

Lesson 5: Reliability of Sources

Overview

In this PowerPoint-driven lesson, students learn how to evaluate the reliability of their sources. First, students answer questions about an unfamiliar picture to test the accuracy of their points of view. Next, students discuss how to detect point of view and bias in sources. They examine the death of Davy Crockett at the Alamo during the Texas War for Independence. Using the INSPECT method of source-analysis, students participate in a jigsaw activity to evaluate the reliability of the diary of Jose Enrique de la Peña and other first-person accounts of Crockett's death.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. Identify different sources that historians use.
2. Explain the concepts of point of view and bias in historical sources.
3. Discuss the causes of the Texas War for Independence and the events of the battle at the Alamo.
4. Compare different first-person accounts of the same historical event.
5. Determine the reliability of sources for their historical value and accuracy, emphasizing how point of view and bias can affect reliability.

Standards Addressed

California History-Social Science Standards

8.8.6. Describe the Texas War for Independence...including territorial settlements, the aftermath of the [war], and the effects the [war] had on the lives of Americans, including Mexican Americans today.

California's Common Core State Standards

RH.6-8.1 — Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

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.

RH.6-8.6 — Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

RH.6-8.7 — Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

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

WHST.6-8.7— Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

WHST.6-8.8 — Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources (primary and secondary), using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

WHST.6-8.9 — Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Preparation and Materials

PowerPoint Teacher Guide — PDF File.

You will need to print this out as it includes the instructions for the lesson.

PowerPoint: Reliability of Sources — Download PowerPoint.

Since the lesson is driven by a PowerPoint slide show, you will need a computer, projector, and screen to show the slide show.

Handout 5A: INSPECT — 1 per student.

Handout 5B: Source: José Enrique de la Peña — 1 per student.

Handout 5C: Source Handouts — There are four separate sources, labeled Source #1, Source #2, Source #3, and Source #4. Make enough copies of each source for a fourth of the class.

Procedure

Since the lesson is driven by a PowerPoint slide show all instructions for the activities are on the PowerPoint Teacher Guide.

- A. Focus Activity
- B. Case Study of Davy Crockett
- C. Small-Group Activity
- D. Share Back: Jigsaw
- E. Debrief

History Experience Planner

This lesson provides students with an opportunity to analyze the reliability of a set of sources using the INSPECT method, emphasizing how point of view and bias can affect reliability. This will help students determine the reliability of sources for their projects to come up with their own conclusion.

Assign students **Log 5: INSPECT – Analyzing Sources** and **Log 6: Keeping Track of Sources** as homework.