

Oral Histories

Summary

Enduring Understanding

:

Students will understand the importance of primary source history information.

Essential Questions

:

What is the difference between primary and secondary source information?

How do you conduct an interview with a primary source?

What information will be gained by getting a real life perspective about recent historical events?

How can developing good communication skills help the way a student can represent the information they have received?

Time Frame

1 class periods of 90 minutes each

Group Size

Individual

Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning, Communication, Social & Civic Responsibility

Materials

an interview source

paper and pencil

a list of prepared questions

Optional:

Video camera

tape recorder

camera

Background for Teachers

Knowledge of primary and secondary resources and oral histories

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will understand the importance of primary source history information.

The student will differentiate between primary and secondary source information.

The student will be able to conduct an interview with a primary source.

The student will be gain a real life perspective about recent historical events.

The student will develop better communication skills by correctly representing the information they have received.

Instructional Procedures

Students should be given the grading criteria ahead of time. (A handout with potential grading criteria is attached in the website section below.)

As a lead-in, the teacher will give the students an overview on conducting oral histories. The teacher

will work with the students to come up with pertinent questions to ask and to point out several ways to conduct and record the interview.

Explain to the students that they should conduct an interview with (preferably) a family member, but if not available, then talk to their parents about a friend of the family who might be appropriate. Have them talk about the issues on their list during the interview and remember that this is a part of history that is not unknown.

Sample questions:

1. Why do you think the Cold War (or WWII, Vietnam, Gulf, etc.) occurred?
2. When did you first feel the effects of the Cold War (or other event)?
3. Are there any examples of how the Cold War (or other) affected you, your family, or your community?
4. Did you understand the Cold War (or other) as it was happening?
5. When did you think that the war was over?
6. What do you think of the leadership provided to our country by the Presidents in office during the war? Why?

- **Have the students brainstorm at least 5 more questions.**

Possible ways to format assignment:

A tape recording of the interview that will be handed in.

A video tape of the interview that will be handed in.

A **TYPED** paper with the questions and responses listed in order of question and answer together...not all of the questions and then the answers.

Students will be required to take notes on all the reports and then hand them in.

- **Students will be told to limit video and tapings to ten minutes or less.**

Assessment Plan

The students will turn in their research and share them with the class.

The "Q and A" will be graded as :

Completion of the **minimum** will be the basis for a B-/C+ grade. The minimum will be the 6 questions listed. To receive an A or B you will need to add 4-6 more questions of your own choosing and listing them in the spaces provided on this sheet and hand them in with your assignment.

The grading of the "sharing" will be based on an "oral presentations" rubric.

Authors

[JILL BARRACLOUGH](#)

[Carolee Cluny](#)

[JENNIFER KING](#)