Teach Me, I Dare You

Taking up the Challenge of Teaching Social Studies

by Ron Sima and David L. Moguel, Ph.D.

Many colleagues, conferences, workshops, summer institutes, and university classes have added invaluably to the ideas presented in this book. For those unknown names whose sources of inspiration and ideas are within the covers of this book, we the authors, and our past students, give many thanks and credit.

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About the Authors

Ron Sima's name and work are widely recognized in the field of social studies education, and he is a much sought-after speaker for gatherings of educators.

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At Stanford he studied under education scholars Michael Kirst and David Tyack. At Harvard he was a student of education economist Richard Murnane and reading specialist Jeanne Chall. Before starting a career as a teacher educator, he was an assistant to then–Superintendent of the San Francisco Unified School District Ramon C. Cortines (most recently the Superintendent of the Los Angeles Unified School District). He also served in the federal government for three years as a Presidential Management Intern for the U.S. Department of Education in Washington, D.C., under two presidents and three secretaries of education.

At UCLA he was a doctoral student of Professor Jeannie Oakes, now at the Ford Foundation. Moguel has been at CSU Northridge since 2000, participating in, among other reforms, the Carnegie Corporation's Teachers for a New Era Initiative.

His current work is in teacher preparation, supervising student teachers in the field, and teaching social studies methods courses.

Introduction

Teach Me, I Dare You: Taking up the Challenge of Teaching Social Studies is a practical and intellectually rich handbook that provides new and veteran middle- and high-school social studies teachers with a wealth of ideas and solutions in a compact format.

The book is not meant to be an exhaustive review of everything known about teaching social studies, nor does it try to "cover" content best left to social studies textbooks. We have reviewed textbooks that try to do this, and the result is ponderous volumes seldom read and used by teachers.

The book strikes a solid balance between practice and theory:

- It is not so heavy on the "practical" that it becomes an intellectually lightweight collection of clever tricks and tips.

- At the same time, it is not so heavy on the "theory" that it becomes a weighty but inaccessible tome of academic scholarship.

The social studies content, methods, and theory in this book will be familiar to you, but are presented in a new and original manner.

This handbook is based on:

- the 40 years of classroom experience of its first author—a valuable piece of craft wisdom

- the research-based work of its second author—an exploration of modern and future perspectives on teaching social studies

- the near-forgotten voices of philosophers and historians of the past—a look back on ancient and historical perspectives on teaching history.

The table of contents allows you to quickly find a topic you need, or an answer to an urgent and pressing question. The book puts forth:

- five basic elements, including lesson planning and teaching students to read

- seven sets of best practices and methods

- four sets of solutions to address the challenge of classroom management

- brief treatments of four special topics, including teaching English Language Learners.

Then, for the reader who has found the book so useful and intriguing that they are willing to spend a few more minutes with it before planning lessons, we end with some voices from the past and present: philosophers and historians on the subject of teaching history.

The Basics of Instruction

Lesson Planning: The Long and the Short of It

You can spend ten minutes or three hours planning a single lesson.

How can you get a quick handle on effective lesson planning?

Long-Range Planning

Your road map for the coming year or semester should begin with the state curriculum framework in your subject matter, state content standards, textbooks, supplemental resources, and any school-district or school-pacing plans. All of these on the kitchen table and a few hours of work will benefit you and your students for the entire school year.

1. On large paper, block out the beginning and end of each semester, all holidays, testing dates, special school-wide programs, and anything else that will impact your instructional time.

2. Use your curriculum framework and text chapters to estimate where you want to be at key points of the semester.

3. Group chapters into logical larger units and think about the following for each unit:

   - What primary sources, or other readings (or perhaps video, music, or other digital resources) might fit into the unit?

   - Is there a long-term project that will ask the students to delve deeper into a topic?

   - What new critical thinking skills can be introduced, and which other higher-order skills need to be reviewed and practiced?

4. Unit by unit, organize all your resources and see where you need additional ones. Now is the moment to consult instructional-materials catalogs; materials from professional conferences, colleagues and peers; and relevant Internet Web sites.

5. Make decisions about what you will be doing week-by-week in each of the units.

6. Sort out what you have done in the past and what you need to do or replace for the future.

Daily Lesson Planning

1. Plan on three activities to make for an effective 55-minute period—students' attention spans can best accommodate this middle ground between too few or too many activities, either of which allows students to lose focus and attention. Of course, certain activities may take longer, such as tests or group projects.

2. Include time and components in each lesson for the students to employ the fundamental skills of listening and talking, reading and writing.

   For example, students read for 15 minutes, listen to your mini-lecture for ten minutes, discuss the reading and the lecture for 15 minutes, then write a memo to the president detailing whether and how the United States should become involved in a particular global conflict.

   There are many types of lesson-plan formats. (We've included some basic versions in the "Reproducibles" section.) While we do

not include versions of, for example, the Seven-Step Lesson Plan, or the Into-Through-Beyond lesson plan, or other well-known formats, *do not* become intellectually paralyzed by any format. Instead, from the models available here (or others), create the formats that best serve your needs. You can take any format we have provided, adapt it, make 180 copies of it (a school year is typically 180 days of instruction), and complete one each day, as necessary.

3. Plan at least three activities or options for students who "finish early."

   Remember to verify whether students are indeed finished; circulate and check their work. If necessary, direct them to revise or complete the assignment.

   We suggest that you have a classroom library of interesting historical resources for students to read and look through when finished with the day's assignment. Some teachers find or create crossword puzzles or word searches that are relevant to the subject at hand. Alternatively, students can work on any long-term assignment they had been previously assigned.

Backwards Planning

Backwards planning starts at the end, by looking at the desired results first (e.g., standards, objectives, or goals) and the evidence that the results have been obtained. Your curriculum and teaching are then derived from the results. The logic of backwards planning suggests a sequence for curriculum in three stages: identifying desired results, determining acceptable evidence, and planning learning experiences and instruction.

Stage 1: You have to know what students should know, understand, and be able to do at the end of a lesson or unit. Teachers must establish *curricular priorities, enduring understandings,* or *the big ideas* they want students to learn. Students need to go beyond mere facts and focus on larger concepts, principles, or processes.

Teachers need to distinguish the enduring understanding—what is important to know and do—from what is only worth being familiar with. Too often teachers begin with the latter, the "low-level factoids" used to measure learning.

Stage 2: This step involves determining acceptable sources of evidence of the above. How will you know students have learned what they needed to know, understand, or be able to do? What will you accept as evidence of student understanding and proficiency?

Backwards planning asks a teacher to think about a unit or lesson plan in terms of the evidence to be collected, evidence that will then document and validate that the desired learning has been achieved. This avoids a unit or lesson simply composed of content to be covered or a series of learning activities.

Stage 3: The last stage involves deciding what learning activities and materials will enable students to get that big idea, or learn those enduring understandings.

These learning activities depend on the decisions made during the first two stages, rather than the traditional method of starting from the activities and deciding goals and assessments later.

As one example, let's say your lesson or unit objective or goal is for students to prepare a one- to two-page letter to a foreign-born person interested in emigrating to the U.S. that explains how American attitudes toward and policies on immigration before and after 1965 changed in some ways, and remained the same in others.

The assessment instrument is thus the letter to a prospective immigrant.

Working backward, the students would need one or more lessons in which to:

- search and read various information sources
- make decisions about which information to include in the letter
- prepare a word or a bubble map of key ideas, to be used to write the letter
- write condensed versions of long stretches of text from textbooks or newspaper articles
- correctly cite statistics, and articulate different arguments or positions on key issues.

Student-Proofing Lessons

As you prepare your lesson plan, think about how the students might derail or sabotage a lesson, then formulate strategies to counter possible snags in the lesson. For example, the lesson might call for students to bring their own graph paper, and of course some students will not. The solution: bring graph paper.

Teaching Students to Read

> *No harm's done to history by making it something someone would want to read.*
>
> David McCullough (Lewis)

Here are two basic problems to address:

1. Many students are asked to read and write little-to-nothing outside of their English classes and outside of school. If they are not reading at school or at home, they are not reading anywhere.

2. Too many students of all reading levels, from low to advanced, do not do the readings they are assigned for homework. Even some advanced students don't do the readings (ask any AP teacher).

One fundamental problem is that the typical American student does not have good, solid reading habits. It is your job to help build that habit in your students. Paradigm shift: You must begin to see yourself, not just as an individual teacher of history and social studies, but as part of a school team to improve student reading and writing skills.

Reading Assignments

Before you launch into a reading (or any related) assignment, create some interest and give students a reason to read.

1. Pose one or more powerful, open-ended questions that students will be compelled to want to answer, then say the answer is somewhere in the text.

2. Then guide the students through a quick look at the text: major headings, pictures, charts, and graphs.

Like a parent before the start of the big family vacation, you are showing them the map so they know where they are going. Be warned that, if you just tell students to read for a given amount of time without any further instructions or guidance, you are likely to spend most of that time disciplining students who simply do not know why they are doing the reading.

Try the following in class or as homework:

- Section by section, ask students to find 5–20 key words in the chapter and define them.

- After a lesson on how to distinguish fact from opinion, have students find and copy five statements of fact and five of opinion in the reading. You will soon find that students tend to believe that everything in the textbook is a fact—try to correct this misperception.

- Ask students, as they read, to prepare one multiple-choice test item, or one matching item, or one fill-in-the-blank item for each section of the chapter, thus producing a short quiz they might exchange with another student.

- Ask the students to find a picture, graph, or other illustration in the chapter, and explain the picture in writing, rephrasing or rewriting the caption.

- Have students identify several key or central ideas, themes, or concepts of the chapter. Model the identification of one such idea, then have students do the same for the others.

- Ask students what they would write if they had to write the chapter over but only in five sentences.

Another idea: if you do a number of the above on the same chapter over several days, most students will come to a thorough understanding of the chapter, having read it several times.

Why Most Reading Assignments Don't Work

Teachers typically ask students to read and then answer the questions at the end. Teachers try something different by asking students to outline, take notes, or summarize chapters. Most of such assignments are doomed to fall short of expectations, mostly because they involve reading long stretches of text without purpose, and thus do not lead to comprehension or retention.

Do not turn the problem of students' not doing the reading into a game of "gotcha," with pop quizzes and other negative methods to punish kids into reading; use positive strategies to get the desired results.

Do not see the textbook as a sort of novel to be read cover to cover—use it as a reference. Use other reading sources to supplement or even replace sections of the textbook. *Now is the time to resurrect those perspective-changing readings you did in college. Use your degree.*

Eight Strategies for Purposeful, Directed Reading

Assigning students short readings begins to give them practice at organizing their learning in manageable amounts. Stress "reading for a purpose"—don't just assign pages to read but give your students a variety of interesting and challenging activities to go along with the assignment, such as one of the following:

- Create a storyboard or cartoon strip from the reading assignment.
- Find an issue, event, or person from the reading and write a letter agreeing or disagreeing with the topic involved.
- Ask students to tackle a reading assignment paragraph by paragraph, then identify three words from each paragraph they think are "key" to the author's ideas. This enables them concentrate on the main points from each selection. When they come back together as a class, have the students make those three words into sentences.
- Have your class analyze a picture in the textbook—ask them to "step into the picture" and write out or brainstorm (in groups or as a class) questions that they would ask the people in the picture (not necessarily about the subject of the picture).
- Formulate an assignment that requires students to reflect on or resolve a controversial issue raised by the reading.
- Use supplementary materials such as primary sources, case studies, posters, or pictures to stimulate reading and writing.
- Refer to national, state, or district curriculum standards and incorporate social studies skills into the reading assignment, such as finding facts and opinions, making generalizations, comparing and contrasting, analyzing and synthesizing information, etc.
- If possible, personalize the reading for students. Try to find something in students' lives that relates to what you want them to read in the chapter. For example, after discussing the idea of a "Renaissance man," ask students to write about someone in their lives who has multiple talents.

Why Reading Aloud Does Not Work, and How It Can

Avoid overusing the traditional read-aloud or popcorn reading exercises you experienced as a student. They might not have worked with you, and they might not work now.

The primary reason is that only a few students are truly good readers, and even then, those students are not always practiced in using good intonation, or "hamming it up" with good acting. Other students are weak readers, and read-aloud exercises only expose their weaknesses in public instead of improving their reading skills. Meanwhile, good readers suffer through slow, halting readings of the text. Since this is happening throughout the day in other classes, it is no wonder why so many students come to dislike reading.

Instead, do the following:

- On occasion, do the reading aloud yourself. Read with enthusiasm; ham it up if you wish. Model how you want your students to read aloud.

- Select the best readers to read aloud. The way for struggling readers to improve is to read and listen to good readers before they attempt the same.

- Have students read aloud to each other in small, intimate groups. Weak readers are better able to practice reading aloud, make and correct their mistakes, and get the help they need from peers in less threatening environments. This is part of a larger picture of creating a non-threatening environment in every classroom, going beyond reading aloud to other necessary tasks, such as taking standardized tests or making an oral presentation. These in turn will help build student confidence in other environments where they may have to perform under pressure or speak in public.

- If you ask students to do any silent or individual reading for any length of time, open the text and do the same. It is distracting for students to see the teacher engaged in other tasks while they're trying to read silently, and nothing communicates the value of reading better than seeing an adult read.

Remember that many students may come from homes that are filled with videos, DVDs, and video games, but not rich in print (magazines, newspapers, books) or above all, adults with good reading habits. It is your job to create that environment in your classroom and to be that adult.

Teaching Students to Take Notes

Why do your students do little, nothing, or just copy the text or the board when you tell them to take some notes?

Students do not automatically know why they should take notes, or how to take them. A teacher's direction to take notes is incomprehensible to students who don't even know what a single "note" is.

Most students proceed to write down as much as they can while the teacher lectures, or copy everything the teacher writes on the board—neither of which involves true learning or understanding. Moreover, if the teacher is moving too fast, some students may actually stop taking notes because they can't keep up. Students need to be taught and reminded frequently that taking notes is a skill that will help them concentrate in class, remember information, and prepare for tests, and that this is a life-long skill for the world of work beyond high school. Books on study skills offer many kinds of note-taking systems.

During Lectures

There are many versions of the Cornell (University) method or system developed by Prof. Walter Pauk in the 1950s. These are the more common elements of these systems:

- Students divide a sheet of lined paper into a narrow column and a wide column. The students take detailed notes in the wide column during a lecture.
- They should not attempt to take down every word and sentence, but should write as much as possible in phrases.

After the lecture, whether in class or at home, the students go through more steps:

- In the narrow column, students reduce their original body of notes into key words, phrases, or questions that will help them recall the larger body of information.
- To review or study for a test, students cover the wide column and recite as much of the wide column as they can recall.
- These variations of the Cornell method enable students to learn how to take notes, organize them after class, learn from them, and use them to study and learn at home. The method prevents students' notes from becoming a jumble of disorganized and disconnected thoughts and ideas. (See page 85 for an outline of one version of a Cornell page of notes.)

Other methods of note-taking include:

- an **outlining method,** requiring advanced note-taking skills. On the surface, it merely requires the use of indentation while taking notes. The most general information is written down along the left of a page, while more specific information is indented to the right. Numbers, letters, or Roman numerals may be helpful in developing the outline as the students take the notes but are not necessary and may even be more confusing. However, underneath the surface, students using this method must develop the skill of making decisions about organization and sequence, and about the relationship between ideas and points, during the lecture.
- a **mapping method,** calling for the graphic representation of the content of a lecture.

When employed effectively, the format enables students to visually track the development of a lecture with bubbles, circles, arrows, boxes, etc.

- a **charting method,** which has students set up their notes as tables with appropriate headings or categories for columns and rows. For example, across the top of a page a student might set up the headings "Time Period," "Important People or Events," and "Significance," then fill in the columns during the lecture.

You have a number of options. You may require students to follow an established format for taking notes; you may develop a system of your own and ask students to follow it; or you can have students develop their own system.

Tips on Lecturing

Having students take notes compels teachers to better organize lectures—students have a notoriously hard time following lectures.

- Be prepared, unless you are a very dynamic speaker or have prepared a spectacular multimedia presentation, to experience a number of students "tuning you out."

- Keep your lectures short and sweet. For most secondary-school students, formal lecture periods should last no more than 5–15 minutes.

- Creating a PowerPoint® presentation helps students build note-taking skills. You can print out a PowerPoint presentation in "outline view" (a certain number of slides per page with lines for taking notes to the right of each slide), then distribute copies to the class.

Conducting Discussions and Asking Good Questions

Why do your daily efforts to get students to participate in good classroom discussions often fall flat? The same few students try to answer all the questions, the discussion is great in spurts of a few seconds each, students tune in and out, and you are forced to revert back to a lecture/monologue. Why?

The Problem: Initiation-Response-Evaluation

Much of the problem lies in a common and overused pattern of classroom interaction of Initiation-Response-Evaluation (or IRE) in which:

- the teacher initiates with a test question, one to which the teacher already knows the answer (Initiation), followed by a short, unelaborated student response (Response), followed by a teacher evaluation (Evaluation) of the student response
- the students never give longer, elaborated-upon answers, and the teacher does most of the talking
- though it seems that the pattern is necessary to check for understanding, it is overused and turns into checks of memorization rather than of actual, deep understanding

An Example to Avoid

Since the IRE almost always starts with a question, such that teachers are asking hundreds of them every day, you need to focus on the quality of the questions. Consider the questions that a couple of teachers wrote into their lesson plan to address a state standard regarding Mesoamerican civilizations. The questions that were to drive the lesson were the following:

a. How did the Spanish arrive in Mesoamerica?

b. What took place upon the arrival of the Spanish?

c. What did the Europeans bring with them?

d. How did the Aztecs welcome them?

Note that a student could answer the questions this way:

a. By ship

b. They fought the Aztecs.

c. Horses and guns

d. As if they were gods

This may be *some* type of learning, but it is insufficient and inadequate. The quality of student answers is a product of the quality of teacher questions. When discussions seem inadequate, it is likely that a teacher's questions made them so.

In general, if you desire students to produce great discussions in which they formulate complex, specific, and focused answers, your questions must share the same qualities.

Authentic Opening Questions and the Socratic Method

Replace the "test questions" to which you already know the answer, with authentic questions. Authentic questions are more compelling and interesting because the questioner is genuinely seeking information or a good answer. For example, consider the following questions as alternatives to the ones previously cited:

a. What possibly could have driven a young Spaniard to give up everything he owned and abandon his family and friends and country, to go on a journey in which he had no idea where he was going, what might happen to him, and might never return from?

b. What factors may have led the Spanish to hope for a friendly encounter with the Aztecs, and which may have led them to expect a hostile encounter?

c. Aside from weapons, what physical and mental resources might an explorer and soldier need to conquer and settle a foreign land?

d. How could the Aztecs have made such a terrible mistake of thinking the Spaniards were gods, and why did it take them so long to realize their error?

Authentic questions such as the ones above build on the intellectual legacy of Socrates: systematically questioning another person with the goal of achieving fundamental definitions of ideas, on the way to achieving truth and knowledge.

The purpose of Socratic questioning is to help students explore their own thoughts about an issue and build a response, not to elicit a "right" answer. True knowledge is not contained in any single response but built progressively through several responses.

Silence and Wait-Time

In the IRE instructional pattern, silence often follows a teacher question, as students do not respond immediately, or may respond with very short answers. The usual teacher reaction is to fill the silence with "teacher talk." This is a natural reaction. Teachers are embarrassed by silence and want to rescue students from an uncomfortable situation.

However, in doing so you may be giving up on some students and inadvertently teaching them that the easiest way of reacting to your questions is to not respond at all.

Teachers typically wait one second or less for students to reply to their question. Some research has found that when teachers wait more than three seconds, resisting the urge to "move on," that:

1. teachers ask fewer and more complex questions, and become more adept at using student responses because they listen more carefully to what students have to say

2. previously "invisible" students speak up, and no longer restrict themselves to simply responding to the teachers' questions

Silence and waiting have these effects because they create a compelling need for a few students to talk. Remember that students are often waiting for other students to ask the questions or make the comments they themselves are thinking. The talking by a few creates a comfortable and inviting environment for others to talk. Sometimes that quiet or invisible student absolutely *needs* to say something because everyone is talking, but no one has said what that person is thinking.

Alternatives to Filling Silence With Teacher Talk

- Have students re-read a portion of the text.
- Have students try out an answer to your question in writing.
- Have students consult with each other in pairs or threes to answer your question.
- Show a video excerpt or play a piece of music to help illustrate a point.

Student Questions

Finally, a third approach has the teacher refrain from asking all the questions and instead has the students generate their own questions about the reading or the issue at hand.

A related approach has students ask each other questions. You will be surprised at students' willingness to talk to and challenge each other, if given the opportunity. For example, you can organize the class into two large groups, and have each group create a list of questions to ask the other. Alternatively, smaller groups can each create a quiz that will be given to other groups.

(Note: Much of the above work is the result of research conducted for a doctoral dissertation by David L. Moguel. A list of selected references can be found at the end of this book.)

Assessments: Traditional vs. Alternative

Why do your students continue to fail or perform poorly on tests and quizzes even after you have spent days and weeks teaching, re-teaching, and reviewing the material?

The most common responses to the above question are that this is the students' fault, or else the fault of factors beyond the teacher's control: students do not care about learning, they do not study well or enough at home, or they don't do the homework; or say that parents don't care, the students can't read, and that poor families have different experiential backgrounds which teachers may not identify with.

Depending on a number of factors in and out of school, all of the above may be true to some extent in every classroom, but we need to turn excuses into better understandings of families. For example, it is not that parents do not care—they care, but they may not know how to turn that care into action that best supports their children's education.

We propose, however, that given the above, we as teachers need to examine our assessment practices. We need to carefully look at:

- the teacher's test-making skills and expertise
- the tests, quizzes, and other assessments themselves

Teacher-Made Tests

- Often teachers will say their teaching builds higher-order thinking skills, or (for example) strives to achieve the highest levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, but the tests, quizzes, and other assessments they employ generally focus on low-level fact recall or other rudimentary skills.
- Writing a test or quiz is the last thing some teachers do after several hours of lesson planning. Teachers may be writing that test late at night, exhausted after spending the time and energy to plan lessons.
- Many teachers do not have the training or resources to write tests and quizzes that meet psychometric standards.
- Psychometrics—the science of measuring (metr-) the mind (psych-)—requires trained professionals, mechanisms for administering test items to sample populations, and statistical analyses to determine validity and reliability.
- Few teachers have the qualifications, training, and other resources to ensure that their tests and quizzes actually test what was taught.
- Our recommendation, then, is that you recognize the limitations of teacher-prepared tests. Instead, you should rely on materials prepared by experts: publisher-made and -provided tests, quizzes, and banks of multiple-choice, matching, or fill-in-the-blank items.

The Problem with Modern Psychometrics

Even psychometrically sound tests and quizzes suffer from some common weaknesses:

- Such tests and quizzes rely almost entirely on memorization, not true learning and understanding.

  Some social studies teachers might not do well on an Advanced Placement test in U.S. or World History, or on the final examinations of some of their undergraduate college courses, if they were forced to take them right now. Does this mean they don't know history or should not be teaching it? We don't think so.

  Think about it: You have probably learned more teaching your subject than you did when you learned it in middle or high school.

  It may be that in school, most of the time, students are being asked to memorize history in order to recall it for a test or quiz. Under those conditions, studying for the test means reading and re-reading textbook passages for memorization purposes.

  To put it another way, traditional assessment methods result in the best students forgetting the material three weeks after the exam, while the weakest students forget the material right before the exam.

> *A historian who would convey the truth must lie. Often he must enlarge the truth by diameters, otherwise his reader would not be able to see it.*
>
> Mark Twain (Lewis)

- Professor Sam Wineburg of Stanford University, a leader in the field of social studies education, has pointed out how many standardized tests in the field tell us less about students' true knowledge of history than they do about modern psychometrics.

  A correct answer on a multiple-choice item does not necessarily mean the student knows the right answer. Maybe they just got lucky. Maybe the "wrong" answers put in there to distract the student from the "right" answer are lousy. Maybe the student was given enough clues to remember and recall just enough to get the answer right.

  In modern psychometrics, test items and tests must create "spread" among students so that their scores fall into the famous "bell curve"—a few high scores, a few low ones, and the rest in the middle.

  A standardized test does not work if everyone gets a high score on it. If too many students get an individual item correct, or if too many score high on a whole test, then that item gets thrown out, or the test has to be redone.

- So, in a sense, it is all a big game based on the premise that the world is divided into a few smart people, a few dumb ones, and everyone else in the middle. In schools, the faulty premise of the bell curve is the basis of a system of curriculum and assessment whose overriding goals are to rank, sort, and compare students to each other.

  While the bell curve may accurately describe aspects of the physical world, it does not work well to describe the human mind and its potential. We urge you to reject it the same way you reject the grading system of a college professor who announces, on the first day of class, that only a certain percentage of students

will receive an A, another percentage a B, and so on. Why can't everyone study hard and get an A? There is something unfair about that; avoid replicating it in your classroom.

Alternative Assessment

That said, with what do we replace traditional assessment methods?

The quickest way to depart from traditional assessments is to add open-ended essays or short-answer items to your assessments. Another is to add items that require students to interpret graphs, tables, charts, or maps.

For a creative final exam, have students think of questions that should be asked on a final; perhaps have students from one class formulate questions for another class to answer. You then edit or strengthen the questions to ensure they are of sufficient depth and complexity.

Teaching the Subject

> *Okay, now getting down to the nitty-gritty: What do I do tomorrow? What do I do the day after that?*

You don't need to learn hundreds of the thousands of methods out there; you need to start with a few, practice them, and build your repertoire from there.

Be creative and flexible. Many of the strategies or activities in the lessons of this chapter can be applied to other historical events or time periods.

U.S. History

American and British Views of the Boston Massacre

This lesson asks students to compare brief historical accounts of the same incident, asks whether a given account is American or British in origin, and asks students to attempt to match each account to its possible source. This activity from an unknown source is an example of building higher-level thinking skills in students. (See page 86.)

Civil Liberties Dialog

For a lesson on the Bill of Rights, and after covering enough of the material for this to serve as an assessment, ask your students to follow a read-aloud of an imaginary conversation between two citizens. When they hear an action that appears to violate the Bill of Rights, students stomp their feet or slap their desk. The class will be noisy for a short period of time, but it is this encouraged form of "outrage" that enables students to understand the Bill of Rights as something that cannot be tampered with. (See page 88.)

At the Sound of the Beep

This exercise has students write answering machine messages to and from historical figures. It can easily be adapted to modern technologies, such as text messaging and email. The handout we've included is specific to George Washington and Leonardo da Vinci, but it can be modified to apply to any time period. (See page 90.)

World History

Family Name/Coat-of-Arms

When studying the Middle Ages and learning about craft guilds, students produce a family coat-of-arms that enables them to learn about the professions and work of the time. Using information in their textbook, students complete a coat-of-arms for a particular craft or guild, such as candlemaking, blacksmithing, animal husbandry, etc. For an interesting strategy that complements the main lesson, ask students to create a personal coat-of-arms based on their family name. Students are given a template coat-of-arms (see page 91) and asked to fill in the panels with art and graphics that represent values important to them and their family, including family trades and businesses, and favorite leisure activities, educational achievements and goals, and important religious traditions.

Assistant Principal: Crime and Punishment, Vengeance and Rehabilitation

After learning about the real code of Hammurabi from the handout (see page 92) or other resource, students are told that the position of assistant principal or dean of discipline at their school has been filled by a Mr./Ms Hammurabi.

Students write out five current school rules and then create punishments for violating them as if Assistant Principal Hammurabi had devised them. Students discuss and distinguish between punishments that lead toward rehabilitation and punishments that exact vengeance.

I Never Spoke to the Boy I Married Until After the Wedding

Very often cultural issues take a back seat to economic, political, and geographic issues in area studies, though many students are more readily interested in learning about cultural perspectives. They wonder about what junior high school students or other teenagers do and how they live in other countries.

Excellent for challenging students' perspectives on and sensitivity to cultures other than their own, this handout (see page 94) starts with a fascinating reading on arranged marriages in India. The second page includes a quiz that has students compare characteristics they would seek in a future husband or wife, to those characteristics that their parents would find important. Generally the two lists would match because "the apple does not fall far from the tree," and students come to see that they actually share many of their parents' values. And just maybe their parents could "arrange" a marriage successfully. This could lead to a discussion on how the environments in which parents place their children constitute an initial "arranging" of future marriages.

U.S. or World History

Bumper Stickers/Billboards: Messages From the Past

This project allows students to place themselves in another time and place. Students create messages for a **bumper sticker** that can be put on the back of a chariot, covered wagon, horse and buggy, automobile, etc., or a **billboard** for the side of a street or road.

The messages should be short statements addressed to ordinary people living at a specific period of time that deals with some historical situation.

Examples include:

- "Serf Unhappy With Lowly Position"
- "My Son Is an Honor Student at Herodotus Middle School"
- "Hammurabi Is Watching You"

Requirements:

1. The bumper sticker must be approximately the size and length of an actual one.
2. The billboard can be reduced to the size of a regular sheet of paper.
3. A short essay gives information that explains the message of the bumper sticker or billboard and provides historical background information and analysis.

Knowledge Wheel

The top sheet of this project is a circle made of cardstock (or other heavy paper), with two horizontal slots, one on either side of a small center hole. Students then create a bottom sheet, also a cardstock circle, with pairs of written items arranged radially so that one pair at a time will show through the slots:

a. Question and answer

b. Person and accomplishment

c. Event and year/description

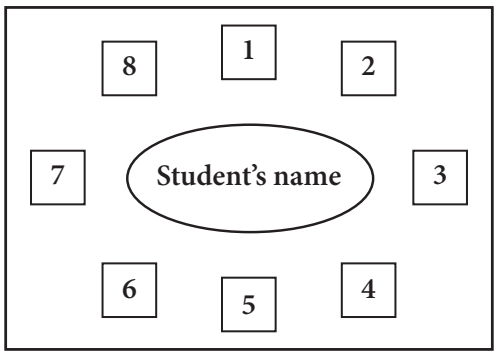
Stick a brad through the center of both circles and fasten it, so that the circles can turn independently. As you turn the top circle, the slots display each pair of items. You might also make this project into a quiz or review game.

Life Cycle: Imagined Autobiography—Past, Present, and Future

Common to the various versions of this project is the building of a student's sense of time and self.

Based on pictures and photographs cut from old magazines, students create a ring of images around a central oval. Half the ring, perhaps four images, represents their life up to this point; e.g., the first is of an infant, the second a toddler, the third a child, the fourth an adolescent. The other half of the ring comprises images that represent their future life; e.g., the high school or college graduation, homes, cars, and careers. Feel free to make your own judgment on size, sources, and total number of images.

Life Cycle Diagram



Pickles and Humbug

This clever hypothetical example can be used for a lesson on the use and misuse of statistics, and the difficulty of proving that one historical incident causes another. (See page 96.)

Telegrams, Faxes, and Email: Send a Message

Applicable to any time period, students prepare telegrams (or faxes, email, or text messages) to historical figures, or from one figure to another.

Perhaps the message would have changed the course of history had it actually been sent. Students write the actual message, then explain its impact on history. Or perhaps the message is from the future to the past. For example, students email Alexander Graham Bell and tell him about cell phones, faxes, long-distance phone service, and email.

- Sample telegram content: "General Custer: Don't go to the Little Big Horn, danger awaits you!"
- Sample explanation introduction: If Custer had received this message and followed its advice, he might have continued to live and possibly have run for president.
- Students could then research facts about General Custer and predict different outcomes for his life and career based on his past.

Multi-Day Lessons: U.S. and World History

Business Cards: Historical Biographies

Based on models provided by you, their parents, or which they find on the Internet or other sources, students:

1. design business cards for several historical figures

2. prepare one-page biographies of each person

You can challenge students to find out something their teacher did not know previously about the person.

Guild/Occupation/Coat-of-Arms: Integrating the Middle Ages With Career/Vocational Education

This exercise allows students to study current occupations by examining their own career aspirations. Students learn about occupations that have existed during different periods of time; this activity is particularly relevant for the Middle Ages but also appropriate for the colonial, pre-colonial, Renaissance periods, etc.

Students create two brochures: one for a historical occupation of the past, and a modern-day occupation which they may be interested in pursuing. Requirements:

1. Two 8½" x 11" pieces of paper folded over once like a book

2. Page 1 (front) of the brochure should have a coat-of-arms indicating the nature of the career.

3. Page 2 should include requirements for entering the profession.

4. Page 3 lists the standards for the profession.

5. Page 4 is a description or narrative of a day in the life of the professional.

Illustrated Timeline: Events, Research, and Artwork

This most typical of social studies assignments is made interesting with art. Students take three or four blank sheets of good paper, tape them together, and illustrate them with cartoons, computer clip-art, or other art.

Students can describe and analyze historical events and time periods in accompanying written assignments.

Magazine Cover and Article

Students create a magazine cover similar to that of a currently available publication, and an article on a historical person, place, or event.

Students would need some pre-training on a basic style in journalism of a lead paragraph and subsequent paragraphs in the form of an inverted pyramid.

The lead paragraph of a story contains the facts in answer to the questions of who, what, when, where, why, and how. Subsequent paragraphs develop the story: implications, controversies, story twists. Less important information is left to the final paragraphs. (See page 97.)

Multicultural/Historical Party Project: Guest List and Bios, Seating Arrangements, and Conversation Topics

On the surface, this project has the students plan a party for themselves and few guests. Underneath the surface, students are learning a great deal of history.

A sample packet would include:

- Page 1: title of event
- Page 2: a formal invitation for the guests
- Page 3: a guest list of historical figures, perhaps from different countries or states, or racial or ethnic groups, or by gender or other characteristics
- Page 4: the name of a guest speaker and set of talking points for the person.
- Pages 5 and on: guest pictures, biographies, and some questions or topics for conversation at each table; table design and seating arrangements; and menu and decorations that reflect a historical period or are appropriate for the guests

Passport to Discover

In this exercise, students "travel" around the world. Create a facsimile of a passport on a computer, or with a copier.

1. Have students bring in appropriately sized photos of themselves, or use a digital camera to take a picture of each student.
2. Have students affix the picture to their "passport" and fill out some personal information (name, address, etc.) as well.
3. Then students add pages to their passports. They can use copies of maps to make pages for a certain country, and add other pages of statistics and figures about that country.
4. They can include foldout pages for very large countries, or for a world map that highlights major areas of interest and "hotspots" in the news, such as the Middle East, Europe, India, Pakistan, Korea, Japan, and China.
5. You can also include blank pages for "Enter" stamps that students can obtain by "entering" or visiting a new continent or country.

Pennies From Nature

You will need a world almanac and about $25 in pennies (or a round number of identical objects of similar size) in a jar.

1. Arrange the seats in four rows of four or five desks facing a similar arrangement on the other side of the room; keep a wide aisle down the middle.
2. Ask students to stand near the aisle and get ready. Having previously established some guidelines against unruly or dangerous behavior, toss the pennies across the floor and have students pick up as many as possible.
3. Have students count their pennies then order themselves around the room by quantity of pennies collected, from least to most. Those with the largest amount of pennies could represent the U.S., China, etc. Those with the least amount of pennies would represent smaller economies, such as Chad or Niger.

4. Now for the geography lesson: use a world atlas or almanac to find the Gross Domestic Product of their country, and then prepare a page of information on that country.

This exercise uses visual and physical examples to help students better understand nations' relative wealth and productivity.

It is then up to you to extend and stretch the lesson as needed to cover the required standards. For example, instead of GDP, you might substitute:

a. natural resources, such as petroleum, iron, or coal deposits

b. bays and oceans that enable trade

c. waterways that provide transport

d. grasslands, mountains, or deserts that facilitate or impede agriculture.

With the pennies and the text/graphic resources, students are then better able to begin to tackle fundamental questions such as: Why has industrialization been more possible in some places than in others?

Trials

Hold a trial that focuses on a historical question, a current issue, or the topic of the current unit. Assign roles to all students, including a defense team of attorneys, a prosecution team, witnesses for each side, a judge, jurors, and bailiff. Jurors, attorneys and judge take notes as witnesses give testimony.

For example, replicate a Salem witch trial, or bring Napoleon up on charges of disturbing the peace and tranquility of Europe.

Welcome Wagon™: A Basket of Cultural Artifacts of a Country or Culture

Conestoga "welcome wagons" would meet and greet westward travelers in the 1800s, providing food and water. In the early 1900s, Welcome Wagon hostesses would deliver hospitality baskets to new homeowners in the area.

In this activity, students select a city from any country that has been studied in the class and create a basket for a newcomer to that city that includes:

- gifts, sample products, and maps supplied by local businesses to new homeowners in the area
- coupons for products and services
- listings, descriptions, and calendars of local civic and cultural activities.

Travel brochures, encyclopedia descriptions, and the Internet can provide valuable resources for the students' Welcome Wagon basket.

Long-Term Class Projects

What do you do when students tell you they have finished all their work and have nothing to do, or when parents complain that their student seems to have little or no homework to do?

Your lesson planning should include frequent long-term projects that hang over students' heads. Their social studies class should always be on their mind. Almost every unit should have some long-term project due at the end of the unit, or you can establish a policy of having a long-term project due every three weeks. Over the course of a semester, there can be a mix of individual and group projects, and oral or written presentations.

Devote perhaps two to three full class periods to the project, including:

1. delivery and discussion of instructions and guidelines
2. research time at the library, in the computer lab, or in class
3. time for class presentations.

A long-term project also serves as homework, so students and their families know that there is some type of homework being assigned, and that it is their responsibility to work on it daily or several times a week.

On the next few pages are some examples of long-term projects.

How Does a Historian "Know"?: Collections of Primary Sources and Artifacts

This project's basic idea is to have students create collections of primary source materials and documents for a particular historical period. In small teams, students research and create or replicate collections of primary sources. The Industrial Revolution, the Roaring 20s, the presidency of Teddy Roosevelt, etc.—any topic you select can be explored through this technique. For an extended assignment, students could prepare written descriptions, summaries, or analyses of the documents.

Here are four suggested areas for such a collection:

- Biographies—several different one- to two-page biographical statements on people of the time period
- Broadsheets—descriptions of events that happened during the period
- Artifacts—facsimiles of train tickets, birth certificates, letters, newspaper accounts, etc.
- Pictures—copies of antique photographs, cartoons, drawings, etc.

Library Research and Information on 3" x 5" Cards

In this project, students fill metal or plastic boxes with 3" x 5" cards containing the fruits of their research on countries, nations, or states; racial or ethnic groups; majority/minority religions; or some other group designation.

For a given entity, students prepare cards on prominent people, food, clothing, celebrations and holidays, religious and cultural traditions and practices, musical and artistic contributions, immigrant history, economy and industry, scientific achievements, geography, etc.

Hollywood and History: Comparing and Contrasting History, Literature, and Feature Films

This intellectually rich project can be a great deal of fun for students, and can take them to some of the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, for example. First, as a model, the teacher takes the students through an exercise in comparing and contrasting, for example:

- the textbook's treatment of Victorian England with excerpts from Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist,* and with a movie version such as Disney's *Oliver*

- the textbook's treatment of Industrial Revolution–era England with William Blake's poem "The Chimney Sweeper" about child chimney sweeps, and with the dancing and singing of the chimney sweeps in Disney's Mary Poppins

- the textbook's treatment of the encounter between the Pilgrims and the Native Americans with excerpts from William Bradford's Mayflower Compact, and with Disney's *Pocahontas.*

Perhaps in some cases you can compare the realism of a piece of literature intended to inform an audience and bring about legislative change, with the romanticism of a motion picture intended to entertain. On the other hand, one can find literature written as propaganda or to maintain the status quo, and compare it to movies made many years later that attempt to shine the light of truth on historical myths.

After you model the exercise, students are then given a choice of historical periods or events to choose from, then set about finding, reading and viewing, and analyzing, matching literary and cinematic versions of the period or event.

Travel Brochure

Students do library, Internet, and travel-agency research to create folded pamphlets enticing visitors to a city or country of their choice. The more information, the better the brochure.

- What landmarks, monuments, and museums will the visitor see?

- What kind of products and local cultural artifacts will the person be able to purchase?

- What languages are spoken?

- What are some useful phrases to know?

- What mean of transportation are available?

Graphics, statistics, and pictures make the pamphlets more interesting. Word processing programs often contain templates for folded pamphlets.

Wars Project: Thematic Unit on U.S. Engagements

A set of instructions supports a project with multiple components in which students focus on a particular war, but also learn about larger themes of conflict between countries and cultures. Students put together a portfolio of the following:

1. A one-page written overview of the war

2. A timeline of important events of the war (at least ten items)

3. Five quotes on war, either general or specific to the war in question (e.g., "Don't fire until you see the whites of their eyes," "Old men make war so young men can die," etc.)

4. A one-page biography on a historical figure involved in or affected by the war

5. A chart or graph that demonstrates or shows something about the war (e.g., statistics on who and how many fought and died, comparisons to other wars, financial cost of the war, etc.)

6. A map on some aspect of the war

7. A poem on war, either general or specific to the war in question

8. A filmography of war movies, with brief descriptions

9. A song or piece of music related to this or other wars, including lyrics if applicable

10. A recruiting poster

A number of the items above (such as the chart/graph, poem, music, or poster) work best if students must also produce a quality piece of writing that not only describes, but explains, analyzes, and interprets the artifact.

Notes on Using the Library

Even if local public libraries have computers, those computers are not always available when students need them, so there is still a role for good, old-fashioned library research.

You should regularly take your classes to the library and/or computer labs for research. Meeting with your school's librarian before you bring the students to the library can be very helpful—librarians are underutilized. Alternatively, a local librarian can spend time pulling out large numbers of books for your students to use for a given assignment. Developing a long-term relationship with a local librarian can result in that person being able to order and purchase books particularly useful to you and your classes.

> *A library, to modify the famous metaphor of Socrates, should be the delivery room for the birth of ideas—a place where history comes to life.*
>
> Norman Cousins (Lewis)

You can also develop a targeted, focused classroom library that can help students learn to use and become familiar with multiple sources when completing research for assignments.

Regular visits to these collections, with proper teacher guidance and direction, can help students develop skills they will use even beyond the assignments you have given them.

Tips for Visiting the Library

When students go to the library to look up a topic, most head straight for the encyclopedias. Most school libraries have several sets of them. However, after the first six students take all the "L" volumes for an assignment on Louis XIV, the other 34 kids will come to you and say they can't do the assignment.

You then have to work with the class to show them other ways to find information on the French king. For example, encourage them to think of other terms or phrases that might lead to relevant information: in the "F" volume, look under "France"; in the "B" volume, look up "Bourbon"—the family name of Louis XIV.

Students need to be comfortable in approaching topics from a variety of angles and locations: they should know their way around the history section in the library as well as be knowledgeable about using Internet search engines.

Notes on Using the Internet

In our busy and increasingly technical world, we are seeing more and more students look to the Internet for resources to complete reports and projects. We need to help them develop a "critical eye" as they surf the vast resources on the World Wide Web. We need to help our students understand that they should not give equal credence to information from the Harvard Medical School Web site and the "Momma's Kitchen of Home Remedies" Web site.

In addition, remember that:

- students still need to know how to read, and read critically, to use the Internet
- there is still a "digital divide" between students who have access to computers and those who do not, at school and at home. GoogleTM and the Internet notwithstanding, it remains a teacher's job to teach students how to read, and it has become a teacher's job to help bridge that digital divide.

Here are some things for you and your students to consider when evaluating Web sites and the information they present:

- Are the author's credentials listed?
- Is the site affiliated with a reputable institution?
- How biased is the information/author/affiliation?
- How well does the Web site meet the subject and requirements of the report/project?
- How much advertising does the Web page contain, and might that be affecting the content presented on the page?
- How well is the site organized (do the links work, and make sense)?
- How well does the information on the webpage encourage the students to use higher-level thinking skills?
- How appropriate for your students is the reading level and content of the Web site?
- How recently has the information been updated?

Some "red flags" to note about Web sites include:

- when no author is listed
- the site is a soapbox or means of propaganda for a particular view and disregards opposing viewpoints
- the information is inappropriate for your students' grade level
- the information is more than four years old
- the site does not challenge students to think at a higher level of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Using Video to Teach Social Studies

You pop in the video, the lights go out, and the clunking sounds you hear are sleepy students' heads hitting the desks. The box promises an excellent documentary, or you loved the movie at the theatre, so you don't know what you are doing wrong. What to do?

Videos can be easily misused or overused. Here are a few tips on using them in the classroom:

- Preview a video before showing it—never show a video you have not seen.
- Review vocabulary that is peculiar to the video or period of time either with a written handout or chalkboard presentation.
- Begin your showing of any video by giving the students a brief summary of the topic; actions, events, or ideas to pay special attention to; and specific questions to answer after the video is completed.
- Show excerpts no longer than 5–8 minutes.
- Stop the video occasionally to check for comprehension, discuss a point, read a supplementary passage of text, fill in the blanks of the worksheet, etc.
- Prepare questions in advance and give them to your students when the video is over.

The quality of the assignment will increase many times with the degree of your preparation and motivation.

Activities

Ask students to make a timeline on the video being shown. On a line drawn down the middle of a piece of paper (long side), have students write at least ten events from the video that would be important issues or topics for study.

Find the evaluation form used by your school district to evaluate videos purchased for classroom use. Copy the form for students to use, as they become the *evaluators* of the video being shown. You can make your own evaluation form using a series of questions to which your classes respond on a scale of one to five, or one to ten. Students should determine if it is a "buy" or a "pass."

Videos are a good way to get students to polish their note-taking and outlining skills. Review these skills with them before they use them when watching the video.

Ask students to fold notebook paper into four equal rectangles, giving them four sections in which to draw or write about the plot/story of the video. Ask them to "illustrate" a number of important events in the video. They can make a small note in each square to remember the event and illustrate it after the video is over. (We've provided a sample in the "Reproducibles" section; see page 98.)

Divide a video into ten-minute sections and ask specific students to be responsible for one of the sections. You as the teacher may need to "call out" the ten-minute segments as you are viewing the video. After students finish the video, a "round robin" of discussion groups can be formed where each of the "experts" can discuss their section of the video with others in their group, and then with the other groups in the class.

Project and Writing Assignments

Videos can be an excellent springboard to longer-term class projects and meaningful writing assignments.

- **Historians and fact checkers:** Show a historical video and have students find out how accurate the portrayal of characters and events are. Ask students to write about various characters, plot, events, costumes, scenery, etc. Each student could take a segment of the complete video as either an individual of group assignment.

- **Video field trip*:*** Showing a full-length film loses something when it is spread out over many class periods. Send out permission slips for students to attend an in-school "field trip"" during which they watch the entire video in one showing. Find an empty room and let teachers know that kids will be missing class. Build in discussion, reading or writing time, and try to find an outside speaker to join you.

- **Historical interviews:** Have students write an interview with one or two characters from a video that's a drama. Use the news reporter format to give insight into the character(s), events, or period of history the video depicts. A good technique to make this assignment work is to have students practice by interviewing and then giving reports on each other.

- **Script revision:** Show a video and then ask students to change the ending. You can change the time or place in which the video is set and ask your students to write out how the ending might change. Another idea is to have the class watch the video to a certain point, stop the program, and then have students write out how they think the video ends.

- **Character consultants:** Have students draft an email, fax, or other type of message in which they offer advice to characters in the video. Have students speculate as to how the video's story might change if a character received such a message and followed through with the advice given.

What to Avoid

It's simple: you must avoid having a movie do in the classroom what television does at home—make students sit in one place and be a passive participant, not an active one. Do not substitute Hollywood entertainment for good, interactive, teaching.

So why don't more students pay attention to documentaries or movies?

- From the moment the video starts, you face an uphill battle simply because the students did not help select the program.

- Most movies are made to entertain; documentaries, however, are designed to inform. Students groan from the instant the showing is announced. They want to watch movies to be entertained, not to learn and understand more about academic subjects.

- It is easy for students to doze off or otherwise tune the video out in a darkened room.

- Your job is to make that movie or documentary effectively serve a range of instructional objectives.

- When watching a film, build instructional activities around it so that students are practicing and developing other basic literacy skills such as reading or writing, or higher-order critical thinking skills such as analyzing war and independence movements, for example, or comparing some historical figures to others.

- Make a picture worth its proverbial thousand words by having students read and write about it.

Think of it this way: A scene from a great movie, or even a horrifying single photograph, can elicit a strong reaction from students. However, you need to move the students far beyond that gut reaction—you need the students talking, reading, and writing about the full range of their reactions to the film, what they think the movie is trying to say, and what they have learned from watching it.

Finally, the next time you use a movie to teach history, use it also to teach students about their future. Show the credits, then explain how each name and title represent a job, a profession, perhaps even a career.

Using Music to Teach Social Studies

> *'Rock n' roll music was the only thing*
> *I ever gave a damn about.*
>
> Billy Joel,
> "The Night Is Still Young" (1998)

The lyrics of their favorite bands are a fundamental truth for many young people. Music is more accessible, interesting, and relevant than what typically takes place in a classroom. The trick is to find ways to make students give their own damn about the history behind the music.

Here are some examples of ways to use music to teach social studies:

- Approach song lyrics the same way you approach any text—as something to be read carefully, discussed, and analyzed.
- Analyze, or have students do research on, the structure and characteristics of musical genres and styles, and the history of their development.
- Use music from different historical periods to illustrate ideas, lifestyles, themes, public opinion and sentiment, etc.

Such activities start with the history in the textbook (or the standards) and look for music to help teach it. Alternatively, you can also start with the student's favorite music, or that of their parents, and then create questions, assignments, and activities that enable students to discover the history behind the music.

Notes on Sources

While we cite specific recordings below (and in an appendix listing full citations or references), specific recordings may not be available at your local music store. In this case, we point out that the larger genres or styles of music are more important and accessible.

The following sources can help you locate examples of specific genres or styles of music, and specific songs, albums, and artists.

- Amazon.com™ allows you to type in a genre or style of music, and produces a list (sometimes numbering in the thousands) of sound recordings that fall into that category. You can also type in titles of songs or albums, names of artists or groups, hear samples of individual tracks, and purchase albums. The site also informs you of similar or related titles, and offers other titles bought by customers who have purchased a selected item.
- iTunes (a trademark of Apple Inc.) helpfully lists over 20 genres of music, lists numerous examples for each, and enables you to locate specific song or album titles, or artist or group names. The software (available at apple.com) enables the customer to purchase and download individual pieces of music at a low cost.
- YouTube.com contains myriad videos (though many are simply a sound recording with a visual placeholder) from all manner of sources, and may be a place to find obscure music as well as popular selections.

Mexican and European music

For a great lesson, play modern *ranchera* and *banda* music from Mexico, the music of Mexican weddings and celebrations. This music features the accordion and brass instruments such as tubas, and styles such as the waltz and the polka (Banda Sinaloense el Recodo, 2000; Los Rieleros del Norte, 1996). Then find traditional German music that also features the same instruments and styles (*International Passport: Oktoberfest in Germany,* 1989). Why would these musical styles be so similar?

- A portion of the great waves of European immigrants into the U.S. in the 1800s and 1900s reached parts of the American Southwest, which up until 1848 was part of Mexico.

- Europeans have also immigrated to Mexico in the past 100 years. Germany, through the Zimmerman telegram of 1917 (during WWI), actually proposed an alliance with Mexico against the U.S.

- Both European Jews and German Nazis fled to Mexico after World War II.

Thus European immigrants, the ancestors of many "white" people in America, introduced the accordion, the waltz, the polka, and other instruments and musical styles to Mexican culture.

For another interesting lesson, play a Strauss waltz (1867), and ask students where they often first hear this type of music. For many Latino students, the answer is the *quinceañera,* the celebration of a young girl's 15th-year coming of age. The celebration almost always features the performance of a Viennese waltz.

So what is a Viennese doing in the middle of a Mexican tradition? In the 1860s, Mexico was invaded by France, who installed Maximilian, a Hapsburg and brother of the Austrian emperor, as Emperor of Mexico (Fuentes, 1992, pp. 270–275). Mexican Conservatives and clergy who wanted to replicate European ideals of monarchy and upper-class society made the waltz a part of the *quinceañera* ceremony.

Arabic, Jewish, and Latino music

Students in recent years have heard the music of Latino artist Shakira, and many of their teachers remember the Spanish flamenco rock/pop of the Gipsy Kings—both with unmistakable Arabic influences.

Students can hear the striking similarities between the wailing singing (the *cante hondo,* or "deep song") in Spanish flamenco (Cantes del Pueblo, 2002; Los Serafines de Valme, 1989; De Falla, 1915; Peña, 1991), the Ladino language of the Sephardic Jews that mixes Hebrew and Spanish (La Rondinella, 1999; Ruth Yaakov Ensemble, 1998), and the ancient and modern Arabic music of Northern Africa and the Middle East (Garcia Lorca, p. 2–7, *Sif Safaa,* 1995; International Institute for Traditional Music—Lebanon, 2002).

Asking why this music is so similar is a hook for engaging students in the study of Northern Africa, Spain, and the Middle East, with their common historical elements of Roman law, Latin and Arabic languages, and the interaction of Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic faiths.

Asian, American Indian, Latin American, and European music

Ancient Chinese, Native American, Aztec, and Andean indigenous music all emphasize wind instruments and percussion, and melody over harmony *(China,* 1998; *Flute Music of the Andes,* 2001; *Tribal Meetings,* 1998). The music is a

reflection of cultures that saw people as a part of nature, rather than as beings who could control or tame it.

Contrast these with the music of J.S. Bach (1685–1750) or Handel (1685–1759): wind instruments used for different purposes, less percussion, an emphasis on harmony over melody. The music is a reflection of a largely Protestant culture that saw itself as divinely commanded to control nature.

Question: Why Are Blacks and Latinos Stereotyped as Being Good Dancers, While Whites Are Perceived as Lacking Rhythm?

African slaves in the New World came primarily from the west African countries of Senegal, Nigeria, and Angola. Nigeria is the home of the Yoruba, the most influential of the African cultures in the Caribbean region.

In many African cultures, the music (and the singing and dancing that goes with it) is an inextricable part of religious expressions of spirituality and faith. African American gospel music in the U.S., and Yoruba chants in Cuba, come directly from those traditions (Dancing, 1993).

This was in contrast to the culture of the Pilgrims and the Puritans, which generally shunned music, singing ,and dance as leading "devilishly to secularized worship" (Scherer, 2005, p.13). Catholic and Protestant cultures in the Americas reacted differently to the music of indigenous and African cultures, leading to the development of distinct forms of music, singing, and dancing (Paz and Schneider, 1987; *It's a Cuban Christmas,* 2001; San Antonio Vocal Arts Ensemble, 1999; *Afro-Cuba: A Musical Anthology,* 1994; Cachao, 1995).

Dancing ability, then, is not an issue of the color of one's skin, but has a lot to do with religion, culture, and history.

> *History, we can confidently assert, is useful in the sense that art and music, poetry and flowers, religion and philosophy are useful. Without it—as with these—life would be poorer and meaner; without it we should be denied some of those intellectual and moral experiences which give meaning and richness to life. Surely it is not accident that the study of history has been the solace of many of the noblest minds of every generation.*
>
> Henry Steele Commager (Lewis)

Class Presentations and Public Speaking

> *Classrooms are a part of life, not merely preparation for it…to make society more democratic, students must participate in classrooms that are themselves democratic societies.*
>
> Jeannie Oakes and Martin Lipton, quoting John Dewey (1999), p. 259

Few students relish the opportunity to speak up in a large classroom, or formally present to their classmates. Yet we know that students must learn the skills of speaking publicly and deliberating and participating in a large group, that are at the heart of the democratic process.

We are the intellectual descendants of Thomas Jefferson, for whom the public schools "bore the responsibility for ensuring that Americans acquire the cultural knowledge and skills of deliberation that could make possible a public process of determining the public good" (Oakes and Lipton, 2000, p. 30–31).

If students do not learn to speak in class, preferring to sit passively and absorb information, or "shut down" because a few of their peers are so vocal, they are then more likely to become apathetic, uninformed voters who allow others to determine important matters for them.

The following are some ways to ensure that students learn how to speak in public and deliver effective class presentations.

Class Presentations

The students presenting should follow a set of simple guidelines. We've provided one simple set which also serves as a grading rubric.

Content (10 points):

- The presentation should focus on a single topic.
- Open with one or two questions that your presentation is designed to answer.
- List your reading sources on your outline.

Format (5 points):

- Prepare a one-page outline of your presentation. (You, the teacher, should provide a model.)
- Avoid the extremes: the outlines should include neither too much nor too little detail.

Creativity and style (5 points):

- Do not write out a complete presentation and read it to me and the class, or read your outline. Many of us will lose interest and stop paying attention.

In the frequent case of students who are too embarrassed to make an effective presentation, try this: have the students draw or otherwise construct a facemask of a historical figure, paste their outline or remarks to the back of the mask, hold it up, and read their work.

The "audience" will need something to do during the presentation; it is too much to ask young students to simply sit and listen attentively to their peers as they struggle through a presentation. One suggestion is to modify the rubric such that students can "evaluate" the work of their peers.

Socratic Circles

A variation on the concept of Socratic seminars, this exercise divides a class of 28 students into four groups: two eight-observer groups, and two six-participant discussion groups.

1. Each six-participant group arranges its chairs into an inner circle, and selects one facilitator.

2. Each eight-observer group goes out into the hall and is given the following instructions:

    a. They will arrange their chairs in an outer circle around the discussion participants.

    b. Six of the eight observers will sit across from one participant, and observe that student during the discussion.

    c. One observer will graphically record the direction of the discussion between facilitator and all other participants.

    d. One observer will tally how often each participant verbally participates in the discussion, and for how long each time (e.g., a few words, a few phrases, or a long, extended statement).

    e. All observers will take notes and be ready to make positive judgments about the quality and nature of the small-group discussion, both on the part of individual students, and the group as a whole.

3. Each group facilitator is given one or two open-ended, authentic questions and some instructions for conducting the discussion.

    a. Your job is to ask questions to keep the discussion moving, not to assume responsibility for answering the questions.

    b. Make sure everyone speaks. Try to have the dominant speakers listen more to their peers, and gently draw out the passive participants who tend to not speak.

At the end of the discussions, the outer circle observers comment on the participation of the inner circle.

Newscast From the Past

Taking advantage of available school equipment, this project has students research, write, and record newscasts much the same way the pros do it, but with twists appropriate to your classroom.

Students can:

- produce newscasts of different time periods, or of different events within the same unit

- pretend a number of different events are happening the same day

- conduct celebrity interviews and trials, reports with foreign correspondents, domestic- and foreign-policy challenges, and conflicts at home and abroad

- use actual footage from documentaries and videos. Do library or Internet research, and follow the above-mentioned newspaper-article format for their live reports.

- create period commercials and advertisements, or snippets of television or radio shows of the time

Professionally produced programs from the original *Newscast From the Past* series are available from Social Studies School Service (http://www.socialstudies.com).

Songs That Teach History/Geography/Culture

This project can involve having groups of student sing or dance to music in front of classmates. Students do one of the following:

1. To the tune of, and mirroring the lyrics of Woody Guthrie's "This Land is Your Land," students prepare a song about the geography of a continent or country.

2. Compare and contrast the national anthem of the U.S. and that of another country.

3. Students prepare then present to their classmates music representative of their parents'/grandparents' homeland, comparing and contrasting the time in which the music was first written, played, and heard, with that of today.

Teaching Younger Students

For an unforgettable lesson, have students write a simple children's book about some part of history; then as a field trip, walk over to the closest elementary school and teach younger students about the Revolutionary War, the Bill of Rights, etc.

> *One of the lessons of history is that nothing is often a good thing to do and always a clever thing to say.*
>
> Will Durant (Lewis)

Teaching Government, Economics, and Geography

> *What experience and history teach is this—that people and governments never have learned anything from history, or acted on principles.*
>
> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (Lewis)
>
> *We learn from history that we learn nothing from history.*
>
> George Bernard Shaw (Lewis)

How Not to Teach Economics and Government

If you are going to start by teaching the names and functions of the three branches of government, the separation and balance of powers, how a bill becomes a law, or how the supply and demand curve works and how equilibrium price is achieved—good luck. You will almost certainly lose a great many students from the start.

In fact, had the Founding Fathers learned government, or the captains of industry learned economics the way these subjects are normally taught in our schools, we might still be the ex–Thirteen Colonies struggling with the Articles of Confederation.

Instead, try the following:

Wake up and Smell the Pancakes

First, ask students to come up with at least seven responses to the following question:

What rules, laws, regulations, or public policies did you encounter from the time you woke up this morning until you got here to class?

After a few minutes, walk them through your own morning to see how much they may have missed.

1. We sleep on mattresses with tags that contain ominous legal language, including the fire regulations met by the product.

2. You may brush your teeth only with toothpaste that is appropriately certified.

3. Here is an interesting challenge—at breakfast some parents and teachers read a newspaper whose every single front-page article has something to do with law or government. Try it.

4. Then we get on cars, trains, or buses that are subject to transportation and traffic laws and regulations.

Use the School Experience as a Teaching Tool

- Have students research compulsory school attendance laws, or curriculum framework and standards, or textbook approval, or school budgets.

  Good questions should drive the research: Why do we have to attend school? Why did college attendance rates dramatically increase after WWII? Why do we have to learn what we do? Who selects the books, and how? Why doesn't the school have the money to do this or that?

- Use the school dress code, sex education, graduation requirements, or other aspects of the education process to teach about the three branches of government.

In each case, who (administrators, teachers, parents, students, etc.) plays the role of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches?

Go Beyond the School Boundaries

- Invite local elected officials or their representatives to your classroom to talk about their jobs and the challenges facing their community or district.
- Invite the school police officer (or any other peace officer) to answer questions the students might have about everyday crime, punishment, and law enforcement.
- Get students involved in a local election. Organize visits by candidates to your classroom, or with time and funding, conduct field trips to campaign offices. Give extra credit for volunteering in a political campaign.
- Invite professors in social studies disciplines from a local college to speak about their areas of expertise.

Tap Into National/Racial/ Ethnic Diversity

Have students research and share personal experiences to compare the U.S. with other countries in terms of form of government, corruption, legal protections, individual liberties, freedom of speech and political expression, etc.

In the service of engaging and sustaining student interest: study racial- or ethnic-minority voting patterns. Especially if you have immigrant students, focus on immigration laws and policy, starting with their personal experience. Ask what they miss about their home countries, and what they are glad they left behind. Then ask what they most admire about the U.S., and what they have grown to dislike about it. Then compare the answers.

Get the Family Involved

Reject the conventional wisdom that politics (and religion) should never be discussed in the home.

Politics is actually a wonderful way to connect with one's parents. For some of us, it is an important way in which we are able to connect with parents who work out in "the real world" where politics matters.

Create assignments that require students to ask their parents' opinions about candidates for elected office, state propositions up for approval, or the state of the nation's domestic- or foreign-policy challenges. An extension or variation of this assignment would have students poll other students on their views and perspectives.

Develop assignments in which the student must go home and research their own parents' employment. What do your parents (or at least one of them) do? How do they feel about their wages, their boss, the union, etc.?

Hit Them in the Pocketbook

- Show your "with-it-ness" with popular culture and study cell phone bills and credit card statements, keeping things anonymous.
- Create assignments in which students study their own spending habits, and how much their parents spend on their families.
- If you are brave and secure enough, share your own paycheck stubs and income-tax returns, with the added bonus of dispelling students' notions that you are rich.

Boring as they might seem on the surface, we must give the subjects of economics and government their due importance. After the arrival of the Pilgrims on the *Mayflower,* the history of the U.S. is essentially the history of its government and its economy. Many other countries have ancient cultures and civilizations that predate their modern governments and economies.

Geography

Resources and Basic Questions

To go beyond the traditional exercise of using outline maps to teach students how to identify countries and continents by their shape, you will need other maps.

- You should use the maps in the textbook, but they do not always meet your instructional requirements.
- Your school should provide you with high-quality wall maps, but those maps are far away from many students during a whole-group discussion.
- The Internet can lead you to some incredible resources, but you cannot always have that laptop and projector on.

We recommend a rarely used resource: Build over time a collection of table or desk-size relief maps. This will cost money, but your teaching will greatly improve.

- The immediate advantages of such maps are that they are bigger than textbook and atlas maps, yet smaller and more portable than wall maps or the Internet maps on the classroom screen.
- Such maps enable students, working in pairs or small groups, to run their fingers over very faithful representations of the world, and "feel" how high mountain ranges can be, how deep some valleys are, how far distances can be.
- Such high-quality maps absorb the interest and attention of students for many minutes, without any direction from you. It is simple: human beings are naturally fascinated by the world in which they live.

Then, before you engage the students in the content of your lesson or unit, have them answer some basic questions:

- Where do I live?
- Where is our school, city, state, country?
- Where are my parents and grandparents from?

Having found themselves, they are then better able to engage in the study of some other country, continent, and culture.

Managing the Social Studies Classroom

Classroom Management and Discipline

> *Why is it that children and adolescents—who by nature are eager and voracious learners—become seen as (and fulfill the prophecy of) unwilling troublemakers who need to be controlled and manipulated into paying attention and learning at school?*
>
> *Why is it that adults—most of whom choose to work with students because they thrive on assisting others develop and learn (and many of whom are experienced teachers)—express as their primary concern and frustration getting students to behave, rather than helping them to learn?*
>
> Oakes and Lipton (1999), p. 239

Very early in a year or a career, many teachers accept the conventional wisdom that a classroom must first be controlled in order to teach the subject. This is where the error lies: concentrating on control first and teaching second. Most attempts to control, discipline, and manage people fail because they create embarrassment, anger, fear, and resentment. But if you first concentrate on teaching well, many of your classroom-management problems will dissipate. Or, you can spend most of the period trying to get students to be quiet, hiding a glaring lack of competent and interesting teaching methods.

Creative Lesson Planning

When you spend the whole period on the same activity, or repeat routines daily and weekly, time goes by slowly. Students lose focus and begin to "misbehave." Follow this rule: in every class period, students should do some reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

A given week might include group work, individual projects, watching a video, Internet research, or the creative use of the textbook and supplementary materials. Use graphic organizers, primary sources, case studies, and computer resources to make your classroom an interesting place to be.

This provides variety and keeps students on task. This is critical, because the most common "misbehaviors" happen when students have nothing to do for even just a few seconds, most likely because they do not understand or cannot do the task at hand, not because they are "bad."

Maintain and Model a Safe Environment

This means more than breaking up fights. It also means protection from racial slurs, bullying, gender taunts, and picking on special-needs students. The best way to do this is to model the behavior you want in your classroom. Make sure that your own actions don't reinforce any social or cultural stereotypes, biases, or prejudices.

Talk to your students at the beginning of the school year and let them know that you will not allow any of the students in your classroom to be hurt physically or mentally.

Establishing "Rules"

Take time throughout the year to establish and model behaviors and ways of interacting with each other. Go beyond the traditional and ineffective methods of:

- posting and "going over" the rules on the first day, or

- having students "democratically" suggest what the classroom rules should be.

Both are contrived exercises—the students know your "rules" are the same as everyone else's, or they know what "rules" you expect them to suggest. Instead, pose open-ended questions such as:

- what are the things that other students do or say in a classroom that you dislike?

- what are some things that other students do or say in a classroom that you appreciate?

Then, after regular, periodic discussions, numerous written drafts, and even humorous skits that exemplify desired and undesirable behaviors, both teacher and students can arrive at a stronger, more effective set of classroom "rules."

Such an exercise is especially effective once you realize that you are not the only person in the room who should play the role of police officer. If you insist on being the only judge and jury, you will fail.

Getting Acquainted

It may seem trite, but to get to know people is the way to come to respect them and be able to work with them. Students can spend an entire year in some classrooms never getting to know each other, and that ignorance breeds stereotyping, contempt and disrespect.

Almost every teacher develops some "icebreakers" to introduce students to one another. Here are a couple of methods:

Yarn toss: Obtain or make a ball of yarn smaller than a basketball. With the students in a circle, hold one end of the string and throw the ball across the circle to a student. That students states their name and reports something interesting, such as the best thing that happened to them this past summer. That student holds on to their part of the string and throws it across the circle to the next student who then does the same, and so on. You get the picture, but you can show students a bigger picture by having them hold up the resulting "spider web" up high and explaining the need for everyone to do their part. If even just a few students drop their part of the string, the whole web falls apart.

Getting Acquainted: At the beginning of class, distribute the handout (either the one provided in the "Reproducibles" section, or one of your own). Have students at their desks fill in the column of their own answers, and then allow them to move about the room to find other students with the same answers. Once they find a match, the other student signs their name in the applicable column, and vice versa. Give some kind of reward to the students with the most complete handout.

Seize the "Teaching Moment"

Say that in the course of a class discussion one of your students uses a derogatory ethnic term. Use this as an opportunity to discuss with the class as a whole why the term is unacceptable for thinking, mature adults—students like to be considered as such.

Do not focus on the offending individual(s); instead, discuss larger issues. Talk privately during or after class with the "offending" student to prevent embarrassing and thus "losing" the person. Make the subtle but important distinction between the person, and their words and actions: *"You are a good person, but what you did or said was bad."*

Reinforce the following two ideas in class:

- People should avoid making broad generalizations about others.

- It is not good to prejudge or be overly judgmental.

What Does One Do With a "Teach Me, I Dare You" Attitude?

Accept the dare. Before you send the student(s) to the dean, or get angry, or engage in a confrontation or power struggle, try something else.

- Give the rest of the class a question they must answer by talking with one another to get their eyes and minds off "the show."

- Deal with the offending students in private or out in the hall.

If this is not possible, reach deep down into yourself: sit with them if they won't read, sing to them, dance with them, give partial credit, kneel, beg, plead, prostrate yourself on the ground, ***find a way****, just don't give up.*

Don't give up, because those students have already given up on themselves. And realize this about sending a student "to the dean": the administrators will not know what to do with the student. By the time the child has made it to the office, the problem has disappeared, because most of the problem lies in the interaction between the students, his peers, and you.

Managing Assignments, Classwork, and Grades

Preparing a Syllabus

College instructors distribute a course syllabus to students on the first day of class, detailing all the information a student needs to know to succeed in that course: assignments, grading and attendance policies, etc. A course syllabus can work at the middle and high school level, especially if combined with a letter to parents.

Delivering Instructions

The quality of your instructions often determines the quality of the work the students do. Here are some common mistakes made by teachers:

- Keeping all instructions verbal, making some up as they go along
- Not requiring students to write anything down
- Giving several steps of instructions all at once

Not surprisingly, students often perceive teachers' instructions as vague. Instead, try the following:

1. Plan as many of your instructions ahead of time as possible.
2. Use the board to write the instructions.
3. Use PowerPoint or transparencies to display pre-planned instructions.
4. Pass out a typed handout of the instructions.

Sometimes students pay half-hearted attention to your instructions, waiting for a convenient time at which they can call you over to help them individually. Instead:

a. Require students to work in groups of two, three, or four.

b. Students must seek help from each other first.

c. When they have exhausted their options, they can call you over or send a representative.

Managing Classwork and Ensuring Accountability

Do not tell a class the following:

- They have the rest of the period to finish an assignment.
- If they don't finish, it becomes homework.

Do say (or do) the following:

1. The assignment will be done in short steps.
2. For each step, give an odd time limit of, say, 7–8 minutes.
3. At the end of that time period, each student or group must be prepared to turn in a written draft or notes, or deliver an oral summary or progress report of their work.
4. A minute before the time limit expires, announce they will need to stop soon.
5. Grant any extra time which students request. This will eventually get you to the extended period of time that your original lesson plan required.
6. All work will be graded, for either a letter or participation grade.

In other words, you must create a sense of urgency about getting to work and staying on task, and an expectation that they must complete the work.

"But I Don't Have a Pencil, Paper, Textbook, the Homework, Etc...."

Many students do not do the homework, or do not come prepared with basic supplies.

Do not reduce the amount of classwork or homework. Teach to the few who complete the work, and work on bringing everyone else up to that level.

- Have extra supplies and textbooks on hand, but create some sort of check-out or account system to prevent abuses.

- Teach students how to keep an organized binder or notebook for your class, divided into sections such as classwork, homework, tests and quizzes, etc.

Group vs. Individual Work, and Teacher Workload

Everyone prefers to work alone, and the educational system is structured around individual achievement and failure, but you should resist this for two reasons:

1. You must control your workload, or else reviewing the work of over a hundred students will consume you.

2. Extremely few workplaces in the real world require employees to work in isolation most of the time—students must learn to work with others.

The "Team Monster Conquest" activity can help students build skills and dispositions necessary to make group work successful. (See pages 100–101.) Student Creation Teams collaborate to formulate a list of characteristics of make-believe monsters, then send their list to another team. The new Conquering Teams work together to create a list of ways to defeat the monster they have been assigned. Student teams then present their monsters and strategies to the whole class.

A note on reducing teacher workload: as much as practicable, have students work in pairs or groups of three, especially on long essays, papers, or projects. Your comments on the student work will be better and more helpful to students if you are reading and grading 50 rather than 150 essays.

Grading and Building Academic Self-Confidence

We make the critical link from grading to building academic self-confidence because anything less than a B, especially when marked and circled in a red pen, can be a blow to a student's self-esteem.

This is especially true for students who claim grades do not matter to them.

At the beginning of a semester, start the students off with relatively simple and easy assignments in order to quickly build a sense of success and accomplishment.

Establishing Rubrics and Awarding Grades

It is an eternal truth of assessment that a grade is always taken by a student as a subjective evaluation of their person, more than an objective evaluation of what they know or can do.

That is why having rubrics is so important, so that students know exactly what they are being graded on. A rubric makes grading more objective and less subjective. With a rubric, a letter grade does not communicate that the student is an "A" or a "D" person, only that the student displayed more or less knowledge or understanding on this particular assignment.

It is also a truth of teaching that the more students know exactly what you want, the more they will produce exactly what you want. The clearer and more detailed your instructions, guidelines, and rubrics, the better the students' work will be.

New teachers will often not know exactly what they want to see in an assignment, so they struggle for a long time to build a system. Their assignment instructions and guidelines are skimpy and vague, so the students produce skimpy and vague work. Sometimes the rubric or criteria are weak or nonexistent, so the teacher's grading is very subjective, and students do not fully understand their grades.

This is the time to ask veterans for rubrics they use, look up some in credential program course materials, or search judiciously around the Internet, all with a view toward modifying what is out there and mold it to your assignments, expectations, and students.

Be careful: a rubric can become unwieldy and impractical if you put too much into it. You simply do not have to read and grade every single thing a student writes.

Finally, realize that rubrics and grades have their limits. If you are a good teacher, your students are learning something just by being in class. Maybe that student is learning how to be a good listener, or another student is learning how to be kind—often a teacher cannot know all that the students are learning, and rubrics and grades cannot fully capture this learning anyway.

Handling the Low Grade

After awarding a low grade, do not just leave it at that. Ask for a personal conference; talk and build a relationship with the student.

Ask the person some questions.

- How well were you able to work with other students? Did you do any of your work at the library?

- What can I do as a teacher to help you improve?
- How can the assignments be structured differently so that you can show more of what you know?
- What can you do to be more successful on this and other assignments?

Award Multiple Grades

Just as varied methods is a standard commandment of good teaching, varied and multiple means of assessing students are also indicators of good teaching. You will want to go beyond the minimum of two grades per week of instruction required by many school districts.

An array of grades gives you a better picture of a single student, and allows each student more opportunities to display what they know. Students need chances to make up low grades on a given assignment. You will also appreciate the opportunity to identify students with a pattern of weak grades in order to help them.

What if Most of My Students Are Failing?

Some teachers do not realize that a grade is a reflection of their own teaching. In some school settings, teachers will justify a large percentage of failing grades in their class by blaming students and parents for not caring about their education and not doing the work.

But a good teacher never stops trying to improve their methods and practices to yield better student work. Lesson plans, strategies, instructions, guidelines, handouts, presentations, class discussions, group work, writing assignments, rubrics, grading, classroom management, course syllabi—just as there are many things a teacher must do, there are many things that a teacher can improve.

We all want students who receive low grades to reflect on what they should have done better, and work hard to improve on the next assignment. In the same way, a teacher should see a high percentage of failing grades as their own grade, and work to improve those numbers.

Starting the Year off Right and Getting Your Classroom Ready

Clearing Your Mind

Summer is a time when a good teacher asks how to plan, change, and focus one's teaching for the coming year. Making the summer productive will make the school year more manageable. Here are some suggestions for starting the school year off right:

- Spend several quiet days (or parts of days) in your classroom cleaning and organizing. This is both a physical *and* a psychological task.
- Get rid of old or outdated materials and file your resources in a way that will make them easy to locate.
- Think about things you tried last year that didn't work. Reflect on why they didn't work, then make the needed changes.

Your Classroom Is Your Home

Take a good look at your classroom. You spend the whole day in your room, so it's important to create an inviting environment for yourself and your students.

1. Posters and charts set the tone of your classroom and motivate students to investigate topics further. Here are a few observations:
    - It's good to have some charts and posters that focus on general skills, such as critical thinking skills, study skills, or primary-source analysis skills.
    - Select charts and posters reflecting what you plan to teach in the first months of the semester so that your room environment can change as units and content change.
    - Students notice your room environment and read the various posters you put up. Posters appeal especially to visual/spatial learners.
2. Do your bulletin-board materials engage the students and grab their attention? Bulletin boards and walls should feature student work. Seeing their work posted on the wall has a tremendous effect on the self-esteem and motivation of students.
3. What about pull-down maps? Are they all up to date? Do any need repair or replacing? Do you have current, up-to-date maps that illustrate your curriculum? Geography can make history and social studies more understandable for students, and pull-down maps and large wall maps can be particularly effective.

Your classroom should be a well-decorated house—all spaces can be used. Look at the walls, the tops of all furniture pieces, the doors of drab cabinets, even the spaces above and below the air conditioner and boards.

Minimalism works in an architecturally significant home, but not in a classroom. Any space can and should be covered with student work or subject-relevant ideas, skills, and content.

Explore a Different Seating Arrangement

One effective arrangement involves five rows of four seats facing another five rows of four seats. This ensures no student is more than four seats away from a large middle aisle. The aisle, especially if outfitted with the overhead projector, laptop, or other equipment, effectively becomes the "front"

of the classroom. This way, the students have much of the class in view, instead of behind them. Such an arrangement also gives the you a chance to move around with greater ease and interact more with each student.

Another effective arrangement is a horseshoe, two students deep, so that all students can see all other students. See what works: the overarching objective is to keep students from "getting lost" or being allowed to remain "anonymous."

Textbooks

If you have received new books for the year, save a class set of the old ones for students who may have left theirs at home.

Instill in students a sense of responsibility for textbook maintenance. Find out what system or mechanisms your school employs to reduce textbook vandalism, theft, and loss.

Organize a Classroom Library

- Find a wide range of resources on your history topics. Arrange them in nice bookcases or keep them on shelves for your students.
- Use 3" x 5" cards to create a simple checkout file.
- When you have students working on projects, a classroom library can be invaluable. Be sure to have class sets of atlases, dictionaries, and some almanacs available.
- Because you, your school, and your district are always on a tight budget, build up these resources a few books at a time.

Learn About Your Students

Though normally not done in a system in which teachers arrive back from vacation one or two days before the students arrive, it is an excellent idea to find out before school starts more about your future students.

- Work with the counseling office and look at grades, assessment results, and learning needs—try to "get to know" your students before they set foot in your classroom.
- Focus on students with a less-than-stellar record—they will need more attention from you.
- On the other hand, do not turn this search into a negative. Students also need a "fresh start" each year. Remember that you could find a real diamond in the rough.
- To avoid stereotyping students, you can also do this kind of assessment during the year. Think of students as flowers that bloom at different times of year.

Teaming up With Colleagues

Find another teacher in your (or another) subject and work together to create common thematic lessons. Perhaps a complicated simulation or other exercise would work better with twice as many students and another teacher.

It is a wonderfully rich experience to have kids reading, say, *The Crucible* in English class while you teach about the Salem witch trials. Interdisciplinary education is a great way to really make learning come alive.

Special Topics

Teaching Standards and Current Events

Let us allay some of your fears and confirm others in regards to teaching to standards and curriculum frameworks:

1. No, **it is not reasonable to expect any individual teacher, let alone individual students, to know all the standards** in the district or state's curriculum framework. Even college history professors do not know all the standards well.

2. No, **the standards are not a stifling set of prescriptive, politically correct or incorrect ideologies**, i.e., intellectual handcuffs that have been placed on you by radicals on either the left or the right, depending on where you place yourself on the political spectrum.

3. You can still be a creative, enthusiastic, and intellectual teacher with your own goals and ideas. In fact, any set of standards provides a stable framework within which you can be as liberal or conservative as you like, within generous parameters.

4. No, **it is not possible to teach all the content or other standards to a satisfactory depth**, or to a satisfactory level of student understanding, within the time you have been given to teach U.S. History, or World History, or Government or Economics.

   We know it would take years, let alone one semester, to teach each subject adequately. However, you have to deal with the time you've been allotted.

But there is one sobering piece of news: yes, **you do have to teach to the standards.** Therefore, the question is not whether you can elect to teach or not teach to them, but how to do so effectively.

Below we discuss some strategies for teaching to standards while allowing for flexibility, creativity, and intellectual and emotional engagement of both you and your students.

Make Every Historical Period Your Favorite

Convince yourself before every unit that the historical period you are about to teach is fascinating and interesting.

Get as enthusiastic as you can about teaching it. You did not have time to take all the history or social-science classes you wanted to in college, but you have a chance now (and every year hence) to learn as much as you can (and want to) learn about these subjects. You will be able to communicate your own enthusiasm to your students.

Post-Holing

Post holes are those into which fenceposts are driven. In the study of history, think of curriculum frameworks and content standards as the entirety of the fence you must put up. The post holes are the points within units at which you should take time to teach a topic to greater depth.

Some ideas on where and when to dig those holes and drive those posts:

- Every three weeks or so, for two to three days

- According to some theme or idea that runs across your course, such as the issues that were affecting young people or women at any particular historical period

- According to your own intellectual or other interests, such as the status of Jewish or Latino populations in a particular historical period

- Perhaps you are comfortable consulting the state "blueprints" for the standardized tests, and the state goes as far as stating the percentage of questions that each standard "gets" on the test. You can then post-hole the standards that typically get the most questions.

What if I Think the Textbook Is a Bunch of Lies?

Do not replace what you perceive to be one set of dogmatic opinions with another, namely your own. Instead, teach students to question and interrogate the textbook, to seek other sources and viewpoints. Enable students to read and make up their own minds.

Teach controversial periods of history (all of them, essentially) from various viewpoints. For example, if you're teaching the period of western expansion and Manifest Destiny, you can teach how Anglo settlers saw it, how the Native Americans saw it, how Mexico and other countries saw it, etc.

Teach Current Events in a Different Way

Owing partly to standards, current events are now either left out of the curriculum or haphazardly presented in the oldest format in the teaching profession—e.g., students find a newspaper article, cut it out, attach a page summarizing the article in their own words, and turn it in. *Boooooring!* This type of assignment usually does not pique a student's interest or bring them up to date on issues facing the world.

Here are some ideas for implementing current events in your classroom:

- Discuss the differences between local, state, national, and international newspaper/magazine stories.

- Point out the difference between stories with short-term interest (e.g., a freeway auto accident) and those with long-term significance (e.g., Iraq).

- Have students find an article of long-term significance and write a telegram/fax or leave an e-mail message to a person mentioned in the article. The student should read the article and form an opinion about what is happening and then write to a prominent person involved in the story. In addition to the short message, the student would also include background information and explain the reasoning behind their message.

- Another activity for a semester-long project would be to have the class brainstorm 20 or 30 issues in the local, state, national, and international arenas.

- Each student can follow and research an issue for the entire year. Students can report to the class periodically on their progress and events concerning their topic, enabling them to become the class authority on that particular topic.

Building a College-Bound Culture in Your Classroom and School

> *Teachers express a cultural value when they tell all their students, "You can go to college." But too often they leave unspoken their belief, "if you act like someone else." Just who that "someone else" might be will vary, but it often conforms to a familiar stereotype of who is a "successful" college student.*
>
> *The profile of such a student is complex, but it likely includes someone who scores high on standardized tests; someone whose parents went to college; someone whose main language is mainstream, unaccented English; someone who has middle-class perspectives and financial support; and so on.*
>
> *Perhaps schools' biggest challenge is to create a school culture that supports college attendance for students whose lives do not conform to this profile.*
>
> Oakes and Lipton (2007), p. 354

One of a teacher's biggest problems is that if a student is not college-bound, the person has little reason to pay attention in class, study at home, and work hard to get a good grade in your class. In elite private schools, no one ever asks who is planning to go to college. It is understood that most, if not all of them, are college-bound.

This is the key. At such schools, other college-bound students surround students, most with at least one parent who is a college graduate. Other schools have to work harder to build that kind of ethic.

Do not be fooled: If asked, most students will say they are going to college. The students know what you want to hear, so they raise their hands even if they have no actual intentions or plans for going to college.

Here is what you can do to help:

In Your Classroom

- Set aside a regular time to talk about your experiences in college. College was hard but fun for many of us, it was a special time in our lives, and it was our ticket to the middle class. You can build this time into your social studies, "advisory," or "homeroom" periods.

- Invite your former college classmates or other professionals to your classroom to spend a few minutes with your students.

Find and Share Relevant Data

Obtain tables of interesting statistics from the U.S. Department of Education at http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest. The numbers below are taken from this source:

- In 2008, 68.6% of high school completers (including GEDs) enrolled in some type of college (Table 201).

- In 2007–08, 39.5% of 2006–07 public school graduates attended four-year institutions (Table 202).

- In 2008, 14% of all 18- to 24-year-old high school completers attended a two-year institution, and 33% attended a four-year institution (Table 204). This means 53% of 18- to 24-year old high school completers did not

go on to either two-year or four-year colleges.

- Comparing the first and third bullets above provides evidence that not all who start college complete college.

- Among 25-to-34-year olds, the U.S. is in tenth place for higher-education attainment, behind Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Ireland, Japan, South Korea, Norway, and Spain (2007 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD] report).

- In 2006–07, nationwide, 73.9% of public school graduates received a college diploma four years after beginning their freshman year (NCES, Digest of Education Statistics, Table 105).

- Nationwide, 56% of the 1999–2000 high school graduates took five years or less to complete their bachelor's degrees; 27% took between 5–10 years; 19% took more than 10 years (NCES, Digest of Education Statistics, Table 391).

- In 2005–07, of the population 25 years old and over, 27% had a bachelor's degree or higher (Table 12).

Those are nationwide averages; you can use other tables from the same or similar sources to explore how income, race, and ethnicity affect opportunities to go to and complete college. Other tables, under the heading "Outcomes of Education," offer evidence that on the average, the more education one has, the higher one's income and the more likely one will be employed.

A final interesting statistic comes from the College Board, maker of the SAT, at http://professionals.collegeboard.com/data-reports-research.

- Of college-bound seniors who took the SAT in 2007, 68% of Mexican-American and 51% of Black seniors were first-generation: the first in their family to attend college.

- In contrast, only 33% of Asian, and 29% of White college-bound seniors were first-generation.

In other words, a key determinant of whether a student goes to college is whether at least one of their parents did.

Accessible statistics and analyses are also available from other sources:

- National Council of La Raza

- Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund

- NAACP

- Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund

In Your School

- During college fairs, wear clothes with college insignia, and take reluctant students by the hand to talk to a college recruiter.

- When the military recruiters come to campus, point out that instead of joining right out of high school as enlisted men and women, students should go to college first, then join as commissioned officers for higher pay and greater responsibility.

- Lead an effort to post the names and pictures of all your school's teachers and administrators in a glass case, along with their colleges and degrees.

- Start a career day. Speakers representing

a range of professions, some in uniform, some alumni, rotate throughout classrooms, spending 15 minutes with a class. The school prepares students to ask meaningful questions.

- Trips to local colleges and universities are great. Even more inspiring is a field trip, including parents, to witness a commencement ceremony.

On the Internet

There are many Web sites online that purport to help students gain admission to college, but many are not user-friendly, or cost money, or bombard students with advertisements.

We know of one, The CLIC Network (www.theclic.net), which uses the latest computer technologies to streamline the college-search process. The site is completely free to students and schools.

In 15 minutes, a student can enroll in The CLIC and be provided a list of colleges, universities, financial aid and scholarship opportunities, and community organizations offering internships and summer jobs for students with the precise characteristics the students have entered.

A Final Note

Some say that encouraging everyone to go to college is misguided, that college is not for everyone, that college prep sets some students up for failure, that we need to bring back vocational education, that society needs non–college graduates to be plumbers and electricians, that we can't all be poets, etc. Those certainly seem like realistic opinions supported by facts, experience, and statistics.

We disagree, and we think teachers and others in the field, all of whom have college degrees, should want for their students what they clearly wanted for themselves, and what many of them want for their own children. Today, a growing number of school districts and a presidential administration agree. Higher college-enrollment rates are evidence that students also agree.

This country's economic success after WWII, and a commitment to increasing the high school graduation rate, created a situation in which a college degree is today what a high school diploma was 50 years ago.

Facts, experience, and statistics also show that if a student does not have at least some college, that person will make less money and enjoy less job satisfaction than they would with a college degree.

And then there is a moral dimension to the question: Teachers, counselors, and school administrators should not decide, as early as middle school, who is and isn't fit for college. Only the individual decides that, and if they had all the information they need, most students would choose college.

It is the job of a history teacher to provide the information and an intellectual environment to enable the individual to make their own decisions and judgments about history. Therefore, it should be the job of any teacher to provide the information and the right environment to enable individual students to make their own decisions about going to college.

> *A lawyer without history or literature is a mechanic, a mere working mason; if he possesses some knowledge of these, he may venture to call himself an architect.*
>
> Sir Walter Scott (Lewis)

Teaching English Language Learners

How should you address the challenges you face in teaching ELL students, most of them recent immigrants?

No Need to Learn a Foreign Language

You don't have to go out and learn Spanish, Chinese, or any other language in order to communicate effectively with English Language Learners.

True story: Ron greeted a Japanese-surnamed immigrant student with a few words in Japanese every morning for a few weeks.

A surprised class and teacher learned much later that the student was a native Spanish-speaker from Peru who knew no Japanese. The student thought Ron's Japanese was some English he had not yet learned.

Instead, you need to:

1. Allow students to use their native language when they want.

2. Encourage the use of English with a positive attitude.

You don't need to be the "English police"—a negative, punitive approach that shames and shuts student down. (More on that later.)

No Need to Rely on External Sources to Learn About Other Cultures

Taking classes and workshops to learn about other cultures and histories is fine if you have the time and money, or if salary points are being offered. Understand that you have experts sitting right in front of you.

Build classroom assignments in which students share their cultural experiences and home country's history.

No Need to Translate Everything

You don't need to translate the text or other materials into some other language. Chances are you do not have the time, the necessary linguistic knowledge, nor the access to professional translators to produce one.

You don't need any of that. Again, you have free labor and experts in front of you.

Here is a good assignment:

1. Students use an Internet translation service (such as Altavista) to produce a draft translation from English to another language, or vice-versa.

2. The students "clean up" and correct the translation. You don't need a perfect translation, just one clear enough to get the point.

In the process of formulating an acceptable translation, you are teaching the necessary English text. You may even pick up some words in a new language.

No Need to Give up Talking to Parents

Certain people will always find a way to communicate:

- A parent who cares about their child's education
- A teacher who cares about that student succeeding in their class
- A student who wants to do well in school

If you are not that kind of teacher, we don't know how to help you. If you feel you do not have that kind of parent or student, rethink the situation:

- The problem is no greater with an ELL student than with any other student.
- Show the parents concern for the child, and get some help with translation.

The student can help, and you can tell if the kid starts to lie or misrepresent. And if they get away with it? You did your part.

Attitude Adjustment

You need to rethink any opposition you have against bilingual education or the use of any language other than English.

> *Don't worry. Check with teachers in later grades. Eventually the ELLs learn to speak English and then you can't shut them up.*
>
> *The real issue is the gap between the verbal English they learn in order to survive outside the classroom and communicate with friends, and the academic language, and reading and writing skills they need to do well in school. Developing that academic language is your challenge.*

There is an enormous difference between telling students not to speak in their native language, and encouraging them to speak English.

If you provide an open, comfortable environment in which students feel safe to occasionally use another language "in private," they are then more likely to feel safe to produce English "in public."

If you impose a hostile, restricted environment in which students are not allowed to use whatever language they want "in private," they are then more likely to "shut down" out of embarrassment, fear, and resentment "in public."

But Doesn't Less of One Language Allow More of Another?

Students do not have to reduce or eliminate the time they spend speaking their native language in order to spend more time speaking English.

This seems counter-intuitive: there is a finite time in a day or lesson in which to speak any language, and since a person cannot speak two languages at the same time, the person must make a choice. So isn't this a zero-sum game? No, it is not. In fact, the opposite is true. Here are two analogies to help make the point.

- Classroom communication between students stretches limits and boundaries. For example, if you allow it, is there a limit to the amount of off-task chatter and gossip that students can produce? Is there a limit to the number of snide remarks or whispers students can make? Is there a limit to the number of surreptitious notes students can pass to each other? In fact, isn't it true that each of these tends to produce more of the same in other students?
- To put it another way, let's say that in the middle of a discussion of content, anything

a student says is either a fact or an opinion. Would we ever think of telling students to choose their words carefully because if they state more facts, they can state fewer opinions? Or that if they want to state more opinions, they must limit the number of facts they pronounce? Of course not. In fact, we would argue that the more facts a person uses, the stronger their opinions. Or, the more opinions they share, the more they and other students must search for facts to support them.

It is the same with language. Allowing students to use more of their native language may actually, in the right environment, lead to greater use and production of English.

Many of you many not agree with this. There are reasons why bilingual education has always been controversial. But those who can play more than one sport, or play more than one musical instrument, would probably agree with us.

Here is one last analogy: Does teaching more periods of U.S. History make you a stronger or weaker teacher of World History? If you teach more periods of Economics and Government, and must then teach fewer periods of U.S. History, does that make you a better teacher of the first and a weaker teacher of the latter? Or is it the case that teaching more than one discipline enables you to discover different perspectives and methods than can make you a better teacher in all disciplines?

But Isn't Total Immersion the Best Way?

Sure, if each ELL were completely surrounded by English-speaking peers. However, chances are they aren't. It is more likely that:

- the teacher is only one, or one of very few individuals speaking English in the class
- the teacher is doing most of the talking
- there are not enough opportunities for students to communicate with each other.

If that ELL is one of many sharing the same native language, the person is actually immersed in that language, not English. And even if that ELL is one of very few ELLs in the class, chances are the person just hears a lot of English and has little opportunity to attempt to produce it.

Many ELLs seem to learn more English out on the playground than in your class. This isn't because they are lazy and won't work hard to learn English in your class.

It's because the playground is the only time they are actually "immersed" in English, in a comfortable environment in which they have multiple opportunities to speak to others.

Consider the possibility of replicating some of that environment in your classroom.

Language and Behavior

You may perceive students' speaking in their native language as a problem of classroom management: they are being rude and inconsiderate, or they are possibly talking about you or fellow students.

But the real problem is the act—passing notes, gossiping, talking about others, being off-task—not the language being used to perform the act. ELL students do not misbehave any more than other students do in English. Sure, they might be

talking about you, but other students are doing the same in English.

Do not focus on eliminating the "misbehavior" of speaking a language other than English—focus on eliminating misbehavior by planning and teaching good lessons, ones in which:

- students have opportunities to speak and listen, read and write
- the teacher does less, rather than more, talking.

English Is Hard to Learn

ELLs face significant challenges in learning English.

One challenge is that English mixes aspects of several other languages, so it has many contradictions and inconsistencies (such as *threw* vs. *through*).

Another challenge is that native speakers normally perceive a "foreign accent" as strange and funny, and immature adolescents know how to make fun of and embarrass their peers. The learner of a new language, already in a vulnerable and self-conscious position, always feels bad. An accent results when a person is trying hard to reproduce the sounds of your language using the only set of sounds they have ever learned and therefore know—the sounds of their native language.

Professional Development: Becoming a Better Teacher

> *Make the most of yourself for that is all there is of you.*
>
> Ralph Waldo Emerson (Lewis)

We agree that teachers who succeed rely on four important factors to keep their passion for teaching during a long career in teaching, making it a profession rather than just a job:

1. Interaction with students
2. A close relationship with colleagues on the school staff
3. An active involvement in local and state social-science organizations
4. A constant process of recharging and renewal through professional workshops and institutes.

Over the years, we have had the privilege of attending, among others, the following:

- A media institute in social studies at UC Berkeley
- A People and Technology program at Harvard University
- A six-week travel and study grant in India through the University of Southern California
- Programs on government at Pepperdine University
- American History Institutes in Washington, D.C., and Chicago
- Teaching American History grants that offer professional development opportunities in local school districts.

Many of these workshops are often of no or very little cost to participants: room and board, transportation, and materials are part of the workshop, and many of them even include a stipend for the period of study.

Without question, these professional development programs, plus attendance at the last 35 National Council for Social Studies conferences, have made a major contribution to the author's growth as a professional educator. Such programs prevent burnout, keep the flame of love for the profession alive, and sustain one's interest in teaching and learning.

Summer Institutes

The spring semester is a good time to prepare and plan a summer in which you can recharge your professional batteries, perhaps even travel. Make a family trip or vacation out of an institute—bring your spouse and children, and request married-student housing on campus.

Your school district, county, or state education department Web site is a good place to look for announcements. Several organizations offer programs for teachers, such as.

- Teaching Traditional American History Grants, U.S. Department of Education
- Supreme Court Historical Society
- The Foundation for Teaching Economics at the National Archives

- The Gilder Lehrman Institute
- The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
- The National Endowment for the Humanities
- National Geographic

Organizations that represent disciplines that make up the social studies often offer summer institutes for teachers: anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology.

On a rare day off or on a Saturday, take a trip to a local college or university—department offices often have the announcements up on a bulletin board.

Conferences

Teachers, like all other professionals, need to keep on top of the latest developments in their field, and one of the best ways to do this is to go to local, state, and national conferences. While attending a conference, you have a chance not only to find out about what's new and exciting in your field, but also to interact with teachers excited about their profession.

Conferences offer lecture sessions and workshops on a variety of topics. Start by going through your copy of the program and marking the sessions/workshops that pique your interest or pertain to the subjects you teach. You cannot go to all the sessions you want, but you can attend with a friend and team up to collect handouts. If you are alone, collect the handout from one session and attend the other.

Many conferences now make electronic versions of session handouts available online. Check the conference program to see if this option is available.

Conferences also afford you the opportunity to visit educational publishers and see the latest materials available. You can look through brand-new items (some not yet published), and you might have a chance to meet and talk with the authors. Look for special events in the exhibition hall such as book signings and special offers (and even free food and drinks).

Funding Sources

Now comes the big question: where does one find the money to attend a conference? Look into the wide range of staff-development funds available for your school or district. These can include gifted funds, Title I funds, school-determined needs, and even PTA funds.

One way to gain free admission to many conferences is to apply to give a session. If your proposal is accepted, you can have the very practical and intellectually rewarding experience of sharing your work with your peers, and then attending the rest of the conference for free.

Organizations

A number of organizations of interest, most of which hold annual conferences, have state or regional chapters, such as the California Council for the Social Studies, which also hold annual conferences:

- Anti-Defamation League
- American Association for State and Local History
- American Historical Association

- Center for Civic Education
- Constitutional Rights Foundation
- Facing History, Facing Ourselves
- Junior Achievement
- National Council for Geographic Education
- National Council for History Education
- National Council on Economic Education
- National Council for the Social Studies
- Organization of American Historians
- Organization of History Teachers
- Street Law
- World History Association

Finally, there are special-interest organizations whose national and regional conferences provide rewarding experiences:

- Association of Mexican American Educators
- Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History
- Native American Heritage Commission
- National Alliance of Black School Educators
- National Association for Asian and Pacific American Education
- Quality Education for Minorities Network

Some Ancient and Modern Thinkers

The Wisdom of the Ancients

For all you professional historians who happen to have jobs as middle and high school teachers, we revisit both ancient and modern sources to find some deep thoughts concerning the teaching of history and geography to young people: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, R.G. Collingwood, William and Ariel Durant, John Dewey, and Lev Vygotsky.

Awesome company indeed. While there are others, we restrict our literature review to these voices in the interest of brevity and practicality.

Socrates and Plato

The first two great philosophers of ancient Greece did not have much to say about the teaching of history to young students, though they had a great deal to say about government, morals, and other important matters important to the social studies. They lived at a time when there were no disciplines or fields of study such as history and economics.

Socrates was born on or about 469 BCE, and Plato in 428 BCE. Plato was a student of Socrates, and 13 years after Socrates was tried and executed by an Athenian court, Plato founded his own Academy, a school that Aristotle would later attend.

Socrates did not write down his teachings, and a great deal of what Plato wrote is in the form of dialogues between Socrates and various students. So it is often not possible to distinguish between what Socrates and Plato said—all we know is what Plato said Socrates said.

Plato's *The Republic* proposes an ideal school curriculum consisting of gymnastics and poetry (including music and art) at the elementary level, then arithmetic, plane geometry, astronomy, harmonics (more music) and dialectics for youth preparing to become guardians (warriors, soldiers) and philosopher-kings who would protect and rule various "cities," or political communities (Brann, 1979, p. xliii).

"Dialectics" was essentially the teaching method of Socrates, involving intellectual conversations in which students seek the definition of truth and "the good."

Book II of *The Republic* contains an interesting discussion about how the education of the guardians should take place. Socrates, in conversation with Glaucon and Adeimantus (Plato's older brothers), and possibly Plato himself (Larson, p. xvii), proposes, among other things, the following:

1. The education of the guardians should follow a "time-tested" formula of gymnastics for the body and poetry (music) for the soul.

2. Poetry includes stories, some true and some false, but the education of the young must start with stories.

3. The stories should be carefully chosen so that they do not run counter to the opinions we want the children to have when they grow older.

4. We need to also separate the storytellers who tell good stories from those who tell bad ones.

5. Stories about gods who do horrible things to each other and to humans should be eliminated, since we want the future guardians to avoid fighting and violence.

6. Such stories, especially ones told by Hesiod and Homer, should not be allowed as part of the education of the young.

Aristotle (384–321 BCE)

Aristotle was a student in Plato's Academy for about 20 years, served as personal tutor to Alexander the Great, and had a tremendous impact on the intellectual life and thought of much of the world long after his death. As Max Lerner, professor of political science at Williams College, wrote in 1943:

> "…there were whole centuries when the civilized world lived in Aristotle's shadow—and not only the European world, but the Ottoman and African; not only the Christian world but the Jewish and Islamic—centuries when all knowledge was held to be contained in the writings of one man" (Aristotle—Jowett, 1943).

Politics was Aristotle's major treatise on government. As did Socrates and Plato, Aristotle said nothing specifically about the teaching of history in schools to young students.

But at the end of *Politics,* in Books VII and VIII, Aristotle proposed an educational system for an ideal state, and various chapters contain fascinating insights into how he thought the education of the young should work. Topics include:

- the purpose of education: Book VII, Chapter 14, pp. 308–309
- telling stories to young children: Book VII, Chapter 17, pp. 316–317
- profanity and indecent speech in the classroom: Book VII, Chapter 17, p. 318
- elementary- vs. secondary-level education: Book VII, Chapter 17
- democracy in the classroom: Book VIII, Chapter 2, p. 320
- curriculum frameworks and content standards: Book VIII, Chapter 3, pp. 322–323
- music as a way to improve children's behavior: Book VIII, Chapters 5 and 6, p. 331.

The Work of Some Modern Thinkers

R.G. Collingwood: On Learning and Teaching History and Philosophy

Robin George Collingwood (1889–1943), philosopher, historian, and archaeologist, was a professor of philosophy at Oxford from 1935 to 1941. He is best known for his work in the field of philosophy of history, and is widely regarded as "the thinker whose ideas have effectively set the agenda for those working on it ever since his untimely death in 1943" (Dray and Van Der Dussen, 1999).

In a chapter entitled "The History of Philosophy" from his intellectual autobiography, Collingwood offers brilliant insights on the learning and teaching of history and philosophy (Collingwood, 1939, 1959, pp. 58–76).

In the first part of the chapter, Collingwood powerfully explains the necessity of:

1. posing the right question before reading any text

2. trying to figure out what question the author was trying to answer.

To do the above is, essentially, "doing" history. For Collingwood, "history did not mean knowing what events followed what. It meant getting inside other people's heads, looking at their situation through their eyes, and thinking for yourself whether the way in which they tackled it was the right way."

He ends the chapter with the ringing statement that "in the history of philosophy, as in every other kind, nothing capable of being learnt by heart, nothing capable of being memorized, is history."

William and Ariel Durant: The Lessons of History

William James Durant (1885–1981) and Ariel Durant (born Ada Kaufman, 1898; died 1981) in Los Angeles) were a husband-and-wife team of Pulitzer Prize–winning writers. Their 11-volume *Story of Civilization,* written and published from 1935 until 1975, established them among the best known writers of popular philosophy and history (Encyclopaedia Brittanica, 2008).

In a monumental essay entitled "The Lessons of History," the Durants reviewed their *Story of Civilization,* with brief-but-comprehensive chapters on the relationship between history and geography, science, race, religion, economics, government, war, progress, and other subjects.

In an incredibly thought-provoking first chapter entitled "Hesitations," the Durants ask historians a series of questions, ones every social studies or history teacher should ask themselves. The Durants begin with:

- Of what use have your studies been?

- Have you found in your work only the amusement of recounting the rise and fall of nations and ideas, and retelling "sad stories of the death of kings"?

The Durants go on to state that history is too complicated for any one individual to understand, but we should inspire everyone to make the effort nonetheless.

Finally, in one of the most inviting introductions to a history book ever written, the authors close their first chapter with the following:

"…we may ask…what history has to say about the nature, conduct, and prospects of man. It is a precarious enterprise, and only a fool would try to compress a hundred centuries into a hundred pages of hazardous conclusions. We proceed."

John Dewey: The Significance of Geography and History (1916)

In his seminal book, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education,* John Dewey included a chapter that constitutes a beautiful, powerful and impassioned explanation of the importance of the study of geography and history. In "The Significance of Geography and History," Dewey makes major points about:

- how these subjects bring meaning to the lived experiences of students
- how the study of human beings cannot be separated from a study of the world in which they live, and the study of how human beings have come to be who they are
- why, if that separation occurs, how geography and history become mere collections of meaningless facts about the physical world, or meaningless dates and events.

These points may seem obvious, but Dewey deepens, extends, and develops each thought into an enduring set of ideas as only a true philosopher can:

- Geography and history are able to bring a full range of meaning to the experiences lived by students on a daily basis, and the experiences lived by their ancestors.
- What matters most in the world are the lives lived by human beings, but it matters that these lives are lived on earth and in nature, not in some empty space. Geography thus matters because it is the study of that earth and that nature.
- If geography is studied separate from the people and the lives they lead, then it becomes a mere collection of facts about the physical world that holds little meaning for students.
- For example, the goal of instruction should be to teach students all that the sun is and does for the earth, so that it becomes more than just a hot, pretty circle in the sky that shows up every day without us thinking or doing anything about it.
- Similarly, history matters because the lives lived by people have histories behind them, and to truly understand us complex human beings, either as individuals or as members of groups, we must study how we came to be who we are.
- Sometimes teachers teach history through the actions of important people, separate from the social settings in which they lived. When that happens, it may be easier for students to temporarily memorize the actions, but they will not truly understand either the people or the history.

Lev Vygotsky: Learning to Write

Vygotsky (1896–1934) was a Russian pioneer in the field of psychology, and is now widely acknowledged as one of the founding fathers of developmental psychology and socio-cultural and socio-historical theories of education.

He relied on the philosophical tradition of Hegel and Marx, "according to which the essence of any phenomenon could be apprehended only through a study of its origin and history." One of his most

important books, *Thought and Language,* is an intellectual tour-de-force that traces the roots and development of these two basic human functions. In it, Vygotsky asks and answers two of the most common questions about teaching writing asked by all teachers:

- Why is learning to write well so hard for students?
- Why is their writing ability always so far behind their speaking ability?

In essence, Vygotsky's answer is as follows:

1. Writing is difficult to learn and do because it is different than talking—it lacks the music and intonation of speech, and it lacks the audience of another person.
2. Writing requires more mental abstractions and physical movements than speech—a person must go from thought to language, disengage from actual speech, replace words with written symbols, then transfer those with fine motor skills and finger muscles to a blank sheet of paper.
3. Students simply do not understand why writing is necessary and useful. In contrast, live conversation with another person makes constant, dynamic demands for thought and even action from both participants. In writing, however, the student must both create and satisfy the need for communication, without speaking and without an audience.

That is why writing is hard, and not just for young students, but for all of us.

Partly based on Vygotsky, here are three ideas for teaching writing in the social studies classroom:

Copy Now, Paraphrase and Summarize Later

Particularly in the early part of a semester or year, avoid the typical assignments that have students put things "in their own words." Students will just use lousy writing to try and say the same thing as the text.

At the beginning, it is better to have them copy good writing. Later they can develop the necessary skills of paraphrasing and summarizing, on the way to developing the ultimate skill of expressing themselves in their own words.

Give Students an Audience

Give students the audience that Vygotsky calls the "interlocutor." Whenever possible, have them write to someone.

For example, instead of an assignment that asks students for five causes of the Civil War in a five-paragraph essay, have them write a series of letters or notes as:

- a Confederate or Union soldier to a relative back home
- a communication from the President to the French ambassador
- a Northern abolitionist to his congregation
- a Southern slave to his family up north, etc.

Double- or Triple-up Assignments

Ease the amount of your workload and improve the quality of your feedback by requiring drafts and coordinating peer review.

Instead of getting 20 pages of lousy ideas and writing at the end of the semester, require a one-page proposal, then a three-page outline, then a seven-page first draft, etc., until you get what you want.

Build time into lessons to have students read and comment on each other's work. You are not the only one in the room who needs to be able to read and understand good writing.

Dr. Sam Wineburg

Perhaps the foremost historian of the teaching of history in the English-speaking world, Dr. Sam Wineburg is a professor of education at Stanford University. His mentor, the renowned education researcher Lee S. Shulman, has cited Dr. Wineburg as nearly singlehandedly forging "a distinctive field of research and a new educational literature." Professor Peter Seixas of the University of British Columbia, another giant in the field, asserts that Dr. Wineburg is "the pre-eminent North American researcher in history education."

Dr. Wineburg and his collaborators, among them Daisy Martin, Tom Levine, and Chauncey Monte-Sano (all based at Stanford University) have developed an "inquiry method" approach to teaching history. The inquiry method, inspired by the teaching of Socrates, is one of the highest forms of critical thinking, and its practices and traditions are found in every academic discipline. At the heart of the method is the formation and testing of hypotheses, and the teaching of students to be accountable for their ideas and opinions, rather than the encouragement of "free-floating undeterred discussions."

The basic sequence of the method is as follows:

1. A moving or vivid account of a historical phenomenon—a video clip, poem or cartoon, newspaper article or letter, a role play or dramatization—is presented.

2. The teacher provides a focus question. For example, a common question is, "Why did Truman drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima?"

3. Students are asked to brainstorm and list hypotheses and possible answers.

4. The teacher then presents students with various sets of data, sources, or text, all of which can come in any number of forms.

5. In a recursive process, students gather data and revise their hypotheses. Each data-gathering instance is followed by a hypothesis-revision session, altering, removing or adding hypotheses as warranted by the data.

The inquiry method allows for variations such as the introduction of disconfirming data days later, thus reopening the inquiry, or the writing of short answers at any point in the process, or the preparation of extended essays at the end.

At http://historicalthinkingmatters.org/, an award-winning Web site produced by Dr. Wineburg and his collaborators, one can find a number of curriculum units in U.S. history that exemplify the inquiry method.

Dr. Benjamin Bloom

Professor Benjamin Bloom joined the faculty of the University of Chicago in 1944. One of the major themes of his life's work was how educational

setting and home environments can foster human potential.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, his collaboration with other members of the American Psychological Association led to a system of classification that came to be known as Bloom's Taxonomy. The original hierarchy ordered cognitive operations into six levels of increasing complexity: factual knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

As Elliot W. Eisner, professor of education at Stanford University and former student of Bloom's, once wrote, one key feature of the taxonomy is that:

> "…each subsequent level depends upon the student's ability to perform at the level or levels that precede it. For example, the ability to evaluate—the highest level in the cognitive taxonomy—is predicated on the assumption that for the student to be able to evaluate, he or she would need to have the necessary information, understand the information he or she had, be able to apply it, be able to analyze it, synthesize it and then eventually evaluate it."

Bloom's Taxonomy is frequently used in social studies classrooms to formulate and order questions and other items on test and quizzes. It can also be used to formulate a series of questions that will drive an extended class discussion.

The work of Professor Bloom was much broader than his famous taxonomy. He was an early critic of a traditional approach to assessment that assumed student achievement would always fall into a "normal distribution," that A–F grades can be accurately determined and used to compare students.

As Eisner writes, Bloom "recognized that what was important in education was not that students should be compared, but that they should be helped to achieve the goals of the curriculum they were studying." For Bloom, "it made no pedagogical sense to expect all students to take the same amount of time to achieve the same objectives. There were individual differences among students, and the important thing was to accommodate those differences in order to promote learning rather than to hold time constant and to expect some students to fail."

Another excellent graphic display applying Bloom's Taxonomy to the teaching of social studies can be found at the Web site of the Connecticut Network, operated by the Connecticut Public Affairs Network, a nonprofit organization: http://www.ctn.state.ct.us/civics/bloom.asp.

Dr. Howard Gardner

A professor at the Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, Dr. Howard Gardner devised his Multiple Intelligences, one of the most widely cited frameworks for thinking about how humans think.

Starting in 1983 with his book *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences,* Dr. Gardner originally laid out a set of seven intelligences:

- linguistic
- logical-mathematical
- musical
- bodily kinesthetic

- spatial
- interpersonal
- intrapersonal

While his theory was seen as problematic by researchers and scholars seeking empirical evidence, mostly through results on intelligence tests, the theory became very popular among teachers and educators because it was consistent with the idea and the reality that students think and learn in different ways. Dr. Gardner's recent work has explored the possible addition of other intelligences to the original seven: naturalist, spiritual, existential, and moral.

An interesting table mapping the Multiple Intelligences framework to the teaching of social studies can be found at the Web site of the Connecticut Network, operated by the Connecticut Public Affairs Network, a nonprofit organization: http://www.ctn.state.ct.us/civics/gardner.asp.

Mel Levine, M.D.

Dr. Mel Levine is the cofounder of All Kinds of Minds, a nonprofit institute for the study of differences in learning, with financier Charles R. Schwab.

Over the past 30 years, Levine has designed programs for the evaluation of children and young adults with learning, development, and/or behavioral problems. He has developed a framework based on what he terms "neurodevelopmental functions" for understanding why children struggle in school.

In Levine's framework, these neurodevelopmental functions are organized into one of eight neurodevelopment constructs or systems:

- Attention control
- Memory
- Language
- Spatial ordering
- Sequential ordering
- Motor
- Higher thinking
- Social thinking

Instead of thinking as these systems as existing in separate compartmentalized entities, Levine describes student learning in terms of unique "neurodevelopmental profiles" of personal strengths and weaknesses.

Most useful for a social studies teacher, or any teacher, is the idea that the best way to address a students' academic and other weaknesses is to begin by identifying and understanding the students' strengths, and ensuring that the individual student understands these strengths.

Reproducibles

Teacher Procedures/Student Responsibilities Lesson-Plan Format

Teacher's name: _____ Class/period: _____

Unit: _____ Date: _____

Standards and skills (curriculum, content, academic, ELD or language standards; historical thinking or social-science analysis skills):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Learning objectives (academic learning goals, content and language goals, understandings, key concepts, essential questions, knowledge and skills):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Resources (readings, materials, prior or prerequisite knowledge):

_____

_____

_____

_____

Time	Teacher procedures	Student responsibilities

Homework:

_____

_____

_____

Differentiated instruction, or accommodations for English-language or special-needs learners:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Assessment:

Assignment: _____ Points/grading: _____

Assignment: _____ Points/grading: _____

Evaluation of lesson effectiveness:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Student Grouping Lesson-Plan Format

Teacher: _____ Lesson date: _____ Period/time: _____

Course/subject: _____ Grade: _____ Unit in progress: _____

Standards to be met or addressed (curriculum, content, academic, language):	Notes:
Skills to be learned (historical thinking, social science analysis skills, etc.):	
Learning objectives (academic learning goals, content and language goals, understandings, key concepts, essential questions, knowledge and skills):	
Differentiated instruction, or accommodations for EL, ELD, or special-needs learners:	

Lesson Phase	Time	Teacher Actions	Student Tasks and Activities	Resources (readings, materials, prior/prerequisite knowledge)	Student Grouping
Warm-up, journal, review of previous class, or other introduction					
1st major activity					
2nd major activity					
3rd major activity					
Summary, look-ahead, or other lesson wrap-up, integration, or closure					
Homework and announcements					

Narrative Lesson-Plan Format

Teacher's name: _____ Class/period: _____

Unit: _____ Date: _____

Standards and skills (curriculum, content, academic, ELD or language standards; historical thinking or social science analysis skills):

Learning objectives (academic learning goals, content and language goals, understandings, key concepts, essential questions, knowledge and skills):

Resources (readings, materials, prior or prerequisite knowledge):

Sequence of activities:

Student grouping:

Assessments and rubrics, monitoring and assessing learning:

Differentiated instruction, or accommodations for English-language or special-needs learners:

Homework:

Unit Plan Overview

Topic(s): An opening narrative of one or two short paragraphs and bullet points introduces the unit plan with overarching questions, goals, objectives, ideas, or themes.

Name: _____ Content area: _____ Grade/level: _____

Months/ weeks/ dates	Unit topic	Standards (content, ELD standards)	Learning objectives (for content, for academic language—e.g., goals, understandings, key concepts, essential questions, historical thinking or social science analysis skills)	Learning activities (general sequence of activities, differentiated instruction)	Assessment (monitoring and assessing learning, rubrics if applicable)	Resources and materials

Semester Plan Overview

Name: _____ Content area: _____ Grade/level: _____

Months/ weeks/ dates	Unit topic	Standards (content, ELD standards)	Learning objectives (for content, for academic language—e.g., goals, understandings, key concepts, essential questions, historical thinking or social science analysis skills)	Learning activities (general sequence of activities, differentiated instruction)	Assessment (monitoring and assessing learning, rubrics if applicable)	Resources and materials

Cornell Note-Taking System Sample

Name: _____ Course: _____ Date: _____

2. **Reduce** and **Question** (after lecture):
   - Write key words, phrases or questions that serve as cues for notes taken in class.
   - Cue phrases and questions should be in your own words.

Alternatively, **Review** and **Clarify**:
   - Review the notes soon after the lecture.
   - Make sure notes are clear and that the information makes sense.

1. **Record** (during lecture):
   - Write down as many facts and ideas as you can in phrases.
   - Use abbreviations when possible.

After lecture:
   - Read through your notes.
   - Fill in blanks and make scribbles more legible.

3. **Recite**, **Reflect**, and **Review**:
   - With classroom notes covered, read each key word or question.
   - Recite, by stating out loud and in your own words, the fact or idea brought to mind by key word or question.
   - Think about what you have learned, reinforcing deeper learning by relating facts and ideas to other knowledge.

4. **Recapitulate**:
   - Summarize each page of notes at the bottom of each page.
   - Summarize the whole lecture on the last page.
   - Use complete sentences.

Alternatively, **Summarize**:
   - Write a summary at the bottom of each page.
   - Mention all key points.

Study: Use both columns of your notes to study for tests.

American and British Views of the Boston Massacre

Directions: Below are five different accounts of the Boston Massacre. Read each one carefully. Ask yourself: Does it seem to be an American or British view? When was it written? Language can be a clue in dating the account. After the five accounts is a list of sources. Try to match each source with the account.

Am/Br: "On the evening of the 5th of March, 1770, there came a short and sharp collision between a handful of soldiers and a small crowd, voluble in abuse, and too free with clubs and snowballs. There was a sputter of musketry, and five or six civilians dropped down dead or dying. That was the Boston massacre."

Am/Br: "On Friday the 2d instant, a quarrel arose between some soldiers of the 29th, and the rope-makers' journeymen and apprentices…many of them being much wounded. This contentious disposition continued until the Monday evening following, when a party of seven or eight soldiers were detached from the main guard, under the command of Captain Preston, and by his orders fired upon the inhabitants promiscuously in King street, without the least warning of their intention, and killed three on the spot; another has since died of his wounds, and others are dangerously, some it is feared mortally, wounded."

Am/Br: "The presence of British red-coats in Boston was a standing invitation to disorder. Antagonism between citizens and soldiery flared up in the so-called Boston Massacre of 5 March 1770. A snowballing of the red-coats degenerated into a mob attack, someone gave the order to fire, and four Bostonians lay dead in the snow."

Am/Br: "The Year 1770 was memorable enough… The Evening of the fifth of March… About nine O'clock We were alarmed with the ringing of Bells, and supposing it to be the Signal of fire, we snatched our Hats and Cloaks… In the Street We were informed that the British Soldiers had fired on the Inhabitants, killed some and wounded others near the Town house."

Am/Br: "On Monday night about eight o'clock, two soldiers were attacked and beat… about 100 people passed and went toward the custom-house, where the King's money is lodged. They immediately surrounded the sentinel posted there, and with clubs and other weapons threatened to execute their vengeance on him… The mob still increased… They advanced to the point of bayonets, struck some of them… A soldier having received a severe blow with a stick, instantly fired… A general attack was then made on the men by heaving clubs, and snow balls… some persons from behind called out, '…why don't you fire?' Instantly three or four of the soldiers fired, one after another, and directly after, three more in the same confusion and hurry. The mob ran away, except three unhappy men who instantly expired."

Sources:

a. "Report of the Committee of the Town of Boston"

b. A British magazine dated April 1770, stating Captain Preston's views

c. John Adams's autobiography

d. English government official, 1897

e. Authors of an American history textbook, 1930

Questions:

1. On what facts do all five accounts agree?

2. On what points do these five accounts of the same event differ?

3. How do the two British accounts differ in perspective? How can we account for this difference?

4. Of the three American versions, which ones include opinion as well as fact? Compare these interpretations with other accounts. How do opinions affect the interpretation of events?

5. Present your views on the topic "History is Interpretation." Use material from the lesson to illustrate your main points.

Civil Liberties Dialog

The following conversation between two students is fictional. As you listen to and read along with this story, think about all you have learned about the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Every time you hear a violation of a right, stamp your feet and slap your hand on your desk. This demonstrates your anger as a citizen when you feel your basic rights are being violated. For the written assignment:

1. select those items that violate some part of the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights, and explain why they do so.

2. support your argument by citing the appropriate article (amendment) in the Bill of Rights.

Jill: Hello, Carlos! How about coming along with me? I'm going to visit Greg. He's in the county jail.

Carlos: For what, Jill?

Jill: He criticized Mayor Brown for raising the bus fare from a dollar thirty-five to two dollars, so a police officer arrested him.

Carlos: They won't let him out on bail?

Jill: No.

Carlos: How long has he been in jail?

Jill: About six months. They say they're in no hurry to have a trial. Anyway, he's too poor to hire a lawyer, and besides, what good would a trial do him?

Carlos: That reminds me of John. He was passing around a petition demanding that the Board of Education raise the teachers' salaries the same percentage as the increase in the cost of living. A police officer entered his house and searched for communist books. John had a copy of the *Communist Manifesto* at home and now he's in jail. If they find him guilty, he'll get 50 lashes every day for three weeks.

Jill: Yes, but did they find him guilty?

Carlos: I don't know. The trial was held yesterday, in secret. And some young man who knew all of the facts refused to testify on John's behalf.

Jill: That's more bad luck for John's family. Did you know that his dad was forced to sell his land to the city for less than he paid for it?

Carlos: Why doesn't he write to the newspaper about it?

Jill: The *Times* is afraid to print anything about it since the newspaper paid that big fine for violation of the anti-sedition law. Remember, the *Times* printed all those articles saying that the mayor ought to resign because he is a good friend of the gangster, Matt Preston.

Carlos: And how about Jim? He's in jail, too. He refused to charge his customers that extra two-percent sales tax for the local church that the U.S. Congress passed this year. He should have seen it coming, though. Jim's never been allowed to vote or run for office because the government does not recognize his church.

At the Sound of the Beep…

1. Create an answering machine message as if you were a main character from historical materials in your textbook (or other resources). Create messages this character might have placed and received, had this technology been available at the time.

   Example A: *This is George Washington, I am out surveying my plantation Mt. Vernon, and I just returned from the Revolutionary War. I am interested in reviewing drafts of the Constitution, specially focusing on the role of the presidency. I am still in awe of the effort and sacrifices of those troops that stayed with me at Valley Forge. If you have a message, please leave it at the beep.*

   Example B: *This is Leonardo da Vinci. I am currently occupied painting the portrait of a mysterious, beautiful lady named Mona Lisa. I don't know much about her, but her smile is giving me a great deal of trouble to paint. In the meantime, I have been working on different inventions for a local patron of my work. It is also very difficult and time consuming to write my notebooks backwards so that my ideas cannot be stolen. At the sound of the beep, please leave a message (perhaps I should have invented the answering machine first).*

2. Then select 3–5 other historical figures that might have called this person, and create four- to five-sentence messages to the person from these other characters.

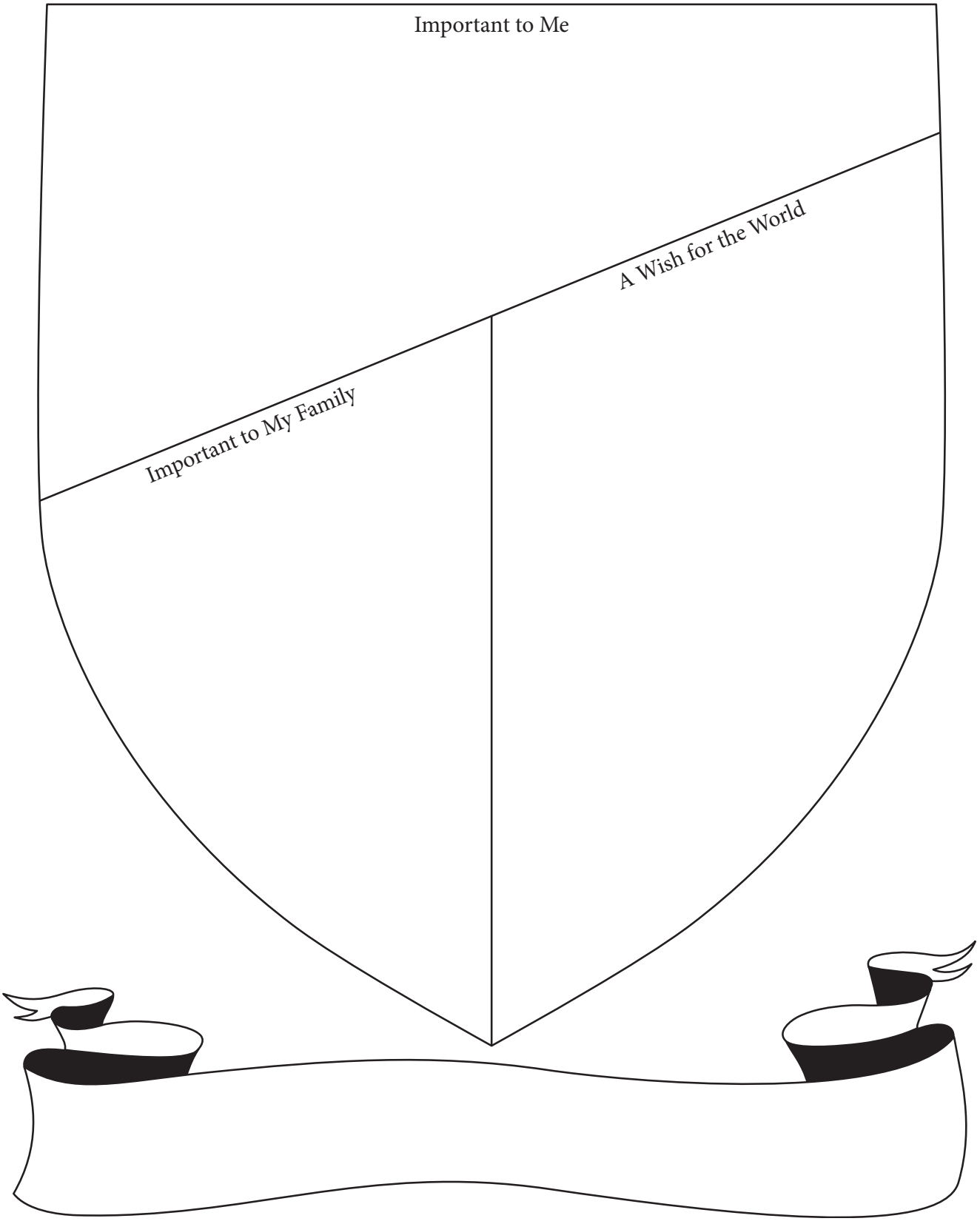
3. You create a final message from you to the historical figure in question. Your message makes comments, asks questions, and poses alternatives.

A complete assignment will have one main outgoing message, 3–5 incoming messages, and a final message from you.

You will be graded chiefly on the historical content of your outgoing and incoming messages, and on the quality of your written product.

(Note: In the 21st century, there are many ways of communicating with other people that were unknown in earlier historical periods. Variations on this assignment could include, for example, email or Twitter messages.)

Family Name/Coat-of-Arms



Hammurabi: Crime and Punishment, Vengeance and Rehabilitation Background Handout

1. "If a man brings an accusation against another man, and charges him with a capital crime, but cannot prove it, he, the accuser, shall be put to death."

   a. How do accusers bring charges today?

   b. What are some penalties for bringing false charges?

2. "If a man, in a case pending judgment, bears false witness, or does not establish the testimony that he has given, if that case were a case involving life, that man shall be put to death."

   a. What does "bears false witness" mean?

   b. What do we call this concept today?

   c. What penalty do we have for this?

3. "If a man neglects to strengthen his dike, and a break is made in his dike and the water carries away the field-land, the man in whose dike the break occurred shall restore the grain that he has damaged. If he is not able to restore the grain, they shall sell him and his goods, and the farmers whose grant the water has carried away shall share the results of the sale."

   a. What public responsibilities do individual students in a classroom have to the whole class and school?

   b. What public responsibility does a homeowner have?

   c. Is it a public responsibility for a man to keep his lawn mowed or his house clean on the outside?

   d. What can be done if he does not?

4. "If outlaws collect in the house of a wine-seller, and she does not arrest these outlaws and bring them to the palace, that wine-seller shall be put to death."

   a. If there were a penalty for not reporting a fellow student who was cheating, would you be more likely to turn them into the teacher?

   b. Do we have laws similar to the one regarding wine-sellers?

   c. What are some penalties associated with violating such laws?

   d. If there were a penalty for ignoring such a crime, would people be less likely to ignore the crime?

5. "If a builder built a house for a man and did not make its construction firm, and the house that he built collapsed and caused the death of the owner of the house, the builder shall be put to death."

   a. Should builders be responsible for houses that slide down hillsides?

   b. What if the owner of the house made changes that made the original house less firm than when it was first built?

   c. Who decides, and how?

6. "If a wife has not been a careful mistress, has spent her time gossiping with neighbors, has neglected her house and belittled her husband, that woman shall be thrown in to the water."

   a. How might a similar law applied to husbands be worded?

   b. Who decides how good of a wife or husband someone is?

I Never Spoke to the Boy I Married Until After the Wedding

Would you let your parents choose your husband or wife for you? How would you feel if you couldn't make your own choices? Sharan is 24. She lives in India. Her parents chose her husband for her. She saw him once before they were married. Does she think it's okay for parents to arrange a marriage? "Yes, I certainly do," she says.

The parents arrange most of the marriages in India. The young people have little to do with it.

Until she was 12, Sharan played with all the neighborhood children—boys and girls. But then she became a teenager, and teenagers in India must stay only with their own gender. Until she was 18, Sharan had no contact with boys. She never had a date. All her girl friends grew up the same way.

When Sharan was 16, her father started looking for a husband for her. It is always the parents of the girl who must search for a mate. The parents of the boy never do the looking. Since Sharan's father was rich, Sharan's future husband also had to have money. Sharan's father gave the matter a lot of thought. He wanted to pick someone who would be just right.

Her father began telling friends that he was looking for a husband for Sharan. Soon, names of possible husbands began to come in. Sharan's father considered them all. Then he chose one boy he thought might make a good husband.

One day he invited the boy's father to lunch. During the meal, he mentioned Sharan. He said Sharan would make a good wife for the right boy. The boy's father understood at once. He was very pleased. He thought Sharan would make a good wife for his son.

The next stop was to visit an astrologer. Astrologers tell the future by studying the stars and planets. The astrologer studied his charts to decide if the marriage would be a happy one. He also told the two fathers when would be the best time to hold the wedding. Almost everyone in India consults an astrologer first before making wedding plans. Sometimes weddings are called off when astrologers say the stars aren't right.

The two men then discussed the gifts Sharan's father would give the couple. This is very important—if the bride's father doesn't offer enough gifts, the wedding is often called off. Sharan's father said he would pay for Sharan's husband to go to medical school. He said he would set up a doctor's office for him when he graduated. He said he would also give Sharan much clothing and jewelry.

Soon Sharan's father invited the boy and his family to dinner. This was the first time Sharan saw the boy who was going to be her husband. The two young people did not speak to each other. The boy's parents asked her a few polite questions. After dinner, the boy and his family went home. That was the only time Sharan saw her future husband until her wedding day.

How did she feel at the time? "Of course, I was very shy during that meeting," she said. "I did not dare to

look at Krishna, my future husband. I didn't know what to say or do. I just knew that he must be someone very good or else my parents wouldn't have picked him. As it turned out, they made a wonderful choice."

When we told Sharan that things are different in the U.S., she looked surprised. "Boys and girls pick their own mates?" she asked. "That's shocking! How can they know who is best for them? No wonder there are so many divorces in the U.S."

Could your parents pick the right husband or wife for you? Take the following test and find out. First read this list, and check all the things you thing are important for your future husband- or wife-to-be:

Me	**My Parents**	
_____	_____	good-looking
_____	_____	good dancer
_____	_____	gets good grades in school
_____	_____	same race as you
_____	_____	good sense of humor
_____	_____	same religion as you
_____	_____	dresses neatly
_____	_____	doesn't smoke
_____	_____	doesn't drink
_____	_____	generous
_____	_____	hard worker
_____	_____	likes children
_____	_____	is polite
_____	_____	likes to make a good impression on others
_____	_____	doesn't take things too seriously
_____	_____	is serious and thinks about the future
_____	_____	doesn't back away from a fight
_____	_____	likes to keep busy
_____	_____	knows how to relax and have fun
_____	_____	comes from a rich family
_____	_____	comes from a nice family
_____	_____	thinks it's very important to get ahead
_____	_____	thinks happiness is more important than money
_____	_____	knows what's happening in the world
_____	_____	likes music
_____	_____	is assertive
_____	_____	gets along with your friends
_____	_____	doesn't go along with the crowd

Pickles and Humbug: A Bit of Comparative Logic

Pickles will kill you. Every pickle you eat brings you nearer to death. Amazingly, most people have failed to grasp the terrifying significance of the term "in a pickle."

Although leading horticulturists have long known *Cucumis sativus* to possess indehiscent pulp (meaning it remains closed at maturity, like fruits), the pickle industry continues to expand.

Pickles are associated with all the major diseases of the body—eating them breeds riots, demonstrations, and wars. They can be blamed for most airline tragedies. Pickles cause auto accidents. There exists a positive relationship between youth gangs, crime waves, and property destruction because of the consumption of this fruit of the *curcubit* family.

Consider these:

- Nearly all sick people have eaten pickles at various points in their lives. The effects are obviously cumulative.
- Most Southern Californians who die have eaten pickles.
- Most soldiers in battle have eaten pickles.
- Most people involved in air and auto accidents have eaten pickles.
- Among people born in 1900 or before who ate pickles during their lifetime, there has been a near-100% mortality rate.
- All pickle eaters over the age of 90 have wrinkled skin, have lost most of their teeth, and have brittle bones and failing eyesight—unless the ills of pickles have already caused their death.
- The only way to avoid the damaging effects of pickle eating is to change one's eating habits. Eat Indian mulligatawny soup; practically no one has ever had any problems from eating mulligatawny soup.

Magazine Cover and Article Assignment/Rubric

In this activity, you will create your own magazine cover and article in the style of a major current publication such as *Time, Newsweek, Sports Illustrated,* etc. You will have to put yourself in the shoes of a real journalist, graphic designer, and publisher. You will also present your cover and article to the class.

Your cover page should include:

1. a picture of a person(s), place(s), or event(s) that will give the reader a clear idea of what the article is about

2. an appropriate title for both the magazine and the article.

Your article should include:

1. answers to the following in relation to your subject: who, what, where, when, and how. The better you answer those questions, the better informed your readers will be about your subject.

2. one to three pictures in your article that are different from the cover picture

3. an explanation to the reader why this person, place, or event is/was important.

	Superior	Average	Below Average
Article (written portion)	None or almost no errors of grammar, style, or usage; very informative; shows a great deal of effort	Some errors of grammar, style, or usage; somewhat informative; shows some effort	Numerous errors of grammar, style, or usage; not informative; shows very little effort
Cover (art and creativity)	Neat, legible, and attractive; subject to be covered is clear; outstanding creativity and effort	Minimally neat, legible, and attractive; subject is somewhat clear and somewhat vague; average creativity and effort	Not neat, legible, or attractive; subject is obscure or confusing; poor creativity and effort
Class Presentation	Very informative; good clarity and voice projection	Somewhat informative; average clarity and voice projection	Not informative; difficult to hear or understand

Video Reflection Worksheet

Express yourself in words, sentences, or visuals. If you wish to mention anything in addition to what you write in the boxes, write it at the bottom of the sheet (or on back, if necessary).

Something you already knew about the topic or subject in question that was reinforced by what you saw on the video:	Something you learned about the topic or subject as a result of watching the video:
Something happening in the world today that relates to the topic or subject:	Something that gives you hope or encouragement for the future, even if the video is sobering or depressing at times:

Getting Acquainted

Is there anybody else like you in the classroom?

1. Write down your own answers quickly.
2. Look for another person with a matching answer.
3. You may use that person for **one** answer.
4. Have them sign their name in the signature column.

Item	My answer	Signature
Birth month		
Name of best friend		
Shoe size		
Middle name		
Hobby		
Family car		
Career choice		
Number of brothers		
Number of sisters		
Favorite food		
Favorite vacation spot		
Junior high attended		
City of birth		
Favorite TV show		
Favorite school subject		
Favorite sport		
Favorite actor		
Favorite actress		
Favorite color		
Zodiac sign		

Team Monster Conquest: Creation Team

Names of Creation Team members:

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

Your job as a team is to create a monster. It can be any kind of monster—the only requirement is that it be harmful to humans. Pick a secretary for your team. Below, list up to 15 "qualities" of your monster. (Examples: It grows by 25% every 24 hours; or if you cut off its arm, the arm grows back and the original arm turns into a new monster, etc.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____

You have 20 minutes to create your monster. When time is called, give this paper to another team.

Team Monster Conquest: Conquering Team

Names of Conquering Team members:

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

Your job as a Conquering Team is to somehow defeat the monster. Appoint a team secretary to write down your strategies and approaches to defeating the monster. You must take all the qualities of the monster into consideration. You may use any method to conquer the monster. Write your answers below. You have 15 minutes.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

When time is called, you will share your answer to the monster problems with the rest of the class. Appoint a spokesperson for your team.

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