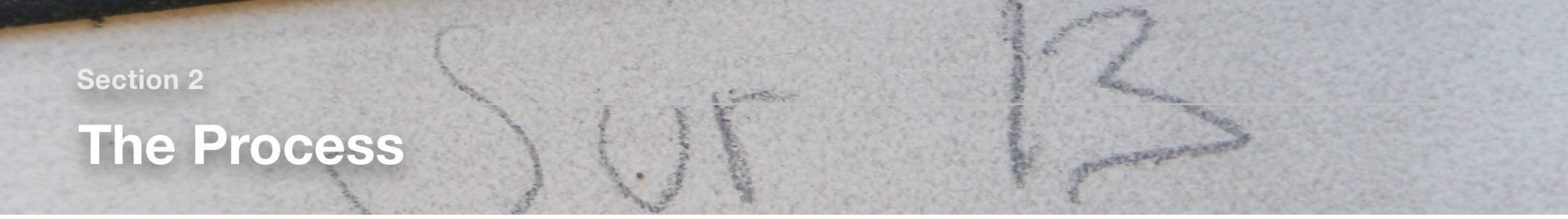
I teach English as a Second Language at a high poverty middle school in Durham, North Carolina. All of my students are experiencing the difficult search for cultural identity. Unknown to them, the Durham community is the family gene that connects us all, much like freckles or a widow's peak hairline. Durham is a community rich in passion, drama, and extremes; racial tension and socioeconomic extremes are part of the fabric. In its early history, Durham was home to historic Stagville, one of the largest pre-Civil War slave plantations in the south. During the Civil Rights movement, Durham hosted many successful sit-ins, boycotts, and marches. Years of struggle for racial equality have created a community that is both hyper-aware of inequities and, at times, deeply divided. I continue to teach in Durham not because it is easy, but because it does not hide from conflict. Instead, Durham is willing to get its hands dirty in an effort to correct injustices. Most importantly, in Durham it is okay to talk

about problems, which is exactly what I wanted to do with my students. I wanted them to realize their place in the rich, problem-filled history of Durham so that they may, one day, be agents of change.

I teach two groups. Mornings consist of an adorable group of sixth graders at a variety of language proficiencies. They are enthusiastic and eager to please, still much in the sweet mindset of elementary students who are just excited to be in this big land of lockers and class changing that is middle school. In the afternoon I teach a group of seventh and eighth graders who are considered "newcomers," meaning they are in the beginning stages of learning English and have typically been in the U.S. for two years or less. This class is a glimpse into my 6th graders' potential future, full of pressures, marginalization, and frustration. The future probably seems overwhelming to them, but I think I have a chance at making it brighter. I at least have to try.

I based my unit on the story of C.P. Ellis and Ann Atwater, a contentious relationship described in the documentary An Unlikely Friendship. Ellis and Atwater were two community leaders in Durham that were chosen to lead a "charette," or 10 day community meeting, intended to desegregate Durham Public Schools. At the time, Ellis was the local leader of the Ku Klux Klan and Atwater was among the African American leaders of the civil rights movement in Durham. The documentary includes interviews that tell the story of their initial dramatic conflict and eventual friendship. In the end, both individuals recognize that their personal struggles are very similar and that they must work together to create a better future for their children. In a dramatic climax, C.P. Ellis recalls giving a speech and tearing up his Ku Klux Klan membership card in a gesture of solidarity with Ann Atwater. They remained close friends and Atwater gave a eulogy at Ellis' funeral in 2005.

The students conducted research about Ann Atwater and C.P. Ellis using primary documents I found in the Ancestry databases. The personal histories of these individuals will underscore their similarities. Both grew up poor and saw the other race as the cause of their struggle. Using the primary sources and the documentary, the students then wrote a third person narrative of C.P. Ellis and Ann Atwater. The process will include graphic organizers to compile the information and I supported the composition of the narratives with writing frames as needed. Both individuals were able to change their opinions about the other at the end of the story, which coincides nicely with the theme of "community" we have been working with this semester.



Section 2

The Process

The process of creating this unit was full of challenges and victories. Instead of pretending that everything came together cleanly and easily, I wrote about the process as it occurred in a journal format. Just like teaching, curriculum is only a part of the job. Reflections about how this project could best serve my students are included.

5/8/14

I needed to find Ann Atwater in the Ancestry database. It seemed like days had gone by without success in finding her and I was beginning to think I would need to write a whole new project. No less than five minutes after writing a panicked email to the LEARN NC staff, and then posting my anxiety to the Moodle all the Ancestry participants were using as a Professional Learning Community, I found Ann Atwater in the ancestry database. It was late afternoon in my classroom, and my loud “THERE she is! HA!” startled Adrienne, the custodian.

I did not think I would find her. In fact, I had bemoaned my plight to no fewer than 4 teachers and my poor husband. The instructional facilitator at my school suggested “creating” documents for her, which sounded great, but didn’t fit my idea of what the lesson would look like. I wasn’t willing to let this woman be so invisible in history, and handmade documents just wouldn’t do her justice.

She was born Anna George, July 1, 1935. She was the youngest of 8 brothers and sisters in Columbus County, NC. She married French Wilson at 14, he was 19, and they had a child when she was 15. This makes me think of my female students, not because they are getting married but because they have been skipping school with older boys a lot lately. Because they are Latina, I suppose, people say “oh, it’s cultural.” Maybe it is, but that seems like an excuse not to help these girls see a bigger and better world. Is it because we don’t SEE a bigger and better world for them? If we don’t, who will?

My 7th period class is a group of 7th and 8th grade students, all who have arrived within the past 2 years. They are all incredibly different, although I might be one of the only ones in the school to see them this way. They all have a similar blank, silent look to them that can be concerning to teachers, but is a mask for an exhausting amount of thinking, wondering, translating, and deciphering.

Of the 13 of them, four have decided to join a gang this semester. The class seems like a veritable breeding ground for Surenos these days, a sprinkle of blue among other colors, accompanied by whispers, shared drawings, and nods of approval. It's like they found music for the first time and they are pretty sure no one else knows about it, and they are far cooler for it. I just want to scream, "I have known about music for years! It's been around for centuries! The kind you are listening to is terrible, listen to mine!" So I will teach them about slavery, the KKK, and Gandhi; I will teach them about injustice and what it looks like to be on the good, peaceful side of history. I will try to make them listen to my music.

The students that I see often drawn to gangs are from specific family structures. When the children were young, the parent(s) decided to leave them with family members in their country of origin while they tried to establish a more secure future for the children in the U.S. The parents sent for their children as soon as they felt that they could provide for them, which often takes years. I have no doubt this is extremely painful and complicated. Parents and children then must reacquaint and cope with feelings of abandonment and guilt. The students I see are in middle school, pre-adolescent brains in confusing bodies. They are easily angry with their parents; their parents seem to feel helpless and confused. While this situation does not automatically result in gang-involved youth, this is a connection I have observed many times over the years. These family histories of creative grouping and transitions are not often recorded in family trees.

To further complicate things, racial tension is prevalent at school. Worse, my students often do not understand what people say to them; their blank stares, nervous laughter, and rapid Spanish sometimes registered as disrespect by the African American students. So the cycle of misunderstanding and conflict continues.

I confiscated a piece of gang related "art" last week that said of her gang, in Spanish, *I call on you when I have a sh--ty day*. There was no mention of *I really like you because you make me happy*, simply how she turns to this group when life is hard. I thought about my life. Then I thought about her life. I bet she has a lot of sh--ty days.

When I learned that seventh grader J.A. had left campus with a friend and gone to a nearby apartment with Surenos members I was at a distinct low. When I saw her in class a day later, I felt ill. She had a headache and glassy eyes, but something else was different as well. A sense of indifference, confidence, smug pleasure, the whole picture was heartbreaking. J.A. is 12 and her favorite color is now blue.

5/11/14

We will start the *Unlikely Friendship* unit this week. My sixth grade classes will begin with the activating questions about groups in

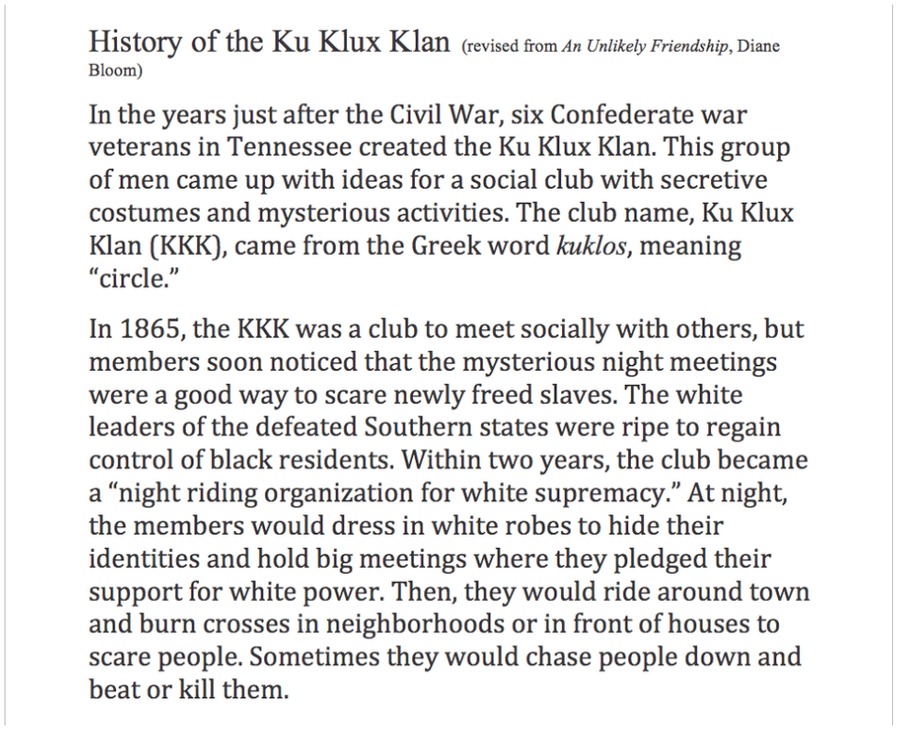
society and a person's ability to change. My 7th/8th grade newcomer Language Arts class has recently finished their African American history unit just after the Civil War. We will do an overview of the years between the Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement, but this should not be too much of a challenge since the most difficult ideas of inequality, racism, and oppression have been established. All classes will start with an activating questions gallery walk.

Activating Questions Gallery Walk

Presentation was edited due to copyright laws.

My 6th graders need some African American History background in order to fully understand the Ku Klux Klan. While they are a bit more informed on American culture of the present, I am not sure what they know about the history of this culture. We will complete a formative assessment to gauge their prior knowledge.

KKK documents



History of the Ku Klux Klan (revised from *An Unlikely Friendship*, Diane Bloom)

In the years just after the Civil War, six Confederate war veterans in Tennessee created the Ku Klux Klan. This group of men came up with ideas for a social club with secretive costumes and mysterious activities. The club name, Ku Klux Klan (KKK), came from the Greek word *kuklos*, meaning "circle."

In 1865, the KKK was a club to meet socially with others, but members soon noticed that the mysterious night meetings were a good way to scare newly freed slaves. The white leaders of the defeated Southern states were ripe to regain control of black residents. Within two years, the club became a "night riding organization for white supremacy." At night, the members would dress in white robes to hide their identities and hold big meetings where they pledged their support for white power. Then, they would ride around town and burn crosses in neighborhoods or in front of houses to scare people. Sometimes they would chase people down and beat or kill them.

Tap or click this widget to view these documents as a PDF.

F.Z., one of my newcomers, hasn't been at school since Wednesday. She was among the first to show her Sur 13 gang art. She is generally very compliant, so I am thinking she thought teachers would not know what the drawings meant. I see many students who think they are invisible because they cannot communicate with most of the people around them. That's why it

is so important to say hello to every single student, especially those with limited language, just so they know they are not invisible.

Wednesday, F.Z. did not look good. Her eyes were red and glassy, face a little pale. I wondered if she was high, so I took her in the hall. When I asked her in Spanish if she was okay she immediately shook her head “no,” covered her face, and started crying. When I tried to get the story out of her about what had happened we both realized we had hit a language block. I asked her to write it all down, which she did. She and her father had been arguing the night before. He had said many horrible things, including accusing her of being the “novia de mi primo” (girlfriend of my male cousin), which she said was untrue. Unfortunately for her, F.Z. is somewhat pretty which may result in some unwarranted suspicions from parents of romantic activity. As the artwork on her binder suggests, I bet she has a lot of “sh-ty days.”

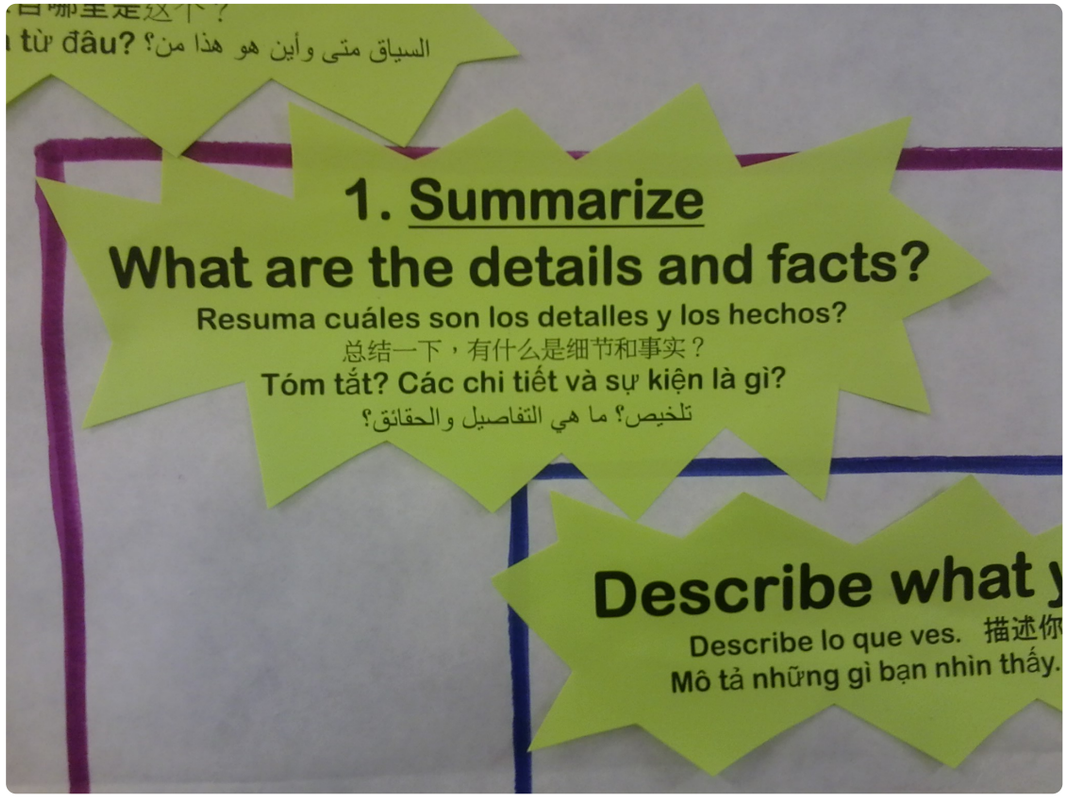
5/18/14

Tomorrow all classes will start practicing their SCIM skills that will eventually help them figure out primary sources. First, I will show 1/3 of the “dog attack” civil rights photo. Students will discuss: 1. What they see? (label for newcomers, man, dog, black and white, bite, etc.) 2. What do they think is happening? We won’t spend more than 5 minutes on this discussion, quickly moving into a brief history of the civil rights movement.

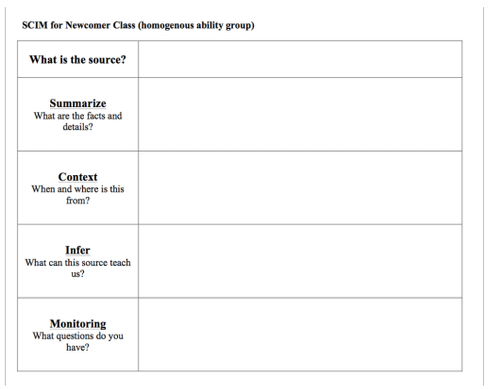
Students will then complete notes about the SCIM process. Each student will receive one page with a blank organizer on each side. Students who still need native language support will need to take notes in both languages in order to complete future activities. The SCIM organizer in different languages will be posted in the room for reference.

The notes of what belongs in each box are written on one side of the SCIM paper. On the other side, the students and I will complete a SCIM-C organizer (together) using the “dog attack” photo from the warm-up. This is to model and guide the students

SCIM Anchor Chart Photographs



SCIM chart for newcomers



SCIM for Newcomer Class (homogenous ability group)

What is the source?	
Summarize What are the facts and details?	
Context When and where is this from?	
Infer What can this source teach us?	
Monitoring What questions do you have?	

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through the process. The students will have one copy of the photo per group; they will have a few seconds to discuss each part of SCIM with their group before we share out and record as a class.

The next day the students will get 1/3 of a new photo and another SCIM organizer. They will find the people with the other parts of their photo and then complete their SCIM as a group.

My 7th period (7th/8th newcomer combo) will finally be on the same track as the rest of the classes. The variety of the levels in this class and need to build background knowledge has been very challenging this year, only compounded by the behavior "issues," some that were developed last year, and some that are just part of being an adolescent who does not understand people around him/her and wants attention. F.Z. has been absent a lot, but mom has been calling the school to notify them of her absence, so that is reassuring. Apparently there is a lot of late night violence in their neighborhood and, at least one day, F.Z. overslept and missed the bus. Again, I bet she has a lot of bad days.

On Friday I was running late to school and happened to pass two of my 8th grade newcomer girls walking away from the school. I stopped them to see where they were going; they gave me a convoluted story. Since there was little I could actually do to redirect them, I told them to go to school and that I would be looking for them. I told the principal and some other key school personnel, and went to teach class. About an hour into the school day, a police officer brought the students to school and one of the girls' parents were there, obviously upset. I showed the parents the girl's blue binder with Sur 13 written all over it. The officer spoke firmly and loudly to the girl about the risks of this artwork; her parents looked sad and scared.

To test my luck, I introduced a lesson comparing the KKK and the gangs of Durham, specifically Northsiders and Southsiders. The Sur 13 girls immediately put their heads down and the other students seemed amused and interested in the ideas.

6/8/14

SCIM worked well for all language levels when each portion was taught explicitly. The newcomer class had a little bit of trouble with the format of the inset boxes. The higher levels managed this format and liked the idea of writing around the square. In the future my newcomers would use something like this.

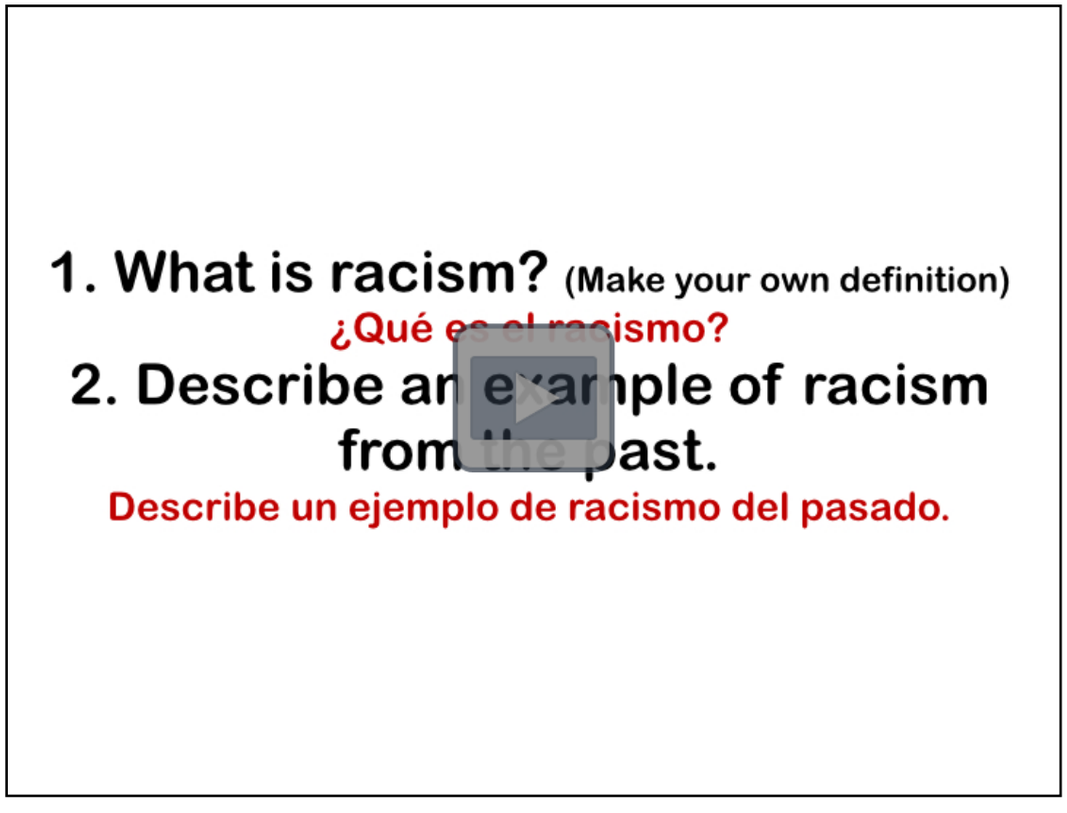
However, the newcomers that I have integrated into heterogeneous ability groups (6th grade sheltered Language Arts classes) did well with the organizer. Importantly, I changed the

first box from “What do you see?” to “What is the source?” The original question seemed redundant when followed by “What are the facts and details?” and the kids seemed confused.

After the students and I had practiced SCIM together using the “dog attack” photo, we completed a guided practice activity where the students completed the SCIM organizer about a photo in groups:

1. **Activator** – Show KKK picture with symbols via PowerPoint; students respond to questions in writing and discuss.

KKK Picture Activator Presentation



Presentation was edited due to copyright laws.

2. **Explain** the existence of the KKK using photos on a PowerPoint.

Key elements: created after the Civil War to scare freed slaves, primarily Christian, still exists today, believes whites are superior and should not intermingle with other races or religions.

3. **Photo puzzle**:

* Materials: 3 historical photos of KKK activities (2 with contextual info), laminated with extra hard lamination. The photos are cut into thirds, creating 9 pieces total.

1. Give each student/pair a piece of a photo. They discuss/write what they see and infer what is happening.

2. Students walk the room to find the other 2 pieces of their puzzle. Once found, they should put the photo together and begin their SCIM organizer, one per person, working as a group. (+-10 min)

3. Students present the photos and their findings to the class.

Then, the students did a “collaborative annotation” about the KKK. A text explaining the history of the KKK was broken into 3 smaller parts. The newcomer class did the same activity with different, easier text about the KKK, Ann Atwater, and C.P. Ellis. Each part was glued to a larger piece of paper. Under each text I drew 3 columns: *Facts, New Information, and Questions*. In

retrospect, I wish I had the second column state *Infer* instead of *New Information*. Each group reads the text and students write in the columns under the text. After 5 minutes they move to the next text. Each group should add to the information already written in each column. *Conclusion*: describe what you know about the KKK.

At this point the students and I watch the documentary *An Unlikely Friendship*, which highlights the development of the relationship between C.P. Ellis and Ann Atwater during the process to desegregate Durham Public Schools. I normally only use this unit with my 8th graders who are slightly more tolerant of "movies" that are not animated or completely action packed. This group of 6th graders gave it a chance and did well. At the end they wrote a paragraph that answers the question "Is it more important to be loyal to your friends or your beliefs?"

An Unlikely Friendship Handout/Worksheet

C.P. Ellis	C.P. Ellis and Ann Atwater	Ann Atwater

Tap or click this widget to view the document as a PDF.

Next, we investigated the primary source documents. I had a lot of concerns, including the handwriting and quality of the documents. How would the students respond to these "old" things in this age where school competes with cell phones, television, and video games? In a year that had consisted of novels, poems, and other materials specifically geared to be "accessible," I worried what would happen when they were given some real life documentation.

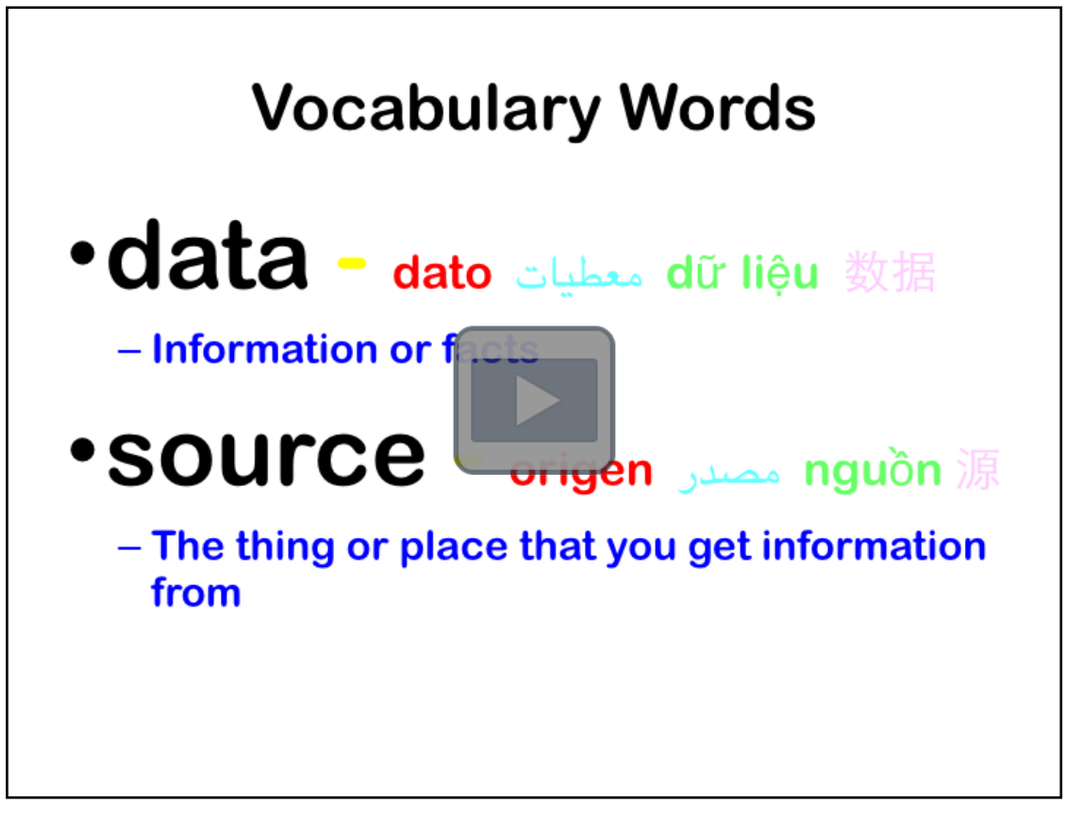
If the end goal was for them to research Ann Atwater and C.P. Ellis in groups using primary source documents, I knew we needed some group practice on a separate person. Someone I had a lot of information about. Not just information, but juicy information, and photos; someone the kids might be interested in. Elizabeth Siler Moss, my grandmother, a woman who never met a camera she did not like, perpetually referred to as "the baby" by her family, was perfect.

To begin, I projected a picture of my grandmother as a young adult on the board. Students were prompted to predict the significance of this individual. Guesses ranged from J.F.K.'s girlfriend to a famous swimmer. A debate ensued. My grandmother would have LOVED that.

We learned vocabulary words that would make the source identification easier. In describing these words and looking at examples the students seemed surprised to learn how "tracked" each person is. I know that some of my students are

undocumented, and that leads to a certain “under the radar” lifestyle that is necessary, but can feel marginalized. They learned that they become a part of a collection of information each time they sign up for school or move to a new home and, surprisingly, they are not as “hidden” as they may think. They were also surprised to see so many categories in the 2010 census. Ultimately, I think they realized that they are seen by the government, and this idea seemed to please them.

Primary Source Vocabulary Presentation



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I was shocked to see the interest my students had toward the primary source documents. To help with the readability of the documents, I zoomed in on certain parts and projected them via PowerPoint. The enlargements helped with accessibility and engagement. The students worked in groups intently and frequently exclaimed things like, “She had 3 brothers!” and “She was the youngest, like me!” One student even started snooping around my desk to find other documents that would provide more information. Finally, I revealed her identity as my grandmother and showed the students photos of us together.

Student Examples

The next day we began our work on C.P. Ellis and Ann Atwater. After a brief discussion of their writing, the students were divided into groups of 3-4 according to if they received Ellis or Atwater on their paper. Similar to the research process for my grandmother, SCIM organizers and copies of primary source documents were distributed and the students were set free to work in their groups.

The primary source documents were provided to the students strategically; the clearer, simpler documents first. The birth index for Ann Atwater was provided before the census. The same strategy was used for C.P. Ellis groups, first giving them his draft card and then providing the 1930 census. With a little guidance, the students easily comprehended the initial information, and this experience gave them some important basics to aid understanding of their second document. Once the students finished a SCIM organizer on each primary source document for their individual, they were tasked with writing a brief narrative of the person using what they had learned.

Shoulda, Woulda, Coulda

Overall, I definitely needed more time. While we got through almost everything I had planned, the most crucial narrative writing part was sacrificed at the end. Students wrote narratives, but not with the detail and focus I would have preferred. In the future, I would review narrative writing, including key words and sequencing, as well as provide writing frames to support some students.

6th grade Language Arts

Regarding Ann Atwater and C.P. Ellis, I think less front-loading about them as individuals, prior to the documentary, would make the information gathering part of the unit more interesting. When my 6th graders finally got to the part when they were researching Ellis and Atwater with the primary sources they were not finding a lot of “new” information. It would be more exciting to make it more inquiry based from the start. In an ESL classroom an inquiry based unit can be tricky. The teacher must give students enough information so they are not confused, but maintain enough mystery so the students are interested.

In retrospect, I would have shown photos of Ann Atwater and C.P. Ellis to the students and asked them to use context clues to predict who they were and why they were important. Then, I would have conducted the primary source lessons, introduced the sources, and let the students build prior knowledge of the individuals. Finally, we would have viewed the documentary and synthesized the history from the primary sources and the information from the film.

Newcomers

Newcomers can definitely comprehend and analyze primary source documents; however, they should not go down the *An Unlikely Friendship* road. The students were able to complete the primary sources activity and understand the context, but the documentary relied too heavily on listening skills without the proper visual or text support to make it comprehensible.

In the future, I would have had them still use the investigation process (SCIM) to look at primary sources, but I would use a different avenue. For 7th and 8th graders I would focus on the Civil War, perhaps researching a specific soldier that already has a great deal of documentation in the ancestry databases. The research process is definitely valuable for this group because it requires them to look closely at clues that will help them

understand a larger picture, something they naturally do as language learners. The process of decoding and integrating information from charts and documents is possible for newcomers and will strengthen their observation skills for other content area texts.

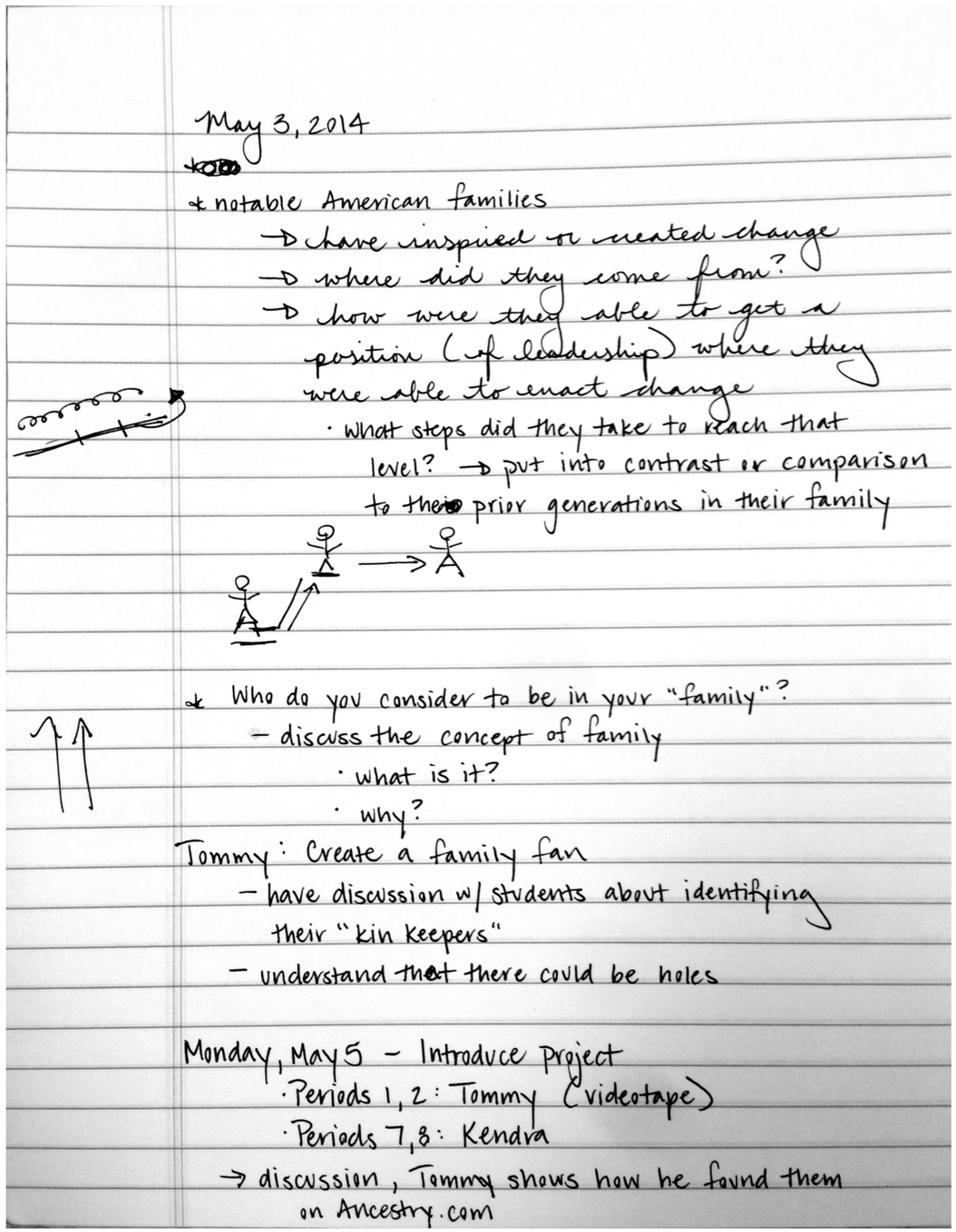
A newcomer class is a great place for nonfiction texts to build the content knowledge needed in Social Studies or Science classes. In future newcomer classes, I plan to teach the SCIM method early and use it with primary sources to support this content. Using primary sources in a newcomer class also lends itself to opportunities to teach students how to fill out important “real-world” forms, a skill they definitely need to practice early and often. The students could create documents about themselves, which would allow them to practice completing official forms and help them remember important information such as their phone number and address. Extensions of this activity might include creating a “class census” or other tasks that would reinforce the important vocabulary required to understand primary sources.

Chapter 5

Showing Students the World of Possibilities

In this chapter, Kendra Allen, school media specialist, discusses her experiences using Ancestry's resources in teaching family history. She collaborated with Social Studies teacher Tommy Ender in an 8th grade classroom setting.

Before Presenting to the Class



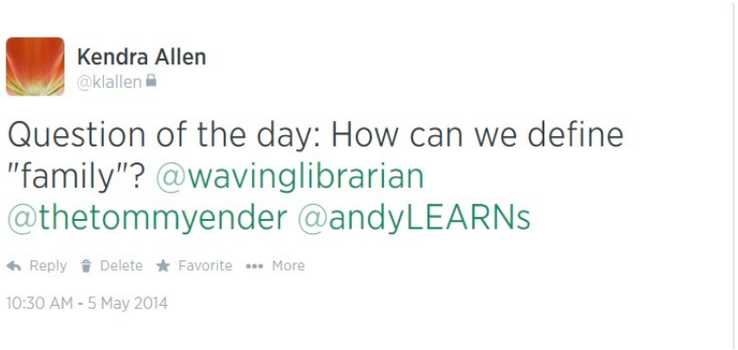
Planning Notes

Kendra Allen

Family history research can seem daunting and disconnected from the context of teaching adolescents. There are pervasive characteristics of this age group, however, that uniquely lend themselves to interest in family history inquiry, whether the students are initially aware of their potential for such interest or not.

With our exploration of Ancestry, my colleague Tommy Ender and I worked with 8th grade students within the Social Studies curriculum. All year, these students focused on United States history with a distinctly third-person point of view. It was then; they are now. What Tommy and I proposed was an opportunity for them to look back at history with a first-person lens—a personal point of view.

Tommy and I started with our own family histories. Using the Ancestry databases and Family Tree Maker software, we began to build our family trees. Before we could ask our students to pursue this kind of inquiry, we had to model it ourselves and



experience the challenges and successes firsthand. While we worked individually to investigate and construct our trees, we also took the time to share our family backgrounds with one another. That sharing of discovery and memory built a foundation for collaboration.

I had quite a bit of information already on hand about my family, courtesy of genealogy research my maternal grandfather had done prior to his death. His notes helped me to quickly populate names, dates, and places into my family tree. I also began to uncover evidence tied to what Tommy and I would eventually describe to the students as “family legends,” those stories passed down that can be vague, variable based on the teller, and altogether more improbable than plausible. My own experience with my “family legends”—reconciling story with documents—would later be incorporated in the instruction of the project and be a source of connection with students who would make their own discoveries during the course of the research.

What Tommy and I both found was that our own family history investigations undoubtedly improved our preparation to introduce the family history project to the students by. This wasn’t “just another project” we were giving to the students. We really believed in the power of their inquiry to shape their perceptions of themselves and individuals in their lives. They could find themselves in history.

Tommy Ender

Family history is rarely taught in a Social Studies classroom. In fact, in my nine years of teaching, I have never come across any Social Studies teachers who use family ancestry as part of their curriculum. When Kendra Allen and I approached the students with this project, many students showed interest. The students, however, still asked typical questions such as “What do we need to do in order to get an A?” and “When is it due?” It wasn’t until we were in the computer laboratory that we saw the full impact of this project. Every student in the class was working on their family tree. Even the students who consistently needed redirection were focused on the computer. Kendra and I knew we were onto something major here.

Prior to presenting the project to my students, I experienced a variety of feelings. Initially, I was excited. I had always been curious about my family history because I have always considered myself a mutt. I knew that my family came from

different countries, but I had never had any concrete proof. I am Hispanic, but look Italian and have a Germanic family name. Once I started creating my family tree, I quickly learned the importance of primary documents for learning about ancestry.

Unearthing these important documents tied to my own family left a lasting impression, an experience I hoped the students would have as well. The power of primary sources shapes the learning of history in the classroom. We consistently teach our students how to read, understand, and use primary sources as vital learning tools. In this case, students could connect to the primary documents as either supporting, or debunking, their own "family legends." For example in my family, I knew that my paternal grandfather had died on Christmas Day. When I started researching, I came upon his death certificate. By finding the document, I started having more confidence in connecting the dots between events in my family and the "legends" that surrounded them.

I also discovered the connections between my family and world events—a key connection for Social Studies teachers and their students. I learned that my paternal grandfather served in World War II. I also discovered my great-grandfather's draft card from World War I. History had now become personal. I continued tracing that line, and I learned that my great grandfather cooperated with the United States in the early 1900s in helping Panama declare independence from Colombia, and subsequently, in the building of the Panama Canal.

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232

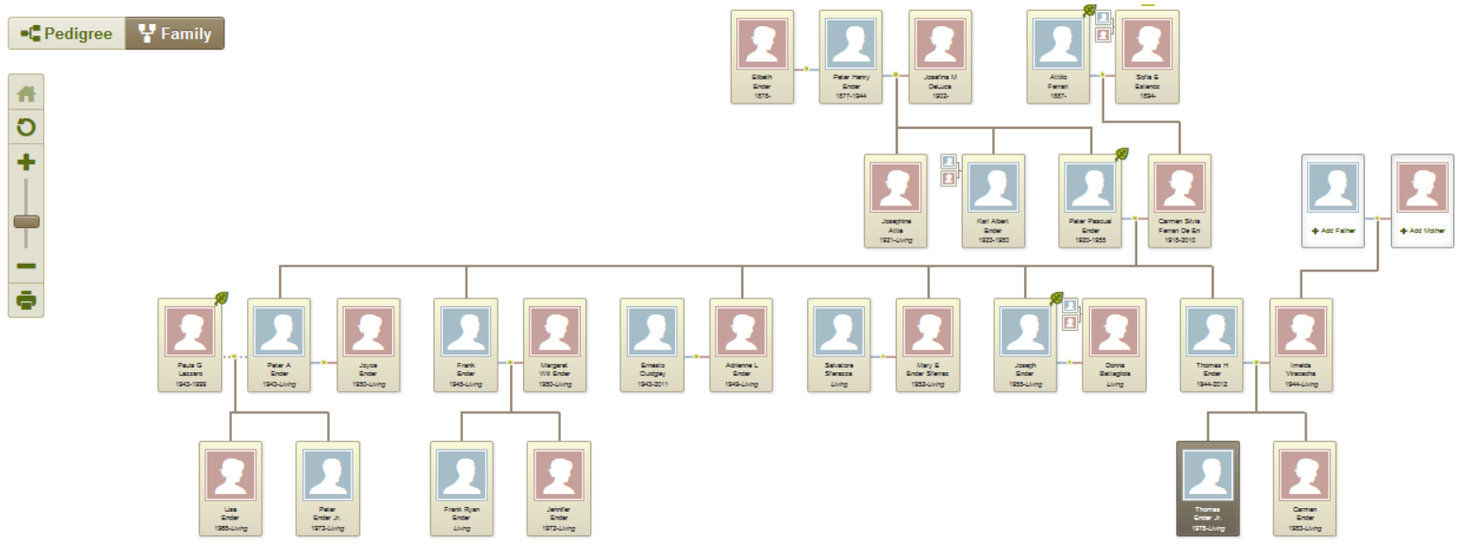
World War II roster found on Ancestry, identifying Tommy's grandfather.

By personalizing history, I gained a new appreciation for what benefits lie in studying the people, places, and events in the past. And that's what I wanted my students to understand.

Presenting to the Students

Tommy Ender

We decided that in order for the students to see two different examples of family trees, we needed to present this unit together. I introduced the unit by telling the students that they were going to personalize their learning of history in class. I stated my expectations for this activity. I wanted my students to end their 8th grade year on a great note by undertaking a unique activity. We had about two weeks prior to the start of mandated state testing, and I felt this was a great opportunity for my students to learn more about themselves. To begin modeling what we meant by researching family history, we discussed the layout of a family tree. I showed the students a different viewpoint for this project: a small family tree. While my paternal line is well-documented, because my father's family descended from upper-class European lines, my maternal line hit a dead end immediately. My mother was an orphan who immigrated to the United States from Colombia. I felt it was important to show this to my students for two reasons: first, I had a number of students in my classes



Tommy Ender's Family Tree

whose parents were recent immigrants; second, I had a number of students who did not know much about their biological parents due to legal or personal reasons.

In the course of talking about exploring the branches of a family tree, we discussed understanding family myths, or family narratives. I then introduced the example of my paternal grandfather. I told them that while researching, they would find pieces of paper that would either validate these narratives or debunk the myths. We wanted to prepare these students for both positive and negative discoveries.

Kendra Allen

The duality of our introduction of the family history inquiry was, I believe, a contributing factor in the students' interest and success. Our trees stood in such stark contrast even at first glance. We wanted to make it clear to the students just how unique each person's experience can be. The dynamic of family is singularly individual. Our expectations were not to see the same outcome from every student. There was no template. This open-ended ambiguity was one of the students' biggest struggles. The students repeatedly questioned us, "How would we quantify an A grade?"

As they looked at my tree, the number of children to one couple was one of the students' most vocal exclamations. So many kids! they shouted. Numbers are flat, I explained. Why do we think they might have so many children, I questioned the class. After their

Learning about the project

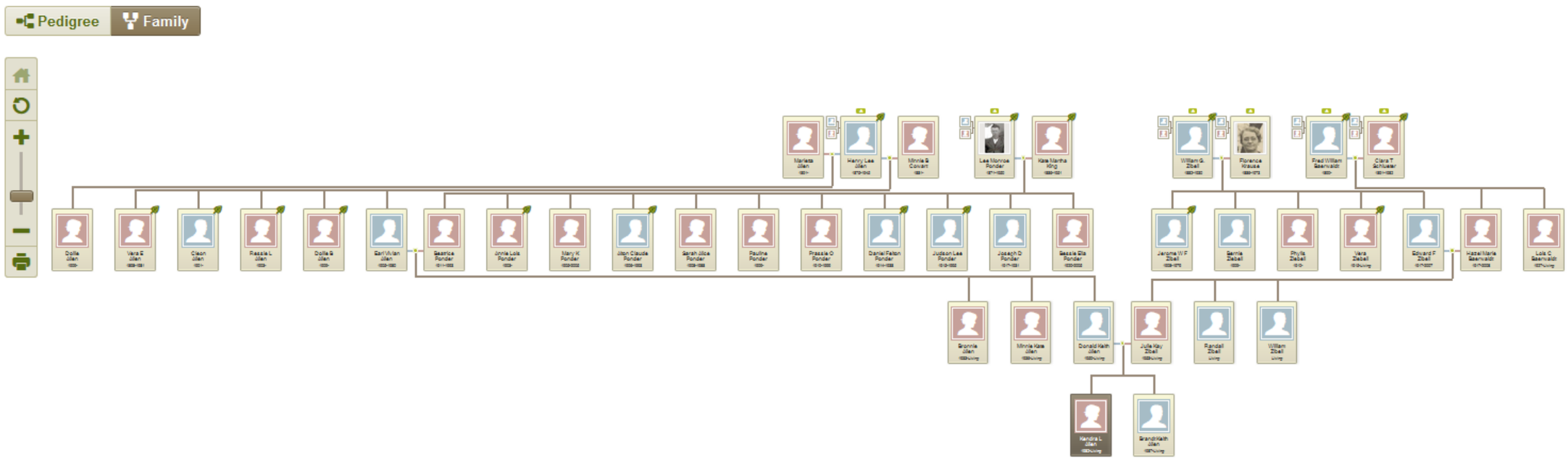
In this clip, students are learning how to start constructing their family trees.

conjectures, I shared with the classes how those families were farmers in rural reaches of Georgia and Alabama. What did that mean? The point was that we can see something, but the real story was hidden deeper. Answer why, explore the surrounding circumstances, look at geography of time and place, identify occupation, incomes, etc. Begin to see that the facts can have dimension.

Incorporating a mini lesson on deciphering a census record was our final component, brought up during the explanation of how students had the secondary option of conducting research on a

famous family instead of their own. After looking at my tree, Tommy's tree, and a tree I started for the presidential Bush family, students could see the contrast of the three trees, their accompanying records or lack thereof, and what inferences they could make about families based on the evidence before them.

Enough about us. It was time for them to begin.



Kendra Allen's Family Tree

Section 3

Carrying Out the Project

Kendra Allen

As a school library media specialist, I have witnessed or been directly involved in many research activities. Student engagement is often a key barometer of success. Armed with information they had gathered at home after we had made our presentation, students arrived back in class eager to get started.

Leaving the structure loose, we had not given the students graphic organizers to direct what information they would bring with them to class. In retrospect, I would have given a graphic organizer to particular students to help them. As they began working, however, the students problem-solved on their own how they could get information that they had not gathered but found they needed. While our school district does not have a formal Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy, we allowed for leniency for this activity. Armed with questions that they were forming as they worked, students texted and emailed family members from mobile devices. What was someone's maiden name? Where was someone born? If they had a question, they went straight to a source to find an answer that could then propel them further in their research online.

On one occasion, I asked a student where she had gotten her information as she had quite a lot. She responded by explaining that her parents had directed her to a great uncle, a family kin keeper, who had then emailed her with extensive findings from his research. I asked her if he had been excited by her interest. "Yes!" she exclaimed. He was thrilled to share his information with her and they were communicating back and forth via email.

As the days continued, the students remained engaged as discoveries were abundant. Tommy noted that at one point the 8th grade assistant principal stopped by and verbally acknowledged the students' learning behavior. He wanted to

know what they were doing that was keeping their focus—these were, after all, 8th grade students in the final weeks of their middle school careers.

Despite their high level of engagement, the students were still unable to fully let go of the need to know the end product. The process of learning more about their family histories was interesting, yes, but what were they going to need to write, do, present, etc. for their final grade? This stress is expressed in chorus in the student feedback.

Tommy Ender

When I entered the computer lab, it was uncharacteristically quiet. There were 30 eighth graders all working on their family tree projects. Even those students who usually needed to be redirected occasionally were focused on computers. Walking around, every student worked on some aspect of their tree: creating a tree, looking at primary documents, or researching on Ancestry.com.

All students were drawn to this unit. For some students, they were simply curious about their family history. For other students, they wanted to find connections between the events we learned in class and the experiences of their relatives. Lastly, for students not working on their personal histories, they wanted to see how some famous American families developed over the generations.

Students Focused on the Project

In this video clip, students in Tommy's class are working on the family ancestry project.

As the students worked, many asked questions. Some of the questions were ones Kendra and I expected. For example, a couple of students asked us to help them read a U.S. Census entry. It was interesting to see how these 8th graders had difficulty reading cursive writing, since it was a common practice in the early 20th century. A couple of other students asked us how to read a city directory entry since many city entries had abbreviations the students could not understand.

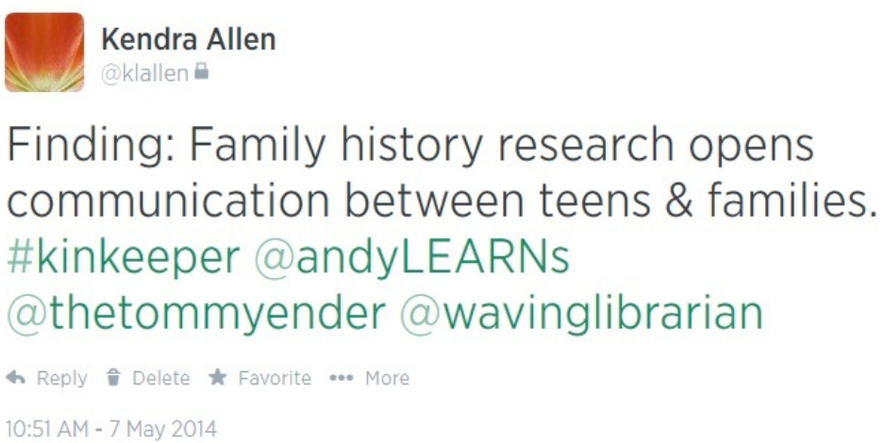
On the other hand, some students came across documents for which Kendra and I were not prepared. One student asked me why her father's car accident was profiled in a newspaper article.

Students in class working on the Ancestry database.

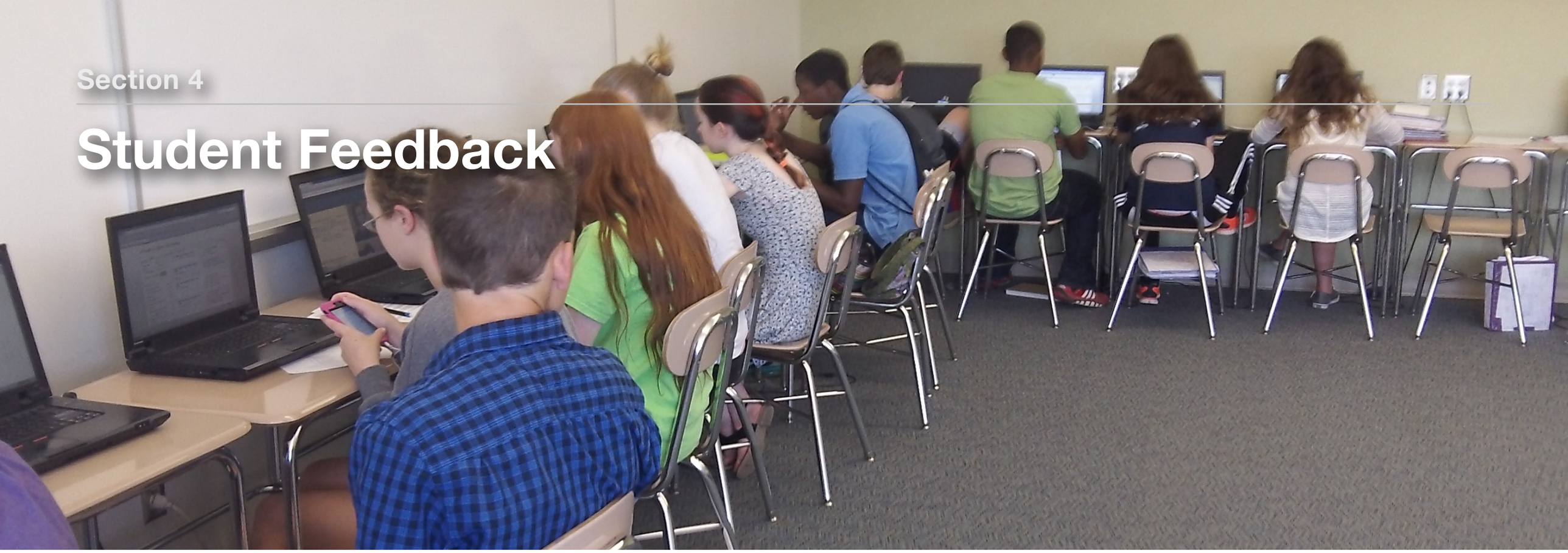
When I read the entire article, I realized he had left the scene of an accident; eventually, he had been imprisoned for it. Since she was not close to him and had recently reestablished communication with him, her family had not revealed all of the details of the accident.

In another instance, one student discovered some dubious details of her family's past. She already had some information from the kin keeper in her family. As she researched, she kept seeing a couple of family connections repeating. Kendra worked with the student and immediately realized that cousins going back three generations had married each other. She then explained to the student why she kept seeing the names repeatedly, and the student became embarrassed by her discovery.

With surprising findings that enhanced and altered their understanding of their family narratives, the students made personal connections that rooted them in the unit. They found information that made them proud and information that made them question. Organic conversations among students sharing their findings with one another sprouted daily. For formal presentations to the class, many students created elaborate family tree displays on cardboard or tri-folds. Other students created online family trees using Family Echo or Family Tree Maker. Some students combined their research with documents previously discovered by their kin keepers to create updated family trees.



Student Feedback



Kendra Allen and Tommy Ender

To gauge students' progression and completion, we used formative and summative queries to solicit their feedback at three different points in the project. After having several days to launch into their family histories, we had the students spend the first five or ten minutes of class to complete a form in Google Drive. This checkpoint allowed us to collect direct reports from the students on their progress, findings thus far, and areas of need. We wanted to identify the strengths and weaknesses in each class and note those students in need of specific assistance.

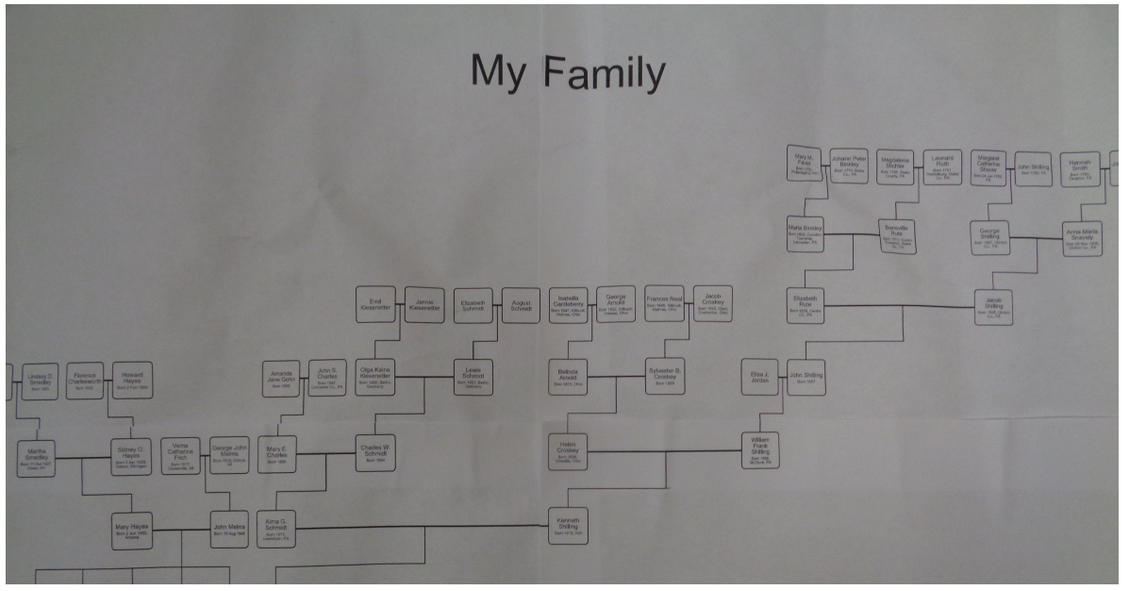
What are some things you have discovered about your family tree?	Whom have you identified as the "kin keeper" of your family?	If there is no "kin keeper," then who has been the one family member you have been relying on so far?	If you are working on a famous family tree, what have you discovered about that family? If you are NOT working on a famous family, then type "N/A."	If you are working on a famous family tree, how have you figured out the legitimacy of some family trees already found online? If you are NOT working on a famous family, then type "N/A."	What have been some problems you have run into so far with this project?	How can Ms. Allen and Mr. Ender further assist you with this project?	What is one goal you hope to accomplish with this project?
I learned that my dad is Irish and German, and my mom is part Cherokee Indian	My grandmother	My grandmother is the kin keeper	N/A	N/A	Yaaahaaaaas. I'm not a good researcher	I don't know	To learn more about my family so that I can hold it against them and also so I can tell people, hey, I'm different ok
I have discovered that I have ancestors from Germany and Vietnam that date back to the 1800's. I also got a lot of information on my mom's side, even though her mom (my grandmother) was adopted.	The kin keeper of my family tree is my Grandmother, since she had already done a lot of our family tree already.	My grandmother had done a lot of research on her family, she wanted to find out more about her tree since she was adopted in Germany from foster care.	N/A	N/A	I have found a lot of problems with spouses of some of my ancestors. There are a lot of blanks where the spouses are supposed to be.	I don't really need assisting since my tree is pretty organized and my Nana helps me with this stuff.	I want to find way more ancestors on my dad's side since I dont really know much about them.

This is an example of the spreadsheet used to gather feedback from the students on the Ancestry.com website.

We provided two other opportunities for students to provide input and share reflection, via facilitated class discussion on the day of the presentations and in their final written reports to be submitted with their family trees.

What students learned about their families that they had not previously known was, we believe, impactful. Their discoveries altered their sense of identity, both as an individual and also as a member of a family. Every student could identify at least one new, meaningful thing they learned as a result of their research.

"I found out that my grandfather was married and divorced before he met my grandmother. The rest of my family knew; I just thought it was cool that I found it out on my own."



"My grandmother was adopted, so it took me a while to get information about her birth family. Her biological mother's brother was a professional baseball player. He also lived his entire life in the U.S. illegally on his brother's visa."

"I learned that nobody in my family went through a divorce."

We were particularly encouraged by students' engagement with primary sources. After a year of reading, annotating, and discussing primary source documents, the contents and applications of the documents seemed to finally resonate.

"I also found my great grandfather's WWI draft registration cards, which was interesting."

"I discovered there was a newspaper article about my great grandfather. Apparently, he invented a machine that helps plant and harvest peanuts. He received credit for his work in a 1940s newspaper and his invention saved money and required less manpower."

Finally, we asked students to give suggestions for how we could improve the project. In several ways, they voiced common ideas and sentiments.

Time:

"We think you should have given us more time to work on the project. We could have found more information about our family and we felt as if we were a little rushed."

"One suggestion would be to give more time on it. If you don't have a kin keeper and don't really know much about your family, you might need a whole quarter to do this project."

Expansion and elaboration:

"I would do an interview with the oldest person in my family and ask them questions."

"My one suggestion for improving this project would be to write a one-page essay on an ancestor that we are really proud of."

"I would want to make a visual to show where my family resides in the world."

"For the next family tree project you assign, I think you should let the students pick their favorite athlete, singer, celebrity, etc. and research their family."

"I could have added pictures or some more information on my family, like where they live or what job they have."

There was also common consensus that the students would have preferred to receive both the assignment description as well as the final product instructions at the same time. We handed the documents to students separately, with the final product instructions coming one week into their research. They requested everything to be given to them at the beginning. You can see these documents on the next pages.

Family Descendants and History:

"I learned that my great-grandfather was the right-hand man of President Herbert Hoover. He was the chief secretary to Mr. Hoover in the White House."

"One of the reasons he stayed here in the U.S. is that there was a war going on in Lebanon when he was done with school."

"I also learned that my great grandpa was from Italy. I had no idea!"

And finally:

"I don't think you should change the project because I thought it was really fun."

Name: _____ Date: _____ Core: __

Discovering the Branches to a Family Tree

Directions: For our last unit in Social Studies, we are turning the tables. Instead of Mr. Ender teaching you, you will teach Mr. Ender. Follow the steps below for this interesting assignment.

Personal Family Steps:

1. Who are the members of your "family?"
    a. Why did you select those individuals?

2. Who is the "kin keeper" in your "family?"
    a. What do you know about this "kin keeper?"

3. Create a diagram to show how your "family" is set up.

4. Start one or more of the following sites to look up your "family" history:
    i. familysearch.org
    ii. ellisisland.org
    iii. rootsweb.com (affiliated with Ancestry.com)
    iv. ancestry.com
    v. genealogy.com

Now, if you are not comfortable tracing your "family's" tree, then follow the steps below.

Famous Family Steps:

1. Select a famous family from the list below.
    i. The Bush Family
    ii. The Clinton Family
    iii. The Kennedy Family
    iv. The Rockefeller Family
    v. The DuPont Family
    vi. The Vanderbilt Family
    vii. The Coppola Family
    viii. The Astor Family
    ix. The Walton Family
    x. The Marsalis Family
    xi. The Lee Family
    xii. The Roosevelt Family
    xiii. The Estevez-Sheen Family

2. Follow steps 3 and 4 from above.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Core: __

Discovering the Branches to a Family Tree – Final Product

Directions: Here are the details for your final product. Follow all of the steps.

Personal Family Steps:

1. Create a visual for your family tree. You must be in it. You may do it one of the following ways:
    a. Digital (Ancestry.com, word processing, etc.)
    b. Handwritten (On paper, drawings, etc.)
2. Include full names, birth date and death date (if applicable), and birth location for all of your relatives.
3. If you have a relative that immigrated to the United States, then state where they came from. Include this answer and the rest of the answers to the questions on a separate sheet of paper.
4. If you did not have a relative that immigrated to the United States, then state where they moved from within the U.S. (i.e. "My grandfather moved from South Carolina to Chicago." "My parents moved from California to North Carolina.")
5. Pick one relative that came to the United States and answer one of the following questions.
    a. Knowing what you know about U.S. history, why do you think they came to the United States when they did? **OR**
    b. Knowing what you know about U.S. history, why do you think they moved from one part of the country to another?
6. How far did your family tree go back in time? Write your answer in complete sentences.
7. What did you learn about your family? Write your answer in complete sentences.
8. What is one suggestion on improving this project? Write your answer in complete sentences.

Famous Family Steps:

1. Create a visual for your family tree. You may do it one of the following ways:
    a. Digital (Ancestry.com, word processing, etc.)
    b. Handwritten (On paper, drawings, etc.)
2. Include full names, birth date and death date (if applicable), and birth location for all of relatives of your famous family.
3. If your famous family had a relative that immigrated to the United States, then state where they came from. Include this answer and the rest of the answers to the questions on a separate sheet of paper
4. If you did not have a relative that immigrated to the United States, then state where they moved from within the U.S. (i.e. "Michael Jordan's parents moved to Wilmington, NC, from Brooklyn, NY.")

Chapter 6

Leaving a Legacy

In this chapter, Sarah Henchey unpacks her experiences considering her own legacy and asking her students to consider theirs.

Section 1

Reconnecting with the tree

“Family is the well of self.” ~ Joseph Amato

I am a teacher. That is a truth of my identity as much as anything can be. My family is comprised of teachers, both in name and in service.

Yet, as I write this chapter, I am searching for a stronger foothold on my identity. After nine years in the classroom, I have stepped outside of it, uncertain of when I may return. As I planned the lessons described here, I was grappling with my own sense of self and legacy. Is teaching how I am meant to leave my mark? How does it align with who I am and who I am trying to become? To answer these questions, I looked toward the past. Family connections are often maintained by pivotal individuals. In any given family, these may be the members who are most passionate about reunions, family pictures, or scrapbooking. They create a glue responsible for producing a binding that transcends busy lives and geographic distances, not to mention ongoing disagreements. In my family, my mother served this role; she organized weekly phone calls with her side of the family, provided updates on the cousins, and sustained a general sense of family that existed outside of my nuclear home. Losing her in the winter of 2005, therefore, left a significant gap, one that stretched across generations.

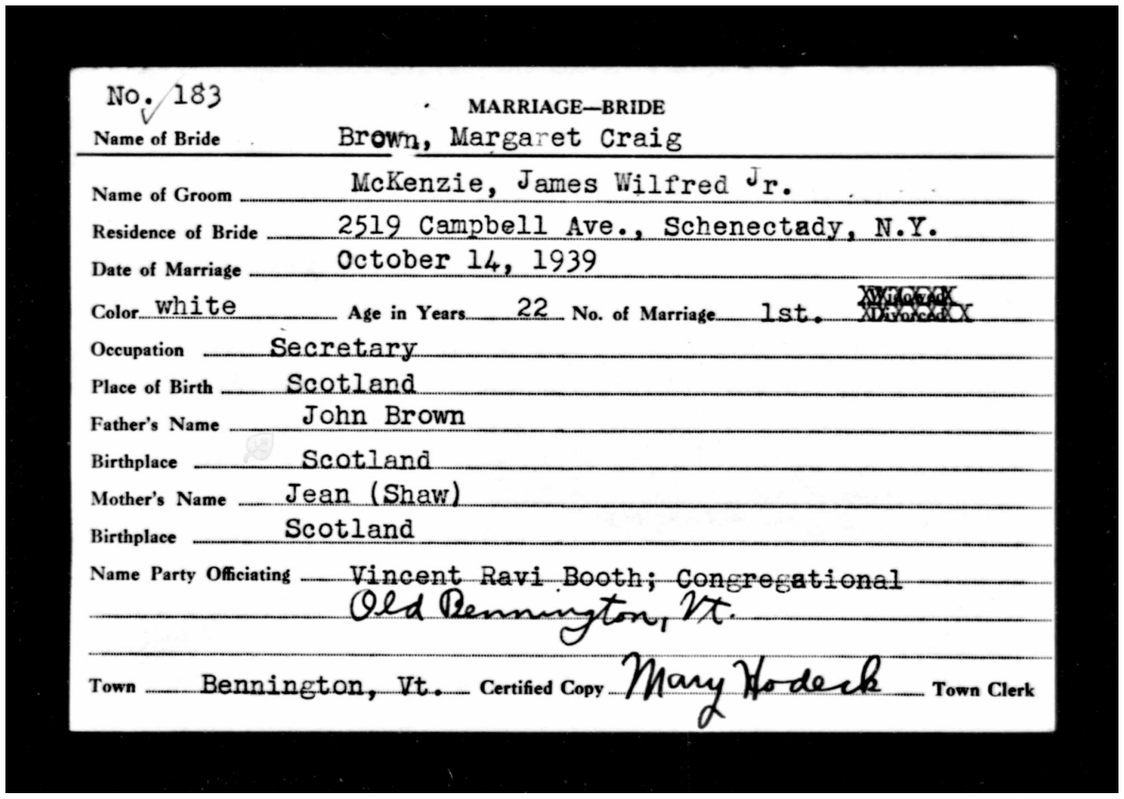
Almost nine years later, I find myself researching my mother’s family and desperate to share my findings with her. I lose myself in interpreting documents from the Ancestry database, especially ship manifests of those who, like my grandmother, immigrated to the United States. I imagine the fear, wonder, and anticipation these individuals must have felt and the rich stories contained within each line of the log. I hold imaginary conversations with my mother about what I unearth. Wouldn’t she be fascinated by this marriage record from Vermont?

Did she even know my grandparents had lived in Vermont? What became of my grandmother’s siblings? What other branches of the family could we explore together using this database?

In the time since my mother has passed, her mother and sister have also gone, broadening the gap between artifacts and stories. Thus, I have to allow the documents to build the story and use speculation, family lore, and fiction to fill the holes. I

devour everything Ancestry has to offer, including city records, census reports, and obituaries.

I am most fascinated by my maternal grandmother's life. Of all my grandparents, I remember her the most. Her formal nature, occasionally broken by a joking reprimand, was a hallmark of holiday gatherings and summer vacations. I imagine her early years living in Scotland and wonder about her memories from that time. I recollect her story of immigration in the early 1920s and think back to how her eyes shone as she described seeing the Statue of Liberty for the first time. I try to imagine the wartime years when my grandfather, and later my uncle, were away. And I



No. 183

MARRIAGE—BRIDE

Name of Bride: Brown, Margaret Craig

Name of Groom: McKenzie, James Wilfred Jr.

Residence of Bride: 2519 Campbell Ave., Schenectady, N.Y.

Date of Marriage: October 14, 1939

Color: white Age in Years: 22 No. of Marriage: 1st.

Occupation: Secretary

Place of Birth: Scotland

Father's Name: John Brown

Birthplace: Scotland

Mother's Name: Jean (Shaw)

Birthplace: Scotland

Name Party Officiating: Vincent Ravi Booth; Congregational
Old Bennington, Vt.

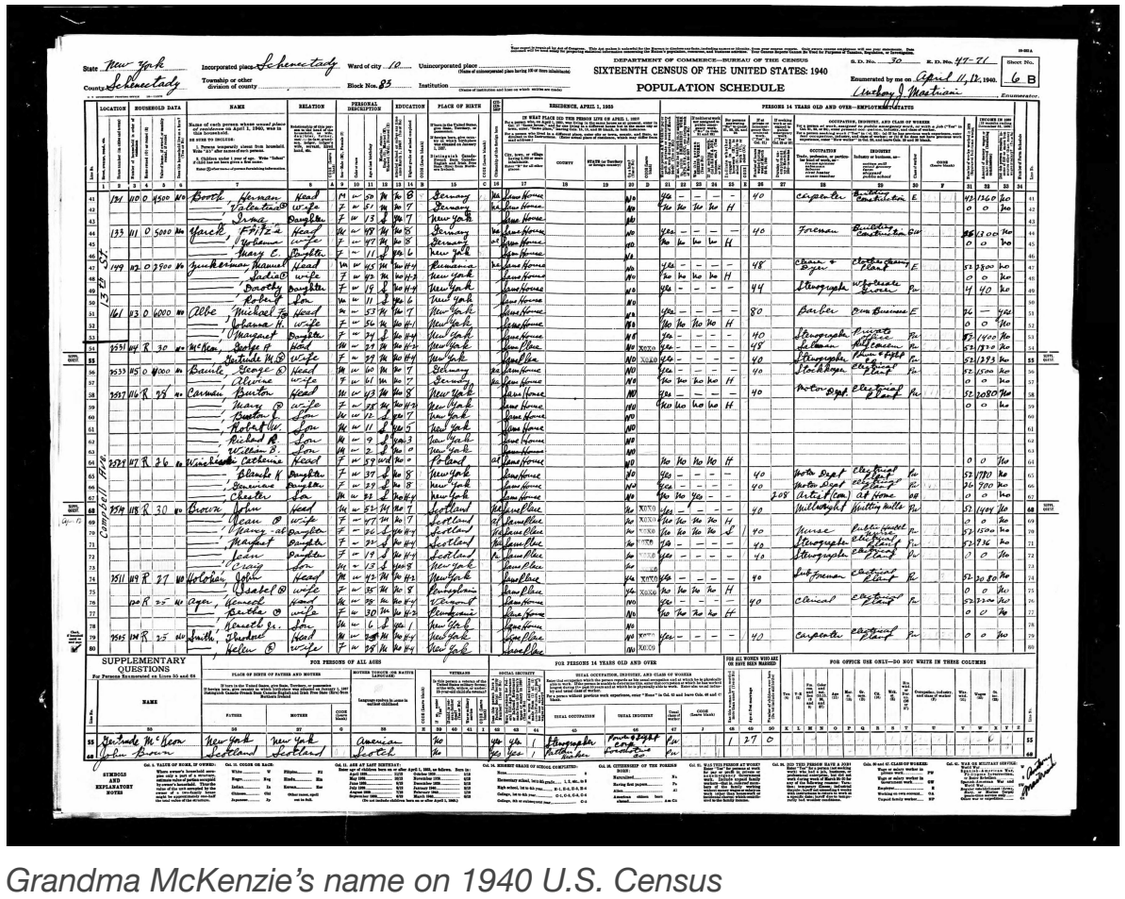
Town: Bennington, Vt. Certified Copy: Mary Hodeck Town Clerk

My grandmother's marriage certificate

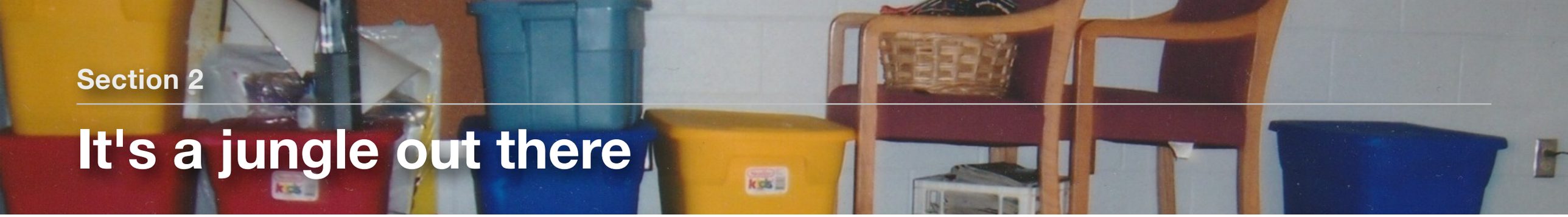
My grandmother

shake my head at myself for not asking her more questions and taking notes while she was still here to share her life.

My grandmother's life, long and complicated, reminds me that my life will be full of ups and downs, twists and turns, decisions and deferments. It helps me look honestly at a change in career, a choice that represents far more than a paycheck. Her life, as told through census reports, death certificates, and photos, re-grounds me in the strength and resilience of the women in my family. It is from this foundation that I grow and develop, and it is this sense of self I hope to activate within my students.



Grandma McKenzie's name on 1940 U.S. Census



Section 2

It's a jungle out there

It’s hard to say why I was drawn to teaching middle school. After originally setting out to teach high school English, I took a left turn during my teacher preparation and wound up surrounded by early adolescents. From my adolescent development courses, I learned, “young people undergo more rapid and profound personal changes during the years between 10 and 15 than at any other period of their lives.” My experiences with teaching middle school have time and again revealed the truth of this statement.

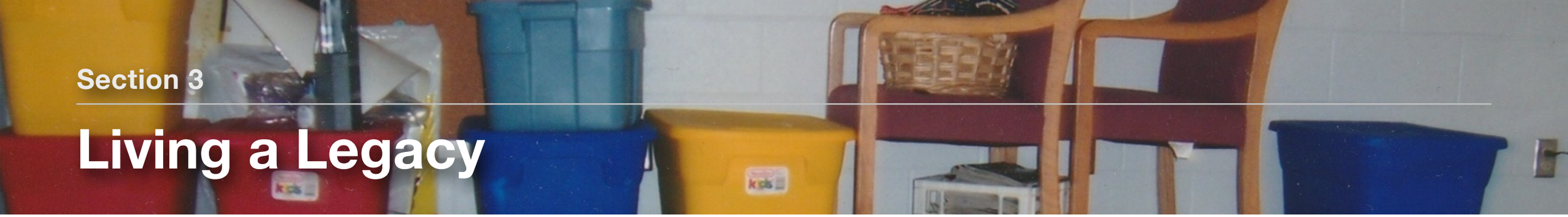
In addition to the well-documented physical and cognitive changes taking place during the middle school years, “adolescents also experience significant changes in their family relations, school environments, and peer group affiliations.” These developments correspond to Erikson’s Theory of Psychosocial Development which marks adolescents at a stage where “forming an identity involves committing oneself to a set of beliefs, values, and adult roles”; “Who am I? What makes me unique? What is important to me? What do I want to do with my life?”

While I explored the fundamentals of adolescent development as part of my college coursework, it took me years to discover my role in supporting students as they developed. I grew to understand this responsibility as I watched and listened to students. I saw them enter middle school as apprehensive sixth graders, develop into quippy seventh graders, and mature to be passionate eighth graders. I watched as they mimicked their peers, experimented with extremes, and settled into their own skins. As they grew, I looked for teachable moments - times where I could help them to see a bigger picture.

In wrapping my head around my own family history, I began to wonder how developing genealogical identities could create guideposts for my students. Who were the individuals in their families to serve as reminders of their inherent strength and adaptability, just as my grandmother had become for me? Who could support them as they developed and worked toward their goals?

To address these questions, I had to take a step back and think about where my students currently are in their quests for identity. Sitting among fears of fitting in and standing out, my students

first had to answer the bigger questions - Who do I want to be?
How do I want to influence others?



Section 3

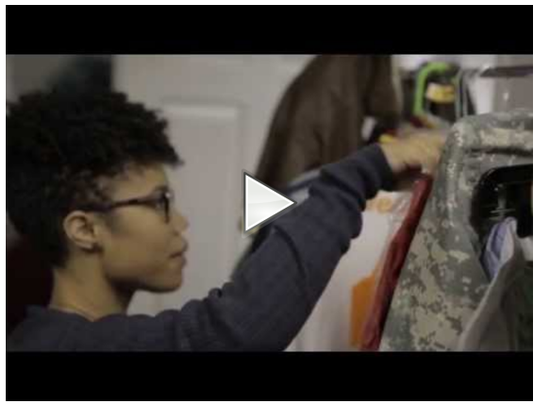
Living a Legacy

The concept of identity is complex and ever-evolving. To open with a more concrete lens, I chose to first focus on the idea of legacy - how are people remembered? After years of watching adolescents struggle with feelings of being misunderstood and inadequate, this question felt like a way of helping students begin with the end in mind, recognizing they will move past this challenging time.

We began with an inquiry based lesson focused on exploring the key term “legacy”. With this purpose, students watched the following texts:

If Today Were the Last Day of My Life

Because of Them, We Can



A Pep Talk

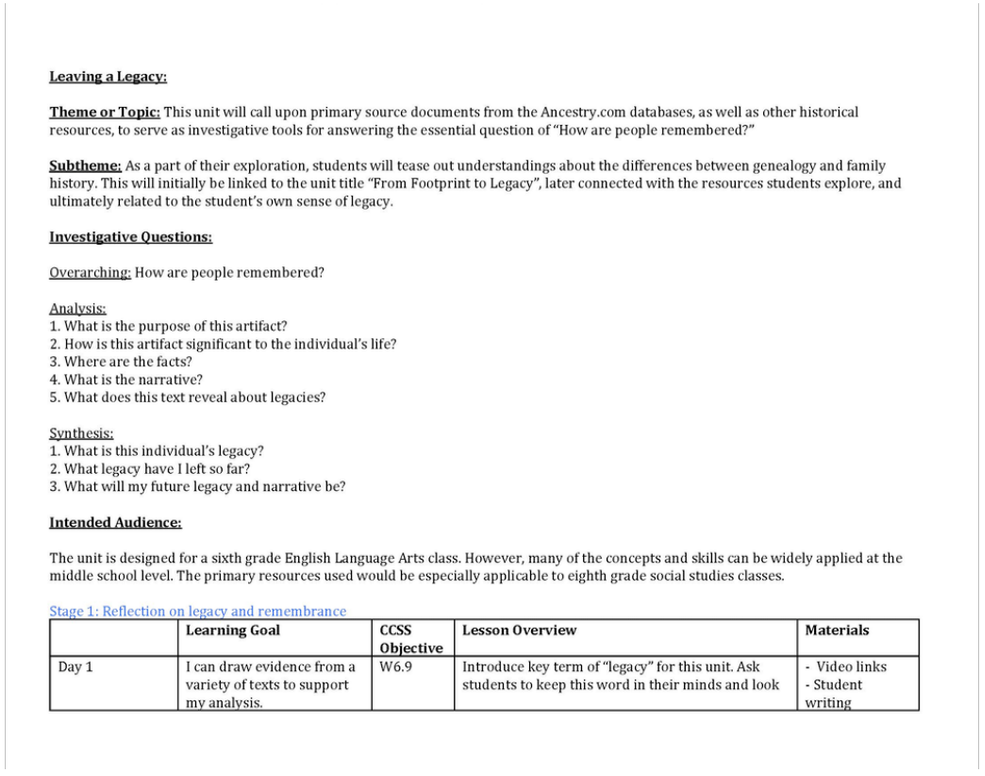
Find Your Greatness

As I watched students view the videos and record their reflections, I hoped they would feel inspired and build a sense of momentum that would translate into an authentic exploration of their own. Their comments revealed their understanding of the key messages from these texts, including:

- "If you want to accomplish something, don't let people get in your way. Find people that will help/support you so you can make your dream happen."
- "Greatness is in everyone, but how you choose to show that greatness depends on your willingness, dedication, persistence, and love of what you're doing."
- "What people do and accomplish affects our people's futures."

I designed this unit with a "zoom out, zoom in" approach. I wanted students to see legacy as a universal concept (or a "zoomed out" view) as well as a way to determine their personal impact ("zoomed in").

Leaving a Legacy Unit Plan



Leaving a Legacy:

Theme or Topic: This unit will call upon primary source documents from the Ancestry.com databases, as well as other historical resources, to serve as investigative tools for answering the essential question of "How are people remembered?"

Subtheme: As a part of their exploration, students will tease out understandings about the differences between genealogy and family history. This will initially be linked to the unit title "From Footprint to Legacy", later connected with the resources students explore, and ultimately related to the student's own sense of legacy.

Investigative Questions:

Overarching: How are people remembered?

Analysis:
1. What is the purpose of this artifact?
2. How is this artifact significant to the individual's life?
3. Where are the facts?
4. What is the narrative?
5. What does this text reveal about legacies?

Synthesis:
1. What is this individual's legacy?
2. What legacy have I left so far?
3. What will my future legacy and narrative be?

Intended Audience:

The unit is designed for a sixth grade English Language Arts class. However, many of the concepts and skills can be widely applied at the middle school level. The primary resources used would be especially applicable to eighth grade social studies classes.

Stage 1: Reflection on legacy and remembrance

	Learning Goal	CCSS Objective	Lesson Overview	Materials
Day 1	I can draw evidence from a variety of texts to support my analysis.	W6.9	Introduce key term of "legacy" for this unit. Ask students to keep this word in their minds and look	- Video links - Student writing

Tap or click this widget to view the unit plan as a PDF.

Therefore, I paired our opening activity with a pre-unit survey:

Pre-Ancestry Unit: Student Survey

Please respond to the following questions as best as you can. If you're uncertain, you may select "unsure".

Your username will be recorded when you submit this form.
* Required

I was born in Orange County, NC. *
- Yes
- No
- Unsure

I have lived in Orange County, NC all my life. *
- Yes
- No
- Unsure

I know where my parents/guardians were born. *
- Yes
- No
- Unsure

I have other family (grandparents, aunts, uncles, counsins) living in Orange County, NC. *
- Yes
- No
- Unsure

I have been to a family reunion. *
- Yes
- No
- Unsure

I have created or seen a family tree for my family. *
- Yes
- No
- Unsure

The survey polled students on everything from their birth location to family traditions to how they believe people are remembered. The results contained a few surprises and lots of thinking to explore.

Notable results from the pre-unit survey

- 81% of students know where their parents/guardians were born
- 72% of students believe their family has traditions
- 67% of students have attended a family reunion
- 44% of students have created or seen a family tree

Some family traditions
We always go to my great grandmothers house for every holiday and have a big dinner.
Eating pierogies on Christmas Eve and borscht on Easter (Polish)
Almost every Sunday my cousins come over and we have a cookout
Having reunions where we pray and have fun there we honor the sick and the fallen. We also celebrate holidays in different ways like before Christmas we do a reunion where honor the birth of baby Jesus.
We make tamales every time there is a special occasion.

When I think of the word legacy, I think of:
my ancestors from the past
what they have left for us what they gifted to humanity for eternity
a person's story
leaving a stories or traditions behind being passed down to different generations when someone important has passed away
of the trail someone left to show what they've done in life

How do you think people are remembered?
I think they are remembered by the impression they leave on people and the legacy and the memories they mark people with.
I think that people are remembered from their legacies and their stories, and how they lived out their lives.
just by who they were
You can be remembered by trying to make a difference in something that is wrong with the world or something you really believe in. Anyone can make a difference, but only the people who want to help can make a difference.

Following our introduction, we zoomed back out and used the text *Heroes and She-roes: Poems of Amazing and Everyday Heroes* to look at examples of legacies left by others. Working in learning teams, students viewed each individual's poem with a focus on identifying his or her impact - how did they change the world?

Student Work: Analyzing Heroes and She-Roes

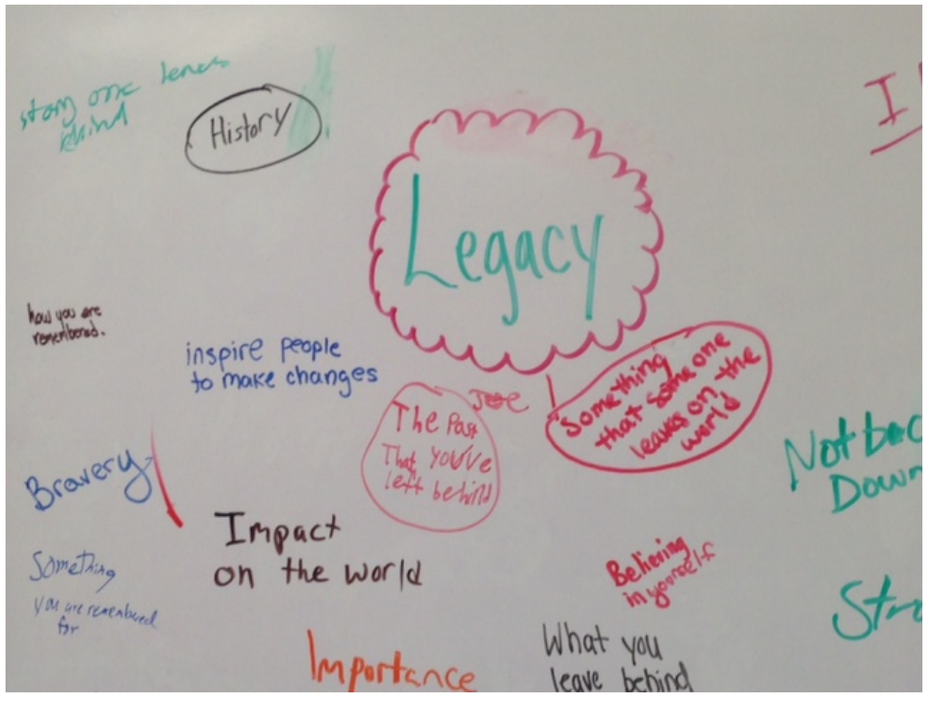
Analyzing **Heroes and She-Roes: Poems of Amazing and Everyday Heroes**

Subject	Lifespan	Location	Impact (How did they change the world?)
I have a dream speech"	1963	Washington, D.C.	They gave a African Americans freedom and inspired many people.
Joan of Arc	1412-1431	France	She fought as the leader of the French during the Hundred Years War.
irefighters in 9/11	September 11, 2001	World Trade Center	They saved many lives and were very brave trying to save others and risking their lives.
rotesting for Democracy	June 5, 1989	Beijing, China	Hundreds of people were killed
Sled dogs in Alaska	1925	Alaska	They brought medicine to sic children and saved lives.
Women working during World War II.	1941-1945	America	They built things that helped the allied men win the war.
osa Parks	1955	Montgomery, Alabama	She defied the law and stood up for her rights and started a yearlong busboy boycott

Teams wrapped up their analysis by determining the theme of the text. Their responses included:

- “You don’t have to be a powerful or famous person to do something great.”
- “There are many heroes in our everyday lives that help without having to change history. There are also heroes in the past who have helped us.”
- “There were many people who changed our world, and many people who still can. You don’t have to be famous to make our world a better place.”

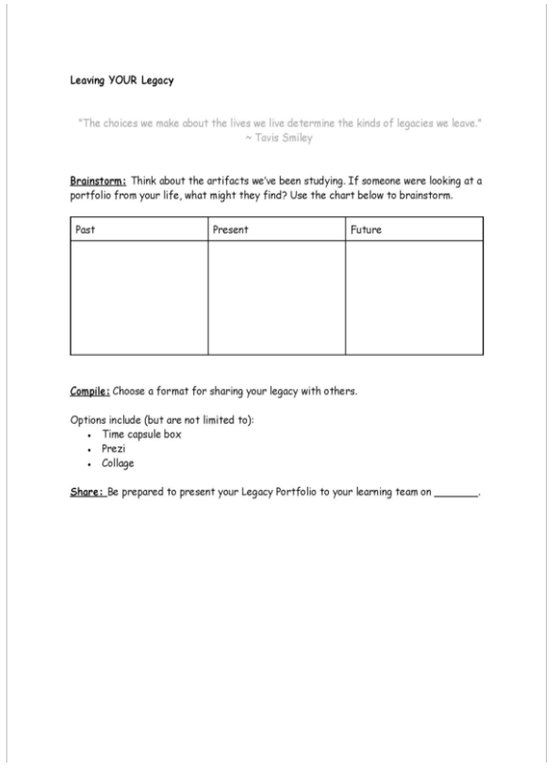
We closed our lesson by creating a word splash focused on our key word of “legacy.”



Word Splash

Unfortunately, scheduling constraints prevented students from completing Stage 2 of our unit plan; however, we were able to bring some closure to our learning by creating legacy portfolios.

Leaving YOUR Legacy Portfolio Assignment



Leaving YOUR Legacy

"The choices we make about the lives we live determine the kinds of legacies we leave."
~ Tavis Smiley

Brainstorm: Think about the artifacts we've been studying. If someone were looking at a portfolio from your life, what might they find? Use the chart below to brainstorm.

Past	Present	Future

Compile: Choose a format for sharing your legacy with others.

Options include (but are not limited to):
- Time capsule box
- Prezi
- Collage

Share: Be prepared to present your Legacy Portfolio to your learning team on _____.

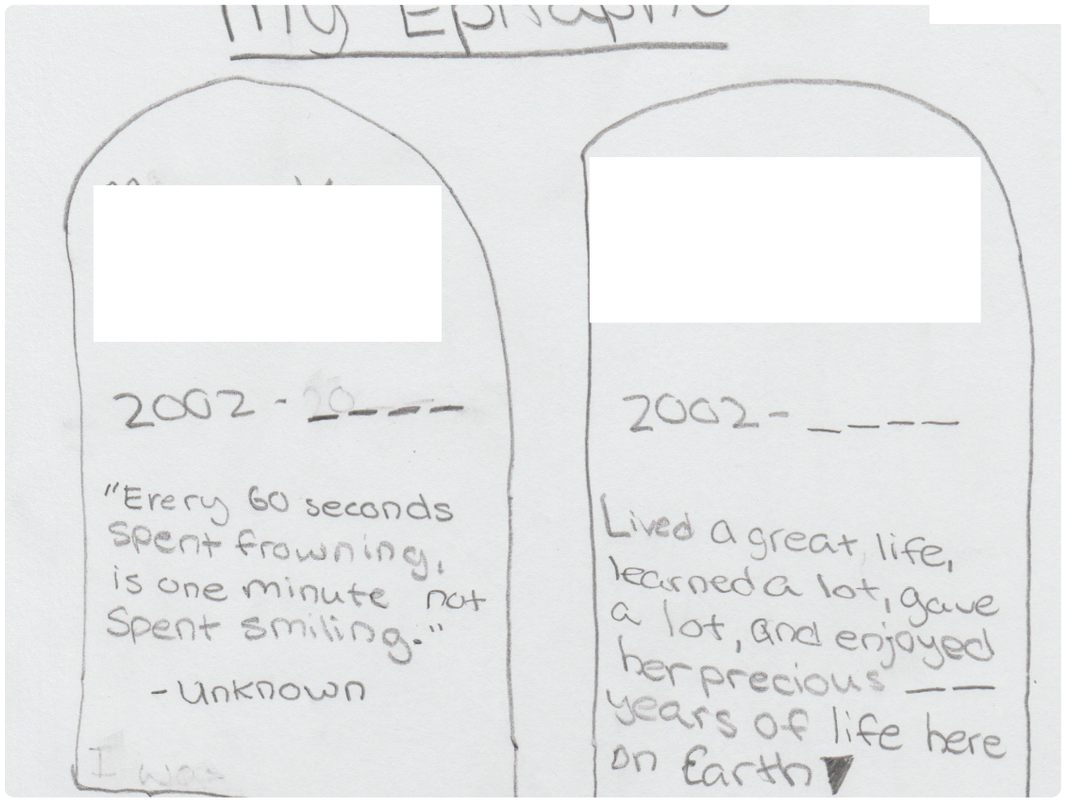
Tap or click on this widget to view the document as a PDF.

Students created and compiled documents including birth announcements, timelines, and epitaphs.

I closed this unit, as well as the school year and perhaps my teaching career, with the following charge to students: Talk with your families. Listen to their stories, learn about your history, and

ask questions. Understand their legacies and use them to dream up your own.

Examples of Student Work for the Leaving YOUR Legacy Assignment



Section 4

Reflections and Recommendations

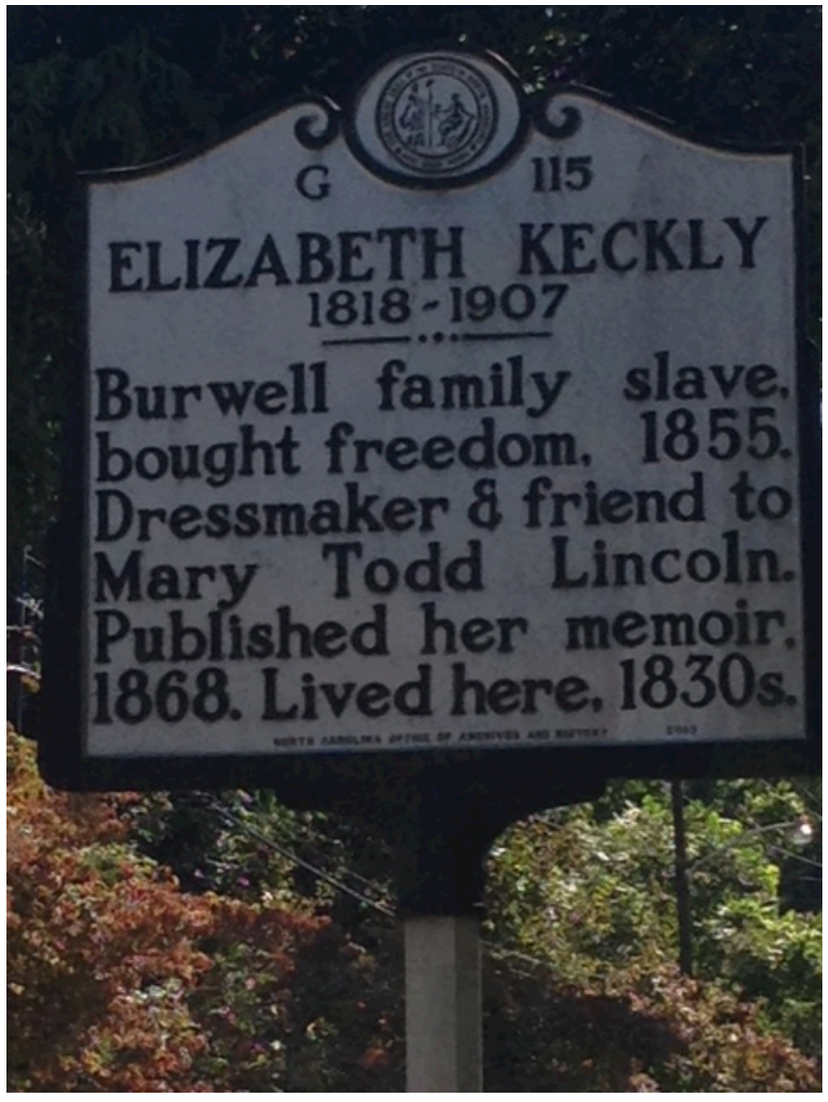
This unit represented a chance to marry my personal search for legacy with my responsibility to support students in their development. I hoped to ignite a spark in students - encourage them to explore their own lineage as they develop their identities and legacies and inspire them to connect with their families while the ties are still strong. Although the lessons in this unit aligned with and deepened the content of my class, more significantly, they met the diverse needs of my students, hopefully aiding them beyond the schooling years.

As is too often the case in teaching, time ran short, and we were unable to reach all of my initial goals. Regrettably, students did not have the chance to “zoom out” and examine primary documents associated with notable Hillsborough citizens. I had hoped that this stage of our unit would serve multiple purposes, including exposing students to a broader array of primary sources and piquing their interest about the rich heritage of their small town.

Nevertheless, using the Ancestry database to research these local figures, including William Hooper (a member of the Continental Congress), Elizabeth Keckley (a former slave and equal rights’ activist), George B. Anderson (a career military man killed during the Civil War), and Billy Strayhorn (a jazz legend), broadened my thinking about the study of individuals, time periods, and themes through the use of primary documents. I used the resources I discovered on Ancestry to create portfolio for each individual, each document a puzzle piece of their life. I realized how primary sources serve as conversation openers - opportunities to interact with history and springboard into a deeper search.

To strengthen the content and impact of this unit, I recommend implementing it during a time with limited interruptions (e.g. testing, breaks), perhaps after the return from winter break. I believe this to be an ideal time as students return to their familiar school routines with the freshness of a new year and yet-to-be-realized ambitions in front of them. To measure the short-term impact of this learning, I recommend spending some time considering your learning objectives and crafting pre-and-post surveys or other means of collecting data. It is also an ideal time to engage the community by eliciting historical artifacts and guest experts.

As teachers, we have the chance to instill knowledge and encourage passion. While the immediate deserves our time and attention, the past adds a rich layer to the bedrock that will build our students' futures.



North Carolina history marker - Elizabeth Keckly

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Chapter 7

The Immigrant Nation: Integrating Family History and Historical Source Inquiry

William Nesbitt designed four projects that integrated the Ancestry databases across a semester of eighth grade US History. As a culmination of the semester, students investigated their own family histories, and compared immigrant stories with the goal of creating and developing significant personal connections.

Section 1

Rationale: Personal and Pedagogical

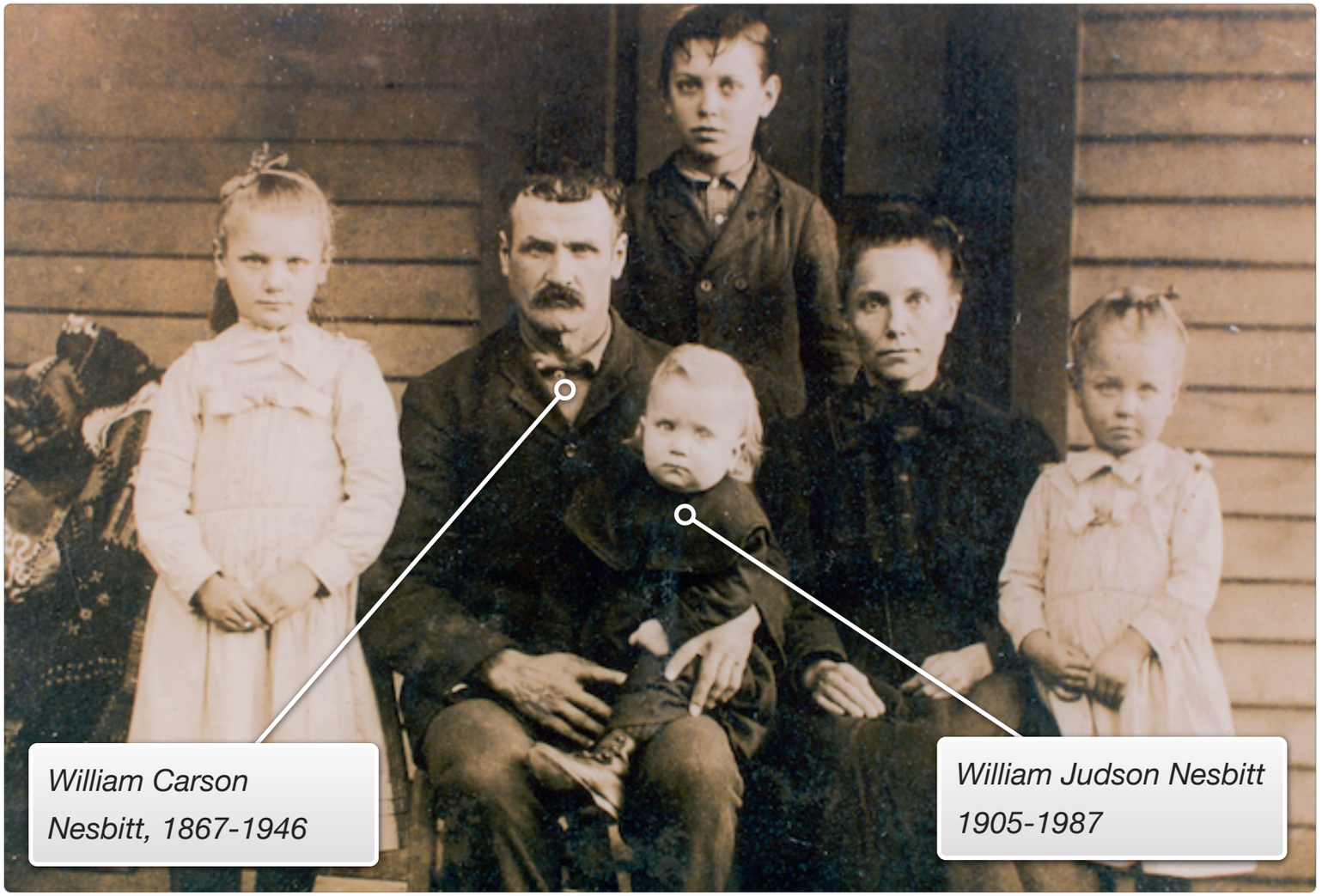
The end (?) of the William Nesbitt chain: The author and his son, Will.

Personal Rationale

As an introduction to this chapter and the reasoning for the activities and experiences in our classroom, a short description of my own personal feelings about family history is worth sharing. Throughout this experience, the event at the forefront of my mind was not curriculum development, stress over writing, or even my normal focus of students' takeaways and shared learning. For the most part, my mind hovered consistently at varying, short distances from thoughts of my first child, Will, who was born on March 27th of this year. I was the fourth William in the Nesbitt family, and so it was made clear to me as early as I could understand that if I was to have a son, he would also be named William. From the moment we found out he was on his way, I've thought about him in everything that I do. One of the great things about this collegial project is that I could do exactly that. ***Is family not at the center of family history?***

A key mistake that I've seen friends, family, and coworkers make in researching family history is the focus on emotionless and arduous study of the past. The reason

The beginning of the William Nesbitt chain



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that family history is so valuable is the same reason that middle grades students can be so easily motivated. We, as the newest end-link in the chain of family are at the center of the research and of the findings. While it may be incredible, as I saw with my own students, to make discoveries about one's past, those discoveries of nationality, experience, effort, joy, and sorrow are only as valuable as the insight they give to the person or people making the discovery. While our efforts in curriculum development and in the classroom were to seek out commonality and create community through shared historical experiences among students, I often allowed myself to focus on "the boy". In thinking about how the knowledge and discovery of his family history might give him confidence and a sense of place, I also allowed myself to consider how my own family's history materializes in my head.

Family history has never been a course of study or created a sense of mystery in my family. Rather than partake in any planned activities, we always seemed to simply gather and "visit." What I came to later know as family history was the inevitable topic of discussion at family visits, and only rarely was it replaced by family gossip. I remember hearing mill stories around my maternal grandmother's large, often loud dinner table or around the concrete picnic tables behind the tiny Uwharrie Methodist Church in Montgomery County, NC.

One of the many characters in my father's family, Uncle Frank liked to educate his bothers in wrestling at almost all family gatherings.

On my father's side I always asked my Aunt Marty to tell us stories about the family and all of the characters and heroes to whom I seem to have been related. She became the kin keeper by aiding both of her parents, and then at least two aunts and uncles in their final days. (Marty became a family kin keeper first through her excitement and pride in the family and the amazing region in which she grew up . As she aided her parents in their final years and managed the family farm until its sale, she became a kind of family historian and curator. This status was cemented when she later cared for her aunt near the end of her life. She would tell us stories of farm life, my grandfather mucking stables to work through college, and all of the famous people that came through my Aunt Clara's hotel and boarding house in Tryon, NC.

Those stories, and more importantly the people who told them have always been the core of my own family history inquiry. A first cousin of mine received a bachelor's degree in history from Wake Forest University, and completed a thorough genealogy of my father's family. This genealogy was later added to Ancestry.com by my brother-in-law. These old photographs, documents, paintings, and books simply illustrated and filled in

Clara Edwards, 1903 - 1994

1

the gaps between the words and emotions of family, often to the detriment of the legends that had formed in my imagination. All of this allowed me to come to this project not only with a working knowledge of my family's past, but also with the confidence that comes from being able to link that knowledge to people and the anecdotes that make it come alive.

For that reason, I may have been less likely to be seen sneaking peeks at my own tree during work sessions than many of my colleagues were, and perhaps came to view our challenges somewhat differently. As we discussed ways to find and record our own inspiration with learning and teaching family history, I became more focused on the latter. Rather than centering my work on my own experiences discovering family history, I chose to examine ways in which teachers might be able to apply family history in varying classrooms I saw then, and still see, nearly endless potential for varying ways to use family historical inquiry and these databases as ways to instill both curiosity and research skills in students of all ages.

Essentially, I wanted to make something that others could use.

I'm not sure that I would have come to my own feelings about my own families' histories through academic study alone, but given the opportunity to begin that search in the classroom, my students and I might find ways to come together and see connections that would rarely emerge in other settings.

The opportunity to integrate historical source analysis and social connection was what really caught my eye. I hope the integration of these concepts can impart the skills of research, analysis, communication, and comparison. The emotional connection to one's own history becomes the carrot that draws the student to look deeper and ask difficult questions. It is my joyful obligation to enlighten and encourage an understanding of our family's past in my own children. This became more and more obvious as Will's birth drew nearer. Our obligation as educators is to use this and whatever other opportunities come to light to inspire students to challenge themselves and each other to further their understanding and facility for inquiry skills.

Pedagogical Rationale

The most significant gains found in middle grades education lie not in academic mastery, but in the development of skills, habits, and attitudes that become the learning foundation for students' academic careers. In order to continue to develop this frame of reference, students in early adolescent developmental stages benefit from understanding their own place in the context of the learning in which they are engaged. The integration of family

history in a middle grades history course provides an exceptional opportunity to motivate students to engage in historical inquiry and instill the skills and work ethic necessary to engage in more in-depth scholarly research while discovering connections between themselves and those around them.

Modern historical inquiry requires the patience and skill needed to mine databases and analyze sources for both their value and relevance. Furthermore, students need to be able to overcome the hurdle of compiling sources they find in order to synthesize a narrative that portrays the experience and emotions of their subject. When asked how historical research is done, most American middle grades students begin with the phrase “Go to Google and…”.

The Results of Bad Research

There seems to be so much distance and effort between the shrugging “Google it!” and the sight of students discovering the connections between their findings and their own experiences, but the result can be inspiring for both student and teacher. While it may be incredibly daunting, it is absolutely worthwhile for both teachers and students to accept the challenge as well as to challenge others to develop solid historical inquiry skills. These skills are necessary in order to seek out and analyze details that

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http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/6-8/

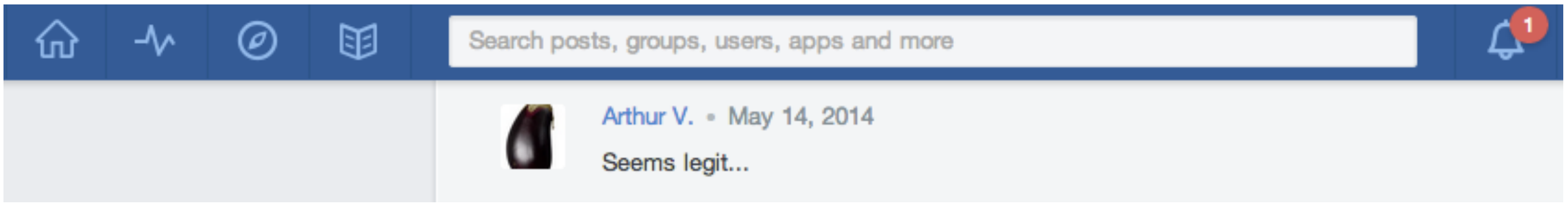
illuminate the past and the lives lived by those who experience many of the events taught in traditional history courses.

Along with other resources, the databases provided by Ancestry.com provide fertile ground for students to discover both the lives and detailed sources relating to the experiences of those who have come before them. The way that Ancestry links historical sources together appears user-friendly enough to engage middle grades students without overwhelming them, but also introduces them to potential pitfalls that can exercise and stretch their historical inquiry and research skills. For this reason, all activities included here incorporate some element of Ancestry.com. Students have the rare opportunity to see and interact with historical sources in a virtual environment that often includes helpful hints and analytical aids. That scaffolded interaction has the potential to build toward the recognition of new cultural connections and "light bulb" discoveries.

When people refer to a "light bulb moment," they tend to think about the particular moment when a concept becomes clear or when their efforts bear fruit. The light bulb, however, can take a long time to power up. The days of teaching by telling are thankfully long past; teachers now understand the need for scaffolding and skill development. For the same reason, students cannot simply sit down with access to resources, and be expected to engage in exhaustive historical inquiry. Such situations are sure to lead to the dreaded "Google it" approach, soon followed by frustration and surrender.

The chapter that follows serves as a toolbox that outlines a number of lessons and activities that offer teachers a potential path to the light bulb. Because teachers know their students best, these activities are created so that they may be used as a cohesive curriculum or independently. The goal of the chapter is to introduce activities that can be used throughout a curriculum so that over the course of a semester or year students will have experienced, practiced, and potentially mastered the skills needed to thoughtfully engage in research that shows how their own history compares to that of their peers.

The one thing that the vast majority of Americans have in common is that their family's American experience begins with an immigrant. For that reason, family history offers students the

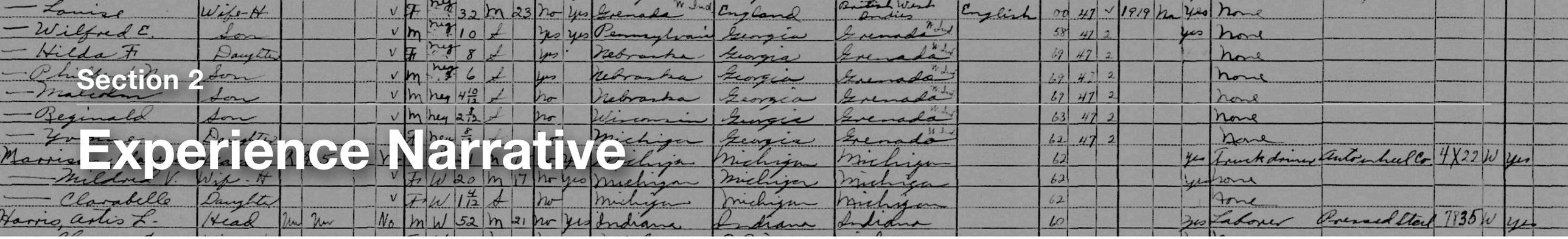


opportunity to find commonality with their peers. The emotional roller coaster that is middle school seems to be a lonely ride, and it can be hard to find commonalities with other students that are both positive and academic. Family research with the common goal of identifying and describing immigrants offers students the chance to connect across social and cultural barriers. A young lady taught at home that her ancestors arrived on the Mayflower might find that her revered immigrant was motivated by the very same forces that brought her classmate's parents from Central Asia some 400 years later. That young lady may even find that what she had been taught at home was incorrect, and that her family history is potentially more interesting and similar to her classmate's that she had previously thought. These discoveries have the potential to go beyond the pride and excitement often found in genealogy and family tree creation to reveal connections and create positive relationships between students that might never otherwise interact socially. Essentially, it can bring students together in surprising ways.

Section Header Image from NC Postcards:

http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/nc_post/id/3959/rec/5

Experience Narrative



Background: the Teacher, the School, and the Plans

As a middle grades teacher of social studies and language arts, I've always been interested in using curriculum to inculcate academic and interpersonal skills in students as they begin to work their way through the labyrinth of adolescence. For that reason I was excited to take part in a project that has the potential to introduce experiences that can engage and motivate both intrinsic and frustrated learners. Furthermore, the chance to work collegially with motivated teachers and experienced faculty members to create new learning opportunities for students was too good to pass up.

Along with 9 other teachers, I arrived in Chapel Hill in January 2014 for a summit on the opportunities that family history and the Ancestry.com websites can supply to K-12 classrooms. We were given direct instruction on tools and databases, and allowed to experience our own families' histories through Ancestry.com. Looking around the rooms during seminar and seeing colleagues sneaking peeks at their own trees confirmed the near irresistible hook that personal family research can provide. What I hadn't expected was the insight offered by faculty members like Dr. Robert Allen, Dr. David Hicks, and especially Dr. Tim Marr. We were encouraged to create ways to challenge students as well as ourselves, and I was especially inspired to seek out ways to do more than just use these tools to research. Dr. Marr's discussion on the changing nature of family in America inspired me to invite students to recognize the ways in which our separate, individual histories can illuminate the connections we all share as Americans and as human beings.

To say the least, I left Chapel Hill with big ideas and the seeds of grand plans. Andy Mink and the LearnNC staff encouraged me to push forward and plan big, so even though I felt that we might not be able to fulfill all parts of the curriculum, I let the ideas flow. That fear of incompletion came not from my students or from my own lack of efficacy, but from the knowledge that I'd be leaving the classroom early this year to care for my child. My only difficulty was choosing which of the many possibilities we might be able to make happen in the classroom. After developing a list of things I'd like to do using these tools, it occurred to me that

doing any single activity wouldn't have the power of doing a number of projects that might build the kind of skills that would set my students up for success in high school. For that reason, I chose to begin to develop 4 separate lessons that could be placed at different points in a US history curriculum, leading to personal family research and a comparison of experiences that might show students what they have in common rather than how they differ.

I teach eighth grade social studies at a high performing middle school in Wake County, NC. Most of my students are well supported and tend to be intrinsic learners. This year's group included some of the most intelligent and affable students that I've had the opportunity to teach in my career. I also had the assistance of a motivated student teacher that was eager not only to teach, but also to work with me as we explored these new curriculum ideas. Along with direction from the faculty of UNC, these circumstances created that rare classroom environment where experimentation and innovation can really occur. While time and curriculum constraints allowed us to complete only parts of the overall plan, we were able to successfully introduce new concepts and tools. We showed that the notion of discovering individual histories and the commonalities between them can motivate students to work even when direction is open-ended and grades are not involved.

The Plan Unfolds: Implementation

The overall plan was to include the use of historical source inquiry and the Ancestry databases in four parts over the course of a semester. The reasoning for pushing all of the work into the second semester is that most of the databases hold artifacts from the late 19th, and mostly 20th centuries, so students are more likely to find success as they research. Initially, middle grades students at any level need a foundation for the kind of analysis we hope to ask of them, so the initial activity is meant to be one where students are analyzing, but not finding sources. While this is a valuable part of the skills development, we were unable to find time during this first run to attempt both Relevance and Reliability and the third activity, Leaders and Circumstances.

While the goal of the continuum of activities was to build on skills, I was especially disappointed to have to leave out the Leaders and Circumstances project. Looking back on the semester as a whole, completing this as well as the Relevance and Reliability activity would have increased the value of what we were actually able to accomplish. Throughout both of the projects that we did implement, students were often chasing sources down rabbit holes. Even the most motivated middle schoolers were thrown off course by seeing hints, dates, or names without thoroughly checking to see that they accurately matched the information that was already known to be true. While there is significant value in these failures and redirections, the overall take-aways might have been far more valuable given more detailed instruction and

guided practice. (insert video segment of Nesbitt explaining why a “hint” doesn’t apply to the person being researched?).

The first element that we were able to prepare for classroom use was a version of the [place-based activity], which was meant to be the second of four activities. The plan had originally been to use Newspapers.com to compare societal reactions to the economic crash of the late 1920s and 1930s in different parts of the State and Nation. Because this fell during my student teacher’s unit, I wanted to give her as much flexibility and room as possible. She and I worked to augment the original plan to include an online game called “Spent” involving personal financial decision and poverty, while staying true to the original goal of comparing and contrasting different experiences of the Great Depression.

“I had to pay for groceries, decide if I should let my kid go to a birthday party, decide if my kid should do after school activities, and more. I had to make tough decisions but I also had to decide what was right and the best thing to do.”

www.playspent.org

“…there are a bunch of tangents in the web of poverty and I feel like Spent exploited and looked at only one of those.”

The result was a successful project that allowed students to examine different types of historical sources while gaining perspective on the trials experienced by Americans during this nation’s greatest financial crisis.

Given the opportunity, students will often provide some of the most valuable feedback as we teachers work to develop lessons and units. At the end of the Boom and Bust unit, students offered reflections on both the research experience and the media tools

they used. These reflections emboldened us to continue to refine the project, and to make further attempts at this kind of experience.

"I [am] especially interested in the concept of stocks, which I did not fully understand before. However, by researching the market crash, I was able to understand how stocks function and why the market crash happened."

Overall students enjoyed learning new material through inquiry, and appreciated both the goal of examining different historical sources, and the medium through which the work was presented.

There had been a number of experiments with this project, and we found the most valuable outcomes to be students' willingness and even excitement for historical inquiry as a method of learning material. The students were able to recognize their own research as we studied the unit, and gained confidence through having researched the material prior to direct classroom instruction.

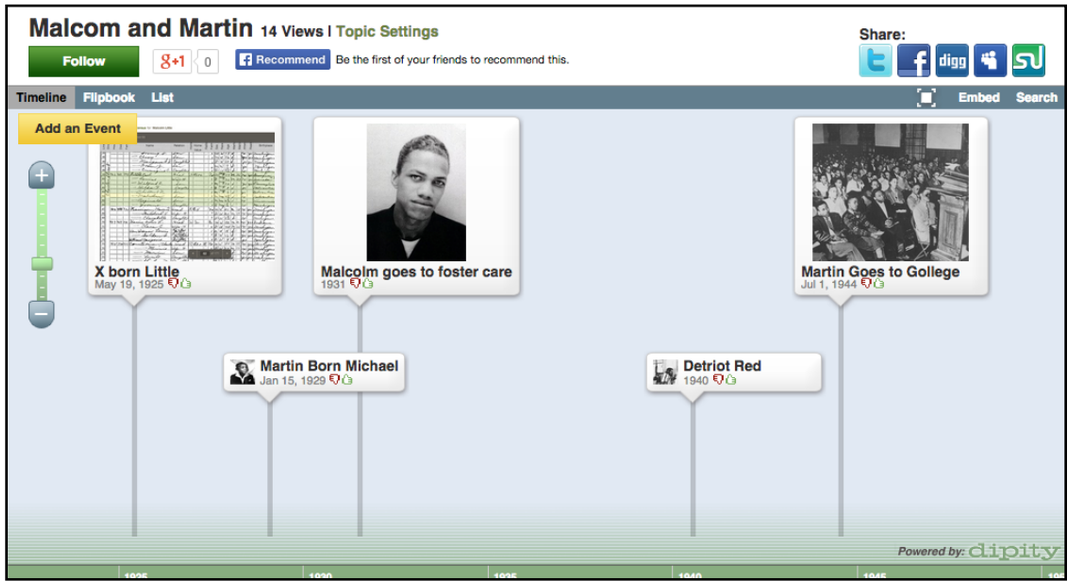
"…once I started to collect research, I became more interested in my topic. I learned new things about North Carolina that I never thought I would."

Example *Thinglink*; the final product for the ***Experience of Place*** project.
https://www.thinglink.com/scene/499649413610733570

The Civil Rights unit in our US history curriculum is one that I especially look forward to each year, and is the point at which I had planned to place the third of four activities. Leaders and Circumstances is a third person historical inquiry that was meant to lead students to not only seek out historical artifacts, but to compare and contrast the narrative created by those sources with those of another figure. It encourages students to independently discover how similar and different life events and circumstances

of the lives of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X led to their individual perspectives on the movement. This final scaffold allows students to be prepared to look both objectively and subjectively at the ways in which historical sources and artifacts crate the story of a person's life. That understanding is tested in students' abilities to compare and contrast ways in which personal circumstance leads to perspective and action.

While we all have to allow ourselves leeway as teachers when we take chances, I was especially disappointed to not be able to work this activity into my time in the classroom this year. For the past two years, I have taught both of these leaders together in direct instruction with the goal of showing students how their lives affected their decisions.



The example timeline included with the ***Leaders and Circumstances*** project.

My goal this year was to take this opportunity to let students draw their own conclusions and discuss in either an on-line discussion or Socratic Seminar. The timing for this portion of the curriculum, however, fell after I left the classroom, and the long-term substitute felt more comfortable with the lecture than with jumping into the deep end, which I totally understand. Along with the relevance and reliability activity, and perhaps more so, I feel that this kind of higher-order thinking would have led to even more value found in personal research.

Even without the Leaders' Circumstances work, the student centered research of the Boom and Bust did allow many students to later embrace independent personal family research when we were able to develop a study group for students interested in seeking out the immigrants in their own families, and comparing experiences and narratives (The Personal Immigrant). Because every student is different, and may or may not enjoy looking into their own family history, I developed a project that seeks to find similarity and connection between the motives and experiences of immigrants or migrants within students' personal histories.

Here again I have to admit some regret. Although I knew it was coming, it was much more difficult to leave the classroom knowing that there was so much excitement surrounding this research and the prospect of students sharing their findings. Because of time and curriculum constraints, our students volunteered their time during the SmartBlock, a 30 minute period

during which students are encouraged to seek academic assistance, and work on assignments. The group consisted of 25 students, Ms. McGoldrick (student teacher), and myself, and while all students had access to Ancestry.com, most of the sharing and discussion happened in an informal Edmodo group, where group members showed off their findings, encouraged and assisted each other, and commented on the similarities that they were able to find.

Take-Aways and Reflection

While I understand that the group of volunteer students that took part in the Personal Immigrant project was by nature independently motivated, the enthusiasm for historical inquiry, discovery, and encouragement that they exhibited is rare. I believe that this excitement is due more to the opportunity offered by the project and the resources found in Ancestry.com than in the students alone. They are, after all, middle school kids. Not only did they buy in enough to volunteer, there were also a number of students posting questions and comments on Edmodo weeks after I left the project. What the integration of these skills and projects can offer, and what these students were able to accomplish, takes their inquiry skills far beyond those expected of middle grades students. They were able to independently discover the value of historical source analysis and evaluation. Based on census records, photographs, draft cards, and maps, these kids drew thoughtful conclusions and created credible narratives. Experiences like these prepare students for high school and give them the confidence and excitement in learning that can take them far beyond high school.

The past months have not only added to my understanding of and ability to teach historical inquiry, they have also reinvigorated my own enthusiasm for student-centered education. This work has reminded me yet again that students will rise to the occasion when we as teachers frame the experience in a way that allows them to steer their own ship and draw their own conclusions. The kind of work that this LEARN NC team has done challenges both student and teacher to step out of their comfort zones and challenge their own ideas of what history and learning can be. Too often students are given facts and told to accept them at face

The Student Teaching Perspective

Ms. Kelly McGoldrick, of North Carolina State University, offered her thoughts on the experience of being involved with this project. Tap or click the widget to read her reflections as a PDF.

value. Without the power to investigate and the encouragement to evaluate, students at any level will choose the path of least resistance. While those face-value facts can be found with a smart phone, the ability and yearning to analyze, communicate, and create personal experiences from historical sources and artifacts is and should be the goal of social studies education. What has been done here by 10 teachers and a few dedicated faculty members simply shows that students don't have to wait until they walk the halls of higher learning, but that these goals can and should be accomplished at any level.

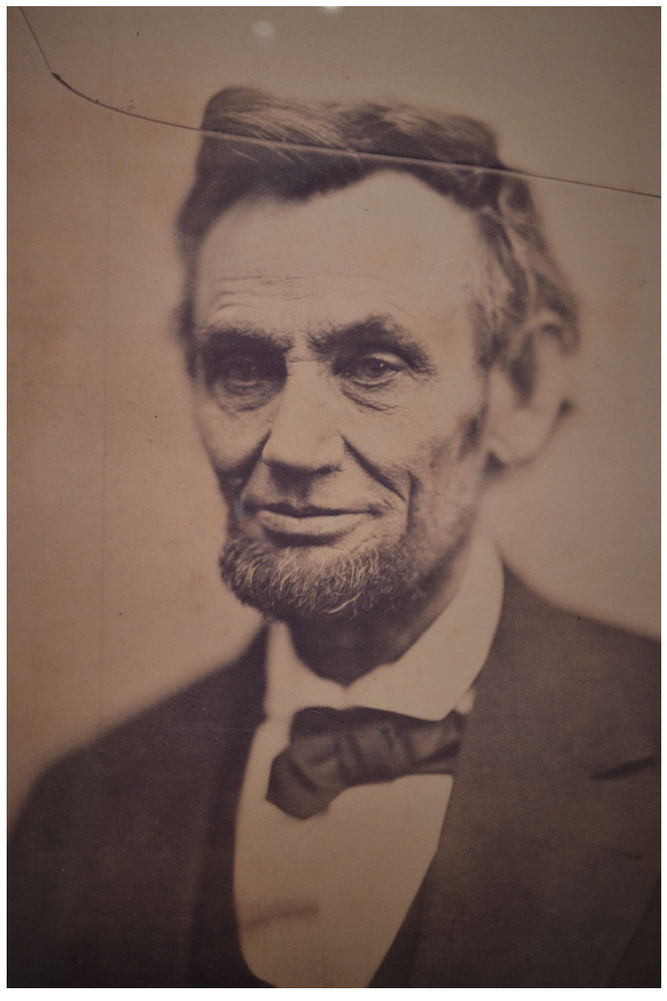
Students maintained high levels of motivation while examining their own family histories, and helping each other throughout the process.

Section 3

Relevance and Reliability

LESSON GUIDE

This guide is meant to provide information that may facilitate implementation in the classroom. It was designed for use in an eighth grade social studies classroom in North Carolina, but can be modified to fit into any US History curriculum.



Objectives:

Students will be exposed to different historical sources provided by the instructor that all relate to the life and presidency of Abraham Lincoln. The goal of the activity is to ask students to examine the documents for both relevance and reliability in telling the story of Abraham Lincoln. In doing so they will exercise analytical and evaluation skills as they pertain to the examination of historical sources.

Standards:

NC 8.H.1.2: Summarize the literal meaning of historical documents in order to establish context.

NC 8.H.1.4: Use historical inquiry to evaluate the validity of sources used to construct historical narratives.

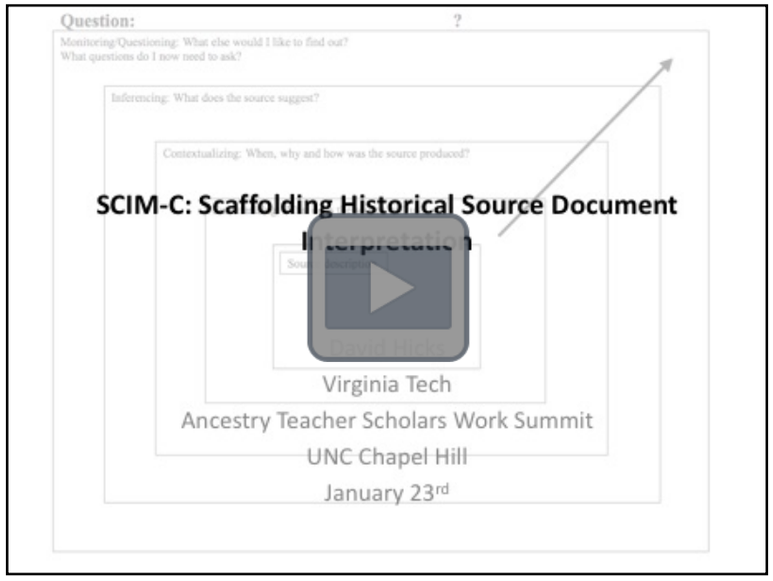
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

Preparation:

Because the focus of this activity is to analyze and evaluate historical sources, it should be completed after students have a basic understanding of the life and Presidency of Abraham Lincoln. This activity is designed to be completed in one 60 minute class period, but teachers may find value in allowing for discussion to stretch into a second. Extra time to introduce and model document analysis is strongly encouraged for teachers new to the SCIM-C method

SCIM-C: Scaffolding Historical Source Document Interpretation

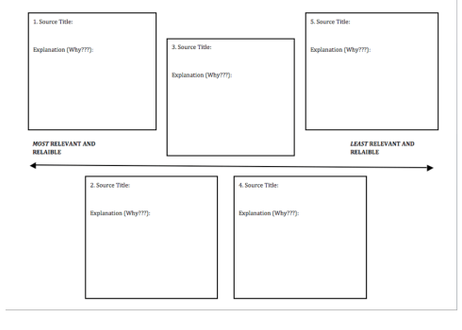


A presentation given during the Ancestry Summit by David Hicks, PhD

Materials:

1. Continuum Record: front /back copies given to each student.

Continuum Record



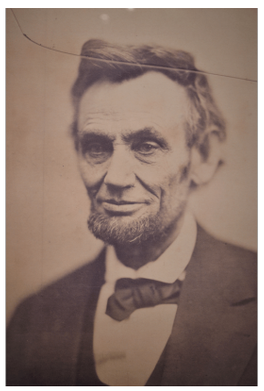
Tap or click the widget to view the documents as a PDF.

2. Lincoln Documents: 5 documents given to each group in an envelope or folder:

- Set one:

1. Emancipation Proclamation,
2. Harding Inauguration Photograph,
3. Lincoln Assassination (New York Times article),
4. SC Secession Document,
5. Lincoln IRS-1864 Document

Lincoln Documents, Set 1



Tap or click the widget to view the documents as a PDF.

- Set Two:

1. Gettysburg Address,
2. Lincoln Inauguration Photograph,
3. SC Resolution Document,
4. NC Weekly Standard page,
5. Lincoln-Pennsylvania- Census Document

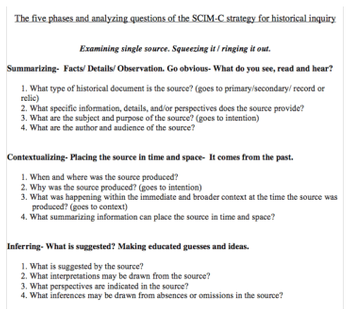
Lincoln Documents, Set 2

Tap or click the widget to view the documents as a PDF.

Instructions:

1. Students should begin by reviewing “The five phases and analyzing questions of the SCIM-C strategy for historical inquiry” (Hicks, 2014).

The 5 Phases of SCIM-C



The five phases and analyzing questions of the SCIM-C strategy for historical inquiry

Examining single source. Squeezing it / ringing it out.

Summarizing- Facts/ Details/ Observation. Go obvious- What do you see, read and hear?

1. What type of historical document is the source? (goes to primary/secondary/ record or relic)
2. What specific information, details, and/or perspectives does the source provide?
3. What are the subject and purpose of the source? (goes to intention)
4. What are the author and audience of the source?

Contextualizing- Placing the source in time and space- It comes from the past.

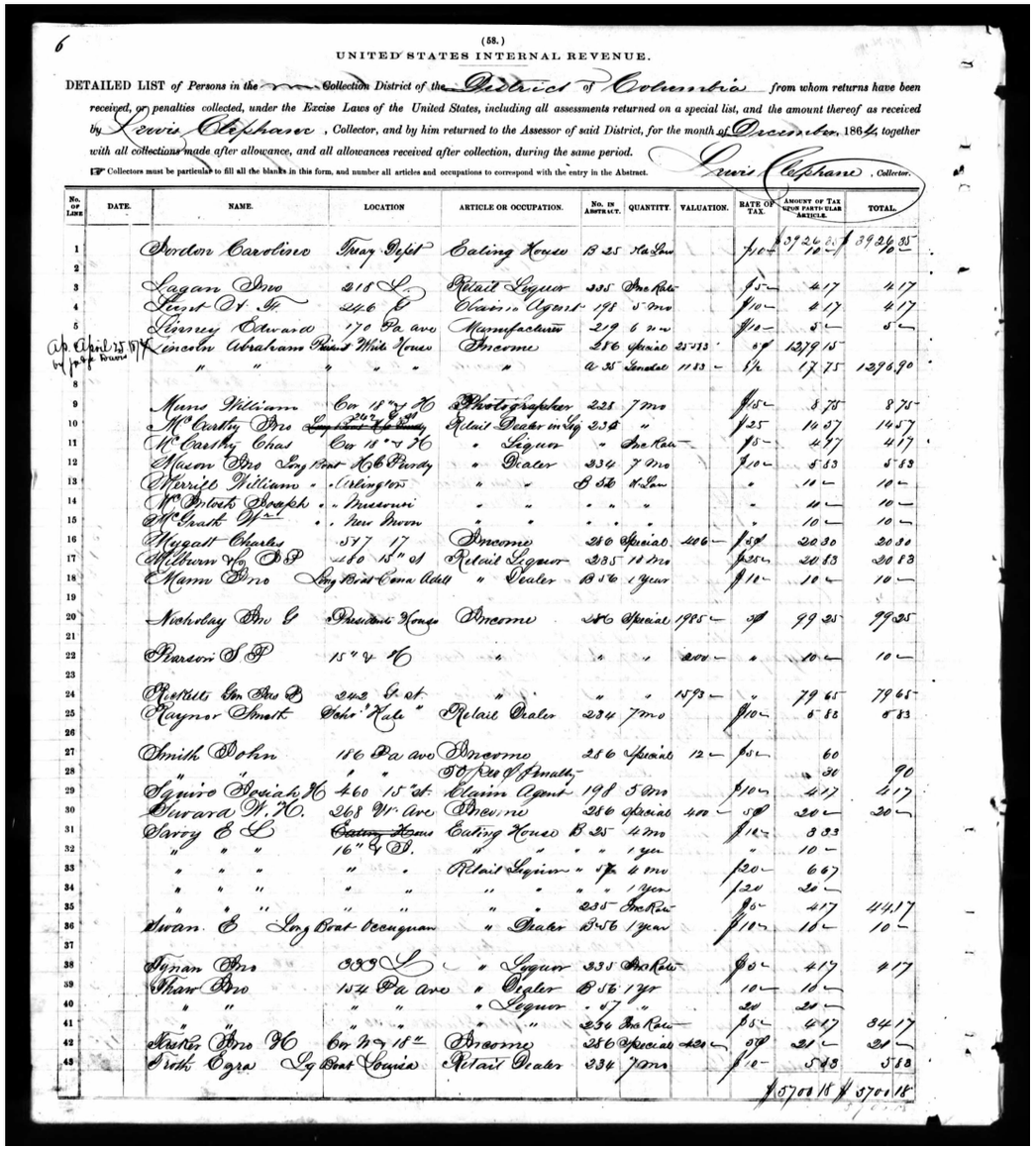
1. When and where was the source produced?
2. Why was the source produced? (goes to intention)
3. What was happening within the immediate and broader context at the time the source was produced? (goes to context)
4. What summarizing information can place the source in time and space?

Inferring- What is suggested? Making educated guesses and ideas.

1. What is suggested by the source?
2. What interpretations may be drawn from the source?
3. What perspectives are indicated in the source?
4. What inferences may be drawn from absences or omissions in the source?

Tap or click the widget to view the document as a PDF.

2. In groups of 3-5, students will be given a set of 5 documents pertaining to Lincoln’s life and Presidency. There are a total of 10



(58.)

UNITED STATES INTERNAL REVENUE.

DETAILED LIST of Persons in the ... Collection District of the District of Columbia from whom returns have been received, or penalties collected, under the Excise Laws of the United States, including all assessments returned on a special list, and the amount thereof as received by Lewis Clephane, Collector, and by him returned to the Assessor of said District, for the month of December, 1864, together with all collections made after allowance, and all allowances received after collection, during the same period.

☞ Collectors must be particular to fill all the blanks in this form, and number all articles and occupations to correspond with the entry in the Abstract.

Lewis Clephane, Collector.

No. OF LINE	DATE.	NAME.	LOCATION	ARTICLE OR OCCUPATION.	No. IN ABSTRACT.	QUANTITY.	VALUATION.	RATE OF TAX.	AMOUNT OF TAX UPON PARTICULAR ARTICLE.	TOTAL.
1		Gordon Caroline	Treas Dept	Eating House	B 25	1st Year		10 p.c.	$39.26 1/2	$39.26 1/2
2										
3		Logan Jno	218 L	Retail Liquor	335	Ins Rate		5	4.17	4.17
4		Lieut A. F.	246 G	Claim Agent	198	5 Mo		10	4.17	4.17
5		Kinney Edward	170 Pa ave	Manufacturer	219	6 Mo		10	5.—	5.—
Ap. April 25 1865 by Joseph Barnes		Lincoln Abraham	President White House	Income	256	Special	25033	5 p.c.	1279.15	
		" "	" "	"	A 35	Income	11183	1/2	17.75	1296.90
8										
9		Mann William	Cor 15th & H	Photographer	225	7 Mo		5	8.75	8.75
10		McCarthy Bro	~~Cor 12th & Pa Ave~~ 246 G 15th	Retail Dealer in Gr	238	"		25	14.57	14.57
11		McCarthy Chas	Cor 15th & H	" Liquor	"	Ins Rate		5	4.17	4.17
12		Mason Bro Ly	Boat H & Penby	" Dealer	334	7 Mo		10	5.83	5.83
13		Merrill William	Arlington	" "	B 56	1 Year		"	10.—	10.—
14		McBrides Joseph	Missouri	" "	"	"		"	10.—	10.—
15		McGrath Jno	New Brun	" "	"	"		"	10.—	10.—
16		Nygatt Charles	317 17	Income	256	Special	226.—	1/2	20.30	20.30
17		Welburn & Dep	460 15th st	Retail Liquor	335	10 Mo		25	20.83	20.83
18		Mann Bro	Ly Boat Corn Addn	" Dealer	B 56	1 Year		10	10.—	10.—
19										
20		Nashelay Bro &	President House	Income	256	Special	1985.—	5	99.25	99.25
21										
22		Pearson S F	15th & H	"	"	"	200.—	"	10.—	10.—
23										
24		Pettitt Con Bro &	242 G st	"	"	"	1583.—	"	79.65	79.65
25		Rayner Smith	Ohio Hall	Retail Dealer	234	7 Mo		10	5.83	5.83
26										
27		Smith John	116 Pa ave	Income	256	Special	12.—	5	.60	
28		"	"	"	"	"		"	.30	.90
29		Squire Josiah H	460 15th st	Claim Agent	198	5 Mo		10	4.17	4.17
30		Surrara W. H.	268 W. Ave	Income	256	Special	400.—	5	20.—	20.—
31		Sarey & L	~~Eating House~~	Eating House	B 25	4 Mo		10	3.33	
32		" " "	16th & H	"	"	1 Year		"	10.—	
33		" " "	" "	Retail Liquor	"	4 Mo		20	6.67	
34		" " "	" "	"	"	1 Year		20	20.—	
35		" " "	" "	"	235	Ins Rate		5	4.17	44.17
36		Swan E Ly	Boat Occoquan	" Dealer	B 56	1 Year		10	10.—	
37										
38		Tynan Bro	339 L	" Liquor	335	Ins Rate		5	4.17	4.17
39		Thare Bro	154 Pa ave	" Dealer	B 56	1 Year		10	10.—	
40		" "	" "	" Liquor	"	"		20	20.—	
41		" "	" "	" "	256	Ins Rate		5	4.17	34.17
42		Tisher Bro &	6th & N & 15th	Income	256	Special	420.—	5	21.—	21.—
43		Toth Egra	Ly Boat Louisa	Retail Dealer	234	7 Mo		10	5.83	5.83
									$5703.18	$5703.18

Sample US Census record used in the activity

documents, so there will be groups that have the same sets of documents. This can be helpful in the discussion phase, as different groups might draw different conclusions and have the opportunity to discuss their reasons.

3. With the analysis questions posted as a reminder, students will open their document packets, and begin to look at each document as a group. All students will complete the Continuum Record individually, but will have the opportunity to discuss their titles (group titles are encouraged), description (group and/or individual), conclusions, and questions with classmates as they work. Students should be reminded that they should be focused on analysis at this point, and so should be working on the front/ first page of the Continuum Record. Students should be given roughly 20 minutes to complete this portion of the lesson.

4. There should be a break between the document analysis and document evaluation portions of the lesson. At this point, the instructor should model the evaluation of one document from each of the 2 document groups (best results should occur if the teacher models different types of sources, ie; one census document and one photograph).

An engraving of the 1861 inaugural Address

5. Students should then return to their groups and discuss their group's ratings of reliability and relevance. The teacher should make sure to remind students tat they should come to a consensus, but that they should take note of the documents that require the most discussion and why. Students should be able to complete this in ten to fifteen minutes.

6. The discussion/conclusion step of the activity is where there is the most flexibility. Pacing may determine that there is only time to look at each of the documents, and see whether or not there is consensus between groups and why. The best opportunity for discussion and learning, however, will be to assign each group an area of the classroom where they can post their documents on the wall. They should put their documents up in order from least to most relevant and reliable, along with a single phrase in explanation written on typing paper (large enough to be seen throughout the class). As groups go through their continuums and reasoning, there should be discussion based on differences in group findings and reasoning for their decision making process. The instructor should take the opportunity to point out that there might not be definitive results in all cases. While some documents are "irrelevant" in that they do not pertain

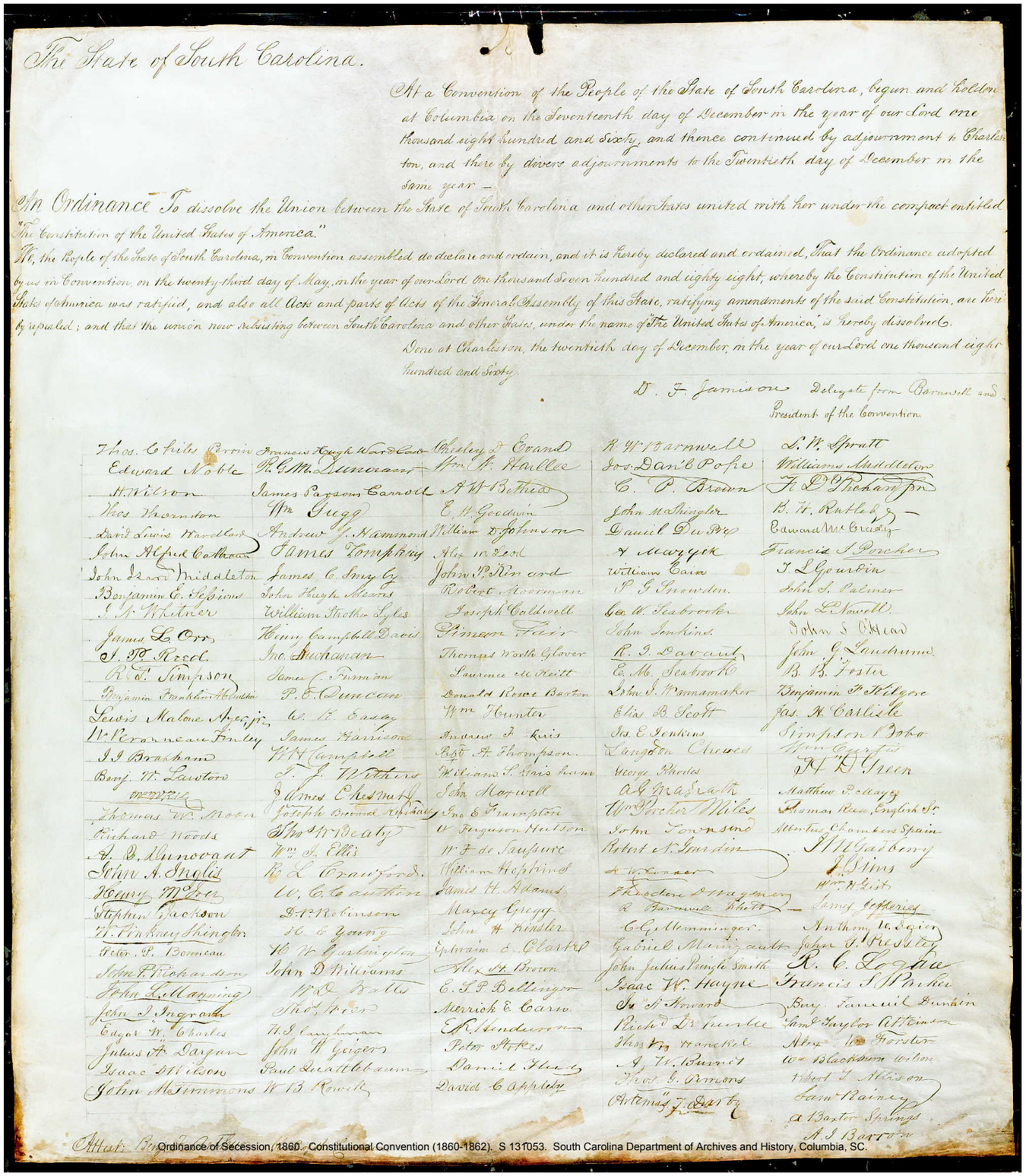
to Lincoln's life or presidency, most of the documents will be ordered subjectively. The point of the exercise is that students make intentional decisions and are able to explain their reasoning.

7. As a ticket out the door or as homework (depending on time), students should be asked to answer the following questions and provide examples from the activity. There is an opportunity here to use online discussion boards such as edmodo, blackboard, today's meet, etc. to encourage students to engage in an active online discussion outside of the class.

Discussion Questions:

1. How can the reliability of a historical source be determined?

2. How can the relevance of a historical source be evaluated?


The State of South Carolina.

At a Convention of the People of the State of South Carolina, begun and holden at Columbia on the Seventeenth day of December in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and Sixty, and thence continued by adjournment to Charleston, and there by divers adjournments to the Twentieth day of December in the same year —

An Ordinance To dissolve the Union between the State of South Carolina and other States united with her under the compact entitled "The Constitution of the United States of America."

We, the People of the State of South Carolina, in Convention assembled do declare and ordain, and it is hereby declared and ordained, That the Ordinance adopted by us in Convention, on the twenty third day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand Seven hundred and eighty eight, whereby the Constitution of the United States of America was ratified, and also all Acts and parts of Acts of the General Assembly of this State, ratifying amendments of the said Constitution, are hereby repealed; and that the union now subsisting between South Carolina and other States, under the name of "the United States of America," is hereby dissolved.

Done at Charleston, the twentieth day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and Sixty.

D. F. Jamison Delegate from Barnwell and President of the Convention.

Ordinance of Secession, 1860. Constitutional Convention (1860-1862). S 131053. South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, SC.

South Carolina Secession Documents used in the activity

Section 4

The Experience of Place: Boom and Bust

LESSON GUIDE

This guide is meant to provide information that may facilitate implementation in the classroom. It was designed for use in an eighth grade social studies classroom in North Carolina, but can be modified to fit into any US History curriculum.

This Project uses the website www.newspapers.com to help students understand the ways in which place and region affect reactions to majir events

Objectives:

As a development of historical inquiry skills, this project offers students a chance to look at the way that place and region can affect the ways in which individuals and communities react to significant historical events. The historical source analysis skills introduced in the relevance and reliability lesson are built upon in that students are now seeking out sources that they feel are reliable and relevant to their topics. The media through which their findings are reported, as well as the choice and independence that are inherent in the work, provides incentive for students. Moreover, there is room for students to review, discuss, and encourage each other's work upon completion using a physical and/or virtual gallery walk sharing opportunity.

Note:

When initially planning to include this project, assumptions were made regarding both timing and resources. When implemented in the classroom, as often happens, adjustments were necessary that led to insight into both

opportunities missed and unexpected learning experiences. This section will seek to reflect both the original plan and the actual implementation in order to show the flexibility of the project as a concept.

Standards:

NC 8.H1.1: Construct charts, graphs, and historical narratives to explain particular events or issues.

NC 8.H1.3: Use primary and secondary sources to interpret various historical perspectives.

8.H.1.4: Use historical inquiry to evaluate the validity of sources used to construct historical narratives

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.9: Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Required Materials:

1. Slide Deck: “The Experience of Place”

The Experience of Place

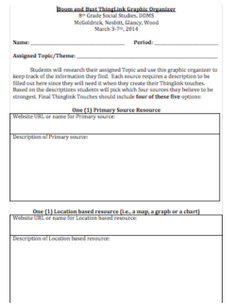
This presentation may be used or augmented to introduce and facilitate the Boom and Bust project

2. Lincoln Documents (as needed for review: see Relevance and Reliability)

3. Individual access to computers and internet

4. Boom and Bust graphic organizer (optional)

Boom and Bust Graphic Organizer


Boom and Bust ThingLink Graphic Organizer
8th Grade Social Studies, (GSW)
McGoldrick, Nesbitt, Glancy, Wood
March 3-7th, 2014

Name: _____ Period: _____

Assigned Topic/Theme: _____

Students will research their assigned Topic and use this graphic organizer to keep track of the information they find. Each source requires a description to be filled out here since they will need it when they create their Thinglink touches. Based on the descriptions students will pick which four sources they believe to be strongest. Four Thinglink Touches should include **four of these five** options:

One (1) Primary Source Resource

Website URL or name for Primary source:

Description of Primary source:

One (1) Location based resource (i.e., a map, a graph or a chart)

Website URL or name for Location based resource:

Description of Location based resource:

Tap or click the widget to view the document as a PDF.

5. Student access to an online forum (Edmodo, Blackboard, Sakai, etc.)

6. Student access to internet, and to Newspapers.com

7. Thinglink examples:

Depression in the City

Depression in the Country

Thinglink Example: *Depression in the City*

Preparation for Implementation as Planned:

Using the scaffold of the relevance and reliability activity, students may be expected to begin not only to analyze and evaluate historical sources, but also to seek out those sources more independently. For this reason, it is not necessary that students be familiar with the context of the historical period prior to beginning their research, but teachers should use their own judgment as to how and where to challenge their students. This project is designed to be placed between short units on the economic boom of the 1920s and the Great Depression that followed the market crash of 1929.

The project can take as long as five to seven 60-minute class periods, although it may be shortened for pacing needs, so each day should begin with a review of the overall goals and the tasks for the day.

Instructions:

Day One: Introduction and Framing:

1. As an introduction on day one, students should choose a location that they may have a personal connection with or interest in. It would, however, be a good idea to have students leave on the first day with at least one secondary choice in the event that resources for their first choice are too scarce. (slides 2-4 of "the experience of place" ppt).

2. A brief discussion of the similarities and differences between the cities, states, or regions chosen by students will get students moving toward recognizing that place can affect one's perspective and experience. Consider asking how people might react to a current event differently in some of the different places brought up during discussion. Be careful, as this kind of open-ended discussion can be great, but can also consume valuable time.

3. That discussion should be followed by a brief review of the excesses of the 1920s, the bubble created by financial and agricultural speculation, and the actual events of the market crash of 1929 (slides 5-7 of "the experience of place" ppt). At this point, students should consider making predictions about how people might react to news of the market crash in their chosen place (slides 8-11 of "the experience of place" ppt).

4. The teacher will introduce the requirements of the project, as well as examples of the types of sources students will encounter (a review of the Lincoln documents will work here if students have experienced the relevance and reliability activity) and the end product.

5. At the end of the introduction day, students may be whirling a little, so it will be good to review with a brief ticket out the door asking them for their first and second choice, as well as a prediction of reactions in those places.

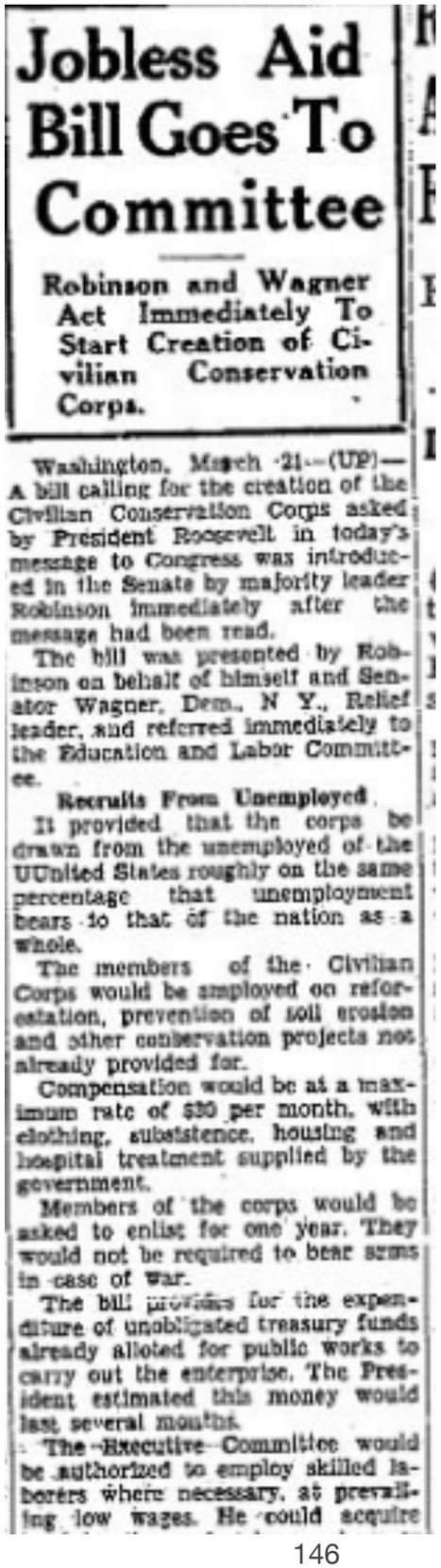
Days 2-5: Research Days:

1. Students will require computer and internet access each day, as well as access to the newspapers.com database.

2. Middle grades students often need both a verbal/visual review of research goals and clear and accessible work steps at the beginning of each day's research. Using an online class forum such as Blackboard or Edmodo, to post both instructions and the project timetable will reduce questions and frustrations.

3. The teacher will act as a facilitator, and should hold students to the expectation that they should seek out the best possible, and not the first found sources. By rotating and asking students questions, the teacher can push students to examine valuable sources that can lead them to their own conclusions.

4. To ensure that students are keeping up with the project timeline, teachers may choose to hold students responsible



Jobless Aid Bill Goes To Committee

Robinson and Wagner Act Immediately To Start Creation of Civilian Conservation Corps.

Washington, March 21.—(UP)—A bill calling for the creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps asked by President Roosevelt in today's message to Congress was introduced in the Senate by majority leader Robinson immediately after the message had been read.

The bill was presented by Robinson on behalf of himself and Senator Wagner, Dem., N. Y., Relief leader, and referred immediately to the Education and Labor Committee.

Recruits From Unemployed

It provided that the corps be drawn from the unemployed of the UUnited States roughly on the same percentage that unemployment bears to that of the nation as a whole.

The members of the Civilian Corps would be employed on reforestation, prevention of soil erosion and other conservation projects not already provided for.

Compensation would be at a maximum rate of $30 per month, with clothing, subsistence, housing and hospital treatment supplied by the government.

Members of the corps would be asked to enlist for one year. They would not be required to bear arms in case of war.

The bill provides for the expenditure of unobligated treasury funds already alloted for public works to carry out the enterprise. The President estimated this money would last several months.

The Executive Committee would be authorized to employ skilled laborers where necessary, at prevailing low wages. He could acquire

for specific pieces (2 article touches by day three, 3 article touches and the open touch by day four, etc).

5. Students can use personal drives, virtual drives, or email to store sources as they find them. If students each have their own login and user ID to newspapers.com, they will be able to use the "clippings" feature to describe and store their articles.

Note: Completing the research during class can be time consuming, but because students are engaging in independent research, they will need guidance as they work.

Days 5-6: Display Creation Days:

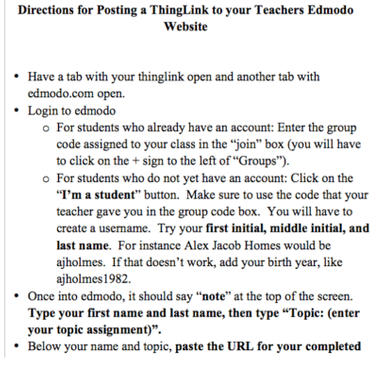
Students will develop narratives for the narrative touch and complete the final presentation using Thinglink .

6. Students will need a review of how to create using thinglink, as well as the ability to view examples. Actual past student work can be used but it is often best to show work on a different subject or in order to prevent students from following examples too closely. Consider also either showing or posting a tutorial clip on a class forum that students may access at their own pace.

7. The privilege of computers can be used here to ensure that students fulfill the writing process by requiring that they complete a rough draft of their narrative before beginning the Thinglink presentation.

Thinglink Tutorial

Directions for posting a Thinglink to Edmodo



Directions for Posting a ThingLink to your Teachers Edmodo Website

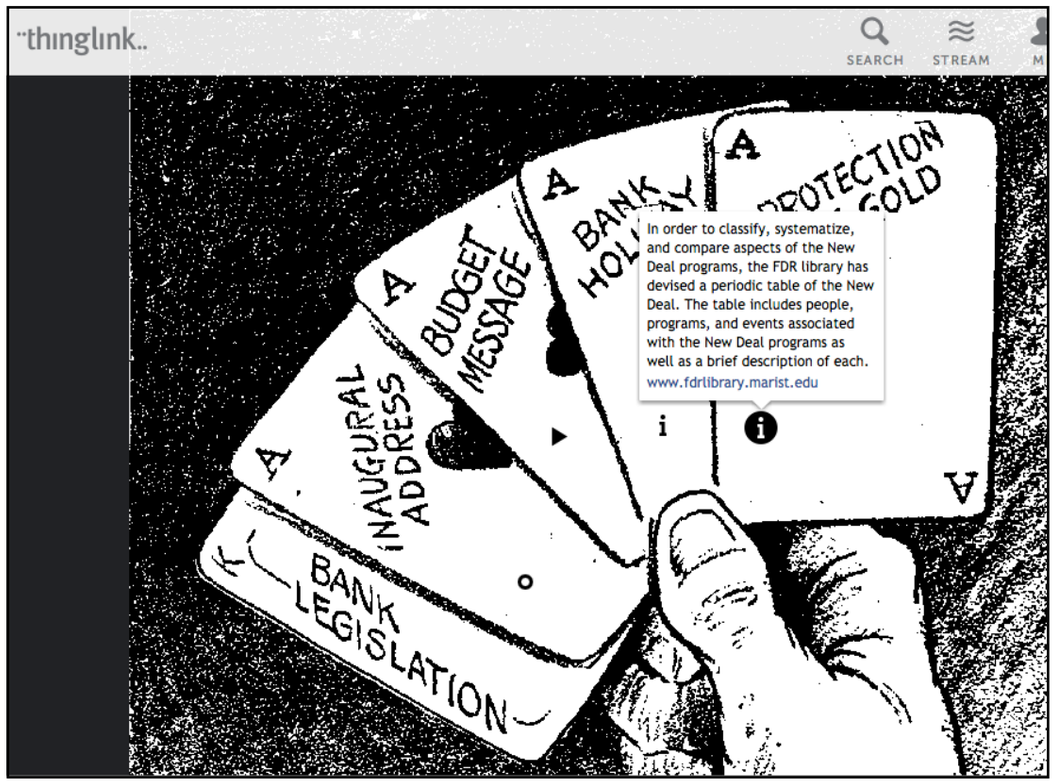
- Have a tab with your thinglink open and another tab with edmodo.com open.
- Login to edmodo
  - For students who already have an account: Enter the group code assigned to your class in the "join" box (you will have to click on the + sign to the left of "Groups").
  - For students who do not yet have an account: Click on the **"I'm a student"** button. Make sure to use the code that your teacher gave you in the group code box. You will have to create a username. Try your **first initial, middle initial, and last name**. For instance Alex Jacob Homes would be ajholmes. If that doesn't work, add your birth year, like ajholmes1982.
- Once into edmodo, it should say **"note"** at the top of the screen. **Type your first name and last name, then type "Topic: (enter your topic assignment)".**
- Below your name and topic, **paste the URL for your completed**

Tap or click the widget to view the document as a PDF.

A graph of the US stock market, 1920-1931

Day 7: Feedback and Discussion:

Sharing and discussing the final product can be done in a number of ways, but because of Thinglink's comment feature, a gallery walk is suggested. Provided that they have one-to-one computer access with internet, students will have the opportunity to engage both virtually and personally as they view each other's work. Students should all have their final presentations open, and will rotate throughout the class period asking questions and offering feedback to their classmates. In order to increase the value of the experience, students may be asked to answer comments and questions or reflect on the feedback offered by their classmates. A word of caution: the comments will not automatically be named with their authors, so while this exercise can be extremely valuable, the teacher must monitor students as they rotate



Student-created example (created without Newspapers.com)

https://www.thinglink.com/scene/498256558791065602

Notes on Implementation by the Author:

This unit fell during the period in which my student teacher was creating and teaching the curriculum, so the actual implementation was changed to allow the student teacher to experiment in and contribute to the planning process. Furthermore, students did not yet have access to Newspapers.com, so the research element was altered, although it remained as close to the original plan as possible.

Before beginning their research on the effects of the Great Depression, students played the online game Spent, and were asked to reflect on their financial choices by completing to a Google form. The learning and reflection that students experienced while playing Spent were extremely impactful. Therefore, social studies teachers should consider using the game whether or not it plays a part in this project. The population with which this project was implemented is, on the whole, a well-supported, upper-middle class group. For many of these students, experiencing poverty even virtually was insightful and valuable. Many students considered it to be one of the most valuable parts of the unit.

Along with the addition of Spent, time and technology access also affected the course of the project. The curriculum had been pushed back by a number of snow days earlier in the year, and because time in the computer lab had been reserved, the project needed to move forward before students learned about the stock market crash of 1929. As a result, most students were researching topics with which they had little prior experience. Students responded to this both positively and negatively comments in their reflections

Because students did not have access to Newspapers.com, we decided that they should seek out different types of historical sources rather than focusing on new articles. We gave students a graphic organizer to help record their research. While it changed the look of students' final products to some degree, it did not reduce the value of the project for students, and could be easily used as an alternative to Newspapers.com.

The final change came, like most classroom course changes, as a result of pacing and the need to move forward. The original plan called for at least one day of in-class gallery walk, with follow-up assignments on Edmodo and thinglink. In implementation, we decided that students would post the final project and a reflection on Edmodo for grading purposes, but that there was not time to allow students to review and discuss each others' work. This was a missed opportunity; many students commented that they enjoyed going to the site to look at others' work.

Spent Feedback-Period 2

* Required

Please Type your first and last name in the blank below *

If you picked Temp, did you pass the typing test? *

- Yes
- No
- I did not pick Temp

How much was your weekly Pay?

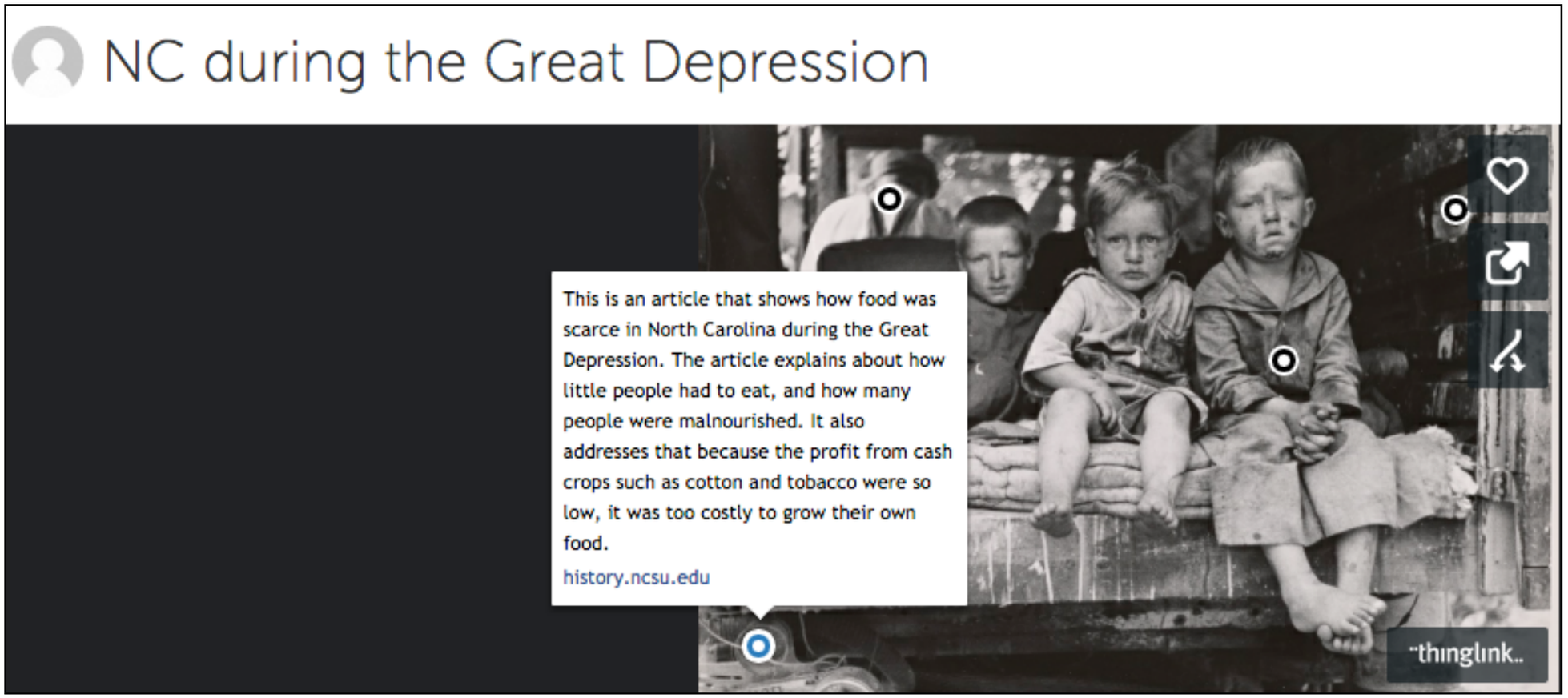
Did you Opt in for Heath Insurance?

How close did you decide to live to where you work? *

If you decided to have a yard sale to make more money, how much money did you actually earn? *

Sample Google form used to assess students' experiences with *SPENT*

"…once I started to collect research, I became more interested in my topic. I learned new things about North Carolina that I never thought I would."



Section 5

Leaders and Circumstances

LESSON GUIDE

This guide is meant to provide information that may facilitate implementation in the classroom. It was designed for use in an eighth grade social studies classroom in North Carolina, but can be modified to fit into

Objectives:

Continuing to build historical inquiry and historical source analysis skills, this project focuses on single individuals, with the goal of discovering ways in which life events and circumstances manipulate individuals' perspectives. ***This project offers students their first glimpse at the actual Ancestry site.*** Students will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with some of the features and challenges of the Ancestry databases. As a content goal, ***this project examines the major events of the lives of Civil Rights leaders Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr.*** While earlier tasks offered students the ability to choose the subject of their research, here they are asked to research the same subjects, but are asked to choose the events and sources that they feel can best offer comparison and contrast between the two men's perspectives on Civil Rights and their goals. Because of limited historical sources available through the Ancestry databases, students are encouraged to use other reputable sources as well. The media through which students share their findings offers them a chance to see the leaders' lives as whole, and specific events that shape the views and actions of each leader.

Standards:

NC 8.H.1.3: Use primary and secondary sources to interpret various historical perspectives.

NC 8.H.1.5: Analyze the relationship between historical context and decision-making.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

Required Materials:

1. Computers with internet access
2. Access to Ancestry.com (individual or group)
3. Ancestry Annie's Top 10 Search Tips

Ancestry Annie's Top 10 Search Tips

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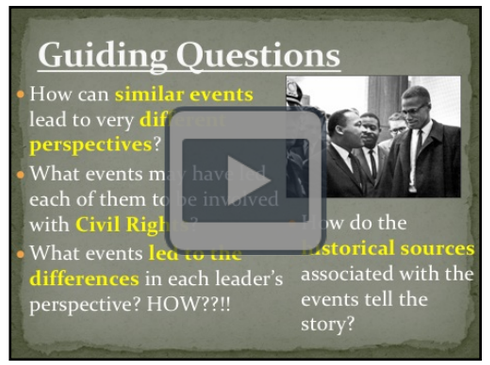
4. Martin and Malcolm Dipity example
5. Leaders and Circumstances Guiding Questions presentation

L_C_Guiding Questions



6. Leaders and Circumstances Project Rubric

Leaders and Circumstances Rubric

Leaders and Circumstances Project Rubric
Nesbitt, 2014

Project Guideline	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Historical Sources	5+ historical sources are accurately included. At least one is an accurately analyzed source from Ancestry.com.	4 historical sources are accurately included. At least one is an accurately analyzed source from Ancestry.com.	3 historical sources are accurately included and/or the Acestry.com source is not accurately analyzed.	Fewer that 3 sources are used, and/or Ancestry.com is not used as a source.
Comparison and Contrast	At least 2 comparisons are illustrated, and at least one is shown to lead to different perspectives.	At least 1 comparison is illustrated, and is shown to lead to different perspectives.	At least 1 comparison is illustrated, but it is not shown to lead to different perspectives.	Only contrasts are illustrated.
Perspectives	Conclusions are reasonable, appropriate for the time period, and clearly detailed.	Conclusions are reasonable, appropriate for the time period, but detail is lacking.	Conclusions are reasonable, but not appropriate for the time period.	Conclusions are unreasonable.
Display and writing elements	The overall display is well organized, the sources used are unique and interesting, and the written portion has few inaccuracies.	The overall display is well organized, and the sources used are adequate, but the written portion has many inaccuracies.	The overall display is well organized, but the sources used show a lack of detailed research, and the written portion has many inaccuracies.	Parts of the display are missing, and/or effort is not shown.

Student Grade: _____/16 total points

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Preparation:

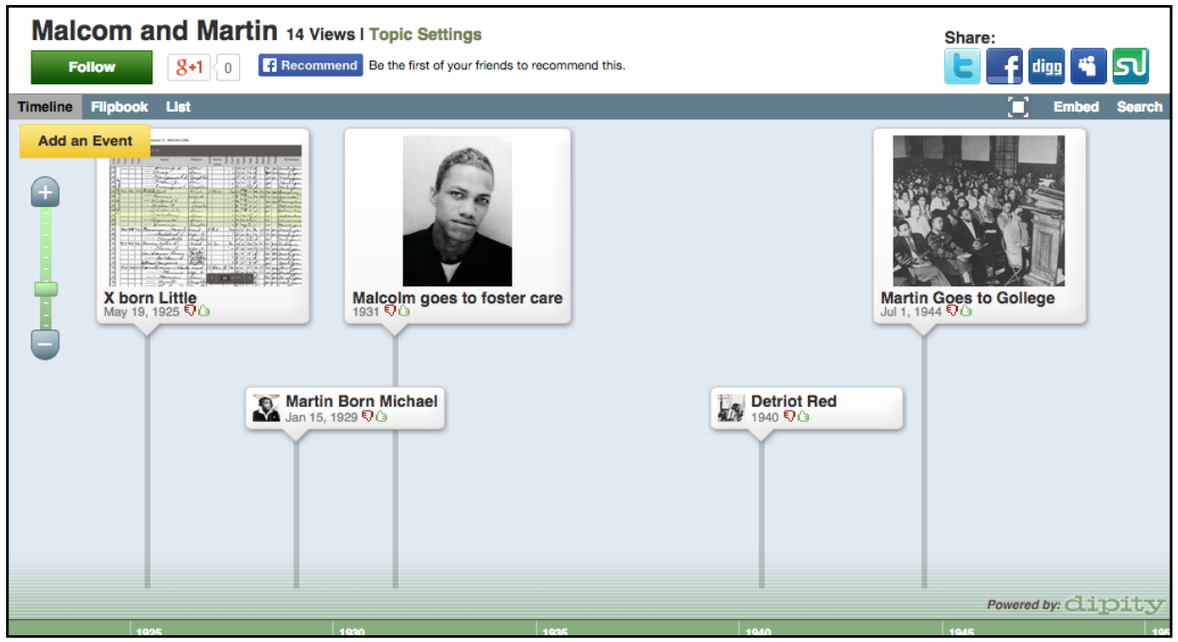
As with the Boom and Bust project, this project offers the teacher options as to when and where to implement the project, as well as how challenging it should be. Here the project is suggested for a unit on Civil Rights for a US history course, but it could be augmented to fit into a number of different time periods or curricula. While it could be assigned without prior knowledge of the Civil Rights movement or the lives of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, the author planned the project to be assigned after either an introduction to the lives and impacts of the two leaders or assigned reading on the subject.

After a period of instruction based on the conditions of the Reconstruction South, the systematic disenfranchisement of African Americans in the early Twentieth Century, and the beginnings of the Civil Rights movement, students should be introduced to the philosophies of both Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. The basis of the project is to encourage students to investigate the ways in which similar and disparate events in the course of each leader's life led to their actions and perspective as leaders. Therefore, familiarity with major events in their lives, as well as their overall philosophies, will allow the student to focus on their effects on one leader's perspective and how it compares to the experience and perspectives of the other. Once familiar with the philosophies and lives of the two leaders, students should be introduced to the project assignment and goals. Depending on their grade level, abilities, and maturity, students may be asked to work independently or encouraged to work in partners or groups.

Perspectives on Resistance: Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr.

Martin Luther King Jr. on Malcolm X

Malcolm X on Martin Luther King Jr.



Martin and Malcolm example timeline

example show students exemplary, adequate, and unacceptable entries to their time lines.

2. Explain that students will be required to link a variety of historical (primary and secondary) sources to the events that they choose to compare and contrast. Before students begin independent or group work, introduce the Ancestry.com site, and model its use (insert Ancestry Annie's Top 10 search tips). Students will need to be made aware that, like all computer based research, they will need to do more than simply type in a name. Malcolm X provides an opportunity to show that more than one person can have the same name, even in the same time period.

Instructions:

Day One; Introduction:

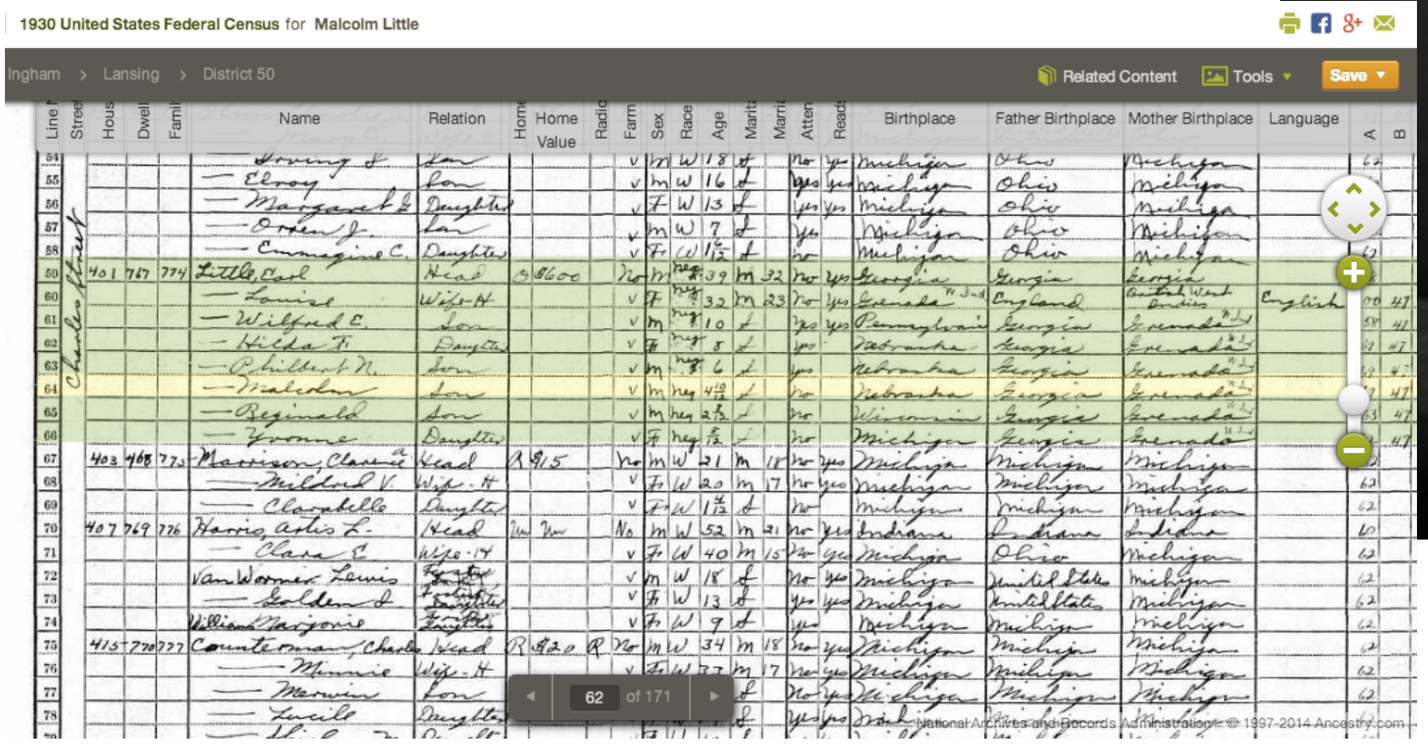
1. Explain to students that they will be asked to seek out historical sources that accurately reflect some of the major life events of the two Civil Rights leaders. They will then draw conclusions as to how these events shaped each leader's perspective on the Civil Rights Movement. Students will use Dipity, a digital timeline creator to show five major events in each leader's life. Using an incomplete

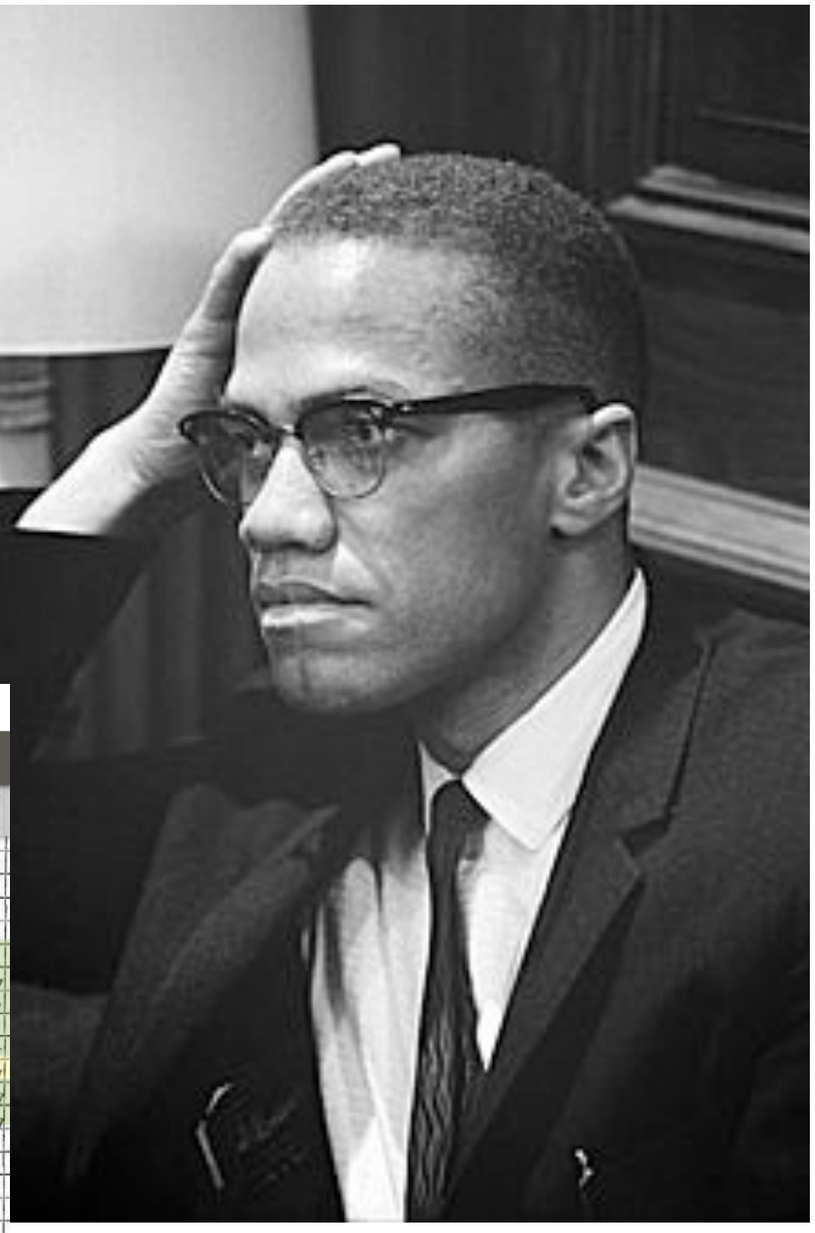
Sample entry within the Dipity timeline

3. Because there are limited historical sources available on Ancestry.com for both Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X (Little), encourage students to search other reputable sources. Depending on students' ability to identify reliable and reputable sources on the internet, a list of sources may be offered or suggested.

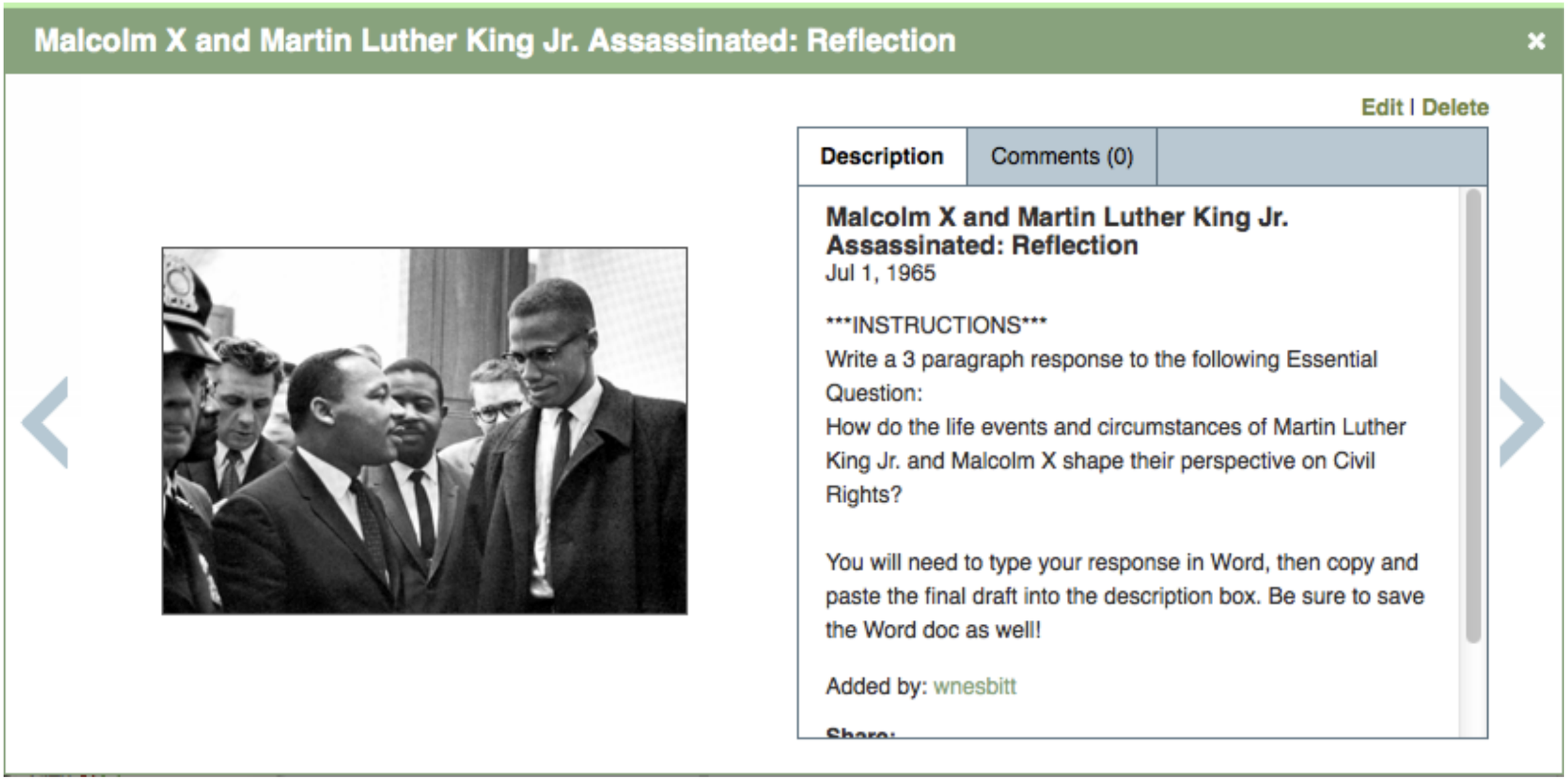
Days Two-Four; Research and Time Lines:

4. Given a well framed example, students should be able to complete the research within two to three days even without outside technology access, but pacing will depend on each student group. Setting daily goals (2 events with sources per





US Census records on the Little Family



Instructions are posted in the *Martin and Malcolm e*xample

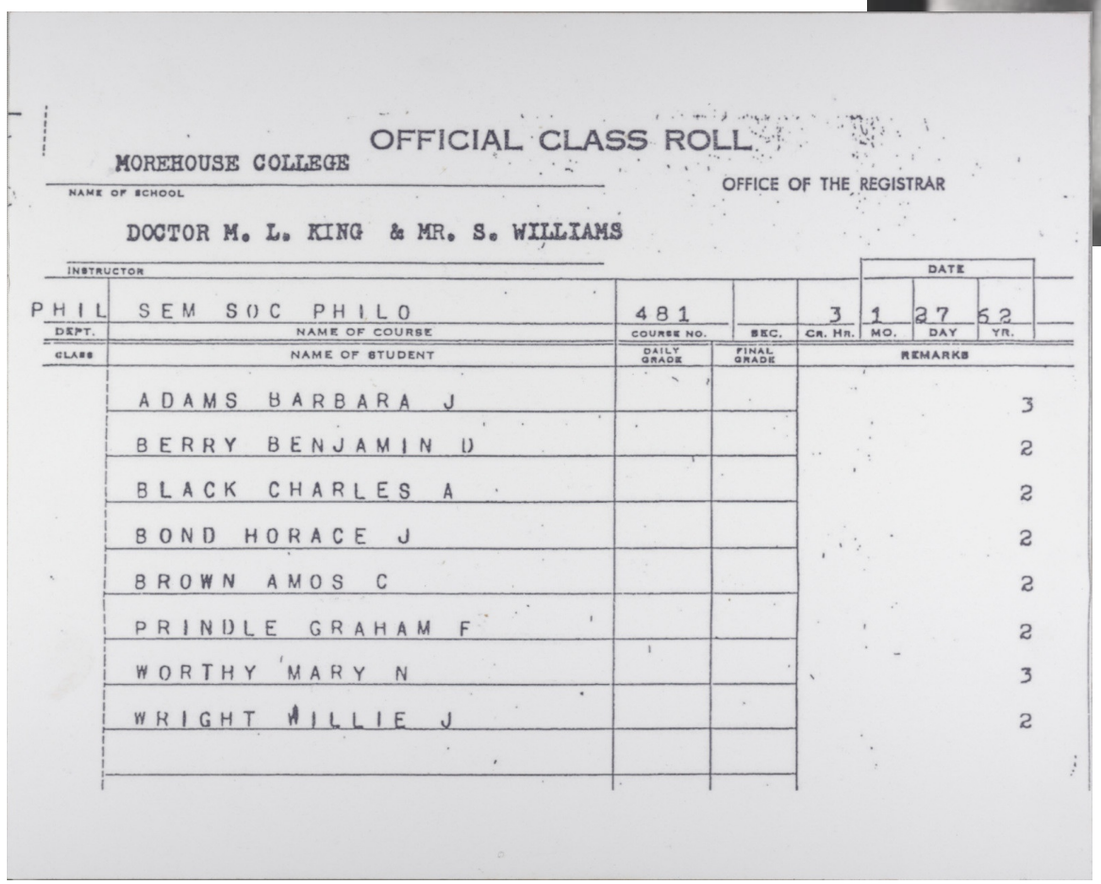
day, etc) and checking in with students each day will ensure that the majority of students do not get behind in their work.

Day Five; Drawing Conclusions:

5. Once they have compiled their chosen events, students need to reflect on how these events led each leader to their respective outlooks on the Civil Rights Movement. This can be

accomplished through a series of guiding questions and a discussion of the students' findings.

6. While the reflections can be created in a number of ways, it is suggested that students create an event for each leader at the time of their death. Rather than have students seek out sources for these events, they should write a response to the essential questions comparing the perspectives of each leader as affected by the events and circumstances of their respective



OFFICIAL CLASS ROLL

MOREHOUSE COLLEGE
NAME OF SCHOOL

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

DOCTOR M. L. KING & MR. S. WILLIAMS
INSTRUCTOR

DEPT.	NAME OF COURSE	COURSE NO.	SEC.	CR. HR.	DATE MO.	DAY	YR.
PHIL	SEM SOC PHILO	481		3	1	27	62

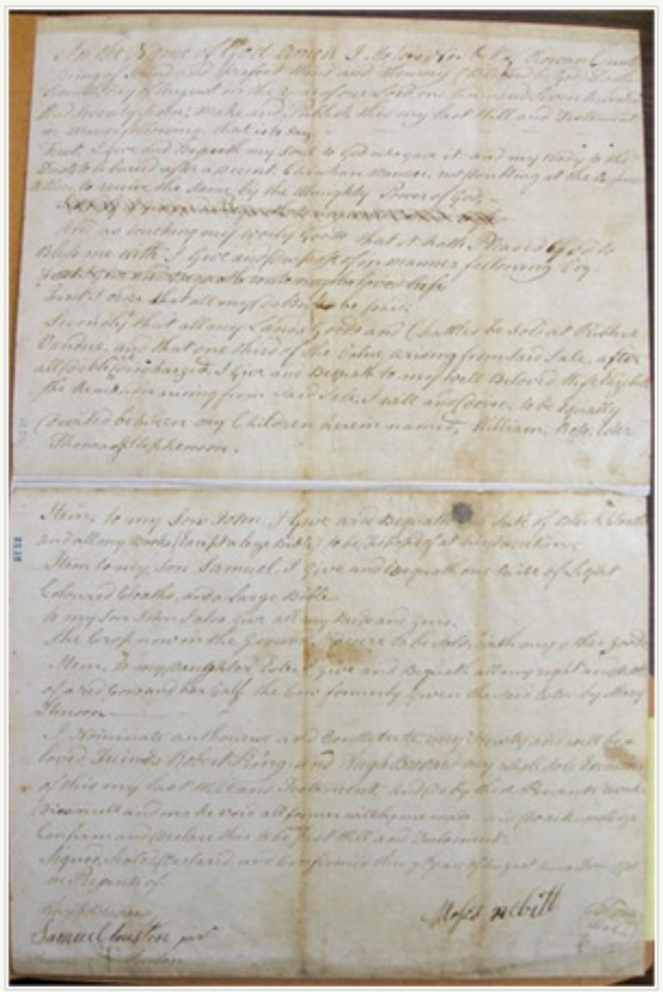
CLASS	NAME OF STUDENT	DAILY GRADE	FINAL GRADE	REMARKS	
	ADAMS BARBARA J				3
	BERRY BENJAMIN D				2
	BLACK CHARLES A				2
	BOND HORACE J				2
	BROWN AMOS C				2
	PRINDLE GRAHAM F				2
	WORTHY MARY N				3
	WRIGHT WILLIE J				2

lives. The length and detail involved in this reflection will depend on the student groups, but a minimum of three paragraphs is suggested.

7. Because the final product is created digitally, students can either upload their timelines to an online forum or email them to the instructor for assessment.

The Personal Immigrant

Moses Nesbitt - Last Will and Testament



Moses Nesbitt,

1740-1779:

My Example

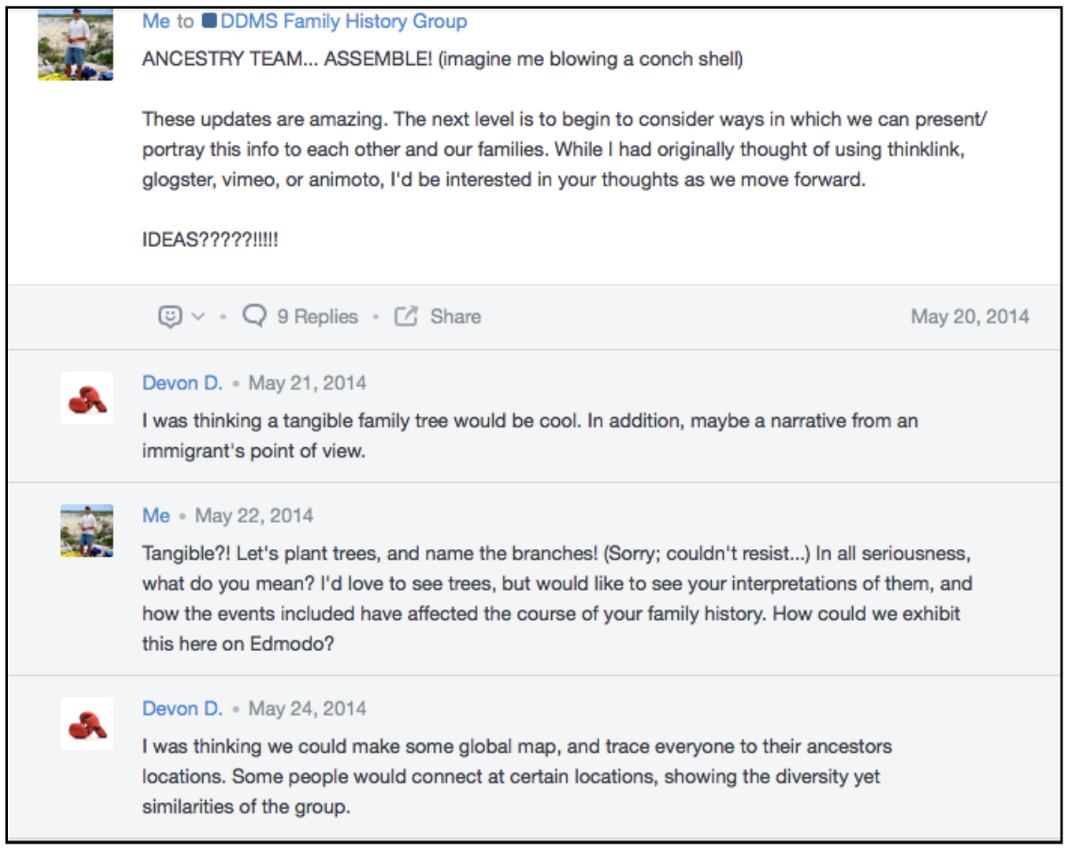
Ancestry offers people the chance to research their own past. The opportunity of sharing that experience with people of different backgrounds can illuminate similar stories across cultures and create meaningful connections.

LESSON GUIDE

This project was implemented as an extra -curricular activity for some students that were excited about using the Ancestry.com resources to research their own family histories. The lessons can be easily modified to be a part of any middle or high school social studies or language arts curriculum.

Objectives:

As a culmination of the skill set developed through the previous activities and projects, the Immigrant Nation project seeks to use historical inquiry and family history research to encourage students to look into their own personal family history, and find experiences similar to their classmates' in the hope of creating community and personal connections. This final project has special appeal because it allows students to research their own family and personal history. Prior to this experience, students have engaged in historical source analysis and studied the effects that both place and circumstance can have on the events and perspectives that shape an individual's life. Those skills and experiences can then be directed towards first person family historical research focused not only on discovery of the past, but also on understanding how the experiences of one's ancestors can illuminate commonality with peers and build community.



Using online forums such as Edmodo allows students to be a part of the project development process.

Note:

As implemented in our classroom, this section was offered to all students not as part of the required US history curriculum, but as enrichment offered during SMART Block. Out of more than 130 students, 25 committed to joining the “club”. While this did not change the goals or direction of the project, it did allow for more freedom in pacing, which is not heavily discussed in this description. Furthermore, an online edmodo group was created that allowed students to work and share independently both in an out of the classroom setting. This proved to be especially valuable when technology access during the school day became scarce.

Teachers will need to be aware that while personal family research can be very popular with students, there may be some who either know of or discover painful information in the history of their family. **Sensitivity to cultural, ethnic, racial, and familial differences is needed, and the teacher must be especially prepared to actively maintain a respectful, inclusive environment as students explore the unknowns of their own past.**

Standards:

NC 8.H.1.3: Use primary and secondary sources to interpret various historical perspectives.

NC 8.H.3.1: Explain how migration and immigration contribute to the development of North Carolina and the United States from colonization to contemporary times.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the sources distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

Required Materials:

1. Computers with internet access

2. Family Research presentation

Family Research Keynote Presentation

3. Immigrant Nation Project rubric

Immigrant Nation Project Rubric

Immigrant Nation Project Rubric
Nesbitt, 2014

Project Guideline	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Personal Immigrant	The ancestor of the researcher who arrived in either this nation or this are is identified to the best of the student's ability.	A migrant or immigrant from the researcher's past is accurately identified. (Chose first, not best)	A migrant or immigrant from the researcher's past is not accurately identified.	A migrant or immigrant from the researcher's past is not identified.
Historical Source Research	4+ historical sources are ***accurately and exhaustively*** analyzed.	3 historical sources are ***accurately and exhaustively*** analyzed.	2 historical sources are ***accurately and exhaustively*** analyzed.	1 historical source is ***accurately and exhaustively*** analyzed.
Narrative	Conclusions are reasonable, appropriate for the time period, and clearly detailed.	Conclusions are reasonable, appropriate for the time period, but detail is lacking.	Conclusions are reasonable, but not appropriate for the time period.	Conclusions are unreasonable.

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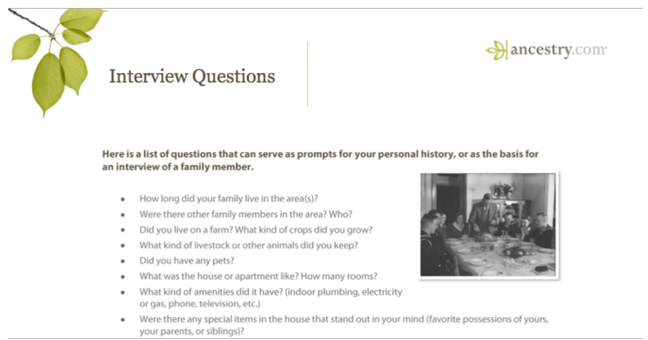
4. Interview Questions for Family Members

Interview Questions for Family Members


Interview Questions

ancestry.com

Here is a list of questions that can serve as prompts for your personal history, or as the basis for an interview of a family member.

- How long did your family live in the area(s)?
- Were there other family members in the area? Who?
- Did you live on a farm? What kind of crops did you grow?
- What kind of livestock or other animals did you keep?
- Did you have any pets?
- What was the house or apartment like? How many rooms?
- What kind of amenities did it have? (indoor plumbing, electricity or gas, phone, television, etc.)
- Were there any special items in the house that stand out in your mind (favorite possessions of yours, your parents, or siblings)?

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5. Family Tree Template

- templates are available at the following website:

  http://www.familytreetemplates.net/

6. Access to Ancestry K-12

7. Ancestry Annie's Top 10 Search Tips

Ancestry Annie's Top 10 Search Tips

ancestry.com

Ancestry Anne's Top 10 Search Tips

Looking for search results that are right on target? Try Ancestry Anne's search tips, from basic to advanced. You won't use them all at once but each can help you zero in on your search for answers.

Tip 1: BASIC

Tip 2: BASIC

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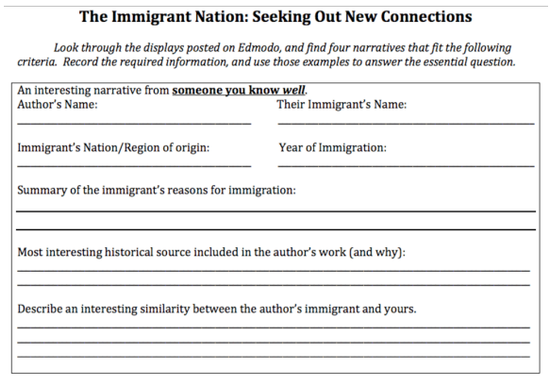
8. Immigrant Nation graphic organizer

Immigrant Nation Graphic Organizer



The Immigrant Nation: Seeking Out New Connections

Look through the displays posted on Edmodo, and find four narratives that fit the following criteria. Record the required information, and use those examples to answer the essential question.

An interesting narrative from **someone you know *well***.

Author's Name: _____ Their Immigrant's Name: _____

Immigrant's Nation/Region of origin: _____ Year of Immigration: _____

Summary of the immigrant's reasons for immigration:

_____

_____

Most interesting historical source included in the author's work (and why):

_____

_____

Describe an interesting similarity between the author's immigrant and yours.

_____

_____

_____

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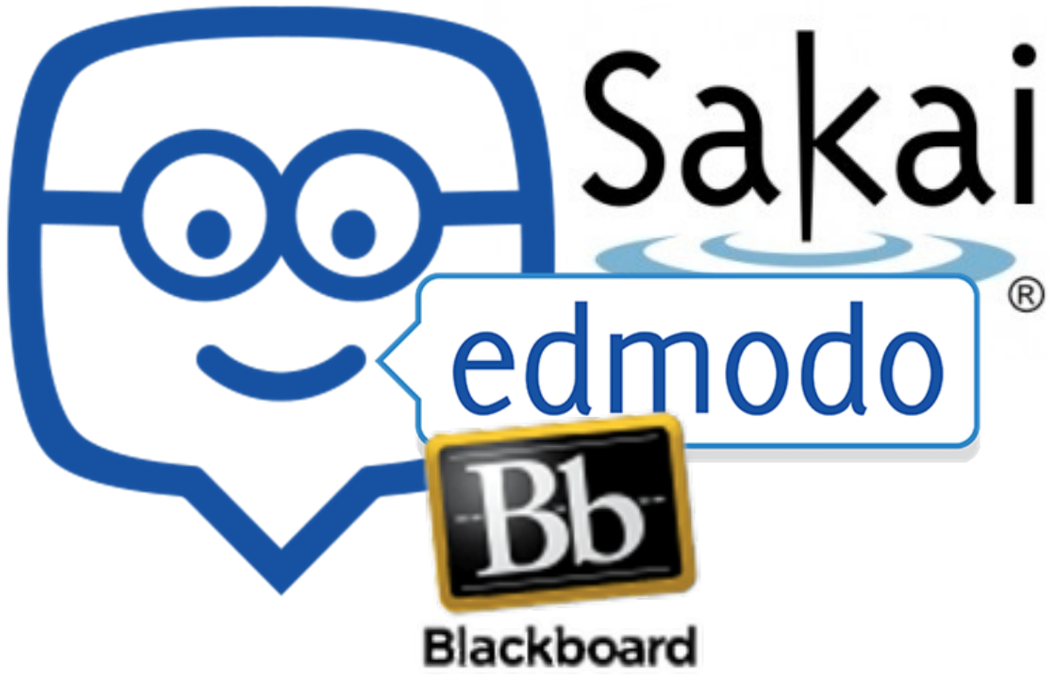
9. Access to an online forum (Edmodo, Blackboard, etc.)



Instructions:

Day 1; Introduction:

1. As an opener to this project, discuss students' prior knowledge of their family's history and origin. This may be especially valuable if the instructor feels that there may be students who will be wary of their own past. Begin with an open "word splash" where students have the opportunity to write on a whiteboard where they think they come from. Students may take this in many different ways (nations, regions, cities, etc), which should be encouraged. This can be very informative as to how they view their own family's history, as well as what they feel family history research should be (insert "immigrant-2" pic), and can lead to the development of class or group definitions of family history. Here also is an opportunity for the instructor to begin to focus on commonality where the students might see only differences. The one thing in common among all initial thoughts and ideas is that they involve immigration or migration.

2. At this point, introduce the opportunity to research and discuss personal family history and lead a discussion of the goals of the project.

3. Rather than going through a series of instructions, the instructor should take the opportunity to pull up Ancestry.com, and review the initial steps of developing a family tree, including interviewing family members and filling out basic family tree templates that will later be used to kick-start individual research.

4. A ticket out the door for day one of the project should be a list of people that students think they will interview to begin to develop their own family tree. Remind students that they will not have the opportunity to access Ancestry.com until they either have a completed family tree template, or have discussed their specific issues with the teacher.

Days 2-5; Research Days:

5. A user id and password for each class or group should be given out on the second day, along with a review of best practices while using the Ancestry.com databases.

6. Students will need varying amounts of time to create their family trees, and find or designate a specific immigrant on whom to focus. That amount of time will depend on both the research confidence and technology access of the student groups, but three to four days of guided research is suggested. **During that time, the instructor should consistently rotate and check in with students as they encounter and analyze new sources**. Day 6; Immigrant Narratives:

7. As students hone in on a specific immigrant, or migrant if their research limits them to that, they will need to consider

As students post information and artifacts, others learn from and encourage them.

the perspectives and motivations of that individual and develop the narrative that they will choose to share. The culminating skill set that is assessed and used in this project is the student's ability to analyze the different historical sources available and draw conclusions about the experiences and perspectives of a chosen immigrant. While this could easily evolve into an extensive writing assignment, students will more likely engage if they have the opportunity

to share and discuss their findings through digital media, using embedded artifacts to guide their narrative.

Days 7-8; Digital Display Creation

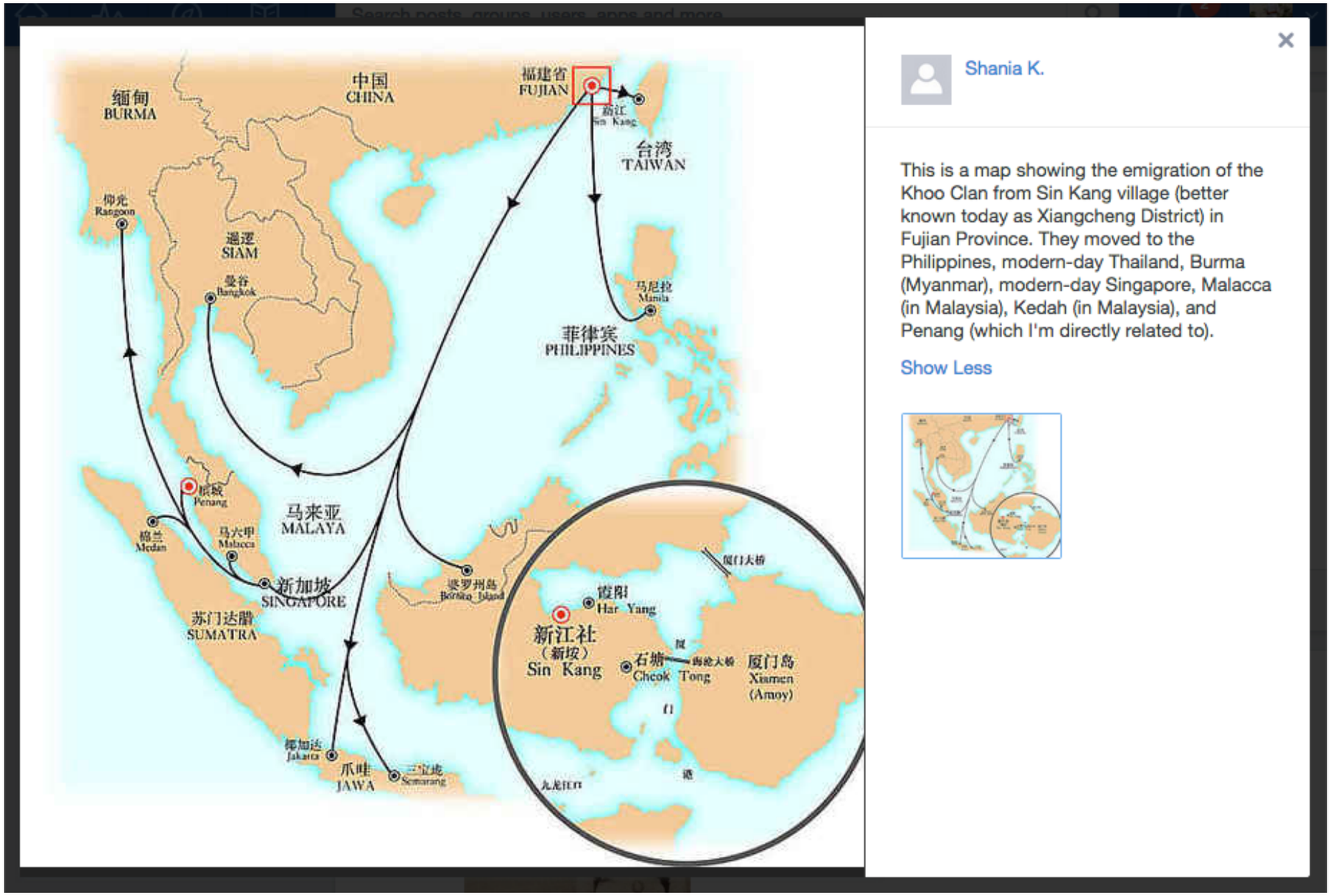
8. There are many different mediums that could be used to share and compare immigrant stories (insert “edmodo sharing ideas” pic). If a subscription to Glogster (Coretta Scott King example) is available, this resource will work well, but other options include thinglink (see Boom and Bust for tutorial), Animoto (tutorial), Meograph (tutorial). While the project can be completed and shared without technology resources such as those listed here, using such formats will allow students to view each other’s work both in an out of the classroom, and give them more opportunity to comment on and discuss each other’s findings.

9. Using a digital forum to compile the work of each class as a whole also makes grading the projects more efficient, and allows for the teacher to give positive feedback publicly within the forum and constructive feedback privately using a rubric.

Encouraging students to analyze documents

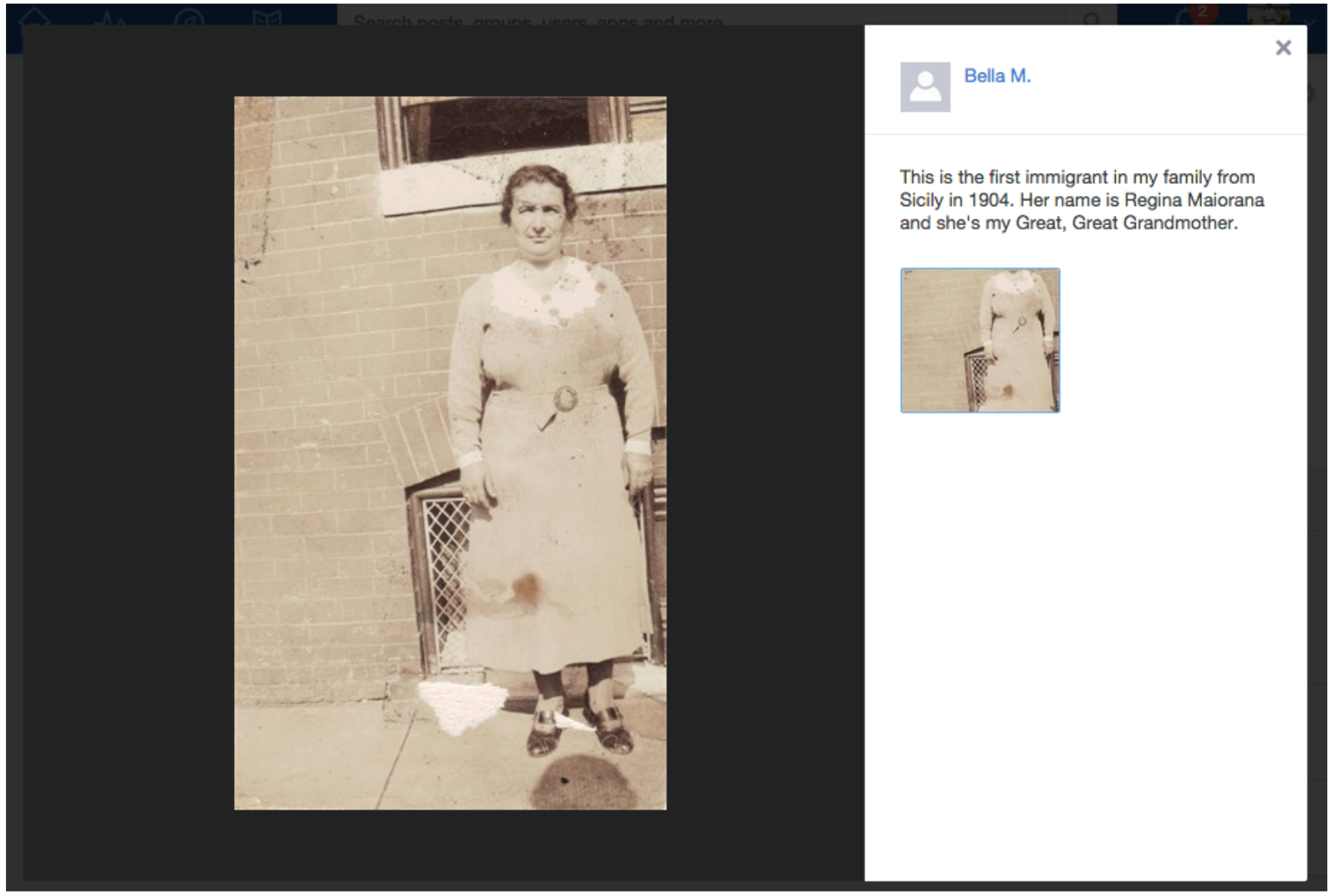
Day 9; Creating Connections

The most powerful potential of this project lies in the interactions that it can create between students as they seek out connections and similarity among themselves, their classmates, and hopefully American society as a whole. Middle grades students often feel very isolated and disconnected from the world around them. Framed correctly, this work can show them that those with whom they feel they have nothing in common might have very similar stories or motivations. For this reason, teachers should encourage students to examine the work of many students, not just those within their own social



We found that students were really discovering similarity without much outside encouragement. Given the opportunity, these kids chose to celebrate the diversity of the group.

circles. Because these interactions can be sensitive, teachers might choose to first use a graphic organizer and/or an online class group such as Blackboard or Edmodo. Encouraging students to seek out interesting parts of their peers' work will elicit deeper connections and more impactful discussion, with the hope of bringing the class or group together and solidifying a strong and memorable class culture.



Students have the option to choose an immigrant that they want to research and create a life story.

Notes on Implementation by the Author:

In early planning, it seemed that placing a project like this at the end of the school year would be best. How better to end an academic year and the middle school experience for a group of eighth graders than to research and share their own histories in an effort to solidify connections before they head off in separate direction for high school? Circumstances (childbirth!) not only forced the project to be hurried, but also forced the project to end before students were able to complete their research and share their findings. For that reason, the graphic organizer and rubric were not used during implementation and no grades were issued. That being said, the project, and especially the prospect of personal family research was enticing enough to draw students into an extra-curricular group to engage in historical source research during time that they could have spent working on homework or in the gym. Moreover, after the project was cut short on May 5, 2014,

students continued to research at home and discuss findings through the Edmodo group for another two weeks. This shows the value of the project and unit even though there are no final products or grades to share.

The combination of the extra-curricular framing and the fact that students chose to be a part of the group led to a more informal atmosphere than students normally experience. This informal atmosphere is the reason for the open-ended final project section, which resulted in part from students contributing to the planning process. Depending on teacher comfort, student groups, and class culture, more structure may be necessary for implementation within the normal class schedule.

By reviewing others' work, students were able to discuss the connections they discovered