

April 14th, 2018
Volume 2, Issue 9

Secondary Social Studies Newsletter



The Power of Stories

In history class students usually read biographies simplified and sanitized for consumption by children. These readings have a tendency to leave out varying viewpoints and do little to humanize the participants as individuals are reduced to a few sentences. Students have difficulty translating these descriptions into complex individuals who often had difficult choices to make. Good historical fiction presents individuals as they are, neither all good nor all bad and provides an accessible avenue for students to learn about history as they can recognize themselves in the characters, relate to the characters' living situations and see a part of history that looks like them. Historical fiction can also provide a way into difficult subjects such as the Holocaust, Civil Rights Movement or slavery in America by humanizing history. This humanizing makes it easier for students to connect historical facts, it encourages empathy and makes history relevant for all students. Books with primary characters from a minority group benefits all students. It allows minority students to see individuals such as themselves in history and it provides the majority group with an experience outside their own.

There are an abundance of historical fiction in libraries, catalogs, and bookstores.

To help select the best, look for books: that present a well-told story that doesn't conflict with historical records, portray characters realistically in authentic settings, fold in historical facts, and accurate information, avoid stereotypes and myths
Look over the [Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People](#) for book recommendations

Sources for Books

[Epic](#)

Free site with lots of books. Focused for students under 6th grade. These options will also serve for 7th and 8th grade students who have difficulty reading. Some books will read aloud and the program will define the words

Public Library

All ISS students automatically have an account at the public library. The public libraries have growing repositories of online books that students can digitally check out in addition to physical copies at the library.

Open Educational Resource Sites

Some sites offering free ebooks you can check for access to quality historical fiction:

[World Library](#)

[Open Library](#)

[Open Culture](#)

[Read Any Book](#)

Middle Eastern American Heritage Month

[Turkey Through Time](#)

Eight lessons that span the history of the area from Catalhoyuk to the Present day

[Politics of Water](#)

Webquest and information on various aspects of water in the Middle East including the weaponization of water and the role of water in several specific middle eastern regions

[Project Hijab](#)

A collection of video interviews with women discussing why they choose to wear or not to wear the hijab

[Getting to Know American Muslims and Their Faith](#)

Five lessons from ing about the demographics of muslims in America, common misconceptions and their beliefs and practices

[Our Shared Past in the Mediterranean](#)

Six lessons on civilizations in the Mediterranean from antiquity to present



Essential Questions

Jacksonian Era

Have Native Americans been treated fairly by the United States government?

Should the US have allowed American Indians to retain their tribal identities?

Does a geographic minority have the right to ignore the laws of a national majority?

Was the age of Jackson an age of democracy?

Depression

Was the Great Depression inevitable?

Did minorities receive a New Deal in the 1930s?

Has the US abandoned the legacy of the New Deal?

Pre-Colonial Africa

How has access to resources such as water shaped the civilizations and the relationships among groups within Africa and the Middle East?

Age of Reform

Can legislative compromises solve moral issues?

Cold War

Should the US have feared internal communist subversion in the 1950s?

Civil Rights

Did the Civil Rights Movement expand democracy for all Americans?

All essential questions are now available in the Secondary Social Studies Essential Question database located in our [Secondary Social Studies Canvas Course](#). The database contains all the questions from past newsletters with filters by subject and topic. Only new essential questions will be included in the regular newsletter.

Resources

Reformation

[National Geographic History 101: Reformation](#)

Four minute overview of the reformation and its significance

[Martin Luther's 95 Tweets](#)

Article explaining how Luther's arguments 'went viral' in a fashion similar to the way information spreads on social media

Personal Finance

[H&R Block Budget Challenge](#)

The H&R Block Budget Challenge is an online simulation tool that replicates real-world budgeting and personal finance decision-making.

By simulating an adult's financial life – paying bills, investing in retirement, managing loans and more – students take a personal finance “road test.”

Depression

[Library of Congress iBook - The New Deal](#)

Students analyze photographs, posters, oral histories, and music that recounts how Federal programs sought to end the Great Depression.

[Library of Congress iBook - The Dust Bowl](#)

Students analyze recorded music, song lyrics and iconic photographs, including Dorothea Lange's “Migrant Mother,” which document the daily ordeals of rural migrant families during a decade marked by financial and natural disasters.

Pre-Colonial Africa

[Wonders of the African World](#)

Interactive site from PBS

Cold War

[Cuban Missile Crisis](#)

Lesson from TED-ED explaining the Cuban missile crisis events

Legal System

[Privilege, Discrimination and Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System](#)

Advanced level lesson from the anti-defamation league in which students examine the various levels of racial disparities in the criminal justice system

World War II

[Library of Congress iBook - Japanese American Internment](#)

Students analyze official documents, newspapers, and images, including powerful photographs by Ansel Adams which offer perspectives on this trying era.

Civil Rights

[Library of Congress iBook - Jim Crow and Segregation](#)

This set, intended for primary source analysis by students, includes photographs, newspaper articles, documents and oral history footage that reflect divergent views on, and the causes and effects of, these laws.

Supply and Demand

[Comparative Economic Systems Activity](#)

From the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta and infographic and activities on comparing economic systems

Historical Thinking Skills

Historical Empathy, Part II

Students brainstorm a list of factors that might affect public support for a war. The aim of this is to focus students on how unpredictable wars are and how managing public opinion is an especially important factor for modern American presidents and world leaders to consider when employing troops in military engagements.

After the introduction brainstorm, discuss the changes over time revealed in public opinion polls and what these changes indicated about the public's support for a war effort and what events may have been the impetus for changes in public opinion. Shifts in public opinion as expressed in polls serves as a platform upon which students can empathize with a leader as a decision maker. Leaders must consider public sentiment especially now that the public's view on issues can be quantified, published and debated thus increasing their influence on political decision making.

The subtext of the data is an important consideration. Students usually accept polling as a scientific absolute and without a perspective. Realization that the formation of the questions, stratification of the sample, and sample size all affect the information found within the poll data is eye-opening for students.

Public opinion polls can be contrasted with other polling data and political cartoons. This analysis is done so that students can examine the effect of leader decision making.

Dividing students into groups to analyze volumes of evidence can become repetitive and historical investigations need diversity just as much as any other instructional approach. A historical investigation can and should be flexible enough to adjust to student needs and is not required to be administered in the same format every time. Investigations can be structured as trials, congressional hearings, debates/discussions, presentations and any other instructional format you can think of. As long as the focus of the instruction is on a historical question, examines evidence and uses that evidence to respond to questions.

To assess this lesson consider asking students to assume the role of Press Secretary and write a press release that addresses the situation including causes, events and why the decision was made. The test of students' empathetic understanding is if they can compose a justification that reflects the leadership's viewpoint of an issue and why a certain decision was made.

From Bruce Lesh, "Why Won't You Just Tell Us the Answer?"

Media 'Close Reading'

Any media message can be used for a close analysis but commercials are often good choices because they are short and tightly packed with powerful words and images, music and sounds.

Find a commercial with many layers, interesting visuals, memorable words and multiple messages. You will replay the chosen video several times as you go through the four steps.

Step 1: Visuals

After the first viewing, write down everything you can remember about the visuals. What do the people look like? What are they doing? What are they wearing? What scenes or images do you remember clearly? Focus only on what is on the screen, not an interpretation of what is on the screen.

Step 2: Sounds

Listen to the sound track. Write down all the key words that are spoken. Who says them? What kind of music is used? Does it change in the course of the commercial? Are there other sounds? What is their purpose?

Step 3: Apply Key Questions

Identify the author and how the specific pieces that were identified influence what the commercial is saying. What values are expressed or unexpressed? What lifestyles are endorsed or rejected? What points of view are assumed? What is the message selling? Is the message being sold the same as the product being advertised?

Step 4: Review Insights

Summarize how the text is constructed and how various elements of the construction trigger our unique response. How is your response different from the response/interpretation of others?

Try this exercise with different kinds of messages, a news story, a scene from a movie, a website, a political advertisement, etc.

Professional Development

Carolinas Oral History Teaching Fellows

Monday, June 25 – Thursday, June 28 at UNC-Chapel Hill

Applications are due before Friday, May 11, 2018

Oral history interviews provide tangible access to the past. Bringing students into close contact with these unique auditory sources can give them a very real sense of what it was like in years past, leading to personal connections, the development of critical thinking skills, and an interest in history that is sometimes missing in middle and high school youth.

This unique program will provide fifteen middle and high school teachers from around the state with an exploration of how to utilize oral histories that relate to the long Civil Rights Movement in the K-12 classroom in effective, meaningful, and creative ways.

Integrating Technology

Telling the Story of History

After nourishment, shelter and companionship, stories are the thing we need most in the world. There are few mediums more captivating than a well told story. From 'what happened next?' to personal connections we make through characters and events, everyone loves them.

Human beings are natural storytellers—that they can't help telling stories, and that they turn things that aren't really stories into stories because they like narratives so much. Everything—faith, science, love—needs a story for people to find it plausible. Why not incorporate something so powerful into the classroom and history is naturally full of stories.

Technology can be incorporated into storytelling through digital and multimedia storytelling. Digital stories usually contain some mixture of computer-based images, text, recorded audio narration, video clips and/or music. These stories can vary in length, but most of the stories used in education typically last between two and ten minutes and allow students to recount historical events as a story which has more appeal than recounting just facts.

See some digital story examples or find stories to use in your class at the [Story Corps](#) site

Tools for Creating Digital Stories

Video

iMovie

[Adobe Spark](#)

StoryBook

[StoryBird](#)

Multimedia

[Adobe Spark](#)

[Story Map JS](#)

Don't Forget

ERPD is Wednesday April 25th

Middle School and High School will both
be at NorthView Middle School

Watch your email for the agenda this week

Before ERPD please join the Secondary Social Studies Canvas Course, if you have not already, by clicking [Join the Course Now](#)

Miscellany

Albert Einstein was offered the role of Israel's second President in 1952, but declined.