

A Glimpse Into America's History

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Using The Library of Congress as a primary source, this unit provides both general and specific people, places, and things in the United States' history. Using this unit, students in the primary grade levels will be applying both literary and technical skills. The students will be viewing a digital historical alphabet; and creating a historical newsletter about famous people, places, and things in America. They will also be using a scrapbook created as a tool for the students to use, to gain a more specific glance into America's history.

Having used these resources and materials, students will in turn have learned about their nation's history in both a broad and general perspective, built upon their phonetic skills while reading historical documents, and create kid writing while utilizing the writer's workshop in both the 1st and 3rd grade levels. This is a fraction of the knowledge and skills that the students will obtain during this unit. Students should have basic literary skills prior to this unit, as well as a general technical knowledge when using the pre-selected websites for research.

Objectives

The students will be able to:

- ↻ Identify historical figures in the United States' history.
- ↻ Identify historical places within the United States.
- ↻ Identify historical documents derived from United States government.
- ↻ Create a scrapbook using primary resources from The Library of Congress.
- ↻ Work in groups to create a "historical newsletter," using primary resources.

Time Required

This unit will be completed over a 3 to 4 week period, meeting for an hour each time.

Grade Level

Primary Grades 1st through 3rd

Curriculum Fit

This unit is a cross-curricular unit. However, it fits primarily into Social Studies and Language Arts curriculum. By utilizing the student's gain in historical information, using primary resources, and calling on their ability to write and record their observations from these resources, the students will effectively complete this unit.

PA Academic Standards

ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT

5.1.3. Principles and Documents of Government

B. Explain the purposes of rules and laws and why they are important in the classroom, school, community, state and nation

C. C. Define the principles and ideals shaping government.

- Justice
- Truth
- Diversity of people and ideas
- Patriotism
- Common good
- Liberty
- Rule of law
- Leadership
- Citizenship

E. Identify documents of United States government.

- Declaration of Independence
- Constitution of the United States
- Bill of Rights

G. Describe the purpose of the United States Flag, The Pledge of Allegiance and The National Anthem.

5.2.3. Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship

F. Explain the benefits of following rules and laws and the consequences of violating them.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR HISTORY

8.1.3 Historical Analysis and Skills Development

A. Understand chronological thinking and distinguish between past, present and future time.

- Calendar time
- Time lines
- Continuity and change
- Events (time and place)

B. Develop an understanding of historical sources.

- Data in historical maps
- Visual data from maps and tables
- Mathematical data from graphs and tables
- Author or historical source

C. Understand historical research.

- Event (time and place)
- Facts, folklore and fiction
- Formation of a historical question
- Primary sources
- Secondary sources
- Conclusions (e.g., storytelling, role playing, diorama)

8.2.3 Pennsylvania History

- A. Understand the political and cultural contributions of individuals and groups to Pennsylvania history.
 - William Penn
 - Benjamin Franklin
 - Pennsylvanians impacting American Culture (e.g., John Chapman, Richard Allen, Betsy Ross, Mary Ludwig Hayes, Rachel Carson, Elizabeth Jane Cochran, Marian Anderson)
 - Local historical figures in municipalities and counties.
- B. Identify and describe primary documents, material artifacts and historic sites important in Pennsylvania history.
 - Documents, Writings and Oral Traditions (e.g., Penn’s Charter, Pennsylvania “Declaration of Rights”)
 - Artifacts, Architecture and Historic Places (e.g., Local historical sites, museum collections, Independence Hall)
 - Liberty Bell

8.3.3 United States History

- A. Identify contributions of individuals and groups to United States history.
 - George Washington
 - Thomas Jefferson
 - Abraham Lincoln
 - Theodore Roosevelt
 - Franklin D. Roosevelt
 - Individuals who are role models (e.g., Abigail Adams, Sacagawea, Frederick Douglass, Clara Barton, Jackie Robinson, Rosa Parks, Archbishop Patrick Flores, Jamie Escalante, Sally Ride, Tiger Woods, Cal Ripken, Jr., Sammy Sosa)
- B. Identify and describe primary documents, material artifacts and historic sites important in United States history.
 - Documents (e.g., Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights)
 - Writings and Communications (e.g., Pledge of Allegiance, famous quotations and sayings)
 - Historic Places (e.g., The White House, Mount Rushmore, Statue of Liberty)
 - The Flag of the United States

ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR READING, WRITING, SPEAKING, AND LISTENING

1.1.3. Learning to Read Independently

- A. Identify the purposes and types of text (e.g., literature, information) before reading.
- C. Use knowledge of phonics, word analysis (e.g., root words, prefixes and suffixes), syllabication, picture and context clues to decode and understand new words during reading.
- E. Acquire a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using words (e.g., antonyms, synonyms, categories of words). Use a dictionary when appropriate.
- F. Understand the meaning of and use correctly new vocabulary learned in various subject areas

1.4.3. Types of Writing

- A. Write narrative pieces (e.g., stories, poems, plays).
 - Include detailed descriptions of people, places and things.

- Use relevant illustrations.
- Include literary elements (Standard 1.3.3.B.).

B. Write informational pieces (e.g., descriptions, letters, reports, instructions) using illustrations when relevant.

1.5.3 Quality of Writing

A. Write with a sharp, distinct focus identifying topic, task and audience.

B. Write using well-developed content appropriate for the topic.

- Gather and organize information.
- Write a series of related sentences or paragraphs with one central idea.
- Incorporate details relevant and appropriate to the topic.

E. Revise writing to improve detail and order by identifying missing information and determining whether ideas follow logically.

F. Edit writing using the conventions of language.

- Spell common, frequently used words correctly.
- Use capital letters correctly (first word in sentences, proper nouns, pronoun "I").
- Punctuate correctly (periods, exclamation points, question marks, commas in a series).
- Use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and conjunctions properly.
- Use complete sentences (simple, compound, declarative, interrogative, exclamatory and imperative).

G. Present and/or defend written work for publication when appropriate.

1.6.3 Speaking and Listening

A. Listen to others.

- Ask questions as an aid to understanding.
- Distinguish fact from opinion.

B. Participate in small and large group discussions and presentations.

- Participate in everyday conversation.
- Present oral readings.
- Deliver short reports (e.g., Show-and-Tell, field trip summary).
- Conduct short interviews.
- Give simple directions and explanations.
- Report an emergency.

1.8.3 Research

A. Select a topic for research.

B. Locate information using appropriate sources and strategies.

- Locate resources for a particular task (e.g., newspapers, dictionary).
- Select sources (e.g., dictionaries, encyclopedias, interviews to write a family history, observations, and electronic media).
- Use tables of contents, key words and guide words.
- Use traditional and electronic search tools.

Organize and present the main ideas from research.

- Take notes from sources using a structured format.

- Summarize, orally or in writing, the main ideas.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

3.7.4. Technological Devices

A. Identify basic computer operations and concepts.

- Identify the major parts necessary for a computer to input and output data.
- Explain and demonstrate the basic use of input and output devices (e.g., keyboard, monitor, printer, and mouse).
- Explain and demonstrate the use of external and internal storage devices (e.g., disk drive, CD drive).

B. Use basic computer software.

- Apply operating system skills to perform basic computer tasks.
- Apply basic word processing skills.
- Identify and use simple graphic and presentation graphic materials generated by the computer.
- Apply specific instructional software.

E. Identify basic computer communications systems.

- Apply a web browser.
- Apply basic electronic mail functions.
- Use on-line searches to answer age appropriate questions.

Student Projects

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY: Digital Historical Alphabet

As a way to capture the student's attention, a digital alphabet slide show will be shown. This slide show will exhibit famous people, places, and things that deal with our nation's history.

This activity will follow with a discussion of the slide show and free time for the students to explore books, websites, and other primary resources to gain ideas for the focus activity of their choice.

FOCUS ACTIVITY: History's Scrapbook

The students will begin by viewing a pre-made teacher scrapbook that illustrates photographs, text, and illustrations of our nation's historical figures, places, and things.

INQUIRY AND APPLICATION ACTIVITY: Historical Newsletters

The students will begin by looking at newspapers. A whole group discussion will be held about the structure, content, and pictures that are in a newspaper.

The students will then view an example of the teacher's historical newsletter. At the time, the teacher will allow the students to meet their 3rd and 1st grade helpers. This project will be a mentoring/teamwork process among two grade levels. The students will work together to choose a historical person, place, or thing for their newsletter.

Students will work together for at least an hour a week, over a period of 3 to 4 weeks, to complete their newsletters and will present them at the end of this time frame.

ASSESSMENT

There will be both a teacher assessment and a peer assessment. The teacher assessment will be chosen from one of the following activities below and the peer assessment will consist of the first and third grade groups exchanging newsletters and answering questions “who,” “what,” “where,” and “when” in regard of their chosen topics.

Topic Option #1

“One More for Rushmore”

Description: Using prior knowledge, The Library of Congress, and varying resources, students will create literature explaining who they would choose to be the fifth individual to be placed on Mount Rushmore. This will be followed with a historical explanation of that individual’s notable trademarks.

Topic Option #2

“Invent something that could improve the quality of life.”

Description: Students will study a few of the inventions, and methods of discovery, of Thomas A. Edison & Benjamin Franklin. Upon completion they will design, and create, a written explanation of their own invention and its purpose.

Topic Option #3

“Using your knowledge of how our flag was made and why the stars and stripes were chosen, redesign our flag to fit into our nation’s history.”

Description: The students will be required to use their knowledge of the stars and stripes and redesign the flag. The symbols and colors that they use will have to have relevance to our nation’s past and present events. An explanation will be required.

Topic Option #4

“Using past and present day events, rewrite our National Anthem.”

Description: The students will be given a copy of our nation’s national anthem and then asked to rewrite it using both past and present day events. This assessment will have to display their knowledge of both our nation’s history and current day events.

“One More for Rushmore”

Topic Option #1: “One More for Rushmore”				
Objectives	Low Performance	Average	Exemplary Performance	Earned Points
The student will be able to distinguish between fact and fiction.	0 points The student can not differentiate between fact and fiction.	2 points The student can associate the facts associated with Mt. Rushmore and give vague information about whom should be included as the additional sculpture.	5 points The student is well aware of the requirements of this project and has completed adequate research using primary resources.	
The student will be able to create a story using facts in their stories.	0 points The student does not adequately demonstrate knowledge of subject matter.	2 points The student included some facts in the story, but information was not completely factual.	5 points The student has accurately completed the assignment and can explain the story with detail.	
The student will be able to identify presidents by their history and characteristics.	0 points The student cannot identify facts about the presidents included on Mt. Rushmore.	2 points The student recognizes the facts, but is not always accurate in their response.	5 points The student demonstrates a high content knowledge of the 4 presidents and the 5 th important figure that they have chosen.	

“Invent something that could improve the quality of life.”

Topic Option #2: “Invention...”				
Objectives	Low Performance	Average	Exemplary Performance	Earned Points
The student will be able to distinguish between fact and fiction.	0 points The student can not differentiate between fact and fiction.	2 points The student can associate the facts associated with a variety of inventions by Edison & Franklin.	5 points The student is well aware of the requirements of this project and has completed adequate research using primary resources.	
The student will be able to create a design for the required invention and complete a written explanation of it.	0 points The student does not adequately demonstrate knowledge of subject matter.	2 points The student included some details in the explanation, but information was not complete and somewhat vague.	5 points The student has accurately completed the assignment and can explain their invention with detail in both, written and oral fashion.	
The student will be able to identify various inventions and inventors by their history and characteristics.	0 points The student cannot identify facts about various inventions or inventors.	2 points The student recognizes the facts, but is not always accurate in their responses.	5 points The student demonstrates a high content knowledge of a variety of inventions and inventors.	

“Using your knowledge of how our flag was made and why the stars and stripes were chosen, redesign our flag to fit into our nation’s history.”

Topic Option #3: “Our Flag”

Objectives	Low Performance	Average	Exemplary Performance	Earned Points
The student will be able to distinguish between fact and fiction.	0 points The student can not differentiate between fact and fiction.	2 points The student can associate the facts associated with the flag, and give vague details about the flag.	5 points The student is well aware of the requirements of this project and has completed adequate research using primary resources.	
The student will be able to create a flag using facts from our nations’ history as a basis.	0 points The student does not adequately demonstrate knowledge of subject matter.	2 points The student included some facts in the creation & explanation, but information was not completely factual.	5 points The student has accurately completed the assignment and can explain the end result with details.	
The student will be able to identify the history of the flag & the various aspects of it.	0 points The student cannot identify facts about our nation’s flag.	2 points The student recognizes the facts, but is not always accurate in their response.	5 points The student demonstrates a high content knowledge of the national flag and has created an end result that effectively reflects their knowledge.	

“Using past and present day events, rewrite our National Anthem.”

Topic Option #4: “National Anthem”

Objectives	Low Performance	Average	Exemplary Performance	Earned Points
The student will be able to distinguish between fact and fiction.	0 points The student can not differentiate between fact and fiction.	2 points The student can associate the facts associated with the National Anthem.	5 points The student is well aware of the requirements of this project and has completed adequate research using primary resources.	
The student will be able to create a new national anthem including past and present history.	0 points The student does not adequately demonstrate knowledge of subject matter.	2 points The student included some details in the project, but information was not complete and somewhat vague.	5 points The student has accurately completed the assignment and can explain their anthem with detail in both, written and oral fashion.	
The student will be able to identify various aspects of the current national anthem and their own national anthem by their knowledge of past and present history.	0 points The student cannot identify facts about various aspects of our national anthem or validate their own creation.	2 points The student recognizes the facts, but is not always accurate in their responses and final product.	5 points The student demonstrates a high content knowledge of the national anthem and has met or exceeded the requirements for writing their own anthem.	

Who and/or What?

Where?

When?

Why?