

Lesson Plan: Journal 1

Historical Journals: Introduction to historical perspectives (Part 1 of 6)

Note: This lesson can be conducted by itself.

Subjects: Social Studies, History, Religion, Arts

Grade-level: Middle [6-8], High [9-12]

Time required: 45 minutes

Related links: [Guampedia](#)

Related documents: Here are a few sample links to historical accounts on Guampedia: [Guam Congress Walkout](#), [CHamorus Capture Bully Hayes](#), [First Air Service to Guam](#), [Brown Tree snake Brought to Guam](#)

Description

In this lesson, students will begin to explore the importance of perspective in historical accounts. They will read and discuss some examples, in the process laying the groundwork for a multi-day unit that will have them create and share journals based on differing points of view.

Objectives/Skills

- Students will read and discuss some differing accounts about the same events or within the same time period.
- The class will begin thinking about the importance of analyzing perspective when reviewing historical accounts.

Questions or Assessment

- How well did students research their individuals?
- Did they have trouble finding information?

Procedure

Teacher prep

Identify a pair of historical accounts that present differing points of view on the same topic. See the above link for suggested examples found on Guampedia.

Reading of First Historical Perspective (5 minutes)

1. Without providing background information about the historical event about to be introduced, have students read the first historical account.
2. Very briefly have the class recap the historical account. Do not go into in-depth discussion just yet; simply gauge the class' understanding of the account.

Analyzing the First Historical Perspective (15 minutes)

1. Ask the students to identify information about the author of the historical account. Please Note: The author of each entry in Guampedia is at the bottom of the entry, with a link to the author's biography.
 - Who is the author?
 - If the author is unknown, note that this is okay. There is much else that can be determined about the author.
 - What did the author write?
 - Who is the intended audience?
 - In what manner is it written?
 - What qualitative statements can we identify? What emotions, if any, can we identify?
 - What is the purpose of this piece? Why did the author write it?
2. During the previous question period, you may need to provide a brief explanation of qualitative vs. quantitative statements. This should be review for most students, but in some cases may not. For younger students, use terms "factual" and "interpretive" instead.
3. Have students describe the historical account being addressed in the piece.
 - What happened?
 - How do you *feel* about the event?

Reading of Second Historical Perspective (5 minutes)

1. Without providing background information about the historical event about to be introduced, have students read the first historical account.
2. Very briefly have the class recap the historical account.
 - Do not go into in-depth discussion just yet; simply gauge the class' understanding of the account.
 - [Grades 4-5] Spend a couple minutes to check that everyone understood the historical account.

Analyzing the Second Historical Perspective (15 minutes)

1. Ask the students to identify information about the author of the historical account. As this is a repeat of an exercise done in an earlier section, you should be able to move quickly through these questions.
 - Who is the author?
 - If the author is unknown, note that this is okay. There is much else that can be determined about the author.
 - What did the author write?
 - Who is the intended audience?
 - In what manner is it written?
 - What qualitative statements can we identify? What emotions, if any, can we identify?
 - What is the purpose of this piece? Why did the author write it?
2. Have students describe the historical account being addressed in the piece. Spend more time with your class discussing this and the following section.
 - What happened? Had your understanding of this event changed? Grown? Become more confused?
 - How do you *feel* about the event? Do you feel different about this event now that you have this new perspective?
3. Lead a discussion on how students' understanding of the historical event changed between readings of the two accounts.
 - How did you understand the event after the first reading? After the second?
 - What made your understanding change?
 - Do you trust the information? If not, is this information useful at all?
 - Guide this discussion toward an understanding that accounts may be biased, but valuable information is still present. Additionally, the slants themselves are valuable information to note and understand.
 - By carefully and critically reading these two accounts, what information can we as historians agree upon?

Recap (5 minutes)

Recap what we've done and learned in the lesson:

“Today we've learned about the presence of perspective in historical accounts. We read one account, understood the historical event through that ‘lens,’ and then read another account and adjusting our understanding through this additional “lens.” We discussed how these personal accounts may provide different interpretations on the same event, but that they are still valuable in providing information and, perhaps even more importantly, viewpoints and motivations of historical individuals.”

Ask students for their favorite parts of the lesson.